Building a Multiethnic Military in Post-Yugoslav Bosnia and Herzegovina

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Abstract

This dissertation explores ideas of the state, the military, and identity. It demonstrates the complex relationship between these concepts by charting the evolution of three armies which were established to fight the Bosnian War from their inception in 1991 until their formal unification in 2006. This process is illustrated through the analysis of a wide range of sources, including interviews, speeches, military journals, government documents and legislation, memoirs, newspaper articles, and trials at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. The author's perspective is informed by his experience living, researching, and working in Sarajevo for over two years, in which time he also travelled throughout every former Yugoslav republic and learned the local language.

Nestled in the heart of the Dinaric Alps, Bosnia and Herzegovina is home to three constituent peoples (Bosnian Croats, Muslims, and Serbs) which, until the period of study, lived in mixed communities scattered across its mountains and valleys. Heritage from a particular constituent people did not necessarily inform political outlooks, and for much of the population regional or ideological loyalties took precedent. This dissertation first examines how the Yugoslavs attempted to build a cohesive military from this range of identities during the socialist period. It then explores how rival nationalist leaders raised armies and attempted to build states on Bosnian territory following the collapse of Yugoslavia, offering new perspectives and fresh analysis of the Bosnian War. The focus of this research, however, is on the process of defence reform and military integration which followed the conflict. Just ten years after the Dayton Peace Agreement ended the war, the three armies which had fought it were unified by the Bosnian parliament. Such a development represents a rare moment of political consensus in post-Dayton Bosnia and Herzegovina, and is considered to be the greatest step in establishing peace since the end of the war. This dissertation illustrates how this step was taken.

The case of Bosnia and Herzegovina offers us many insights. It reminds us that the boundaries and salience of identity are fluid, and that states are fragile constructs that are difficult to build and maintain. It illustrates the difficulties of building a cohesive military from a diverse population, and offers a lens to analyse various attempts to overcome them. Furthermore, it demonstrates that military integration can serve as the vanguard of institutional reconciliation in post-conflict states and a unified army can serve as a symbol of cooperation in a divided society.

Contents

Acknowledgements

Glossary of Abbreviations

APC – Armoured Personnel Carrier

APZB –*Autonomna Pokrajina Zapadna Bosna* (Autonomous Province of Western Bosnia)

ARBiH – *Armija Republike Bosne i Hercegovine* (Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina)

AVNOJ – *Antifašističko vijeće narodnog oslobođenja Jugoslavije* (Antifascist Council of the National Liberation of Yugoslavia)

BA – British Army

BiH – *Bosna i Hercegovina* (Bosnia and Herzegovina)

CIA – Central Intelligence Agency

DAP – *Demokratska alijansa za promjene* (Democratic Alliance for Change)

DPA – Dayton Peace Agreement

DRC – Defence Reform Commission

EC – European Community

ECMM – European Community Monitoring Mission

EU – European Union

EUFOR – European Union Force

FBiH - *Federacija Bosne i Hercegovine* (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina)

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

HB – Herceg-Bosna

HDZ – *Hrvatska demokratska zajednica* (Croat Democratic Union)

HOS – *Hrvatske obrambene snage* (Croat Defence Forces)

HSP – *Hrvatske stranke prava* (Croat Party of Rights)

HV – *Hrvatska vojska* (Croatian Army)

HVO – *Hrvatsko vijeće obrane* (Croat Defence Council)

ICTY – International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia

IFOR – Implementation Force

IISS – International Institute for Strategic Studies

JA – *Jugoslovenska armija* (Yugoslav Army)

JNA – *Jugoslovenska narodna armija* (Yugoslav People's Army)

KC – *Kadrovski centar* (Personnel Centre)

KPJ - *Komunistička partija Jugoslavije* (Communist Party of Yugoslavia)

LA – Lebanese Army

MOWM – March on Washington Movement

MPRI – Military Professional Resources, Incorporated

MUP – *Ministarstvo unutrašnjih poslova* (Ministry of the Interior)

NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organisation

NCO – Non-Commissioned Officer

NGO – Non-governmental Organisation

NOP – *Narodnooslobodilački pokret* (National Liberation Movement)

NOVJ – *Narodnooslobodilačka vojska Jugoslavije* (National Liberation Army of Yugoslavia)

OHR – Office of the High Representative

ONO – *Opštenarodna odbrana* (Total National Defence)

OSBiH – *Oružane snage Bosne i Hercegovine* (Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina)

OSCE – Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe

PfP – Partnership for Peace

PIC – Peace Implementation Council

PL – *Patriotska liga* (Patriotic League)

RS – Republika Srpska (Serb Republic)

RSK – Republika Srpska Krajina (Serb Republic of Krajina)

SAO - *Srpska autonomna oblast* (Serb Autonomous Regions)

SCMM – Standing Committee on Military Matters

SDA – *Stranka demokratse akcije* (Party of Democratic Action)

SDB – *Služba državne bezbednosti* (State Security Service)

SDS – *Srpska demokratska stranka* (Serb Democratic Party)

SFOR – Stabilisation Force

SFRJ – Socijalistička federativna Republika Jugoslavije (Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia)

SKJ – *Savez komunista Jugoslavije* (League of Communists of Yugoslavia)

SRBiH – *Srpska Republika Bosna i Hercegovine* (Serb Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina)

SRJ – *Savezna Republika Jugoslavija* (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia)

SVK – *Srpska vojska krajine* (Serb Army of Krajina)

TO – *Teritorijalna odbrana* (Territorial Defence)

TORBiH – *Teritorijalna odbrana Republike Bosne i Herzegovine* (Territorial Defence of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina)

UN – United Nations

USSR – Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

VF – *Vojska federacije* (Army of the Federation)

VJ – *Vojska Jugoslavije* (Yugoslav Army)

VRS – *Vojska Republike Srpske* (Army of Republika Srpska)

Introduction

On 1 January 2006, the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina (*Oružane snage Bosne i Hercegovine*, OSBiH) officially entered service. The emergence of this new, multiethnic military came just over a decade after a long and bloody war divided the majority of the Bosnian population along ethnic lines, both politically and geographically. Upon its formation, the OSBiH became the largest multiethnic institution in Bosnia and Herzegovina (*Bosna i Hercegovina,* BiH), and ever since, its architects have held the military integration process as a model for the rest of Bosnian society to follow.[1] Much of BiH has remained divided since the Dayton Peace Agreement (DPA) ended the war. State-level governance remains largely deadlocked, while economic stagnation and falling standards of living continue to drive population decline. It is in this challenging political climate that the Bosnian military has quietly been strengthening itself as an institution, and BiH as a state.

Since 2005, Bosnian troops have served alongside soldiers from a host of other militaries during multilateral operations around the world. The units sent on such missions are always equally representative of BiH's three constituent peoples: Bosnian Croats, Muslims, and Serbs. The first OSBiH unit to deploy abroad, for example, was an unexploded ordnance disposal team composed of 12 personnel from each constituent people. The team was sent to Iraq to join the international peace support operation there.[2] Operating alongside more experienced and more advanced armed forces in enivironments such as this presents an excellent opportunity for Bosnian troops to exchange knowledge and develop experience, while also contributing to the institutional identity and cohesion of the OSBiH. In total, 1,222 personnel from the Bosnian Ministry of Defence and the OSBiH have participated in EU, NATO, and UN missions outside of BiH.[3] Furthermore, through its participation in such operations, the OSBiH has earned itself a good reputation, as this 2018 report makes clear:

> The participation of members from BiH in peace support operations has been rated positively and they can be seen as ambassadors of their country. Their outstanding achievements attracted the attention of world media through various events on missions where they participated, and were rewarded with recognition by the UN, NATO, and local governments.[4]

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[1] Paddy Ashdown, interview with the author. (22/03/2016)
[2] Ministry of Defence and Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina. *Brochure.* (Sarajevo, 2011) p.5
[3] Centre for Security Studies – Sarajevo. *Bosnia and Herzegovina in Peace Missions: Contribution to Maintaining Peace in the World.* (Sarajevo, 2018) p.10
[4] Ibid. p.12

Furthermore, since its formation, the OSBiH has been a partner of the Maryland National Guard through the US Department of Defense's State Partnership Program. In this time, thousands of soldiers from across BiH have deployed on training exercises together and participated in events with their counterparts from Maryland, enhancing their professionalism further.[5] Additional assistance has been offered to the OSBiH from the British Embassy in Sarajevo, which has sponsored an initiative since 2013 that aims to rejuvenate the 'ageing' OSBiH officer corps by 'identifying the best young leaders from the civilian post-graduate sector' and establishing the 'best possible model for selecting and training' the next generation of Bosnian military leaders.[6] The result of all of these activities is an increasingly capable and professional military which is viewed as a peer by the officers and soldiers of other armed forces. The successful development of the OSBiH was recently recognised by the leadership of NATO, who, in December 2018, invited BiH to submit its first Annual National Plan detailing how it will meet the terms of its Membership Action Plan (MAP). Once the MAP is complete, BiH will be ready to join NATO as a full member state if the political consensus to do so can be found.[7]

The path to this moment, however, has not been smooth. Prior to the events of 2018, Bosnian progress towards NATO accession stalled for almost a decade. A particular point of contention for many Bosnian Serb leaders was the signing over of defence property seized during the war to the state. Despite numerous court rulings, it took over nine years for any progress to be made on this issue, and it remains largely unresolved at the time of writing. Furthermore, many other security and defence matters continue to threaten the stability of BiH. In 2017, for example, Bosnian Serb soldiers participated in a parade celebrating the formation of the Bosnian Serb entity in BiH, Republika Srpska (RS), in defiance of a Bosnian government declaration that such action was unconstitutional.[8] More recently, RS President Milorad Dodik called for Bosnian Serb troops to wear their old wartime uniforms during ceremonies, rather than the current uniforms inspired by those worn in the US military.[9] Furthermore, recent estimates suggest that the RS administration has built up an arsenal of weaponry, largely imported from Russia, including enough automatic rifles to arm 'roughly 75 percent of its [5,238-strong] police with Kalashnikov-type firearms,' and is even rumoured to have

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[5] Maj. Kurt Rauschenberg. "Bosnia and Herzegovina armed forces celebrate Armed Forces Day, marking 13 years of unified military." *U.S. Army News.* (01/12/2018)
[6] British Embassy Sarajevo. "Best and Brightest Required to Lead the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina." *UK Government Announcements.* (02/10/2013) Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/news/best-and-brightest-required-to-lead-the-armed-forces-of-bosnia-and-herzegovina
[7] Gregorian, interview with the author.
[8] Andrew Byrne. "Bosnian Serb forces take part in illegal 'statehood day' parade." *Financial Times.* (09/01/2017)
[9] Alan Crosby. "Bosnian Serb Leader's Call for Wartime Uniforms Tugs at Bosnia's Nationalist Threads." *Radio Free Europe.* (13/05/2019)

procured Igla 1-V anti-aircraft missiles.[10] Events and developments such as this indicate the extent to which the military remains a contentious topic in Bosnian politics, but also highlight the significance and symbolic importance of the unified OSBiH.

In order to properly illustrate how a multiethnic army was built in this evironment, this dissertation explores the military history of BiH from when it was a constituent republic of Yugoslavia to the formation of the OSBiH. Although volumes of literature (much of which is discussed in detail) has been published on the collapse of Yugoslavia, the war in BiH, and the post-Dayton reform process, the research presented in the following chapters constitutes the first work from a military perspective to assess these events as an integral whole. However, rather than focussing on battles and wars, this dissertation analyses the ways in which the five armies that developed in BiH between 1991 - 2006 approached the subject of identity.[11] In each case, the ethnic composition, structure, ideology, and educational initiatives of the military are assessed, along with the ceremonial and symbolic functions that its soldiers are expected to perform. With the history and organisational methods of the armies which preceded the OSBiH well established, the dissertation culminates with a detailed account of how they were pieced together to form a single, unified army. This final section includes not just an overview of the practical aspects of the defence reform and military integration process, but also builds on themes discussed throughout the dissertation to illustrate why the OSBiH was organised in the way it was and explain why this model was chosen.

This dissertation demonstrates that building a multiethnic military is a vital step of state-building in diverse societies, particularly after conflict. The case of BiH illustrates this process over the longue durée, and highlights the impact of conflict and international crisis management initiatives on such processes. In addition, this dissertation reveals the many ways in which the military has been employed, with varying degrees of success, to forge and consolidate national identities.

The first chapters of this dissertation provide the conceptual and historical context in which the findings of later chapters should be understood. Chapter One explores the themes that underpin the dissertation, including: state formation; civil-military relations; nation-building; nations and nationalism; military organisation; and multiethnic armed forces. It combines historical examples with theories drawn from a range of academic disciplines to illustrate the relationship between the state, the military, and identity. By doing so, the chapter not only provides definitions of such concepts, but also creates a lens through which the complex processes that represent the core of

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[10] Rauf Bajrović, Richard Kraemer, & Emir Suljagić. *Bosnia on the Chopping Block: The Potential for Violence and Steps to Prevent it.* (Philadelphia, 2018) p.6

[11] This figure excludes paramilitary formations, as well as the peacekeeping forces deployed by the UN, NATO, and EU.

this dissertation can be better understood. Furthermore, it outlines many of the challenges that those who hoped to build a multiethnic army in post-war BiH faced and establishes the historical context in which their efforts took place.

The framework established in Chapter One is then applied to two case studies. By examining the history of the Lebanese Army, Chapter Two provides an overview of how a multiethnic military was successfully created following a civil war. This serves to provide an example of how such armed forces have been organised, while also illustrating the challenges that a complex post-conflict environment creates for policymakers and military leaders. The second case study assesses the ways in which the British Army has overcome the challenge of forging a cohesive military from the diverse population that it serves. The study focusses on the origins and development of the regimental system, a method of military organisation that was adopted by the OSBiH upon its formation. Together, these two case studies establish templates of successful multiethnic militaries which are used to comparatively analyse the other armed forces discussed in the dissertation. Furthermore, they also establish two models which provide another lens through which the defence reform and military integration process in BiH can be better understood.

Chapter Three offers an analysis of the origins and development of the Yugoslav People's Army (*Jugoslovenska narodna armija,* JNA) and the territorial defence formations that supported it. This serves a number of key functions. Primarily, it provides vital context for understanding the war in BiH and the armies which fought in it. Indeed, all of the armies that fought in the war and later became components of the OSBiH drew many of their structures, units, and personnel from the Yugoslav defence establishment. Additionally, understanding how the multiethnic JNA was organised provides necessary context for understanding the decisions, outlooks, and political platforms that informed the creation of the OSBiH. Together, these three chapters serve to review existing literature, offer crucial context for understanding the Bosnian War, and provide the theoretical underpinning of the dissertation.

Chapters Four and Five focus on the conflict in BiH and the emergence of rival states and armies on Bosnian territory between 1991 and 1995. Chapter Four assesses the formation of RS and its military, the Army of Republika Srpska (*Vojska Republike Srpske*, VRS). As the army which inherited most equipment and personnel, as well as the structures of the JNA, particular consideration is given to the changes and continuity between the two. Furthermore, the chapter provides an account of how the VRS transitioned from an inclusive, multiethnic, and socialist military into a nominally monoethnic, nationalist army. Examining the VRS from this perspective not only offers many insights into its history, but also creates a new perspective from which to view the war. Chapter Five

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analyses the armies which, in 1992, fought for the Bosnian government: The Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (*Armija Republike Bosne i Hercegovine*, ARBiH) and the Croat Defence Council (*Hrvatsko vijeće obrane*, HVO). As well as charting the origins and development of these two armed forces and offering insights into the relationship between the two, this chapter focuses on the gradual evolution of the ARBiH from an inclusive and multiethnic force into a predominantly Bosnian Muslim army. As with Chapter Four, assessing the ARBiH and HVO in this way provides a fresh perception of the conflict. The three armies are assessed through the analysis of documents, testimonies, and recollections of key participants. The official journals of the ARBiH and the VRS, *Prva linija* (Front Line) and *Srpska vojska* (Serb Army) respectively, provide the core source base for these chapters. Both were established in the earliest days of the war, and report on developments within each army, offer interviews with leading political and military figures, and provide a fascinating insight into the conflict. Almost every senior commander (from all three armies) to survive the war published a memoir of some kind. The works of Rasim Delić, Jovan Divjak, Hasan Efendić, and Sefer Halilović from the ARBiH, Vinko Pandurević and Manojlo Milovanović from the VRS, and Slobodan Praljak of the HVO are considered, alongside publications by political figures from neighbouring countries and the international community.

Chapters Four and Five provide a detailed account of the history of the three component parts which would later form the OSBiH: the ARBiH, HVO, and VRS. With this context established, Chapter Six details political and military developments in BiH in the years following Dayton. It provides an account of how each army adapted to peace and offers detail on the major developments and events which informed the Bosnian security sector in this period, including the creation of the Army of the Federation (*Vojska federacije,* VF) of Bosnia and Herzegovina from the ARBiH and HVO. Furthermore, the chapter explores the relationships between the armies and the various administrations that governed them, detailing how each military responded to its political leaders and the ways in which such leaders utilised the armies to consolidate their bases of power. In addition, this chapter serves to set the scene for the events of 2002 – 2006 which culminated in the creation of the OSBiH.

The final chapter focusses on the political events, practical steps, and individual efforts which led to a multiethnic military being constructed in BiH. A central feature of the chapter is the Orao Affair, a political scandal which directly led to seismic changes in the governance and organisation of the security sector in BiH and proved to be a catalyst for defence reform and ultimately military unification. Indeed, such was the impact of the scandal that a dedicated article, based on preliminary research for this dissertation, was published in February 2018 in the *Journal of Slavic Military Studies*

on the topic.[12] The chapter also considers the organisation and structure of the OSBiH by drawing on many of the concepts and models discusses throughout the dissertation. This significant period of Bosnian history is severely under-reasearched, making the contribution that this chapter in particular offers the field to be particularly significant.

Sources

A meaningful investigation into the complex topics described in the chapter outlines required idenifying and analysing a broad base of source material, as well as developing a nuanced and sophisticated understanding of the society and history of BiH and the former Yugoslavia. Furthermore, while many sources (particularly those produced after the war) have been published in English, much of the material upon which this study is based only exists in its original language and can only be found in the region. As a result, to best conduct the research for this dissertation, I lived in Sarajevo for over two years and travelled extensively throughout former Yugoslavia. By doing so, I became acquainted with the people, culture, and history of the area, learned the local language, and conducted extensive archival research in BiH and Serbia. At the National and University Library of Bosnia and Herzegovina, I uncovered the official journals of the various the armed forces and the memoirs of a broad range of Bosnian military and political figures, as well as extensive newspaper and media records from some of the key events discussed in this dissertation. The National Library in Belgrade offered access to a considerable collection of specialist books and documents. Many are first hand accounts and memoirs written by former military personnel and politicians, while others represent the research of leading scholars from the region.

The source material acquired in Belgrade and Sarajevo provides the foundation of this dissertation. This base has been built on using material gathered from numerous other sources. The interview transcripts of the 1995 BBC documentary, *The Death of Yugoslavia*, held at the Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives at King's College London, proved to be an invaluable resource. The collection includes extensive interviews with almost every major diplomatic, military, and political figure involved in the conflict, to the extent that many were used as evidence by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY). These transcripts provided many significant insights for my work. Furthermore, I gathered additional useful material from the US Army Center for Military History in Washington, DC. The After-Action Reports and transcribed oral history testimonies produced by US personnel serving in IFOR and SFOR, the NATO peacekeeping forces deployed to BiH after the war, provide a fascinating perspective of the armed forces in BiH. This selection of archival

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[12] Elliot Short. "The Orao Affair: The Key to Military Integration in Post-Dayton Bosnia and Herzegovina." *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 1. (2018)

material was also strengthened further with numerous books I was able to acquire from shops, collectors, and friends across the region.

After the war, an extensive range of intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations began working in BiH. The EU, NATO, OSCE, and UN, for example, all maintained missions which focussed on upholding peace and driving the recovery from conflict, while countless NGOs led projects and researched various aspects of BiH's transition from war. The reports, publications, and other records produced by such organisations, particularly those that operated in the security sector, provide this dissertation with an additional selection of excellent source material. Of note are the assessments and analysis offered by peacekeepers who were deployed to BiH, as their expertise and unique perspectives on the conflict and its aftermath are particularly insightful to this dissertation. Documents such as this are supplemented by similar reports and publications produced by various institutions of the Bosnian government, the OSBiH itself, as well as government departments of numerous other states.

An additional source of material comes from the trials of the ICTY. The witness testimonies, legal assessments, and verdicts of the Tribunal provide a wealth of information and insights into the war in BiH and the armies which fought it. The efforts of prosecutors to prove the link between the VRS and Belgrade in particular are useful, as the details of such secretive initiatives may otherwise have been lost. Instead, the work of the ICTY offers detailed first-hand accounts from individuals who participated in the conflict at every level, as well as expert assessments of the key events of conflict.

The greatest strength of this dissertation, however, is the material gathered from "elite interviews" with individuals involved in the events and developments relevant to this thesis, including the construction of the OSBiH.[13] These include Paddy Ashdown, who served as High Representative in BiH from May 2002 until January 2006. In this time, he was responsible for overseeing the governance of BiH and ensuring the terms of the DPA were adhered to, making him the most politically powerful individual in the country. Furthermore, the construction of the OSBiH was, for the most part, the result of his ambition and vision. However, Ashdown had little involvement in the practical and technical aspects of the reform process. Much of this was done by NATO officials working alongside Bosnian politicians and military personnel. One of the most significant NATO figures involved in this process was Raffi Gregorian, who Co-Chaired the Defence Reform Commission which designed the OSBiH and created a plan for its construction. Gregorian was assisted in his work by Rohan Maxwell, who now serves as NATO's Senior Politico-Military Advisor in

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[13] Elite interviews target people directly involved in the political process. Glen Beamer. "Elite Interviews and State Politics Research." *State Politics and Policy Quarterly*, Vol. 2, No. 1. (2002) p.87

BiH. Maxwell was responsible for developing a model of military organisation that was affordable, practical, and most importantly, acceptable to Bosnian politicians of all parties. The perspectives and insights I gained by interviewing such figures were complimented further by lengthy conversations I held with a range of Bosnian politicians and international military personnel and officials.

My sense of the history and political context in which the reform process took place was further informed by the time I spent working for a Bosnian non-governmental organisation that works alongside a host of international bodies, the Centre for Security Studies (CSS). While working there, I was able to discuss the recent military history of BiH with the staff of the country's leading civil-society organisation dedicated to researching and scrutinising security policy. Furthermore, by assisting in a number of projects that CSS were developing, as well as writing reports of my own, I became familiar with the practical implications of the military integration process. I also participated in, and later contributed to, the International Peace and Security Institute's Symposium on Post-Conflict Transitions that was held in Ilidža in 2017 and 2018. This proved to be an excellent opportunity to meet a broad range of scholars, students, peacebuilding practitioners, and military personnel from around the world (including BiH) with experience in researching or delivering processes such as defence reform in post-war BiH.

The initial findings of this study have been presented for scrutiny and discussion in a range of academic articles, media publications, and conference papers.[14] These have served as barometers to measure the progress of my research and have allowed me to refine the analysis and observations contained in this dissertation. As a result, it represents a considered and balanced exploration of the process of building a multiethnic military in post-Yugoslav BiH, and offers fresh insights into the complex dynamic between the state, the military, and identity in the former Yugoslavia.

Literature and Definitions

A wealth of literature has been produced which explores various aspects of the Bosnian War, the DPA, and post-Dayton BiH. The US Central Intelligence Agency's Office of Russian and European Analysis published *Balkan Battlegrounds*, an unclassified treatise based on the Agency's tracking of the conflict, in 2002.[15] It remains the most comprehensive strategic analysis of the conflicts in BiH and the wider region during the 1990s, and also provides insights into key political developments

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[14] These include regular attendance at the British Association of Slavonic and Eastern European Studies' annual conference at Cambridge University, a trip to the Association of East European and Eurasian Studies conference in Chicago, as well as presentations given at Uppsala University, the Royal Danish Defence College, and the Sarajevo School of Science and Technology.
[15] Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Russian and European Analysis. *Balkan Battlegrounds: A Military History of the Yugoslav Conflict, 1990-1995.* (Washington, DC, 2002)

that affected military aspects of the conflict. A more refined evaluation of these developments, however, is presented in James Gow's *The Serbian Project and its Adversaries*. Based on research conducted for trials at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), Gow's work provides an authoritative account of the complex machinations and key events that brought about the collapse of Yugoslavia and illustrates the complex dynamics of power and influence which guided the conflicts.[16] Marko Attila Hoare's *How Bosnia Armed* offers a detailed study of how the Bosnian government, facing an international arms embargo and a much more powerful foe, managed to raise and equip an army during the war.[17] In addition, considerable volumes have been published by participants and witnesses of the Bosnian War. Indeed, most major political and military leaders from BiH and beyond involved in the conflict have published diaries, memoirs, or studies of aspects of the conflict. Some of the most insightful contemporary accounts, however, come from observers rather than participants. War correspondent Anthony Loyd, for example, was in BiH for most of the conflict, and the reflections he offers in *My War Gone By, I Miss It So* portray many complexities of the war that are often overlooked in such accounts, particularly the trials and tribulations of ordinary people.[18] The head of the European Community Monitoring Mission deployed to wartime BiH, Colm Doyle, provides a similarly insightful commentary on political developments in the first years of the conflict based on his observations from meetings and investigations as a peacekeeper.[19]

Considerable scholarship has focussed on the DPA and its implementation. Many of the facilitators and signatories of the Agreement produced publications which illustrate their perspective on events, while the implementation of the agreement has been analysed by countless political scientists and NGOs.[20] Christopher Bennett's *Bosnia's Paralysed Peace* offers the most comprehensive analysis of the efforts to stabilise BiH in this period.[21] Post-war defence reform has been the subject of more

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[16] James Gow. *The Serbian Project and its Adversaries: A Strategy of War Crimes.* (London, 2003); Gow has also produced numerous other relevant works, including: James Gow. *The Triumph of the Lack of Will: International Diplomacy and the Yugoslav War.* (London, 1997) and James Gow. *Legitimacy and the Military: The Yugoslav Crisis.* (London, 1992)

[17] Marko Attila Hoare. *How Bosnia Armed.* (London, 2004); Hoare has also written on the development of civil-military relations in the ARBiH: Marko Attila Hoare. "Civil-Military Relations in Bosnia-Herzegovina 1992-1995." In Branka Magaš & Ivo Zanić, eds. *The War in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina 1991-1995.* (London, 2013)

[18] Anthony Loyd. *My War Gone By, I Miss It So.* (London, 2000)

[19] Colm Doyle. *Witness to War Crimes: The Memoirs of a Peacekeeper in Bosnia.* (Barnsley, 2018)

[20] The Peace Implementation Council and the Office of the High Representative were both established to monitor and assist with the implementation of the DPA, and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation were mandated to oversee certain provisions of the Agreement. The United Nations Development Program, the World Bank, and the International Crisis Group also established missions designed to monitor or assist BiH in its transition from conflict. All published reports and analysis on the situation in BiH. Florian Bieber and Sumantra Bose are the most prolific political analysts of the implementation of Dayton, and their relevant publications are listed in the bibliography.

[21] Christopher Bennett. *Bosnia's Paralysed Peace.* (London, 2016)

focused studies, with *Destination NATO: Defence Reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina*, written by Rohan Maxwell and John Andreas Olsen, providing the most detailed account of this process.[22] An excellent overview is also offered in *Military Integration After Civil Wars*, in which Florence Gaub examines the case of BiH alongside other examples of post-conflict defence reform.[23]

This dissertation navigates these established works, drawing on many key ideas and observations. However, none of the existing literature considers the military history of BiH in the timeframe presented in these chapters, nor do they investigate the impact that armed forces had on the creation and development of states and identity as Yugoslavia collapsed. In addition, the research presented in the final chapters of this dissertation represents previously unexplored territory for historians and provides vital insights for anyone wishing to understand the contemporary military situation in BiH. It is in these areas that this dissertation makes a unique and valuable contribution to the field.

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[22] Rohan Maxwell & John Andreas Olsen. *Destination NATO: Defence Reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2003-2013.* (London, 2013); Maxwell has also published an insightful chapter on the subject in Rohan Maxwell. "Bosnia-Herzegovina: From Three Armies to One." in Roy Licklider, ed. *New Armies From Old: Merging Competing Military Forces After Civil Wars*.Washington, DC, 2014)

[23] Florence Gaub. *Military Integration After Civil Wars: Multiethnic Armies, Identity and Post-Conflict Reconstruction.* (London, 2011)

Chapter One: The State, Identity, and the Military

The dynamic between the state, identity, and the military is complex and subject to influence from an immeasurable array of factors. The military occupies an intermediary position between the state and society, serving as an instrument of power for the former whilst being drawn from the latter, and as a result it represents a significant connection between the two. Furthermore, the military is embedded with the heritage of the society it serves, the national narratives of which are often mythologised histories of the military's exploits. Tasked with the solemn duty of defending the territory, integrity, and population of a state, the military is an institution dependent on cohesion and unity to serve its purpose. In almost every case, however, a society is composed of numerous groups which may not be inclined to form united and cohesive institutions, nor to stand shoulder-to-shoulder for a common cause. This chapter provides an overview of the key developments of the relationship between the state and the military, explores the interaction between identity and the military, and culminates with an analysis of the dynamic between these three concepts.

Civil-Military Relations

Sociologist Charles Tilly famously stated that 'war made states, and vice versa.' He argues that as Europe emerged from the middle ages, rulers gradually consolidated the 'coercive means' at their disposal at the expense of the populations under their control (which they disarmed) and any rival powerholders (whose armies they abolished). Once coercive means have been established within a given territory, a ruler gains a multiplicity of advantages (money, goods, etc), which they then attempt to protect and extend. In order to protect and extend their territories, standing armies developed, which, Tilly argues, generated the structures of a state.

> It did so both because an army became a significant organisation within the state and because its construction and maintenance brought complementary organisations – treasuries, supply services, mechanisms for conscription, tax bureaux, and much more – into life.'[1]

Over time, such a model had to be adopted by more rulers, as failing to do so would result in defeat, and so 'war wove the European network of national states, and preparations for war created the international structures within it.'[2] According to Tilly's theory, the origins of the modern state and

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[1] Charles Tilly. *Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990 – 1990.* (Blackwell, 1992) pp.70-71
[2] Ibid. p.76

the modern military are wholly intertwined, with one existing in order to facilitate the other. By such logic, it should be argued that the state made the military, and vice versa.

Max Weber, who ruminated on the nature of the state long before Tilly, defined the state as a 'compulsory political association with continuous organisation' whose 'administrative staff successfully upholds a claim to the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force.'[3] In other words, as Francis Fukuyama would later postulate, 'the essence of stateness is enforcement: the ability, ultimately, to send someone with a uniform and a gun to force people to comply with the state's laws.'[4] Whilst a state represents the source of authority within a given territory, it requires power to implement its will and enforce its laws. Armies typify the ultimate expression of power, coercion, and as a result their relationship with whom they serve and to what they owe their loyalty represents a challenging dilemma. A state requires an army for protection and, in the case that the civilian police are unable to fulfil its duties, the enforcement of laws. An army, however, because of its monopoly on the tools of violence, also presents a threat to the state.

The involvement of the military in matters of state has historically been labelled as 'Praetorianism' after the Praetorian Guard of the Roman Empire. Initially established as a personal bodyguard of Emperor Augustus, the Praetorians possessed a monopoly on the use of force within the city of Rome, which offered them significant power and influence. They became infamous for assassinating Emperor Caligula and replacing him with Claudius, but would continue to "participate" in politics in this manner for centuries. Samuel Huntington, when considering contemporary 'praetorian societies,' proposed that three models of military involvement in society can be identified: Oligarchic, in which political participation is limited to dominant social forces such as landowners, the clergy, and the military, which is incorporated into governing structures; Middle-class radical, in which the oligarchic regime has been overthrown and the military offers stability, the inclusion of the middle-class in political participation, and the enforced demobilisation of other political elements; and Mass, in which there is mass participation in politics and the military acts as a 'guardian' of the middle-class, serving to 'block the lower classes from scaling the heights of political power.'[5] Whilst his analysis is largely limited to Latin America, and defines the political actions of other institutions (the clergy and civil service, etc) as praetorian, it does provide a framework for understanding military involvement in state governance. Eric Nordlinger offers a more precise definition of praetorianism in contemporary societies, which is limited to military participation:

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[3] Max Weber. *The Theory of Social and Economic Organisation.* (A.M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons, trans) (Oxford, 1947) p.154

[4] Francis Fukuyama. "The Imperative of State-Building." in *Journal of Democracy,* Vol. 15, No. 2. (2004) p.21

[5] Samuel Huntington. *Political Order in Changing Societies.* (Yale, 1968) pp.201-2

'Praetorianism refers to a situation in which military officers are major or predominant political actors by virtue of their actual or threatened use of force.'[6]

The quandary of how to ensure the military is effective enough to enforce the state's will without it becoming prone to praetorianism has historically been illustrated by the question "Who will guard the guardians?" (*Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?*), first posited by the Roman satirist Juvenal.[7] Indeed, that people with guns freely subordinate themselves to people without guns is counter-intuitive, as Samuel Finer suggests:

> Instead of asking why the military engage in politics, we ought surely to ask why they ever do otherwise. For at first sight the political advantages of the military vis-a-vis other civilian groupings are overwhelming. The military possess vastly superior organisation. And they possess arms.[8]

Various traditions, circumstances, and conventions can explain why a military may not become involved in politics. However ultimately the disinclination of an armed group to seize power can only be explained by loyalty, either to an individual, a state or an idea. To be efficient and effective fighting forces armies must share a common loyalty to one of these focus points. However, as individuals die, states fail, and ideas are shunned, an army can be left in a position in which it owes loyalty to nothing. In such a situation, an army may seize power from those it was protecting and create a new focus for loyalty, or it can splinter as its composite elements replace their shared loyalty with divergent loyalties to other individuals, states or ideas. As a result, the question of how to build a cohesive army to serve the state effectively, yet not threaten the state itself, has been the subject of debate among leaders, generals and thinkers for the course of recorded history.

Many of the city-states of ancient Greece were fully aware of the threat the military posed to their fledgling republics. In order to ensure their armies reflected their civic values, and to prevent them from attaining too much power, the ideal of the citizen-soldier was advocated. The citizen-soldier represents two key pillars upon which the legacy of the Hellenic World was built: military service and civic participation. Claire Snyder argues that 'citizen-soldiers serve in the military in order to protect their ability to govern themselves for the common good, and they participate in the process of deciding when to engage in war. Both halves of the ideal are equally important.'[9] Central to this

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[6] Eric Nordlinger. *Soldiers in Politics: Military Coups and Governments.* (Upper Saddle River, 1977) p.3
[7] In the original context "Who will guard the guardians?" was used to show the impossibility of imposing a moral code on women. Juvenal. *Thirteen Satires of Juvenal, Volume 1*. (John Mayor, trans) (Cambridge, 2010) Satire 6.
[8] Samuel Finer. *The Man on Horseback: The Role of the Military in Politics.* (London, 1962) p.5
[9] Claire Snyder. *Citizen-Soldiers and Manly Warriors: Military Service and Gender in the Civic Republican Tradition.* (London, 1999) p.1

model of preventing praetorianism is the investment the soldiers have, as individual citizens, in the state they serve. Indeed, the citizen-soldier's commitment to civic participation precludes the need for the military to become involved in the state, because the boundary between the state and the military does not exist. Every (male) citizen is responsible for both the state and the military, and is guided through decisions via a set of principles, including 'liberty, equality, camaraderie, the rule of law, the common good, civic virtue, and participatory citizenship.'[10]

The armies of the Roman Republic were modelled on the concept of the citizen-soldier, and with them Rome conquered much of the Mediterranean coast and established a sizeable empire. However, restricting military service to citizens with a certain amount of wealth led to frequent manpower shortages, which were addressed in 107 BC by sweeping reforms. Rather than military service being the civic right and duty of a few enfranchised wealthy classes, the new armies of Rome would be formed from the whole spectrum of society, who would serve in exchange for a plot of land at the end of their service.[11] This contract between land-ownership and military service would come to dominate the relationship between the military and the state across most of the former Roman Empire for centuries. In medieval Europe, armies were formed from companies of mercenaries and troops supplied by vassals, who were obligated to supply a certain number to their monarch or tenant-in-chief in exchange for the fiefdom they controlled.[12] Thus, militarily, feudalism can be explained by the following model: 'a free man, the feudal lord, gave another free man, the vassal, a fief, which could be a piece of land, a post, or any other asset. The vassal in return committed himself to be obedient and loyal.'[13] Under feudalism, the state – to be understood as the ruling aristocracy – also represented the most significant elements of the military, and is protected from the rest by the highly stratified, hierarchical society in which it operates. Whilst many peasants were mobilised from time to time, any armies they formed to challenge the state 'were subjugated by an aristocracy of mounted warriors that became more powerful than any central institution and increasingly appropriated the jurisdiction over the peasants.'[14] In this manner, a select group of individuals were again entrusted with both the state and the military, although this model of military service partnered with land ownership rather than civic participation.

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[10] Ibid. pp.1-2

[11] Christopher Anthony Matthew. *On the Wings of Eagles: The Reforms of Gaius Marius and the Creation of Rome's First Professional Soldiers.* (Newcastle, 2010) p.26

[12] Ian Heath. *Armies of Feudal Europe 1066 – 1300.* (Cambridge, 2006) p.12

[13] Stefan Burkhardt. "Feudalism in Europe." In Clifford Rogers, ed. *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Medieval Warfare and Military Technology,* Vol. 1*.* (Oxford, 2010) p.44

[14] Rene Barendse. "The Feudal Mutation: Military and Economic Transformations of the Ethnosphere in the Tenth to Thirteenth Centuries." *Journal of World History,* Vol. 14, No. 4. (2003) p.511

Over time, however, levy troops raised from fiefs of land lacked the training and equipment to be of much military worth. Furthermore, the value of land as a source of wealth diminished in comparison to material goods, trade, and currency, and as a result, armies came to be increasingly composed of mercenaries, particularly in areas in which feudalism did not fully develop, such as Italy. The rise of mercenary armies was considered by Niccolo Machiavelli in the sixteenth century, who wrote that 'these foreign soldiers are more likely to harm the public good than are one's own men.'[15] He observed that 'there exists no more dangerous sort of infantry than one composed of men who make war their profession, since you are forced either to make war constantly and repeatedly pay these men, or run the risk that they will take your kingdom from you.'[16] Inspired by the legions of Rome and their 'true and perfect antiquity,' Machiavelli concludes that 'one cannot build one's foundation on forces other than one's own' and advocates a return to a military composed solely of the citizens of the state.[17]

The New Model Army of the English Civil War (1642-51) represented a revolutionary step forward in terms of the relationship between state and military. The Army was composed of full-time soldiers rather than militiamen or levies, and was free to be deployed anywhere as it had no ties to garrisons. It was financed by a combination of taxes and loans offered by the merchants of the City of London, boasted high levels of discipline and, as it was essentially meritocratic after 1644, officers were professional soldiers who did not have seats in Parliament.[18] In terms of its structure, organisation, financing, and, most importantly, its separation from political authority, the New Model Army was an unprecedented development. Parliament would utilise the power of its new army to consolidate its control of the entire British Isles, acquire additional colonies abroad, and establish a bridgehead on the European continent.[19] A leading General, Oliver Cromwell, would ultimately use his influence to seize power, however the principle of the state possessing a standing army financed by the population (rather than an array of small armies financed and commanded by aristocrats), 'wholly under the control of Parliament rather than the many competing local interests,' established the prevailing model of the modern military – and the modern state as understood by Tilly and Weber.

The following century witnessed another revolutionary development in the relationship between the state and the military. Carl von Clausewitz, a Prussian general and military theorist of the Napoleonic era, examined war as a science. In his posthumously published treatise *On War* he famously stated

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[15] Niccolo Machiavelli. *The Art of War.* (P. Bondanella and M. Musa, trans) (London, 1995) p.8
[16] Ibid. p.19
[17] Ibid. p.34
[18] Ian Roy. "Towards the Standing Army 1485-1660." in David G. Chandler & Ian Beckett, eds. *The Oxford History of the British Army.* (Oxford, 1994) pp.43-5
[19] Ibid.

that 'war is nothing more than a continuation of political intercourse,' describing it simply as 'an act of violence intended to compel our opponent to fulfil our will.'[20] In addition, Clausewitz viewed the soldier in simple terms, claiming that 'the soldier is levied, clothed, armed, exercised, he sleeps, eats, drinks, and marches, all merely to fight at the right time and place.'[21] His thinking epitomised the new principles that would come to govern political and military thinking during the Enlightenment. Viewed in an abstract manner, war was explained as nothing more than an instrument of policy, and therefore, in order to achieve that policy, war without limit can be utilised. Applying such abstract ideas practically heralded the emergence of the principle of "Total War" and the mobilisation of the entire country in pursuit of victory. As Clausewitz himself observed, 'instead of governments and armies as heretofore, the full nation was thrown into the balance.'[22]

The modern study of the relationship between the military and the state began with Huntington's *The Soldier and the State,* published in 1957. He not only laid the foundation of modern civil-military relations discourse (the discussion regarding the relationship between civil society and the military established to protect it), but also raised questions regarding what it meant to be a military professional, how a military should be organised, and what its relationship with the state should be. Huntington posits that 'the cleavage between the military and civilian spheres and the resulting tension between the two are phenomena of distinctly recent origin,' suggesting the Napoleonic Wars as the genesis of such issues.[23] He proposes that the key to preventing military involvement in politics is to create a professional military class, over which objective military control is achieved by 'militarizing the military, making them the tool of the state.'[24] He views a professional officer as someone 'who pursues a "higher calling" in the service of society,' defining their professionalism as being earned through expertise, responsibility and corporateness.[25] The key task of an officer, therefore, is limited to the 'management of violence,' a phrase first used by the political scientist Harold Lasswell.[26] Furthermore, the function of a professional military force is deemed to be nothing more than achieving 'successful armed combat.'[27] This definition is expanded by Anthony Forster, Timothy Edmunds, and Andrew Cottey, who state that professional armed forces are those which:

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[20] Carl von Clausewitz. *On War.* (J.J. Graham and F.N Maude, trans) (Ware, 1997) p.357, p.5
[21] Ibid. p.33
[22] Ibid. p.592
[23] Samuel Huntington. *The Soldier and the Changing State.* (Oxford, 1970) p.20
[24] Ibid. p.83
[25] Ibid. pp.8-10
[26] Huntington. *The Soldier and the Changing State.* p.5; Harold Lasswell. "The Garrison State." *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 46, No. 4 (1941)
[27] Huntington. *The Soldier and the Changing State.* p.11

Accept that their role is to fulfil the demands of the civilian government of the state and are capable of undertaking military activities in an effective and efficient way, and whose organisation and internal structures reflect these assumptions.[28]

Huntington suggests that 'the inherent quality of a military body can only be evaluated in terms of independent military standards. The ends for which the military is employed, however, are outside its competence to judge.'[29] Such thinking clearly disabuses the military of any role or accountability in the social and political aspects of the society which it serves. This detachment of the military from responsibility is the result of one key assumption, summarised by Thomas-Durrell Young:

There are key requisites, however, that legitimate the use of force and violence by a soldier in a democracy: force and violence are employed only in a rational way, for a public purpose and with public consent.[30]

Kees Koonings and Dirk Kruijt posit a division between 'political' and 'non-political' armies. They define 'political' armies as 'those institutions that consider involvement in – or control over – domestic politics and the business of government to be a central part of their legitimate function.'[31] By such a description, those militaries which conform to Huntington's definition of a professional military are, or strive to be, non-political. Koonings and Krujt do note, however, that the 'non-political' military should be seen as the exception,

although a powerful one because it has turned into the dominant paradigm in North America, Western Europe, Japan, and to a certain degree also in the former Soviet Union, China, and most of the formerly communist countries of Eastern Europe.[32]

The conceptual framework offered thus far laid the foundations for understanding of the relationship between the state and the military in Western Europe, North America, and a number of other states. Following the Second World War, this consensus was manifested by the creation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). Although NATO was, and remains, primarily a defensive alliance between like-minded states, membership requires a particular model of civil-military

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[28] Anthony Forster, Timothy Edmunds, & Andrew Cottey. "The Professionalisation of Armed Forces in Postcommunist Europe." in Anthony Forster, Timothy Edmunds, & Andrew Cottey, eds. *The Challenge of Military Reform in Postcommunist Europe: Building Professional Armed Forces.* (Basingstoke, 2002) p.6
[29] Ibid. p.57
[30] Thomas-Durrell Young. "Military Professionalism in a Democracy." in Thomas Bruneau & Scott Tollefson, eds. *Who Guards the Guardians and How: Democratic Civil-Military Relations.* (College Station, 2006) p.17
[31] Kees Koonings & Dirk Krujt. "Introduction." in Kees Koonings & Dirk Krujt, eds. *Political Armies: The Military and Nation Building in the Age of Democracy.* (London, 2002) p.1
[32] Ibid.

relations to be established. Willem Van Eekelen defines the democratic institutions demanded by NATO thus:

> First of all, the existence of a constitution or basic law clearly defining: The relationship between president, government, parliament and the military; the checks and balances applying to this relationship, including the role of the judiciary; who commands the military; who promotes military personnel; who holds emergency powers in a crisis; and where the authority lies for the transition from peace to war. Second, there should be political oversight of the military. This should be done in two ways: by means of democratic political control over the General Staff through the defence ministry – which includes a civilian component – and which itself is subject to parliamentary control, especially concerning the budget. Third, the military should maintain adequate levels of training and equipment in order to safeguard the independence and territorial integrity of the state, but also to prevent demoralisation and Bonapartism within the army.[33]

A model such as this is clearly predicated on the existence of a democratic state, a powerful parliament and judiciary, and an accountable government. While these methods of organisation were prevalent on either side of the Atlantic, they were either unattainable or undesired in much of the rest of the world.

In the many communist states that emerged throughout the twentieth century, for example, the military was rarely subject to such constitutional restrictions and democratic oversight. Indeed, as the Party and the military usually enjoyed a considerable overlap with regard to personnel, the senior military leadership was integrated into the mechanisms and structures of political power in many cases. In 1978, Dale R. Herspring and Ivan Volgyes published a collaborative volume representing the first attempt to conceptualise the civil-military relations of communist states.[34] Roman Kolkowicz offers an analysis in the same vein as Huntington, noting that officers in the Soviet military were 'essentially a conservative community of guildlike professionals.'[35] He argues that the military in the Soviet Union was 'both the mainstay of the regime and its principal rival for power,' observing that 'since the state makes no formal provision for the transfer of power, Party leaders have come to view organised groups and institutions as potential rivals and challengers.'[36] The

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[33] Willem Van Eekelen. "The Security Dimensions of European Integration and the Central-East European States." in Anton Bebler, ed. *Civil-Military Relations in Post-Communist States: Central and Eastern Europe in Transition.* (Santa Barbara, 1997) p.9

[34] Dale Herspring & Ivan Volgyes, eds. *Civil-Military Relations in Communist Systems.* (Boulder, 1978)

[35] Roman Kolkowicz. "Interest Groups in Soviet Politics: The Military." in Dale Herspring & Ivan Volgyes, eds. *Civil-Military Relations in Communist Systems.* (Boulder, 1978) p. 11

[36] Ibid. p.13

military, with the great power at its disposal, evidently represented the greatest threat. As a result, Kolkowicz claims, Party leaders were 'faced with the problem of how to control and, when necessary, to coerce the military without reducing its vigour, efficiency, and morale.'[37] Such an analysis is almost identical to Huntington's, something which Kolkowicz himself concedes, stating that the institutional characteristics of the Soviet military were 'those of all large professional establishments, regardless of their political-social environment.'[38] William Odom, who would become Director of the US National Security Agency, takes issue with Kolkowicz's argument, noting how the Party and the military shared a common outlook on issues such as economic decentralisation, intellectual dissent, the nationality question, political and economic liberalisation in Eastern Europe, and de-Stalinisation.[39] He also observes that the military was in fact an administrative arm of the Party, that most of the military elite were also Party members, and that many civil and military activities were interlinked in fields such as industry, education, and regional administrations.[40] Furthermore, Odom questions Huntington's definition of professionalism, arguing that the much of the expertise needed for a modern military has civilian counterparts, such as technical and medical professionals, and that 'one seldom finds a military establishment that is effectively bound by a comprehensive professional ethic.'[41]

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War ushered in a period of instability and change to the world, which was felt most keenly in Europe. States freshly unburdened by the bloc politics and ideological division that had defined Europe for almost half a century clamoured to adapt to new realities. The social, economic and political structures of many Central and Eastern European states were dismantled and replaced with the foundations of free-market democracies. However, amidst the turmoil, many old threats to stability that had been contained by the pressures of the Cold War were beginning to re-emerge. Separatism and religious radicalism, regional interstate rivalries, humanitarian crises, organised crime, and environmental concerns, compounded by political-economic instability, presented a challenge that not all states would be able to overcome. As new states emerged, and others began to crumble, the borders of Europe and the viability of many of its states came into question. With Communism cast out of Europe, their former leaders deposed, and their states in flux, the armies of Central and Eastern Europe, many of which

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[37] Ibid. p.12
[38] Ibid. p.13
[39] William Odom. "The Party-Military Connection: A Critique." from Dale Herspring & Ivan Volgyes, eds. *Civil-Military Relations in Communist Systems.* (Boulder, 1978) pp.32-33
[40] Ibid. p.42
[41] Ibid. p.35

had until recently been organised under the umbrella of the Warsaw Pact, were left in a precarious position.

Koonings and Kruijt hypothesise three scenarios for 'political armies' in the aftermath of the Cold War. First, the 'withering away scenario' in which the forces of liberalisation are strong enough to gradually but effectively push the military out of politics. Second, the 'institutionalised modification scenario,' in which, either through overt or covert means the military remains politically involved at some level, perhaps by identifying new threats or 'guiding democracy.' Thirdly, the 'perversion and corruption scenario,' in which the military is reluctant to yield power, and can develop into a rogue regime, or retain its respectability whilst sponsoring paramilitary actions in its political interests.[42]

Anton Bebler, discussing the actions of some of the newly independent states after the Cold War, notes how:

> The emancipation expressed itself in establishing in some states new national armies, introducing new uniforms, insignia and other symbols; in most states in reforming the previously existing military formations, revising the former postulates in conformity with new national security assessments and priorities, developing for the first time in history or after long decades of bloc politics true national defence doctrines, and so on.[43]

Defence reform measures such as these, which focussed on protecting state sovereignty and territorial integrity rather than strengthening the Warsaw Pact, were, however, limited to a select group of former communist states. A correlation can be identified between states which faced the least complex challenges following the collapse of the Eastern bloc, those with minimal religious or ethnic radicalism for example, and militaries which were able to implement reform and 'wither away' from politics. Jerzy Wiatr observes that in Poland, a country with a largely homogeneous population, the 'nascent democracy has not been endangered by the armed forces.' He continues, 'Polish officers are as loyal to the new democratic institutions as they were to the party-controlled Peoples Republic.'[44] Inversely, those states which proved unable to overcome the challenges presented by the end of the Cold War would see their legitimacy undermined, territorial integrity threatened, and their militaries entangled in politics. In Yugoslavia, the upheaval across Europe was

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[42] Kees Koonings & Dirk Kruijt. "Military Politics and the Mission of Nation Building." in Kees Koonings & Dirk Kruijt, eds. *Political Armies: The Military and Nation Building in the Age of Democracy.* (London, 2002) pp.31-2
[43] Anton Bebler. "The Regionwide Perspective on Post-Communist Civil-Military Relations." in Anton Bebler, ed. *Civil-Military Relations in Post-Communist States: Central and Eastern Europe in Transition.* (Santa Barbara, 1997) p.70
[44] Jerzy Wiatr. "Military Politics and Society in Poland during the Democratic Transition." in Anton Bebler, ed. *Civil-Military Relations in Post-Communist States: Central and Eastern Europe in Transition.* (Santa Barbara, 1997) p.77

met with demands for independence from three of its six constituent republics, dividing the loyalties of many soldiers who now found themselves torn between nation and state. The threats to the integrity of the state it was pledged to defend threatened the existence of the Yugoslav People's Army (*Jugoslovenska narodna armija,* JNA) itself. Under such circumstances, the JNA was easily coerced into acting on behalf of the strongest advocates of Yugoslav territorial integrity: the Serb leadership. During the crisis, the Serbs retained the option to form their own sovereign state. The JNA, however, had to either ensure the continuation of the state, or find a new one to serve. As a result, Miroslav Hadžić, a former JNA officer, records:

> The military commanders became dependent on the political will of the Serbian leaders. Thus, [Serbian President Slobodan] Milošević had an easy time putting the JNA in the front line of the battle for the Serbs' ethnic and state interests and goals, although they were quite changeable and elastic.[45]

With the unifying socialist ideology discredited and the state seemingly collapsing, the loyalty of the soldiers of the Yugoslav army splintered, with some finding new foci for their loyalty in their home republics and others with the rump Yugoslav regime in Belgrade. The JNA would ultimately collapse along with the Yugoslav state, with many of its soldiers becoming pawns of Milošević's project for a greater Serbia and others fighting their former comrades for independence within socialist era boundaries.

The end of the Cold War, the fall of communism in Europe, and the violent collapse of Yugoslavia heralded a new era of civil military relations. The mammoth bloc armies that had come to embody the Cold War, designed and organised to fight on an unprecedented scale across the plains of Europe, became immediately obsolete. Diane E. Davis observes:

> Even as a tentative peace settles in among previously contending geopolitical superpowers struggling over spheres of influence, those countries and regions that lay in the interstices of this larger power structure - and whose fates not that long ago seemed overdetermined by the economic or political competition between Cold War antagonists – are beginning to implode with greater frequency.[46]

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[45] Miroslav Hadžić. *The Yugoslav People's Agony: The role of the Yugoslav People's Agony.* (Farnham, 2002) p.108

[46] Diane Davis. "Contemporary Challenges and Historical Reflections on the Study of Militaries, States and Politics." in Diane Davis & Anthony Pereira, eds. *Irregular Armed Forces and Their Role in Politics and State Formation.* (Cambridge, 2003) p.1

This led to a 'revolution in military affairs,' and organisations such as NATO underwent a transformation both in purpose and application.[47] Lord Robertson, Secretary General of NATO (1999 – 2004), observed that after the Cold War 'we face different challenges and different missions – regional or civil wars, humanitarian emergencies, peacekeeping operations, and responding to terrorism and the use of weapons of mass destruction.'[48] In such operations, he notes, 'troops from Europe, North America, Africa, Latin America, and even Asia are operating under the same command' and 'interoperability is key.'[49]

His words illustrate a new direction for the relationship between a state and the military. Whilst multinational forces were nothing new, the institutionalisation and seeming permanence of them was. States within the Alliance pooled sovereignty, resources, and troops under non-state banners in order to achieve foreign policy goals outside of the territory of member-states. NATO, ostensibly founded as a military alliance, was no different, and became increasingly used as a tool of soft power to influence states and events outside of its territory, most significantly in the former Warsaw Pact states.[50] Thomas Bruneau contends that 'one of the biggest challenges to democratic consolidation and deepening has been to find the proper balance between the civilian and military sectors,' an equilibrium which 'is fundamental to the success of authentic democratic governance.' [51] Faced with such challenges during their respective transitions from socialist governance, most former-Warsaw Pact states were receptive to the advice, training, and guidance that was increasingly offered by NATO. Zoltan Barany argues that in this period, 'promoting stability in non-NATO Europe – an effort that became linked with the Alliance's expansion – now became one of the key objectives of NATO.'[52] To catalyse the desired transition to democratic governance, the prospect of NATO membership was used to encourage the states of Eastern Europe to strengthen their democratic institutions and ultimately subscribe to the school of civil-military relations which had prevailed in Western Europe following the Second World War.

However, even as the model of an 'apolitical' military designed purely for 'successful armed combat' began to spread, many of its underlying assumptions were challenged. A series of civil wars broke out throughout the 1990s and 2000s. Many of them, such as those in Algeria, Burundi, and Nepal (to

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[47] Istvan Gyarmati & Theodor Winkler. "Defense Reform in the Trans-Atlantic Region: Lessons (Not) Learned." in Istvan Gyarmati & Theodor Winkler, eds. *Post-Cold War Defense Reform: Lessons Learned in Europe and the United States.* (Washington, DC, 2002) p.x
[48] Lord Roberston. "Foreword." In Gyarmati & Winkler, eds. *Post-Cold War Defense Reform.* p.vii
[49] Ibid. p.vii
[50] Formed in 1955, the Warsaw Pact was composed of Albania (until 1968), Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Romania, and the Soviet Union. It was formally dissolved in 1991.
[51] Thomas Bruneau. "Introduction." In Bruneau & Tollefson, eds. *Who Guards the Guardians and How.* p.1
[52] Zoltan Barany. *The Future of NATO Expansion: Four Case Studies.* (Cambridge, 2003) p.12

name but a few), were predicated on the rejection of the legitimacy of the state by a group within society. While an apolitical military might meet some success in combatting the unconventional tactics employed by such groups, there was little it could do to reinforce the state's legitimacy. Barany illustrates this point with an example of what can happen when a 'political' military employed, in part, to secure the legitimacy of state, is removed. On May 23, 2003, the Coalition Provisional Authority, the US-dominated transitional government, issued Authority Order No. 2, which disbanded the Iraqi Armed Forces in their entirety.[53] He notes:

> While the Ba'ath regime was uniformly hated in Kurdistan and amongst the population in southern Iraq, the military – a conscript army with a large proportion of Shia Muslim draftees and Sunni officers – had enjoyed considerable sympathy and respect in the rest of the country.[54]

The disbandment of the army left a 'security and public safety vacuum; produced a large pool of trained, armed humiliated, and desperate men for whom joining the anti-American insurgency became a logical choice; and destroyed the only national institution in a deeply divided society.'[55] The ensuing chaos has been well documented, but it can be stated that after over a decade of international efforts to rebuild a functioning state, the security situation has deteriorated to the point where the viability of the Iraqi has been brought into question. Davis notes that in many locations beset with socio-economic problems akin to Iraq:

> Specialized paramilitary forces and police now replace the national military on the front lines of violent conflict, while citizens arm themselves both offensively and defensively as vigilante groups, militias, terrorists, and even mafia organisations seeking to counteract or bypass the state's claim on a monopoly of legitimate force.[56]

The literature on civil-military relations reveals a complex and evolving field. However, until recent years, much of it erroneously assumes that both the 'civil' and 'military' facets of a society represent two monolithic and homogeneous pillars, with any tension, rivalry, or envy existing only between them. Whilst a professional identity may exist and even dominate many militaries, the assumption that it overrides all other identities or loyalties a soldier may have is unfounded. Odom challenges these assumptions, but perhaps most pertinently states that 'one finds that these [defence]

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[53] Zoltan Barany. *The Solider and the Changing State: Building Democratic Armies in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas.* (Princeton, 2012) p.1
[54] Ibid.
[55] Ibid.
[56] Davis. "Contemporary Challenges and Historical Reflections on the Study of Militaries, States and Politics." p.1

establishments are highly politicised institutions as diverse as the polities to which they belong. They are no easier to fit into a global model than the polities themselves.'[57] The argument that modern militaries are indeed 'highly politicised' and 'diverse' raises many questions which have not been addressed in civil-military relations literature, and are compounded by the example of Iraq, where the state lost all authority and legitimacy after the military was disbanded. The military had represented the only 'national institution in a deeply divided society,' one which collapsed without it.[58] This demonstrates the extent to which the role of the military goes beyond successful armed combat. Instead, the military can be seen to also act as a national institution which can unify the populations within, and provide legitimacy to, the state it serves. Thus, the questions of which groups should be included in the military, how they should be organised, and most importantly, what should be used to unify them to ensure the military remains cohesive and effective, become particularly significant.

Cohesion, Division, and the Nation

The relationship between identity and the military is as complex as that between the state and the military, however the dynamic can be divided into two themes: The impact which identity has on the military; and the impact the military has on identity. Identity poses a fundamental challenge to the military, as in order to be effective a military must be cohesive. However, as every society is composed of a multitude of identities (race, religion, ethnicity, class, and gender, to name a few), cohesion may be difficult to attain. Furthermore, the military can influence and even create identity by developing its own heritage and reputation, but also by serving as the focus of myths that are woven into a national narrative. The following section examines these interactions.

Ethnic identity must be understood as adaptable and fluid. Religion, race, occupation, heritage, culture, class, language, region, and many other identifying markers can be interpreted to demarcate ethnic boundaries. However, whilst one ethnic group may be identified from its neighbours by their religion, for example, another ethnic group may share a religion with their neighbours and be differentiated from them by language. Cynthia Enloe offers this concise definition of ethnicity: An ethnic group is, at root, a collectivity whose members share a belief in a common heritage which is, in turn, legitimated and sustained through cultural expression.'[59]

Echoes of Enloe's words can be identified in the work of Benedict Anderson, who just a few years later offered his infamous definition of the "nation." He states: 'it is an imagined political community

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[57] Ibid. p.36

[58] Barany. *The Solider and the Changing State.* p.1

[59] Cynthia Enloe. *Ethnic Soldiers: State Security in a Divided Society.* (London, 1980) p.8

– and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign.' He continues, elaborating that 'it is *imagined* [emphasis in original] because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.'[60] Eric Hobsbawm contends that whilst modern nations claim to be 'natural human communities' which are 'rooted in the remotest antiquity,' they are in fact composed of constructs such as 'fairly recent symbols' and 'suitably tailored discourse (such as "national history"),' and are therefore little more than the product of the 'invention of tradition.'[61] By such a definition, nationality, like ethnicity, becomes an extremely fluid concept, the boundaries of which can expand or contract, both spatially and temporally, based on how they are imagined. As a result, both ethnicity and nationality do not necessarily correlate to borders, and ethnic groups and nations may exist across multiple states. In the context of Yugoslavia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, an official lexicon developed which continues to inform the discussion around national identity to this day. The architects of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (*Socijalistička federativna Republika Jugoslavija*, SFRJ) utilised two designations for identity: *narod*, which translates to nation or people; and *narodnosti*, which means nationalities. In the framework of the SFRJ, the nations were represented by one of the constituent republics of the federation (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Slovenia) while the nationalities enjoyed no such associations with territory. The post-war Bosnian constitution established at Dayton shares much of its vocabulary with those of Yugoslavia, with Bosnian Croats, Muslims, and Serbs being referred to as constituent nations or peoples, and other nationalities (such as Jews and Roma) being described as Others.

Viewed through this lens, it becomes apparent that almost all militaries were and continue to be composed of myriad identities. Alon Peled observes:

> Throughout history, most military organisations have been multi-ethnic in nature, and this phenomenon is even more common in the post-soviet era. Most important, the fate of multi-ethnic armies is not sealed in advance for better or worse. In some cases, diverse ethnic groups have come together, fought bravely and defeated much more ethnically cohesive enemies. In other cases, armies have fallen apart from within or fallen apart on the battlefield.[62]

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[60] Benedict Anderson. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism.* (London, 2016) pp.5-6
[61] Eric Hobsbawm & Terence Ranger, eds. *The Invention of Tradition.* (Cambridge, 2010) p.14
[62] Alon Peled. *A Question of Loyalty: Military Manpower Policy in Multiethnic States.* (New York, 1998) p.xiii

Discussion of the composition of armies and the complications that can ensue can be traced back to the fifth century BCE. In one of the most famous passages from *The Histories*, Herodotus, viewed by many as the 'Father of History,' meticulously records the extensive panoply of groups serving in the army of the Persian Emperor Xerxes, to whom they owed a shared loyalty. The appearance of each group, or 'nation,' is recorded in great detail, with the symbols, attire, and equipment illustrating the array of people serving in Xerxes' army and showing that each group served in units defined by nationality.[63] Chinese general and strategist Sun Tzu, writing almost contemporaneously with Herodotus, instructs that a general 'having collected an army and concentrated his forces, he must blend and harmonise the different elements thereof.'[64] Further details of what this process entails are lacking, however it shows a consciousness of the potential problems in raising an army from 'different elements.' A lineal descendent of Sun Tzu, Sun Bin (sometimes referred to as Sun Tzu II), offers some additional thoughts on the topic, noting that without 'harmony among personnel... there is calamity even in victory.'[65] He advises that a leader should 'organise soldiers by homeland' and 'delegate authority to those who are leaders in their own localities.'[66]

The Roman Army of both the Republic and the Empire addressed the questions of who should serve and in what capacity in several ways. The main combat unit of the Roman Army was the legion, each of which was unique due to 'the standards and symbols on men's shields, as well...as other peculiarities of dress and routine.'[67] Despite these differences however, the legions were composed exclusively of Roman citizens, a status eventually given to all free people living within the Empire in an attempt to forge an identity that would transcend regional and religious identities. Alongside the citizen legions however, Rome also relied upon additional foreign troops, known as *foederati,* which were 'recruited from a single ethnic group, and often specializing in a particular fighting technique.'[68] The *foederati* increasingly came to dominate the Roman army, and would invariably serve in the name of Rome, but under the command of their own tribal leaders, in the manner described by Sun Bin.[69] However, Rome's increasing reliance on *foederati* troops led to its demise, and ultimately the leaders of *foederati* armies would carve the empire up for themselves.

The decision of whether to enlist subordinate or 'outside' groups into the military, such as the Romans did with the *foederati*, continues to torment military planners to the present day. Such a

[63] Herodotus. *The Histories.* (Aubrey De Selincourt, trans) (London, 2003) pp.439-45
[64] Sun Tzu. *The Art of War.* (Lionel Giles, trans) (Minneapolis, 2006) p.37
[65] Sun Tzu II. *The Lost Art of War.* (Thomas Cleary, trans) (San Francisco, 1997) p.47
[66] Ibid. p.73
[67] Adrian Goldsworthy. *The Complete Roman Army.* (London, 2003) p.50
[68] Ibid. p.204
[69] Ibid. p.208

quandary is referred to as the 'Trojan Horse dilemma,' and can be summarised in one simple question: If recruited, trained, and armed, will ethnic soldiers become loyal soldiers or dangerous saboteurs?[70] Ultimately it is this question which has dictated whether particular groups have been utilised, in various capacities and functions, by the military.

Many strategists and military thinkers, such as Clausewitz, assumed that the Trojan Horse dilemma had been addressed by the dawn of modernity. As Peled observes, 'in revolutionary France, the new ideas of nation, freedom, citizenship, and patriotism ended the tradition of military ethnic quotas and military manpower contracts between Emperors and ethnic leaders.'[71] Notions of citizenship, in which the state offers its populace membership, rights, and participation promised to erase the anachronistic and divisive identities of the past. 'French nationality was French citizenship: ethnicity, history, the language or patois spoken at home, were irrelevant to the definition of "the nation,"' observes Hobsbawm.[72] He also discusses the original understanding of "patriotism," and stipulates that the 'idea…was state-based rather than nationalist, since it related to sovereign people itself, i.e. to the state exercising power in its name. Ethnicity or other elements of historic continuity were irrelevant to 'the nation' in this sense.'[73] Such an interpretation of the nation, however, was based on the erroneous assumption that non-state identities were a pre-modern phenomenon that would not be able to function in an era of rapid social and technological change. It was this assumption which led Clausewitz to identify soldiers solely by their citizenship. However, pervasive non-state identities such as ethnicity and religion failed to succumb to modernity and continued to flourish throughout the nineteenth century. Indeed, it can be argued that such identities 'often acquire new vitality from precisely those aspects of modernity that were supposed to make them irrelevant – for example, from mass communications, industrialisation, elections, educated professionalised elites, urbanisation.'[74] A prime example were the Pontifical Zouaves raised by Pope Pius IX to defend papal lands during the tumultuous period prior to Italian unification. Pius, facing rebellion in Tuscany, issued a call for "Swords of the Cross" in March 1860.[75] In response, 20,000 men from across Europe and the Americas gathered, using modern communication and transport, under the ancient banner of the Holy See.[76] They employed modern military methods to fight a decade-long war in Italy and proved to be an effective force. What united them was not common citizenship, but a shared faith.

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[70] Peled. *A Question of Loyalty.* p.1
[71] Ibid. pp.17-8
[72] Eric Hobsbawm. *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality.* (Cambridge, 1992) p.88
[73] Ibid. p.87
[74] Peled. *A Question of Loyalty.* p.6
[75] Charles Coulombe. *The Pope's Legion: The Multinational Fighting Force that Defended the Vatican.* (Basingstoke, 2008) p.11
[76] Ibid. p.49

The longevity of non-state identities can be illustrated by events in France at the end of the century. In 1894 Captain Alfred Dreyfus, a member of the general staff of the French Army, was court-martialled for allegedly leaking intelligence documents to Germany.[77] He was found guilty, sentenced to life imprisonment, and exiled to French Guiana. It soon became apparent, however, that he had been wrongly convicted, and had in fact been framed. Brian Bond notes: 'As a cold, unsympathetic character, a wealthy industrialist's son and a Jew – the only one on the general staff – he was ideally cast for the role of traitor.'[78] Dreyfus had been selected as an easy and believable scapegoat due to his Alsatian and Jewish heritage, which separated him enough from French Catholicism to be blamed without tarnishing the 'honour of the army.'[79] The Dreyfus Affair illustrates how a 'modern' state could still question the loyalty of elements within it: if the ideas that had come to symbolise the state, *liberté, égalité, fraternité,* were to be shunned, or if the state itself were to fail, then 'other' groups, such as Alsatians or Jews, may divert their loyalty to something 'foreign' rather than something more familiar, such as French nationalism or Catholicism. Furthermore, it highlights the difficulties inherent in trying to create an army (and a state) in which ideology or citizenship acts as a unifying identity that precedes all others.

The coming of modernity and nationalism posed a particularly difficult challenge to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which was composed of soldiers of a multitude of identities. The "Common Army" was formed from soldiers of German, Hungarian, Czech, Slovak, Polish, Ruthene, Slovene, Croat, Serb, Romanian, and Italian heritage, a complexity compounded by an equally varied confessional diversity.[80] Istvan Deak argues that 'the nationality problem in the Hapsburg Monarchy was insoluble' and notes that on the eve of the First World War, of 329 independent units (regiments and specialist battalions), only 142 were made up of men who spoke the same language, 163 used two languages, and in 24 three or more languages were in use.[81] Whilst officers were compelled to learn the language of their soldiers for obvious practical reasons, little could be done by the Hapsburgs to accommodate its plethora of identities other than the continued use of the 'a-national dynastic ideology' of Empire and Monarchy. Any effort to cultivate democratic, federalist, or other representative values to reconcile differing identities would entail abandoning the dynastic loyalty and feudal ideology which held the army together. Deak observes that 'giving up these pre-modern values would have involved a surrender to nationalism, the very force that threatened the

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[77] Brian Bond. *War and Society in Europe 1870-1970.* (Stroud, 1998) p.60
[78] Ibid. p.60
[79] Ibid.
[80] Istvan Deak. "The Ethnic Questions in the Multinational Hapsburg Army, 1848-1918." in Nándor Dreisziger, ed. *Ethnic Armies: Polyethnic Armed Forces from the Time of the Hapsburgs to the Age of the Superpowers.* (Ontario, 1990) p.22
[81] Ibid.

existence of the Monarchy and, hence, the Army.'[82] The Common Army of the Hapsburgs would survive the battlefields of the First World War, but would disintegrate in the aftermath as its composite national groups found new states emerging in their name.

Throughout the twentieth century, political ideology served as a unifying agent to build cohesive armed forces out of diverse groups, just as religion had done in the previous century. In the Spanish Civil War, 35,000 people from across the world volunteered to serve under the banner of the International Brigades. [83] Formed by the Communist International to combat Francisco Franco's fascist forces, they were united by their belief in socialism rather than a shared homeland. The International Brigades were disbanded in 1938, and the following year the cause for which they fought, the Spanish Republic, fell to fascism. Just two years later, many of their former adversaries formed the Blue Division, a force in which 47,000 Spaniards served the cause of fascism as part of the German Wehrmacht.[84] Additional troops from Spain served in Waffen SS *Freiwilligen* (volunteer) regiments, along with men from across occupied Europe. Indeed, 'around half of the men that served in the Waffen SS during WWII were foreign (i.e. non-German) volunteers of conscripts.'[85]

The puzzle of how to fit multiple identities into a single army emerged as one of the greatest challenges faced by peace-builders during the surge of civil conflicts that followed the end of the Cold War. In such conflicts, identity replaced ideology as one of the main drivers of hostilities, and in many cases the question of who would serve in the post-war armed forces was key in ending hostilities. Roy Licklider observes that of the peace agreements negotiated since 1989, 'many…have, as a central component, provisions to merge competing armed groups in a single national army.'[86] The desire for integration is succinctly explained by Ronald Krebs and Licklider, who state:

> The intuition appears to be that a professional, communally representative force could allay vulnerable groups' security fears by serving as a credible signal of the governments' commitment to power sharing and by keeping communal or ideological compatriots under arms. Such a force could also provide a symbolic model for the political community, allowing all to identify with a larger national project.[87]

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[82] Ibid. p.46
[83] Anthony Beevor. *The Battle for Spain: The Spanish Civil War, 1936 – 1939.* (London, 2006) p.157
[84] Gerald Kleinfeld & Lewis Tambs. *Hitler's Spanish Legion: The Blue Division in Russia in WWII.* (Mechanicsburg, 2014) p.327
[85] Nigel Askey. *Operation Barbarossa: The Complete Organisational and Statistical Analysis, and Military Simulation, Vol. IIA.* (Lulu Publishing, 2013) p.568
[86] Roy Licklider. "Introduction" in Roy Licklider, ed*. New Armies from Old: Merging Competing Military Forces After Civil Wars.* (Washington, DC, 2014) p.1
[87] Ronald Krebs & Roy Licklider. "United They Fall: Why the International Community should not promote Military Integration after Civil War." *International Security,* Vol. 40, No. 3. (2015) p.94

New Armies from Old: Merging Competing Military Forces After Civil Wars, discusses the military integration of formerly warring groups in Rwanda, the Philippines, South Africa, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Sierra Leone, and Burundi. In all cases, it was reconciling the various identities that had become polarised by conflict that posed the greatest obstacle to efforts to military integration.[88]

Throughout history the diversity of most societies has consistently presented a dilemma to those trying to forge an effective military. It has influenced the structure and organisation of all armed forces, led countless military leaders to question the loyalty of their own soldiers, caused the disintegration of centuries-old armies, united soldiers from across the world under a single banner, and been the determining factor between war and peace. By using nationality, religion, and ideology, political and military leaders can rally armies to their cause. However, as the boundaries of such identities are fluid and the prominence of one may be superseded by another, they can become the cause of division and conflict within the military.

Armed forces are powerful institutions invested with considerable power and significant symbolic value. As a result, they exert a powerful influence of their own which can have a profound, if unintended, impact on the societies they serve. The military is the giver of the founding myths and gallant heroes of a national narrative, the protagonist in the historic trials the state has faced, and the clergy tasked with the sacred task of remembrance. Through these roles, the military becomes a *mythomoteur,* a generator of myths, and has a profound impact on identity. Anthony D. Smith, defined a nation as 'a named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members.'[89] He later refined his position, positing that a nation was 'a named community possessing an historic territory, shared myths and memories, a common public culture and common laws and customs.'[90] Constant to his definition is the importance of shared myths and memories to the formation of national identity. He would later argue that myths of sacrifice and war 'are particularly effective in creating the consciousness and sentiments of mutual dependence and exclusiveness, which reinforce the shared culture, memories and myths of common ancestry.'[91] John Hutchinson, discussing Smith's work, notes that warfare creates heroes and epochal events which

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[88] Roy Licklider, ed. *New Armies from Old: Merging Competing Military Forces After Civil Wars.*
[89] Anthony Smith. *National Identity.* (London, 1991) p.14
[90] Anthony Smith. "When is a Nation?" *Geopolitics,* Vol. 7, No. 2. (2002) p.15
[91] Anthony Smith. *Ethno-Symbolism and Nationalism.* (London, 2009) p.28

provide 'role models and reference points especially when taken up by poets, artists and writers who embed these in the collective consciousness.'[92]

Hutchinson observes that 'Smith conceives of the nation in Durkheimian terms as a sacred community that elicits mass sacrifice in its defence, although he observes that nationalism and its referent, the nation, combine both secular and "religious" qualities.'[93] Smith offers an example of this 'secular religion,' noting the 'many rituals and ceremonies of national remembrance for soldiers fallen in war "for their country."' He argues that at the collective level, such rituals and ceremonies serve as a 'grim and solemn reminder of communal fate, of the trauma and survival of the nation in the face of its enemies and of the repeated blood sacrifice of its youth to ensure the regeneration of the nation.'[94] Carolyn Marvin and David W. Ingle offer a further exploration of the idea of blood sacrifice. They argue that after enough blood has been sacrificed by a nation, 'the slate of internal hostilities is wiped clean. The group begins again. The external threat is met. Our bad feelings towards one another are purged.'[95] They also discuss the symbolic value placed on the U.S. flag, but argue it is the same for most state symbols:

> The flag in high patriotic ritual is treated with an awe and deference that marks it as the sacred object of the religion of patriotism. The flag is the skin of the totem ancestor held high. It represents the sacrificed bodies of its devotees just as the cross, the sacred object of Christianity, represents the body sacrificed to a Christian god.[96]

Marvin and Ingle's case can be illustrated most effectively if one considers the Flag Presentation at American military funerals. At such occasions, a ceremony is held in which the fallen soldier is interred, saluted, and then the flag which adorned the coffin is folded and given to their loved ones, recognising and symbolising the sacrifice they made for the nation. The lifespan of traumatic collective memories can be considerable as they are not only reinvigorated by ritual and ceremony, but also by pilgrimages to the sites of significant battles, war cemeteries, and museums. Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia and Mamayev Kurgan in Volgograd represent two such places that constitute the "holy sites" of the 'secular religion' of national identity, serving not just as sites to remember the fallen, but also as sombre reminders of sacrifices made on behalf of the nation,

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[92] John Hutchinson. "Warfare, Remembrance and National Identity." in Athena Leoussi and Steven Grosby, eds. *Nationalism and Ethnosymbolism: History, Culture and Ethnicity in the Formation of Nations.* (Edinburgh, 2006) p.43

[93] Ibid.

[94] Smith. *Ethno-Symbolism and Nationalism.* p.78

[95] Carolyn Marvin & David Ingle. "Blood Sacrifice and the Nation: Revisiting Civil Religion." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion,* Vol. 64, No. 4. (1996) p.775

[96] Ibid. p.770

reinforcing the collective memory. Such sacrifice, as Hutchinson summarises, 'creates a compact between the living and the dead, reversing the attrition of individual egotism and class divisions, and forms a moral community of the nation.'[97]

A School of the Nation?

It has been established that complex relationships exist between the state and the military, and identity and the military. In some cases, such as in one of Huntington's praetorian societies, these relationships result in the distinction between the concepts becoming blurred. This can be identified when the military essentially becomes the state (and arguably, identity), such as happened in Germany in the First World War, or Japan in the Second World War. However, when elements of these relationships exist independently, a considerable overlap can be identified in which a sophisticated dynamic between all three concepts has developed. This is manifested most tangibly through the efforts made by states to utilise identity to strengthen (or otherwise influence) the military, or alternatively to use the military as a tool to shape or build an identity. Furthermore, ethnic groups may utilise the military (or their record of service in it) in attempts to receive recognition or concessions from the state, or conversely, use the mechanisms of the state to influence the military, perhaps to lessen the dominance of a certain group.

Enloe argues that ethnic identities are subject to influence by the military in a number of ways. She notes three possible outcomes which can result from interaction between the military identity:

> First, militaries can have no independent effect, but simply reflect sub-military, sub-political trends in social relations. Secondly, the military may have an independent effect in the direction of hastening the disappearance of ethnicity as a basis for inter-group relations. Thirdly, the military may have an independent effect in the opposite direction, so that it sustains or revitalises ethnic identifications.[98]

Furthermore, she argues that ethnic identities have been 'utilised' by the state to recruit soldiers into the military. She muses that her colleagues:

> Tried to hide their puzzlement over why, when they were investigating violence in the Middle East and Ulster, British defence expenditures and agricultural policy in Mozambique, I should be spending my days sorting out Scottish clans and eighteenth century regimental grievances.[99]

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[97] Hutchinson. "Warfare, Remembrance and National Identity." p.43
[98] Ibid. p.11
[99] Enloe. *Ethnic Soldiers.* p.ix

She had hypothesised a link between the manifestation of state power in the American and Soviet Military-Industrial complexes and the state's utilisation (or isolation) of ethnicity to mobilise militaries, claiming that in order to optimise security, state planners 'think ethnically.'[100] Enloe offers the following example to illustrate the point:

> Envisage a Scottish soldier serving in the British army; he is dressed in his formal regimental uniform of red tunic and plaid kilt. The red tunic symbolises his loyalty to the British monarch, while his kilt symbolises his Scottish identity.[101]

She observes that this can be explained using one of two approaches. The 'ascriptive' approach would view the soldier as a man who views himself as Scottish, who has enlisted as a result of the traditionally high value which Scottish culture places on the military, and has been assigned to a Scottish regiment because the British state has recognised the existence of such 'primordial ethnic bonds' within the larger polity. In such an approach, the symbolic uniform would be understood to be a concession that state authorities have made 'so as to reconcile primordial attachments with universalistic institutions.'[102] A 'situational' approach would, she argues, question the assumption that the man automatically assumes himself a Scotsman, noting that he may instead primarily identify as a landless farmer or a Highlander. In this sense, a Scottish identity could develop 'as a result of being socialised into an ethnically defined regiment.'[103] Furthermore, his enlistment could be the product of messages from national and local elites claiming that it was the best way to gain acceptance in an English-dominated state. The recognition of 'primordial' symbols such as the kilt may not be a concession, but rather part of an effort to utilise ethnicity in a modernising state. Enloe notes that 'modernisation, while it may make mortars more common than bagpipes and khaki fatigues more functional than kilts, does not automatically eliminate the saliency of ethnicity in the recruitment and deployment of the British military.'[104]

Although modernisation had little impact on the 'saliency of ethnicity,' it led to a profound transformation of war. Large populations, technological developments, and industrialisation led to conflicts directly affecting increasing proportions of the populations involved. The American War of Independence, the French Revolutionary Wars, and the American Civil War all witnessed campaigns in which the civilian population and resources were specifically targeted on an unprecedented scale, either for utilisation or destruction, by the states involved. Such practices were employed on a

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[100] Ibid. p.ix
[101] Ibid. p.1
[102] Ibid.
[103] Ibid. p.3
[104] See Chapter 2; Ibid.

greater scale during the First World War, and in the aftermath of that conflict, the term "total war" first appeared in France and Germany 'to describe the fighting but also to envisage even more violent conflicts.'[105] As a result, Hobsbawm notes:

> State interests now depended on the participation of the ordinary citizen to an extent not previously envisaged. Whether the armies were composed of conscripts or volunteers, the willingness of men to serve was now an essential variable in government calculations.[106]

The demands of mass warfare (in conjunction with other social factors), he continues, 'made it imperative to formulate and inculcate new forms of civic loyalty (a "civic religion" to borrow Rousseau's phrase),' which emerged as 'populist-democratic patriotism.'[107] For the military, this patriotism was expressed by the concept of the 'nation in arms,' which Adam Roberts defines as: 'A situation in which all the citizens (or at least the male citizens) are members of armed forces organized by, or owing allegiance to, national authorities.'[108] He argues that 'implicit in most, but not all, ideas of the nation in arms is the assumption that the nation and army are, or at least ought to be, a unity; that all the people are incorporated in the army on a common professional and legal footing.'[109]

The *levée en masse* that followed the French Revolution is the first example of a nation in arms, as Omer Bartov observes: 'Thus an army was formed which both in numbers and motivation, in social composition and self-perception, was inherently different from anything seen hitherto in Europe.'[110] He contends that 'the individual serving in the *nation armeé* fought for France, rather than for the King of the French… Liberation from the monarchy thus also meant mobilisation by the state, even if it was ostensibly for the good of the community as a whole.'[111] Furthermore, he argues, the revolutionary army 'constituted a crucial factor in the creation of a new concept of national identity.'[112] Defeat at the hands of France inspired a complete reassessment of the 'allegedly invincible' Prussian Army, and following the defeat of Napoleon, the need for 'a more intimate union between the army and the nation' was recognised.[113] Bartov observes that, although the rhetoric of

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[105] The term Total War has since been employed by historians to describe previous wars, but the term originates from the interwar period; David Bell. *The First Total War: Napoleon's Europe and the Birth of Warfare as we Know it.* (Boston, 2007) p.9

[106] Hobsbawm. *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780.* p.88

[107] Ibid. pp.85-9

[108] Adam Roberts. *Nations in Arms: The Theory & Practice of Territorial Defence.* (London, 1976) p.37

[109] Ibid.

[110] Omer Bartov. "'The Nation in Arms': Germany and France, 1789-1939." *History Today*. (September, 1994) p.28

[111] Ibid.

[112] Ibid.

[113] Ibid. p.29

the 'nation as an entity whose survival and success were the business of all its members' was present, the old Monarchy was never truly replaced. Thus, he argues:

> Patriotism and loyalty to the nation were therefore initiated, nurtured and directed from above, and the new army of liberation served both as the manifestation of this state-controlled patriotism and as the means to disseminate those of its virtues deemed positive by the new regime.[114]

By carefully utilising the rhetoric of the nation and nationalism, Prussia was able to mobilise more of its population for war than ever before. Nearly 700,000 Prussian men were deployed in the War of 1866, and in 1870-71 1.2 million men were mobilised by the Northern German Confederation alone.[115] Such figures, representing approximately 40 percent of an age class (the method of categorisation employed by the Prussians) allowed Prussia to defeat the armies of far larger states, such as France (which had abandoned the nation in arms following the Bourbon Restoration) and Austria, which could only field 25-30 percent of the equivalent age class.[116] The nation in arms reached its zenith in the First World War, a conflict in which 65 million men were mobilised by the belligerents and their empires. Ten percent of France's adult population (including half of all French men aged 20 – 32) and nine percent of British men aged under 45 were killed, and over half of the 11 million Germans (of a population of 41 million) mobilised were killed or wounded.[117] Crucial to convincing their populations to volunteer for war or accept conscription was the dissemination by states of nationalist propaganda and the rhetoric of national identity. In this manner, the military was strengthened by the state through the instrumentalisation of identity.

Central to the application of the nation in arms concept is universal military service, whereby a substantial proportion of the population spend a specified period of time in the military in order for states to be able to maintain a large standing army, and train a large pool of reservists. The presence of a large section of society with military training has obvious strategic benefits (such as being able to mobilise vast numbers of reserves in the case of an attack), despite the claim that conscript armies tend to be less effective and require more resources on a per-soldier basis for the amount of military capability they provide.[118] However, additional motives can be identified which go beyond strategy. Bartov notes that 'most Frenchmen and Germans seemed convinced that fighting in the

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[114] Ibid.

[115] Dierk Walter. "Roon, the Prussian Landwehr, and the Reorganization of 1859-1860." *War in History*, Vol. 16, No. 3. (2009) p.285

[116] Ibid.

[117] Ingrid Westmoreland. "Casualties." In Spencer Tucker, ed. *The European Powers in the First World War: An Encyclopedia.* (New York, 1996) pp.172-3

[118] Barany. *The Solider and the Changing State.* (2012) p.36

national uniform meant fighting for the nation and for the preservation of what they understood to be the unique political, cultural, and social entity to which they belonged.'[119] He argues that both nations 'had internalised the central element of the modern nation state, namely, that military service was an expression of national identity.'[120] Furthermore, military service offers states a level of access to their adult population that is unmatched by any other institution of governance. Indeed, during a term of service that, in many cases, lasts for a few years, recruits can be subjected to a range of training and education programmes which can be tailored to the agenda of policymakers and military leaders. A 1972 French Defence White Paper illustrates how the military was viewed as an institution in which disparate identities could be bonded together:

> Military service is an opportunity to make lasting friendships which are not bound by social constraint. The comradeship which emerges from sharing the same existence every day, the quality and the unselfishness of human relations which develop there, the integration of men from different milieus, trades and geographic origins, and the possibility of judging men without bias are all factors which can contribute to the personal enrichment of the man who is willing to make his contribution generously to the reality and *esprit de corps* of the small community that his section, platoon, company, squadron or company represents.[121]

The belief that the military can succeed in overcoming the salience of non-state identities and somehow consolidate disparate groups into a unified national army has echoed across history. The Roman Legions performed this function millennia ago, along with the more recent armies of France and Germany. On the eve of the First World War, former US President Theodore Roosevelt argued that 'the most important of all things is to introduce universal military service' which would include 'foreign-born as well as native-born citizens' in order to 'Americanize the population.'[122] Similar ideas can be identified in the Soviet Union, where according to Leonid Brezhnev, the Soviet Armed Forces had a role in educating citizens 'in the spirit of deep loyalty to the Socialist Motherland, to the ideas of peace and internationalism and to the ideas of the friendship of the people.'[123] The utilisation of the military by the state to influence society in such ways has led many to regard it as a "School of the Nation."

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[119] Bartov. "The Nation in Arms." p.32
[120] Ibid.
[121] Cited in Peled. *A Question of Loyalty.* (1998) p.19
[122] Theodore Roosevelt. *Fear God and Take Your Part.* (New York, 1914) pp.371-2;
[123] Leonid Brezhnev. *Speech at the 25*[th] *Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.* (1976) in Teresa Rakowska-Harmstone. ""Brotherhood in Arms": The Ethnic Factor in the Soviet Armed Forces." in N.F. Dreisziger, ed. *Ethnic Armies: Polyethnic Armed Forces from the Time of the Hapsburgs to the Age of the Superpowers.* (Ontario, 1990) p.146

Krebs explains that the enduring belief that the military has a social application is founded on three 'plausible mechanisms' which link military service and the construction of cohesive national communities: socialisation, contact, and elite transformation.[124] He notes that the military may 'socialize soldiers to national norms embedded in the military's manpower policy,' 'bring together individuals of various ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic backgrounds in common cause and in a collaborative spirit, providing a suitable environment in which to break down communal barriers,' and 'alter the views of future leaders who later use their positions of influence to spread their revised definition of the nation.'[125] Many modernisation theorists contend that new states are faced with a challenge when attempting to form a nation, as the old societies they govern are marked by their 'rural backwardness, their strong kinship ties, regional or ethnic loyalties, and lack of interest in anybody different from them.'[126]

Florence Gaub argues that for such theorists, the military offers a solution to these problems, as 'mixing different groups into a highly modern, technologized institution that symbolises the state should hence form the ideal citizen, aware of transethnic and translinguistic identity that is needed to form a stable state.'[127] Krebs remains sceptical as to whether the military can indeed influence individuals to 'reconsider their identity, their attachments, and the definition of their political community,' arguing that 'identity is not subjective and universal, but rather inter-subjective and hence contextual. This fundamental insight limits the scope and permanence of the military's potential impact.'[128] Furthermore, Gaub observes that the assumption that the military can be used as a tool to teach its recruits a form of 'official nationalism' which is then disseminated into society is based on the assertion of broad generalisations, which are from a perspective in which development is a linear process towards the ethnocentric model of many Western societies. Despite such reservations, however, the belief that the military can serve as the vanguard of nation-building remains pervasive.

The military can play numerous roles within society, from becoming directly involved in the affairs of state, to being utilised as a tool to forge new identities. In the context of a democratic state however, in theory the military has a much more limited scope for involvement in society. Zoltan Barany notes that 'generally speaking, in the modern democratic state the only legitimate internal

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[124] Ronald Krebs. "A School for the Nation? How Military Service Does Not Build Nations, and How it Might." *International Security,* Vol. 28, No. 4. (Spring 2004) p.87

[125] Ibid.

[126] Florence Gaub. *Military Integration After Civil Wars: Multiethnic Armies, Identity and Post-Conflict Reconstruction.* (London, 2011) p.17

[127] Ibid.

[128] Krebs. "A School for the Nation?" pp.87-8

role for the army is to provide relief after natural disasters.'[129] Whilst this is true to an extent, numerous 'democratic' militaries continue to be tasked with duties beyond Huntington's understanding of a detached and apolitical military, such as nation-building. However, the very presence of the military, even a volunteer force, has an impact on the society it serves, as Gaub argues: 'it is, intentionally or unintentionally, a part of the wider social system.'[130]

In addition to serving on a 'macro level' as the School of the Nation, Gaub identifies two further 'dimensions' in which the military can influence the society it serves. On a micro level, she argues, 'the military is a profession that socialises the individual' as, upon joining the military, recruits enter a 'total institution' which separates them from the rest of society and regulates daily life.[131] In pursuit of cohesion, a vital component of an effective military, the values of comradeship, corporatism, and cooperation are instilled in recruits, theoretically superseding pre-existing intergroup bias. Gaub illustrates this with the statement often used in the US Army, 'there is no black or white, only (army) green.'[132] The other 'dimension' discussed by Gaub exists on a meso level, where 'the military interacts between society (or rather its diversity) and the state by expressing the state's attitude towards this diversity.'[133] She reflects that 'just as the ideal of the homogenous nation-state only rarely exists, so does the ideal of the perfectly homogenous army,' and notes that as a result, in many cases the state may have to consistently rely on particular ethnicities, such as Sikhs in the Indian Army, or Berbers in the Moroccan Army.[134] By relying on such groups, she argues, the military has 'bolstered or even created self-perceptions of groups which frequently served as a basis for the formation of group identity,' an idea which resonates with Enloe's 'situational' approach to viewing the mobilisation of ethnicity.[135]

Non-state identities refer to groups within a society who are, in some way, excluded from the majority community within a society, usually as the result of ethnic, confessional, or racial differences. In some cases, such isolation may be voluntary or even desired, but in many cases, such societal divisions exist as the result of prejudice, discrimination, or the state's fear that the group could act as a Trojan Horse in the event of conflict. As a result, as Gaub contends, 'the ethnic composition of the military reflects the ethno-political stratification on which the state rests; it mirrors who the state chooses to rely on in order to stabilise, and who it does not deem

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[129] Barany. *The Solider and the Changing State.* (2012) p.31
[130] Gaub. *Military Integration After Civil Wars.* p.9
[131] Ibid. p.9
[132] Ibid. p.11
[133] Ibid. p.9
[134] Ibid. p.13
[135] Ibid.

trustworthy.'[136] By the same token, when formerly excluded groups are mobilised by the state and treated not as cannon-fodder or labourers, but as soldiers as valued as any other, a clear message is sent to society, signalling that the group is now considered a trusted and reliable part of society. President Truman's Executive Order 9981, which criminalised racial discrimination and heralded the end of segregated units in the U.S. Army, is a clear example of this. The army became the first large organisation in the U.S. to guarantee equal opportunities for African-Americans, sending a clear indication to society that (at least as far as the state was concerned) African-Americans were deemed worthy of 'equality of treatment and opportunity' and could be trusted with arms.[137]

This dynamic, however, is not necessarily one-directional, and just as the state may use the military as a mechanism to display which groups within its society are trusted, groups within a society may use the military to demand recognition, equality, or other concessions from the state. The desegregation of the US Armed Forces can be seen to be the result of a change in attitude from the American establishment, but conversely, it also can be viewed as a direct product of African-Americans utilising the military (specifically their contributions to it) to influence policy. The "Double V" campaign began in February 1942 following the publication of an article in the *Pittsburgh Courier*, titled "Should I Sacrifice to Live 'Half American,'" in which James G. Thompson stated:

> The "V for Victory" sign is being displayed prominently in all so-called democratic countries which are fighting for victory over aggression, slavery and tyranny. If this V sign means that to those now engaged in this great conflict, then let colored Americans adopt the double VV for double victory. . . The first V for victory over our enemies from without, the second V for victory over our enemies within. For surely those who perpetrate these ugly prejudices here are seeking to destroy our democratic form of government just as surely as the Axis forces.[138]

The campaign was successful in rallying African-American support for the war, and gained prominence after being adopted by the African-American press, celebrities, and servicemen such as the Tuskegee Airmen.[139] Such utilisation of military service is explained by Krebs, who observes that 'to invoke military service in this fashion is to exploit a widely recognised norm to raise moral

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[136] Ibid. p.14
[137] Harry Truman. *Executive Order 9981.* (26/07/1948)
[138] James Thompson. "Should I Sacrifice to Live." in Neil Wynn. *The African American Experience during WWII.* (London, 2011) pp.110-11
[139] Dan J. Puckett. "Double V Campaign" in Leslie Alexander and Walter Rucker, eds. *Encyclopedia of African American History.* (Santa Barabara, 2010) pp.745-46

consciousness, draw attention to an imbalance in the equation of rights and obligations, and trap state leaders in their own rhetorical commitments.'[140]

When viewed as an institutionalised reflection of the ethno-political stratification of society, the military, specifically representation in it, constitutes a key strategic objective in the struggle for equality. As a result, whilst many African-Americans utilised their military service in their attempts to influence the state, others aimed to utilise the state in order to achieve important practical and symbolic reforms within the military. As such, during the Second World War the Double V campaign was complemented by the March on Washington Movement (MOWM), an organisation led by A. Philip Randolph, the General Organiser of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. Described as 'the most effective African American protest organisation during the Second World War,' the MOWM combined 'unflinching patriotism' with the fight against Jim Crow.[141] The MOWM won a momentous early victory in 1941, when its threat of protest and disruption forced President Franklin D. Roosevelt to issue Executive Order 8802, which declared:

> As a prerequisite to the successful conduct of our national defense production effort, I do hereby reaffirm the policy of the United States that there shall be no discrimination in the employment of workers in defense industries or government because of race, creed, color, or national origin.[142]

President Roosevelt, however, did not address numerous other demands of the MOWM, one of the most pressing of which was the desegregation of the armed forces. Randolph wrote in 1944 that 'pivotal and central to the whole struggle in the Negro liberation movement at this time is the abolition of Jim Crow in the armed forces,' a point elaborated upon by the magazine *Crisis,* which stated: 'This is no fight merely to wear a uniform. This is a struggle for status, a struggle to take democracy off of parchment and give it life.'[143] Whilst ultimately unsuccessful in driving the reform of the US military during the Second World War, the MOWM would achieve its legislative demands just a few years after the war.

As has been noted, President Truman initiated a reform process towards integration in July 1948, and won two thirds of the African-American vote later that year for his efforts. Krebs observes that the desegregation of the U.S. armed forces was 'an unquestionably political act implying a boldly

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[140] Krebs. "A School for the Nation?" p.122
[141] David Lucander. *Winning the War for Democracy: The March on Washington Movement, 1941-1946.* (Chicago, 2014) pp.3-4
[142] Franklin Roosevelt. *Executive Order 8802.* (25/06/1941)
[143] Lucander. *Winning the War for Democracy.* p.170

race-free vision of the American political community.'[144] He notes that, 'at stake in the military's racial policies was more than military efficiency: at issue was the very meaning of the American nation.'[145] Whilst the precise circumstances of the desegregation of the U.S. military are still debated by historians, the utilisation of military service by African-Americans as a means to strengthen their case for equality within society is well established. Furthermore, the recognition of equality by the military carried significant symbolic value for the ongoing struggle for civil rights.

Conclusion

A considerable volume of scholarship has been dedicated to the relationship between the state and the military. Many theories claim to have answered the ubiquitous question "Who shall guard the guardians?" However, the prevailing model, adopted by the states of NATO and many others, is the separation of the military from the state, in the manner described by Huntington. This model, in which the military is 'professionalised' and 'militarised' to the extent that its only concern is 'successful armed combat,' should be considered aspirational and utopian, as the military has an impact upon both the society it protects and the state it serves regardless of how far it is distanced from the mechanisms of power. Thus, civil-military relations should not be understood as the interplay between two monolithic institutions, but as part of a wider study of the dynamic between the state, the military, and society, all of which are influenced by one another.

Identity in all its manifestations must be understood as fluid and adaptable. The boundaries of a nation or an ethnicity, and even which term is most appropriate, exist only as they are imagined by the individuals within (and without) the community. Furthermore, it has been well established that regardless of ongoing efforts to consolidate national identities to be in line with state boundaries, non-state identities remain pervasive and can even be seen to have flourished under the conditions of modernity. Understood through this prism, the military of any state can be viewed as a collaborative institution composed of a multitude of identities, rather than the physical manifestation of a homogenous nation. Furthermore, the military exists between the state and society, and as such serves as a barometer which illustrates the state's attitude to groups within society, and groups within society's investment and commitment to the state.

Krebs argues that the field of civil military relations should properly be understood as 'encompassing a wider range of questions about the relationship between the armed forces, the polity, and the populace.'[146] The state can use identity to influence the military, and can use the military to mould

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[144] Ronald Krebs. "One Nation under Arms? Military Participation Policy and the Politics of Identity." *Security Studies,* Vol. 14, No. 3. (2005) p.550
[145] Ibid.
[146] Krebs. "A School for the Nation?" p.123

identity, whilst groups within a society (defined by their identity) can use the military to pressure the state, or use the state to shape the military. In any case, the military serves as a key tool of communication between the state and society, and a symbolic totem which can be utilised to indicate the boundaries of society. Thus, any analysis of the military must include the study of the society from which it is composed and the state it serves, as all militaries interact with both.

Chapter Two: Case Studies

This chapter presents two cases studies which illustrate how many of the ideas and theories described in the first chapter have been applied in practice. The first is an examination of the Lebanese Army and its efforts to bring together the eighteen recognised religious groups of Lebanon into a robust military organisation following a protracted civil war. This process offers numerous insights of how the military can be employed as a tool of nation-building, particularly in post-conflict environments. Furthermore, the confessional diversity of Lebanon and its recent history of conflict makes it a pertinent example rich in parallels with post-Dayton Bosnia and Herzegovina. The second case study focuses on the British Army and the development of the regimental system, a unique method of military organisation that is now employed in a number of Commonwealth states such as India and Canada. This model is particularly worthy of note as it was the structure deemed to be best suited to the unified military of post-Dayton Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Case Study 1: The Lebanese Army

In January 2007, Lebanon appeared on the brink of returning to the civil war that had devastated the country from 1975 until 1990. Veteran correspondent Robert Fisk, reporting from Beirut, noted 'I watched what historians may one day claim was the first day of Lebanon's new civil war' as a general strike degenerated into a sectarian battleground. Sunni pro-government protesters, Shia supporters of Hezbollah, numerous Christian sects (Marionites, Greek Orthodox and Catholic), as well as Druze and Alawites, jostled amongst themselves and each other for power.[1] Fisk provides a vivid account of a confrontation between Shia and Sunnis on Corniche al-Mazraa, in Central Beirut:

> The mobs were there in their thousands, chorusing their hatred for those who lived across the other side of the boulevard. There were few officers. But after an hour, a Lebanese colonel ran down the street, a smartly dressed man, not even wearing a flak jacket, who walked straight into the highway between these two great waves of angry people, the stones banging off his helmet and body and legs. And the soldiers around me stood up and ran into the road to join him between these two enormous forces. I don't like journalists who fall in love with armies. I don't like armies. But yesterday it seemed that this one man was a lonely symbol of what stood between Lebanon and chaos. I don't know his religion. His soldiers were Sunnis and Shias and Christians - I had checked, of course - all dressed in the same

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[1] Robert Fisk. "Opposition demonstrations turn Beirut into a violent sectarian battleground." *The Independent.* (24/01/1990)

uniform. Could they hold together, could they remain under his command when their brothers and cousins, some of them, must have been among the crowds? They did. Some even grinned as they hurled themselves at the hooded men and youths too young to have known the last civil war, pleading and shouting for the violence to end. They won.[2]

As Fisk points out, the soldiers in the Lebanese Army (LA) were from numerous religious backgrounds, more in fact, than he says. Indeed, historically almost every religious or ethnic group in Lebanon has been represented in the military (two Jewish LA officers were dismissed in 1952 and were never replaced).[3] During the war against Israel in 1948, Shia, Sunni and Druze Muslims fought alongside Marionite, Greek Orthodox and Catholic Christians, just as Fisk observed in 2007.[4] In addition to its confessional diversity, distinct regional, social, and class divisions further complicate the identity of the LA. It could be expected that an army formed from such a patchwork of disparate identities would, in the many periods of crisis experienced by Lebanon, either fracture into rival forces or be dominated by one group. However, even during the darkest years of the civil war, when the LA had very limited capability and almost no authority, it at least remained a Lebanese institution. A study of the origins and development of the LA will provide an understanding of the circumstances from which such a seemingly successful multiethnic military has emerged. Consideration will be given to the structure and organisation of the LA, along with the rhetoric of its commanders, and non-combat functions the LA has performed in the state, such as ceremonial and educational roles. The insights presented will not only illustrate the complexity of the dynamic between the state, identity, and the military, but will also offer historical examples which can later be utilised as elements of a comparative analysis.

In 1943 Lebanon attained independence from France. A 1932 census, the last official one held in the country, indicates that the population of Lebanon was composed of 28 per cent Marionite Christians, 22.4 per cent Sunni Muslims, 19.6 per cent Shia Muslims, 9.7 per cent Greek Orthodox, 6.8 per cent Armenians (Catholic and Orthodox) and 5.9 per cent Greek Catholics.[5] In total Christians had a marginal majority in population (50.4 per cent), and this, coupled with them being more politically active, led to the French heeding their calls in the prelude to independence to be separate from

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[2] Ibid.

[3] Jewish Virtual Library. *Lebanon Virtual Jewish History Tour.* Available: https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/lebanon-virtual-jewish-history-tour (Accessed: 06/12/2018)

[4] There are eighteen constitutionally recognised religious groups in Lebanon: Alawite, Armenian Catholic, Armenian Orthodox, Assyrian Church of the East, Chaldean Catholic, Copts, Druze, Greek Orthodox, Isma'ili, Jewish, Latin Catholic, Marionite Catholic, Melkite Greek Catholic, Protestant, Sunni, Shi'a, Syriac Catholic, and Syriac Orthodox.

[5] Rania Maktabi. "The Lebanese Census of 1932 Revisited. Who are the Lebanese?" *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 2. (1999) p.19

Syria.[6] Many Christians considered themselves essentially French and wished to retain close ties with their former patron. In contrast, however, most Sunnis, the dominant Muslim group both numerically and politically, were advocates of pan-Arab nationalism and union with the Arab hinterland, primarily Syria. The 1943 National Pact provided the blueprint for the composition and outlook of the nascent Lebanese state, and represented a compromise between the various worldviews of the communities in Lebanon. Lebanon would be an Arab state, however, it would neither seek an alliance with a Western Power nor would it pursue pan-Arabism. It was, in essence, to remain neutral in international affairs.[7] Furthermore, the Pact endorsed the principle of intercommunal power-sharing, and the ratio of six Christians to five Muslims was agreed as the composition of Parliament, which would be elected on a confessional and geographical basis. The highest posts would be divided between the dominant communities, with a Marionite President, Sunni Prime Minister and Shia Speaker of Parliament.[8]

It was not until August 1, 1945, that the Lebanese government received command of the Lebanese component of the *Troupes Speciales du Levant*, the French colonial forces, and formed the LA.[9] Initially, the LA was a small force of 3,000 men commanded by Fuad Shihab (a Marionite trained in France), and was dominated in its officer corps by Christians.[10] Furthermore, Christian dominance was retained at numerous command levels, where they filled the roles of Head of Military Intelligence, Deputy Chief of Staff, Air Force Commander, President's adjutant, and the heads of the branches of the army. In addition, the Military Academy and the Republican Guard were led by Christians, as well as most combat units, including artillery and armour.[11] Christians would continue to dominate the officer corps until the beginning of the civil war. However, amongst enlisted personnel the number of Muslims, especially Shias, steadily rose.[12]

Due to Lebanon's internationally neutral stance, difficulties in maintaining a confessional balance in recruitment, and Christian fears that an increasingly Muslim army could at some point be turned against them, the LA remained a small force concerned almost exclusively with internal security.[13] However, as Oren Barak states, 'the new-born institution lacked cohesion, discipline and *esprit de*

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[6] Florence Gaub. *Military Integration After Civil Wars: Multiethnic Armies, Identity and Post-Conflict Reconstruction.* (London, 2011) p.46
[7] Oren Barak. *The Lebanese Army: A National Institution in a Divided Society.* (New York, 2009) p.20
[8] Gaub. *Military Integration After Civil Wars.* p.48
[9] R.D. McLaurin. "Lebanon and Its Army: Past, Present and Future." in Edward Azar, ed. *The Emergence of a New Lebanon: Fantasy or Reality?* (Santa Barbara, 1984) p.82
[10] Gaub. *Military Integration After Civil Wars.* p.49
[11] Barak. *The Lebanese Army.* p.31
[12] Ibid. p.28
[13] Ibid. p.21

corps, and its officers and men held disparate views of the identity of their state and its foreign policy.'[14]

During the 1948 war between Israel and its Arab neighbours Lebanon, for the most part, took a defensive role, with its contribution largely being limited to allowing its more powerful allies to use Lebanese territory to manoeuvre troops, volunteers, and supplies. However, on June 5 and 6, the LA fought the Israeli Defence Forces in a village called Malikiyya (in present-day Israel), achieving a rare victory. The battle had much symbolic significance for the LA. Oren Barak, in his study of the commemoration of the battle, observes that the victory:

> Bore many qualities that are the stuff myths are made of: manifestations of professionalism, discipline and *esprit de corps* (as manifested, for instance, in the combined use of infantry, artillery and armour); acts of bravery and sacrifice; readiness to come to the help of brothers in their time of need thus fulfilling the sanctified duty of the Arab states toward the Palestinian cause; and, above all, a victory over a powerful and sinister enemy.[15]

During the 1950s the LA faced more challenges. A general strike directed against Prime Minister Khoury in 1952 led to calls for military intervention, which Shihab refused. Then, in 1958, President Camille Chamoun requested the army break-up riots, but Shihab again declined. Shihab argued that the LA's role was the protection of the state, and that the unrest was directed against the particular government in place, rather than the state, and he therefore refused to act.[16] This established a positive image for the LA, one in which the army respected the political and constitutional structures of Lebanon and remained aloof of the quarrelsome inter-confessional politics that beset the state. Shihabism, as Shihab's approach became known, meant 'abstaining from confessionalism and politics, and was the basis of abnegating ethnic diversity.'[17] It restricted the LA to the role of the 'safeguard of democracy and Lebanon's unity.'[18] This ideology would underpin the army throughout the civil war and influence its eventual re-emergence.

In 1969, following the Six Day War between Israel and many of its Arab neighbours, Lebanon signed the Cairo Accords.[19] Lebanon had remained relatively detached from the Arab-Israeli conflict since 1948, however under the terms of the Accords southern Lebanon became a base of operations for

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[14] Oren Barak. "Commemorating Malikiyya: Political Myth, Multiethnic Identity and the Making of the Lebanese Army." *History and Memory,* Vol. 13, No. 1. (2001) p.63
[15] Ibid. p.67
[16] Gaub. *Military Integration After Civil Wars*. p.49
[17] Ibid
[18] Ibid. p.63
[19] Nora Boustany. "Lebanon Annuls PLO Agreement." *The Washington Post.* (22/05/1987)

Palestinian militants. Fearing that Lebanon could be drawn into the conflict with Israel and unnerved by the presence of a Palestinian force so large within Lebanon's borders, Christian militias began arming, and were quickly followed by other sectarian, ideological, and regional militias.[20] These militias quickly grew and soon outnumbered the LA. The Phalangists, a Christian militia, commanded 8,000 men, the total strength of eight Palestinian militias totalled 22,900, the Communists and Progressive Socialists fielded 5,000 each, and numerous other political and confessional militias each had thousands of men at their command. In 1975, the LA had a total of 15,250 troops.[21]

The inaction of the LA in the face of retaliatory Israeli strikes against the Palestinian militants in Lebanon, coupled with the Christian image it had developed primarily due to the predominance of Christians in the officer corps, led to many accusations that the LA had become a Christian, rather than pan-Lebanese, force. Fearing such allegations could escalate into rebellion, the government hesitated to deploy the LA to end clashes that had erupted between Palestinian militants and Christian militias.[22] Indecision in the face of escalating violence led to desertions from both the LA and the police, the eruption of further violence, and the splintering of the LA. In 1976, a Sunni lieutenant formed the Lebanese Arab Army, a breakaway group of Sunni soldiers. At the same time, a General attempted a coup d'état, and Major Sa'ad Haddad formed another small army in the south of the country.[23]

The fighting in the Civil War was largely restricted to clashes between militias, who often attempted to assert dominance over their own confessional group as much as fighting those of other faiths. The LA remained largely paralysed during the war, and experienced significant desertions, as well as numerous defections of soldiers and officers to the militias. Barak estimates that ten per cent of LA officers and soldiers remained in their positions, 15 per cent defected to militias, and 75 per cent simply went home.[24] In 1984, the 6th Brigade, composed mostly of Shias, refused orders to confront the Shia militia Amal, choosing instead to join up with Amal to fight Palestinian militias, prompting one of the most traumatic defections of the war.[25] The same year, Michel Awn (a Marionite) became Commander of the LA, and began shaping it to suit his personal needs. The loss of legitimacy experienced by the LA, stemming from accusations that it was a Christian force and thus did not reflect the social composition of Lebanon, led to the loss of its monopoly on the legitimate use of force and the collapse of its institutional cohesion. As a result, it was powerless to fulfil any of its

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[20] McLaurin. "Lebanon and Its Army: Past, Present and Future." p.82
[21] Gaub. *Military Integration After Civil Wars*. p.51
[22] Ibid. p.50
[23] Ibid.
[24] Barak. "Commemorating Malikiyya." p.72
[25] Gaub. *Military Integration After Civil Wars*. p.58

obligations as a military, leaving the state without the means to enforce its authority for 15 years.

In 1988, following a constitutional crisis, Awn was named Prime Minister, a role usually reserved for a Sunni, and then, after Christian groups in Lebanon rejected a US-Syrian sponsored candidate for President, claimed the role for himself.[26] Acting as President, Prime Minister and Commander of the LA, Awn declared war on the Phalangists and then on Syrian troops in Lebanon, who had been deployed to parts of Lebanon as peacekeepers for most of the war. A rival government, led by Salim Hoss (the former Prime Minister), was formed and drew considerable support in its opposition of Awn. Emile Lahoun (a Marionite) was chosen as Army Commander for the Hoss government, and implored Awn's soldiers to join the new government. This led to the institutional division of the LA for the first time since its inception. However, confessional identities were ignored, as the split was between Awn's personal supporters and those who opposed him.[27] Awn was eventually driven out of Lebanon by Syrian air strikes, opening the door for Hoss. The new Lebanese government enjoyed a degree of legitimacy as it was the product of the Ta'if Agreement, which had been signed by the surviving members of Lebanon's Parliament (last elected in 1972) in Ta'if, Saudi Arabia, on October 22, 1989.[28] The Civil War would end almost a year later, on October 13, 1990, having cost the lives of 150,000 people and wounded at least 300,000 more, whilst more than 750,000 had left the country.[29] During the conflict, much of Lebanon had been occupied by Syrian Forces, a multinational peacekeeping force had come and gone, and Israel had invaded in 1982. As a result, in addition to the human cost, the country had suffered severe damage to its infrastructure, as well as its political, constitutional, and state structures.

Reconstruction

There had been numerous attempts at rebuilding the LA during the war. In October 1978 proposals for the establishment of two armies, one Christian and one Muslim, or four armies, one Christian, one Shia, one Sunni and one Druze, had been dismissed in favour of a unified national army.[30] Muslim officers were recruited, giving a confessional parity in the officer corps, and "Friendship Camps" were set up for common training of soldiers from different faiths. Positions in the higher echelons of command were shared, and the National Defence Law of 1979 clarified the somewhat ambiguous chain of command, giving control to the President, who would have to answer to layers of

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[26] Alan Cowell. "Lebanese Said to Reject U.S-Syria Election Plan." *New York Times.* (20/09/1988)
[27] Gaub. *Military Integration After Civil Wars.* p.52
[28] Barak. *The Lebanese Army*. p.161
[29] Gaub. *Military Integration After Civil Wars*. p.48
[30] Barak. *The Lebanese Army*. p.117

representative councils, entrenching the need for political consensus.[31] These attempts, however, fell prey to political disagreements and fears that, if strengthened, the LA would support the Christians. Following the Israeli invasion in 1982, further attempts were made to rebuild the army, this time with the support of the US. Conscription was introduced to facilitate a rapid expansion of the LA, and a US-led train and equip programme, the Lebanese Army Modernization Programme (LAMP), was introduced to strengthen its military capabilities and 'produce a credible nucleus for a larger, more capable military.'[32] The reinvigorated LA attempted to impose peace. However, continuing fears that a strong army would be a tool of Christian power impeded the reform process, and the alienation of some groups led to its near-collapse.[33] Although these efforts all failed, Barak observes, 'the government attempted to reconstruct the army time and again, reflecting the deep conviction of Lebanon's leaders that the successful revitalization of this institution was a prerequisite for a successful political settlement that could end the war.'[34]

Whilst the Ta'if Agreement brought about an end to the war, Lebanon remained a fragile state. Gaub notes how 'Lebanon was controlled by numerous militias and ruled by warlords, and neither the army nor the police had a say in the security organisation of the country.'[35] The Ta'if Agreement updated Lebanon's power-sharing arrangements to reflect changes in the country's demographics, providing the political consensus needed to embark on strengthening Lebanon's state institutions, particularly the LA.[36] The new LA faced numerous challenges in its attempt to rebuild itself into an effective military which was also representative of all Lebanon. It had to 'reunite its scattered remnants, restructure the religion-based brigades, increase its size, integrate former militias, get rid of the Christian image and impose itself as the one and only source of coercion.'[37]

The first step in the LA's process of reconstruction was the incorporation of Awn's followers into the legitimate army. The 3,000 – 5,000 men who had stayed loyal to Awn represented some of the best soldiers the LA had, and were mostly Christian. To reject them would not only weaken the LA and isolate Christian groups, but also make any attempt to create a confessionally balanced military difficult. Gaub observes that 'the reunification of these two parts, albeit successful, remains taboo in

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[31] Ibid. p.118

[32] Ralph Hallenbeck. *Military Force as an Instrument of U.S. Foreign Policy: Intervention in Lebanon, August 1982 – February 1984.* (Santa Barbara, 1991) p.40

[33] Barak. *The Lebanese Army*. p.125

[34] Barak. "Commemorating Malikiyya" p.72

[35] Florence Gaub. "Multi-Ethnic Armies in the Aftermath of Civil War: Lessons Learned from Lebanon." *Defence Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 1. (2007) p.6

[36] Barak. *The Lebanese Army.* p.169

[37] Gaub. "Multi-Ethnic Armies in the Aftermath of Civil War." p.7

the Army,' with the LA preferring to downplay or deny it had ever split.[38] Reunification was followed by a restructuring of the brigade system, which since the French Mandate had organised units on a confessional-geographical basis, resulting in units such as "The Shia Brigade of the Bekaa Valley."[39] In order to remove these confessional-geographical loyalties the brigades were mixed, initially at the officer level, and then with a battalion from one faith being moved into a brigade dominated by another. In 1992, individual soldiers were assigned to new units as part of project "Total Integration," in which a certain amount of personnel were shifted around brigades to make every brigade confessionally balanced.[40] Furthermore, battalions would now rotate their deployment every six months, moving from one area of Lebanon to another.[41]

In 1993, conscription, labelled as Flag Service, began. This was in part to facilitate the enlargement of the LA, seen as a vital measure for it to reassert its dominance. By 1994 the LA consisted of 40,000 men, and by 2004, 60,000, four times its size in 1975.[42] In addition, the LA was equipped with 400 tanks, 1,000 armoured vehicles and 200 artillery pieces, establishing it as the dominant military force in Lebanon.[43] The introduction of conscription also had other aims, with the LA stating it would help the youth escape 'narrow partisanship' and 'blind sectarianism,' reflecting a belief in 'military service as a vehicle to overcome the societal divisions that led, among other reasons, to the civil war.'[44] Thus, the LA can be seen to have been employed as the School of the Nation, with the intention being to unite communities that had become polarised from the civil war through contact, interaction, education, and training.

In order to facilitate the military's new role, numerous measures were taken to shake off the Christian image. For the first time its composition was disclosed by the Minister of Defence, revealing that although Christians retained a predominance in the ranks of Brigadier and Colonel, Muslims now filled the majority of posts from Major down. Furthermore, Muslims formed a slight majority, at 52.2 per cent, of the total officer corps.[45] A total of 6,000 former militiamen were integrated into the LA and Lebanon's other security institutions, 5,000 of whom were Muslim. Amal, the largest Shia militia, offered 2,800 men, and 1,300 Druze were incorporated.[46] Whilst these numbers represent a fraction of the total strength of the militias, 'it expressed in a very tangible manner the reconciliation that

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[38] Ibid.
[39] Ibid. p.8
[40] Ibid.
[41] Barak. *The Lebanese Army.* p.177
[42] Gaub. "Multi-Ethnic Armies in the Aftermath of Civil War." p.12
[43] Barak. *The Lebanese Army.* p.184
[44] Ibid. p.178; Gaub. "Multi-Ethnic Armies in the Aftermath of Civil War." p.8
[45] Barak. *The Lebanese Army.* p.177
[46] Gaub. *Military Integration After Civil Wars*. p.65

was so badly needed.'[47] The incorporation of a high proportion of Muslim militiamen, coupled with selective recruitment, allowed the LA to achieve its stated aim of a 50:50 ratio of Christian to Muslim personnel. Some estimates have suggested that the ratio is closer to 40:60, with Muslims now holding an overall numerical majority, which reflects assumptions (there has not been a census since 1932) that Muslims represent the largest demographic group in modern Lebanon.[48]

The balancing of the LA into a 50:50 institution in theory, and perhaps a Muslim-dominated institution in practice, achieved much in creating a new, non-partisan image for the LA. This image was put to the test as the LA began reasserting itself over the remaining militias. In 1991 the LA raided 250 militia bases and began confiscating weapons. Militias that did not disarm and engage in politics rather than violence found their leaderships arrested, and protests were dispersed. Gradually the LA took up positions at military and government sites across Lebanon, replacing militia garrisons. Its actions in confronting militias of all confessions and restoring public order earned it the support of many in the population.[49]

In addition to establishing its monopoly on coercion, the LA sought to re-establish its legitimacy. The legacy of Shihabism was invoked and the tomb of the Unknown Soldier was rebuilt in Beirut, drawing a path of continuity from before the Civil War to the present. In addition the LA became the only formal institution to commemorate soldiers and civilians killed during the Civil War.[50] The memory of the Battle of Malikiyya was invoked, 'representing the army's finest hour, when members of different ethnic groups and regions had fought side by side and managed to overcome the enemy of Lebanon and the Arabs.'[51] Reminding the LA, and the Lebanese population, of their former victories and the continuing presence of their common enemy served to offer a simple unifying narrative that had almost been forgotten. The publishing of memoirs, articles, and books on the Battle of Malikiyya reminded the LA's men 'of their common, glorious past, embedding it in the institutional memory of this now fragmentized body.'[52] The LA managed to reclaim its position as a symbol of a unified, pan-confessional Lebanon, which despite the Civil War, retained enough appeal to re-emerge from the conflict. Gaub observes:

> While all kinds of ideologies were fighting each other between 1975 and 1990 in Lebanon –
> pan-Arabism, pan-Syrianism, Communism, Marionite confessionalism – none was strong

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[47] Ibid. p.67
[48] Ibid. p.70
[49] Barak. *The Lebanese Army.* pp.180-84
[50] Ibid. p.184
[51] Oren Barak. "Commemorating Malikiyya" p.73
[52] Ibid.

enough to win over the others. One could deduce that Lebanese nationalism remained as the only answer.[53]

The importance of international support for the reconstruction of the LA cannot be understated. Lebanese officers were offered training in Syria, which also provided much of the LA's new weaponry.[54] Furthermore, the US and Saudi Arabia pledged to assist in the reconstruction, with the LA receiving non-lethal vehicles and helicopters from the US, in addition to an initial $42 million in military aid.[55] Brigadier-General Nizar Abdel-Kader, writing for the LA's *Defence Magazine,* quotes a US official in Beirut, who stated: 'Our cooperation with the Lebanese Army is very broad and comprehensive, and it is all about strengthening the Lebanese Armed Forces as the sole, legitimate defense of the country.'[56] International support such as this not only provided the LA with the necessary materiel to rebuild itself, but also served to underscore its legitimacy. The reconstructed LA became a large, powerful, and legitimate army, backed by Syria, the US, France, and the United Nations.

The reform of the LA since the Ta'if Agreement has been a marked success. Up until the present day the LA has 'been successful in staying clear of divisive politics and in maintaining its cohesion when national politics continued to degenerate.'[57] The two attempts at reconstructing the army during the Civil War, although ultimately unsuccessful, served to lay key foundations for a rapid transformation once peace had been restored. Barak argues that:

> In the period of 1977-79. . .the Army was the harbinger of broader political and social change. First, Christian-Muslim parity in the officer corps was attained in 1977-78. Then, in 1979, the National Defence Law introduced power-sharing mechanisms into the Army command.[58]

The third attempt to reconstruct the LA would prove successful, 'this time not only with Syrian aid and supervision and with international backing and support, but according to a new political consensus embodied in the Ta'if Agreement of 1989.'[59] In 1991 the Lebanese Defence Minister

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[53] Gaub. Military Integration After Civil Wars. p.61
[54] Barak. The Lebanese Army. p.179
[55] Brigadier-General Nizar Abdel-Kader. "US Military Assistance to Lebanon: Equipping LAF Not Transforming It."
    National Defence Magazine, No. 82. (2012)
[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Oren Barak. "Towards a Representative Military? The Transformation of the Lebanese Officer Corps since
1945." *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 60, No. 1. (2006) p.90
[59] Oren Barak. "Commemorating Malikiyya" p.73

proclaimed 'there is no state and no legitimate rule without a unified army.'[60] Given political support such as this, the LA became the vanguard of reform in post-war Lebanon, as Barak notes: 'the most salient reform...took place in the army.'[61] Through ensuring that it was not dominated by a single group, and acting indiscriminately against militias of all faiths, the LA was able to reimagine itself as a pan-Lebanese institution. Restructuring created brigades and units that were composed of mixed groups at every level which therefore had no affiliation to a region or group. Furthermore, reclaiming past glories and highlighting continuities from before the Civil War allowed the LA to portray itself as legitimate and permanent, transcending the upheavals that had devastated the country. Whilst the LA 'has managed to impose itself as the symbol of unity, reconciliation, transethnicity and a peaceful Lebanon as such, the state (or rather politics and politicians) is the symbol of war-time, fragmentation and interethnic strife.'[62]

The extent to which the construction of a multiethnic military in post-war Lebanon is, of course, limited by the re-emergence of Hezbollah as a military force after it initially participated in the structures established by the Ta'if Agreement and 'dismissed any notion of otherthrowing the Lebanese regime.'[63] Although Hezbollah maintained a low-intensity conflict against Israeli forces and their allies in the south of Lebanon, it was not until 2000 when its operations escalated considerably. As Israeli forces withdrew, Hezbollah stepped up their attacks and rapidly advance into the formerly occupied territory.[64] The presence of Hezbollah in Lebanon undermines the LA's monopoly on the legitimate use of force, as well its claim to represent all groups within Lebanese society.

Three key themes can be identified from the case of the reconstruction of the LA after the Civil War. First, it became clear that attempts to reform or rebuild the LA whilst the conflict continued were impeded not by opposition, reluctance or incompetence at the military level, but by the breakdown of political consensus. Once a renewed political consensus had been reached in the Ta'if Agreement, backed by international and regional actors, reforms to the LA proceeded rapidly and effectively. Second, in order to attain an image of unity, drastic changes had to be made to the structure of the LA. Units lost their identity, normally derived from their geographic origin or confessional composition, and soldiers were redistributed, merged and re-branded in order to create new units that could only be identified as Lebanese. Furthermore, the officer corps and chain of command were vigorously reformed, with officers who did not fit the new model of the LA being retired or

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[60] Barak. *The Lebanese Army.* p.176
[61] Ibid. p.175
[62] Gaub. *Military Integration After Civil Wars*. p.80
[63] Dominique Avon & Anaïs-Trissa Khatchadourian. (Jane Marie Todd, trans) *Hezbollah: A History of the "Party of God."* (Cambridge, 2012) p.41
[64] Ibid. p.55

dismissed, proving that there was no place for sentimentality in the reform process. Thirdly, the reforms which took place in the LA led the entire reform process in post-war Lebanon, setting a precedent and an example to other institutions. Thus, while militias were disarmed and state authority was gradually reasserted, the reconstructed LA became a symbol of a unified and peaceful Lebanon.

Case Study 2: The British Army

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UK) is the product of centuries of political upheaval and institutional consolidation. In 1535 Wales was formally annexed to the Kingdom of England, in 1542 Henry VIII claimed the title of King of Ireland for the English monarch, and in 1603 King James became the first sovereign to rule over both England and Scotland. The English Civil Wars (1642-51) led to the consolidation, albeit briefly, of the three kingdoms into the English Commonwealth, which was nominally a republic. The restoration of King Charles II, however, led to a return to the former structure, in which a single monarch ruled over three separate kingdoms. In 1707, the kingdoms of England (including Wales) and Scotland were formally unified by the Act of Union, creating the Kingdom of Great Britain. Almost a century later, in 1800, the Kingdom of Great Britain was formally unified with the Kingdom of Ireland, forming the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, which existed until the formation of the Irish Free State in 1921. Linda Colley argues that the Acts of Union with Scotland and Ireland were the direct result of 'the threat posed by France' and suggests that 'recurrent wars with France had made it possible for the different countries, social classes and ethnic groups contained in Great Britain to have something in common.'[1] It was in these recurrent wars with France that the British Army and its regimental system were both forged.

The origin of the modern British Army (BA) is usually ascribed to a ceremony which took place upon the return of Charles II to England in 1660. The soldiers of the former New Model Army, victors of the English Civil Wars, laid down their arms, then picked them up again in the name of their new king.[2] Since this ceremonial act, the BA has enjoyed an uninterrupted existence as an institution to the present day. Throughout its lifetime, the BA has been a multiethnic force, and while the technology and nature of conflict has developed dramatically during this period, the manner in which the BA has approached questions of identity has been remarkably consistent.

The following overview of the development of the composition of the BA provides an illustration of the complexity challenge British military planners faced when they were trying to forge a cohesive army from the various ethnic groups that form the UK. Indeed, the earliest demographic data for the British Isles, the 1821 censuses of Great Britain and Ireland, highlights the diverse range of ethnic and religious identities within the polity. The censuses revealed a total population of almost 21.5 million, 52.3 percent of whom lived in England; 32.4 percent in Ireland; 9.9 percent in Scotland; 3.4

[1] Linda Colley. *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707 – 1827.* (Yale, 1992) p.322

[2] Allan Mallinson. *The Making of the British Army: From the English Civil War to the War on Terror.* (London, 2009) p.28

percent lived in Wales; and 1.5 percent were serving in the military.[3] The population was further divided by religion. Although the majority of the population were Protestant (predominantly Anglican), a significant minority were Catholic, most notably in Ireland, where they constituted a majority.

The longevity of the BA suggests that the puzzle of how to form a cohesive military from such diversity was solved. Although no clear policy or intention can be identified regarding recruitment, structure, and organisation for the initial two centuries of the history of the BA, the ad-hoc solutions that sustained it for that initial period were gradually formalised in the late-nineteenth century. The product of this process was the regimental system, a method of organisation that not only offers a unique solution to the challenge of building multiethnic armies, but one that has also been widely praised for the cohesion and effectiveness it instills in armies that employ it. This has led to the system being employed by militaries across the world. Furthermore, as the organisational method applied to the unified Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2005, an analysis of the design and development of the regimental system will provide an understanding of how and why a system formerly the preserve of the anglosphere was employed by the military of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The New Model Army inherited by Charles II upon the Restoration was rapidly reduced in size, and was eventually limited to a few regiments of Guards.[4] Separate military establishments existed in both Scotland and Ireland at the time. However, the army in Scotland was negligibly small and while the garrison in Ireland was much larger, it was loosely organised.[5] However, as the pressures of war and empire increased, so the size of the BA grew, and its composition became ever more complex. The BA filled its ranks with soldiers from a panoply of other countries, such as Danish and Hessian mercenaries and Hanoverian and Dutch royal guards.[6] Significant contingents were provided by refugees, such as the Huguenots, one of whom, Field Marshall Jean Louis, Lord Ligonier, rose to the rank of Commander-in-Chief from 1757-66.[7] Furthermore, during the fight against Napoleon, the BA grew to an unprecedented size, leading to shortages in recruiting. As a result, during this period 20 percent of the BA was composed of 'foreign soldiers,' including 'French royalists, Germans, Greeks, Corsicans, and Negroes.'[8] Such groups, constituting clear minorities and being motivated by financial

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[3] 1821 Census of Great Britain; 1821 Census of Ireland, Online Historical Population Reports. Available: http://histpop.org/ohpr/servlet/Show?page=Home (Accessed: 21/02/2018)

[4] Ibid. p.29

[5] John Childs. "The Resortation Army, 1660 – 1702." In David Chandler, ed. *The Oxford History of the British Army.* (Oxford, 1994) p.51

[6] Alan Guy. "The Army of the Georges, 1714 – 1783." In David Chandler, ed. *The Oxford History of the British Army.* (Oxford, 1994) p.99

[7] Ibid. p.92

[8] David Gates. "The Transformation of the Army, 1783 – 1815." In David Chandler, ed. *The Oxford History of the British Army.* (Oxford, 1994) p.138

contracts rather than national loyalty, presented few problems to the British military leadership. It was the incorporation of groups within the British Isles, such as Scots and Irish, which posed the greatest challenge.

In 1681, the Second Royal North British Dragoons, or Scots Greys, was formed, the first standing Scottish unit in the BA.[9] The Nine Years War (1688-97) led to the unofficial merging of the military establishments of England, Ireland, and Scotland, a process which was institutionalised with the formal union of England and Scotland, both militarily and politically, a decade later. The merging of the English and Scottish military establishments resulted in the significant inclusion of Scottish officers and soldiers in the BA, as well as the establishment of numerous Scottish units. Between 1714 and 1763, 25 percent of the officers in the BA were Scottish, a number far greater than their proportion of the population.[10] The Jacobite rising of 1745, launched in the Scottish Highlands by Bonnie Prince Charlie, did little to stem the recruitment of Scots into the BA, and can even be argued to have catalysed it. Between 1725 and 1800, 37 Highland regiments, totalling 70,000 men, were raised.[11] Prime Minister William Pitt the Elder would defend the decision to recruit the erstwhile rebels, stating:

> It is indifferent to me, whether a man was rocked in his cradle on this side or that of the
> Tweed. I sought for merit wherever it was to be found... and I found it in the mountains of
> the north. I called it forth, and drew it into your service, a hardy and intrepid race of men!
> ...These men, in the last war were brought to combat on your side: they served with fidelity,
> as they fought with valour, and conquered for you in every part of the world: detested be
> national reflections against them![12]

By 1759, Scots comprised 16 percent of the soldiers based in Britain, and 27.5 percent of the soldiers and 31.5 percent of the officers based in North America.[13] Hew Strachan observes that the recruitment of highlanders served both the British and Highlanders. The British needed more men and found a ready supply of them among the displaced population following the clearances of the Highlands. Furthermore, removing men of military age from the Highlands would reduce the chance of another rebellion. For the Highlanders, Strachan contends, 'military service offered a way back from rebellion and defeat,' as those families 'whose titles and estates were forfeit were able to

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[9] Mallinson. *The Making of the British Army.* p.31
[10] Hew Strachan. "Scotland's Military Identity." *The Scottish Historical Review,* Vol. 85, No. 2. (2008) p.322
[11] Trevor Royle. *Queen's Own Highlanders: A Concise History.* (Mainstream Publishing, 2007) p.1
[12] Ibid.
[13] Stephen Conway. "War and National Identity in the Mid-Eighteenth-Century British Isles." *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 116, No. 468. (2001) p.877; Strachan. "Scotland's Military Identity." p.321

redeem both by raising regiments and so proving loyalty to the Hanoverians.'[14] Thus, the British can be seen to have 'exploited clan loyalties to form regiments while simultaneously destroying the clans themselves.'[15]

The BA which fought Napoleon was disproportionately Scottish, as they constituted approximately 17 percent of the force. However, in the ensuing years this proportion fell, to 13 percent in 1830, and 10.5 percent in 1870 (by which point the Scots comprised 8 percent of the UK population). By the 1870s, falling numbers of Scottish recruits resulted in five ostensibly Scottish regiments having fewer than 15 percent of their personnel hailing from Scotland.[16] However, as Strachan notes, 'the warrior image of the Highlands proved both powerful and resilient' and was eventually appropriated by the Scots as a universal symbol of Scotland.[17] An 1862 *History of the Scottish Regiments in the British Army*, written by a Scotsman, illustrates the extent to which a Scottish military identity had been reconciled with service in the BA:

> Consistent with the bold and adventurous spirit of the Scotsman, we find him pushing his fortune in almost every land under the sun; with brave and manly heart going down to the battle of life… Of all the many and varied departments of life in which the Scotsman has been distinguished, he is most pre-eminent in the honourable profession of a soldier.[18]

The mass-recruitment of Highlanders by the British, and the subsequent expansion of Highland identity to encompass Scotland as a whole, offers a clear example of ethnic mobilisation. Existing pre-modern identities were institutionalised by the BA, which created a 'warrior race' of soldiers, the boundaries of which were gradually expanded to include even urban lowland Scots. As a result, Catriona Kennedy and Matthew McCormack observe, 'the rising reputation of Highland troops within the British army has been viewed as a vital means of cementing Scotland's attachment to the Union,' while J.E. Cookson argues that the Highland regiments became 'proud symbols of Scotland's ancient nationhood and of her equal partnership with England in a British Empire.'[19]

In 1689 the Royal Irish Regiment joined the English military establishment, becoming the first Irish unit of the BA. Despite a pervasive belief among the leadership in London that Catholics were 'unreliable by definition' and therefore Irish Protestants should remain in Ireland to suppress any

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[14] Strachan. "Scotland's Military Identity." p.322
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid. p.326
[17] Ibid. pp.326-27
[18] Archibald Murray. *History of the Scottish Regiments of the British Army.* (Glasgow, 1862) pp.78-79
[19] Catriona Kennedy and Matthew McCormack. "New Histories of Soldiering." In Catriona Kennedy and Matthew McCormack, eds. *Soldiering in Britain and Ireland, 1750 – 1850.* (Basingstoke, 2013) pp.8-9; John Cookson. *The British Armed Nation, 1793 – 1815.* (Oxford, 1997) p.129

uprisings, many Irish of both faiths served in the BA.[20] Indeed, Protestants only made up approximately ten percent of the population. Although the Protestants had more reason to serve in the BA and were considered more trustworthy by the British government, Irish Catholics joined the military in increasing numbers, to the extent that in the First World War they made up around three-quarters of the casualties from the island.[21] Stephen Conway notes that of the BA soldiers based in Britain in 1756 only 4.4 percent were Irish. However, he stipulates that most Irish recruits served overseas. Although precise figures are, according to Conway, unavailable, he illustrates the extent of Irish service abroad with the composition of 11 regiments which gathered in Halifax, Nova Scotia, in 1757. Forty-three percent of the soldiers were English (and Welsh), 40 percent were Irish, and 17 percent were Scots.[22] The pressures of the American War of Independence led to the Catholic Relief Bill in 1778, which allowed both Irish and British Catholics formally to serve in the BA.[23]

By the time of the Napoleonic Wars approximately 159,000 Irishmen were serving in British Regiments, in addition to eight Irish regiments recruited in Ireland, leading some historians to estimate that as many as half of the Duke of Wellington's army in the Peninsular War was Irish.[24] In 1830, the Irish contingent of the BA peaked at 42.2 percent, far outweighing Ireland's proportion of the UK's total population. By 1868, following the famine and ensuing migration, this figure had fallen to 30.4 percent, and by 1890 only 14.5 percent of the BA hailed from Ireland.[25] Considering the history of British military activity in Ireland and the colonisation of parts of the country by Protestants, the extent of Irish participation in the BA is surprising. However, as Kennedy argues: 'the French revolutionaries' aggressive drive for dechristianization meant that the war against republican and even Napoleonic France could now be presented as a struggle between European Christian order and an imperialistic atheist state.' Thus, she continues, 'there was no paradox in an Irishman accepting a commission in the British Army.'[26]

Furthermore, Kennedy notes how 'the army was not a crucible of Britishness, insofar as it did not strive to impose a single, unitary identity on its Irish recruits' and 'the national regiments cultivated a

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[20] Conway. "War and National Identity in the Mid-Eighteenth-Century British Isles." p.878
[21] Robin Bury. Buried Lives: The Protestants of Southern Ireland. (Dublin, 2017) p.16
[22] Conway. "War and National Identity in the Mid-Eighteenth-Century British Isles." p.879
[23] Catriona Kennedy. "'True Brittons and Real Irish': Irish Catholics in the British Army during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars." In Catriona Kennedy and Matthew McCormack, eds. Soldiering in Britain and Ireland, 1750 – 1850. (Basingstoke, 2013) p.40
[24] Peter Karsten. "Irish Soldiers in the British Army, 1792 – 1922: Suborned or Subordinate." Journal of Social History, Vol. 17, No. 1. (1993) p.36; Desmond and Jean Bowen. Heroic Option: The Irish in the British Army. (Barnsley, 2005) p.xiv
[25] Karsten. "Irish Soldiers in the British Army, 1792 – 1922: Suborned or Subordinate" p.36
[26] Kennedy. "True Brittons and Real Irish." p.44

distinctive form of regimental Irishness.'[27] The recruitment of Irish into the BA can therefore be seen as another example of ethnic mobilisation, in which the non-state (at the time) identity of Irishness was embraced by the British military leadership, and Irishmen served in an institution which recognised and entrenched their identity, rather than attempting to supplant it with a British one. Central to facilitating the successful mobilisation of Scottish and Irish soldiers into the BA was the form of administration and organisation pioneered by the British military: the regimental system.

The Regimental System

Despite its widespread application and well-documented history, any definition of the regimental system must remain fluid. Socio-economic developments, coupled with advances in technology and military organisation, mean that the parameters of what a regiment is – in terms of structure, composition, identity, and purpose – are constantly changing. David French, in his detailed study of military identities in the BA, postulates that 'the language of the "regiment" is so shot through with anomalies that to talk of a "regimental system" is itself almost a misnomer, for there was much about it that was anything but systematic.'[28] Perhaps the only consistent observation of the regimental system focuses on its abstract, emotional appeal. When joining a regiment, a soldier enters a community which offers them an inspirational heritage, a legacy to defend, and the support of a "family" in a manner considerably more personal than the faceless bureaucracy of an army organised along the lines of the continental system. Such a dynamic, it is argued, fosters *esprit de corps* and boosts the morale of troops, ultimately leading to increased combat effectiveness and cohesion. This understanding of the regimental system is perhaps best illustrated by Queen Elizabeth II, who, when addressing a group of regimental colonels in 1956, told them that the British Army:

> More perhaps than any other in the world, has always lived through the regiment and the regimental tradition. In the hour of battle, it has repeatedly relied on it, on the pride and comradeship of men who would sooner die than betray the traditions of their corps or be unworthy of the men of old who fought before them under its colours. There is no first among the regiments and corps of my Army and there is no last; all are bound in the same spirit of brotherhood and proud service to sovereign and country and each regards itself – with every reason – as second to none.[29]

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[27] Ibid. p.51
[28] David French. *Military Identities: The Regimental System, the British Army, and the British People, c.1870-2000.* (Oxford, 2007) p.7
[29] Ibid. p.2

The regiment was both the key operational and administrative unit of the BA prior the formal establishment of the regimental system. During this period, 'for the individual, the regiment *was* [emphasis in original] the army. Officers would be commissioned and promoted in the regiment, while men would be recruited into the regiment and remained with it until death or discharged.'[30] In 1871, Edward Cardwell, the Secretary of State for War, passed the Regulation of the Forces Act, laying the foundation for the modern regimental system. The Act divided the country into 66 districts loosely based on the counties and regions of the UK, each of which would house a regimental depot and support two battalions, which together would form a regiment. One battalion would serve abroad for a period usually of five years, whilst the other would remain in its home county and focus on recruitment and training.[31] The creation of territorial designations and the establishment of links with local communities under the Cardwell reforms had mixed results. In some cases, the reforms simply formalised existing practices and required little implementation. However, in many instances the efforts have been described as 'the reinvention of "tradition" with a vengeance,' and the idea that all of the regiments constituted a community or family has been dismissed as 'largely bogus.'[32] The reforms introduced by Cardwell created regiments from units as disparate as the 27/Inniskilling Fusiliers (based in Ireland) and the 108/Madras Infantry (based in India), and in some cases, the composite parts of the regiment rarely interacted. The two regular battalions of the Sherwood Foresters, for example, did not meet at all between 1899 and 1938.[33]

In 1881, Hugh Childers, building upon Cardwell's work, continued the reform process and attempted to reinforce regimental identities. French points out that, in pursuit of these new identities, 'the regimental and military authorities manipulated symbols, rituals, ceremonies, and "histories" to create a new regimental *esprit de corps*.' Most regiments were named after their home county, such as The Devonshire Regiment, however those with distinct ethnic identities had them recognised, resulting in the formation of units such as The Royal Irish Regiment, The Welsh Regiment, and The Black Watch (Royal Highlanders). The ethnic distinctions between the regiments were highlighted in the uniforms of the soldiers. English and Welsh regiments sported roses on the lace of officers and white facings on the redcoats of their soldiers; Scottish regiments bore thistles, yellow facings, and some wore kilts; and shamrocks and green facings decorated the Irish regiments.[34] Furthermore, the

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[30] Bob Burnham & Ron McGuigan. *The British Army Against Napoleon: Facts, Lists and Trivia, 1805-1815.* (Philadelphia, 2010) p.59

[31] Lieutenant Colonel Jim Storr. "The Regimental System in the British Army – 1685-2010." in Peter Dennis & Jeffrey Grey, eds. *Raise, Train and Sustain: Delivering Land Combat Power.* (Canberra, 2010) p.245

[32] French. *Military Identities.* pp.77-78

[33] Ibid. p.78

[34] It should be noted that by 1931 only 16 line-infantry regiments still wore the facings they had been prescribed in 1881; French. *Military Identities.* p.96

battle honours inscribed on the regimental colours (the flag historically carried into battle) not only distinguished units from each other, but also served as a record of a regiment's history. Modifications, based on past glories, were also made to the uniforms of the soldiers in a regiment. In 1801, for example, the 28th (North Gloucestershire) Regiment was awarded the honour of wearing an extra Sphinx emblem on the back of their headdresses to commemorate the bravery displayed at the Battle of Alexandria, where they were simultaneously attacked in the front and rear by French forces.[35] Customs such as this led to a situation in which, as French states:

> No two regiments in the British Army wore exactly the same uniform. Variations might in some cases be quite minor – a different pattern of button or cap-badge – but the functions of the differences were quite deliberate. They were a visible symbol of the common identity that each member of the regiment shared, and they enhanced each regiment's sense of separateness.[36]

The expression of unique identities by the regiments of the British Army was not restricted to names and uniforms. Numerous measures were taken to instil a distinct cultural identity for each regiment in order to further embellish their separateness. Each regiment possessed an unpaid titular head of the regiment in the form of a Colonel, usually a retired or serving senior officer, who, whilst serving a purely symbolic role, would act as a patriarchal figurehead and preside over institutions that created 'the image of the regiment as a community' such as the Regimental Association.[37] The Regimental Associations offered financial and emotional assistance to present and former soldiers and their families, organised regimental events, erected memorials to fallen comrades and published regimental journals and histories.[38] The journals focussed on military and sporting triumphs of the regiment, and also offered extracts from the historical records and tales of heroism, while most of the histories 'presented a chronological account of the significant achievements of the regiment, concentrating on wars and battles, rather than on the dreary years of garrison service that was the lot of most soldiers.'[39] The focus on rooting the regiment deep in the past and ensuring the continuation of its traditions is explained to some extent by Lieutenant General Sir Alastair Irwin: 'To one degree or another the past provides a powerful motive for performing well in the present. And

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[35] Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum. *The Battle of Alexandria.* (SOGM) Available at: http://www.soldiersofglos.com/1801/05/20/the-battle-of-alexandria/ (Accessed: 18/09/2017)
[36] French. *Military Identities.* p.85
[37] Ibid. p.79
[38] Ibid. p.87
[39] Ibid. p.83

so, we must not lightly sever the direct links with that past.'[40] However, it is evident that such links with the past are, to some extent, created.

The activities of the Regimental Associations underpinned the effort to foster unique identities among the regiments of the British Army. French argues that, far from being an organic process, the Regimental Associations acted with 'the explicit purpose of influencing behaviour of men in the present and the future,' and intended to 'bolster pride in the regiment amongst its members, to encourage the present generation to enlist, and then to emulate the heroic deeds of their predecessors.'[41] One regimental history, for example, warned that 'the past is the heritage which nothing can take from you, but the present and the future are in your hands, see that you are worthy of these great traditions.'[42] Irwin observes that the celebration of heritage and identity in the Regimental System offers soldiers 'a sense of belonging to an entity which has an existence, a past, present and future of its own.'[43] The community, he continues,

> extends over several generations, across all ranks, serving and retired. In belonging to this community its members benefit from a powerful sense of mutual support, of comradeship, of obligation to others in the regimental family. These provide the encouragement and moral strength necessary to sustain the regiment or corps through good times and bad.'[44]

Furnishing the regiments of the BA with regional and national attachments and names, unique uniforms, and individual histories served to delegate the question of identity to the regiments themselves. This allowed each regiment to tailor the accoutrements of its appearance and heritage to represent the personnel who, in theory at least, served in the regiment. Kennedy argues that 'the regimental system, moreover, meant that the BA was able to manage an array of different personal, regional and national attachments that reflected the composite character of the UK and its component patriotisms.'[45] In many cases, the composite character of the UK was exaggerated. The 1881 reorganisation, if applied consistently, should have resulted in the reduction of kilted Highland regiments from five to two and half. However, this proposition met with institutional resistance (supported by the Queen), and the result was 'the reverse of manpower logic' and the preservation of all five regiments, which had formerly English regiments grafted onto them. Furthermore, the 'highland craze' was extended to all Scottish regiments, and Lowland regiments adopted 'semi-

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[40] Irwin. "What is best in the regimental system?" p.2
[41] Ibid. p.83
[42] Anon. *A Short History of 13th Hussars.* (Aldershot, 1923) p.63 Quoted in: French. *Military Identities.* p.84
[43] Lieutenant General Sir Alistair Irwin. "What is best in the regimental system?" in *The RUSI Journal.* Vol. 149, No. 5. (June 2008) p.2
[44] Ibid. P.2
[45] Kennedy. "True Brittons and Real Irish." p.38

highland' features such as 'basket-hilted broadswords, pipe bands and tartan trews.'[46] The special attention paid to the Scottish regiments during the 1881 reforms led to the overrepresentation of Scotland within the BA, and served to 'confirm, and even to extend, the specifically Scottish identities of Scottish regiments.'[47]

Little evidence can be found to suggest that any effort was made by the British military leadership to create a "British" or "UK" identity in the military. The Duke of Cambridge, Commander-in-Chief of the BA in the mid-nineteenth century, the time of the first reforms, postulated that a 'truly British army was being forged, made up of English, Irish and Scottish battalions, which by serving together in the empire promoted a form of national homogeneity.'[48] Indeed, during this period the military was the only profession whose members 'uniformly operated in an all-British context.'[49] However, camaraderie between soldiers that have fought together does not necessarily lead to the erosion of ethnic identities or the emergence of a new, overarching identity. Nor does it reflect a conscious effort by the military to create one. Kennedy contends that 'there is little evidence that the BA tried actively to propagandize its captive audience of soldiers.'[50] She continues, speculating that 'what the army may have offered was a flexible and, in an important sense, specifically military identity,' noting that 'if there was little institutional effort to foster an attachment to the British nation, the army, nonetheless, provided a context for interaction and encounters between soldiers from across the four nations.'[51]

The British approach to overcoming the challenge posed by building an army from multiple ethno-national groups can be defined by the military's recognition and institutionalisation of the varied identities from which it was formed. Enshrining regional and national identities within the administrative units of the BA signalled that both Scottish and Irish identities were as integral to the military as the numerically dominant English identity. That in many cases the personnel within each regiment had little or no attachment to it, as with the multitude of Irishmen serving in English regiments, or with Lowland Scots or English serving in Highland regiments, appears to have done little to dilute these regimental identities.

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[46] Hew Strachan. "Scotland's Military Identity." p.327
[47] Ibid. p.327
[48] Ibid. p.326
[49] Laurence Brockliss. "The Professions and National Identity." in Laurence Brockliss and David Eastwood, eds. *A Union of Multiple Identities: The British Isles, c.1750 – c.1850.* (Manchester, 1997) p.9
[50] Kennedy. "True Brittons and Real Irish." p.45
[51] Ibid. p.51; 45

French, in his excellent study of military identities, concludes his chapter on the regimental system by highlighting the machinations and circumstances which led to its implementation and development:

> Regiments were culturally defined organisations that were bound together by shared historical memories, customs, and a myth of descent, not by the common ethnic or local origins of their members. They were the product of a particular set of historical circumstances, the Cardwell-Childers reforms, and of the need identified by the military authorities to find a way of instilling morale and discipline into the large number of short-service recruits that the Regular Army needed. The idea of a 'regiment' was something that was artificially constructed by the Colonels of Regiments and their senior officers. In many cases their efforts were rewarded with success.[52]

That the regiments were no more than the product of 'invented tradition' and military policy serves to underscore that, despite the somewhat organic appearance of the BA, its approach to multiethnicity is the product of informed decision and design. Three key themes can be identified from the success of this design. First, the institutionalisation of the main composite identities of the BA through the establishment of regiments with regional and national affiliations can be viewed to have minimised the perception that the BA was a tool to erode and destroy ethnic identities, and was instead a tool by which such identities could become incorporated into the wider polity. Second, little to no effort was made on behalf of the state to utilise the military to shape, manipulate, or create a "British" identity. Indeed, the evidence suggests a *laissez-faire* attitude in which soldiers naturally interacted with personnel and units from across the UK, developing a sense of their shared purpose, with the state and the military offering minimal direction to such developments. Third, the overrepresentation of ethnic groups such as Scots and Irish, compounded by the exaggeration of identities such as those of the Highlanders, illustrates the process of ethnic mobilisation as described by Cynthia Enloe.[53] Although the circumstances of the overrepresentation are most likely explained by myriad circumstances such as poverty, the outcome was a military which represented something closer to a partnership between the nations, rather than an English army supplemented with Irish and Scottish auxiliaries.

Conclusion

The case studies illustrate a number of approaches that have been employed by the state to create a cohesive and representative military from a multiethnic society. In both the Lebanese and the British

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[52] French. *Military Identities.* p.98
[53] Cynthia Enloe. *Ethnic Soldiers: State Security in a Divided Society.* (London, 1980)

cases, it was critically important to construct a military in which all of the constituent identities of society were represented. However, where Lebanon's military leadership designed its army (after the civil war) to be ethnically balanced in its composition, but removed all indicators of religious or geographic attachments from its units, the British military paid little attention to the individual identities of its soldiers, and instead assured the representation of all ethnic groups through embedding the heritage and identity of each group in particular units. Furthermore, although both armies perform the role of a social agent and contribute to creating an identity shared among their composite elements, the attitude of the leadership of each army is markedly different. In Lebanon, the use of conscription, mixed units, and rotational deployments around the country indicates a firm commitment to the idea that the military can serve as a school of the nation. Indeed, the priority given to forming a unified army when attempting to rebuild the state during and after the civil war suggests the military was seen as the most important tool for unifying the population and rebuilding Lebanese identity. In contrast, British military planners have rarely made use of conscription, and no efforts have been made to employ the British Army consciously to forge identities other than regimental ones.

The fact that two different armies have developed seemingly successful yet contrasting solutions to the same problem illustrates that there is no "correct" way to structure a multiethnic army or utilise the military within a society. It does, however, present an opportunity to identify two different models, each of which are inspired, but adapted to a specifically military context, by Sabrina Ramet's exemplary analysis of the approaches with which the leadership of socialist Yugoslavia viewed the pervasive "national question."[54] The first can be described as "Integral Organisation." This model is, in many ways, consistent with the concept of civic nationalism, which Smith notes is 'based on the idea that the nation was a rational association of citizens bound by common laws and a shared territory.'[55] Thus, when Integral Organisation is utilised, recruits serve on the basis of their citizenship and are organised, for example, in ethnically mixed units. Furthermore, little recognition is offered to names and symbols other than those of the state and the military. This combination of factors makes the military, whether the intentional result of policy or not, a social agent and an institution of integration, one which can be utilised by policymakers to attempt to forge a state-wide national identity. Viewed in this manner, the post-Ta'if Agreement Lebanese Army can be seen as an example of this model, as soldiers were organised in mixed units without any symbolic attachments

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[54] Sabrina Ramet. *Nationalism and Federalism in Yugoslavia, 1962-1991.* (Indiana, 1992); These approaches, and their relation to the Yugoslav military, are discussed in detail in the next chapter.
[55] Anthony Smith. *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology, History.* (Polity Press, 2010) p.43

to ethnic groups, and the Lebanese government actively employed the military as a tool to forge a shared national identity based on service, citizenship, and civic nationalism.

The other model, best illustrated by the regimental system of the British Army, is "Organic Organisation." This method is, to an extent, the inverse of Integral Organisation, and reflects an approach in which ethnic groups are incorporated into the wider polity as constituent elements of it, much like in many consociational forms of governance. Arend Ljiphart contends that: 'democratic government in divided societies requires two key elements: power sharing and group autonomy' and points out that 'these two characteristics are the primary attributes of the kind of democratic system that is often referred to as power-sharing democracy, or to use a technical political-science term, "consociational" democracy.'[56] Employing names and symbols associated with ethnic groups to differentiate military units from each other, and in some cases organising personnel on the basis of ethnicity, offers a significant degree of group autonomy. Furthermore, the organisation of military units in this way can be viewed, at a symbolic level, as the division of military power and responsibility between the constituent groups that compose the state. Indeed, such units can even be viewed as bastions and vehicles of ethnic identities, which not only protect them, but enhance them. Major General VK Srivastava and Colonel GD Bakshi of the Indian Army, a military which employ the regimental system, illustrate this view:

> The Indian Army is a microcosm that faithfully represents the rich and vibrant diversity of the Indian macrocosm. . .this unique regimental system creates a mini ethno-universe of sorts – a cultural microcosm that faithfully replicates and preserves the cultural and ethnic background and context that the recruit comes from.[57]

Understood in this way, the regimental system draws numerous parallels with consociationalism. Like in many divided societies that are governed by consociational administrations, the British Army has solved the challenge of building a multiethnic military by ensuring it is an institution which preserves and values Irish, Scottish, and Welsh identities, rather than employing it as a tool to forge a prescribed British one.

The following chapter explores the ways in which Yugoslav policymakers attempted to build a cohesive and effective military from the various nations and nationalities that they governed through the prism of the ideas discussed in this chapter. It charts an evolving approach, in which both the integral and organic models of military organisation were employed. Together with this

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[56] Ibid.
[57] Major General VK Srivastava & Colonel GD Bakshi. "Infantry Regiments: The cutting edge of soldiering." *Indian Defence Review.* (17/10/2011)

chapter, it provides vital context for understanding both the military history of the Western Balkans and the political challenges and dilemmas that stood in the way of those who aimed to build a multiethnic military in post-Yugoslav Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Chapter Three: The Yugoslav People's Army – A Precursor?

The Yugoslav People's Army (*Jugoslovenska narodna armija,* JNA), the army of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (*Socijalistička federativna Republika Jugoslavija*, SFRJ), was one of the largest military forces in Europe during the Cold War. Alongside Yugoslav territorial defence forces, it was credited with making Yugoslavia 'an invincible bastion for every aggressor' an 'armed fortress' and a 'veritable hornets' nest for any enemy force.'[1] From its origins as a modest force of 12,000 communist agitators at the outset of the Second World War, the JNA developed and expanded to become an integral part of Yugoslav society.[2] As the Yugoslavs developed their unique interpretation of socialism, so the role and structures of the JNA would change to reflect the evolving nature of the state it served. It succeeded in its task of deterring invasion from both East and West and remained a cohesive force through numerous political and economic crises. However, in the final years of its existence, the JNA became a pawn in the machinations of various nationalist leaders as they vied for power during the collapse of the Yugoslav state.[3] This chapter will provide an historical overview of the origins and development of the JNA, examine its relationship to the Yugoslav state and Yugoslav identity, and analyse the myriad ways in which it was utilised to address the twin challenges of defending the state from external (and internal) aggression and unifying a population with disparate ethno-national identities into a cohesive fighting force.

Origins

In April 1941, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was invaded and occupied by Axis forces, which effortlessly routed the Royal Yugoslav Army. The exiled King Peter II convened a government in London, whilst a former officer in the Royal Yugoslav Army, Dragoljub "Draža" Mihailović, organised a resistance movement in occupied-Serbia, centred around irregular formations composed of Chetnik Detachments. The Chetniks (*četnici*) were characterised by their monarchist and Serb nationalist ideology, and whilst they would later establish *modus vivendi* and collaborate with the occupying forces, they were initially recognised by the British as allies. During the initial months of the war, the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (*Komunistička partija Jugoslavije,* KPJ) remained underground. However, following the Axis invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941, the President of the KPJ, Josip

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[1] Nikola Ljubičić. *Total National Defence – Strategy of Peace.* (Belgrade, 1977) p.252; Richard Herrick. *The Yugoslav People's Army: its military and political mission.* (Monterey, 1980) p.14; Herrick. *The Yugoslav People's Army.* p.45

[2] A. Ross Johnson. "The Role of the Military in Yugoslavia: An Historical Sketch." in Roman Kolkowicz and Andrzej Korbonski, eds, *Soldiers, Peasants, and Bureaucrats: Civil-Military Relations in Communist and Modernizing Societies.* (London, 1982) p.182

[3] This process is explored in detail in chapters four and five.

"Tito" Broz, issued a proclamation to the peoples of Yugoslavia to 'rise up against the German, Italian, Hungarian, and Bulgarian invaders.'[4] Meanwhile, the Party began organising military units and formed the National Liberation Movement (*Narodnooslobodilački pokret,* NOP) to lead the uprising.

The Partisans, as the members of the NOP were called, employed guerrilla tactics and strategy to combat their more numerous, better armed, and more prepared opponents. Initially, the scope of their operations was limited due to the overwhelmingly disparity between their own forces and those of the Axis occupation, which were also supported by troops raised by local quisling governments. These early operations were carried out by small groups, often simply carrying out ambushes and raids in their local area, as Nikola Ljubičić, a Partisan who fought alongside Tito throughout the war and became Secretary of Defence in 1967, recalls:

> In the initial period of the National Liberation War. . . our military organisation featured a wide network of territorial units of different types, names and sizes. But the basic form of military organisation was the National Liberation Partisan Detachment.[5]

Whilst the Communists led the Movement, they were careful to garner support from as much of the Yugoslav population as possible. Retaining a broad base not only strengthened the legitimacy of the Partisans, but it also allowed them to fill their ranks and increase the scale of their operations more rapidly. Vladimir Dedijer, another Partisan (who later fell out of favour with the regime), notes how:

> Tito stressed that the Partisan detachments were called National Liberation Detachments because they were the fighting formations not of any political party or group. . . but were the fighting forces of the people of Yugoslavia and should therefore include all patriots, whatever their views.[6]

On 22 December 1941, exactly six months after Tito proclaimed the beginning of the uprising, the first regular military formation of the NOP, the First Proletarian Brigade, was established in Rudo, Bosnia. Dedijer records that after observing the high number of workers and miners in some units, Tito decided to bring them together into a larger force than the usual Partisan Detachments. The new units were elite, with service in them being considered the 'highest honour for every individual fighting man.'[7] They were 'characterised by their firm discipline and by their methods of warfare,' were distinguished from other units by flying the hammer and sickle standard and wearing the red

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[4] Vladimir Dedijer. *Tito Speaks: His self-portrait and struggle with Stalin.* (Norwich, 1953) p.145
[5] Ljubičić. *Total National Defence.* p.57
[6] Dedijer. *Tito Speaks.* p.153
[7] James Gow. *Legitimacy and the Military: The Yugoslav Crisis.* (London, 1992) p.43

star on their *titovka* (adapted from the Russian *pilotka*) caps, and were not 'bound to regions where they had originated, but would fight in all parts of Yugoslavia.'[8] Whilst the National Liberation Detachments offered localised resistance to the occupiers, the Proletarian Brigades were supposed to emulate the "shock" units of the Red Army and serve as a foundation from which an army capable of liberating all Yugoslav territory could be built. Furthermore, the Proletarian Brigades were intended to be drawn from all Yugoslav populations. It was believed that by fighting shoulder-to-shoulder, the brigades would help to 'overcome the deep divisions in the Yugoslav society' and 'mould a "new man."'[9] In practice, however, the First Brigade remained dominated by Serbs and Montenegrins, and contained 'only sprinklings of "fighters" from other nations.'[10]

In terms of doctrine, personnel, and ideology the Proletarian Brigades were the genesis of the JNA. As the war developed they increased both in size and number, alongside regionally based units that were commanded principally by officers from the respective region, who answered to a regional command and gave orders using the respective local language.[11] In early 1942, the NOP was renamed, becoming the National Liberation Army of Yugoslavia (*Narodnooslobodilačka vojska Jugoslavije*, NOVJ), and later that year, Dedijer records, it consisted of 150,000 fighters. This figure would double within a year.[12] Yugoslav Communists who had fought in the International Brigades of the Spanish Civil War (known as "Spaniards") were key in organising and leading the rapidly expanding army. Twenty-nine of them became Partisan generals, and every Partisan army was led by a Spaniard. Even Tito's deputy, Ivan Gosnjak, had fought in Spain.[13] The Party consolidated control of the army through commissars, who established 'Political Sections' within Partisan formations for 'the transmittal of political directives.'[14]

On 29 November 1943, the Antifascist Council of the National Liberation of Yugoslavia (*Antifašističko vijeće narodnog oslobođenja Jugoslavije,* AVNOJ*)* met in the town of Jajce, in central Bosnia. The council had been formed a year before to administer territory liberated by the Partisans and represented the political leadership of the resistance movement. The dominance of the KPJ in the armed forces of the NOVJ was reflected in the composition of the AVNOJ. For all intents and purposes, the latter was simply the political arm of the Partisan movement, and the former was the

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[8] Ibid. p.172

[9] Anton Bebler. "Political Pluralism and the Yugoslav Professional Military." in Jim Seroka & Vukasin Pavlovic, eds. *The Tragedy of Yugoslavia: The Failure of Democratic Transformation.* (New York, 1992) p.106

[10] Ibid. p.106

[11] A. Ross Johnson. "The Role of the Military in Yugoslavia: An Historical Sketch." p.182

[12] Dedijer. *Tito Speaks.* p.186, 202

[13] Johnson. "The Role of the Military in Yugoslavia." p.182; Bebler. "Political Pluralism and the Yugoslav Professional Military." p.110

[14] Ibid. P 182

military arm, as William Deakin, a British officer who served alongside the Partisans, notes: 'The political and military aspects of the direction of the Yugoslav National Liberation Movement were deliberately and inextricably intertwined.'[15] The meeting in Jajce culminated with the formal rejection of the authority of the exiled monarchy, the declaration that a new Yugoslav state based on 'democratic federal principles' had been formed, and the appointment of Tito as Marshal of Yugoslavia and Prime Minister.[16] There was little that King Peter II and his government in London could offer in response, particularly as the Partisans' strength and reputation increased across Yugoslavia.

By the end of the war the NOVJ had grown into a formidable force which incorporated between 700,000 and 800,000 fighters organised in forty-eight divisions and four armies, and was renamed again, this time to the Yugoslav Army (*Jugoslavenska armija*, JA).[17] It had developed from a largely Serb and Montenegrin (75 – 80 percent) force to an army which, to an extent, reflected the Yugoslav population: The Partisans claimed that in May 1944 the national composition of the NOVJ was 44 percent Serb, 30 percent Croat, 10 percent Slovene, 5 percent Montenegrin, 2.5 percent Macedonian, and 2.5 percent Muslim.[18] Such claims are supported by the observations of outsiders such as Deakin, who notes that 'the central conclusion of our observations was that the Natoinal Liberation Army, in marked and forceful contrast to the pan-Serb, anti-Croat, and anti-Moslem obsessions of the Mihailović Četniks, was a *Yugoslav* military organization.'[19] Whilst the NOVJ had received limited supplies from the British, and Soviet forces had provided considerable assistance in the Belgrade Offensive, the Partisans had liberated the majority of Yugoslav territory by themselves, making Yugoslavia (with the exception of Albania) the only country in Europe able to claim it had liberated itself.[20] Central to the Partisans' success was the mantra of "brotherhood and unity," which A. Ross Johnson argues signified 'opposition both to the Serb hegemony of interwar Yugoslavia and the national fratricide of World War II.'[21] The inclusivity of brotherhood and unity, coupled with a respectful policy towards Yugoslav civilians during the war and the ultimate victory of the Partisans,

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[15] William Deakin. *The Embattled Mountain.* (Oxford, 1971) p.88; Sabrina Ramet. *Nationalism and Federalism in Yugoslavia, 1962-1991.* (Indiana, 1992) p.49

[16] AVNOJ. *The Declaration from the Second Session of the Anti-Fascist Council of National Liberation of Yugoslavia.* (Jajce, 1943)

[17] Tomislav Dulić & Roland Kostić. "Yugoslavs in Arms: Guerrilla Tradition, Total Defence and the Ethnic Security Dilemma." *Europe-Asia Studies,* Vol. 62, No. 7. (2010) p.1058; Johnson. "The Role of the Military in Yugoslavia." p.181

[18] Gow. *Legitimacy and the Military.* p.54; Sabrina Ramet. *The Three Yugoslavias: State-Building and Legitimation, 1918-2004.* (Indiana, 2006) p.153

[19] Deakin. *The Embattled Mountain.* p.106

[20] Adam Roberts. *Nations in Arms: The Theory and Practice of Territorial Defence.* (London, 1976) p.124

[21] Johnson. "The Role of the Military in Yugoslavia." p.182

laid a solid foundation upon which the nascent state could draw legitimacy across its territory and consolidate its position in the aftermath of war.

The cost of their victory was considerable, however, with Yugoslav estimates placing wartime losses at approximately 1,700,000. Dedijer lamented: 'Every ninth Yugoslav gave his life in the war.'[22] These figures are likely to have been exaggerated, as James Gow notes: 'around 1 million Yugoslavs died, according to calculations broadly accepted by non-partisan experts.'[23] On Victory Day (9 May 1945), Tito gave a speech celebrating the triumph of the partisans. He lauded the soldiers of the NOVJ, telling them:

> Your immortal deeds will live forever in the hearts of our peoples and their future generations. The arena of the glorious battles of the Sutjeska, of Zelengora, Kozara, and the Neretva, etc, will remain eternal monuments to your heroism and that of your fallen comrades. They will inspire future generations of our peoples and will teach them how to love their country and how to die for it. They will be monuments of our national pride in the struggle for freedom and independence.

> The new Yugoslav Army, an Army forged in the fires of the fiercest battles, an Army which is comprised of yourselves, a true people's army which has won such glorious victories, must remain, and will remain, the unshakable defender of the achievements of our superhuman struggle.[24]

Through recognising the sacrifices and bravery of the partisans, promising eternal monuments, and designating a role for the army following the war, Tito was outlining his vision for the SFRJ. The costly victory earned by the Partisans provided the founding myth and a common focus of memorialisation for the new state, whilst the JA would preserve what had been won – national liberation and social revolution. This narrative, emphasising the shared nature of the triumph, was embraced by the Yugoslav military leadership, as Branko Mamula, a Partisan and later Yugoslav Minister of Defence, illustrates:

> Each of our nations and each of our nationalities were the vehicles of the struggle for their own national emancipation and that all of them together, by their common struggle managed, despite adversity, to score a victory over a militarily far superior enemy.[25]

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[22] Dedijer. *Tito Speaks.* P 244
[23] James Gow. *The Serbian Project and its Adversaries: A Strategy of War Crimes.* (London: Hurst, 2003) p.35
[24] Josip Broz Tito. *The Selected Works of Josip Broz Tito.* (New York, 2013) pp.25-29
[25] Branko Mamula. *Small Countries' Defence.* (Belgrade, 1988) p.201

In March 1945, the JA was quickly reorganised into a more conventional fighting force, a process Adam Roberts argues this was because 'Soviet influence and Soviet-style administrative socialism were at their height in the country' and Yugoslavia's main challenge at this point was 'reasserting central authority in a fragmented country.'[26] The Soviets had sent their first military mission to Yugoslavia in February 1944, and following Victory Day their assistance rapidly increased. Thousands of Yugoslav officers and soldiers were sent to the Soviet military schools, the JA was organised on Red Army lines, and became increasingly armed by Soviet weaponry, including 125,446 rifles, 38,210 sub-machine guns, 14,296 machine guns, in addition to hundreds of tanks and aeroplanes, and thousands of artillery pieces and mortars.[27] Whilst the transformation of the JA into a conventional army may seem at odds with the Yugoslav experience of the Second World War, James Gow contends that this decision resulted from Yugoslav belief in Soviet institutions (particularly the effective and experienced Red Army), and was consistent with other efforts to emulate Soviet structures during Yugoslavia's 'statist' (or Stalinist) phase.[28]

Within a few years, however, the differing visions Stalin and Tito had for the future of the Balkans would prove to be irreconcilable. A key point of contention was Tito's independent foreign policy, particularly his ambition to incorporate neighbouring Albania. Jeronim Perović, in his analysis of Soviet documents relating to the period, challenges the 'version propagated in the official Yugoslav historiography' and argues that 'the main reason for the conflict was Stalin's dismay when Tito continued to pursue an expansionist foreign policy agenda.'[29] Robert Niebuhr concurs, noting that 'there was simply little room for a strong personality like Tito, whose rise to supremacy in Belgrade threatened to upset the global competition for power.'[30] As a result, in June 1948 Yugoslavia was condemned and at a meeting of Cominform and expelled from the organisation.[31] The following year, the Soviets renounced the Soviet-Yugoslav friendship treaty and began a series of military manoeuvres in neighbouring countries.[32]

Fear of Soviet invasion led to a rapid reconsideration of Yugoslavia's defensive capabilities, resulting in the formation of Partisan units, the establishment of Partisan headquarters throughout

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[26] Roberts. *Nations in Arms.* p.124
[27] Miloš Vasić. "The Yugoslav Army and the Post-Yugoslav Armies." in David Dyker & Ivan Vejvoda, eds. *Yugoslavia and After: A Study in Fragmentation, Despair and Rebirth.* (Harlow, 1996) p.120
[28] Gow. *Legitimacy and the Military.* p.42
[29] Jeronim Perović. "The Tito-Stalin split: a reassessment in light of new evidence." *Journal of Cold War Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 2. (2007) p.34
[30] Robert Niebuhr. "Enlarging Yugoslavia: Tito's Quest for Expansion, 1945 – 1948." *European History Quarterly,* Vol. 47, No. 2. (2017) p.287
[31] Perović. "The Tito-Stalin split." p.60
[32] Dulić & Kostić. "Yugoslavs in Arms." p.1058; Johnson. "The Role of the Military in Yugoslavia." p.183

Yugoslavia, and the caching of weapons and explosives.[33] By 1949, 149 regiments and 20 independent brigades had been formed by the JNA to supplement their defensive capacity.[34] Yugoslavia's isolation in the Communist world forced it to look westwards for assistance, and whilst Tito continued to denounce imperialism, economic aid was negotiated from Britain, France, and the United States in 1950, followed by American military aid in 1951. This would continue until 1958, and provided the Yugoslav Army with an array of heavy weapons and aircraft.[35] On Army Day, 22 December 1951, the military was renamed in order to signal severance with the past, finally becoming the JNA, and the Soviet model and commissar system were abolished.[36] The threat of invasion stimulated further military expansion, and by 1952 Yugoslavia boasted an army of half a million men and a defence budget, as a percentage of the national economy, that was the biggest in the world.[37]

Post-war Consolidation and "Integral Yugoslavism"

On 31 January 1946, the Constitution of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia was promulgated. A clear link can be identified between the legitimacy of the regime and its wartime credentials: authority in the new Yugoslav order, the constitution explained, 'derives from the people and belongs to the people,' who had 'exercised their authority through the people's committees. . . which had originated and developed during the struggle for national liberation. . . and are the fundamental achievement of that struggle.'[38] The constitution established Yugoslavia as a federation of six republics: Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, and Montenegro, along with the autonomous province of Vojvodina and the autonomous region of Kosovo-Metohija. The new Yugoslavia, in contrast to the interwar kingdom, lent considerable respect for the national sensitivities, linguistic rights, and cultural needs of almost all of the Yugoslav population. Two broad categories were recognised: The "nations" (*narodi*), consisting of Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Macedonians, Montenegrins, and (from 1971) Muslims; and the "nationalities" (*narodnosti*), consisting of Albanians, Hungarians, Turks, Slovaks, Bulgarians, Romanians, Ruthenes/Ukrainians, Czechs, and Italians.[39] The constitution enshrined the sovereign rights, security, equality, and national freedom of the nations (through the republics), and the right of the

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[33] Dulić & Kostić. "Yugoslavs in Arms." p.1058
[34] Gow. *Legitimacy and the Military.* p.43
[35] Roberts. *Nations in Arms.* p.147
[36] Gow. *Legitimacy and the Military.* p.44; Johnson. "The Role of the Military in Yugoslavia." p.184
[37] Roberts. *Nations in Arms.* p.149
[38] Constituent Assembly of the Federative People's Republic of Yugoslavia. *Constitution of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia.* (Belgrade, 1946)
[39] Ramet. *Nationalism and Federalism in Yugoslavia.* p.55

nationalities to 'their own cultural development and the free use of their own language.' [40] However, not all groups within Yugoslav territory were included in the constitutional provisions. Gypsies were guaranteed "individual rights" but were only afforded equal status with other national groups in the Republic of Macedonia, whilst ethnic Germans (half a million of whom had lived in Yugoslavia prior to 1939) who survived the war and ensuing reprisals had their property confiscated and were interned in work camps until March 1948. Many left when they could, and those who remained after 1948 were employed in state industry and even conscripted into the JA.[41]

	Percentage of Total Polulation			Pecentage of JNA Officer Corps		
	1948	1971	1981	1946	1970	1991
Croats	24	22.1	19.7	22.7	14.7	12.6
Macedonians	5.2	5.8	6	3.6	5.6	6.3
Montenegrins	2.7	2.5	2.6	9.2	10.3	6.2
Muslims	5.1	8.4	8.9	1.9	4	2.4
Serbs	41.5	39.7	36.3	51	57.4	60
Slovenes	8.9	8.2	7.8	9.7	5.2	2.8
Other*	12.6	13.3	18.7	1.9	2.8	6.7
*Includes 'Yugoslavs', Albanians, Hungarians, etc.						

Table 1: National composition of JNA Officer Corps compared with national composituib if Yugoslav population[42]

The JA was quick to begin adapting its own structures to reflect Yugoslav society because, as Gow argues, 'the armed services' legitimacy is dependent, to some considerable extent, on their congruence with the society that spawns them. . . the armed forces' composition must be generally representative of social and ethnic cleavages within society.'[43] Conscription evidently led to a significant cohort of the JA/JNA being proportionally representative, in terms of national identities, of the (male) Yugoslav population. However, approximately half the personnel in the JNA were career soldiers. Table 1, shown above, indicates the national composition of the officer corps, and offers a comparison with the national composition of the whole Yugoslav population. It reveals the challenge faced by the Yugoslav military establishment in attempting to bring together the nations

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[40] Constituent Assembly of the Federative People's Republic of Yugoslavia. *Constitution of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia.*

[41] Almost all ethnic Germans left Yugoslavia by the end of the 1950s. Ramet. *Nationalism and Federalism in Yugoslavia.* p.55; Steffen Prauser & Stanislav Sretenovic. "The "Expulsion" of the German Speaking Minority from Yugoslavia." In Steffan Prauser & Arfon Rees, eds. *The Expulsion of the 'German' Communities from Eastern Europe at the End of the Second World War.* (EUI Working Paper HEC, Florence, 2004) pp.54-56

[42] Table 1, based on information from Johnson. "The Role of the Military in Yugoslavia." p.198; Mile Bjelajac. *Jugoslovensko iskustvo sa multietničkom armijom 1918-1991.* (Belgrade, 1999) p.80

[43] Gow. *Legitimacy and the Military.* p.31

and nationalities of Yugoslavia into a single army, and illustrates the prevalence of Montenegrins and Serbs throughout the army's lifetime. It can be noted, however, that from its formation, all of the nations were represented to some extent within the officer corps. Florian Bieber argues that the multiethnic nature of the army was 'not only key in the general effort to structure Yugoslavia as an inclusive state but also based on the experience of the Royal Yugoslav Army, which lacked legitimacy because it was viewed by non-Serbs as being dominated by Serb officers.'[44] Mile Bjelajac notes that following the war 'one of the most important preoccupations of the state and military management was to adapt the nationality structure [of the army] to the nationality structure of the population' and stipulates that the KPJ 'hoped that the problem of legitimacy in a multi-ethnic society would be overcome by appropriate representation of non-Serbs among Generals and the officer corps in general.'[45]

The initial efforts to create a more representative military, coupled with the federal structure of the state and constitutional provisions that were made, were intended to establish the legitimacy of the new Yugoslavia. However, such policies were not necessarily intended to be permanent, as Sabrina Ramet argues:

> The federal system was presumed to be largely an ephemeral formality and relinquished little authority to the republics. The national heterogeneity was the sole raison d'être for the establishment of federalism, with each republic except Bosnia-Herzegovina named after and consecrated as the official political embodiment of a discrete national group. The anticipated process of homogenization would, therefore, erode the basis for the federal system.[46]

This hypothesis is strengthened if the changes in the structure and role of the JA in the aftermath of the Second World War, which reflected political developments within Yugoslavia, are considered. From the AVNOJ declaration in 1943, until the Eight Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (the successor of the KPJ; *Savez komunista Jugoslavije,* SKJ) in December 1964, the dominant school of thought within the Yugoslav leadership was that the nations and nationalities of Yugoslavia would homogenise into a new socialist nation.[47] It was during this period that the term "Yugoslav" was first considered as a national category, and the idea of "Yugoslav Culture" was

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[44] Florian Bieber. "The Role of the Yugoslav People's Army in the Dissolution of Yugoslavia: The Army without a State?" in Lenard Cohen & Jasna Dragović-Soso, eds. *State Collapse in South-Eastern Europe: New Perspectives on Yugoslavia's Disintegration.* (Indiana, 2008) p.305

[45] Mile Bjelajac. "The Military and Yugoslav Unity." in Dejan Djokić, ed. *Yugoslavism: Histories of a Failed Idea, 1918-1992.* (London, 2003) p.219; Bjelajac. *Jugoslovensko Iskustvo Sa Multietničkom Armijom 1918-1991.* p.49

[46] Ramet. *Nationalism and Federalism in Yugoslavia.* p.50

[47] Ibid. p.51

endorsed, signifying Party recognition of "Yugoslavism" (*Jugoslovenstvo*).[48] Yugoslavism developed

alongside the state that espoused it, undergoing transformations and reinterpretations when it was

deemed necessary. Initially, at least, it represented what Ramet describes as 'Integral Yugoslavism':

the belief that a new Yugoslav nation was in the process of forming, and that 'national specificity and

affective attachment to Yugoslavia were…antagonistic.'[49] One of the leading proponents of this

thinking was Aleksandar Ranković, an ardent centralist whom many viewed as having "Stalinist"

tendencies, who, as head of all public and secret police forces (and Organisation Secretary of the

SKJ), was the third most powerful man in socialist Yugoslavia.[50] The military became a leading

instrument in the efforts to forge a Yugoslav identity.

The JA/JNA was a conscript force in which all able males served. The period of service changed

several times, but in 1972 was set at fifteen months for Ground and Air Forces, and eighteen months

for the Navy, with a reduction to twelve months for persons 'of a high education.'[51] The conscripts,

as a matter of policy, underwent training in republics other than their own, and would serve in units

of mixed nationality.[52] Such a model can be explained by two key factors. Primarily, mixing

conscripts and career soldiers from across Yugoslav territory clearly indicates an intention to utilise

the military as a "School of the Nation" in which men of different trades, ethnicity, and geographical

origin are forged into the vanguard of the Yugoslav nation-building project. However, as the SFRJ

leadership believed that 'every nationalism is dangerous' a more palatable rationale was offered.[53]

Mitja Ribičič, as President of the Federal Executive Council, summarises:

> Our point of departure is the working man and self-manager as the basic factor. . . the
>
> dilemma over the creation of armies belonging to each nationality has no real basis in our
>
> society, as the peoples and nationalities already have their army, created in revolution and
>
> through joint efforts and sacrifices.[54]

The JNA was the army of the Yugoslav working class, a revolutionary army, in which there was no

place for reactionary tendencies such as nationalism, and by extension, military organisation on the

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[48] Ibid.

[49] Ibid. p.179

[50] Slobodan Stankovic. *Aleksandar Rankovic – Political Profile of a Yugoslav "Stalinist."* (Radio Free Europe, 1983) p.1

[51] Mensur Seferović, ed. *Armed Forces of the SFRY: On Guard of the Peace and Freedom.* (Belgrade, 1977) p.83

[52] Marko Milivojević. "The Political Role of the Yugoslav People's Army in Contemporary Yugoslavia." in Marko Milivojević, John Allcock & Pierre Maurer. *Yugoslavia's Security Dilemmas: Armed Forces, National Defence and Foreign Policy.* (Braford, 1988) p.39

[53] Sabrina Ramet. *The Three Yugoslavias: State-building and Legitimation, 1918-2005.* (Indiana, 2006) p.603

[54] Mitja Ribičič. "The Armed People in Defense of Socialism and Independence." in Olga Mladenović, ed. *The Yugoslav Concept of General People's Defense.* (Belgrade, 1970). pp.31-2

basis of nationality. Tito emphasised as much following the Croatian Crisis in 1971: he said that Croatian separatists, by calling for a 'Croatian Army,' had wanted:

> Little by little to take the army in their own, Croatian hands . . . they will have to wait a long time for this. I believe that the Sava will first have to start running upstream toward the Triglav before that happens.[55]

With conscripts from various nations being deployed and trained away from their homes, language came to pose a challenge to integration efforts. Whilst Serbo-Croat was spoken across Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, and Montenegro, it contained numerous regional dialects, the most dominant of which were *ekavica* and *ijekavica.* Furthermore, Slovenian and Macedonian were distinct languages, and an additional complication to the linguistic composition of Yugoslavia can be found in the use of two alphabets. Generally, Slovenia and Croatia used the Latin script, whilst Macedonia used Cyrillic, and Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, and Montenegro used both. The JNA found a balance between functionality and national equality by employing the *ekavica* (largely spoken in Serbia) variation of Serbo-Croat written in the Latin script as the language of command.[56] This language represented an effort to inculcate Yugoslav soldiers and officers with a shared language, and with it, a shared identity.

For multiple national groups to unite in an area as venerated and symbolic as the military, a shared focus of loyalty that can transcend national differences must be present. For Yugoslavia, this was Tito. Revolutionary, Partisan leader, heroic liberator, Field Marshal, Supreme Commander, Secretary of Defence, Prime Minister and President, Tito was inextricably intertwined with the both the Yugoslav state and military. His wartime credentials earned him unparalleled prestige across Yugoslav society, especially in the army, whilst his national identity (half Croat, half Slovene) helped to allay fears of a return to Serb hegemony. Partisans who had fought for (and alongside) him in the Second World War dominated the institutions of Yugoslavia. Bjelajac purports that in 1954, 86.7 percent of JNA officers were former Partisans; in 1959, eighty percent; in 1963, 73.8 percent; and in 1969, 43.9 percent.[57] Robin Alison Remington describes this 'generational cohort bonded to the military' as 'the "club of 1941."'[58] Ljubičić, one of the members of the "Club of '41," expresses his veneration clearly. He notes 'Tito's greatness as a revolutionary, as the inspirer and strategist of the revolution on Yugoslav soil' and argues that his wartime strategy was 'the equivalent of a scientific

[55] Borba. (Belgrade, 1971) quoted in: Milivojević. "The Political Role of the Yugoslav People's Army in Contemporary Yugoslavia." p.21

[56] Bjelajac. *Jugoslovensko iskustvo sa multietničkom armijom 1918-1991.* p.100

[57] Ibid. p.52

[58] Robin Alison Remington. "The Yugoslav Army in Transition." in Constantine Danopoulos & Daniel Zirker, eds. *Civil-Military Relations in the Soviet and Yugoslav Successor States.* (Boulder, 1996) p.157

discovery' which 'opened a new epoch in the history of war.'[59] Edvard Kardelj, another "Club of '41" member and a prominent architect of the Yugoslav state, declared:

> It is at this point that Tito's great role in the history of the working class and peoples of Yugoslavia begins. For Tito is the leading creative personality of our revolutionary workers' movement, armed by the Communist Party of Yugoslavia with the highest perceptions and means, which assured its success and victory.[60]

Ann Lane notes that during the early 1950s 'Tito, as founding father of Yugoslav state was elevated, or perhaps elevated himself, into the role of cult figure.'[61] Tamara Pavasović Trošt argues that 'one can quickly conclude that Josip Broz Tito possessed – and indeed succeeded in building the perception of – the qualities of genuine charismatic authority' and further stipulates that he was 'particularly successful in maintaining his public image and using it as an anchor for a united Yugoslavia.'[62] Even following his death in 1980, Tito remained a powerful figure in the JNA. Miroslav Hadžić observes that he became used as 'a model, a theoretical and methodological standard, as legitimacy, supreme evidence, an ideological and political whip, and also a totem.'[63]

Along with Tito, socialism provided a key pillar of unity in Yugoslavia. For the military, it served as a powerful integrative agent and provided an inclusive, supranational ideology which could offer the most direct solution to the problems arising from creating an army from multiple nations. If soldiers and officers could be convinced to subscribe to socialism and identify as socialists, they would come to share an ideology which emphasised their equality and class (rather than national) identity. The army, therefore, was not only responsible for defending the state and forging a Yugoslav identity, but also became the custodian of the achievements of the revolution and responsible for its continuation, a duty made clear by Tito in 1971: 'the task of our army is not merely to defend the territorial integrity of our country, but also to defend our socialism when we see that it is in danger and that it cannot be defended by other means.'[64] In order to diffuse and promote Yugoslav socialism, both within the military and out into society, the army was utilised, as 'a key instrument by which conscript youths were socialised into the values of the Yugoslav Communist system.'[65]

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[59] Ljubičić. *Total National Defence.* p.19

[60] Edvard Kardelj. "Tito and the League of Communists of Yugoslavia." (1967) quoted in Ljubičić. *Total National Defence.* p.21

[61] Ann Lane. *Yugoslavia: When Ideas Collide.* (London, 2004) p.119

[62] Tamara Pavasović Trošt. "A Personality Cult Transformed: The Evolution of Tito's Image in Serbian and Croatian Textbooks, 1974-2010." *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism,* Vol. 14, No. 1. (2014) pp.46-7

[63] Miroslav Hadžić. *The Yugoslav People's Agony: The role of the Yugoslav People's Agony.* (Farnham, 2002) p.56

[64] Slobodan Stankovic. *Tito Praises Yugoslav Army.* (Radio Free Europe, 1971) p.2

[65] Johnson. "The Role of the Military in Yugoslavia." p.187

Soldiers were given obligatory reading from the Party and the military's own press, had to attend political and ideological lectures, and were encouraged to participate in recommended political and social activities in civilian society.[66] Furthermore, they received political education and training (*političko obrazovanje i vaspitanje*) which provided them with 'Marxist-based scientific knowledge about society and man, the working class as the mainstay of revolutionary changes, the War of National Liberation and the socialistic revolution, [and] about building a self-managed society as a community of equal nations and nationalities.'[67] Gow notes that 'the result of this education, other political work within the army and, presumably, peer-group pressure, was the nurturing of a "brotherhood and unity" spirit and the "Yugoslav" idea.'[68]

During the Second World War, the Yugoslav Communists had been careful to portray the NOP as an open organisation largely free from strict ideological tenets. However, as the war progressed the communist element of the Partisans became increasingly pronounced, and by Victory Day the JA was undoubtedly a socialist army: the KPJ grew from a pre-war figure of 12,000 to a 1945 membership of 140,000, the vast majority of whom had joined via the military.[69] Dean observes that 'the institutional roots of party and army are the same: they grew together out of the Partisan struggle and in that formative period were highly integrated organisationally and ideologically,' whilst Vašić argues that the army was simply the military arm of the KPJ.[70] The only political organisations soldiers within the JNA were allowed to be associated with were the KPJ (after 1952 the SKJ) itself and its youth wing, and any vestige of religious representation that remained from the NOVJ was repressed.[71] The open and enforced politicisation of the military was a notable success. The JNA itself proudly stated that the SKJ 'exists in every military collective, unit and establishment and more than 90 per cent of the leading cadres belong to it,' continuing that the purpose was to ensure the 'highest level of ideo-political consciousness possible.'[72] Marko Milivojević reports that in 1978, 100,000 of the JNA's 240,000 men were in the SKJ, with all commanding officers and nearly all senior enlisted men being members as 'membership of the [SKJ] is a condition that has to be met by anyone who wishes to be considered for officer status.'[73] Such was the presence of the Party in the military that the JNA developed its own Communist Party, the SKJ-JNA, which accounted for 5-6 per

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[66] Anton Bebler. "Political Pluralism and the Yugoslav Professional Military." in Jim Seroka & Vukasin Pavlovic, eds. *The Tragedy of Yugoslavia: The Failure of Democratic Transformation.* (New York, 1992) p.108
[67] Hadžić. *The Yugoslav People's Agony.* p.58
[68] Gow. *Legitimacy and the Military.* p.52
[69] Remington. "The Yugoslav Army in Transition." p.156
[70] Dean. "The Yugoslav Army." p.85; Vašić. "The Yugoslav Army and the Post-Yugoslav Armies." p.116
[71] Anton Bebler. "Political Pluralism and the Yugoslav Professional Military." p.108-19
[72] Seferović, ed. *Armed Forces of the SFRY.* p.81
[73] Milivojević. "The Political Role of the Yugoslav People's Army in Contemporary Yugoslavia." p.31

cent of the total SKJ membership.[74] Ljubičič describes the SKJ-JNA has having 'concerned themselves...with everything of significance for the Army's development,' elaborating that:

> They actively promote the revolutionary and all-people's character of the Army; educate Army men in the spirit of the Yugoslav socialist revolution; develop socialist morale; consolidate the brotherhood and unity of the nations and nationalities of Yugoslavia; [and] foster Yugoslav socialist patriotism and internationalism.[75]

In a reform of the organisation of the SKJ in 1974, a Central Committee was formed in which the JNA was given fifteen seats (ten percent of the total), the same proportion as the autonomous provinces, giving it a 'stronger voice...than ever before,' and made it the most politically represented military in Europe (except for Albania.)[76]

The military was an institution which embodied the society many in the Yugoslav leadership aspired to build. In theory at least, it transcended the national divisions within Yugoslavia, was vehemently socialist, and free from external pressures and commitments. The JNA's position as the vanguard of socialist Yugoslav society placed it in a uniquely privileged position, from which it was offered a high degree of formal autonomy and sovereignty within the state. It was not until 1966 that its finances were even scrutinised, and until the 1980s the budget was linked to national income.[77] In addition, the JNA controlled large parts of the economy (most significantly, the entire defence industry) and conducted its own foreign trade. Indeed, estimates suggest that the JNA produced eighty percent of the combat material it required, and Yugoslav arms exports to non-aligned countries exceeded the value of arms imported by Yugoslavia.[78] The power and wealth acquired by the JNA was manifested in the everyday lives of the officers and personnel of the JNA, as Vašić illustrates: '[They] had their own apartment blocks, their privileged shops, their medical care, their courts of law; the army bank offered them privileged credits, their wives were employed without problems.'[79] Petrović describes the system as a "society within a society" as they would also holiday in specific JNA resorts, and would attend exclusive concerts, dancing evenings and theatre in JNA *dom vojske* (Home of the Army) cultural centres.[80] Furthermore, the army had its own political representation, enjoyed

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[74] Bebler. "Political Pluralism and the Yugoslav Professional Military." p.122
[75] Ljubičić. *Total National Defence.* p.340
[76] Zdenko Antic. *Yugoslav Army Influence to be Strengthened.* (Radio Free Europe, 1974); Bebler. "Political Pluralism and the Yugoslav Professional Military." p.109
[77] Roberts. *Nations in Arms.* p.158; Bieber. "The Role of the Yugoslav People's Army in the Dissolution of Yugoslavia." p.303
[78] Roberts. *Nations in Arms.* pp.195-6
[79] Vašić. "The Yugoslav Army and the Post-Yugoslav Armies." p.120
[80] Tanja Petrović. "Officers without an Army: Memories of Socialism and Everyday Strategies in Post-Socialist Slovenia." in Breda Luthar & Maruša Pušnik, eds. *Remembering Utopia: The Culture of Everyday Life in Socialist Yugoslavia.* (Washington, DC, 2010) p.96

generally high social esteem among the country's population, and its leadership was 'in a unique position in the communist world to comment publicly and critically on sensitive public issues.'[81] The elevation of the JNA to such a position in society represents a more tangible effort to supplement the ideological focus of Yugoslav Socialism with incentives to literally "buy-in" to the idea. Through establishing legitimacy and utilising ideology, education, party membership, and the privileged position it enjoyed in society the JNA went to great lengths to push integrative measures and forge bonds between its soldiers that transcended national divisions and would ensure unity.

There remains a further method of integrating the multiplicity of identities that was central to both the military and the state: memorialisation. The considerable number of Yugoslavs who died in the Second World War provided a shared experience of loss, victimhood and tragedy. The struggle of the Partisans against a militarily superior foe conveyed a message of shared sacrifice and heroism, and the Partisan victory offered a narrative of strength in unity and shared triumph. Together, this collective memory of the Second World War provided the fertile ground for the founding myth of the state and the JNA to be developed.

In his Victory Day speech Tito had envisioned 'eternal monuments' and 'monuments of our national pride' being created to honour the fallen and celebrate the heroism of the Partisans.[82] Following the war such monuments were built at the sites of enemy atrocities and Partisan battles across Yugoslavia. The importance of these locations were emphasised, and such sites became the 'altar of the homeland, the holy grounds of the new socialist religion.'[83] Vladana Putnik describes the memorials thus: 'They depicted the martyrdom of the partisans and the civil victims as sacrifices in the struggle against fascism and for the establishment of communism.'[84] The Battle of Sutjeska, one of the significant engagements of the war, was memorialised with an initial monument at Tjentište in 1949, which was then replaced in 1958 and further enriched by an additional memorial complex completed in 1974. Putnik observes that memorials such as Tjentište, often built in inaccessible locations, were symbols of the state which became 'obligatory places for the student excursions to visit.'[85] In addition to the monuments, public holidays marked significant days of the Second World War. The fourth of July became Fighter's Day and memorialised the beginning of the uprising against the Axis occupiers in 1941, and the twenty-first (later twenty-second) of December became Army Day, and commemorated the formation of the NOP in 1941. Monuments across Yugoslavia and the

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[81] Milivojević. "The Political Role of the Yugoslav People's Army in Contemporary Yugoslavia." p.33
[82] Tito. *The Selected Works of Josip Broz Tito.* p.26
[83] Vladana Putnik. "Second World War monuments in Yugoslavia as witnesses of the past and the future." *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change,* Vol. 14, No. 3. (2016) p.208
[84] Ibid.
[85] Ibid. p.209

public holidays enjoyed across the country dispensed a message of the shared, Yugoslav, nature of the conflict.

Another key aspect of the memorialisation process conducted by the SFRJ was in cinema, most significantly the production of *Partizanski filmovi* (Partisan Films). Jurica Pavičić notes that 'throughout the forty-three years of Yugoslav cinema, partisan film was commercially the most successful, ideologically the most representative and culturally the most typical film of all genres.'[86] The Partisan Films often depicted the great tales of the struggle and ultimate victory of the Partisans, in productions such as Battle of Neretva (1969), Walter Defends Sarajevo (1972), and Battle of Sutjeska (1973). Pavičić argues that 'all of them organise their narrative around the legitimisation of the new regime through its war merits.'[87] The partisan films served to illustrate a clear narrative of the righteousness of the Partisan cause and the importance of unity, whilst also highlighting the martyrs and heroes' sacrifices to the causes of liberation and socialism, reinforcing and promulgating the founding myth of both the state and the JNA.

The JNA itself, whilst often the object of memorialisation, conducted commemorative events. Ceremonies and military parades can be regarded as a common feature of most societies and serve to commemorate the fallen and reiterate a national narrative. The JNA was no exception to this, but it did develop a rather unique perspective on memorialising the Partisans. The plan for responding to a NATO invasion from the North-West, for example, was named "Sutjeska 2," while large-scale training exercises were given names such as "Freedom-71" and would often take place on the site of Partisan battles. "Podgora-72" was a demonstration in celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of the navy and air force, and enacted a hypothetical attack on Tito's wartime headquarters on the island of Vis. As part of the "Kornati-74" exercise wreaths were laid in memory of the Partisans 'to remind the younger generation of the national liberation struggle.'[88] The evocation of the Partisan legacy in planning and training illustrates an attempt by JNA officers (who were mostly former Partisans) to imbibe recruits and conscripts with a sense of the wartime struggle, celebrate the founding myth of the JNA, and promote the ideology of brotherhood and unity.

The celebration and commemoration of the Partisans gave the JNA a clear identity and offered it a glorious, and importantly, shared, founding myth: It was the multiethnic Yugoslav Communists and Partisans who, through struggle and sacrifice, had defeated the occupiers. Memorialisation in this

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[86] Jurica Pavičić. "Titoist Cathedrals: The Rise and Fall of Partisan Film." in Gorana Ognjenović & Jasna Jozelić, eds. *Titoism, Self-Determination, Nationalism, Cultural Memory: Volume Two, Tito's Yugoslavia, Stories Untold.* (New York, 2016) p.39

[87] Ibid. p.43

[88] Roberts. *Nations in Arms.* pp.186-7

manner legitimised the regime, laid the foundation for the 'Yugoslav socialist patriotic' identity, and celebrated Partisan ideals such as brotherhood and unity. Whilst impossible to quantify, the impact of such culturally significant messages doubtlessly catalysed the ideological and structural integrative efforts of the JNA.

A Changing Approach and "Organic Yugoslavism"

Between 1948 and 1952, a series of domestic and international political events instigated a dramatic reconsideration of Yugoslavia's state structures and geo-political position. For inspiration, the Yugoslav leadership returned to Marx and Lenin, and devised the doctrine of 'workers self-management' which delegated control of the means of production to the workers themselves, rather than the state controlling it in their name. Furthermore, central planning was shunned in favour of a more decentralised structure which offered more power to the republics.[89] These changes were gradually introduced throughout the 1950s and the early 1960s, but it was not until 1964, at the Eighth Party Congress, that a firm commitment was made dispelling any assimilationist intent:

> The erroneous opinions that our nations have, in the course of our socialist social development, become obsolete and that it is necessary to create a unified Yugoslav nation [are] expression[s] of bureaucratic centralism and unitarism. Such opinions usually reflect ignorance of the political, social, economic, and other functions of the republics and autonomous provinces.[90]

Ramet notes that 'this was unquestionably a turning point both for Yugoslav nationalities policy and for interrepublican relations' and resulted in the republics becoming 'fully legitimate agents of popular sovereignty' while the Yugoslav state became genuinely federal in its structure.[91] Whilst the "Yugoslav" category (introduced in 1961) was retained as an option on the census, the period in which a "Yugoslav" identity was assumed to be gradually replacing those of the nations of Yugoslavia came to an end.

From 1964 onwards, the policy of integral Yugoslavism was replaced with "Yugoslav socialist patriotism." The new approach lacked the supranational, assimilationist element of its predecessor, and was conceptually defined as: 'the identification with, feeling for, and love of the socialist self-managing community' which represented a 'moral force for the unity of the socialist self-managing

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[89] Gow. *Legitimacy and the Military.* p.23

[90] *Osmi kongres Saveza Komunista Jugoslavije* (Belgrade, 1964) quoted in Ramet. *Nationalism and Federalism in Yugoslavia.* p.51

[91] Ramet. *Nationalism and Federalism in Yugoslavia.* pp.51-2

community of nations and nationalities of Yugoslavia.'[92] Ramet describes this new approach to the national question in Yugoslavia as "Organic Yugoslavism," and argues that it included devotion to Yugoslavia as a whole, as well to one's republic.[93] The move away from integral Yugoslavism was cemented following the removal of Ranković, one of its most influential sponsors, from his positions of power in 1966.[94] Robert Dean notes that 'as the decentralization of party and state authority proceeded in the late 1960s, the army remained something of an institutional anomaly – monolithic, hierarchical, centralized' and observes that 'the all-Yugoslav JNA seemed a threat to the rights of Yugoslavia's constituent republics,' a situation which led nationalists to demand the reorganisation of the JNA into monoethnic units, each with their own language of command.[95] Whilst the nationalist demands were ignored, scrutiny of the JNA continued and, for the first time the federal defence budget was subjected to serious criticism in the Yugoslav parliament in December 1966.[96] The developments within the political apparatus of Yugoslavia, coupled with concerns regarding its budget, demanded the JNA reform its own structures. This pressure for reform was compounded in 1968 when Soviet-led forces invaded Czechoslovakia and awareness of the Soviet threat was redoubled.[97]

Upon hearing of the invasion, Tito convened an extraordinary meeting of his top civilian and military leaders on the island of Brioni and, behind closed doors, involved them in an unprecedented debate on Yugoslavia's defences. It was agreed that the JNA was unready for a Soviet invasion, and that Yugoslavia's defensive capacity needed to be significantly increased.[98] Since the formation of the Warsaw Pact in 1955, the JNA had been supplementing its standing army with a significant reserve of partisan formations and from 1959 the official doctrine in case of invasion had been 'combined open-partisan warfare.'[99] It was agreed at Brioni that the existing doctrine, which utilised Yugoslavia's knowledge, experience, and geography, was the most appropriate model, but needed to be rapidly and considerably expanded. Furthermore, the promise of comprehensive military reform would allow the JNA to be brought in line with socio-political developments within Yugoslavia.

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[92] Milan Miladinović. *Jugoslovenski socijalistički patriotizm.* (Belgrade, 1976) quoted in Ramet. *Nationalism and Federalism in Yugoslavia.* pp.53-4
[93] Ramet. *Nationalism and Federalism in Yugoslavia.* pp.51-4
[94] Dulić & Kostić. "Yugoslavs in Arms." p.1059
[95] Dean. "The Yugoslav Army." p.87; Johnson. "The Role of the Military in Yugoslavia." pp.191-2
[96] Roberts. *Nations in Arms.* p.158
[97] Johnson. "The Role of the Military in Yugoslavia." p.184
[98] Bebler. "Political Pluralism and the Yugoslav Professional Military." p.122
[99] Gow. *Legitimacy and the Military.* p.45

Total National Defence (*Opštenarodna odbrana,* ONO) was the product of the meeting on Brioni. It offered an affordable and effective countermeasure to invasion, placated those calling for an increase in the power of the republics, and was largely drawn from the Yugoslav experience of the Second World War. Nikola Ljubičić, one of the architects of ONO, offers an explanation:

> The National Liberation War of the Yugoslav peoples, waged under unfavourable international military-political circumstances and with inferior military equipment, graphically illustrates what can be accomplished by a people who are well-organised, smartly led, and ready and resolved to fight for their vital interests. The Yugoslav liberation war confirmed that the morale of the people and their armed forces – though military weapons and equipment are hurled at them in massive quantities and the war is protracted and exhausting – is the most important, the decisive factor in victory.[100]

At its most basic level, ONO proposed to arm and train as much of the population as possible in partisan warfare. Whoever attempted to occupy Yugoslavia could, the theory went, win some significant victories against the JNA, but would then be faced by millions of trained, armed and organised citizen-soldiers. Estimates suggested that a force of two million soldiers would be needed to effectively subjugate the country.[101] Although ONO was in many ways inspired by the Yugoslav experience in the Second World War, it was not a product of nostalgia. Ljubičić observed the successes of technologically inferior forces in China, Algeria and interwar Indochina, but recognised the unique significance of Vietnam:

> There, a relatively small, poor, impoverished, long suppressed but unified, resolute, morally strong and invincible people for eleven years successfully fought off the million-strong army of the USA and its quislings. Enormous quantities of technical equipment, numerical superiority, the most up-to-date combat equipage, including chemical and biological, the appalling terror and devastation – none of these could defeat the morally firm and determined Vietnam people.[102]

The National Defence Law of 1969 formally introduced ONO, and established Territorial Defence (*Teritorijalna Odbrana,* TO) formations in each of the republics and provinces.[103] The new defence policy was believed to be consistent with the workers self-management tenet of Yugoslav socialism,

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[100] Ljubičić. *Total National Defence.* pp.276-7
[101] A. Ross Johnson. *Total National Defence in Yugoslavia.* (Santa Monica, 1971) p.4
[102] Ljubičić. *Total National Defence.* p.277
[103] Excerpts from the 1969 National Defence Law can be found in Mladenović, ed. *The Yugoslav Concept of General People's Defense.* pp.318-21

and was therefore considered to be wholly appropriate, as Mijalko Todorović, a member of the Executive Bureau of the SKJ illustrates:

> To expand the rights and responsibilities of federal republics, communes, working organisations and other self-managing units does not imply any weakening of our people's unity and defensive power but on the contrary, strengthens and raises them to a new, higher level of self-management.[104]

The TO forces were financed by their respective republics and provinces, utilised the respective local language for administration and command, and stored their weapons locally. Whilst the commanders were usually from the JNA, in every other regard the TO units were organised by regional defence ministries, which were given jurisdiction to direct national defence efforts within their respective territories, making each one an essentially separate and distinct army.[105] Herrick describes the introduction of TO forces as 'a defence structure that allows for the national character of each of its republics and provinces,' whilst Cynthia Enloe notes that, for the first time, 'racial-ethnic categories...were openly accepted.'[106] In addition, it was agreed that twenty-five percent of each republic's troop contribution would be stationed in their home republic, limiting the exposure of conscripts to other nations and nationalities.[107] ONO represented a dramatic change in the JNA's place in Yugoslavia. It was no longer a distinctly Yugoslav institution that was, to some extent, responsible for trying to forge a new Yugoslav identity, but instead became a "co-equal" military force alongside multiple republican armies which offered each republic (particularly Slovenia, which had the most homogenous population of the Yugoslav republics and therefore a TO force that was organised, financed, composed and commanded by Slovenes) 'one of the trappings of national sovereignty.'[108]

The placement of over one-million trained reservists, complemented by further civil defence organisations comprising another million, to the jurisdiction of the republics and provinces had a profound impact on the JNA. Whilst the JNA would retain command in joint tactical operations, it had 'lost its monopoly of responsibility for defence and became nominally (although not de facto) one of two co-equal components of the newly named Armed Forces of Yugoslavia.'[109] The legal

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[104] The Communist Party of Yugoslavia was renamed the League of Communists of Yugoslavia in 1952. Mijalko Todorović. "The Essence of the Concept of General People's Defense." in Mladenović, ed. *The Yugoslav Concept of General People's Defense.* p.45
[105] Florence Gaub. *Military Integration after Civil Wars: multi-ethnic armies, identity and post-conflict reconstruction.* (London, 2001) p.83
[106] Enloe. *Ethnic Soldiers.* p.173
[107] Constitution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. (Belgrade, 1974) Article 243
[108] Gow. *Legitimacy and the Military.* p.31
[109] Johnson. "The Role of the Military in Yugoslavia." p.185

status of the two sections of the Yugoslav military, however, remained ambiguous. Traditionally territorial forces offer little more than support to the conventional army, however, as Ljubičić argued, with the JNA/ONO 'there is not a hierarchy of elements in the system of nation-wide defence, but a combination of reactions in which any success by one expands the radius for action by others.'[110] Ljubičić's assertions would later be confirmed in the 1974 Constitution, which postulated that:

> The Armed Forces of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia form a single whole and consist of the Yugoslav People's Army, as the joint armed forces of all nations and nationalities and of all working people and citizens, and of the Territorial Defence as the broadest form of organized defence forces.[111]

The 1974 Constitution also enshrined other modifications to the structure and organisation of the Yugoslav Armed Forces. The JNA was to become the first army in history that was constitutionally bound to be proportionally representative of the population it defended:

> In terms of composition of the officer cadre, and appointment to higher command and leadership positions in the Yugoslav People's Army, the principle of proportional representation of republics and autonomous provinces will be applied.[112]

To achieve this aim promotion quotas were used to lessen Serb dominance, and recruitment was focused on attracting cadets from under-represented republics. The reorganisation of 1974 immediately led to proportional national representation in all officer schools, the reserve officer corps, and TO units.[113] However, proportional representation by republic did not imply proportional representation by national origin, and the significant numbers of Serbs living outside of the Republic of Serbia were free, for example, to serve in the military as representatives of the republic where they resided. Furthermore, in practice the attempts to mould a more proportional military were limited to the Slavic nations only, and even in this form were subject to internal criticism by the two over-represented groups.[114] Proportional representation was never achieved in the officer corps, and in fact the proportion of Serbs would steadily rise until 1991. Among the leadership cadre (the highest-ranking Generals) however, a degree of proportionality had already been achieved, with Croats in fact becoming the most over-represented nationality. Furthermore, parity was almost

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[110] Nikola Ljubičić. "General People's Defense – The Guarantee of Independence for Socialist Yugoslavia" in Mladenović, ed. *The Yugoslav Concept of General People's Defense.* p.37
[111] Constitution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. (Belgrade, 1974) Article 240.
[112] Ibid. Article 242.
[113] Herrick. *The Yugoslav People's Army.* p.76
[114] Bebler. "Political Pluralism and the Yugoslav Professional Military." p.116

achieved among the lower-ranking Generals, with only Montenegrins being significantly overrepresented.[115] The ONO approach to military organisation illustrates the entrenchment of Yugoslav socialist patriotism in the Yugoslav defence sector and signalled that the attempts to utilise the JNA as the school of a new, Yugoslav nation had ended.

In addition, the 1974 constitution established the equality of languages and alphabets. This led to the authorisation of the Slovenian and Macedonian languages (and the Cyrillic alphabet) in command and training, the publication of educational literature and material in various languages, and JNA recruits were offered local language courses wherever they were stationed.[116] These measures were expanded further in 1988, when the main journals of the JNA, *Narodna Armija* (People's Army) and *Front* (Front), were published in Slovenian and Macedonian, and multi-language signs were introduced at all barracks and military installations.[117] Such measures show a clear rejection of the attempt to create a unifying language shared by all Yugoslavs, and in its place a recognition of the linguistic diversity within the JNA.

The JNA, in its 1974 format, would remain broadly unchanged until the fabric of the SFRJ itself began to unravel. The death of Tito in 1980, economic stagnation, and the collapse of the USSR and European Communism would place tremendous obstacles in the path of the SFRJ. The SKJ was disbanded in 1990, leaving an ideological and political void. In its place, the centrifugal force of nationalism grew in strength in many of the republics. As the last Yugoslav institution, the JNA became the final obstacle to independence for the nationalist movements within some republics and was soon depicted as such. Bjelalac suggests that in Slovenia the JNA came to be portrayed as an occupying, foreign, and fascist force. As a result, Slovenia refused to contribute to the federal defence budget or allow Slovenian recruits to join the JNA.[118] As tensions between the republics increased, the JNA, seeking 'reliable and usable' forces, formed ethnically homogeneous Serbian units for special use in Slovenia in 1991.[119] As the Yugoslav crisis escalated the JNA found itself caught between increasingly vitriolic debates between the leaders of the republics. The collective Presidency that had replaced Tito was all but paralysed by the crisis and General Veljko Kadijević, the Minister of Defence of the SFRJ and de facto leader of the JNA, would not intervene (either in the name of Yugoslavia or Serbia) in the crisis without a mandate from the Presidency.[120] As tensions between the republics erupted into declarations of independence the JNA, given two thirds of its

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[115] Zdenko Antic. *National Structure of the Yugoslav Army Leadership.* (Radio Free Europe, 1972) p.3
[116] Bjelajac. *Jugoslovensko iskustvo sa multietničkom armijom 1918-1991.* p.101
[117] Ibid.
[118] Ibid. pp.103-6
[119] James Gow. *The Serbian Project and its Adversaries.* (London, 2003) p.55
[120] Ibid. pp.56-7

conscripts were Serbs, had few options.[121] Hadžić, a former JNA officer, offers this concise analysis of events: 'The Army could not save the country it belonged to and so in order to survive it had to lean towards the one that Milošević offered. And he was the only one making the offer.'[122]

Conclusion

The Partisans founded the socialist Yugoslav state in the midst of war, establishing a federal system which they hoped would placate nationalist concerns and provide unity and stability once victory was achieved. The struggle, sacrifice, and ultimate triumph of the Partisans provided the founding myth of Tito's Yugoslavia and established the legitimacy of the nascent state. In the years following the Second World War, following the example set by the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia entered a phase of development focused on centralising authority and strengthening the power of the state. During this period, the military was an invaluable tool for advocates of integral Yugoslavism. Its access to (and control over) hundreds of thousands of men from across Yugoslavia placed it in an unrivalled position to inculcate the population with an ideological framework that legitimised the socialist Yugoslav state and its belief that 'national differences would wither away.'[123] The military leadership's attempts to build a unified army out of the nations and nationalities of Yugoslavia during this phase mirrored the state's efforts to unify the population, with a focus being placed on shared loyalty to Tito and socialism, and the authority of the Party within the military being strengthened. Furthermore, military personnel enjoyed one of the most privileged positions in society, while the military as an institution was the subject of memorialisation and became 'accustomed to official public praise and a virtual aura of sanctity.'[124] These factors helped to make service in the army, and with-it, regular exposure to the leadership's efforts to forge a Yugoslav nation, more legitimate and appealing.

Following decades of ideological and political development, however, integrational agendas were cast aside by the political leadership of Yugoslavia. Following this change of policy, attempts were made to re-imagine the JNA as the protector of the rights and identities of the nations and nationalities of Yugoslavia rather than a monolithic, assimilationist threat. Tito remained as a shared focus of loyalty, and a more clearly defined brand of Yugoslav socialism served to provide a unifying ideology: however, the introduction of TO forces undermined the JNA's role as the protector of all the nations and nationalities of Yugoslavia and brought its legitimacy into question. After a series of

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[121] Miroslav Hadžić. *The Yugoslav People's Agony: The Role of the Yugoslav People's Army.* (Farnham, 2002) p.260
[122] Ibid. p.259
[123] Ramet. *Nationalism and Federalism in Yugoslavia.* p.50
[124] Bebler. "Political Pluralism and the Yugoslav Professional Military." p.125

crises in Yugoslavia in the 1980s, coupled with the rise of nationalist leaders across many of the republics, the JNA (and the Yugoslav state) came to be viewed, like its interwar predecessor, as a device of Serb dominance. With Tito gone and the wisdom of socialism brought into question, the only factors left holding the JNA together were Yugoslavia's complex constitutional order, the fading legacy of the Partisans, and the political and economic privilege enjoyed by its increasingly isolated leadership.

Throughout its various incarnations the JNA remained vital to the Yugoslav state. Tanja Petrović has noted that 'the Yugoslav army and its officers were considered one of the most important pillars of Yugoslav unity,' and Johnson observes that the JNA was 'the custodian and ultimate guarantor of the Yugoslav State and the Communist System.'[125] Indeed it can be argued that ensuring the unity of Yugoslavia was the single main task of the military: according to a 1971 poll conducted by *Nedeljne informativne* novine, a Belgrade weekly, only twelve percent of professional JNA personnel (officers and non-commissioned officers) thought that foreign aggression was the most likely source of conflict, with over half of high-ranking officers (from the rank of Major up) believing 'nationalism and chauvinism' were the greatest danger facing Yugoslavia.[126] Such results indicate that many within the JNA, particularly in the upper echelons, were fully aware that their primary concern was keeping the country together. Minister of Defence Admiral Branko Mamula, writing in the JNA journal *Narodna armija* in 1983, described the role of the JNA in Yugoslav society thus:

> The links between the army and the people have been confirmed and strengthened. The reputation that the army enjoys in our society, as the backbone of the system of nationwide defense; a breeding ground of brotherhood, unity, and Yugoslav socialist patriotism; and an important factor of security, internal cohesion, and stability of Yugoslavia has been maintained.[127]

The sheer range of duties the JNA was expected to perform (the backbone of defence, a breeding ground of Yugoslav socialism, and an important factor of state cohesion) by the Yugoslav leadership long after the Yugoslav nation-building project was abandoned illustrates the extent to which the state was wholly reliant on the military for cohesion.

The challenge of maintaining this cohesion grew steadily more complex until, in 1991, Yugoslavia began to collapse. The following chapters chart how the units and structures of the JNA were divided

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[125] Petrović. "Officers without an Army." p.98; Johnson. "The Role of the Military in Yugoslavia." p.186
[126] Slobodan Stankovic. *What Does the Yugoslav Army Think?* (Radio Free Europe, 1971) pp.1-2
[127] Slobodan Stankovic. *Yugoslav Defense Minister Calls the Army the "Backbone of the System."* (Radio Free Europe, 1983) pp.4-5

and adapted to become the foundations of an array of armed forces which fought each other to establish new states on what had been Yugoslav territory.

Chapter Four: The Army of Republika Srpska

The Army of Republika Srpska (*Vojska Republike Srpske,* VRS) was the military of the Serb Republic that was proclaimed by Serb leaders in Bosnia and Herzegovina (*Bosna i Hercegovina,* BiH) in May 1992. Owing to its origins as part of the Yugoslav People's Army (*Jugoslovenska narodna armije,* JNA), the VRS maintained a significant supremacy over its adversaries in numerous areas, including equipment, training, and organisation, offering it complete dominance on the battlefield throughout most of the 1992-1995 war in BiH. Despite such advantages, however, the VRS failed to force the government of BiH to capitulate, and as the conflict developed, its opponents grew increasingly powerful and coordinated. By the final year of the war, the VRS was struggling to attain any significant victories or retain the ground it held, its troops were demoralised and overstretched, and its logistics and communications infrastructure, key to its momentous early triumphs, lay in ruins. Faced with defeat on the battlefield and mounting pressure from the international community and their allies in Belgrade, the Bosnian Serb leadership acquiesced first to a ceasefire and then to the Dayton Peace Agreement. The terms of the Agreement offered the VRS a chance to escape total defeat on the battlefield but fell short victory: the state for which it had fought, Republika Srpska, would survive, but in a reduced form and within BiH, rather than as part of what remained of Yugoslavia or a Greater Serbia.

The project to create a Greater Serbia had offered enough appeal to unite disparate nationalist Serb leaders in Croatia, BiH, Montenegro, and Serbia.[1] However, beyond a relatively vague desire to unite their respective Serb populations, these leaders had little else in common. The most significant divisions among them stemmed from the Serb experience of the Second World War. Marko Attila Hoare observes that:

> For the first year of its existence the rank-and-file of the Partisan movement was overwhelmingly Serb and though this numerical dominance lessened as the war progressed, the Serbs continued to participate disproportionately in the movement at an all-Yugoslavia level until the end of the war.[2]

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[1] Many Bosnian Serbs dismissed the nationalist leaders in favour of BiH's ostensibly inclusive government, including significant numbers from Tuzla and 80,000 Serbs from Sarajevo, many of whom helped defend their cities. Misha Glenny. *The Fall of Yugoslavia.* (London, 1996) p.218

[2] Marko Attila Hoare. "Whose is the Partisan Movement? Serbs, Croats and the Legacy of a Shared Resistance." *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies,* Vol. 15, No. 4. (2002) p.26

As a result, significant numbers of the Serb population across Yugoslavia were directly linked to the legacy of the Partisans and identified with its heritage. In BiH, the Bosnian Serbs had been the driving force of the Partisan resistance, contributing approximately 70 percent of the strength of the two major Partisan units in the republic and, after the war, receiving 64.1 percent of Bosnian Partisan pensions.[3] This population was mostly spread across the northern regions of Bosnian Krajina and Northern Bosnia, and was centred on Banja Luka, the largest predominantly Serb city in the republic. However, many Serbs, particularly in BiH and Serbia, rejected the socialist ideology of the Partisans and favoured the advancement of Serbian Orthodox Christianity and the restoration of the exiled Serb monarchy, which had ruled Yugoslavia prior to the Axis invasion. Their wartime movement was focused on the remnants of the Royal Yugoslav Army, and adopted the name *Četnici* (the Chetniks), a word derived from the Serbian word for the members of a guerrilla force. Although the Chetniks had collaborated with Axis forces before being been soundly beaten, both militarily and diplomatically, by the Partisans, many Serbs continued to laud the merits of the movement after the war.[4] In BiH, the most vocal support of this nature came from Bosnian Serbs in the mountainous regions of the Drina Valley, which bordered Serbia and Montenegro. Such ideological and historical separations within the Serb community were only amplified by the rivalries within the leadership of each outlook, and other divisions, such as the distinct experiences of the rural and urban population.

As the forces that supported a Greater Serbia gathered, such divisions became increasingly apparent. This not only led to friction over how the war should be conducted within the Serb leadership but was also the cause of confusion among their adversaries, as Ejup Ganić, a member of the Presidency of BiH recalls. In October 1991, he visited a village near Trebinje which had just been burnt down by JNA soldiers. He recalls that:

> On the way back I noticed these soldiers of the [JNA] – they had the long hair of the Chetniks and they greeted me with three fingers raised. Then I asked "Is this the Yugoslav Army or Chetniks? What am I seeing?" The commanders deputy told me "it's up to you Ganić to decide what they are, who they are."[5]

A few years previously, a JNA soldier evoking such imagery would have been severely punished for discrediting the legacy of the army's Partisan founders and undermining the military's vehemently anti-nationalist reputation. However, as the JNA was 'Serbianised,' both in terms of its composition

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[3] Ibid. p.27
[4] See Chapter 3.
[5] Ejup Ganić. "Interview for The Death of Yugoslavia by the BBC." (1995) Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives. p.5

and outlook, parts of it became increasingly Chetnik. When the VRS emerged from the JNA, this division deepened.

The confusion over the identity of the soldiers not only reflects the rapidly changing political landscape in BiH, but also hints at another key division that beset the Serb leadership: the question of who was in overall command of the army remained unanswered throughout the war. The matter was complicated by the *de jure* separation of the VRS from the renamed Yugoslav Army (*Vojska Jugoslavije,* VJ) while it in fact continued to operate as an integral part of it. As a result, Slobodan Milošević, President of Serbia and the sponsor of Serb efforts in BiH, Ratko Mladić, Commander and figurehead of the VRS, and Radovan Karadžić, President of Republika Srpska and the military's constitutional civilian commander, could all claim to wield supreme authority over the VRS. Although they essentially operated as a triumvirate, throughout the conflict their relationship was rivalrous as each had different, and somewhat irreconcilable, visions for how the VRS should develop as a military and how it should fight the war.

This chapter examines the development of the VRS during the conflict, taking into account the numerous factors that influenced this process. The impact of events on the battlefield will be considered, alongside the rivalry and competition between the triumvirate, and the efforts of VRS officers themselves to shape their army. Together, this will illustrate how the VRS was transformed, in terms of organisation, ideology, and symbolism, from part of a multiethnic, socialist, and Yugoslav army into the military of an exclusively-Serb state.

Partisans, Chetniks, and the 'Military Line' – The Origins of the VRS

Unlike its opponents, the core of the VRS originated from a well-established and professional military, the JNA. Once considered a champion of 'brotherhood and unity' and a cornerstone in efforts to promote cooperation between the peoples of Yugoslavia, by early 1992 it had been stripped of conscripts and many professional soldiers from Slovenia and Croatia at the behest of those republics' respective leaderships. This increased the Serb contingent of the JNA from a pre-June 1991 total of 35 percent of conscripts and 40 percent of professional soldiers to over 90 percent in both categories, undermining its legitimacy as a Yugoslav institution while also offering an opportunity for Serb leaders to inherit a powerful tool of coercion.[6] Such a turn of events had been anticipated by a powerful network of political and military leaders within the disintegrating Yugoslav

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[6] Prosecutor vs. Duško Tadić. "Opinion and Judgment." *IT-94-1-T* (ICTY, 1997) p.38

state which served as a 'chain of command which ran parallel to the old Yugoslav Army, through the state security department and the interior ministry.'[7]

Known as the Military Line (*Vojna linija,* VL), this network was established by Milošević and coordinated by Serbia's State Security Service (*Služba državne bezbednosti*, SDB), which had become a crucial tool for the Serbian president to project power both within Serbia and into the rest of Yugoslavia. In essence, the VL rejected the Titoist leanings of many in the Yugoslav leadership in favour of the 'Serbianisation' of the state and the military.[8] Part of the SDB's operations in the years leading up to the collapse of Yugoslavia had been to create this network of like-minded influential individuals across the institutions of the Yugoslav state, ensuring that each was prepared to support their agenda by having them sign an oath of loyalty to Milošević.[9] One of their recruits was Mladić, who was duly promoted to the rank of Major-General and, on April 25, 1992, reassigned to the JNA's Second Military District, which included Eastern Croatia and almost all of BiH, as deputy commander. Two weeks later, on May 10, he assumed command of the District.[10] His redeployment ran alongside that of thousands of other Bosnian Serb JNA personnel who were brought from across Yugoslavia to replace outgoing soldiers from other Yugoslav republics, in a manoeuvre designed to pre-empt demands that the JNA be withdrawn from BiH following independence. While the JNA itself would leave, its significant Bosnian Serb contingent (85 percent of JNA troops in BiH in 1991) could legitimately remain.[11] President of Yugoslavia and close ally of Milošević, Borisav Jović, explained the rationale behind this manoeuvring in December 1991:

> When BiH are recognised internationally, the JNA will be declared a foreign army and its withdrawal will be demanded, which is impossible to avoid. In this situation, the Serb population in BiH. . . will be left unprotected and endangered. Slobo feels that we must withdraw all citizens of Serbia and Montenegro from the JNA in BiH in a timely fashion and transfer citizens of BiH to the JNA there. . . That will also create the possibility for the Serb leadership in BiH to assume command over the Serb part of the JNA.[12]

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[7] Julian Borger. "Brutal cog in Serb machine." *The Guardian.* (17/01/2000)

[8] James Gow. *The Serbian Project and its Adversaries: A Strategy of War Crimes.* (London, 2003) p.61

[9] Prosecutor vs. Slobodan Milošević. "Mustafa Candić, testimony before the court." *IT-02-54* (ICTY, 2002) p.12742

[10] Prosecutor vs. Ratko Mladić. "Fourth Amended Indictment." *IT-09-92-PT* (ICTY, 2011) p.2

[11] Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Russian and European Analysis. *Balkan Battlegrounds: A Military History of the Yugoslav Conflict, 1990-1995.* (Washington, DC, 2002) p.129

[12] Borisav Jović. *Poslednji dani SFRJ: Dnevne zabeleške iz perioda 15. V 1989 – 8. VII 1992.* (Belgrade, 2000) p.420

Thus, the VL was able to organise, prepare, and deploy the core of an army in BiH which could be formally handed over to a cooperative (Serb) source of authority within the newly-recognised country if it became independent.

The Serb Democratic Party (*Srpska demokratska stranka*, SDS) was established in July 1990 and functioned as the political leadership of Serbs in BiH, despite numerous localised Bosnian Serb and multiethnic parties being established across the country.[13] However, in the December 1990 elections, the SDS won both Serb seats in the Presidency, as well as gaining the second greatest share of seats (behind the dominant Bosnian Muslim party) in both houses of BiH's Parliament, cementing its place as the unrivalled Bosnian Serb authority in BiH. The strength of the SDS, coupled with its broadly pro-Milošević outlook, led the VL network to offer it support throughout 1991, including the provision of arms.[14] Despite wielding significant influence within the newly elected institutions of the state, the SDS leadership rejected BiH's legitimacy entirely, as Karadžić explains:

> President Milošević did not see the international recognition of [BiH] as an event of crucial importance... We even joked about this and he said that although Caligula declared his horse a senator, the horse never became one, and added that the same applied to [President of the Presidency of BiH, Alija] Izetbegović. He had international recognition but no state. And we really thought that.[15]

As a result, the SDS orchestrated a campaign to undermine and de-legitimise the nascent Bosnian state and prepare for its collapse. In April 1991 a number of predominantly-Serb municipalities formed an economic and cultural association, which initially held no power, but soon developed their own assemblies and police forces. Many of them also stopped sending taxes to the government in Sarajevo.[16] In September, these assemblies proclaimed the formation of an array of Serb Autonomous Regions (*Srpska autonomna oblast*, SAO) in BiH, including Krajina, Romanija and Stara Herzegovina, 'with the aim of separating from the Republican government agencies in Sarajevo.'[17] In November, the SDS organised a plebiscite primarily for the Bosnian Serb population, asking voters whether they wished to remain in Yugoslavia. The outcome was purportedly 100 percent in favour, and over the following months the JNA and SDS increasingly coordinated the establishment of

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[13] Steven Burg & Paul Shoup. *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina: Ethnic Conflict and International Intervention.* (New York, 2000) p.47

[14] *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.127

[15] Radovan Karadžić. "Interview for The Death of Yugoslavia by the BBC." (1995) Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives. p.3

[16] Burg & Shoup. *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina.* p.120

[17] Prosecutor vs. Tadić. "Opinion and Judgment." p.34

municipal governments, paramilitary forces, and checkpoints.[18] On 19 December 1991, the SDS promulgated a document to the Serb administrations labelled as 'Top Secret' and titled *For the organisation and activity of organs of the Serb people in BiH in extraordinary circumstances*. James Gow, who served as an expert witness for the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia on this topic, argues that this document 'indicates preparations for the creation of these para-governmental structures through the establishment of what are called crisis headquarters.' He notes that such preparations were made 'almost certainly under the tutelage of the Serbian [SDB].'[19]

In the first months of 1992, the SDS withdrew from the institutions of the Bosnian state entirely. On January 9, the Serb People's Assembly, itself formed from the framework of the crisis headquarters, proclaimed the Serb Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (*Srpska Republika Bosna i Hercegovina*, SRBiH), which was renamed the Serb Republic (Republika Srpska, RS) in August 1992.[20] This was followed in March by the promulgation of a constitution, the parliamentary session of which was broadcast live on television. One Bosnian Serb MP commented in the last session that 'at long last I have lived to see Bosnian Krajina become Western Serbia' while another said 'now the Turks will shake with fear from us.'[21] The constitution made the objectives of the SRBiH (and the military duties of its citizens) clear with its stipulations regarding national defence, with Article 109 stating: 'It is the right and duty of all citizens to protect and defend the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the [Serb] Republic and Yugoslavia, organizing within the framework of the armed forces of the JNA and the TO.'[22] In short, the Serb Republic was to continue as part of Yugoslavia, and it was the duty of all Bosnian Serbs to ensure this was the case.

The SDS campaign against the Bosnian state neared its conclusion in early April 1992, when Serbian paramilitaries, led by Željko "Arkan" Ražnatović, brutally massacred dozens of Bosnian Muslims in the city of Bijeljina in northeastern BiH in a cynical move designed to create terror among the non-Serb population and drive them from their homes.[23] After the attack, Arkan welcomed Biljana Plavšić, one of the SDS members of the Presidency of BiH, to the city and was publicly kissed and offered thanks by her for his efforts.[24] Similar events took place over the following weeks in Foča, Višegrad, and elsewhere. Two days after the massacre in Bijeljina, Karadžić decided to withdraw

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[18] Ibid. p.35
[19] Prosecutor vs. Duško Tadić. "James Gow, testimony before the court." *IT-94-1-T* (ICTY, 1996) p.376; Gow. *The Serbian Project and its Adversaries.* p.122
[20] Vinko Pandurević. *Srbi u Bosni i Hercegovini: od deklaracije do konstitucije.* (Belgrade, 2012) p.34; Gow. *The Serbian Project and its Adversaries.* p.174
[21] Prosecutor vs. Tadić. "Opinion and Judgment." p.35
[22] Bosnian Serb Assembly. *Ustav Republike Srpske, sedmi deo.* (Službeni glasnik, 16 March 1992)
[23] Gow. *The Serbian Project and its Adversaries: A Strategy of War Crimes.* p.129
[24] Colm Doyle. *Witness to War Crimes: Memoirs of a Peacekeeper in Bosnia.* (Barnsley, 2018) p.123

Plavšić and her colleague, Nikola Koljević, from the Presidency of BiH. Their removal, he argues, meant that the Presidency 'would then become illegitimate, because we were a part of that government, the Serb representation accounted for one-third of its membership.'[25] Thus, through establishing a parallel administration, boycotting Bosnian institutions, and creating terror among the Bosnian Muslim population, the SDS was able to almost fatally undermined the Bosnian state and lay the institutional foundations of the SRBiH.

On April 3, a day before the two Serb members of the Bosnian Presidency withdrew from the institution, the Federal Defence Secretary of Yugoslavia, General Blagoje Adžić, ordered the JNA to 'hasten the withdrawal' from BiH.[26] With them, they took confiscated Bosnian Territorial Defence (*Teritorijalna odbrana,* TO) weaponry, as well as ammunition, supplies, fuel, and even some industrial military facilities. However, only 20 percent of the troops (approximately 14,000 soldiers) left BiH, with most instead staying at their posts.[27]

The following month, on May 4, the decision to split the JNA into the VJ and VRS was announced, to take effect on May 19. In the interim, both Mladić and Karadžić prepared the military and civilian frameworks which would govern the new army. Mladić's second-in-command, Manojlo Milovanović, recalls that on May 11 the 'narrow circle of the Headquarters of the future army was formed, comprised of four generals, seven colonels, and one captain – all of them professional military personnel, of the now-former JNA.'[28] He notes that this group of senior officers determined ten principles which would define how the VRS should function. Many of them concerned the transition from the JNA, stating that the VRS should 'use all manpower and material assets left from the JNA and territorial defence in the area of RS and make them the base for the future VRS,' and advising that they did not need to 'create a new art of war – tactics or strategy, but should adapt JNA guidelines and rules of engagement to the needs of the VRS.'[29] Other principles concerned structure and administration of the VRS, such as the role of municipalities in supplying the military, or affirmed the VRS's commitment to upholding international law and UN regulations. Of most note, however, were the many items that focussed on establishing and strengthening the grip of the Headquarters over the military. The second item, for example, stipulated that 'all paramilitary formations that are

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[25] Radovan Karadžić. "Interview for The Death of Yugoslavia by the BBC." p.3

[26] *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.129

[27] Marko Attila Hoare. *How Bosnia Armed.* (London, 2004) p.40; Gow. *The Serbian Project and its Adversaries.* p.60

[28] The VRS would retain the institution "Headquarters" (*Glavni Štab*) until 1996, when it was replaced with the more conventional "General Staff" (*Đeneralštab*). Manojlo Milovanović. "Stvaranje i razvoj vojne Republike Srpske u toku odbrambeno otadžbinskog rata u BiH, 1992. do 1995. god." in Vlada Republike Srpske. *Vojska Republuke Srpske u odbrambeno-otadžbinskom ratu: Aspekti, organizacija, operacije.* (Banja Luka, 2011) p.28

[29] Milovanović. "Stvaranje i razvoj vojne Republike Srpske u toku odbrambeno otadžbinskog rata u BiH, 1992. do 1995. god." p.28

formed on the territory of RS are to be included in the VRS, and those that refuse will be broken up and exiled,' while the third explicitly stated that the SDS-controlled Crisis Centres were to be 'excluded from the system of command over VRS units.'[30] This brought any Serb militias that had been raised and armed by the SDS into the VRS and formally removed the influence of the political leadership from within the ranks of the military. Furthermore, the fourth principle determined that the military would 'exclude the already-resurrected Chetnik strategy of warfare' and proclaimed that there would be 'no Chetniks, no Partisans, just warriors for the defence of RS.'[31] These principles removed certain aspects of the emerging military that the SDS had influence over, even threatening their paramilitaries if they did not recognise the VRS's monopoly on the use of force.

This message was made even clearer by item seven, which announced that the military would create 'strict subordination, senior officers in command will appoint by a system of "up down" and not by elections from the "bottom,"' and item eight, which decreed that the 'military of RS has to be depoliticised as an organisation, and command staff including NCOs, officers, generals, and civil personnel in the service of the VRS can't be members of political parties.'[32] Indeed, the Headquarters even promulgated their own vision of the role and purpose of the VRS, a privilege usually reserved for the civilian commander of a military:

> The moral fibre of the VRS is to be built and developed on Serb heritage, tradition, patriotism, awareness of war goals, religion, professionalism of its command cadre, and the sense of justice and humanity in relation towards the wounded, dead and captured soldiers and their family members.[33]

Of most note in this statement is the omission of any reference to RS and its institutions of state, including the presidency, suggesting they were viewed as superfluous. Through asserting military dominance wherever any ambiguity regarding command and authority over the VRS arose, Mladić and his deputies enforced a break with a long tradition of political involvement in the Yugoslav military, a tradition that was continued in the armies of its adversaries. The formal separation of the civil and military facets of the state in this way came at the expense of the SDS. The Party of Democratic Action (*Stranka demoktratkse akcije,* SDA), the main representative of Bosnian Muslims in the BiH state, and the Croatian Democratic Union (*Hrvatska demokratska zajednica,* HDZ), a BiH extension of the ruling party in Croatia, were both pivotal in raising troops and organising the armies they led through the war. This allowed them to embed their influence and control into their forces.

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[30] Ibid.
[31] Ibid.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid.

For the SDS, the military of the state they governed was pre-fabricated, with an established chain of command, structure, and heritage. With an assertive figurehead such as Mladić in command, they had little hope of influencing the military by any means other than conventional constitutional channels.

The following day, the SDS established the legal framework for the formation of the military. The law also stated that: 'The former units and headquarters of the territorial defence are renamed into commands and units of the Army, whose organisation and formation will be established by the President of the Republic.'[34] The SDS had reminded Mladić that it was the duty of the president to organise and form the army, however they did not claim any privileges within the military sphere beyond constitutional authority and civilian oversight.

While these preparations were underway in BiH, in Belgrade Air Force General Božidar Stevanović, part of the VL network, escalated an 'intelligence operation' he had been running in order to strengthen Milošević's control of the armed forces. Having already had a number of generals fired earlier in the year, Stevanović presented Milošević with an additional 38 names, all of whom were removed from their positions. In total, over a third of the JNA's 150 generals were purged as a result of being deemed 'unreliable' or 'traitors' by the operation.[35] With the JNA firmly under the control of the VL and preparations made in BiH, its *de jure* division into two armies went smoothly.

The VRS inherited an extensive array of personnel and equipment from the JNA. A military history of the conflict by the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) suggests that in total, Mladić had between 100,000 and 110,000 former JNA troops at his command when he assumed the position of Chief of VRS Headquarters.[36] Gow contests this figure, postulating that it was more likely to have been between 60,000 and 80,000, only 50,000 of whom were operational.[37] Estimating figures such as this is problematic, particularly in the case of Yugoslavia. As a result of conscription, almost every man served in the JNA for a period of time, and many of them were retained as reservists after completing their service. Furthermore, in a series of large mobilisations of the population by the JNA in the years prior to the establishment of the VRS, Serbs and Montenegrins were increasingly the only people to respond. As a result, most of the men who joined the VRS had at least some JNA experience. If considering the number of serving JNA troops that were transferred to Mladić's command, however, Gow's figure is far more plausible. It was the established framework provided by the transfer these standing units to the VRS which allowed it to rapidly expand to include Bosnian

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[34] Bosnian Serb Assembly. *Odluka o formiranju vojske Srpske Republike Bosne i Herzegovine*. (Banja Luka, 1992)
[35] Gow. *The Serbian Project and its Adversaries.* p.62
[36] *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.130
[37] Gow. *The Serbian Project and its Adversaries.* p.77

Serb personnel of varying experience, creating a figure that correlates more with the estimates of the CIA. The transfer of organised military units offered the VRS additional advantages, the most potent of which was the arsenal it received: approximately 300 - 500 tanks (including 50 advanced M-84s, a Yugoslav-updated T-72), 200 – 300 Armoured Personnel Carriers (APCs), 400 field artillery pieces over 100mm, 48 multiple rocket launchers, and 350 120mm mortars, as well as a modest air force of 35 aircraft.[38] By contrast, its opponents were unable to acquire enough uniforms and rifles to send their soldiers into battle and were outnumbered in terms of heavy weapons by more than ten to one.[39]

The VRS enjoyed a significant number of other advantages as a result of its heritage. Key to the success of the VRS throughout the war was its ability to communicate across the entire Bosnian theatre (and beyond) almost instantly through the use of deeply lain telephone lines that converged on Han Pijesak. Here, a complex of tunnels, bunkers, and underground facilities had been purpose-built to be the headquarters of the entire JNA in case of an invasion of Yugoslavia. In addition to unparalleled communications, Han Pijesak also offered the VRS a vital secure location to base their command and intelligence units.[40] Furthermore, prior to its withdrawal, the JNA was ordered to prepare 'a map analysis of [BiH] which will clearly show: what is situated in secure areas; what can be successfully defended, with adequate reinforcements, until the conditions for evacuation are created; what can be evacuated through threats and force…'.[41] Maps and plans such as this, created by a professional military preparing for war, provided the VRS with the capability to move units and supplies across the country with maximum efficiency, whilst also limiting their opponents' resources.

Although such a wealth of materiel and infrastructure undoubtedly provided the VRS with an overwhelming advantage on the battlefield, the most significant benefit the VRS inherited from the JNA was the continuing institutional link with the VJ. The support which the VRS received from this link was prominently manifested in three key areas. Firstly, throughout the war the VRS was able to rely on the VJ and the Serbian SDB for a steady supply of ammunition, fuel, spare parts, and other materiel vital for resisting the Army of the Republic of BiH (*Armija Republike Bosne i Herzegovine,* ARBiH) and its attritional doctrine. In addition, when the situation required it, contingents of the VJ were also deployed to BiH, with as many as 20,000 troops and 100 tanks being sent to assist the VRS throughout the conflict.[42] Secondly, following the establishment of the Serb Army of Krajina (*Srpska*

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[38] *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.130, Gow. *The Serbian Project and its Adversaries.* p.77
[39] Gow. *The Serbian Project and its Adversaries.* p.91
[40] Ibid. p.182
[41] *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.130, Gow. *The Serbian Project and its Adversaries.* p.163
[42] Gow. *The Serbian Project and its Adversaries.* p.77

vojska krajine, SVK) in Croatia, the VJ, and the VRS, the three forces retained a shared officer corps.[43] This not only allowed for the relocation of officers when necessary, but also maintained a broad pool of experience, ensured a ready supply of professional staff, and most importantly, allowed newly promoted officers to receive adequate training for their roles away from the front. Finally, the link with VJ proved invaluable as it allowed the VJ to subsidise the VRS during a long and costly war that was impossible for Republika Srpska to finance independently. The VRS was a large, technically advanced army, and would represent an overwhelming burden on the relatively small Bosnian Serb population. More significantly, the VRS's failure to capture any cities other than Banja Luka and Bijeljina, coupled with the ethnic cleansing campaigns that were orchestrated in captured territory, left it with 'an economically and demographically bankrupt territorial base from which to wage a war.'[44] Bojan Dimitrijević, a prominent Serbian historian of the period, describes how an 'imaginary unit' of the VJ, the 30th Personnel Centre (*Kadrovski centar,* KC), was established as 'some kind of shadow name for the VRS' in order to oversee 'all of its administrative tasks.'[45] Through the KC, the VRS was able to considerably offset the cost of its own upkeep as officers' wages, pensions and social care for the injured, as well as compensation for the families of fallen soldiers were all managed and paid for in Belgrade.

Two former JNA corps formed the core of the VRS. Not only were there a substantial number of troops, but the corps also had an established chain of command, trained staff officers, as well as logistics and support units, allowing for organised rapid expansion through the incorporation of numerous other Serb military formations in BiH. The most significant of these formations were the elements of the Territorial Defence of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (*Teritorijalna odbrana Republike Bosne i Herzegovine,* TORBiH) which had rejected Izetbegović's call to arms and sided instead with the Serb Republic. Initially, these units were placed under local SDS jurisdiction but deferred to JNA command when its troops were present. Their numbers were significantly swelled by volunteers, many of whom were Bosnian Serb reservists and conscripts who had been mobilised by the JNA in April 1992 (in a move deemed 'invalid' by Alija Izetbegović, leading most other Bosnians to ignore it) and had been allowed to keep their weapons upon completion of their service.[46] General Milutin Kukanjac, commander of JNA forces in BiH at the time, later explained: 'I mobilised the troops and those who joined got arms. The Serbs responded to the mobilisation call and the Croats and Muslims did not.'[47] Some of these conscripts and reservists gathered into their

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[43] The SVK was formally established on March 19, 1992.
[44] Hoare. *How Bosnia Armed.* p.69
[45] Bojan Dimitrijević, interview with the author. (15/10/2017)
[46] Doyle. *Witness to War Crimes.* pp.27-8
[47] Milutin Kukanjac. "Interview for The Death of Yugoslavia by the BBC." (1994) Liddell Hart Centre for Military

old units, such as the Banjalučki Corps, a JNA formation which became the VRS I Krajina Corps, while others joined up with local TO units.[48] Together, these volunteers boosted the number of Serb TO troops from the original 11,000 who had defected from the TORBiH to a considerable force of almost 60,000.[49]

Not all volunteers joined the structure of the TO however, with many men from both BiH and Serbia forming independent units of their own, contributing a paramilitary aspect to the growing military might gathering in the name of the SRBiH. The paramilitary troops rarely contributed to battlefield operations, and instead fulfilled other roles ranging from special forces operations, such as when the "Wolves" seized the television transmitter on Kozara Mountain in the spring of 1992, offering the Serb leadership a broadcasting monopoly across many parts of BiH, to ethnic cleansing campaigns such as the one carried out by Arkan and his volunteers from Serbia in Bijeljina.[50] The military forces of the SRBiH were supplemented by a 15,000-strong Ministry of the Interior (*Ministarstvo unutrašnjih poslova,* MUP) armed police force that was formed on April 1, mainly from Serbs who had formerly served in the MUP of BiH.[51]

Central to the rapid mobilisation of such significant numbers of men was an operation conducted by the VL network in the months prior. In 1990, the Serbian SDB began distributing Second World War-era rifles from Serbian MUP and TO stocks to 'groups likely centred on the local SDS municipality board.'[52] Weapons were also smuggled into BiH from Montenegro, with one such convoy being captured by police loyal to the Bosnian government in late 1991, leading Izetbegović to lament to Colm Doyle, Head of the European Community Monitor Mission (ECMM), that he 'saw the JNA not only as an army of occupation but as a force providing logistical support to the Bosnian Serbs.'[53] His observation proved to be astute, as the testimony of Mustafa Candić, a Bosnian Muslim JNA intelligence officer at the time, illustrates. Candić remembers how the JNA distributed confiscated TORBiH weaponry to Bosnian Serbs from places such as ski lodges, and recalls a moment when a JNA officer, Major Čedo Knežević, responded to an enquiry about the weapons by saying 'I have lots of them and I can give you some. Here is a friend of ours. He can confirm that I can arm half of the United States, if you want.'[54] Candić also notes that the distribution was not based on 'old

Archives.p.18

[48] Bojan Dimitrijević, interview with the author. (15/10/2017)

[49] *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.130; Jovan Divjak. "The First Phase, 1992-1993: struggle for survival and genesis of the Army of Bosnia-Herzegovina." in Branka Magaš and Ivo Zanić, eds*. The War in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina 1991 – 1995.* (London, 2013) p.143

[50] Prosecutor vs. Tadić. "Opinion and Judgment." p.32

[51] *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.130

[52] Ibid. p.128

[53] Doyle. *Witness to War Crimes.* p.52

[54] Prosecutor vs. Slobodan. "Mustafa Candić, testimony before the court." p.12780-4

friendships' as Milošević suggested to him, but was instead a coordinated series of military operations codenamed *Proboj* (Breakthrough) 1 and 2.[55]

Additional weapons were transferred from the JNA itself. Doyle, whose role in the ECMM included escorting JNA 'troop and equipment convoys [from Croatia] through Bosnia in order to determine if their final destination was to be Serbia or elsewhere,' reports that unregistered convoys travelling westwards led the ECMM 'to suspect not all JNA units withdrawing from Croatia were heading for Serbia.'[56] In one such instance, on his way to a meeting with Plavšić in Pale at the end of April 1992, he records being forced off the road 'in order to give way to a convoy of M-84 tanks heading in the same direction. Here was the first evidence of large elements of the JNA moving to Pale, and in the process reappearing as the [VRS].'[57]

Through the various operations and manoeuvres discussed, the VL network was able to prepare a vast military force in BiH before conflict broke out. Serving JNA troops, Bosnian Serb reservists and conscripts, paramilitary formations, and MUP units were all armed, organised, and in position, ready to fight when the time came.

Early Victories and Rival Visions: 1992 and 1993

By the time the VRS had formally been established on May 19, 1992, scattered incidents of violence across the country had escalated into open conflict. One of the first major battles occurred in Northern Bosnia during April and May 1992 and resulted in Croat and Muslim forces, operating under the banner of the Croatian Defence Council (*Hrvatsko vijeće obrane,* HVO), severing the strategically vital Posavina Corridor. The corridor linked Serb territory in Croatia, the Serb Republic of Krajina (*Republika Srpska Krajina,* RSK), and Serb-held areas in Bosnian Krajina with the Drina Valley and, most significantly, Serbia itself. Upon its formation, the first major task which the VRS faced was reversing the HVO offensive and re-establishing the contiguity of Serb territory. In early June, the VRS I Krajina Corps began preliminary operations in the area, and within three weeks had re-opened the corridor.[58] Over the following months, the VRS steadily pushed opposition forces back, capturing the towns of Modrica, Odžak, and Bosanski Brod in some of the largest engagements (sometimes involving 'more than 50,000 troops on both sides,' according to CIA estimates, although this figure was likely lower) of the entire war.[59] The CIA explains that this operation, which was successful against 'experienced and numerically superior Croatian, Bosnian Croat, and Bosnian Army forces,'

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[55] Ibid. p.12779
[56] Doyle. *Witness to War Crimes.* p.41
[57] Ibid. p.161
[58] *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.146
[59] Ibid. p.145

was the result of the VRS's 'typical mixture of professional leadership, organisation, and fire-power, enhanced in these operations by the commitment of most of the VRS's battle-tested former JNA units.'[60]

The capture of the so-called "Corridor of Life" and the establishment of the northern border of RS on the river Sava (upon the banks of which Bosanski Brod lies) had been the second of a number of war aims that had been approved by the Bosnian Serb Assembly in May 1992. The third reiterated the constitutional provision that RS would join the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (*Savezna Republika Jugoslavija,* SRJ), which had been formed on April 27 from the remaining republics of Yugoslavia, Serbia and Montenegro. All that remained to completely fulfil this aim was to finalise the republic's borders, the parameters of which were outlined in the fourth war aim. It stipulated that the border with the 'Muslim and Croat section of Bosnia should run along the Neretva and Una Rivers, in addition to the Sava,' claiming the majority of BiH for RS.[61] RS also claimed part of Sarajevo, as well as access to the sea. Within months, most of these aims had been achieved by the VRS: the Posavina Corridor remained open throughout the war, VRS troops were stationed along much of the Sava and Una, and parts of Sarajevo were occupied while the rest was besieged. Although BiH government forces held some ground, much of which (including areas around the Drina, Neretva, and Una rivers) was coveted by the RS leadership, the VRS successfully facilitated the 'creation of a territorially contiguous Bosnian Serb state,' which covered more than 60 percent of BiH, during 1992.[62] The capture of this territory included significant victories at Jajce, where a beleaguered Croat-Muslim resistance collapsed, Bosanska Krupa and Bosanski Novi, both on the Una near Bihać, as well as at numerous towns in the Drina Valley. In all cases, the non-Serb population was expelled, often 'under a rain of mortar rounds,' or hounded by paramilitaries.[63] On November 19, Mladić issued Operational Directive 04, which escalated this process by ordering the VRS Drina Corps to 'inflict the heaviest possible losses on the enemy, and force them to leave the Eastern Bosnia areas of Birač, Žepa and Goražde together with the Bosnian Muslim population.'[64]

Despite its rapid advance and battlefield successes, the VRS faced serious challenges as soon as it was formed. It was a particularly large army (in 1992, it was second only to the VJ in all of former Yugoslavia), however the Bosnian Serb population only totalled 1.35 million. This left it with very little strength in depth, and almost no military reserves. As a result, the VRS:

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[60] Ibid. p.147
[61] Ibid. p.140
[62] Divjak. "The First Phase, 1992-1993." p.160
[63] *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.149
[64] Prosecutor vs. Zdravko Tolimir et al. "Second Consolidated Amended Indictment." *IT-05-88-PT* (ICTY, 2005) p.5

would never have the ability to deliver a knock-out blow to its enemies or adequately hold a frontline of more than 1000 kilometres. Even during 1992, the VRS was repeatedly forced to shuttle units across the country from battle to battle.[65]

Furthermore, although in most cases the former JNA units in the VRS such as the I Krajina Corps easily defeated their opponents, the large concentrations of volunteer and TO formations in Eastern Bosnia struggled, revealing a considerable disparity in capability within the military. Milovanović explains that the quality of the TO formations depended on where they were recruited, as the 'economic condition of the municipality' would dictate what equipment and combat ability they had. He notes that this led 'the Headquarters and corps commanders to form strong support units, and the corps even trained individual brigades from their constituency for manoeuvre in other areas.'[66] Such a solution could only be successful if the VRS retained advantages in communication and transportation over its opponents and was therefore able to reinforce vulnerable areas before they were overrun. As a result, converting 'the mob of TO personnel into properly organised, well-led light infantry brigades, while simultaneously reigning in many of the virtually autonomous volunteer units,' was a challenge that dominated VRS operations away from the battlefield during 1992.[67]

As command and control, ideological outlook, and training standards were centralised in the first months of the war, the rivalry between Karadžić, Milošević, and Mladić over authority of the VRS began to manifest. Karadžić hoped to break with the heritage of the JNA, saying that he 'wanted to make an army which would not be communist, a true army of the people.'[68] However, the VRS Headquarters had distanced him from having much sway over the development of the military. Just days after the formation of the VRS, Mladić ordered the artillery and tanks of the Sarajevo-Romanija Corps, which was encircling Sarajevo, to begin shelling the city.[69] General Života Panić, the last Minister of Defence of socialist Yugoslavia (he replaced Adžić on May 8) and first Commander of the VJ, attests that in shelling Sarajevo, Mladić acted against the wishes of Milošević, who feared 'an anti-Serb media campaign' and was 'very opposed to it.'[70] UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali reported to the Security Council that Mladić was to blame, however in response sanctions

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[65] *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.142

[66] Milovanović. "Stvaranje i razvoj vojne Republike Srpske u toku odbrambeno otadžbinskog rata u BiH, 1992. do 1995. god." p.32

[67] *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.141

[68] Radovan Karadžić. "Interview for The Death of Yugoslavia by the BBC." p.16

[69] The Sarajevo-Romanija Corps was formed from the JNA IV Corps, which included five tank battalions and an artillery regiment, supplemented by six brigades of light infantry raised from the local TO. *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.153

[70] Such comments may, of course, have constituted part of a campaign of disinformation. Života Panić. "Interview for The Death of Yugoslavia by the BBC." (1995) Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives. pp.39-40

were placed on the SRJ, vindicating Milošević's concerns.[71] Thus, within a fortnight of its formation, Mladić used his operational authority to consolidate control over all Bosnian Serb armed forces in BiH, outline his vision for the future of the army, and overrule his main rivals.

Another organisational task which the VRS had to overcome was managing the transition of its institutional identity away from that of its socialist predecessor. The first steps in this direction were made on June 28, when VRS troops gave an oath of allegiance at a ceremony attended by members of the presidency, government, and much of the military leadership. The oath read: 'I (name and surname), swear by my honour and my life to defend the sovereignty, territory, independence and constitutional order of my fatherland and faithfully serve the interests of its people. So help me God.'[72] June 28 was *Vidovdan*, a Serbian Orthodox religious holiday and the designated memorial day of the 1389 Battle of Kosovo, making it the most significant day of the year for Serb identity. Following the oath-giving ceremony, it also became the day upon which the deeds and sacrifices of the VRS were commemorated. The association with noteworthy celebrations of both the Serbian national narrative and the Serbian Orthodox Church, coupled with the invocation of 'fatherland' and 'god' in the oath, illustrate that although the structures and personnel of the JNA remained, a complete severance with its ideological and symbolic heritage had been made. However, although it is clear that the Orthodox faith was used to fill the void, no mention of the RS or its institutions was made in the oath.

By the end of the year, the VRS had reorganised and given some level of training to the TO troops and volunteers that had joined it in May, and now had at its command at least 80,000 well-equipped soldiers organised in seven Corps and 51 manoeuvre brigades.[73] Furthermore, much of the administrative infrastructure of the JNA had been adapted for use by the VRS. A former military training centre was repurposed as 'The Military Training Centre of the VRS' and the socialist-era positions of Organisation, Mobilisation, and Personnel Officer, and Ideological-Political Officer were retained on the Headquarters staff, the latter being re-designated 'Head of Morale, Religious, and Legal Issues.'[74] The officers who held these posts (and commanded the training centre) all answered directly to Mladić. Furthermore, in all properly organised VRS formations, morale, religious, and legal officers took the place of JNA ideological-political officers.[75] Through these officers, Mladić could

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[71] United Nations Security Council Resolution 757. (30/05/1992)

[72] Milovanović. "Stvaranje i razvoj vojne Republike Srpske u toku odbrambeno otadžbinskog rata u BiH, 1992. do 1995. god." p.31

[73] The corps were: VRS Headquarters, I Krajina, II Krajina, Eastern Bosnia, Sarajevo-Romanija, Herzegovina. International Institute of Strategic Studies. *The Military Balance, 1993.* (London, 1993) p.74

[74] Jovo Blažanvoić. *Generali Vojske Republike Srpske.* (Banja Luka, 2005) pp.71-9

[75] Milovanović. "Stvaranje i razvoj vojne Republike Srpske u toku odbrambeno otadžbinskog rata u BiH, 1992. do 1995. god." p.34

dictate what would replace the socialist political education and training which the soldiers received, increasing his level of influence over the development and ideological outlook of the military further.

Maintaining structural continuity with the JNA also offered the VRS another considerable advantage over its opponents, who were forced to conceptualise and build the institutions, structure, and offices of their respective militaries whilst fighting a war. Despite this advantage, however, the VRS failed to prevent the Bosnian government from raising considerable armed forces of its own and holding many strategically significant cities, facilities, and transport routes. As a result, in 1993 disputes over the manner in which the VRS was prosecuting the war and how the conflict should be ended deepened the animosity within the triumvirate.

In January 1993, UN Special Envoy Cyrus Vance and European Community (EC) representative Lord Owen promulgated the first comprehensive proposal for ending the war. Vladimir Petrović notes that 'the leadership of the Bosnian Serbs was unanimously and adamantly resisting the peace offer' as they felt it was 'provocatively anti-Serbian.'[76] Milošević, however, feared a rejection of the plan could lead to increased sanctions or a military intervention, but was unable to force Karadžić to agree to the terms. Nina Casperson argues that SDS resistance to the plan stemmed from Mladić, whose 'vehement opposition and thirty-five-minute-long impassioned speech against acceptance was one of the decisive factors in parliament's rejection of the plan.'[77]

Indeed, while the negotiations were taking place, Mladić continued VRS operations, including significant offensives in Eastern Bosnia. It was in this period, Casperson observes, that a faction within the SDS hailing from Krajina, along with some members of the opposition, began aligning themselves with Mladić, illustrating his growing political influence, and also the emergence of a 'regional division of the RS.'[78] Owen would recall that 'I think Mladić became very powerful from then on. And that's not to say he was powerful as a military leader, but I think he began to have a political constituency.'[79] Although he usually deferred to Milošević, it is evident by his actions that peace, at least under the terms set by Vance and Owen, was not a priority. Petrović argues that the Bosnian Serb leadership showed 'a lack of interest in economic difficulties posed by sanctions, as well as an absolute determination to terminate the statehood of BiH.'[80]

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[76] Vladimir Petrović. "Serbian Political Elites and the Vance-Owen Peace Plan: ICTY Documents as Historical Sources." in Florian Bieber, Armina Galijaš, and Rory Archer. *Debating the End of Yugoslavia.* (London, 2014) p.194
[77] Nina Casperson. *Contested Nationalism: Serb Elite Rivalry in Croatia and Bosnia in the 1990s.* (New York, 2010) p.138
[78] Ibid.
[79] Prosecutor vs. Slobodan Milošević. "David Owen, testimony before the court." *IT-02-54* (ICTY, 2003) p.28562
[80] Petrović. "Serbian Political Elites and the Vance-Owen Peace Plan." p.199

In September 1993, the ranks of the VRS were strengthened by an unlikely source. The majority-Bosnian Muslim town of Velika Kladuša lies near Bihać, just across the border from what was, during the collapse of Yugoslavia, RSK. During the socialist period, it was home to Agrokomerc, an agricultural business which developed into one of the biggest conglomerates in Yugoslavia under the stewardship of Fikret Abdić. In the 1990 elections, Abdić had run for a seat in the Presidency on an SDA ticket, and had won more votes than any other candidate. However, for unknown reasons he did not claim his victory, and instead left the role of Chairman of the Presidency to Izetbegović. Abdić took a lower-ranking seat on the Presidency of BiH, but returned to Velika Kladuša, leaving the coordination of the war to Izetbegović and his allies. Then, in the autumn of 1993, after representing the BiH government at the Owen-Stoltenberg negotiations in Geneva over the summer, Abdić proclaimed the establishment of the Autonomous Province of Western Bosnia (*Autonomna Pokrajina Zapadna Bosna*, APZB), centred on Velika Kladuša, and began raising his own private army.[81]

Such a move shocked Sarajevo but was welcomed by many government forces in the Krajina region. Two entire brigades and significant contingents from other units of the ARBiH V Corps mutinied and joined Abdić, who immediately came to terms with both the Bosnian Serb and Croat leaderships.[82] By the end of the year, the APZB could muster up to 10,000 men organised in six brigades.[83] The VRS had even armed their erstwhile foes, equipping them with all the small arms, mortars, and ammunition they needed, as well as offering them artillery support. In exchange, the VRS moved troops through APZB territory, allowing them to mount an assault on Bihać from RSK territory in Croatia, and APZB troops fought alongside VRS in Krajina.[84] This significantly boosted the strength of the 80,000 troops Mladić had left, and almost won him Bihać.[85] Furthermore, although the APZB troops were not integrated into the VRS, they did operate alongside them and ultimately deferred to VRS command, making them something of a semi-autonomous auxilliary force in a similar manner to the HVO units operating within ARBiH Corps.[86]

The APZB troops were not the only non-Serb troops fighting with the VRS. A significant number of Orthodox mercenaries and volunteers, largely hailing from Russia and Greece, are known to have fought in the VRS. Most estimates place their number at a maximum of 1,500 throughout the war, however Aziz Tafro argues that 'the exact number will never be known as a large number of Russians

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[81] Brendan O'Shea. *Bosnia's Forgotten Battlefield: Bihać.* (Stroud, 2012) pp.15-28
[82] Hoare. *How Bosnia Armed.* p.114
[83] O'Shea. *Bosnia's Forgotten Battlefield.* pp.22-3; *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.189
[84] *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.189
[85] International Institute of Strategic Studies. *The Military Balance, 1994.* (London, 1994) p.84
[86] This practice effectively came to an end following the January 1994 Washington Agreement.

fought under false names.'[87] He suggests that 'more than 10,000 Russian mercenaries' could have served in the VRS during the war in BiH.[88] While this number is unlikely, monuments have been raised in honour of fallen Russian fighters, including a 5.5-metre high Orthodox Cross in Višegrad, highlighting the value placed on their contribution.[89] Later in the war, 100 Greeks formed the 'Greek Volunteer Guard,' which was 'fully integrated into the [VRS] and led by Serb officers,' in the Drina Corps[90] A surprising outcome of the unlikely alliance with APZB and the recruitment of foreign volunteers was that for a time (April 1994 – August 1995) it made the troops under Mladić's command the most multiethnic armed force (approximately 10 percent non-Serb) in BiH.[91]

Stalled Progress and Deepening Divisions: 1994 and 1995

In the early stages of the conflict, the VRS enjoyed complete supremacy on the battlefield. By 1994 'they had achieved virtually all of their territorial objectives at acceptable costs' and VRS troops remained able to hold ground against the increasingly powerful and effective ARBiH.[92] Despite the strong position their forces were in, the triumvirate became increasingly fractured over control of the military and what to do next. In January, General Dušan Kovačević, RS Minister of Defence and an officer of the VRS Headquarters, argued that command should be left to Mladić and Headquarters, writing in the VRS journal, *Srpska vojska* (Serb Army), that: 'We are one nation, one state, and we should have a single army under a single commander with the same badge who will complete the mission.'[93]

At this point, Karadžić and Milošević favoured negotiating the most favourable deal they could and declaring the war a triumph, while Mladić still sought 'a decisive close with a signal military victory over the Muslims.'[94] Such a prospect was becoming increasingly unlikely. A number of VRS offensives at the end of 1993 and beginning of 1994 had initially been successful, but the ARBiH retook the ground in every case. Indeed, the ARBiH had grown into the largest armed force in BiH and had developed an effective, although costly, doctrine which was beginning to grind the VRS down. Furthermore, the March 1994 Washington Agreement ended the conflict between parts of the ARBiH and HVO, allowing both to focus their efforts on defeating the VRS. Developments such as this

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[87] Aziz Tafro. *Ruski i Grčki plaćenici u ratu u Bosni i Herzegovini.* (Sarajevo, 2014) p.32
[88] Tobias Pietz. "Overcoming the failings of Dayton: defense reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina." in Michael Innes. *Bosnian Security after Dayton: New Perspectives.* (London, 2006) p.157; Ibid. p.32
[89] Danijel Kovačević. "Bosnian Serbs Unveil Monument to Russian War Volunteers." *Balkan Insight.* (12/04/2017)
[90] Takis Michas. *Unholy Alliance: Greece and Milošević's Serbia.* (College Station, 2002) p.18
[91] See Chapter Five.
[92] *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.220
[93] Blažanvoić. *Generali Vojske Republike Srpske.* p.84; Dušan Kovačevič. "Vojsku mora financirati država." *Srpska vojska,* No. 16. (January, 1994) p.6
[94] *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.220

soon translated into a change in the pattern of the war. The hitherto solid VRS lines began to falter, and as winter settled in Krajina, ARBiH V Corps managed to punch a hole through VRS defences and launch a penetrating offensive, recapturing Kupres and taking more ground for government forces in a few weeks than had been achieved throughout the entire war.[95] During this crisis, Karadžić 'insisted on his role as Supreme Commander and he donned a uniform,' presenting himself as an alternative military leader to Mladić at the first moment when the general appeared strategically fallible.[96] In response, however, Mladić ordered a counter-attack, which proved remarkably successful, retaking all of the lost territory and almost defeating V Corps entirely. Sensing his chance for decisive victory, Mladić prepared to take Bihać.

Both Milošević and Karadžić, however, had other priorities. In August 1994, Milošević had accepted a peace plan drawn up by the Contact Group (composed of the USA, UK, Russia, Germany and France), which had replaced the previous Owen-Stoltenberg process.[97] The plan was generous to the Bosnian Serbs, delineating the separation of BiH's population along ethnic lines and offering the fulfilment of almost all of their strategic objectives. Indeed, aside from the continued existence of a few Bosnian Muslim exclaves in the Drina Valley, having to share Sarajevo, and not attaining access to the sea (a particularly optimistic goal), the plan offered the Serb leadership precisely what it wanted. Despite this, Karadžić predicted 'carnage' if the Bosnian Serb Assembly voted yes, and after considerable debate, he and the SDS rejected the plan.[98] In response, Milošević placed political and economic sanctions on RS and its leadership, heralding the most significant rift in the triumvirate to date.[99] The introduction of 'inter-Serb' sanctions also reveals the extent to which the VRS was separate from the state it was supposedly fighting for, as fuel, ammunition, officers, and logistical and maintenance support from Belgrade continued unabated.[100] Furthermore, those VRS personnel who were working in the institutions of the state, such as Minister of Defence Kovačević, were simply withdrawn.[101] That the military was totally unaffected by the imposition of severe sanctions against the state suggests that, after more than two years of war, the VRS remained very much a Yugoslav institution, rather than one of the Serb Republic.

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[95] Mike Redman. "Joint ABiH-HVO operations 1994: A preliminary analysis of the Battle of Kupres." *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies,* No.16, Vol.4. (2007) p.10
[96] Filip Švarm. "Civilian-Military Games." *Vreme.* (24/04/1995)
[97] The Owen-Stoltenburg process took place in July and August 1993. For most of 1994, the Contact Group took the lead, and also failed.
[98] Emma Daly. "Serbs keep answer to peace plan a secret." *The Independent.* (20/07/1994)
[99] The SDS dominated every major institution in RS aside from the VRS, including the parliament, the police, Ministry of Defence, and industries, so sanctioning RS served to punish the SDS. *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.288
[100] Ibid. p.222
[101] Blažanvoić. *Generali Vojske Republike Srpske.* p.84

The economic sanctions placed on RS, coupled with the concomitant political isolation, severely undermined Karadžić's authority. He could no longer claim to be a conduit of Belgrade's designs, and thanks to the ambiguity of RS's constitutional status, any attempt to utilise legitimate institutional channels to assert his influence could easily flounder. Indeed, his new civilian Minister of Defence, Milan Ninković, recalls that:

> Although I was defence minister, my main task was to organise the mobilisation of civilians, I had no power to order anything operational... Mladić issued the orders to the troops, he was not obliged to inform me. I only received orders to supply rations. It wasn't like in your country, where ministers have power.[102]

Karadžić's position was further weakened by the increasingly divided Bosnian Serb Assembly. Since his rejection of the Contact Group Plan, Milošević had gradually been enlisting agreeable 'rank and file' Bosnian Serb politicians with the goal of eventually ousting the RS President.[103] Sensing his authority was waning, Karadžić made a bid to assert his dominance. The VRS assault on Bihać was well underway, with Serb troops holding about a third of the UN-declared Safe Area around the city and fighting taking place near the headquarters of V Corps. One UN report stipulated that there may have been only 300 V Corps soldiers left in the city, illustrating just how close Mladić was to eliminating an entire enemy corps and striking his decisive blow.[104] However, in attacking Bihać, the VRS not only violated a UN-declared "Safe Area" but also breached the no-fly zone over BiH by conducting numerous bombing runs against the city utilising Serb aircraft operating out of Udbina in RSK.[105] This led the UN Security Council to authorise NATO airstrikes against Serb forces. Karadžić's first response was to warn the USA of the dangers of 'another Vietnam,' however he soon ordered the offensive to stop and a few weeks later announced live on television that he had personally invited former US President Jimmy Carter to act as an 'honest broker.'[106]

Talks convened by the former US President culminated in a four-month ceasefire across the country, leading Brendan O'Shea to note that 'the peanut farmer from Plains, Georgia, had once again succeeded where all the rest had failed.'[107] This raised Karadžić's profile as a leader and arguably saved him from being ousted. With few other options, Milošević was forced to accept that he had been outmanoeuvred and publicly backed the agreement. Mladić was furious with Karadžić. He had

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[102] Raymond Whitaker. "Looking for Radovan." *The Independent.* (21/07/2000)
[103] O'Shea. *Bosnia's Forgotten Battlefield.* p.129
[104] Ibid p.117
[105] John Pomfret. "NATO Jets Bomb Serb Airfield." *The Washington Post.* (22/11/1994)
[106] Emma Daly & Andrew Marshall. "Bihać fears massacre." *The Independent.* (27/11/1994); O'Shea. *Bosnia's Forgotten Battlefield.* p.129
[107] O'Shea. *Bosnia's Forgotten Battlefield.* p.134

accused the RS President of promoting another Chetnik-Partisan split following the failure of the Contact Group Plan (Mladić had tacitly backed Milošević) and had been angered when the Bihać offensive was stopped.[108] In response, Karadžić called the VRS military command communists. In January 1995, *Srpska vojska* published a thinly veiled attack on Karadžić, stating:

> The development of the RS political system is quite difficult because of the war. Some political parties, primarily their leaders, feel that the war is over and are trying to secure the most favourable positions possible in the struggle for power. This has resulted in a change of behaviour that deserves the attention of the general public to ensure the normalisation of the situation, and that the struggle for the freedom of the Serbian people is brought to an end soon.[109]

The article also proclaimed that 'the allegations against the officers as "communards" are unacceptable.'[110] In such a climate, divisions within RS's political and military leadership were at their most severe. Indeed, Milovanović recalls that following the NATO air strikes, Commander of the I Krajina Corps, Momir Talić, suggested dividing the VRS in two, ostensibly to improve efficiency. Under his proposal:

> The first Army would have a zone of responsibility from the Una River, to Zvornik somewhere, and the other from there, to the south, including Herzegovina. The command of both armies would be directly linked to the [RS government], which would make the Headquarters unnecessary.[111]

Although the suggestion was dismissed, the fact that a senior VRS commander was contemplating the division of the military along the traditional axis of the Chetnik-Partisan split reveals the extent of disharmony within the Bosnian Serb leadership. This is further reflected by the decision of the SDS to begin strengthening the police, 'which they believed was completely loyal to them.'[112] Filip Švarm attests that it was 'thoroughly cleansed of anyone who was considered even remotely dangerous' and then recognised (and armed) as a military organisation, leading to the formation of special units of 600 – 700 hand-picked men which quickly earned a reputation on the battlefield.[113] Such a move

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[108] *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.222

[109] Milovan Milutinović. "Jedinstvena uz srpski narod." *Srpska vojska,* No. 26. (January, 1995) p.16

[110] Ibid.

[111] Milovanović. "Stvaranje i razvoj vojne Republike Srpske u toku odbrambeno otadžbinskog rata u BiH, 1992. do 1995. god." pp.38-9

[112] Švarm. "Civilian-Military Games."

[113] Ibid.

indicates that the SDS not only recognised its impotence over the VRS, but also suggests that by the end of 1994 they were also threatened by it.

On the battlefield, the long-overstretched VRS began losing ground to the combined forces of the ARBiH, HVO, and Croatian Army (*Hrvatska vojska,* HV) in 1995. Despite the ceasefire, fighting continued around Bihać, with ARBiH troops going up against APZB and VRS forces. A key factor in these engagements was the decline in fortunes of the SVK in Croatia: if RSK fell, the VRS would be left facing the entire HV, as well as its Bosnian adversaries. This no doubt informed the decision to leave Bihać, the capture of which would be costly and was essentially untenable without the SVK, to government forces until Serb forces could muster more strength. The failure of BiH's political leaders to agree to a more comprehensive peace agreement led to a resumption of fighting across BiH at the end of March, triggered when 21,000 troops of the ARBiH VII Corps launched an offensive against VRS positions on Mt. Vlašić, inflicting a significant defeat.[114] Just two weeks later, the VRS instigated its own offensive, which was lauded once again as 'war winning,' with the aim of widening the Posavina Corridor near Brčko. The attack managed to take some ground from the HVO, but an ARBiH counterattack wiped out all VRS gains. The CIA notes that:

> The VRS defeat was the Serbs' last effort at a war-winning offensive to break the Bosnian Government's will… VRS forces – despite their advantages in armor, artillery, and other heavy weapons – were almost completely unable at this point in the war to break through ARBiH positional defenses… The VRS was unable to defeat the ARBiH's fortifications, and ARBiH troop reserves allowed the ARBiH to block any penetration the VRS made. The shift in the military balance between the ARBiH and the VRS that began in early 1994 was now complete.[115]

In June, the ARBiH launched its largest offensive of the war. In a desperate bid to break the siege of Sarajevo, 80,000 troops from four corps attacked VRS positions across the Sarajevo operational area. The assault proved costly and ultimately fruitless, and in drawing troops away from other fronts, left some government-held territory exposed. The VRS triumph was lauded by *Srpska vojska,* which published an article at the end of June, titled 'Grown with the nation,' which argued that:

> The VRS today commands responsive forces, modern fighting equipment, and highly qualified fighters and officers for leading the armed struggle. With the activation of all human and material potential for defence, the equal distribution of the war effort on all

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[114] *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.301
[115] Ibid. p.304

structures of society and the preservation of the unity of the army, government and citizens, the tasks demanded by the Serb people can be fulfilled.[116]

Milošević was quick to recognise the opportunity and directed Mladić to move his forces against the remaining BiH enclaves in the Drina Valley. The defenders of Goražde, with some assistance from the Royal Welch Fusiliers, managed to hold the town, but the VRS's two other targets, Srebrenica and Žepa, fell in July. In both cases, the actions of Mladić's troops against the civilian population they captured, including the murder of over 8,000 men and boys at Srebrenica, would later be declared acts of genocide.[117] In strategic terms, the capture of the towns did little more than fill in some spots of non-Serb territory on a map that already covered more than two-thirds of BiH. For the VRS, however, the atrocities committed would come to define it in the eyes of the world.

After taking Srebrenica under the personal command of Mladić, Bosnian Serb and Greek soldiers made their way to the ruins of the town's Orthodox church and raised their respective national flags, along with those of Vergina and Byzantium, in victory.[118] Although the military contribution of the Greek volunteers was minor, their presence, symbolically manifested by the assemblage displayed and the location selected for the ceremony, elucidated what united the VRS troops fighting in the Drina Valley above all else: the Orthodox faith. Furthermore, the people they massacred were portrayed (through a wide range of derogatory terms for Muslims) in religious terms, suggesting Serb forces, or parts of them, viewed the entire conflict as a holy war for the "liberation" of Christian territory. The extremity and objectives of these beliefs obviously hearken back to the days of the crusades; however, a similarity can be identified with the National Liberation War fought against the Axis and their local allies by the Partisans.

That conflict had been portrayed by the socialist leadership of Yugoslavia as a titanic struggle between the forces of socialism and fascism in which the Partisans fought to liberate territory from an existential threat. Ideological-Political officers in JNA units had lauded the sacrifices and victories of the Partisans for decades and had been responsible for ensuring troops were well acquainted with socialist ideology and theory. With such structures repurposed for 'morale, religious, and legal affairs' by the VRS, the leadership, perhaps informed by their experience in such a system, aimed to motivate their troops in the same way that they had experienced when in the JNA. The promotion, utilisation, and celebration of the Orthodox faith within the VRS indicates that, despite the political

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[116] Milovan Milutinović. "Stasala uz narod." S*rpska vojska,* No. 30*.* (June, 1995) p.5
[117] Presiding Judge Almiro Rodrigues. "Radislav Krstic becomes the First Person to be Convicted of Genocide at the ICTY and is Sentenced to 46 Years Imprisonment." *ICTY Press Release* (ICTY, 2001)
[118] Michas. *Unholy Alliance.* p.1

divisions that had emerged between Karadžić and Mladić throughout the war, they retained shared ideological goals.

By the end of July, Croatian Serb forces were severely overstretched. The RSK had committed a lot of forces to a last-ditch Serb effort to take Bihać by entering from its territory, leaving much of the rest of the republic exposed to the gathering HV forces across the frontlines. When the Croatian attack came on August 4, it was rapid and effective, sweeping aside SVK defences and quickly capturing many strategically significant targets.[119] In a response that appears more political than strategic, Karadžić utilised the 'war conditions' powers which the SDS had invested him with a week previously to claim responsibility for the defence of RSK and declare himself Commander of the VRS via a newly established Supreme Council.[120] Mladić was relieved of his command and reassigned to the civilian role of Special Adviser for the Defence of RS and RSK.[121] The Serbian daily *Politika* speculated that the move was to prevent a coup d'état by the VRS Headquarters, however such an initiative would most likely not have been stopped by these measures.[122]

Karadžić's announcement came the same day that Croatian Serb leader Milan Martić ordered the evacuation of all Serbs from RSK territory, making it all-but meaningless.[123] Through claiming personal authority over RSK and the VRS, however, Karadžić could attempt to present himself as the key to peace in both polities. As one diplomatic source told *The Independent*: 'There is a power struggle going on, Karadžić's only chance in the struggle with Mladić is to consolidate the RSK and the RS as a single entity and present the case to Milošević and the international community.'[124] The next day, however, Knin fell and Karadžić's gambit began to unravel. Mladić had been in Belgrade negotiating with EU representative Carl Bildt at the time of his dismissal, but upon hearing the news he scheduled a meeting of the entire VRS Headquarters in Banja Luka for the next day. The outcome of the meeting was a letter to the RS Assembly, signed by the 17 most senior officers of the VRS, which declared that Mladić was the commander of the VRS.[125] Karadžić publicly blamed Mladić for the loss of Knin and stated that:

> There are some commanders who have been interfering with civilian responsibilities or even wanted to negotiate with Bildt or Stoltenberg, that has to stop. Something like that is equal

[119] *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.370
[120] Gow. *The Serbian Project and its Adversaries.* p.192
[121] Ibid.
[122] Casperson. *Contested Nationalism.* p.139
[123] Milan Martić's order to evacuate civilians from areas of "Republic of Serb Krajina" – Scan. (ICTY, August 1995) Available at: http://icr.icty.org/LegalRef/CMSDocStore/Public/BCS/Exhibit/Indexable/IT-06-90/ACE80815R0000319913.tif (Accessed 31/10/2018)
[124] Emma Daly. "Bosnian Serbs fall out as Knin is lost." *The Independent.* (06/08/1995)
[125] Gow. *The Serbian Project and its Adversaries.* p.193

to treason. The army cannot negotiate with our enemies or with the international community.[126]

Nevertheless, the VRS leadership had made its choice, recognising its talismanic and influential commander over the constitutional order of RS. The rivalry and divisions that had gradually unravelled the unity of the triumvirate had escalated into a public political battle over authority of the military, and Mladić had won. Although he and Milošević remained relatively close, and the VRS continued to receive support from Belgrade, they did not agree on the war. For Milošević, there was little left to gain from the conflict in BiH, and international sanctions and war weariness threatened to foment worsening unrest in Serbia. As a result, he lent his support to the ongoing peace process, only to be frustrated by his erstwhile allies in BiH. Milošević's failure to end the fighting and Karadžić's inability to relieve Mladić of his command illustrates how, by August 1995, the VRS was unaccountable to any civilian authority. Indeed, the refusal to recognise Mladić's dismissal constituted mutiny. However, a coup d'état remained unlikely, as one Belgrade observer noted: 'Don't expect to see the [VRS] chiefs try to destabilize the political leaders. That would be deadly to both and would not be pleasing to Belgrade either.'[127]

For its part, the VRS was already losing a war of attrition against its increasingly large and capable opponents in BiH. It stood no chance whatsoever if the relatively small contingents of HV troops already operating alongside HVO forces were reinforced by the experienced and well equipped 65,000-strong army that had just defeated the SVK, particularly if it had to defend RS's 300-mile frontier with Croatia.[128] However, before the HV assault came, the VRS was dealt a crippling blow by a much more powerful assailant. In early August, the 'dual-key arrangement' which governed NATO's involvement in the Bosnian War was reworked. Previously, one key was held by NATO Commander of Allied Forces in South Europe and the other was held by the UN Secretary General's Special Representative in Yugoslavia, Yasushi Akashi. In the new arrangement, Akashi's key was handed to the UN's military commander in BiH.[129] Following the shelling of a marketplace in Sarajevo on August 28, and no doubt emboldened by the events at Srebrenica a month earlier, acting UN Commander Lieutenant-General Rupert Smith 'turned the UN key' along with his NATO counterpart in Naples, and Operation Deliberate Force was launched.[130] The Operation entailed a 'two-week campaign against the Bosnian Serbs, in which 3,500 aircraft sorties were flown, nearly 100 cruise

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[126] Daly. "Bosnian Serbs fall out as Knin is lost."
[127] Švarm. "Civilian-Military Games."
[128] The HV could call upon an additional 220,000 reservists. International Institute of Strategic Studies. *The Military Balance, 1996.* (London, 1996) p.83
[129] Ryan Hendrickson. "History: Crossing the Rubicon." *NATO Review.* (NATO, 2005)
[130] Ibid.

missiles fired and almost 400 different Serb targets engaged.'[131] These targets included most VRS positions near government-held cities, ammunition dumps and transport routes, anti-air batteries, and most significantly, the nerve centre of the RS war effort, Han Pijesak, along with a plethora of other communications and radar sites across the country. The destruction of many of the facilities at Han Pijesak increased the time it took for communications to reach the field from the headquarters 'from minutes to 48 hours, or more.'[132] This entirely negated one of the VRS's greatest advantages and prevented its corps from coordinating their operations and effectively supporting each other. Furthermore, left isolated and with limited information on the course of the fighting, Mladić travelled to Belgrade, where he was admitted to a military hospital, supposedly with gallstones.[133] The VRS was impotent against NATO airstrikes and, with its commander away and communications down, it quickly lost ground to the combined ARBiH-HV-HVO offensive, which began on 8 September.

The offensive, codenamed Mistral – 2, made considerable progress in Bosnian Krajina. The troops of the APZB had suffered significantly since Abdić had split from the government of Sarajevo, particularly when ARBiH V Corps troops temporarily captured the town of Velika Kladuša in December 1994.[134] In July 1995, Abdić had ambitiously proclaimed the Republic of Western Bosnia, but just two months later his forces, along with their VRS allies, were driven out from the territory.[135] News of the HV's 'stunning victory' over the SVK and its rapid impact on the conflict in BiH caused significant tension in the Bosnian Serb leadership. The 'improvements made in its force structure and doctrine before the operation' had a 'profound impact on the VRS leadership's thinking and crystallized their belief that a political-military settlement had to be negotiated as soon as possible.'[136] This added pressure on Karadžić to allow the formation of a negotiating team and an end to the war. Trevor Minter, who was commander of British forces in BiH at the time, observes that although the VRS was 'exhausted and outmanoeuvred' it 'did not collapse,' its 'chain of command was maintained in defeat,' and it would have 'fought on desperately had their home areas been attacked.'[137]

Just weeks later, Milošević announced the formation of a joint Bosnian Serb-Serbian peace delegation, which he would lead, preventing Karadžić from sabotaging any negotiations by

[131] Michael Rose. *Fighting for Peace: Lessons from Bosnia.* (New York, 1999) p.349
[132] Gow. *The Serbian Project and its Adversaries.* p.198
[133] Ibid. p.197
[134] Emma Daly. "Thousands flee as Bosnian rebel crushed: Muslim troops take control of Bihac fiefdom run by 'Daddy' Abdic." *The Independent.* (10/08/1994)
[135] O'Shea. *Bosnia's Forgotten Battlefield.* pp.225-7
[136] *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.376
[137] Trevor Minter, interview with the author. (10/09/2018)

superseding his position. Holed up in his stronghold of Pale in Eastern Bosnia, however, the RS President remained bellicose, declaring that the VRS was 'holding firm' and would 'win in the end,' and saying of Deliberate Force that 'I think those bombs can destroy the peace process,' the strikes are 'a moral disaster for the Western World and for the UN.'[138] Mladić, meanwhile, returned to BiH once the NATO airstrikes stopped and oversaw the stabilisation of the frontlines, even orchestrating a number of counter-offensives which, under the circumstances, were remarkably successful, particularly when the VRS faced the ARBiH by itself.[139] The unexpected reversal was enough to convince the Bosnian government to prioritise peace talks, although how much resilience the VRS had left at this point is debatable.

The string of triumphs against the ARBiH signalled that Mladić could still defeat his adversaries on the battlefield, but the damage inflicted by NATO was terminal. Without its ability to relay information and coordinate the rapid movement of reserves, the VRS was unable to enact the effective defensive doctrine that had served it so well, rendering its units isolated and outnumbered. Indeed, Gow argues that 'NATO's use of air power was, without a doubt and contrary to the predominant opinion of Western commentators, the decisive element in ending the war in BiH.'[140] Furthermore, although Mladić initially chose simply to ignore Karadžić and the SDS rather than remove them from power, the rift that had developed between them could easily have worsened had the war continued, with a military coup, the division of RS between Banja Luka and Pale, or even a Serb civil war being perfectly plausible outcomes. Before this could happen, however, the fighting stopped. On October 9, under the supervision of Milošević, Mladić and Karadžić signed a ceasefire agreement with Izetbegović, who represented both Bosnian Muslims and Croats.[141] The following month, a permanent peace agreement was negotiated in Dayton, Ohio, between Milošević, representing the Serbs, Izetbegović, representing Bosnian Muslims, and President Franjo Tuđman of Croatia, who represented Bosnian Croats. On 5 December 1995, the three Presidents formally signed the General Framework for Peace in BiH in Paris, finally ending the brutal conflict.

Conclusion

Throughout the 1992 – 1995 War the VRS shared the goals and ideology of the state it ostensibly served. However, while the SDS government dominated every other aspect of the nascent Serb republic, it was unable to assert its authority over the military. Its influence within the army was

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[138] Daniel Williams. "NATO Continues Extensive Bombing Across Bosnia." *The Washington Post.* (31/08/1995)
[139] Gow. *The Serbian Project and its Adversaries.* p.197
[140] Ibid. p.198
[141] Fiona Watson. "Not peace, but a big step forward." *House of Commons Library, Research Paper 95/102.* (October 1995) p.20

removed by the VRS leadership in the early months of the conflict, and as the war progressed, Karadžić consistently failed to establish his control, as President, over Mladić and his troops. This left the state and the military as two essentially monolithic, separate entities, exemplified by the necessity of having both Karadžić and Mladić sign the October 1995 ceasefire with Izetbegović. Furthermore, the VRS's reliance on locally raised armed forces left it unable to effectively address the Chetnik-Partisan divide by acting as a social agent. Instead, most troops raised in Eastern Bosnia, for example, remained in that theatre and were led by local officers, most of whom would have identified more with the heritage of the Chetniks than the Partisans. Although the rigid structure of the chain of command maintained cohesion within the military, the suggestion of a senior officer that the VRS should be divided in two, with half serving the 'Partisan' leadership in Banja Luka and the other serving the 'Chetnik' stronghold of Pale in Eastern Bosnia illustrates the pervasiveness of this divide.

Milošević had no constitutional or military authority over the VRS, however it was his VL network that went to great lengths to establish the army. The ongoing provision of vital support that the VRS was reliant on was also given at his command. In addition, he was the unrivalled leader of the project to forge a Greater Serbia from the former Yugoslavia, making him the main ideological driving force behind the VRS, and indeed all of the Serb armies that emerged from the JNA. Although he was ultimately able to assert his control over both Karadžić and Mladić, proving that he was the power behind the VRS, his ambiguous and unlegislated role completely undermined the emergence of civil-military relations in RS. Indeed, it would not be until the following year that the VRS was subject to oversight by the Bosnian Serb parliament.

Despite the chaotic nature of the relationship between its triumvirate leadership, however, the VRS was able to rapidly and effectively emerge from the JNA. It had clear military objectives, and the tools it was furnished with to achieve them were the most potent in the conflict. As a result, it quickly secured considerable swathes of territory and allowed for the establishment of RS. Furthermore, although the triumvirs disagreed with each other as to how the war should be fought and when it should end, their ideological motivations remained the same. By re-purposing the ideological dissemination framework of the JNA, Mladić was able to inculcate his troops with a shared motivation for fighting: the "liberation" of Serb lands from non-Serb oppressors in the name of the Orthodox faith. The contribution of non-Serb forces to these objectives did little to dilute this message. There appears to have been very little friction between APZB troops and their VRS allies, although their input is also largely ignored by their erstwhile Bosnian Serb allies in commemorations of the war, and the presence of Greek and Russian soldiers only served to amplify the religious

aspect of the conflict. This message was enough to gloss over divisions within the Serb community and maintain the cohesion and unity of the military.

The VRS was able to achieve almost all of its strategic objectives very quickly. Utilising its superior firepower, organisation, communications, logistics, and defensive doctrine it was able to hold the territory it had claimed against its numerically superior adversaries. However, after having failed to subjugate the BiH government when its advantage was greatest the VRS became increasingly overstretched. When NATO initiated Operation Deliberate Force, the damage inflicted left the VRS incapacitated. This left it, and RS, in a vulnerable position, particularly considering the entrance of significant numbers of HV forces into Bosnian Krajina. Facing an inevitable, although possibly drawn-out defeat on the battlefield and ever-deepening divisions within its leadership, the VRS and the RS were saved by the Dayton Peace Agreement, which ensured a place for both in the future of BiH.

Chapter Five: The Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Croat Defence Council

The Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (*Armija Republike Bosne i Hercegovine,* ARBiH) was the military of the nascent Bosnian state that emerged following the republic's declaration of independence from Yugoslavia in 1992. Bosnia and Herzegovina (*Bosna i Herzegovina,* BiH) was soon engulfed in conflict, and in the initial months of the war the chances of the Bosnian leadership organising an effective defence seemed unlikely: by the end of 1992 the government of BiH retained authority over little more than 30 percent of Bosnian territory, while Bosnian Serb forces controlled over 60 percent of the country, boasted a near-monopoly on heavy weapons and air support, and had already achieved most of their war aims.[1] Furthermore, territorial claims of Bosnian Croat leaders further complicated any claims of authority the government made. From this unfavourable beginning the ARBiH grew into a large military force which 'developed a war-fighting method commensurate with the material and human resources available to it' and was regarded as an effective light infantry fighting force.[2] 'The Bosnian defiance of the odds and formation of an army while already largely overrun,' James Gow argues, 'was heroic and, on many levels, partly successful.'[3] Indeed, although the ARBiH failed to obtain an absolute military victory, after almost four years of war the once-dominant Bosnian Serb Army, the Army of Republika Srpska (*Vojska Republike Srpske,* VRS), had been manoeuvred into a position where it was forced to negotiate peace terms or face increasingly frequent defeats on the battlefield.

The struggle to make the ARBiH capable of, at the least, forcing the Bosnian Serb leadership (or their sponsors in Belgrade) to the negotiating table, was complex. From the outset of the war, much of the army was under-equipped, untrained, and lacked the strategic, operational, and tactical capabilities to conduct anything other than static-defence. Furthermore, the ARBiH was composed of a group of armed forces formed under the auspices of a range of state institutions, ethnic identities, and strategic goals. Fusing these groups into an effective military, whilst also maintaining legitimacy and an image of inclusivity, only magnified the challenge faced by BiH's political and military leadership.

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[1] Jovan Divjak. "The First Phase, 1992-1993: struggle for survival and genesis of the Army of Bosnia-Herzegovina." In Branka Magaš and Ivo Zanić, eds. *The War in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina 1991 – 1995.* (London, 2013) p.174; Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Russian and European Analysis. *Balkan Battlegrounds: A Military History of the Yugoslav Conflict, 1990-1995.* (Washington, DC, 2002) p.160

[2] CIA. *Balkan Battlegrounds.* (Washington, DC, 2002) pp.223-4

[3] James Gow. *The Serbian Project and its Adversaries: A Strategy of War Crimes.* (London, 2003) p.256

In addition to the conflict on the battlefield, rival visions for the future of BiH competed for control and influence within the halls of power in government-held territory during the war. In November 1995, during the final days of the war, an ARBiH Corps Commander, General Sakib Mahmuljin, stated 'we are still not a professional army. We are a people's army. To be precise, we are a nation in uniform.'[4] In this statement, Mahmuljin identifies the relationship that had developed between the military and society, and highlights how, due to the extent of the conflict, the two became fused. However, exactly what this nation constituted or should constitute was open to contention, and due to its omnipotent societal presence in government-held territory, the ARBiH was an arena in which proponents of rival visions for the future of the nation-elect competed. Were ARBiH soldiers serving the state and constitutional order, or were they answering to President Alija Izetbegović and his increasingly powerful political party? Was the ARBiH a secular, multiethnic military which regarded all loyal Bosnian citizens as equals, or was it a Muslim army fighting to further the interests of Bosnian Muslims?

A key factor that influenced the evolution of the ARBiH was another Bosnian military force, the Croat Defence Council (*Hrvatsko vijeće obrane*, HVO). Formed in 1991 by the leading Croat nationalist political party in BiH, the Croat Democratic Union (*Hrvatska demokratska zajednica,* HDZ), the HVO entered the war as a highly decentralised organisation of Bosnian Croat local defence forces. This led to a complicated relationship with the ARBiH. In parts of BiH, the two armies fought side-by-side against the VRS throughout the conflict, whilst in others, a costly civil war between them erupted for over a year.[5] This dynamic was complicated further by divisions within the Bosnian Croat community, some of whom envisioned union with Croatia while others advocated a future in BiH.[6] Such divisions, coupled with the challenges that resulted from being the smallest force to fight in the Bosnian War, placed a great strain on the HVO throughout the conflict.

This chapter explores developments in the ARBiH and the HVO both on and off the battlefield between 1992 and 1995, taking into account the changing nature of their composition and capabilities. The struggles for power within each military and other relevant institutions are considered, as is the utilisation of ideology and symbolism by the leaderships in order to motivate their troops and consolidate their bases of power. Together, this provides a detailed portrait of the evolution of two very different armies in a complex conflict.

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[4] Quoted in: Marko Attila Hoare. *How Bosnia Armed.* (London, 2004) p.119
[5] A detailed account of the civil war between the ARBiH III Corps and HVO troops in Operative Zone Central Bosnia is offered by Charles Shrader in *The Muslim-Croat Civil War in Central Bosnia: A Military History, 1992 – 1994.* (College Station, 2003)
[6] These divisions are outlined in more detail in this chapter on pages 96 – 100.

Origins of the ARBiH

The origins of the ARBiH can be traced to before its official formation on 15 April 1992. While this date signifies the time at which a plethora of armed groups were symbolically unified into a single force, numerous military units had been raised, armed, organised, and trained throughout the previous year and would form the core of the army. Furthermore, many of the units and much of the structure and administration of the ARBiH was inherited from the Territorial Defence (*Teritorijalna odbrana,* TO) of BiH, which had been established as an independent reserve armed force of Yugoslavia in 1974.[7]

The TO force of BiH had been present in Bosnian society for decades, and although each republic's TO was financed and organised entirely by the republic itself, the TO formations had been a central pillar of Yugoslav defence policy: if Yugoslavia was attacked, the professional army would meet the invader head-on and aim to inflict heavy losses and slow the advance, giving the TOs time to mobilise and present an armed populace impossible to defeat. Most TO forces in Yugoslavia were highly decentralised organisations, specifically designed to remain operational even following a devastating attack which could, potentially, destroy Yugoslavia's entire chain of command.[8] As a result, the structure of the TOs encouraged local commanders to act independently against an aggressor. Furthermore, the Yugoslav pursuit of Workers' Self-Management added an ideological and constitutional aspect to the decentralisation and placed the responsibility and duty of defence upon workers themselves, rather than the federal or republican governments. This led to a situation in which, while the JNA had a relatively regular relationship with the Yugoslav state (demarcated by its adherence to the chain of command and respect for the constitutional order of Yugoslavia), the TOs were so localised and autonomous that their relationship with the state was distant. Instead they were offered leadership by the League of Communists and unified by Yugoslav Socialist Patriotism.[9]

By 1990, however, the ability of these twin pillars to provide leadership and galvanise public support had crumbled and in the elections of November and December 1990, the Party for Democratic Action (*Stranka za demokratske akcije,* SDA) rose to power, attaining the greatest share of seats in the Presidency, the Chamber of Citizens, and the Chamber of Municipalities.[10] With BiH still a

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[7] A detailed account of the development and introduction of the Total National Defence policy which led to the formation of TO forces in each Yugoslav Republic and Autonomous Province can be found in Chapter 3.

[8] Some command functions were re-centralised in 1981, but the republics maintained a key role in defence planning. James Horncastle. "A House of Cards: The Yugoslav Concept of Total National Defence and its Critical Weakness." *Macedonian Historical Review,* Vol.2, No.1. (2012) pp.292-3

[9] Yugoslav Socialist Patriotism is discussed in Chapter 3.

[10] Dieter Nohlen & Philip Stöver. *Elections in Europe: A Data Handbook.* (Sinzheim, 2010) pp.329-31

constituent republic of Yugoslavia, the fledgling SDA government found itself 'at the apex of a state apparatus it hardly controlled' and a TO that was becoming increasingly fragmented.[11] In 1991, the TO comprised 37,223 Bosnian Muslims, 29,276 Bosnian Serbs, 14,326 Bosnian Croats, and 5,339 'Others.'[12] In the absence of the League of Communists, little was left to hold the diverse institution together, and with no constitutional measures in place for such a development, the legitimacy of what remained could be easily questioned. In addition, the state inherited from Yugoslavia had been designed, developed, and staffed by communists, many of whom remained loyal to the idea of Yugoslavia, or reinvented themselves as nationalist leaders of their respective ethnicities. As a result, institutions such as the Ministry of the Interior (*Ministarstvo unutrašnjih poslova,* MUP) and State Security Service (*Služba državne bezbednosti,* SDB) were 'riddled with Serb and Croat nationalists' who were willing to help 'subvert and conquer the Bosnian state from within.'[13] The SDA's position was further weakened by its continued acquiescence to the Yugoslav military leadership's May 1990 demand that all TOs in Yugoslavia be disarmed, despite BiH's being the only one to adhere to the decision. In total, over 300,000 assorted firearms, light mortars, artillery pieces, and armour were surrendered by the TO of BiH prior to April 1992, leaving the state increasingly defenceless.[14]

Attempts in September 1991 by the Presidency to demand the withdrawal of Yugoslav forces and begin the mobilisation of the TO were thwarted by the veto of Biljana Plavšić, a Bosnian Serb member of the collective leadership. When the Bosnian parliament began preparing for secession from Yugoslavia the following month, Bosnian Serb nationalists, including Plavšić, instigated a campaign to undermine the republican government. First, they formed a parallel administration for the Serb people of BiH and declared numerous Serb Autonomous Districts, and then, in the first months of 1992, proclaimed the formation of the Serb Republic of BiH and adopted a constitution which stated that the republic was part of Yugoslavia.[15] On 12 May 1992, the Bosnian Serb Assembly approved the formation of its own army, the Army of the Serb Republic of BiH, which was renamed a few months later (as was the proclaimed state), becoming the VRS.[16] According to Stjepan Šiber, a Bosnian Croat who later served as deputy commander of the ARBiH, prior to the formation of the VRS, the ethnic composition of the Republican Staff of the TO was 'around 60 percent Serb, around 30 percent Muslim, and around 10 percent Croat. Here [BiH] there was no mention of the national

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[11] Marko Attila Hoare. "Civil-Military Relations in Bosnia-Herzegovina 1992-1995." In Branka Magaš & Ivo Zanić, eds. *The War in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina 1991-1995.* (London, 2013) p.181

[12] Rasim Delić. *Armija Republike Bosne i Hercegovine: Nastanak, razvoj i odbrana zemlje, knjiga prva.* (Sarajevo, 2007) p.141

[13] Hoare. "Civil-Military Relations in Bosnia-Herzegovina 1992-1995." p.180

[14] Divjak. "The First Phase." p.158

[15] Vinko Pandurević. *Srbi u Bosni i Hercegovini: od deklaracije do konstitucije.* (Belgrade, 2012) pp.34-6

[16] Ibid. p.44

key or equal representation of the peoples.'[17] Until many of them left the TO for the VRS, these mostly-Serb upper echelons of the TO sought to continue working alongside the JNA (and assist its efforts in Croatia) by disarming non-Serb TO units, distributing arms among the Serb population, and mobilising some Serb units for deployment in Croatia.[18] However, TO units commanded by, or composed of, non-Serbs (which constituted a majority of the TO as a whole) became increasingly reluctant to cooperate.[19]

After the independence referendum, held between 29 February and 1 March 1992, Izetbegović, acting as Chairman of the Presidency of BiH, declared independence from Yugoslavia. The first months of 1992 had been marked by increasing unrest across BiH, including protests and shootings. On 27 March, however, paramilitary units from Serbia began a series of attacks on towns in north-eastern BiH, first terrorising Bosanski Brod, a small but strategically significant town bordering Croatia, and a few days later, harrying the Bosnian Muslims residents of Bijeljina from their homes.[20] In his memoir, Izetbegović unequivocally states that it was the attack on Bijeljina, which began on 1 April, which marks the beginning of the war in BiH.[21] Just days after these events, the two Bosnian Serb members of the Presidency (who had both been central actors in the formation of the Serb state designed to supersede the Republic of BiH), Biljana Plavšić and Nikola Koljević, tendered their the formal resignation on 4 April.[22] Over the following days BiH was recognised by numerous states and organisations around the world, including the European Community, the USA, and Croatia.[23] The start of hostilities, coupled with the complete withdrawal of Bosnian Serb nationalists from the apparatuses of the Bosnian state meant that the TO of BiH inherited from the socialist period had, for all intents and purposes, ceased to exist. The Presidency of BiH, now facing a war without an army, decided to form a new TO on April 8, the same day the word 'socialist' was dropped from the name of the republic and a state of "war-danger" was declared.[24] Over the course of the following week, 40 out of 48 former TO staff members, seven out of nine regional TO staffs, and 73 out of 109 municipal staffs pledged their loyalty to the new TO of the Republic of BiH (*Teritorijalna odbrana Republike Bosne i Herzegovine,* TORBiH), and 75,000 individuals (of 86,000 registered in the old TO)

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[17] Stjepan Šiber. *Prevare zablude istina: Ratni dnevnik 1992.* (Sarajevo, 2000) p.15

[18] Rasim Delić notes that in 1991, only two of 14 TO brigade commanders were Bosnian Muslim. Delić. *Armija Republike Bosne i Herzegovine, knjiga prva.* p.141

[19] Hoare. *How Bosnia Armed.* p.23

[20] Chuck Sudetic. "Bosnia Asking U.N. for Peace Forces." *New York Times.* (28/03/1992)

[21] Alija Izetbegović. *Inescapable Questions: Autobiographical notes.* (Leicester, 2003) p.116

[22] Steven Burg & Paul Shoup. *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina: Ethnic Conflict and International Intervention.* (New York, 2000) p.64

[23] James Gow. *The Serbian Project and its Adversaries: A Strategy of War Crimes.* (London, 2003) p.173

[24] Hoare. *How Bosnia Armed.* p.52

volunteered to join the new force.[25] The TORBiH was administered by the Ministry of Defence of BiH and was commanded on an operational level by its own Supreme Command, a dynamic essentially unchanged by secession. The only significant institutional development was the re-allocation of overall strategic command from the JNA to the TO Supreme Command.[26]

Both the military and the state emerged from the apparatus of socialist Yugoslavia. As the TO and the Republic of BiH approached the transition from devolved administrations within the framework of a federal state to fully sovereign governing institutions of an independent country, the shape of their future relationship remained uncertain. The TO was far from a professional military, and significant portions of its personnel had rejected the Presidency's call to mobilise, leaving it partially hollow.[27] The state apparatus was equally weakened, with many bureaucrats and Party officials either leaking intelligence to their former comrades or leaving their posts and offering their services to Belgrade, Pale (the Bosnian Serb capital), or Zagreb.[28] As a result, in the first months of independence not only were both the military and the state untested national institutions, they were also weak, undermanned, and subject to external influence.

With the threat of armed conflict becoming increasingly plausible, the SDA immediately began considering the establishment of a national paramilitary force outside the control of compromised state institutions, as Marko Attila Hoare observes:

> The SDA as the leading party of government was forced to organise its own clandestine resistance movement independently of the Bosnian state institutions, while these same institutions in large part collaborated with the external enemy in attempting to suppress this resistance.[29]

In March 1991, Izetbegović approved the formation of such a force, and in June 1991, a 'Council for the National Defence of the Muslim Nation' was established within the SDA, signifying the moment when, according to future ARBiH Commander Rasim Delić, the party 'accepted historical

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[25] Divjak. "The First Phase." p.158, *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.143

[26] Mahmoud Cherif Bassiouni. *Final Report of the United Nations Commission of Experts Established Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 780 (1992): Annex III; The Military Structure, Strategy and Tactics of the Warring Factions.* (UN, 1994) pp.16-17

[27] Thirty-six out of 109 municipal TO staffs refused to recognise the government of BiH. Divjak. "The First Phase." p.183

[28] Most Bosnian Serb officials had left the BiH administration by April 1992; Hoare suggests that a member of the BiH Presidency, Fikret Abdić, and the Minister of Interior, Alija Delimustafić, were working for Yugoslav military intelligence in 1992. Hoare. "Civil-Military Relations in Bosnia-Herzegovina 1992-1995." p.181; Major-General Aleksandar Vasilijević, a senior JNA commander, also contends that the KOS had two agents at the very top of the SDA leadership. *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.130

[29] Marko Attila Hoare. "Civil-Military Relations in Bosnia-Herzegovina 1992-1995." p.180

responsibility for preserving BiH and Bosniaks.'[30] The military organisation formed by the party

received the name 'Patriotic League' (*Patriotska liga,* PL), and although its ranks were open to all

nationalities, Delić concedes that its units 'were primarily based on the participation of Bosniak

people.'[31] A PL Main Headquarters, which included the PL's military leadership as well as a range of

political, public, and cultural figures, was established, with Izetbegović himself overseeing its

activities.[32] The PL's military commander, Sefer Halilović, offered a summary of the goal of the

organisation in an interview with the BBC, stating that 'our objective was the defence of BiH as a

state and the Bosnian Muslim people from genocide and eradication. So we existed as an armed

force that protected BiH and Bosnian Muslims.'[33] Hasan Čengić (Izetbegović's closest confidant and

later the Minister of Defence for BiH) concisely notes why the SDA, as the party of government,

chose to raise an armed force outside the framework of the state: 'We decided to form the [PL]

organisation through the structure of the [SDA] party because that was the only structure we could

rely on.'[34] Speaking to the Second SDA Congress in 1997, Izetbegović reflected on the evolution of

the PL, offering some important insights into its development:

> In July 1991 the first military experts joined the PL and provided the first directives for the
> defence of BiH. The first truckload of weaponry arrived in August 1991. The first military
> training began in September. The first units were formed in October. In November a long-
> range radio transmitter was acquired to cover all of BiH, and the training of communications
> operators began. In December the organising of personnel and the arming of police reserve
> units of the BiH Interior Ministry began at the initiative and under the leadership of the PL.
> In January 1992 the first unit of the PL with military training was created, and the
> distribution of TO arms began at the initiative of the PL, an action that was carried out
> through the highest organs of BiH.[35]

Izetbegović's account of the formation of the PL understandably ignores many of the issues the

organisation failed to overcome in this period. In *Balkan Battlegrounds,* an historical overview of the

break-up of Yugoslavia produced by the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), the authors note that

'the PL failed miserably to acquire and distribute weapons' and the number of weapons it was able

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[30] Rasim Delić. *Armija Republike Bosne i Herzegovine: Nastanak, razvoj I odbrana zemlje, knjiga druga.* (Sarajevo, 2007) p.326

[31] Ibid. p.328

[32] Delić. *Armija Republike Bosne i Herzegovine, knjiga prva.* p.157

[33] Sefer Halilović. "Interview for The Death of Yugoslavia by the BBC." (1995) Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives. p.5

[34] Quoted in CIA. *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.130

[35] Alija Izetbegović. "Speech to the Second Congress of the SDA." *Dnevni avaz* (September, 1997) p.2

to stockpile 'fell far short of its requirements.'[36] Furthermore, Halilović claims that in March 1992 his organisation had 126,000 organised members, 80,000 of whom were armed, however other estimates suggest that at this time the PL could only field 40,000 troops.[37] Despite these shortcomings, the PL boasted a 'fairly evolved organisational structure' with eight BiH regional commands located in Sarajevo, Doboj, Cazin, Prijedor, Livno, Mostar, Višegrad, and Tuzla, as well as one in the predominantly-Muslim region of Serbia, the Sandžak.[38] Furthermore, ARBiH General Rifata Bilajac would later comment that 'the foundation of the ARBiH is in the Patriotic League, which grew through the TO to become the ARBiH,' suggesting that the PL was a particularly significant, if not the dominant, force within the army, despite being significantly smaller than the TO component.[39]

While the TORBiH and PL represent two military formations which would play pivotal roles in the ARBiH, in the earliest months of the conflict they were poorly equipped and inexperienced. During this period, particularly in April and May 1992, the Police, SDB, and other MUP forces played 'a decisive role in the defence of areas with a majority Bosniak population, especially in Sarajevo.'[40] On 4 April, the same day that the Bosnian Serb members left the Presidency, Izetbegović ordered the mobilisation of all police units and reservists in Sarajevo in an attempt to bolster the city's fragile defences. Steven Burg and Paul Shoup argue that this decision, which was immediately followed by a call from Bosnian Serb nationalists to evacuate Sarajevo, signifies the 'definitive rupture between the Bosnian government and the Serbs.'[41] The next day, police stations and MUP buildings were attacked by Bosnian Serb units, many of which were also formed from policemen.[42] On 5 April, VRS troops began firing into Sarajevo, beginning an almost four year siege of the capital. It was at this crucial moment that police units provided the Bosnian government with the ability to assert its control in the city, capturing, for example, six snipers who fired on a peace demonstration outside the BiH parliament and defending the TV tower on Hum hill.[43] Of particular note in these actions was a 200-strong unit of special police, led by a Croat, Dragan Vikić, suggesting that, much like the TO, the MUP was a multiethnic force.[44] According to Jovan Divjak, a senior Bosnian Serb commander in the ARBiH, the defensive actions of the police in cities 'of vital strategic importance for the defence

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[36] CIA. *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.132
[37] Halilović. "Interview for The Death of Yugoslavia by the BBC." p.3; CIA. *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.132
[38] CIA. *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.132
[39] Haris Halilović. "Efikasnijim komandovanjem do slobode." *Prva linija*, No. 20. (January, 1995) p.4
[40] Divjak. "The First Phase." p.160
[41] Burg & Shoup. *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina.* p.129
[42] CIA. *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.152
[43] CIA. *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.152; Hoare. *How Bosnia Armed.* p.46
[44] Colm Doyle. *Witness to War Crimes: The Memoirs of a Peacekeeper in Bosnia.* (Barnsley, 2018) p.129

of BiH as a whole against the more powerful aggressor forces, bought time for organising and planning the defence.'[45]

Bosnian police units also contributed significantly to the overall strength and capabilities of the Bosnian government, and later to the ARBiH. In total, the MUP mobilised approximately 70,000 men, as many as the TORBiH. Furthermore, as Charles Shrader notes, the troops of the MUP were 'mainly armed with small arms and had few vehicles but [were] generally well equipped and well trained.'[46] Hoare argues that at this time, the forces of the MUP were 'the most powerful armed force under Bosnian government command.'[47]

The Bosnian government managed to mobilise significant numbers of troops in this initial period and was successful in establishing a framework for the organisation and operational control of its forces. However, as the Head of the European Community's Monitor Mission in Sarajevo, Colonel Colm Doyle, observes, 'at this early stage, the fledgling Bosnian army was little more than a name.'[48]

Origins of the HVO

In 1991, the Croats of BiH were broadly divided into two camps. Laura Silber and Allan Little note that 'one-third of the Bosnian Croats lived in western Herzegovina, a notorious hot-bed of extreme right-wing nationalism, where Croats formed close to a hundred percent of the population.'[49] This community provided many volunteers to fight in the war in Croatia, largely favoured joining Croatia, and was represented by Franjo Boras of the HDZ in the Bosnian Presidency.[50] The majority of Bosnian Croats, however, lived in central and northern Bosnia in mixed towns and cities, and were 'much more inclined to live in a multiethnic Bosnian state than to seek its partition into ethnically pure units.'[51] Stjepan Kljuić, the other Bosnian Croat member of the Presidency and HDZ leader in BiH, preferred to work within the framework of a united BiH and supported Izetbegović, representing this more inclusive outlook despite hailing from the same party.[52] His views were shared by significant Bosnian Croat leaders. A HDZ leader from Herzegovina, Miro Lasić, stressed that the 'optimum solution is to "retain Bosnia and Herzegovina as a whole, not altering its borders," for such a future would be favourable to Croatia.'[53] Furthermore, Sarajevo Archbishop Vinko Puljić

[45] Divjak. "The First Phase." p.160
[46] Charles Shrader. *The Muslim-Croat Civil War in Central Bosnia, 1992-1994.* (College Station, 2003) p.34
[47] Hoare. *How Bosnia Armed.* p.52
[48] Doyle. *Witness to War Crimes.* p.129
[49] Laura Silber & Allan Little. *The Death of Yugoslavia.* (London, 1996) p.293
[50] Ibid.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Sabrina Ramet. *The Three Yugoslavias: State-Building and Legitimation, 1918-2005.* (Indiana, 2006)
[53] Jure Krišto. "Deconstructing the Myth: Franjo Tuđman and Bosnia and Herzegovina." *Review of Croatian History*, Vol. 6, No.1. (2011) p.44

stated: 'The unified message, and I stand by this, is that an integral, sovereign Bosnia and Herzegovina is the best solution for the Croat people in Bosnia and Herzegovina.'[54] The HVO's main political rival, the Croat Peasants' Party (*Hrvatska seljačka stranka*, HSS), also opposed the more extreme politics attributed to Herzegovina. The party's leader from 1993 - 1995, Ivo Komšić, reflects that the HSS feared that the majority of Bosnian Croats (those living outside of Herzegovina) were left 'unprotected' by the policies discussed by the HDZ and sought to build an alternative platform:

> We wanted to become an independent political subject in BiH, one that would make its own
> decisions, and not be instructed what to do... Of course, we knew we would be faced with
> fierce reactions. The very establishment of the Party was fiercely attacted by Grude and
> Zagreb. Even by the HSS in Zagreb.[55]

The influence of such figures, however, was eclipsed by that of Croatian President Franjo Tuđman. His command over the Croatian state and military, combined with the influence he had as leader of the HDZ in Croatia, placed him, more than anyone else, in control of the future of the Bosnian Croat community.

While offering some support to Boras in the Presidency, for the most part Tuđman chose to circumvent the Bosnian state in order to influence events in BiH. An emerging leader from Herzegovina, Mate Boban, was chosen to lead efforts to form an independent Croat 'political, cultural, economic and territorial whole' and, upon its declaration on 18 November 1991, he became its first president.[56] According to Article 2 of the *Decision on the Establishment of the Croat Community of Herceg-Bosna*, Herceg-Bosna (HB) consisted of the following municipalities: Jajce, Kreševo, Busovača, Vitez, Novi Travnik, Travnik, Kiseljak, Fojnica, Kakanj, Vareš, Kotor Varoš, Tomislavgrad, Livno, Kupres, Bugojno, Gornji Vakuf, Prozor, Konjic, Jablanica, Posušje, Mostar, Široki Brijeg, Grude, Ljubuški, Čitluk, Čapljina, Neum, Stolac and parts of Skender Vakuf (Dobretići), Trebinje (Ravno), and, added a year later, Žepče.[57] This encompassed approximately 30 percent of the territory of BiH, and included many areas which were not majority Croat. A month later, the most prominent Croat critic of the HB, Kljuić, had his authority to represent Bosnian Croats in any negotiations revoked by the HB leadership.[58] On 8 April 1992, as conflict was erupting in Sarajevo, the HB leadership declared the formation of the HVO, which it described as 'Herceg-Bosna's

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[54] Ibid.
[55] Ivo Komšić. "Interview for The Death of Yugoslavia by the BBC." (1995) Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives. pp.5-6
[56] Ibid.
[57] Prosecutor vs. Jadranko Prlić, et al. "Indictment." *IT-04-74.* (ICTY, 2009) p.7
[58] Krišto. "Deconstructing the Myth." pp.44-5

supreme executive, administrative and defence body.'[59] Boban contended that this was necessary because 'thirteen Croatian villages in the municipality of Trebinje – including Ravno – were destroyed and the Bosnian government did nothing thereafter.'[60]

A series of crisis staffs established in predominantly Bosnian Croat areas served as nuclei for HVO military units to muster. With the ARBiH using the structures of the TO, and Serbs dominating the JNA, the HB leadership was forced to build the organisational structures of the HVO from scratch. The framework of the TO was copied, linking Bosnian Croat reservists and volunteers across BiH through the municipal administrations controlled by the HDZ. As many units had been covertly organised for the war in Croatia, fully formed HVO units surfaced 'within days of the Bosnian war's beginning, complete with officers, staffs, organisations, and weapons.'[61] On 16 April, Tuđman ordered the Croatian Army (*Hrvatska vojska,* HV) to set up a forward position in Grude, a municipality in Herzegovina. Milivoj Petković, a former JNA lieutenant-colonel from Croatia, was placed in command of the position in his capacity as an HV officer and was subsequently appointed Chief of the HVO Main Staff. He was assisted in his duties by Slobodan Praljak, a Bosnian Croat who served as an HV Major-General, Assistant Minister of Defence of Croatia, and senior representative of the Croatian Ministry of Defence to HB.[62] The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), in its initial indictment of Praljak, noted that:

> He served as a conduit for orders, communications and instructions from President Franjo Tuđman, [Croatian Minister of Defence] Gojko Šušak and other senior officials of the Republic of Croatia to the HB/HVO government and armed forces, and reported to and kept Croatia's senior officials informed of developments in [BiH].[63]

With Petković and Praljak in control, the level of direct influence exercised by Zagreb over the HVO was absolute at the highest levels. The CIA observed: 'Organized and directed from Zagreb, the HVO in 1992 was for all practical purposes a subordinate command of the Croatian Army.'[64] Up to 20,000 Bosnian Croats mobilised under the HVO's banner before April 1992, and by the end of the year, this figure had grown to approximately 45,000, including contingents of HV troops.[65] Although they had seized considerable quantities of arms from TO stockpiles in HDZ-controlled municipalities, they were entirely dependent on Croatia for leadership, logistical support, heavy weapons, and additional

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[59] Prosecutor vs. Jadranko Prlić, et al. "Indictment." p.1
[60] Shrader. *The Muslim-Croat Civil War in Central Bosnia.* p.29
[61] CIA. *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.134
[62] Prosecutor vs. Jadranko Prlić, et al. "Indictment." p.3
[63] Ibid. pp.2-3
[64] CIA. *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.134
[65] International Institute of Strategic Studies. *The Military Balance, 1993.* (London, 1993) p.74

arms. Tuđman was forthcoming in these regards. The HV commanders deployed to BiH raised a brigade-sized formation, the Ante Bruno Bušić Regiment, over the spring of 1992. It was composed entirely of volunteers organised in four battalions, and was well-equipped and manoeuvrable, making it the HVO's most effective unit.

Additional support from Zagreb came in the form of considerable financial backing, the supply of approximately 50 tanks, up to 500 artillery pieces, and a 'very important' small fleet of helicopters, as well as small arms and ammunition.[66] As a result, despite being the smallest army in BiH (by a significant margin), the HVO was in 'organizational second place at the war's outbreak in April 1992 — lacking the fully formed military infrastructure of the VRS but far ahead of the virtually non-existent Bosnian Army.'[67] This led many Bosnian Muslims to join up, particularly in local defence units in majority-Croat areas. Klejda Mulaj argues that, in 1992, up to 30 percent of the HVO was composed of Bosnian Muslims 'whose preference for joining this formation rather than local Muslim militias was informed by the HVO's ability to provide weapons.'[68]

In addition to the HV/HVO, there was another Bosnian Croat army which emerged in the months prior to the outbreak of war. The Croat Defence Forces (*Hrvatske obrambene snage,* HOS) were formed by the Croat Party of Rights (*Hrvatske stranke prava,* HSP), an extreme right-wing Croatian political party. Indeed, the abbreviation "HOS" itself invoked the identity of the military of the Independent State of Croatia, the fascist puppet-state established by Axis powers on the territory of Croatia and BiH during the Second World War, the Croat Armed Forces (*Hrvatske oružane snage*). On 3 January 1992, Blaz Krajlević and Mile Dedaković were appointed to establish a headquarters in Ljubuški, a municipality in Herzegovina, and lead the HOS.[69] Burg and Shoup note that the HSP and HOS favoured 'an alliance of Croats and Muslims against the Serbs, and the creation of a republic made up of Croats and Muslims that would eventually be absorbed into a greater Croatia.'[70] The HOS raised approximately 5,000 troops, many of whom hailed from the diaspora or were hired as mercenaries.[71] They wore a black uniform, openly sported fascist insignia, and found significant support from both Bosnian Croats and Muslims.[72]

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[66] Ibid; Klejda Mulaj. *Politics of Ethnic Cleansing: Nation-State Building and Provision of In/Security in Twentieth Century Balkans.* (Lexington, 2010) p.53; Shrader. *The Muslim-Croat Civil War in Central Bosnia.* p.62

[67] CIA. *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.225

[68] Mulaj. *Politics of Ethnic Cleansing.* p.53

[69] CIA. *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.133

[70] Burg & Shoup. *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina.* p.198

[71] CIA. *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.133

[72] Shrader. *The Muslim-Croat Civil War in Central Bosnia.* p.46

Despite the apparent separatism displayed by the establishment of HB, its relationship with the Bosnian state was ambiguous. Jure Krišto contends that for Tuđman 'it was in the interest of the Croatian people at that time for there to be a "demarcation" *inside* [emphasis in orginal] Bosnia and Herzegovina,' rather than to make a bid for full independence.[73] Thus, initially at least, both the HVO and HOS shared the goals of the Bosnian government and fought alongside the forces it had gathered against the VRS.

Formation of the ARBiH

The emergence of the PL, coupled with the institutional separation of the TORBiH and MUP and the establishment of the HVO and the HOS, led to a situation in which five separate armies (in addition to numerous paramilitary groups) fought alongside each other for the first weeks of the war. Each was administered and received orders from different institutions, only two of which, the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Interior, represented the Bosnian state. In a bid to assert its authority and bring both organisation and legitimacy to the array of armies fighting for BiH, the Presidency declared the unification of all armed forces on the territory of BiH under the banner of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (*Oružane snage Republike Bosne i Herzegovine*, OSRBiH) on 9 April 1992, and gave a deadline of 15 April for all units to accept the decision.[74] This largely symbolic gesture was accepted by each armed force, including the HVO and HOS, and was followed by the absorption of the PL into the structures of the TORBiH on 12 April. An appeal on 13 April by Hasan Efendić, a former JNA officer and the newly appointed Chief of Staff of the TORBiH, for Bosnians in the JNA to desert and join the OSRBiH.[75]

Upon being offered the position of Chief of Staff on 8 April, Efendić reportedly asked the Minister of Defence: 'Will our army be multi-national or mono-national? If it is mono-national I would not want to be commander.'[76] The promise of a Bosnian Croat and a Bosnian Serb deputy, Stjepan Šiber and Jovan Divjak respectively, convinced Efendić to take the role. Thirty-six out of 109 municipal TO commands (almost representative of the proportion of Bosnian Serbs in the population) refused the Presidency's request to join the newly formed TORBiH, suggesting that the force would be heavily dominated by Bosnian Muslims.[77] However, despite this apparent division along ethnic lines, in the initial months of the conflict the TORBiH successfully retained much of the character of its Yugoslav predecessor. Efendić suggests that 'Bosniaks, Croats, and a small number of Serbs responded to the

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[73] Krišto. "Deconstructing the Myth." p.46
[74] Hoare. *How Bosnia Armed.* p.52
[75] Ibid.
[76] Hasan Efendić. *Ko je branio Bosnu.* (Sarajevo, 1998) p.143
[77] According to the 1991 Census, Bosnian Serbs constituted 31.21 percent of the population. Thirty-six point three percent of municipal TO Commands refused to side with the Bosnian government.

mobilisation,' while Divjak reports that in 1992 the proportion of Croats in the army was 'higher than their proportion of the overall population,' which was 17.3 percent in 1991, and the proportion of Serbs 'stood at about half their percentage proportion of the population,' which was 31.21 percent.[78] He also notes that the ARBiH Supreme Command was composed of 18 percent Croats and 12 percent Serbs, which reflected the proportions of overall troop numbers.[79] Thus, in 1992 the ARBiH was approximately 65 percent Bosnian Muslim (and "Other"), 20 percent Croat, and 15 percent Serb, a composition which was reflected in the leadership to the highest levels. Such a balance in composition and distribution of power suggests that, as Delić argues, the ARBiH at this time was indeed:

> An organised armed force of BiH and its peoples and citizens defending not only their own country and citizens, but also the values of democracy and civilisation and a thousand-year long history, as well as the multiethnic, multiconfessional, and multicultural character of BiH.[80]

The Presidency's decision to create the OSRBiH went some way in establishing a framework for the coordinated management of the separate armed groups on paper, but few practical changes were made. The integration of the TO and PL under the auspices of the Ministry of Defence (rather than the SDA) and the establishment of the TORBiH on 12 April had represented a more significant development toward a democratic model of civil-military relations, but it was not until the following month that the legal status of the OSRBiH was clarified. The Law of the Armed Forces of RBiH, introduced on 20 May 1992, enshrined the OSRBiH as the 'common armed forces of all citizens and nations of the Republic,' while the Law on the ARBiH of 1 August 1992, stated:

> Service in the Army is carried out by the citizens of RBiH. Citizens of the Republic have the right, under the conditions determined by this Law, to serve in the Army, to perform military and other duties, to acquire the rank of military officers and other professional titles and to advance in the service.'[81]

The promulgation of such laws, at a time when prospects on the battlefield were bleak, illustrate the extent to which the leadership of BiH were committed to establishing at least the appearance of an inclusive and legitimate armed force, in which all citizens of BiH could serve and fight to preserve the constitutional order of BiH. It was this image that Izetbegović iterated to the world at the

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[78] Efendić. *Ko je branio Bosnu.* p.116
[79] Divjak. "The First Phase." pp.172-3
[80] Delić. *Armija, knjiga druga.* pp.332-3
[81] Rasim Hodžić & Šefik Sabljica, eds. *Zbirka propisa iz odbrane.* (Sarajevo, 1995) pp.51-64

International Conference on Former Yugoslavia in August 1992, when he declared some 'fundamental principles' upon which he hoped the future constitution of BiH would be based. The first was: 'BiH will be a democratic, secular state, based on the sovereignty of its citizens and equality before the law of its nations.'[82]

However, even while drafting inclusive laws and presenting democratic visions for the future, Izetbegović and the SDA began a series of political manoeuvres which bypassed the nascent institutions of state and ignored the legal framework that was being established, immediately undermining the emergence of democratic civil-military relations in BiH. Divjak contends that after the PL was officially incorporated into the TORBiH, 'there was still a dual command structure in place' in which Colonel Hasan Efendić, a former JNA officer, led the TORBiH while Halilović retained command of the PL.[83]

Halilović, a former JNA officer originating from the Sandžak, a majority-Muslim region of Serbia, had deserted in September 1991 because he felt that 'my place was with my people' and had travelled to Sarajevo in order to put himself 'at the disposal of the SDA and Bosnian Muslims.'[84] On 25 May, the impractical dual command structure was abolished; however rather than the PL becoming fully incorporated into the TORBiH, Efendić was replaced by Halilović, signifying something of a coup within the military, and the ascension of the armed wing of the SDA to the height of military power within the OSRBiH.[85] Just over a week later, Rasim Delić, another former JNA officer (and SDA supporter) who had defected a few months earlier, was placed in command of the newly established Operational Command in Visoko, near Sarajevo. His tasks included forming new military units and and serving as a conduit through which weapons smuggled into BiH could be distributed, arguably making him the most significant figure in the formation and development of the armed forces loyal to the BiH government. In direct contravention of the established chain of command, Delić answered directly to Izetbegović, rather than through the TO Supreme Command and Chief of Staff Halilović, who (despite his own irregular selection process) protested that such an arrangement was a violation of military protocol.[86] Following the formal declaration of war on 20 June 1992, the Presidency assumed direct control over the OSRBiH from the Ministry of Defence, in part due to alleged obstructionism on the part of the 'Croat-oriented' Jerko Doko, who led the ministry.[87]

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[82] Izetbegović. *Inescapable Questions.* p.138
[83] Omer Karabeg. "What Really Happened During the Dobrovoljacka Attack? (Interview with Jovan Divjak)" *Radio Free Europe.* (08/03/2010)
[84] Halilović. "Interview for The Death of Yugoslavia by the BBC." p.1
[85] Prosecutor vs. Sefer Halilovic. "Indictment." *IT-01-48-I.* (ICTY, 2001) p.1
[86] Hoare. *How Bosnia Armed.* p.78
[87] Ibid. p.79

Although such a transfer of authority was constitutional in a time of war, by July 1992 many of the original members of the Presidency had left the institution, leaving it firmly in the hands of the SDA, although a Bosnian Croat, Mile Akmadžić, remained Prime Minister.

The efforts of the Bosnian government in the spring and summer of 1992 to establish the necessary legal, administrative, and organisational frameworks to send the ARBiH into battle ran alongside the struggle to arm and equip the thousands of soldiers it now had under its command. During this period, the JNA was still deployed across BiH, and held their own stockpiles and confiscated TO arms in warehouses and barracks across the country. With an international arms embargo placed on Yugoslavia and its seceding republics, these weapons became a jealously guarded resource.[88] In mid-April, PL troops stormed the Pretis factory in Vogošća, on the outskirts of Sarajevo, and seized 800 anti-tank rockets. However, no compatible rocket launchers could be found in Sarajevo, so Colonel Sulejman Vranj flew a helicopter at great risk from Sarajevo to the town of Visoko, picked up a single rocket launcher, and flew back, providing the city's defenders with a vital capability that was driven around the city to face subsequent attacks.[89] One such attack by the JNA on 2-3 May was successfully defeated, however, hundreds of JNA troops remained trapped inside their barracks in the city. Some within the OSRBiH, such as PL Commander Halilović, advocated seizing all confiscated TO weaponry at the JNA's warehouse in Faletići, in Sarajevo. Izetbegović preferred to allow the JNA to leave the city, with the weapons, unhindered.[90] As a result, the defence of Sarajevo was, initially at least, bereft of even the most basic weaponry. According to Divjak, in 1992 the defenders of Sarajevo possessed only six snipers (in contrast with the besiegers' 285), one tank (opposed to 91), and no heavy artillery.[91] OSRBiH forces in some areas of BiH were more successful in acquiring arms and, sometimes, heavy weaponry. On 15 May, a JNA convoy was captured in Brčkanska Malta, near Tuzla, an event which had a 'crucial impact in raising morale among our troops and strengthening their resolve to defend the area.'[92] An additional 9,000 infantry weapons were seized from the JNA barracks at Kozlovac, just outside Tuzla, providing the defenders of the city with a veritable arsenal in comparison to the rest of the OSRBiH.[93] In Zenica, TO units even managed to acquire heavy weaponry, including 20 tanks and 19 anti-aircraft guns.[94] Although Bosnian government forces

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[88] UN Security Council. Resolution 713. (September, 1991)

[89] CIA. *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.139

[90] Hoare. "Civil-Military Relations in Bosnia-Herzegovina 1992-1995." p.184

[91] Divjak. "The First Phase." p.163

[92] Izetbegović. *Inescapable Questions.* p.128

[93] Divjak. "The First Phase." p.165

[94] Ibid.

remained significantly outmatched, particularly in terms of heavy weaponry, artillery, and air power, enough arms and ammunition were acquired in this crucial period to prevent a complete rout.

On 22 May, the TORBiH was given the order to fully mobilise, and on 27 May, the creation of twelve brigades of the OSRBiH was formally announced.[95] Although most of the army remained in scattered TO units, the OSRBiH now had soldiers organised in sizeable units, a much clearer chain of command, and was beginning to look less like a collection of militias and more like a military. However, despite these developments, the OSRBiH remained limited in both its capabilities and effectiveness. Defensive lines established in the first months of the war would, in many cases, remain unchanged for the duration of the conflict. In Sarajevo, for example, two thirds of the defence lines were left unaltered from June 1992 until the Dayton Peace Agreement brought an end to the fighting in December 1995.[96] The story was similar across most of the country, with OSRBiH troops able to halt enemy advances, but unable to mount any offensive actions, plan coordinated manoeuvres, or increase its operational capability. For many OSRBiH soldiers, their experience of the conflict was limited to participating in "shifts" on static frontlines, such as those around Sarajevo. Shrader describes this process thus:

> The available military weapons were kept on the frontline position and transferred to the relieving shift. The men participating in the shifts were only skimpily supplied with uniforms and other equipment and were considered soldiers only during the time they were actually on shift.[97]

Divjak offers a further insight into the problems the OSRBiH faced in the first phase of the war, many of which, he argues, remained unresolved until the end of the conflict. He notes that in addition to the lack of weapons and munitions, the OSRBiH also severely lacked signalling and engineering equipment, lamenting that 'we did not even have shovels to dig simple trenches, to say nothing of mechanical diggers, especially in the cities which had been surrounded since day one.'[98] He estimates that approximately 75 percent of the OSRBiH spent the first year of the war fighting 'in jeans and trainers' and did not even possess a single, unifying insignia. Instead, OSRBiH troops wore the badges of the TO, PL, Yugoslav-era civil defence and youth workers' brigades, or simply the emblem of their respective city.[99] The most significant shortcoming Divjak identifies is the lack of professional personnel and the limited training that could be offered to recruits. He illustrates the

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[95] These brigades were: I Tuzla, II Tuzla, I Zenica, I Podrina, I Lukavac, CVIII Brčko, I Bihaćka Krajina, the 'King Tomislav' Brigade, and four Sarajevo brigades; Hoare. *How Bosnia Armed.* p.77
[96] Divjak. "The First Phase." p.161
[97] Shrader. *The Muslim-Croat Civil War in Central Bosnia.* p.29
[98] Divjak. "The First Phase." pp.160-1
[99] Ibid.

extent to which the OSRBiH was an amateur force by discussing the case of one particularly large brigade (with more than 5,000 men) which boasted that they did not have a single officer or non-commissioned officer (NCO) from the former JNA. He also notes that in some places, such as Sarajevo, there was essentially no opportunity to conduct training exercises due to uninterrupted military activity and the lack of space.[100]

During the summer of 1992, following the declaration of a state of war by the Presidency on 20 June, the OSRBiH underwent a comprehensive reorganisation. On 4 July, the TORBiH (which already included the PL) was renamed the ARBiH, and the MUP and most Bosnian Muslim paramilitary units were incorporated into the new force. The ARBiH was to be structured in much the same way as a conventional army. However, a Supreme Command (rather than a General Staff) would preside over regional and municipal level commands. The predominantly Croat elements of the OSRBiH, the HVO and HOS, remained independent of the new army, although a largely symbolic link through the framework of the OSRBiH was retained. This link was strengthened, for a time, following an agreement signed between Izetbegović and Croatian President Franjo Tuđman on 21 July, which recognised the HVO and the ARBiH as distinct elements of the OSRBiH and called for the creation of a joint staff.[101] Despite the challenges faced in the period between April and July 1992, forces loyal to the BiH government managed to mobilise enough manpower, acquire enough weaponry, and mount a strong enough defence to prevent themselves from being completely overrun. Amidst this often-chaotic struggle, the myriad armed groups which had mobilised and fought for the government of BiH were slowly merged into a single, relatively cohesive army: the ARBiH.

A Giant Rises: 1992

Following its formation, the ARBiH was divided into seven military districts (Sarajevo, Doboj, Tuzla, Banja Luka, Zenica, Mostar, and Bihać), a system which reflected the structure of TORBiH.[102] The commanders for these districts were selected by Chief of Staff Halilović, although the ability to communicate and exert command and control over all units remained limited.[103] These districts, originally designed to coordinate the defensive operations of TO militias in their respective areas, began a transformation to a more conventional military structure on 18 August, 1992, when they officially became ARBiH Corps Areas. The Sarajevo Military District became ARBiH I Corps, Doboj and Tuzla became II Corps, Banja Luka and Zenica became III Corps, Mostar became IV Corps, and Bihać became V Corps. Two additional corps were added in 1993, VI Corps located in Konjic, and VII Corps,

[100] Ibid.
[101] Hoare. "Civil-Military Relations in Bosnia-Herzegovina 1992-1995." p.188
[102] Shrader. *The Muslim-Croat Civil War in Central Bosnia.* p.34
[103] Gow. *The Serbian Project and its Adversaries.* p.245

headquarted in Travnik.[104] The reorganisation took months to complete, but by the beginning of December 1992, the ARBiH possessed five corps, each with its own headquarters and staff, which commanded a number of Operational Groups, a collection of brigades gathered 'to facilitate the conduct of operations and command and control in combat,' in addition to a varying amount of independent and tactical brigades, and supporting artillery, signals, engineering, and logistical troops.[105] Due to the nature of the fighting in BiH, each corps was essentially isolated from the others, and, for the most part, did not coordinate operations with other corps until the final year of the war.

At the time the corps were established, the ARBiH commanded, according to Halilović, approximately 170,000 troops organised in 28 brigades, sixteen independent battalions, one armoured battalion, and two artillery divisions, in addition to 138 other units.[106] These figures had rapidly increased following the influx of refugees (mostly to central BiH) from places such as Jajce, which was captured by the end of October 1992. Many combat-age people driven from their homes formed mobile units capable of operating across BiH and conducting offensive operations, offering the ARBiH a capability it had, for the most part, lacked.[107] By the end of 1992, the ARBiH had grown both in terms of its size and its capabilities. This was reflected by a number of successes on the battlefield. At the end of October 1992, troops from II Corps repulsed VRS forces near Gradačac and managed to capture an entire JNA armoured train, acquiring significant quantities of arms and equipment.[108] The journal of II Corps, *Armija Ljiljana* (Army of the Bosnian Lily), later reported that captured JNA artillery had been formed into a unit nicknamed "The Division of Earthly Thunders" which 'had led the enemy to despair' during the fighting around Brčko and could be used in operations in Banovići and Gradačac.[109] In an interview with *Armija Ljiljana*, the commander of the unit, Feriz Šehanović, noted that:

> We have excellent gun crews, and the composition of the unit is multinational. But I still urge our fellow citizens, Orthodox Bosnians, to report to our unit, according to their knowledge and abilities, so that tomorrow our city can walk with its head raised up.'[110]

Šehanović is evidently implying that Tuzla, the city in which II Corps was based, found pride in its diversity, even during the conflict. Interviews conducted by Anna Calori corroborate this suggestion,

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[104] Shrader. *The Muslim-Croat Civil War in Central Bosnia.* p.35
[105] Ibid.
[106] Sefer Halilović. *Lukava strategija.* (Matica, Sarajevo, 1998) p.151
[107] Shrader. *The Muslim-Croat Civil War in Central Bosnia.* p.4
[108] Izetbegović. *Inescapable Questions.* p.140
[109] Mirza Mukić. "Divizion zemaljskih gromova." *Armija ljiljana,* No. 19. (December, 1992) p.1
[110] Ibid.

with interviewees (former ARBiH soldiers) commenting that there were more Serbs in II Corps 'than in any other part of Bosnia,' 'most of my Serb colleagues remained here during the war, and we went together to the front-line to fight against nationalists,' and 'I wasn't protecting Serbs or Croats or Muslims, I was protecting people.'[111] Calori suggests that this can be attributed to the city's unique heritage, but also highlights the role of the local leadership:

> The Tuzla government's measures were aimed for the collective defence of the city rather than the protection of a singular ethnic group. This was perhaps due to the leadership's anti-nationalist stance, derived from their ideological, cultural and political background.'[112]

The election of a reformist candidate, Selim Bešlagić, as mayor in the 1990 municipal elections and the formation of a multiethnic cabinet not only contributed to the II Corps' diversity, but also led to a situation in which, according to a former II Corps soldier, 'you left your weapons outside the city' as the police maintained internal security. [113] This denotes a clear separation between the civil and military aspects of security, as well as the development of an armed force which was not only effective on the battlefield but was also evolving in a democratic manner in terms of its composition and deference to civilian institutions.

Over the course of the first six months of the conflict, relations between the HVO and the HOS worsened. The HOS had proved valuable due to the supposed enthusiasm of its troops for combat, however their autonomy soon came to be viewed as a liability by the HVO leadership. On 9 August 1992, HOS Commander Kraljević and seven staff officers were killed at an HVO checkpoint, and two weeks later the majority of the HOS was incorporated into the HVO, with a small component joining the ARBiH.[114] Combined with a gradual expansion, the incorporation of the HOS brought the strength of the HVO to over 30,000 troops, who could rely on the support of up to 15,000 HV soldiers when necessary.[115] A December 1992 instruction by the Commander of HVO forces in Mostar, Ivan Primorac, reveals the concerns of the leadership regarding the incorporation of former HOS units. It ordered all commanders 'to ensure that unit members wear only HVO insignia and removal other emblems' which could 'compromise the reputation of HVO and HV members by implying ideas which the world media may interpret as fascistic.'[116] Furthermore, HV troops were

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[111] Anna Calori. "Salt and Socialism: A Deconstruction of Tuzla's Political Identity in the Context of the Bosnian Conflict." *Ethnopolitics Papers,* No. 35. (2015) pp.15-18

[112] Ibid.

[113] Calori. "Salt and Socialism." pp.15-18

[114] Shrader. *The Muslim-Croat Civil War in Central Bosnia.* p.46

[115] Gow. *The Serbian Project and its Adversaries.* p.236

[116] Slobodan Praljak. *Handbook: With instruction on how to think (mens rea) and how to act (actus reas) in order to be declared a member of the Joint Criminal Enterprise at the International Criminal Tribunal in the Hague, How to Become a Joint Criminal?: Facts.* (Zagreb, 2017) p.174

deployed to HB were required to 'wear HVO insignia during their deployment' in HB.[117] Such actions indicate a gradual process in which a degree of uniformity was brought to the various units under HVO command. However, while the ARBiH grew considerably, both in terms of size and organisation, throughout 1992, the HVO 'had in large measure failed to evolve since the war's beginning.'[118]

Advances and Setbacks: 1993

The ARBiH which survived 1992 served the constitutional order and territorial integrity of the state, and was inclusive of all components of the population, making it both a uniquely Bosnian and democratic institution. However, Divjak argues that, even by the end of 1992, the percentage of serving Bosnian Croats and Serbs declined as the SDA 'radicalised its position' and 'started saying that the Bosniaks were the "central nation" in Bosnia and appropriated the name Bosniak, which historically refers to all inhabitants of Bosnia, thus relegating local Serbs and Croats to their "reserve homelands."'[119] He also notes that, beginning in 1993, the clergy became involved in the ARBiH and religion was introduced, which, he argues, when coupled with the appropriation of Bosniak identity, 'led to the genesis of a mono-national structure and politics that contradicted the presidential platform for the defence of multi-national, multi-religious, multicultural BiH.'[120] Developments such as this were reflected in the upper echelons of the ARBiH, where Šiber, the highest ranking Croat in the ARBiH, was 'promoted' to a diplomatic posting in Switzerland at the start of the year, effectively removing him from the inner circle of the army.[121] However, although the numbers of Bosnian Croats and Serbs in the ARBiH were dwindling, the overall strength of the ARBiH was rising steeply.

By January 1993, Halilović suggests that the ARBiH had grown to 'an impressive figure' of 261,500 troops, which he states is 'the time when the *Armija* reached its peak' and controlled the most free territory.[122] Divjak claims that in 1993 the ARBiH 'had as many as 200,000 people on our list,' while the International Institute for Strategic Studies' (IISS) *Military Balance*, widely lauded for its precision, puts the total at 180,000, although it does concede that there was a 'lack of accurate information' and it should be noted that only 'regular' troops are included in IISS estimates.[123] Nonetheless, even at the lowest estimate, 180,000 troops made the ARBiH considerably larger than any other force operating in BiH, and gave it an edge over its opponents in one aspect of the conflict.

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[117] Ibid.

[118] CIA. *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.225

[119] Divjak. "The First Phase." p.173

[120] Ibid. p.162

[121] Šiber. *Prevare labude istina.* p.218

[122] Halilović. *Lukava Strategija.* p.151

[123] Divjak. "The First Phase." p.162; IISS. *The Military Balance, 1993.* p.74

Most of the advantages that could be gained from the ARBiH's numerical dominance were, however, mitigated by two key factors. On 14 January 1993, open conflict broke out between the ARBiH and its erstwhile allies, the HVO. Although Bosnian Muslims and Bosnian Croats in many parts of BiH continued fighting alongside each other, in central Bosnia and Mostar vicious fighting over the control of territory and supply routes drew considerable resources and manpower away from both armies' frontlines facing the VRS. In central Bosnia, for example, ARBiH III Corps' approximately 26,000 troops fought over 8,000 HVO Operative Zone Central Bosnia soldiers, gaining some ground at great cost, but having little impact on the overall course of the war.[124] In addition to having to supply and conduct operations on a second front, the ARBiH's manpower advantage was also blunted by the pervasive difficulty it faced in sourcing weaponry. Izetbegović estimates that by mid-1993 the BiH government had successfully acquired 30,000 rifles and machine guns, 20,000,000 bullets, 37,000 grenades, 46,000 anti-tank missiles, 20,000 uniforms, and 120,000 pairs of boots.[125] However, although considerable (particularly considering the arms embargo and the difficulties transporting supplies across the country), such figures remained far lower than was necessary to properly arm the ARBiH. By the end of the year, the ARBiH 'still showed serious deficiencies in equipment and skills, lacking both armour and artillery and, in some units, even basic infantry weapons and ammunition.'[126]

The conflict between the ARBiH and the HVO began just two days after the Vance-Owen Plan was announced, and was welcomed by VRS Commander Ratko Mladić, who declared 'I will watch them destroy each other and then I will push them both into the sea.'[127] The conflict had a considerable impact on the HVO and exposed many of its organisational and operational limitations. While many units in Herzegovina were well-equipped and had gained considerable combat experience, most forces raised in central Bosnia and western Herzegovina 'had little to do in their hometowns other than keep a watchful eye on their Muslim neighbours.'[128] The Croats of northern Bosnia had witnessed the most fighting, but were largely contained to a small pocket around Orašje, and were considered loyal to the Bosnian government. As a result, when the conflict with the ARBiH intensified, the considerable variations in the capability of HVO units soon became apparent. Furthermore, many were found to be understrength and the army as a whole suffered from a severe lack of reserves. Additional problems stemmed from the HVO's formation as both a governmental and military body. Shrader notes instances of local HVO commanders ignoring the orders of their

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[124] Shrader. *The Muslim-Croat Civil War in Central Bosnia.* pp.22-3
[125] Izetbegović. *Inescapable Questions.* p.126
[126] CIA. *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.207
[127] Silber & Little. *The Death of Yugoslavia.* p.295
[128] Ibid. p.181; Shrader. *The Muslim-Croat Civil War in Central Bosnia.* p.59

military superiors and argues that 'without the assent of the local civilian authorities, even the major regional commander might find it difficult to relieve a subordinate commander' who might be a 'local favourite.'[129]

The HVO leadership began addressing these issues on 10 February 1993, when all municipalities in HB were ordered to raise a Home Guard unit for the protection of military facilities and the manning of checkpoints. This would free HVO troops for frontline operations. However, before such measures could be implemented, the ARBiH's overwhelming numbers soon translated into victories on the battlefield, leading to the capture of both Travnik and Kakanj from the HVO in June 1993.[130] This led Jadranko Prlić, the HVO's political leader, to order all Bosnian Croats between 18 and 60 to report for military service, indicating how vulnerable the HB had become.[131] By the end of July, HB had lost about a quarter of its territory to the ARBiH, and was on the verge of disaster.[132] Praljak, reflecting on the fall of Bugojno, contends that the town's defenders were defeated 'in spite of being the best armed brigade of the [HVO]' because 'there were no clear political ideas about what to defend.'[133] He also blamed the civilian leadership for losses in Travnik and Vareš, labelling them 'a group of thieves… getting rich.'[134] In some areas, such as Konjic and Žepče, HVO forces were so desperate that an unprecedented and highly utilitarian alliance with local VRS forces was formed against the ARBiH.[135] Further south, the HV took responsibility for the defence of much of Herzegovina, freeing up additional HVO units to stem the tide in central Bosnia.[136] The most significant change, however, came at the end of 1993 when Ante Roso, a former French legionnaire from Croatia, was appointed as Commander of the HVO. He was responsible for establishing the Zrinski Battalion of the HV (centred around his fellow ex-legionnaires), which saw extensive combat in Croatia and was regarded as one of the best units of the HV.[137] His task in BiH was to bring the organisational methods used by the HVO in line with the HV and create a Bosnian Croat force which could operate alongside its Croatian counterpart in sophisticated and demanding manoeuvres.

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[129] Ibid. p.43
[130] CIA. *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.196
[131] Ibid.
[132] Ibid. p.207
[133] Slobodan Praljak. *Development of political and military prearations regarding the attacks of ABiH on HVO in Central Bosnia and the Valley of the Neretva River in the period from 1992 – 1994: Mostar, ABiH offensive afainst HVO "Neretva 93," Volunteers from Croatia (HV) in ABiH and HVO, and other thruths: Facts.* (Zagreb, 2014) p.210
[134] Ibid.
[135] CIA. *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.180
[136] Ibid. p.198
[137] Ibid. p.50

In 1993, the SDA began subordinating the military to its political goals. Hoare observes that this was initially manifested by 'the sidelining or dismissal of commanders who did not follow the SDA line.'[138] On 8 June 1993, this process was escalated by the appointment of Delić, a close ally of Izetbegović, to the newly created post of Commander of the ARBiH. Delić assumed complete operational control of the army, with Divjak and Šiber remaining as deputies, although, as both were not Bosnian Muslims, their strategic input was mostly ignored.[139] Halilović, the erstwhile leader of the ARBiH, claimed his demotion was unconstitutional as it had not been approved by a majority of the Presidency, and allegedly attempted to incite a *coup d'état* which was only just averted. However, he was technically not demoted, as he retained the position of Chief of Staff, despite it being made largely defunct by the new position of Commander. In October 1993, the SDA also began increasing its grip on the Bosnian state, replacing Prime Minister Mile Akmadžić, a Bosnian Croat, with Haris Silajdžić of the SDA. Although this served to bring an end to crippling divisions between Muslim and Croat ministers within the government, it left Izetbegović and the SDA with a near-monopoly on the institutions of governance.

Many ARBiH units were, in 1993, still largely autonomous formations that had answered the call to defend their towns and cities in 1992, but were yet to be brought under the effective command and control of the Supreme Command and the Presidency. The IX and X Brigades, which had both made vital contributions to the defence of Sarajevo, came under scrutiny following a direct appeal from Divjak to Izetbegović regarding their mistreatment of Serbs. The Commanders of the brigades, Mušan "Cace" Topalović and Ramiz "Ćelo" Delalić, were widely known to have been criminals prior to the war, but had become charismatic leaders with significant followings after their early military successes, and Izetbegović speculated that it had been Halilović's 'insufficient personal courage' and 'insufficient authority among the troops' that had allowed them to ignore orders and persecute civilians.[140] Following the rise of Delić, plans were made to bring the rogue units to heel. However, Izetbegović chose to circumvent both military and state institutions and instead use the SDA and its affiliates to achieve this. On 23 October 1993, the SDA issued a statement condemning certain units in the I Corps for their 'unlawful behaviour' and 'arbitrary conduct,' precipitating military intervention.[141] The planning of the intervention, which was given the name Operation Trebević, was confined to an inner cabal of Izetbegović, Delić, and the MUP Commander, Bakir Alispahić. It involved moving the elite (and personally loyal to Izetbegović) *Crni labudovi* (Black Swans)

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[138] Hoare. *How Bosnia Armed.* p.91
[139] Ibid.
[140] Izetbegović. *Inescapable Questions.* p.166
[141] Statement of the Executive Board of the SDA. (23/10/2993) Quoted in: Izetbegović. *Inescapable Questions.* pp.167-8

paramilitary unit from Kakanj into Sarajevo in order to, in the words of Izetbegović, 'take action against our own units.'[142] The Presidency was consulted just a few hours before the operation began, but endorsed the use of violence anyway, and on 26 October Delalić was apprehended and Topalović was killed.

Alongside efforts to consolidate their control over the ARBiH, Izetbegović and Delić also targeted numerous units composed mostly of Bosnian Croats which had been formed under the auspices of the HVO but, in practice, fought as integral parts of the ARBiH, even as the Muslim-Croat civil war evolved in other parts of the country. The Kralj Tvrtko Brigade in Sarajevo, for example, was formally part of the HVO and operated under its banner, but in practice coordinated its efforts with the ARBiH and contributed 1,500 troops to a 2km front along the north bank of the Miljacka.[143] In the Bihać area, the relatively small Croat community formed the 101st HVO Brigade, which in practice operated as a battalion-sized, semi-autonomous formation within the ARBiH V Corps, while in Tuzla, the 107th, 108th, and 115th HVO Brigades had minimal links to the rest of the HVO, and served as key units within the ARBiH II Corps.[144] Despite this history of relatively successful cooperation, immediately following the success of Operation Trebević, in November 1993 Operation Trebević 2 was launched, leading to the capture and detainment of HVO military leaders in Sarajevo. What remained of the Kralj Tvrtko Brigade was then forcibly incorporated into the I Corps, resulting in the loss of more than half of its troops, who refused to join the ARBiH. Similar operations were attempted, to varying degrees of success, against HVO units which had participated in the defence of majority-Muslim areas such as Bihać, Tuzla, and the Posavina region.[145]

Consolidation and Offensive Operations: 1994

The Washington Agreement, signed on 18 March 1994, brought an end to the fighting between the ARBiH and the HVO, and coincided with the removal of Boban as HB President, and his replacement with a more moderate candidate by Tuđman.[146] Described by Izetbegović as 'the result of force, not conviction and political will,' the Agreement contained provisions to not only end the conflict, but also lay the framework for a lasting alliance between the two.[147] This put an end to the practice of incorporating HVO units into ARBiH formations in majority-Muslim areas, and vice versa. The conflict

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[142] The Black Swans were one of the ARBiH's most elite units, and would later form the personal guard of Izetbegović whenever he left Sarajevo. Chuck Sudetic. "Bosnia's Elite Force: Fed, Fit, Muslim." *New York Times* (16/06/1995); Izetbegović. *Inescapable Questions.* p.167

[143] *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.201

[144] Ibid.

[145] Ibid; Hoare. "Civil-Military Relations in Bosnia-Herzegovina 1992-1995." p.191

[146] Burg & Shoup. *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina.* p.293

[147] Izetbegović. *Inescapable Questions.* p.177

in central Bosnia had already stimulated the ethnic homogenisation of both the ARBiH and the HVO, but the Washington Agreement formalised this process by establishing ethnic identity as the basis for the division of power in the new alliance and encouraging separation, leaving little reason or incentive for Bosnian Croats to remain in the ARBiH and Bosnian Muslims to remain in the HVO.[148] The proportion of Serbs in the ARBiH (15 percent in April 1992), had steadily fallen as the war progressed due to attrition and the mobilisation of the much larger Bosnian Muslim population in government-held territory. As a result, from 1994 onwards both the ARBiH and the HVO were virtually monoethnic armies, with examples such as Divjak, who remained in a senior position in the ARBiH throughout the war, representing a symbolic vestige of diversity.

During 1992 and 1993, the efforts of both the ARBiH and the HVO were invested in holding as much ground as possible, arming their soldiers, and providing them with whatever training and organisation they could. With the renewed alliance, significant quantities of troops and materiel from both armies could be redeployed, offering a significant boost to the operational capacity of forces facing the VRS. Furthermore, support and logistics were able to reach pockets of resistance that had been isolated for over a year, while the respite which the Washington Agreement offered heralded another reorganisation of the ARBiH. Operational Groups gathered with the purpose of conducting the ARBiH's first major offensives of the war, and fully-equipped mobile battalions were established within brigades, greatly improving their individual manoeuvring capacity and effectiveness.[149] Additional 'manoeuvre' and 'liberation' brigades, capable of operating across BiH, were also formed, providing a capability which had, for the most part, been limited to small units such as the *Crni labudovi, Živiničke ose* (Zinc Axes)*, and *Kalesijski vukovi* (Calvary Wolves), all of which were essentially paramilitary formations serving as special forces.[150]

The cessation of hostilities also offered the HVO the time it needed to fully implement the ambitious reforms being implemented by Roso. The new HVO was a two-tier force. The top cadre was composed of four newly formed Guards Brigades, in which only professional soldiers served, and most of the HVO's heavy weaponry was concentrated. These brigades were designed to be able to operate independently throughout BiH and were in every way copies of the Guards Brigades of the HV. Their creation, however, led the rest of the HVO to be devoid of its best soldiers, officers, and equipment. These units were remodelled as well, and became the second-tier Home Defence Regiments (*domobranska pukovnija*) that had originally been envisioned to supplement the HVO. These reforms left the Bosnian Croats with a very small but capable offensive component, and an

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[148] United States Institute of Peace. *Washington Agreement.* (01/03/1994)
[149] Divjak. "The First Phase." p.165
[150] Haris Halilović. "Efikasnijim komandovanjem do slobode." *Prva linija,* No. 20. (January, 1995) p.4

excess of operationally useless militias, most of which were soon dismissed. As a result, the CIA observes, 'though it could manage some local attacks on its own, during the offensive operations of the year, it would function as a mere supporting auxiliary of the HV.'[151]

Until 1994, most of the ARBiH was so under-resourced and inexperienced that coordinating its efforts on a national level was all-but impossible. At the beginning of the year, however, the ARBiH had increased its troop capacity to 228,000 and was becoming increasingly capable.[152] As a result, it began providing the BiH leadership with:

> An overall offensive strategy, a doctrine and tactics that fit this strategy but could be carried out with the Army's limited resources, and a training programme which would produce a force disciplined and proficient enough to execute the manoeuvres required by the strategy.[153]

Put simply, the new strategy, formulated by newly appointed Commander Delić, aimed to grind the VRS down in a war of attrition that, given its numerical superiority, the ARBiH would inevitably win. This was translated into a doctrine in which the ARBiH would 'seek to achieve a continual series of limited gains sustainable without artillery support or motorised transport and roll the frontline back a kilometre at a time.'[154] A more sophisticated doctrine was reflected in the evolution of battlefield tactics employed by the ARBiH. During 1994, elite units, designed specifically to facilitate such a style of combat, began to emerge. One such example are the "recon-sabotage" units which scouted the battlefield prior to an offensive, identifying weak points in the opposing lines, which were then targeted with sabotage operations aimed at disrupting command and control links and artillery observation posts, isolating enemy frontline units prior to an infantry attack spearheaded by elite assault units.[155] Strategies, doctrine, and tactics such as these allowed the ARBiH to maximise its strengths, while doing as much as possible to negate the extent to which it was hindered by shortcomings such as the lack of artillery, armour, and mechanised transport. The result was a limited but significant change in the nature of the conflict. The ARBiH conducted a range of offensives across the country, and although many failed in their objectives, some ground was taken (almost 100 square kilometres around Konjic, for example). Furthermore, in some battles, such as at Vozuća in the Ozren Mountains during the summer of 1994, the ARBiH came close to defeating the Bosnian Serb I Krajina Corps, proving to the VRS that 'winning battles against the Muslims was

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[151] CIA. *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.287
[152] Delić. *Armija, knjiga druga.* p.342
[153] CIA. *Balkan Battlegrounds.* pp.223-4
[154] Ibid.
[155] Ibid.

becoming a near-run thing.'[156] An article published in the ARBiH journal, *Prva linija* (First line), the following year reflected on the progress made:

> The new mode of warfare required the introduction of several manoeuvring brigades and the coordinated activities of two or more corps. This implies the extraordinary operational coordination of units involved in the operations, a high level of discipline and responsibility for the execution of plans, providing connections, communications, logistical provisions, and all of the other components of organisation and planning.[157]

Such an analysis suggests that the ARBiH leadership was fully aware of the scale of the challenge they were facing but was also becoming increasingly confident in the capabilities of the army they were building.

Away from the frontlines, Izetbegović continued publicly to proclaim the inclusivity of the ARBiH throughout 1994. On 4 August, he stated:

> Our army in which both Serbs and Croats are serving, is not an avenging army. It is not an anti-Serb army. It is the golden *fleur-de-lis* that flutters on its flag, not death's head. Our common homeland of Bosnia and Herzegovina meets all the conditions to become, finally, a state in which the rights of all will be respected and protected.[158]

A few weeks later, in a speech to the UN General Assembly, he reiterated that 'for many of us, Bosnia is an idea. It is the belief that people of different religions, nations and cultural traditions can live together.'[159] On the anniversary of Bosnian Independence on 1 March 1995, he proclaimed:

> Our aim is a Bosnia of free people, a Bosnia in which the human being and human rights will be respected. We oppose the concept of mono-national, mono-religious, one-party parastates – in the plural – with our concept of a free and democratic Bosnia.[160]

However, the image presented by Izetbegović and the SDA was becoming increasingly distant from reality and continued to be undermined by the decisions they made, as Sabrina Ramet observes: 'Izetbegović tried to be all things to all men, presenting himself as a devout Muslim to some audiences and as a champion of tolerance and secular liberal democracy to other audiences.'[161] On 19 November 1994, the commander of II Corps, General Hazim Sadić, was replaced by the SDA-

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[156] Ibid. pp.233-5
[157] Nermin Butković. "Napokon bijelim figurama." *Prva linija*, No. 25. (June, 1995) p.4
[158] Izetbegović. *Inescapable Questions.* p.182
[159] Ibid. p.187
[160] Ibid. p.210
[161] Ramet. *The Three Yugoslavias.* p.389

approved Sead Delić, and sent to Turkey to serve as a military attaché to BiH's diplomatic delegation there.[162] Sadić had been a successful leader who, with the cooperation of Tuzla's Reformist Mayor, had advocated for the ARBiH to be as multinational and inclusive as possible, and had even formed Bosnian Serb 'Liberation' units, inspired by the Partisans, within II Corps. Hoare contends that Sadić may have been suspected of harbouring autonomist designs for the Tuzla region, offering a pretext for his removal. However at the time, Sadić's lack of SDA membership was unusual in the upper echelons of the ARBiH, and may have been reason enough.[163] The substitution of ARBiH officers with SDA-backed replacements, coupled with the elevation of Rasim Delić above the established chain of command in 1993 illustrates the extent to which the army was, despite the assertions of Izetbegović, increasingly becoming the armed wing of the SDA, rather than the military of the state.

Exclusivity and Endgame: 1995

The SDA's attempts to consolidate its control over the Bosnian state and the ARBiH in 1993 and 1994 led to a clash between Izetbegović and the other members of the Presidency in January 1995. At a ceremony in Zenica on 20 October 1994, Izetbegović had been made the honorary commander of the VII Muslim Brigade, one of the ARBiH's elite units, infamous for its Islamic character, Mujahidin volunteers, and combat effectiveness. During the ceremony he received a certificate written in Bosnian and Arabic, which stated:

> We fighters of the VII Muslim Illustrious Brigade, by the Lord Allah the Almighty in whose name we fight, proclaim our immense honour in awarding this certificate to the hadji Alija Izetbegović, the worthiest son of Bosnia, most beloved brother of the Bosniak-Muslim nation, proclaiming you first honorary commander of the VII Muslim Illustrious Brigade. It is our principle: May the mercy of Allah, and His protection from the crime committed against the Bosniak-Muslim nation, always be with you.[164]

In response, at the beginning of 1995 the non-SDA members of the Bosnian Presidency, one of the 'last feeble bastions of multi-ethnicity in the state,' condemned the politicisation of the ARBiH as manifested at Zenica, and its transformation into an Islamic, Bosniak, and SDA army.[165] Izetbegović responded by demanding full authority over the military be invested in him as President of the Presidency, rather than the Presidency as a whole, as the case had been since June 1992. This coincided with the establishment of *Dan šehida* (Day of Martyrs) on 23 January by the *Islamska*

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[162] Faruk Kruševljanin. "Nova misija velikog ratnika." *Armija ljiljana,* No. 57. (December, 1994) p.3
[163] Hoare. *How Bosnia Armed.* p.109
[164] Quoted in: Hoare. *How Bosnia Armed.* p.110
[165] Divjak. "The First Phase." p.194

Vjerska Zajednica (The Islamic Religious Community, the organisation of BiH's Muslim clergy), which was to be celebrated annually on the second day of Ramadan, and would entail the faithful visiting the local *šehidsko mezarje* (Martyr's cemetery) for prayers.[166]

The term *šehid,* derived from the Arabic for witness or martyr, increasingly became applied to fallen Bosnian Muslim soldiers of the ARBiH as the war progressed. Although it was often used alongside a more inclusive term (*šehidi i poginuli borci,* martyrs and fallen warriors), the widespread use of such a term, its institutionalisation as a public holiday, and the creation of cemeteries specifically to inter fallen Muslim ARBiH soldiers illustrates the extent to which the ARBiH had become increasingly Islamic in its identity, at the expense of its former inclusivity. Indeed, the Commander of British UN (and later NATO) forces in Bosnia from August 1995, Lieutenant Colonel Trevor Minter, observes that 'in my time the ARBiH was entirely Muslim.'[167] The concerns of the non-SDA members of the Presidency were validated by Izetbegović's response, yet their intervention came at the expense of the little power they had left. Following such events, the carefully maintained image of the equality of BiH's constituent nations within government-held territory began to slip. In an interview with *The Times* in February 1995, for example, Izetbegović commented that his aim was 'to preserve Bosnia and to ensure that the Muslim people have their own place there,' while in a speech to the Bosnian parliament at the end of the year, he proclaimed that 'the Bosniak people were the backbone of the state.'[168]

Despite the political turmoil, on the battlefield the ARBiH continued to develop into an organised, experienced, and increasingly confident force. The ceasefire orchestrated by former US President Jimmy Carter put the fighting on hold for the first four months of 1995, offering Delić an opportunity to make 'organisational and formation changes' and bolster the logistical support and training ARBiH troops received.[169] In addition, the Staff of the Supreme Command, the highest body in the ARBiH, was reorganised along more conventional lines and renamed, becoming the General Staff of the Army. *Prva linija* reports that the reorganisation 'aimed at strengthening the defence capabilities of the Army and increasing its efficiency,' as well as improving leadership and command.[170] Although strengthened, the ARBiH remained very limited in its operational capabilities due to shortages in arms and equipment. It still had 'fewer weapons than people' and, as an army with approximately 250,000 troops, the ARBiH had only 31 tanks, 35 APCs, and a total of around 100 artillery pieces of

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[166] "Dan šehida oživio sjećanja na najbolje sinove BiH" *Klix.ba.* (August, 2012)
[167] Trevor Minter, interview with the author. (10/09/2018)
[168] Izetbegović. *Inescapable Questions.* p.190, 204
[169] Delić. *Armija, knjiga druga.* p.360
[170] Haris Halilović. "Efikasnijim komandovanjem do slobode." *Prva linija*, No. 20. (January, 1995) p.4

all sizes, compared to the VRS's 370 tanks, 295 APCs, and 700 heavy artillery pieces.[171] Furthermore, 'this haphazard collection of captured vehicles and weapons was a hodgepodge of varying calibres and types, and each gun crew knew its ammunition reserves had to last for the remainder of the war.'[172]

The extent to which the ARBiH had evolved, in terms of its organisation and ambition, yet remained hindered in terms of its capabilities, is best illustrated by the attempt, in June 1995, to break the siege of Sarajevo. Misha Glenny suggests that in the months leading up to the operation, 'a carefully planned campaign of disinformation' was promulgated by the Bosnian government, in which many potential scenarios were disseminated into the public discourse to ensure the real campaign was a surprise.[173] Furthermore, he notes that Sarajevo TV punctuated 'lengthy explanations of passages from the Koran' with 'sequences romanticizing the preparations of the [ARBiH] for the spring offensive,' further illustrating the growing fusion between the Islamic elements of the SDA's ideology and the ARBiH itself.[174] When the operation was finally launched, it was unprecedented in size, involving the coordination of 80,000 troops from four separate ARBiH Corps. Although it did achieve some successes, the effective defensive doctrine and well-prepared troops of the VRS stalled the attack with artillery and the rapid redeployment of mechanised units, followed by 'the judicious commitment of elite infantry units at key moments to eliminate ARBiH territorial gains.'[175] Even with its well-developed organisation and strategic planning, the ARBiH was unable to deal a significant blow to the VRS.

It was not until September 1995, following the defeat of Republika Srpska Krajina by Croatia and the subsequent capture of a wealth of military equipment and supplies that ARBiH forces were able to pose a significant threat to the VRS. The deployment of significant firepower on the battlefield allowed the ARBiH V Corps to conduct manoeuvres unimaginable just months previously, resulting in considerable gains on the ground, as well as the capture of further substantial quantities of equipment and supplies. The II Corps was also able to widen the scope of its operations, organising its own captured artillery into division-level reserves, allowing for more coordination and offensive manouevres, and introducing "pursuit detachments" (Composed of tanks, APCs, light vehicles, and elite mobile infantry units) in order to allow operations 'against the enemy's rear in a manner never before possible and [afford] the II Corps a new degree of offensive depth.'[176] Delić argues that by the

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[171] International Institute for Strategic Studies. *Military Balance, 1995.* (London, 1993) pp.79-80
[172] CIA. *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.284
[173] Misha Glenny. *The Fall of Yugoslavia*, 3rd ed. (London, 1996) p.265
[174] Ibid.
[175] CIA. *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.309
[176] Ibid. p.388

end of 1994 and throughout 1995, the military supremacy of the VRS had been reduced to the extent that the Bosnian Serb leadership and their sponsors in Belgrade had to consider negotiating peace. This was compounded, he notes, by the establishment of a military alliance between the ARBiH, the HVO, and the HV, the decline in morale of the VRS and the Bosnian Serb people, and the damage inflicted upon VRS logistical and communications infrastructure by NATO in August and September 1995.[177] On 12 October 1995, another ceasefire was signed, heralding negotiations held in Dayton, Ohio, in November, and the formal signing of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in BiH in Paris in December.[178]

Conclusion

The ARBiH became an effective army only in the last months of the war. From April 1992 until the end of 1993, the priority on the battlefield was simply to hold ground, as the political and military leadership of the Republic of BiH attempted to mobilise, arm, train, and supply an army. In 1994, with considerable numbers of troops organised, an appropriate doctrine introduced, and parts of the army developing the capability to conduct offensive operations, the ARBiH was no longer a rag-tag militia of volunteers fighting in 'jeans and trainers,' but still significantly lagged behind both the VRS and the HVO in terms of operational capability. However, by 1995 the ARBiH was able to coordinate manoeuvres involving units from across the country, utilise more complex offensive tactics, and ultimately move beyond the static-defence operations that it had largely been limited to for most of the war. By the time the peace agreement was signed, the ARBiH was an organised army, with relatively high levels of discipline, experience, and morale. Furthermore, it had developed a strategy, a doctrine, and tactics which allowed it to attain victory on the battlefield. It had evolved from a loose organisation of disparate armed groups into a force recognisable as a military. Despite these developments, throughout the course of the war it was unable to properly equip, train, and provide professional officers to its soldiers, and many of its victories on the battlefield owed much to the efforts of the HV, NATO airstrikes, and the subsequent decline of VRS morale. The extent to which the ARBiH remained limited in the final months of the war is illustrated by Minter, who notes that even in the final months of 1995, ARBiH units were 'very local forces and [were] dependent on local personalities and leadership.'[179] Its troops were 'not soldiers at all but people given a uniform and a gun. I was not aware of any training, certainly not above individual level.'[180] Delić concludes his account of the conflict with a frank assessment of the ARBiH's capabilities at the end of the war:

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[177] Delić. *Armija, knjiga druga.* pp.370-1
[178] Ceasefire Agreement for Bosnia and Herzegovina. *Annex II.* (05/10/1995)
[179] Minter, interview with the author. (10/09/2018)
[180] Ibid.

> The ARBiH was in a condition to continue waging the war of liberation of BiH, if it had been
> supported by the international community and if it continued with joint operations with the
> Croatian Army and the HVO. Without such support, the ARBiH could not continue the war.[181]

As Delić concedes, although the ARBiH had grown and matured as a military, the support of the HVO, and more importantly, the HV, was vital. At the beginning of the conflict, the HVO was relatively well-organised and armed, and as a result was successful in its defence of the territory claimed by HB. Despite ostensibly being a Bosnian Croat organisation, it was financed by Zagreb and 'during the entire Bosnian war — but especially during the first several months — the HVO's chain of command, both political and military, [ran] all the way back to Tudjman's desk in Zagreb.'[182] Furthermore, for many of their most significant engagements, HVO units were deployed alongside HV troops, and were subject to command by HV officers. By 1995, the HVO had developed into a force designed specifically to augment the HV, to the extent that it was entirely reliant on Croatia to safeguard the territorial claims of the HB. Under the framework of the Washington Agreement, the HVO was formally allied with the ARBiH, however it remained to all intents and purposes an expeditionary force of the HV stationed in BiH. This ambiguity would be the cause of much consternation in future. For the months either side of Dayton, it allowed the HVO to serve as the crux of the ARBiH-HVO-HV alliance which threatened the VRS with defeat.

This alliance survived and recovered from countless VRS offensives and, by doing so, successfully removed the possibility of Mladić attaining a military victory and ending the conflict on his terms. Combined with mounting international pressure on the architects of the Greater Serbia project, manifested most significantly by NATO's bombing campaigns, this forced Milošević to the negotiating table. Given the position of the ARBiH and HVO in 1992, this was a considerable achievement. However, while this did constitute a victory of sorts, the democratic aspirations that the Bosnian government had established as its aims at the beginning of the war had not triumphed. Although efforts were initially made to create the constitutional and institutional framework for an inclusive and democratically accountable military to develop, particularly in Tuzla, all progress in this direction was subverted by the SDA's gradual consolidation of control over both the civil and military facets of the Bosnian state. The SDA succeeded in removing any meaningful opposition, either through moving the portfolios of obstructionist ministers to the Presidency, or by replacing them outright with SDA members. Furthermore, Izetbegović slowly gathered more and more authority

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[181] Delić. *Armija, knjiga druga.* p.370
[182] CIA. *Balkan Battlegrounds.* p.134

over military affairs, first through bypassing the conventional chain of command, then by replacing non-SDA approved officers, and finally by investing full authority over the ARBiH in himself.

Thus, by the time the Dayton Agreement was signed in December 1995, power in all areas held by the ARBiH was in the hands of the SDA. As a result, the relationship between the state and the military (although both were diminished in size and diversity) had essentially reverted to what it had been during the socialist period: both were dominated by the same political party, making any formal separation between them purely symbolic. Indeed, as Hoare argues, 'the Bosniak national interest was identified solely with the president, the ruling party and the army, in consequence of which these three institutions became increasingly fused.'[183] In a speech to a large crowd in the Bilino Polje Stadium in Zenica in April 1996, Izetbegović stated: 'Without the SDA Bosnia would either be a province of Greater Serbia today, or it would have been destroyed.'[184] This statement underlines the extent to which the ARBiH and the remaining structures of the Bosnian state had become subordinated to the SDA, which for all intents and purposes had simply replaced the Communist Party as *the* source of authority within both the government and the military, and across government-held territory as a whole.

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[183] Hoare. "Civil-Military Relations in Bosnia-Herzegovina 1992-1995." p.198
[184] Izetbegović. *Inescapable Questions.* p.355

Chapter Six: The Entity Armies, 1995 – 2002

The Dayton Peace Agreement (DPA), formally signed on 14 December 1995, brought peace to Bosnia and Herzegovina (*Bosne i Hercegovine,* BiH) after more than three and a half years of brutal conflict. Approximately one hundred thousand people died as a result of the war, more than half of the population were forced from their homes, and much of the country's infrastructure was destroyed. In addition, well over 200,000 troops (some estimates suggest as many as 400,000 – 430,000 including reservists) remained armed and ready to continue fighting.[1] Furthermore, the institutions and structures of the young state which would have to build and maintain the peace were largely untested, their only experience of state-wide multiethnic governance being the months leading up to the outbreak of war.

Faced with the herculean task of trying to establish a lasting peace from such an unpromising situation, in addition to ending the conflict, the DPA also laid the institutional foundations of the Bosnian state. Annexes were included on elections, refugees and displaced persons, the preservation of national monuments, policing, and the constitution.[2] Furthermore, the integral role that the international community would play in BiH was enshrined, and 60,000 NATO troops were mandated to enter the country to 'assist in the implementation of the territorial and other militarily related provisions of the agreement.'[3] However, despite the considerable detail given to certain aspects of the future of BiH in the DPA, the fate of the armies that had fought in the war was almost entirely unaddressed and remained uncertain. Indeed, Richard Holbrooke, a US diplomat who was the driving force behind the negotiations at Dayton, later lamented that 'the most serious flaw in the DPA was that it left two opposing armies in one country, one for the Serbs and one for the Croat-Muslim Federation.'[4]

On the ground, the military commanders of all three sides faced myriad challenges. Initially, they had to ensure the armies they commanded abided by the terms of the peace agreement, begin demobilising the considerable numbers of troops they led, and find the means to financially and logistically support whatever size force they deemed necessary in case of a return to war. Although such tasks were to some extent completed within a few years, they remained pervasive and

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[1] International Institute of Strategic Studies. *The Military Balance, 1996.* (London, 1996) p.81; Tobias Pietz. "Defense reform and the failings of Dayton." In Michael A. Innes, ed. *Bosnian Security After Dayton: New Perspectives.* (London, 2006) p.156
[2] General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. (Dayton, 1995)
[3] Ibid, Annex 1-A. (Dayton, 1995)
[4] Richard Holbrooke. *To End a War*. (New York, 1998) p.363

contentious issues throughout the period. Furthermore, the Army of Republika Srpska (*Vojska Republike Srpske,* VRS) continued to be a vital tool for the Bosnian Serb political leadership to consolidate their authority in peacetime, and the Bosnian Muslim and Croat components of the Army of the Federation (*Vojska federacije,* VF) proved equally valuable to their respective ethnic leaders. This led to increased tension in the already problematic civil-military relationships which the armies, all of which had never experienced peace, had with their civilian commanders. The VF was also issued with the complex task of undergoing a transformation from the model and doctrine it had inherited from the Territorial Defence (*Teritorijalna odbrana,* TO) force of the socialist era to a method of structure and organisation favoured in democratic countries. The presence of international observers, external efforts to strengthen the Bosnian state, and the hunt to capture indicted war crimes suspects, many of whom were prominent military commanders, all served to add additional layers of complexity to the security sector in post-Dayton BiH.

This chapter outlines the key constitutional, diplomatic, and regional developments relevant to military affairs in the period 1995 – 2002 and offers an assessment of how the two armies which formally existed in BiH after the war, the VF and VRS, navigated this complex political environment. Reforms in the security sector of both entities are analysed alongside those in other state institutions, illustrating a process which often ran counter to efforts to consolidate the Bosnian state. The instability caused by the presence of multiple armed forces within a single state, particularly one so mired by conflict, is evaluated, as are the efforts of political elites to utilise the military to consolidate their own bases of power. Considerable attention is also given to the role and influence of regional developments and the international community. Together, this forms a detailed account of the military situation in post-Dayton BiH, and illustrates how the VF and VRS, already divided by the legacy of war, diverged even further and posed a consistent threat to the stability of BiH.

Three Armies in One State: The Dayton Peace Agreement

The DPA divided BiH into two entities, the term given to the semi-autonomous devolved administrations which each governed approximately half of the country. Republika Srpska (RS) covers 49 percent of the territory of BiH. Its population is almost wholly Serb, and the entity is governed by a centralised government. Constituting 51 percent of the territory of BiH, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (*Federacija Bosne i Hercegovine,* FBiH) is composed of ten cantons, to which many powers are devolved. Six are majority Bosnian Muslim, two are majority Bosnian Croat, and two are mixed. Although many people eventually returned to homes outside their respective ethnic enclaves, governance of the entities remains the preserve of the dominant

ethnic group. In addition, there is one small 'shared' district, Brčko.[5] Brčko owes its unique status to its strategically vital location. It is the sole non-FBiH link between the two halves of RS, and also provides access to the rest of the FBiH for the Posavina Canton, which otherwise is encircled by RS and Croatia.

At the national level, BiH is governed by a bicameral Parliament composed of a House of Representatives (comprised of 28 members from the Federation and 14 from Republika Srpska) and a House of Peoples (comprised of five Bosnian Muslims, five Croats and five Serbs). Executive power is held by a three-member Presidency, composed of a Bosnian Muslim, a Croat, and a Serb.[6] Overseeing all elements of political activity is the Office of the High Representative (OHR), an organisation which represents the international community, in the form of the Peace Implementation Council (PIC).[7] The High Representative leads the OHR and has the responsibility to monitor the implementation of the peace settlement, coordinate with the signatories of the DPA, and report back to the PIC.[8] In 1997, at a PIC conference in Bonn, the powers of the High Representative were extended, giving them the authority 'to remove from office public officials who violate legal commitments and the Dayton Peace Agreement, and to impose laws as he sees fit if [BiH]'s legislative bodies fail to do so.'[9] These responsibilities have since been referred to as the "Bonn Powers."

Governance in BiH has, for the most part, remained restricted to the collection of nationalist parties which came to prominence in the 1990 elections and retained their positions throughout the war. The Party of Democratic Action (*Stranka demokratske akcije,* SDA), which positioned itself as the protector of Bosnian Muslims, generally favoured strengthening the central state at the expense of the entities, not least because they would likely form the largest party in parliament. The Croatian Democratic Union (*Hrvatska demokratska zajednica,* HDZ) remained close to its sister party in Croatia, and sought to maximise Bosnian Croat autonomy, with little regard for the FBiH or BiH itself. The Serb Democratic Party (*Srpska demokratska stranka,* SDS), which had led RS through the war, managed to retain its position initially, but lost ground to other parties from 1997.[10] All parties which governed RS in the period, however, remained firmly committed to their entity's autonomy and were willing to threaten secession from BiH. Together, these parties filled seats on power-sharing

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[5] General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
[6] Ibid.
[7] The PIC is composed of 55 countries and agencies that continue to support the peace process in BiH.
[8] OHR. "The Mandate of the OHR." *OHR Press Office.* (16/2/2012)
[9] Ibid.
[10] Election results and detailed information on the electoral process are publicly available from the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights.

councils and formed uneasy coalitions, which generally achieved little, for most of the 1995 – 2002 period.

The establishment of such structures of governance and the arrival of the largest peacetime deployment of military force since post-Second World War Germany led to the rapid de-escalation of the military situation in BiH. According to the World Bank, within four months of the DPA, 100,000 soldiers of the Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (*Armija Republike Bosne i Hercegovine*, ARBiH, the predominantly Bosnian Muslim army), 45,000 Croatian Defence Council (*Hrvatsko vijeće odbrane,* HVO) troops, and an additional 150,000 from the VRS had left their units.[11] Tobias Pietz notes that 'it is not accurate to talk of demobilisation or controlled reduction but rather of the disintegration of the armed forces of all groups.'[12]

Greatly reduced in size, and in many cases less professional, what remained of the armies in BiH were composed of the core staff of each military and a fraction of the operational forces they commanded during the war. The practice of conscription, a legacy of the socialist period as well as of the war, continued in all three armies, providing a ready supply of cheap troops to fill the ranks and allowed reserve numbers to be kept high. Furthermore, military service offered civilian and military leaders the opportunity to use their militaries as a school with which they could attempt to embed approved values and beliefs in the youth of their respective ethnic groups.[13] Rohan Maxwell, the Senior Political-Military nalyst at NATO Headquarters Sarajevo, notes that conscription was regarded as a 'rite of passage,' which 'remained important – to the leadership and politicians, if not the increasingly disenchanted, unpaid, and maltreated conscripts – and each ethnic group of soldiers saw itself, and was generally seen, as protectors of its constituent people.'[14]

The continued presence of multiple opposing armies in post-Dayton BiH was not a product of design. Holbrooke notes that 'since NATO would not disarm the parties as an obligated task, creating a single army or disarming [BiH] was not possible.'[15] Carl Bildt, the EU's wartime negotiator, contends that rather than NATO's timidity, it was the desire of Washington to be able to exert influence on and offer assistance to the armies in BiH that resulted in the DPA's vagueness concerning the

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[11] Such figures include professional soldiers, conscripts, and reservists. World Bank. *Technical Annex to Bosnia and Herzegovina for an Emergency Demobilization and Reintegration Project.* (Washington, 1996) p.1
[12] Pietz. "Defense reform and the failings of Dayton." p.157
[13] See Chapter 1 for more on using the military as a social agent or "school of the nation."
[14] Rohan Maxwell. "Bosnia-Herzegovina: From Three Armies to One." In Roy Licklider, ed. *New Armies from Old: Merging competing military forces after civil wars.* (Washington, DC, 2014) p.183
[15] Holbrooke. *To End a War.* p.363

military.[16] While there was clearly plenty of political manoeuvring at Dayton, the constitution that was eventually negotiated recognised, but did not enshrine, the presence of entity armies:

> Neither Entity shall threaten or use force against the other Entity, and under no circumstances shall any armed forces of either Entity enter into or stay within the territory of the other Entity without the consent of the government of the latter and of the Presidency of [BiH]. All armed forces in [BiH] shall operate consistently with the sovereignty and territorial integrity of [BiH].[17]

The armed forces were obliged to defend and preserve the territorial integrity of BiH but were also restricted to their respective entities. The omission of any further detail regarding the status of the militaries in the constitution put them, by default, under the control of the entities, as 'all governmental functions and powers not expressly assigned in this Constitution to the institutions of [BiH] shall be those of the Entities.'[18] Additional negotiations regarding the finalisation of two military articles of the DPA were held in 1996 in Florence and Vienna, but concerned arms control, de-escalation, and the promotion of cooperation between the entity armies.[19] Such initiatives were largely successful, but did little to address many underlying problems, as the commander of the US contingent of the Peace Implementation Force (IFOR), Major General William Nash, observes:

> All four armies have done their job pretty well in achieving the objectives set out in Annex 1-A of the Dayton Accord. But I don't know if the military aspects bring peace as much as bring the absence of war.[20]

As a result, the FBiH formed its own Ministry of Defence and General Staff, and the RS retained the military institutions it had built during the war. Furthermore, the RS constitution was amended in order to reserve the right of the Bosnian Serb national assembly to declare war.[21] Coordination at the national level with regard to defence was limited to the Standing Committee on Military Matters (SCMM), which held no power and merely served to provide what has been described as a 'tenuous link between the three militaries.'[22] Indeed, the SCMM failed to meet until 1998, and even then was

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[16] Carl Bildt. *Peace Journey: The Struggle for Peace in Bosnia.* (London, 1998) p.135
[17] General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Annex 4. (Dayton, 1995)
[18] General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
[19] General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Article 4. (Florence, 1996), General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Article 2. (Vienna, 1996)
[20] The fourth army was SFOR; Rupert Wolfe Murray, ed. *IFOR on IFOR: NATO Peacekeepers in Bosnia-Herzegovina.* (Edinburgh, 1996) p.4
[21] OHR, Department for Legal Affairs. *Constitution of Republika Srpska.* (Official Gazette of RS, 2000) Article 70
[22] Matthew Morton. "Three Hearts in the Chest of One State: The Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina." *Journal of Slavic Military Studies,* Vol. 25, No. 4. (2012) p.517

periodically boycotted by all parties involved.[23] NATO, burdened as it was with enforcing the ceasefire, controlling BiH's airspace, and supervising the boundaries between the entities, was reluctant to disarm the armies in the years immediately after conflict. The recent US experience in Somalia no doubt informed the decision to prioritise caution and avoid the ubiquitous "mission creep." As a result, even paramilitary units were left armed until August 1997.[24] The absolute priority of the peacekeepers was to stop the war from restarting. In the first years after Dayton, this entailed practical measures rather than reforming policy, as a US IFOR Engineer explains: 'We've blown up two thousand bunkers, that's a lot of bunkers. . . We're going to make it so it's hard for these guys to go back to war.'[25] When coupled with the ambiguity of the DPA with regard to the armies in Bosnia, this situation offered each entity plenty of scope to possess and develop its own armed force.

The Army of the Federation

The VF constitutes one of the two entity armies that existed in Bosnia after Dayton. It was the product of the March 1994 Washington Agreement, which brought an end to the conflict between Bosnian Muslims and Croats in parts of BiH, forged a military alliance between them, and laid the foundations for what, upon the signing of the DPA, became the FBiH.[26] While this served to strengthen both the ARBiH and the HVO in their struggle against the VRS, it also led to the ethnic homogenisation of each force. Due to the localised nature of much of the fighting, in many cases whichever ethnicity was dominant in an area led the defence against the VRS and the minority ethnicity would serve under the other's banner. As a result, many HVO units were up to 50 percent Bosnian Muslim, and a significant proportion of the ARBiH was Bosnian Croat and Serb.[27] When conflict broke out between the ARBiH and HVO in Herzegovina and Central Bosnia in October 1992, this practice quickly stopped in those areas, although in some places, such as Sarajevo, the instability led to the forced incorporation of semi-autonomous Bosnian Croat units into the ARBiH. [28] After the Washington Agreement, however, both armed forces became increasingly mono-ethnic as troops were ushered into formations representing their ethnic identity. By the end of the war, although they were officially unified by Article 6 of the Washington Agreement, which stated that 'both sides

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[23] Florence Gaub. *Military Integration after Civil Wars: Multiethnic armies, identity and post-conflict reconstruction.* (London, 2011) p.94

[24] Cody Phillips. *Bosnia-Herzegovina: The U.S. Army's Role in Peace Enforcement Operations 1995-2004.* (Pub 70-97-1, 2005) US Army Center of Military History. p.15; Mike O'Conner. "NATO Plans to Disarm Paramilitary Forces in Bosnia." *The New York Times.* (09/08/1997)

[25] Murray, ed. *IFOR on IFOR: NATO Peacekeepers in Bosnia-Herzegovina.* p.43

[26] United States Institute of Peace. *Washington Agreement.* (01/03/1994)

[27] See Chapter Five.

[28] Ibid.

agree to the establishment of a unified military command of the military of the Federation,' the ARBiH and HVO existed as separate, mono-ethnic institutions. [29]

The rhetoric of political and military leaders in the years after Dayton illustrates the extent to which they disregarded the VF, and instead focused on consolidating their ethnically demarcated political constituencies. Indeed, Herceg-Bosna, the Bosnian Croat state, was not formally dissolved until August 1996, and was replaced with a political association the following year.[30] At an SDA convention in 1997, Alija Izetbegović, the Bosnian Muslim member of the Presidency, stated that there was:

> No turning back to a colourless, non-national Bosnia. After becoming aware of itself and its name and after the unmeasurable sufferings it has gone through, the Bosniaks will never again give up their nationality and Islam as its component.[31]

Speaking at another convention in March 2000, he proclaimed that the SDA had been the organiser and leading power of the resistance to Serb aggression, and had fought 'for the political and spiritual survival of Bosnia and the Bosniak people.'[32] Such statements contrast with many speeches he gave during the conflict itself, when he often emphasised inclusiveness, but were echoed by ARBiH military commanders. At a ceremony held in Zenica on [ARBiH] Army Day (April 15) in 1996, Brigadier-General Vahid Karavelić reminded the gathered troops and civilians that: 'We defended the Bosniak people… The ARBiH grew from our people, and remember, from now, as long as this world exists, we are the Army of our people. Our foundations are our faith, our fallen heroes, and our injured.'[33] At another Army Day event the following year, Rasim Delić, the wartime commander of the ARBiH, asked the audience to 'be firm in the commitment to the survival of the whole of Bosnia and... the Bosniak people, our culture, traditions and faith in this region. . . we all have to be the army.'[34] From such statements it is clear that for most Bosnian Muslim political and military leaders, the ARBiH, the SDA, and the Bosniak people were institutions that had been intertwined during the war, and continued to be so after Dayton, even though the ARBiH did not formally exist in post-Dayton BiH.[35]

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[29] United States Institute of Peace. *Washington Agreement.*
[30] Jane Perlez. "Muslim and Croatian Leaders Approve Federation for Bosnia." *The New York Times.* (15/08/1996)
[31] Alija Izetbegović. *Inescapable Questions: Autobiographical Notes.* (Leicester, 2003) p.512
[32] Ibid. p.440
[33] Taib Terović. "U nove pobjede." *Prva linija,* No. 41. (April, 1996) p.6
[34] Rasim Delić. "Svi moramo biti armija." *Prva linija,* No. 50. (April, 1997) p.4
[35] See Chapter Five.

The legacy of conflict between the two component parts of the VF was reflected in its structure and development. Most prominent was the continued segregation of the lower ranks on the basis of ethnic identity. As a result, the approximately 18,000 Bosnian Muslims and 6,000 Bosnian Croats who made up the army only served together for ceremonial purposes, at VF Headquarters, or in the Rapid Reaction Force, which was composed of a battalion from each ethnicity.[36] A 2005 NATO report reflected on the presence of parallelism in the VF, and illuminates the extent to which it was, in practice, two separate armies. It notes that property and equipment seized by the ARBiH and HVO during the war was held separately, each component maintained their own separate logistics and support processes, and despite a Federation Intelligence Service being established in 1997, work within it was divided. Furthermore, veterans' affairs and wartime archives were not consolidated, and both the ARBiH and HVO kept their own bank accounts, with the joint Federation account being all but empty.[37] Further division can be identified from the sources of VF funding. A 1998 report from the International Crisis Group concluded that the Bosnian Muslim element was largely financed domestically, although 40% of funds came from Arab states in the Gulf. The Bosnian Croat element, however, was financed entirely from abroad, with 83% of its funds coming from Croatia and much of the rest coming from *the diaspora*.[38] This situation led some observers to claim that the Croat forces constituted a 'foreign force,' and thus were in contravention of the DPA.[39]

The extent to which the VF remained a deeply divided institution is illustrated by events that took place in 2001. The November 2000 elections, in which the HDZ lost ground to a ten party coalition, initiated a tumultuous year in Bosnian Croat politics which culminated with the withdrawal of the HDZ from the institutions of the FBiH and an attempt to establish Croat self-rule in Herzegovina.[40] HDZ leaders requested that Croats in the VF refuse orders from non-Croats, meetings were held between Croat officers and the wartime HVO leadership to discuss forming a new army, and numerous Croat soldiers removed the Federation insignia from their uniforms. This campaign was mostly financed by funds held by the Hercegovačka Bank (subject to one of the largest corruption scandals in post-Dayton BiH), some of which were used to pay Croat VF officers if they left their

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[36] Sergeant Peter Fitzgerald. "The armed forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina." *SFOR Informer,* Vol. 127. (SFOR, 2001) p.1; Charles Perry & Dimitris Keridis. *Defense Reform, Modernization, and Military Cooperation in Southeastern Europe.* (Dulles, 2004) p.262

[37] DRC Team 8. *Concept Paper on Parallelism.* (Sarajevo, 2005)

[38] International Crisis Group. "Is Dayton Failing?: Bosnia Four Years After the Peace Agreement." *Balkans Report* No.80. (1999) p.9

[39] General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Annex 1-A. (Dayton, 1995)

[40] The November 2000 elections were accompanied by a referendum, deemed illegal by the OSCE, on Croat autonomy in BiH. This was followed by a series of boycotts of federal institutions, the formation of parallel governance structures, and widespread protests. Thierry Domin. "Political Situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina." *SFOR Informer,* Vol. 126. (14/11/2001)

posts.[41] Crisis was only averted following an international investigation into the dealings of Hercegovačka Bank, the intervention of the Croatian Foreign Ministry, which pledged its support for the state and entity institutions of Bosnia, and the appointment of a new Defence Minister. Despite this, General Dragan Ćurčić, Deputy Commander of the VF (and the highest-ranking Croat), resigned, citing his desire to remain loyal to the Croat people.[42] Whilst the VF remained intact until the creation of a unified Bosnian military, it is apparent that it was an army only in name.

Whilst structurally the VF can be considered fragile, it had significant resources at its disposal. A combined 1998 budget of over 400 million Deutschmarks dwarfed the 70 million the VRS received. Much of this was spent on maintaining an army more than twice the size of its former adversary, as well as a considerable pool of reservists. However, a significant focus was placed on modernisation.[43] An American Military Consulting Firm, Military Professional Resources Incorporated (MPRI), had earned itself a reputation in the region after it had helped professionalise the Croatian Army (*Hrvatska vojska,* HV) prior to Operation Storm. While MPRI was nominally in Croatia to train Croatian officers in democratic civil-military relations and managing the transition from socialism, the HV rapidly became a highly capable force, and was soon able to launch complex military offensives. When Operation Storm was launched in August 1995, the offensive defeated the Serb state in Croatia, Republika Srpska Krajina, in a week and brought HV, HVO, and ARBiH troops to within 16 miles of the largest Bosnian Serb-held city, Banja Luka. Paul Williams, who served as a legal counsel to the Bosnian delegation at Dayton, reported that at the accords his clients sought similar assistance, hoping to make it a precondition to the signing of the treaty.[44] British and French concerns that arming the Bosnian Muslims could lead to a return to war prevented such provisions being included, but the Bosnian Muslim delegation received verbal assurances from their US counterparts that assistance would be provided in future.[45] These assurances were quick to manifest themselves, and in May 1996 MPRI officially began working with the VF under the Train and Equip Programme.[46] The US State Department established the Joint Interagency Taskforce for Military Stabilisation of the Balkans to administer the programme, and US Ambassador James Pardew led the initiative.[47] He described its aims frankly:

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[41] Outi Keränen. "International statebuilding as contentious politics: the case of post conflict Bosnia and Herzegovina." *The Journal of Nationalism and Ethnicity,* Vol. 31, No. 3. (2013) p.362
[42] OHR. *Chronology/Monthly Tracker 2001.* (2001)
[43] Fitzgerald. "The armed forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina." p.1
[44] Paul Williams. "Promise them anything." *The Weekly Standard.* (18/12/1995)
[45] Jane Sharp. "Dayton Report Card." *International Security,* Vol. 22, No. 3. (1997) p.116
[46] Peter Singer. *Corporate Warriors: The Rise of the Privatised Military Industry.* (New York, 2003) p.128
[47] Raffi Gregorian, interview with the author. (18/07/2017)

We do not seek an offensive force, but in the future if somebody wants a fight it will

be more than fair. This war had an aggressor, and it had a victim. The program [seeks]

to ensure that there will be no future victims and no easy prey for partisans of war.[48]

The journal of the VF, *Prva linija* (Frontline)*,* heralded Train and Equip with the headline 'The

Professionals Come!'[49] It explained that the Programme 'creates conditions to enhance the

combat power and efficiency of our units, and in this way modern weapons, professionalism

and expertise compensate for the significantly reduced and limited numerical strength of our

units.'[50]

Through Train and Equip, the VF acquired an array of small arms, hundreds of artillery pieces,

armoured vehicles, tanks, and even a squadron of helicopters, with almost all of the new

equipment being of American or French origin.[51] MPRI oversaw the establishment of the

Federation Ministry of Defence and Joint Command, which were respectively completed in

1997 and 2001. They also introduced the US Army concept of a Training and Doctrine

Command, and began using modern training methods used in the US military, including a

computer simulation centre and a field combat training centre.[52] Such was the transformation

of the VF that conscripts are said to have translated and learnt US Army chants for use on

exercises.[53] Chris Lamb, of the US Department of Defense, regarded the Train and Equip

Programme as successful, and noted that it 'rectified the military imbalance between Bosnian

Serb and Federation forces, reassuring the Federation and sobering the Serbs.'[54] Recognising

the advantages Train and Equip offered, RS President Biljana Plavšić requested the

programme be extended to the VRS. However, her unwillingness to hand over all remaining

persons indicted for war crimes to international authorities led the US to dismiss her

request.[55] As a result, Bosnian Serb commentators such as former VRS General Vinko

Pandurević argued that as 'RS is unable to allocate more extensive financial resources for the

development and modernisation of its military' the Train and Equip Programme could

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[48] Christopher Lamb. "The Bosnian Train and Equip Programme: A Lesson in Inter-Agency Integration of Hard and Soft Power." *Institute for National Strategic Studies Strategic Perspectives,* No. 15. (2014) p.11
[49] Editorial. "Profesionalci dolaze!" *Prva linija,* No. 42*.* (May, 1996) p.1
[50] Ibid. p.3
[51] Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. *Transfers of major conventional weapons: sorted by supplier. Deals with deliveries or orders made for year range 1996 to 2015.*
[52] "Temelj vojne organizacije Vojske Federacije BiH." *Prva linija,* No. 57*.* (December, 1997) p.9; Singer. *Corporate Warriors.* p.129; Rohan Maxwell, interview with the author. (20/10/2016)
[53] Rohan Maxwell, interview with the author. (20/10/2016)
[54] Lamb. "The Bosnian Train and Equip Programme: A Lesson in Inter-Agency Integration of Hard and Soft Power." p.11
[55] Raffi Gregorian, interview with the author. (18/07/2017)

'significantly disturb the balance of military forces and encourage the FBiH to launch a new offensive against RS.'[56]

In 2002, 10,000 VF soldiers were demobilised, completing a series of troop reductions that began with Dayton, leaving the VF with a standing force of 14,000 men. However, the quantitative shortfall was more than offset by modern equipment and a greater quality of training and education, most of which was offered by friendly states and brought the troops up to NATO standard.[57] By January 1998, 1,500 VF personnel had received education and training abroad, most significantly in Turkey, and another 500 were being trained as far afield as the USA, Malaysia, Qatar, and Pakistan.[58] Schools were established for personnel to learn foreign languages, predominantly English, German and Turkish, and new accommodation was also built, with the aim of creating 'quality living and work conditions.'[59] The rapid transformation of the VF, with the assistance of MPRI and friendly states, established a modern professional army in the FBiH, and represented a significant shift from the armed forces that had fought in the war. The developments were welcomed by *Prva linija* as they promised 'training to world standards' and the creation of 'armed forces for the 21st Century.'[60] However, despite professionalisation and modernisation, the VF failed to integrate its Bosnian Croat and Bosnian Muslim composite elements at any level below that of the most senior leadership throughout the period.

The Army of Republika Srpska

Just weeks after the DPA was signed, the talismanic leader of the Bosnian Serb military, General Ratko Mladić, published a Christmas and New Year's message in *Srpska vojska,* the journal of the VRS. In it he lauded the exploits of his army, stating: 'The VRS, in the defensive and liberation war that was imposed on us, in exceptionally difficult conditions, unrivalled in the history of warfare, against a many times stronger and more powerful enemy and the most powerful part of the international community, defended the Serb people and most of the territory.'[61] He remained bellicose as well, reminding his readers that 'the signing of the [DPA] created the conditions. . . for the ongoing struggle of the Serb people for their own sovereignty, statehood, and cultural, spiritual, and general development to continue in the diplomatic, political, economic, and other spheres of life

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[56] Vinko Pandurević. *Oslovi doctrine odbrane republike srpske.* (Belgrade, 1999) p.107

[57] Graeme Herd & Tom Tracey. "Democratic Civil Military Relations in Bosnia and Herzegovina: A New Paradigm for Protectorates?" *Conflict Studies Research Centre: Balkan Series,* Vol. 5, No. 66. (November 2005) p.8

[58] S. Poskić. "Obuka – Imperativ daljeg razvoja." *Prva linija,* No. 58. (January 1998) p.5

[59] Ibid. pp.4-5

[60] Braco Kalaba. "Obuka po svjetskim standardima." *Prva linija,* No. 49. (March, 1997), p.1; Braco Kalaba. "Oružane snage za 21. stoljeće." *Prva linija,* No. 48. (February, 1997) p.1

[61] Ratko Mladić. "Novogodišnja i božićna poruka glavnog štaba vojske Republike Srpske." *Srpska vojska,* No. 34. (December, 1995) p.4

in peace.'[62] Foreseeing 'numerous and complex tasks in the coming years,' he also outlined his vision for the VRS after the war, declaring that 'the entire Serb people will be the builders of a happier future, but also a strong and invincible army to guarantee their survival in this region.'[63] His message ended with a stern reflection on the sacrifices that had been made: 'We must never forget that our freedom was paid for with the lives of the best sons of the Serb people. Their sacrifice permanently obliges us to preserve the freedom and peace of the Serb people and all citizens in [RS].'[64] Through such statements, Mladić clearly conveys a simple message: That although the war had stopped, the fight continued, and the VRS remained central to success.

Despite Mladić's sabre-rattling rhetoric, however, the VRS faced an array of monumentous challenges in the years following the war, the most pressing of which was addressing the dismal relationship it had with the entity it served. In August 1995, the entire high command had rubuked the orders of their constitutional leader, RS President Radovan Karadžić, in favour of Mladić. This amounted to mutiny and provided President of Serbia Slobodan Milošević the pretext he needed to act on behalf of the divided Bosnian Serb leaders in the final months of the war. By bringing peace to BiH, the DPA reduced Milošević's authority over the Bosnian Serb leadership, but did little to narrow the gulf between the civilian and military commanders of RS. The extent to which the VRS remained independent of civilian control is best illustrated by the words of the RS Minister of Defence (1994 – 1998), Milan Ninković: 'At the time of Dayton I piloted a law through the assembly to increase civilian control of the military, and Mladić didn't like that. He arrested me. I thought I was going to be executed. I was released because Patriarch Pavle, the head of the Serbian Orthodox Church, intervened.'[65] While it is possible to speculate that Patriarch Pavle's intervention may have taken place at the behest of Milošević, indicating his ongoing influence in BiH, the arrest of the Minister of Defence by the military was the second clear act of mutiny which the VRS committed in the interest of strengthening Mladić's authority at the expense of their civilian commanders and the constitutional integrity of RS.

Before tensions could escalate much further, however, the hunt for Mladić on behalf of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), which had indicted both him and Karadžić after the massacre of c.8,000 Bosnian Muslim men and boys in Srebrenica in July 1995, began to have an impact on the Bosnian Serb leadership. Although he technically remained in command of the VRS until the end of 1996, Mladić largely retired from public life to the shelter of a

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[62] Ibid.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Ibid.
[65] Raymond Whitaker. "Looking for Radovan." *The Independent.* (21/07/2000)

bunker disguised as a hunting lodge near Han Pijesak, his wartime headquarters.[66] He is believed to have remained in the bunker until the summer of 1997, when he moved to Serbia.[67] In July 1996, Karadžić was ordered to step down as RS President and head of the ruling SDS by Milošević, who feared renewed sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (*Savezna Republika Jugoslavia, SRJ*).[68] While both men remained influential, Mladić from his bunker and Karadžić in his East Bosnian stronghold of Pale, their future as the leaders of the military and civil facets of RS was over. Holbrooke, who negotiated Karadžić's removal, made this clear: 'He [Karadžić] will not appear in public, or on radio or television or other media or participate in any way in the elections,' which were scheduled for September.[69]

Karadžić's chosen successor was one of his wartime deputies, Biljana Plavšić. She served as interim leader until elections were held, and successfully secured a two-year term as RS President. Plavšić was known for her extreme views, having been an active supporter of the ethnic cleansing campaigns of Serb paramilitaries and having stated during the war that 5 million dead Serbs was a price worth paying if it secured 'the survival and freedom of the other 5 million.'[70] Indeed, even Vojslav Šešelj, a notorious war criminal, described how she 'held very extremist positions during the war, insufferably extremist, even for me, and they bothered me as a declared Serb nationalist.' He noted that she refused to shake hands with Milošević after he agreed to the Vance-Owen Plan in 1993.[71] In November, she moved to do what Karadžić had failed to do 14 months previously, and asserted constitutional authority over the military. Manojlo Milovanović, Mladić's deputy throughout the war, recalls that on 7 November 1996:

> The complete Headquarters [of the VRS] was removed by the order of the President of RS, Ms. Biljana Plavšić, after 1,697 days of existence. Some senior officers were reassigned to other duties, part of them retired, and several generals were made available to the VRS or the [SRJ] military. The Headquarters, as an institution, was renamed the General Staff, and was led by retired colonel Pero Čolić.[72]

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[66] Prosecutor vs. Ratko Mladić. "Amended Indictment." *IT-95-5/18-I* (ICTY, 2002) p.1
[67] Julian Borger. *The Butcher's Trail: How the search for Balkan War Criminals became the most successful manhunt in history.* (New York, 2016) p.206
[68] Tony Barber. "Breakthrough as Karadžić steps down." *The Independent.* (20/07/1996)
[69] BBC. "'War Criminal' Karadžić resigns." *BBC.* (19/07/1996)
[70] Prosector vs. Slobodan Milošević. Vojslav Šešelj, testimony before the court." *IT-02-54* (ICTY, 2005) p.43368
[71] Ibid. pp.43371-3
[72] Manojlo Milovanović. "Stvaranje i razvoj vojne Republike Srpske u toku odbrambeno otadžbinskog rata u BiH, 1992. do 1995. god." In Vlada Republike Srpske. *Vojska Republuke Srpske u odbrambeno-otadžbinskom ratu: Aspekti, organizacija, operacije.* (Banja Luka, 2011) p.35

Whereas Mladić had been unanimously supported by the military leadership in August 1995, this time around he was not even present to protest. Plavšić and Čolić would remain in their positions until the following elections in 1998. Although they achieved little else, their actions lessened the divide between the VRS and the other state institutions of RS.

Throughout the Bosnian War, the VRS was dependent on the significant support of the SRJ. This link with Belgrade would remain central to the VRS as an entity army, with observers describing it as 'an integral part of the Yugoslav Army.'[73] In 1998, 40 percent of VRS funding came directly from the SRJ, and until 2002 its officers' wages were still being paid from Belgrade.[74] The continued reliance on Yugoslav support following Dayton can be explained as much by necessity as by fraternal bonds. By the end of the war the VRS was on the verge of defeat, with some estimates suggesting its operational force was as small as 30,000 troops.[75] Much of the equipment it had inherited from the JNA had served its purpose in a war against armies without heavy weapons but had since become obsolete. For example, the main tank used by the VRS in the war, the T-55, was originally designed in 1945 and stood little chance against the M60 Pattons received by the VF through Train and Equip: the Pattons were a modernised model of a tank specifically built to destroy T-55s. Problems with outmoded equipment were compounded by a chronic shortage of spare parts, which meant that almost all of the VRS's equipment was difficult to maintain. Moreover, it had reportedly depleted most of its ammunition reserves in the war.[76] RS was, however, able to retain a small air force, including 30 fixed-wing light attack jets and 12 helicopters which were kept stored in hangars near Banja Luka and Zalužani.[77] Although the equipment was dated, the VF had no fixed-wing capability whatsoever, offering the VRS a noteworthy advantage in that field.

The total budget of the VRS in 1998 was 70 million Deutschmarks, half of what the Bosnian Croats received, and a fraction of the total VF budget.[78] As a result, the VRS was limited to a comparatively small force of 10,000 men, although the Total Defence system inherited from Yugoslavia was maintained, allowing for the rapid mobilisation of reserve troops.[79] Little was done to improve the quality of training offered to VRS personnel, although senior officers began to attend training seminars in Oberammergau, Germany, alongside their VF counterparts, in 1998.[80] The food and

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[73] James Gow & Ivan Zverzhanovski. *Security, Democracy and War Crimes: Security Sector Transformation in Serbia.* (Basingstoke, 2013) p.124

[74] Ibid.

[75] Vašić. "The Yugoslav Army and the Post-Yugoslav Armies." p.133

[76] Ibid.

[77] Perry & Keridis. *Defense Reform, Modernization, and Military Cooperation in Southeastern Europe.* p.266

[78] International Crisis Group. "Is Dayton Failing?" p. 9

[79] Borislav Đurđević. "Stvorena u borbi." *Srpska vojska,* No. 38. (June, 1996) p.10; See Chapter 3.

[80] Gulner Aybet. "NATO Conditionality in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Defense Reform and State-Building." *Problems of Post-Communism,* Vol. 57, No. 5. (September 2010) p.26

accommodation offered to VRS conscripts deteriorated in quality over time, and no official arms imports were made by RS between Dayton and military unification.[81] Whilst equipment may have been sourced covertly from the SRJ, this material would have been compromised by the same problems as the VRS's existing reserves. As Rohan Maxwell, the Senior Political-Military Analyst at NATO Headquarters Sarajevo, explained: 'The RS Army had not moved, they were still on the old system, and quite proud of it . . . although maybe the VRS would have recognised that they were probably outgunned by the stuff that had been given to the Federation.'[82] An interview conducted by *Srpska vojska* with Plavšić offers insight into the condition of the VRS. Discussing the reduction of personnel, she observed:

> Of course, the reorganisation should have been followed with a much stronger
> material base than was the case… As far as I know, people in the General Staff and in
> the Army in general are performing to the level of their capabilities. However, much of
> it depends on material assets.[83]

In 2003, the VRS demobilised an additional 3,500 soldiers, leaving them with a standing force of only 6,500 men, less than half the strength of the VF.[84] By the time the reform process began, a significant discrepancy in the relative military capability of each entity had developed, with the VF being twice the size of the VRS, possessing superior equipment, and receiving better training.

The VRS did, however, retain significant symbolic value, offering RS considerable power and 'one of the trappings of national sovereignty.'[85] A 1996 article in *Srpska vojska* underlined its importance, stating: 'All those on whom further building of the Army depends must know that it still remains the only guarantee to the Serb people, for a peaceful life and development of RS.'[86] Plavšić emphasised the link between the VRS and RS's aspirations for statehood: 'A Yugoslav soldier did not know what he was fighting for, whereas a Serb soldier knows that he is fighting for his Serb state. By keeping such an attitude, we will have both our state and our future.'[87]

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[81] Rohan Maxwell & John Andreas Olsen. *Destination NATO: Defence Reform in Bosnia-Herzegovina, 2003-13.* (London, 2013) p.24; SIPRI. *Transfers of major conventional weapons: sorted by supplier. Deals with deliveries or orders made for year range 1996 to 2015.*

[82] Rohan Maxwell, interview with the author. (20/10/2016)

[83] Borislav Đurđević. "Odbrana je najvažniji posao države." (Interview with President of RS Biljana Plavšić) *Srpska vojska,* No. 43. (May 1997) p.6

[84] Herd & Tracey. "Democratic Civil Military Relations in Bosnia and Herzegovina." p.8

[85] James Gow. *Legitimacy and the Military: The Yugoslav Crisis.* (London, 1992) p.31

[86] Đurđević. "Stvorena u borbi." p.9

[87] Đurđević. "Odbrana je najvažniji posao države." p.9

May 12 is celebrated as VRS Day, and commemorations have focused on the role of the army in the founding of RS.[88] In May 1997, the editors of *Srpska vojska* remarked: 'In a little over four years of war thousands of fighters fell, giving their lives for what we have today - and that is Republika Srpska.'[89] The following year, the publication ran the headline: 'The Army is the pillar of unity of RS.' This invoked the words of Plavšić at a ceremony held in Banja Luka: 'May remembering the victims be a measure of our love for RS.' She continued:

> In peacetime, it is the VRS' task, as well as its obligation as the creator of this Serb country, to use its authority, professionalism and proven patriotism, to be a pillar of our society inside, and a barrier to the outside, if needed.[90]

In comparison with the VF, the VRS developed very little as an entity army. Whilst this can be explained in part because of its formation, originating as it did from the well-equipped and professional Yugoslav army, much of this stagnation can be attributed to a severe lack of funds and resources. However, where the VF symbolised little more than an alliance of necessity between its composite elements, the VRS was heralded as the founder, unifying focus, and guarantor of the Serb entity in BiH. RS gave the VRS a state to serve as Yugoslavia collapsed. In return, the VRS fought to establish RS. For many Bosnian Serbs, the survival of one was intertwined with the other.

Military Integration: An unlikely prospect?

An examination of the development of the entity armies has revealed the complexity of the security environment in post-Dayton BiH. The divergent paths of development not only symbolised the ongoing division within BiH, but also raised extensive practical challenges to integration. Concerns regarding the development of the entity armies were raised by the PIC in 1998:

> The Council is concerned at the increasing divergence in doctrine and training between the Entity Armed Forces, and urges the development during 1999 of plans for a training and development programme common to all the armed forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina.[91]

The inability of the VF to address the legacy of conflict between its composite elements and integrate them at a meaningful level offered an indication of the difficulties that would face any

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[88] Since unification it has also been celebrated as the Day of the 3rd Infantry (Republika Srpska) Regiment of the OSBiH.

[89] Đurđević.. "Odbrana je najvažniji posao države." p.6, M. Dizdar. "Vojska je stub jedinstva Republike Srpske." *Srpska vojska,* No. 50*.* (May 1998) p.8

[90] Borislav Đurđević. "Vojska je stub jedinstva republike srpske." p.1, Borislav Đurđević. "Neka sećanje na žrtve bude merilo naše ljubavi za republiku srpsku." *Srpska Vojska,* No. 50*.* (May 1998), p.9

[91] PIC. *PIC Declaration.* (PIC Main Meeting, Madrid, 16/12/1998) Military Issues Annex

efforts to unify the armed forces in BiH. The PIC described the integration efforts in the VF as 'superficial and inadequate' and further noted that efforts to implement confidence and security building measures had been delayed, resulting in 'a lack of real progress towards improving the level of co-operation and confidence between the Entity Armed Forces (and within the Federation army).'[92] David Lightburn, a NATO analyst, observes that 'de facto, however, there were, and remain (in 2000), three armies, since the Croat and Bosniac forces have not been integrated either in structure or in practice, and cooperation between the two is minimal and superficial.'[93]

The extent of external sponsorship of all armed forces in BiH following Dayton exacerbated the practical difficulties facing integration efforts, raised concerns regarding legitimacy and jurisdiction, and presented a direct threat to the viability of the Bosnian state. The PIC also voiced its concern regarding this matter: 'The Council requires immediate and full transparency in all aspects of external support to military forces . . . all such external support should promote integration and cooperation among and between all elements of the armed forces.'[94] The problems in the defence sector were apparent to international observers, and the PIC itself identified 'the instability that is inherent in having two – and in practice three – armies present in one country.' [95] However little progress was made in addressing this. This can in part be explained by the omission of many specifics regarding defence in the DPA, and the initial focus on de-escalation and reconstruction following the war. However, reform across almost every sector of post-Dayton BiH society was difficult.

A report to the US House of Representatives illustrates the frustration faced by those wishing to establish a functioning state: 'Bosnian leaders from all three ethnic groups have not made a concerted effort to curb corruption and have often acted to obstruct the reform process in general.'[96] It was in the face of such corruption and obstructionism that the Bonn Powers were introduced. Initially, the powers were used to establish basic aspects of the state, such as promulgating a Law on Citizenship, and introducing a passport, flag, currency, national anthem, coat of arms, and a common licence plate for vehicles, none of which could be agreed upon by BiH politicians.[97] The continued failure to build a political consensus within the country over time, however, led to powers being increasingly utilised to force through reforms, including the creation of a state-wide public broadcasting system, judicial reform, constitutional amendments, and the

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[92] Ibid.

[93] David Lightburn. "Seeking Security Solutions." *NATO Review.* (01/12/2000) p.1

[94] PIC. *PIC Declaration.* Military Issues Annex

[95] Ibid.

[96] Government Accountability Office. *Bosnia: Crime and Corruption Threaten Successful Implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement.* (Washington, DC, 2000) p.2

[97] Christopher Bennett. *Bosnia's Paralysed Peace.* (London, 2016) p.114

formation of a state-wide tax system.[98] Throughout the period, however, the entity armies remained relatively untouched due to their ambiguous legal and constitutional positions and the significant symbolic value of the VRS.

In December 1999, Croatian President Franjo Tuđman died. He had been key in facilitating financial and political support for the HDZ in BiH and the Bosnian Croat component of the VF, and although he 'repeatedly proclaimed his public support for the [DPA], he never abandoned hopes of creating a Greater Croatia.'[99] In elections held following his death, the HDZ was ousted from power in Croatia, severely weakening their allies in BiH and shifting priorities domestically. The Social Democrat-Liberal coalition government prioritised integration in Euro-Atlantic institutions, reforming the constitution and, in May 2000, joining NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP), a bilateral programme that promotes multilateral military cooperation and the modernisation and democratisation of armed forces. In 2002, the Croatian Ministry of Defence published a revised National Security Strategy, which 'sees Croatia's military as a smaller, more professional force, able to participate in peace support operations in cooperation with NATO countries and to fulfil Croatia's obligations as part of the PfP.'[100] In doing so, the Croatian state made clear its ambition to reform its military to conform with the conventions and practices of NATO member-states, making the potential for a return to the illicit support of Bosnian Croats particularly difficult.

Croatia's PfP membership coincided with renewed calls from the PIC for the creation of a 'state defence establishment' in BiH, a reduction in the size of armed forces, and a military configuration that could be 'balanced against projected budgets.'[101] An audit of the defence budgets of 2000, sponsored by the US, UK, Switzerland, and Germany, concluded that the entity armies were spending far more than they were allocated, and warned that by 2002 the VF would only be able to pay one in three of its soldiers, and the VRS two in three.[102] In addition, it was found that both armies often failed to pay salaries and bills, and almost nothing was spent on purchasing equipment, providing quality training within BiH, maintaining infrastructure, investing in research and development, or adequately funding the SCMM, the only state-level military institution.[103] Sergeant Peter Fitzgerald, a peacekeeper deployed to BiH with the Stabilisation Force (SFOR, the successor to IFOR), noted the fiscal impact of BiH's bloated defence sector:

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[98] Bennett. *Bosnia's Paralysed Peace.* pp.147-8; Paddy Ashdown. *Swords and Ploughshares: Bringing Peace to the 21st Century.* (London, 2007) p.245

[99] Perry & Keridis. *Defense Reform, Modernization, and Military Cooperation in Southeastern Europe.* p.255

[100] Timothy Edwards. *Defence Reform in Croatia and Serbia-Montenegro.* (Oxford, 2003) p.38

[101] PIC. *PIC Declaration.* (PIC Main Meeting, Brussels, 24/05/2000) Military Issues Annex

[102] Major General (ret'd) John Drewienkiewicz. "Budgets as arms control – the Bosnian experience." *The RUSI Journal,* Vol. 148, No. 2. (2003), p.32

[103] Herd & Tracey. "Democratic Civil Military Relations in Bosnia and Herzegovina." p.7

The primary purpose of any armed force is to defend a country's territorial integrity and sovereignty. The situation in BiH is unique, however, with two distinct armed forces in defence of one country. Such a defence structure has led to armed forces that have become an economic burden on the country.[104]

He points out that steady personnel reductions had greatly reduced the number of troops, from an end-of-war estimate of 430,000 to 34,000 in 2001. However, at this number the BiH defence budget was still consuming approximately six percent of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), quadruple that of the European average.[105] Even following a programme of troop reduction in both entities, in 2003 there remained 20,000 soldiers in Bosnian armies, in addition to a combined total of 250,000 reserves. Compared with total population figures, this amounted to one soldier for every 21 citizens: In the US the ratio is 1:200.[106] Having three armies in one state, regardless of the political or symbolic value, was an expensive luxury that BiH could not sustain.

In December 2000, elections held in Serbia resulted in Zoran Đinđić becoming Prime Minister, after he led the Democratic Opposition of Serbia to victory and formed a coalition government. Widely favoured by many Western leaders for his role in the September presidential elections which toppled Milošević, the victory of Đinđić represented a sharp change in outlook for the Serbian state. Furthermore, it dealt a significant blow to the aspirations of the RS leadership to join the SRJ, as two of the new government's first moves were to establish diplomatic ties with BiH (symbolising its formal recognition of the sovereignty of BiH) and express interest in PfP membership.[107] This led to a reconsideration of priorities in BiH, particularly after January 2001, when a coalition of ten parties convinced to cooperate by the American and British ambassadors formed a government. Known as the Democratic Alliance for Change (*Demokratska alijansa za promjene*, DAP), the new government ousted the incumbent nationalists, whose 'stewardship since Dayton had left Bosnia poor, dysfunctional, divided, corrupted, unreconstructed and hopeless' in the eyes of many, for the first time since 1990.[108] The arrest of Milošević in April 2001, followed by his extradition to The Hague in June, offered a definitive end to an era which began to recede with the election of Đinđić. In March of the following year, Mladić was formally retired from the military (by the SRJ) and in April a warrant was issued for his arrest.[109] This was immediately followed by the announcement that

[104] Fitzgerald. "The armed forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina." p.1
[105] Ibid.
[106] Herd & Tracey. "Democratic Civil Military Relations in Bosnia and Herzegovina." p.7
[107] Perry & Keridis. *Defense Reform, Modernization, and Military Cooperation in Southeastern Europe.* p.257
[108] International Crisis Group. "Bosnia's Alliance for (smallish) Change." *Balkans Report No. 132* (2002) p.1
[109] Julian Borger. "14 years a fugitive: the hunt for Ratko Mladić, the Butcher of Bosnia." *The Guardian.* (21/01/2016)

Serbia formally aspired to join the PfP.[110] The recognition of BiH, the arrest of Milošević, the forsaking of Mladić by Serbia, and the declared intention to join a NATO programme represented a seismic shift in the political environment in Serbia. This, combined with the formation of DAP in BiH, left RS's SDS leadership isolated. With hopes of secession reducing, it was left with few options but to try and obstruct the state-building process in BiH on its own.[111]

The accession of Croatia to PfP, coupled with the interest signalled by Serbia, inevitably led to the consideration of PfP in BiH, and in July 2001 the Presidency of BiH expressed its desire to join the programme. Whilst such declarations were welcomed by the NATO Council, many conditions would have to be met before BiH could join. NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson outlined the requirements at a press conference in Sarajevo:

> A common security policy, democratic parliamentary oversight and control of the
> armed forces, the provision at a state level of command and control of the armed
> forces, including a state level ministry responsible for defence matters, full
> transparency for plans and budgets, and a development of a common doctrine and
> common standards to train and equip the armed forces of this country.[112]

The conditionality offered by NATO demanded significant reforms in order for progress towards PfP membership to be made. However, whilst the creation of state-level oversight was required, the integration of the armed forces in BiH was not.

On 27 May 2002, Paddy Ashdown, the former leader of the British Liberal Democrats, became High Representative. He brought with him new ideas, a new approach, and a willingness to intervene in BiH domestic politics on an unprecedented level, to the extent that his critics gave him the moniker "the Viceroy of Bosnia."[113] In his inaugural speech to the Bosnian parliament, Ashdown highlighted the burden that the entity armies were placing on BiH's finances, noting that 'BiH spends twice as much on defence as the United States, and four times more than the European average . . . there is no alternative to reform.'[114] Later, reflecting on his time as High Representative, Ashdown offered an interesting insight into his aims for BiH:

> I felt that the process of creating the peace was over, the job was now to put BiH
> irreversibly onto the path to a sustainable peace as a member of the European
> institutions. Note the word European institutions, it doesn't just mean the EU, it

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[110] Edwards. *Defence Reform in Croatia and Serbia-Montenegro.* p.65
[111] Aybet. "NATO Conditionality in Bosnia and Herzegovina." p.26
[112] NATO Secretary General Lord George Robertson. *Joint Press Conference.* (Sarajevo, 13/07/2001)
[113] "Running Bosnia: The viceroy rules, OK? Not everyone thinks so." *The Economist.* (24/07/2003)
[114] Paddy Ashdown. *Inaugural Speech to BiH Parliament.* (Sarajevo, 27/05/2002)

means Brussels-based institutions which includes NATO. In making that the aim of my mandate I was clear that in order to become a member of NATO they'd have to create a united army, a single army. It was contained within the framework of what I thought the aim of my mandate was.[115]

Ashdown's interpretation of his mandate did not correlate exactly with the official NATO position, which allowed for multiple armies if they had state-level oversight. He explained this discrepancy, stating: 'Mostly I decided I was a better judge of what was possible in Bosnia than they were sitting in Brussels.'[116] When asked where the idea for military integration originated from, Ashdown explained: 'It started with me. I saw my job as to build in BiH the framework for a light level state. One of the parts of that framework was a single army under the control of the Presidency.'[117]

The events of 2000 - 2002 constituted a seismic shift in the political discourse and strategic environment of the region. The divergence of the entity armies and associated instability had been highlighted by the international community, along with the economic unsustainability of the post-Dayton defence sector in BiH. Regional interest in NATO, coupled with the formation of the 'least obstructive' BiH government since the war ended, initiated serious discussion about long-term military ambitions.[118] With the goal of joining the PfP agreed, NATO's conditions outlined, and the arrival of an ambitious High Representative, the climate for reform was as conducive as it had ever been.

Before any significant progress could be made towards reforming the entity armies, however, a number of prominent Bosnian Serb leaders moved to sabotage the process. The Bosnian Serb member of the Presidency, Živko Radišić, vetoed legislation that aimed to reorganise military organisation at the state level just weeks prior to Ashdown's arrival, and, on Ashdown's first day as High Representative, RS Prime Minister Mladen Ivanić 'flatly refused, with threats' to enact the last act of Ashdown's predecessor, Wolfgang Petritsch.[119] In September 2002, *Glas srpski*, a newspaper from RS, reported that the NATO Director for the Balkans, Robert Serry, did not deem unification a necessary step to NATO integration, reporting that 'officials of [RS] and NATO confirmed that the abolition of the [VRS] and the [VF] is not a condition for BiH to join the Partnership for Peace.'[120] Serry is quoted as saying, 'according to the Dayton Agreement BiH is entitled to two armies, but it is

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[115] Paddy Ashdown, interview with the author. (22/03/2016)
[116] Ibid.
[117] Ibid.
[118] Drewienkiewicz. 'Budgets as arms control – the Bosnian experience.' p.30
[119] Herd & Tracey. 'Democratic Civil Military Relations in Bosnia and Herzegovina.' p.8, Ashdown. *Swords and Ploughshares.* p.235
[120] N. Zelenović. "Ostaju dvije vojske." *Glas srpski.* (21/09/2002) p.3

required to provide guarantees to the [SCMM].'[121] The statement was leapt on by Bosnian Serb leaders, who could argue that any attempt to disband or merge the VRS was a violation of the DPA.

This contrasted with Ashdown's interpretation. He recalls that in October 2002 he hoped to introduce another reform: 'the disbandment of Bosnia's two entity based armies and the creation of a single army, under the control of the state. This was an essential requirement for membership of NATO.'[122] These contrasting statements illustrate the pervasive ambiguity of the constitutional position of the armed forces in BiH. According to some international observers, the armies were entitled to exist separately as a result of the DPA. However to others, the entity armies represented a barrier to integration into international institutions and were not protected by the Agreement whatsoever.

The delays caused by such tactics lasted until the October elections, when the main nationalist parties returned to power and were able to protect their military interests more effectively. In 2003, five Bosnian Serb parties agreed to harmonise parliamentary activities in order to block any talks regarding defence reform.[123] Ashdown notes that he was aware that any attempt to reform the VRS 'would be furiously resisted by the RS, who regarded their army as a mark of "statehood."'[124] Military integration, it seemed, remained an unlikely prospect.

Conclusion

The DPA established a lasting peace, however it did little to address a broad range of issues which together created an extremely complex and unstable security environment in post-war BiH. In practical terms, the three armies that had fought each other in an extremely divisive and polarising conflict were left to navigate this environment by themselves, with the stipulations of the DPA and the efforts of the international community for the most part being restricted to demobilisation and de-escalation. This led both entities, fearful of a return to conflict, to retain considerable armed forces, to establish prerogatives and structures of military administration and organisation usually the preserve of sovereign states, and to maintain doctrine and training focused on the potential resumption of the 1992 – 1995 War.

The consociational nature of BiH's governing structures allowed politicians who identified as leaders of the Serb, Croat, or Muslim communities of BiH (rather than of the citizenry as a whole) to dominate the administration of the country. By extolling the glories and sacrifices that their

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[121] Ibid.
[122] Paddy Ashdown. *Swords and Ploughshares.* p.246
[123] Outi Keränen. *The Contentious Politics of Statebuilding: Strategies and Dynamics.* (London, 2017) p.70
[124] Ashdown. *Swords and Ploughshares.* p.246

respective armies had made, such leaders utilised a powerful tool which helped them maintain the focus of BiH politics on the divisions brought about by the conflict and consolidate their positions, as Berg explains: 'Across all areas, ties between ethnic-nationalist networks and security forces remained strong. Many political leaders in all three ethnic groups had been military leaders, and used military officers and veterans' groups to mobilize public support.'[125] This made it politically prescient to keep the militaries as separate as possible and resulted in the VF being essentially bereft of any identity or cohesion. Furthermore, although the international community recognised the 'inherent danger' of having three armies in one state, particularly one as unstable as BiH, the various intergovernmental agencies and state-led initiatives that called for significant defence reform were unable to incentivise (or demand) such action. Lightburn reflects that:

> The main obstacle remains the lack of political will in the area of defence, at both state and entity levels. A radical change in the attitude of members of the joint presidency and of other state and entity leaders is required.[126]

An array of measures and reforms were gradually implemented throughout the period with the explicit goal of strengthening the state-level governance of BiH. Meanwhile, Croatia progressed towards Euro-Atlantic integration, the era Milošević was brought to an end in Serbia, and international observers increasingly came to recognise that the instability from the presence of multiple armies in BiH was the greatest threat to peace in the region. Rather than developing in line with these trends and moving towards co-existence or integration, however, the entity armies maintained and promoted distinct ethnic identities, remained ideologically and doctrinally prepared to resume fighting each other, and ultimately evolved into two very differently organised institutions.

The lens offered by peace and conflict scholars Johan Galtung, Anders Themnér, and Thomas Ohlson illustrates how these developments 'limited' the peace in post-Dayton BiH. Galtung identifies two types of peace: negative, which he defined as 'the absence of violence'; and positive, which he characterises as the 'integration' of human society.[127] Themnér and Ohlson contribute an additional category, 'legitimate peace,' which they place midway between positive and negative peace. Legitimate peace, they contend, is when 'loyalty to the idea(s) of the state' are strengthened and 'the attitudes and practices of individuals and groups within the state toward each other' are

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[125] Louis-Alexandre Berg. "From Weakness to Strength: The Political Roots of Security Sector Reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina." *International Peacekeeping,* Vol. 21, No. 2. (2014) p.155
[126] Lightburn. "Seeking Security Solutions" p.5
[127] Johan Galtung. "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research." *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 6, No. 3. (1969) p.183

improved.[128] Viewed in this way, it is apparent that throughout the 1995 – 2002 period, the peace in BiH did not advance beyond negative. Central to this lack of progress was the institutionalisation of the separation of the formerly warring armies, manifested by the entity armed forces: As long as they stood ready to fight each other, peace in BiH was limited to the absence of violence. As a result, by 2002, the prospect of military integration or the creation of a multiethnic Bosnian Army seemed almost as unlikely as at Dayton, as VF Commander Atif Dudaković reiterated in 2003:

> So far, some cosmetic changes have occurred, but it has, so to speak, kept the dynamic from the war, which is the HVO, the [ARBiH], and the VRS. So, this is what has been done so far on the issue of the military: the reduction of personnel, weapons, and bases, which are mainly cosmetic transformations. There aren't divisions anymore but brigades, not corps but development groups, not 100s but 30s, but the structure, and even the thinking remains the same.[129]

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[128] Anders Themnér & Thomas Ohlson. "Legitimate peace in post-civil war states: towards attaining the unattainable." *Conflict, Security & Development*, Vol. 14, No. 1. (2014) p.63

[129] Braco Kalaba. "Reforma odbrambenog sistema Bosne i Hercegovine." *Prva linija,* No. 108. (June, 2003) p.8

Chapter Seven: The Orao Affair and Military Unification

Between December 1995 and 2002, the military situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina (*Bosna i Hercegovina,* BiH) remained largely unchanged. Security was provided by an international peacekeeping force, which from 1996 until 2004 was operated by NATO and was known as the Stabilisation Force (SFOR). Despite the cessation of hostilities, their continued presence was required as in practical terms three armies remained in place from the war, ready to fight each other. Raffi Gregorian, a US State Department official who later led defence reform efforts in BiH, notes efforts to reconcile the militaries in the years following the war:

> The military leaders of the international community (various commanders of SFOR, and the deputy commanders) were all trying to get the entity armed forces to work together, to get into the habit of doing that. They'd have exercises: civilian emergency response; build a bridge with engineers; they'd put them on retreats and workshops. Across the board they'd really do whatever. And they got nowhere. That's because, and I think this is something Paddy [Ashdown] appreciated, these were not military technical problems, they were political problems.[1]

While there were no practical barriers to addressing what was recognised as the 'inherent instability' of having three armies in one state, particularly in military terms, the only progress that had been made was the isolation of the armies from each other and the gradual demobilisation of some of their soldiers.[2] Most power in BiH was entrenched below state level, in the hands of two devolved political administrations referred to as entities: Republika Srpska (RS) and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (*Federacija Bosne i Hercegovine,* FBiH). RS was predominantly Bosnian Serb, and commanded the Army of Republika Srpska (*Vojska Republike Srpske,* VRS), and the FBiH was mostly divided between Bosnian Croats and Muslims. The FBiH possessed a military, the Army of the Federation (*Vojska Federacija,* VF), but in practice it was a very divided institution, with its two components, descended from the Croatian Defence Council (*Hrvatsko vijeće odbrane,* HVO) and the Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (*Armija Republike Bosne i Hercegovine,* ARBiH), remaining wholly separate except at the highest levels of command. The political leaders of the Bosnian Croat, Muslim, and Serb communities generally failed to reach a consensus in parliament

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[1] Raffi Gregorian, interview with the author. (18/07/2017)
[2] PIC. *PIC Declaration.* (PIC Main Meeting, Madrid, 16/12/1998) Military Issues Annex

and would often obstruct or veto legislation for fear of losing their autonomy.[3] As a result, the international community, represented by the Peace Implementation Council (PIC) and embodied by the High Representative to BiH, intervened in Bosnia's domestic politics in order to ensure there was not a return to conflict, exercising a mandate that they had been issued at a conference in Bonn in 1997.[4] While a number of High Representatives forced legislation into place, dictating the future of the three armies was assessed as being too destabilising, and potentially unconstitutional. However, in 2002 and 2003, BiH was rocked by its most severe crisis since the war.

The revelation that a business in the Bosnian Serb entity had been selling weapons to Iraq, while the country was under a UN-mandated arms embargo raised the possibility of international condemnation and damaging sanctions. This crisis, known as the "Orao Affair," caused a seismic shift in the political discourse in BiH, upended RS's defence establishment, and drove powerful and cohesive calls, hailing from international and Bosnian political figures, for significant changes to be made. The result was an intensive period of comprehensive defence reform, which culminated in the military unification of the armies in BiH and the creation of the largest multiethnic institution in the country. Furthermore, such was the extent of the changes that BiH qualified to join NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP), its first noteworthy step on the road to integration into Euro-Atlantic institutions.[5]

This chapter charts the events of the Orao Affair, offering insights into the circumstances which inspired the greatest step in stabilising BiH since the war ended with the Dayton Peace Agreement (DPA). Its impact will be assessed, with a particular focus on the work of the Defence Reform Commission (DRC), which provided the structural, practical, and legislative plans for reforming, and ultimately unifying, the armies in BiH. A detailed analysis of the structures and methods of organisation that were utilised successfully to integrate and establish the new Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina (*Oružane snage Bosne i Hercegovine*, OSBiH) is offered, alongside due consideration of the influence of regional and international developments. Together, this will provide an account of how, 26 years after socialism was rejected at the ballot box, a multiethnic military was created in BiH.

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[3] See Chapter Six.
[4] OHR. "The Mandate of the OHR." *OHR Press Office.* (16/2/2012)
[5] My findings on this appear in: Elliot Short. "The Orao Affair: The Key to Military Integration in Post-Dayton Bosnia and Herzegovina." *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 1. (2018)

The Orao Affair

Links between socialist Yugoslavia and Iraq had been established following Saddam Hussein's rise to power, and manifested themselves through the construction of numerous airports, infrastructure projects, and bunkers by *Jugoimport* and *Aeroinženjering*, two Yugoslav companies. Furthermore, prior to the break-up of Yugoslavia, repair and maintenance services at a facility in Zagreb had been used by the Iraqi Air Force. However, following the secession of Croatia from Yugoslavia, 19 Iraqi MIGs that were being serviced were transported to Serbia, where they remained.[6] The relationship continued into the 1990s, despite UN sanctions on both states remaining in place, with contractors from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia constructing the new Ba'ath Party headquarters and several bunkers in Baghdad.[7]

On September 9, 2002, the US embassy in Sarajevo voiced concerns that a business in BiH was engaged in trade with Iraq, and demanded an investigation as it was believed that arms were involved, in contravention of a UN embargo. The business in question was the Orao (Eagle) Aviation Institute, a former Yugoslav military manufacturer with a large facility in Bijeljina, RS, which developed, built, and maintained parts for a range of fighter jets. The embassy told the press that they had 'information which raises the question of whether violations of the UN resolution regarding Iraq had taken place, which is why the issue is raised with Bosnian governments, both at state and entity level.'[8] The following day the Investigative Commission of the RS Ministry of Defence reported that 'there is no evidence that the "Orao" Aviation Institute from Bijeljina delivered weapons, military equipment or spare parts, nor provided any services to any country under UN embargo, especially not Iraq.'[9] For its part, Orao announced that it would file charges 'against those who gave statements and the alleged information about this (the delivery of weapons to Iraq), as well as against the media that reported this without checking the information.'[10] The same press release emphasised that 'the "Orao" Aviation Institute, in its long tradition, never produced weapons or any type of ordnance, and jet engines are not weapons.'[11]

The RS Commission presented its findings to the BiH Presidency a few days later, which accepted the conclusion that Orao did not arm Iraq and that BiH had not violated the UN embargo.[12] However, a number of ambiguities in the report left the issue unresolved. It stated that 'the commission could

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[6] Braco Kalaba. "Vojska federacije sa unificiranim oznakama." *Prva linija,* No. 59*.* (February, 1998) p.9
[7] Oliver Poole. "Inside £50m nuclear bunker that couldn't save Saddam." *The Telegraph.* (12/01/2006)
[8] Fena. "Ambasada SAD traži istragu o predaji oružja Iraku." *Oslobođenje* (10/09/2002) p.3
[9] M. Cepina. "'Orao'" nije kriv." *Glas srpski.* (11/09/2002) p.3
[10] S. Raven. "Tužbe zbog lažnih optužbi." *Glas srpski.* (12/09/2002) p.3
[11] Ibid.
[12] V. Živak. "BiH nije prekršila zabranu naoružavanja Iraka!" *Oslobođenje.* (15/09/2002) p.6

not confirm whether one of Orao's partners hadn't misused business arrangements and commitments to divert weapons to Iraq,' and that it had been unable to complete 'the verification of the residence of people employed at Orao, to determine whether any of them were living in Iraq.'[13] On October 8, 2002, the Sarajevo daily *Oslobođenje* published allegations from 'well informed Western officials, who requested anonymity,' that 'in the last two years engineers and other employees of the "Orao" Aviation Institute regularly travelled to Iraq and worked on maintaining Iraqi aircraft, and received nine times more pay.'[14] *Oslobođenje* elaborated that 'Orao has allegedly worked on the overhaul of jet engines for MiG-21 "Fishbed" and MiG-29 "Fulcrum" fighters in Iraq.'[15] The Western source revealed that the US embassy had privately discussed the matter with RS officials prior to going public, but had been dissatisfied with the response:

> Representatives of the United States deliberately did not make a fuss in the media, because they want to give the RS authorities the opportunity to clear this up. Also, they did not want the affair to influence the current election. BiH needs to choose the path to Europe, rather than to Iraq. Cooperation with Iraq prevents BiH's integration with international institutions. This is an opportunity for the military and civilian officials of RS to show that they are not part of the problem, but that they are able to investigate the matter and solve the problem. The response of the US government will depend on how serious and genuine their investigation and its results are.[16]

On October 11, after Orao had closed for the weekend, SFOR troops began an inspection at its factories and warehouses in Bijeljina. Major Sean Mel of SFOR informed reporters in Bijeljina that it was a 'regular check and that these inspections cannot be connected with the affair concerning the involvement of "Orao" in the sale of weapons to Iraq.'[17] The search continued throughout the weekend as, supposedly, the keys for a number of safes could not be found by Orao staff. However, SFOR soldiers remained at the complex until they were located.[18] Before SFOR publicly announced the results of its search, representatives of the US embassy met with the RS Investigative Committee in Banja Luka. Deputy Minister Lieutenant General Nikola Delić, who had chaired the committee, gave assurances that 'trade with Iraq halted from mid-September, and that no official of Ministry of Defense or an official at a higher level in the RS has approved such a trade.'[19] Despite his assurances,

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[13] Ibid.

[14] Antonio Prlenda. "Dvogodišnji let iznad Sadamovog gnijezda." *Oslobođenje.* (08/10/2002) p.7

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Onasa. "Zavod 'Orao' i dalje pod blokadom." *Oslobođenje.* (13/10/2002) p.4

[18] Onasa. "SFOR ponovo u 'Orlovim' sefovima." *Oslobođenje.* (14/10/2002) p.3

[19] Ibid.

however, the results of the inspection revealed that Orao had indeed been supplying aircraft spare parts and technical assistance to the Iraqi Air Force, and was continuing to do so. A letter was found pertaining to multiple shipments of materials for the maintenance and repair of MiG jet engines for Iraq. Furthermore, at least five experts were said to still be in Iraq, and the Iraqi Air Force had been asked to remove the Orao emblem from all documents and equipment and hide the Serbian-language technical manuals. The most damning evidence revealed by the letter, however, was that it was dated September 25, two weeks after the first warnings from the US embassy.[20]

In a statement published by *Oslobođenje*, US officials made clear how they viewed the situation and what response they expected from those authorities accountable for the trade:

> In fact, work with Iraq is not suspended, trade with the material and the movement of people into and out of Iraq is not interrupted. Investigations so far have not been adequately extensive, and the United States expects it to continue, and to show fully and in detail how the trade was actually conducted, who was included, in particular who was in charge, how many people travelled to Iraq, when and how many times. They expect to be provided with the details of the material which was sold to Iraq, as well as details on the payment of such activities. The US also expects to be told what measures will be taken against those responsible for these actions.[21]

The statement also made clear that the repercussions of the escalating scandal had the potential to be severe for BiH. Antonio Prlenda, an *Oslobođenje* columnist, reflected that: 'BiH could be facing international sanctions because of the slow and insufficiently serious investigation by the Ministry of Defence of the Republika Srpska.'[22] Just days later, the newspaper ran the headline 'BiH has 24 hours to avoid sanctions.'[23] At the time, the Bosnian economy remained in a fragile state, with high unemployment, low wages, and Gross Domestic Product standing at approximately half of its pre-war total. Furthermore, both the state and entity governments were reliant on foreign aid to meet their respective expenditures.[24] Depending on what shape the sanctions took, financial assistance could cease, goods could be embargoed, or individuals and institutions targeted. Such a response was guaranteed to destabilise the fragile Bosnian state and ran the risk of inviting a return to conflict.

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[20] Antonio Prlenda. "Bijelinski 'Orao' donosi sankcije za BiH?" *Oslobođenje.* (22/10/2002) p.5
[21] Ibid.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Antonio Prlenda. "BiH ima 24 sata da izbjegne sankcije." *Oslobođenje.* (25/10/2002) p.1
[24] Economics Institute of Sarajevo. *United Nations Development Programme Human Development Report.* (Sarajevo, 2002) pp.20-37

The High Representative of BiH, Paddy Ashdown, understood that 'in the worst case, this breach of international law by the RS could have opened up Bosnia to the possibility of UN action.'[25] He was, however, also the first to see the opportunity which the crisis presented, recording in his memoir: 'We knew at once that this would give us the opportunity I had been looking for to try to push through defence reform in order to abolish the two opposing entity armies and create a single Bosnian army under state control.'[26] Moving quickly to take the lead in the international response to what was being dubbed the "Orao Affair," he outlined the 'required action' that was needed to avert a crisis on October 28:

> In the short term there must be a full and public enquiry. This will need to involve the State authorities as the State ultimately has responsibility for ensuring BiH respects UN resolutions. Those politically responsible for bringing BiH to the brink of international condemnation and pariah status must face the consequences.[27]

In addition, he called for new standards and regulations regarding trade to be implemented, including the provision that state (rather than entity) institutions had to approve weapons exports.[28] Ashdown also ordered reviews of BiH's border control and the entity defence structures, arguing that the systems of democratic civilian control needed to be strengthened, and stating that 'it is clear that the current system appears to allow parts of the defence industry to operate outside of transparent political control.'[29] Furthermore, he added that oversight of the defence sector needed to be properly established at the state level, demanding that 'clear lines of responsibility must be established through a strengthened Standing Committee on Military Matters.'[30] All of these measures were directed towards the strengthening of the BiH state at the expense of the entities, a process that the leadership of RS had vehemently fought since Dayton.

In the Serb Republic, opinion was divided over who should be held accountable. Most parties agreed that the President of RS, Mirko Šarović, and the Prime Minister, Mladen Ivanić, were ultimately accountable. Whether or not they, or indeed anyone else, should be removed from their positions, however, was the cause of much debate.[31] Eventually, at the request of the BiH Presidency 'to dismiss all officials responsible for the cooperation between Bijeljina and Baghdad within 24 hours,'

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[25] Paddy Ashdown. *Swords and Ploughshares: Bringing Peace to the Twentieth Century.* (London, 2007) p.248
[26] Ibid.
[27] OHR. "High Representative Outlines Required Action Following 'Orao' Scandal." *OHR Press Office.* (28/10/2002)
[28] A. Kalamujić. "Država preuzima kontrolu nad kompletnim naoružanjem." *Oslobođenje.* (26/10/2002) p.4
[29] OHR. "High Representative Outlines Required Action Following 'Orao' Scandal."
[30] Ibid.
[31] OHR. "OHR BiH Media Round-up." *OHR Press Office.* (28/10/2002) p.3

RS took action.[32] The Director of the Orao Aviation Institute, Milan Priča, the Commander of the RS Air Force, Colonel Miljan Vlačić, and the Director of the Department for Military Logistics, Spasoje Orašanin, were all quickly dismissed.[33] Although Prica continued to protest, reiterating that 'Orao has never sold weapons,' the Bosnian Serb leadership considered the matter dealt with.[34] Following the dismissals, the Serb member of the BiH Presidency, Mirko Šarović, announced that: 'The government and the relevant authorities of RS took concrete measures to sanction any institution which violated the embargo on exports of arms and equipment to Iraq.'[35]

The US administration, however, was unsatisfied. A press release issued by the US embassy the next day stated that:

> The United States government welcomes the first steps which have punished a violation of UN Security Council resolutions, the Dayton Agreement and BiH export control regulations, but we expect new steps from those responsible in the state and entity to stop cooperation with Iraq and carry out a full investigation. We expect that the officials who bear political, military and business responsibility are not only dismissed, but are also criminally sanctioned.[36]

The Bosnian Muslim member of the BiH Presidency, Beriz Belkić, also called for more punishment. He told *Oslobođenje*:

> The dismissals that have occurred in the RS itself are a signal that we have started to understand the situation. But, those dismissed were in the military structure, and now we need to establish the responsibility of the civilian structures, which command the army.[37]

Ashdown was also critical of RS's response and, after returning from a meeting with the UN Security Council regarding the affair, commented that 'it is worrying that the measures taken by the RS in September to clarify this issue were very tepid and unconvincing,' although he did concede that 'the latest measures by the RS are encouraging.'[38] A more ominous warning came from US Secretary of State Colin Powell, who wrote to Ivanić and told him that his government faced serious consequences because of the scandal and informed him that 'this topic has now gained attention at

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[32] Prlenda. "BiH ima 24 sata da izbjegne sankcije." p.3

[33] Ibid.

[34] Onasa. "Demanti smijenjenog direktora 'Orao' nikada nije prodavao oružje." *Oslobođenje.* (26/10/2002) p.5

[35] G. Dakić. ""Orao" slomljenih krila." *Glas srpski.* (25/10/2002) p.3

[36] Aldijana Omeragić. "Bond traži nove smjene dužnosnika RS*." Oslobođenje.* (26/10/2002) p.4

[37] Ibid.

[38] Ibid.

the highest level in the Government of the United States.'[39] He described the RS investigation as a 'mockery,' and said that 'you were warned about these activities and did not do anything to prevent them.'[40] Further pressure was applied as Powell reminded Ivanić that 'the United States also has access to numerous sanctions and penalties that can be applied to your government and to all individuals who are involved.'[41] Powell made it clear that RS was facing diplomatic isolation if it did not go further, and that the US could act unilaterally and punish the Serb entity if it was deemed appropriate.

As the leadership of RS assessed its options, others began to see the opportunity the events presented. Belkić, speaking for the Bosnian state, declared that 'we must learn from this and reform defence.'[42] In the media, Aldijana Omeragić argued that 'the US threat of sanctions has become a great opportunity for BiH, more than seven years after the war, to reorganize and eventually curb all legal and secret weapons and armaments,' and recognised how the Orao Affair had raised a discussion 'about creating a single BiH Army. Or maybe even a new, state-level Ministry of Defence.'[43] Zira Dizdarević contended that 'to punish the whole of Bosnia and Herzegovina because of Orao would be meaningless because the central government does not have a mechanism for control over the military industry,' and contended that 'the most important question is what lesson can be brought from this case on a system level. The Orao affair and the behaviour of the authorities on this occasion favours the strengthening of the powers of the central authorities and giving more responsibilities to them.'[44]

Meanwhile, more details of Orao's dealings were emerging. On October 27, 2002, *Oslobođenje* reported that SFOR had found a link between Orao, a Belgrade firm called "Jugoimport", and an importer in Iraq called "Al-Bashair Trade Companies." The findings confirmed the role of Orao in the provision of parts, maintenance, and mechanical training for two series of engines for MiG fighters in a contract worth 8.5 million US Dollars. The *Oslobođenje* article concluded that Orao 'has enabled Iraq, with highly specialised Yugoslav help, to get the damaged fleet of MiGs back to the heavens.'[45] This came just two weeks after US President George W. Bush told the UN that Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq posed a 'grave and gathering danger' and issued an ultimatum that unless weapons inspectors were allowed into Iraq, action would be taken.[46] Bush's declaration coincided with an

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[39] Fena. "Ako vi ne djelujete, djelovaće međunarodna zajednica." *Oslobođenje.* (26/10/2002) p.5
[40] Ibid.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Omeragić. "Bond traži nove smjene dužnosnika RS*." p.4
[43] Aldijana Omeragić. "Orlovo gnijezdo." *Oslobođenje.* (26/10/2002) p.2
[44] Zija Dizdarević. "RS snaži BiH*." Oslobođenje.* (29/10/2002) p.2
[45] Fena. "SFOR pronašao vezu između 'Orla' i Iraka." *Oslobođenje.* (27/10/2002) p.7
[46] George W. Bush. "President Bush's address to the United Nations*." CNN.* (12/09/2002)

escalation in the bombing of Iraq (a regular occurrence between the First Gulf War and the Second) by US and British aircraft, which used the UN-mandated no-fly zone to 'destroy the country's air defence systems in anticipation of an all-out attack.'[47] By helping the Iraqi Air Force increase its capability in such a political climate, Orao was not only contravening a UN arms embargo, but was also posing a threat to US and British military assets. Indeed, in the final weeks of 2002, an Iraqi MiG was able to down a US Predator Drone, although it is not possible to verify if it was one included in the Orao deal.[48]

In response to the mounting severity of the case, the Commander of SFOR, US General William Ward, called on the RS authorities to conduct:

> A thorough inspection of the Orao complex at the Ministry of Defence level, as well as to make an overall inspection of RS Ministry of Defence and all other institutions and companies engaged in the production of military equipment or weapons.[49]

Ward's approach can be seen to have offered RS multiple opportunities to conduct its own investigations and present its findings to the Bosnian public and the international community. However, the evidence suggesting that the RS administration had not only been involved in the deal but had also attempted to hide evidence and continued to trade with Iraq after the investigation began, severely undermined its authority and legitimacy. As a result, Ward warned that 'only strict control of the Ministry of Defence of the RS, the RS Government and the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina can ensure that in future there is no serious violation of the trade embargo.'[50] In response to this increased pressure, two further high ranking RS officials resigned their positions: Defence Minister Slobodan Bilić and the army Chief of Staff, General Novica Simić. The RS government stated that 'this act helps to improve the international position of the Republika Srpska,' however it remained unclear whether this would be enough to satisfy the international community.[51]

With the Bosnian Serb leadership firmly implicated in the Orao Affair, Ashdown presented his case for using the unfolding crisis to fundamentally reform the security sector to the international community. On October 29, he flew to Brussels to brief the NATO Secretary General, George Robertson. Ashdown told the ambassadors of the North Atlantic Council that BiH was facing its 'most

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[47] Richard Norton-Taylor. "Britain and US step up bombing campaign in Iraq." *The Guardian.* (04/12/2002)
[48] Michael Gordon. "After the War: Preliminaries; US Air Raids in '02 Prepared for War in Iraq." *New York Times.* (20/07/2003)
[49] V. Živak. "Odgovornost vlasti RS utvrdiće se tek po okončanju istrage!" *Oslobođenje.* (28/10/2002) p.4
[50] Ibid.
[51] BBC. "Bosnian officials quit over Iraq sales." *BBC News.* (29/10/2002)

severe crisis since the war.'[52] He warned that when the full enquiry which he had instituted was complete, it would be likely to show some high-level political culpability for the Orao Affair. He also used this meeting to gauge the response to his planned reforms, noting that he 'intended to use this scandal to initiate a complete reform of the defence structures in BiH.'[53] Robertson agreed that NATO would supervise the defence reform process, giving some strong credibility to any proposals that would follow.[54] Ashdown also received the endorsement of the UN Security Council for the 'priority reform measures.'[55] In the following days, General Ward told *Oslobođenje* that the only solution to the problems arising from the Orao Affair was the creation of a BiH State Ministry of Defence, and US Ambassador Clifford Bond spoke of the need for a unified Bosnian army.[56] Ashdown was able to quickly establish a consensus among the international community and, crucially, a range of Bosnian political figures, on the appropriate response to the actions of Orao and RS by highlighting the danger that sanctions posed and advocating assessment and reform rather than punishment. Furthermore, the involvement of the RS government and military, coupled with the attempts to orchestrate a cover-up, left them discredited, isolated, and unable to challenge Ashdown's manoeuvres.

Before the extent and degree of the reforms to be made could be planned, however, the RS Investigative Committee was given a final opportunity to meaningfully participate in the response to the Orao Affair. In accordance with parliamentary procedure, the Bosnian parliament and the international community waited until the committee had completed its (second) investigation and reported its findings. This took over two months, and when, on January 7, 2003, Ashdown was offered a 'first, private sight of the latest RS government report' he found the 1,600-page document to be an 'attempt to provide a snowstorm of paper which would obscure the issue of political culpability.'[57] Indeed, the report placed the burden of responsibility on former RS President Biljana Plavsić, a 'sworn enemy of the current administration, who was, very conveniently, already in jail, having been convicted by the Hague Tribunal.'[58]

The incumbent Bosnian Serb member of the Presidency, Mirko Šarović, was also implicated in the report. He had been elected to his position as news of the Orao Affair was first breaking just months earlier, with 70 percent of the Bosnian Serb vote, but prior to that he had served as RS President and

[52] Sense. "Bosna pred najtežom krizom od završetka rata." *Oslobođenje.* (31/10/2002) p.7
[53] Ashdown. *Swords and Ploughshares* p.250
[54] Ibid.
[55] Dizdarević. "RS snaži BiH." p.2
[56] Sense. "Bosna pred najtežom krizom od završetka rata." p.7
[57] Ashdown. *Swords and Ploughshares.* p.262
[58] Ibid.

the Chairman of the RS Supreme Defence Council, its highest military body and the one responsible for overseeing the deal with Iraq.[59] However, the report was absent of any concrete evidence linking him to Orao. Frustrated again by what was deemed to be an attempt to obscure the truth, Ashdown ordered a fresh investigation by intelligence officers from NATO countries, who presented their findings, which named Šarović as the key culprit, in March.[60] Just days after the investigation proved his links to Orao, Ashdown publicly accused him of being engaged in 'aggressive intelligence operations against [BiH] institutions and citizens, and international organisations working in BiH,' which 'compounded the damage done by the Orao Affair.'[61] Evidence to back these allegations had been gathered in a raid conducted by British troops many weeks earlier, on 7 March, and proved that VRS intelligence, with the cooperation of Serbia, had been intercepting phone-calls and bugging briefing rooms.[62]

The position of the Bosnian Serb member of the Presidency was increasingly untenable, and by the beginning of April it seemed likely he would either have to resign or be removed by the High Representative. However, Ashdown records that on April 1, 'to my huge surprise, Bosnian Muslim President Sulejman Tihić, backed by his Croat colleague, warned that I should not remove the Serb president as this would destabilise the whole country.'[63] He notes that 'my big fear is not riots or instability as predicted by the French and the Germans yesterday, but a Serb withdrawal from the whole process.'[64] In response, he privately asked Šarović to step down, which the member of the Presidency eventually acquiesced to do on April 2, although his aides indicated that it was a 'tactical resignation, forced on him by Lord Ashdown, and that he would make a political comeback.'[65] Ashdown later reflected that this was 'a very dangerous moment,' but contends that he was left with few options: 'He had broken a UN Security Council sanction, he continued to provide weapons and weapons assistance to Iraq, and you just can't ignore that. It was not something which I enjoyed doing or something I particularly wanted to do.'[66]

Šarović joined a multitude of other Bosnian Serb government officials and military officers who were removed from their positions, including the VRS's military and civilian leadership. Seventeen of those dismissed were later charged with illegal trading, either for being involved in the trade or helping to

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[59] Ibid. p.251
[60] Ian Traynor. "Bosnia's arms to Iraq scandal claims top political scalp." *The Guardian.* (03/04/2003)
[61] Jolyjon Naegele. "Bosnia: Political Stability in Question Amid Scandals, Espionage Charges." *Radio Free Europe.* (03/04/2003)
[62] Ibid.
[63] Ashdown. *Swords and Ploughshares* pp.279-80
[64] Ibid.
[65] Traynor. "Bosnia's arms to Iraq scandal claims top political scalp."
[66] Paddy Ashdown, interview with the author. (22/03/2016)

cover it up.[67] The following day *Glas srpski* reported that: 'Yesterday BiH Presidency Chairman Mirko Šarović tendered his resignation from his duties, which was accepted by the High Representative Paddy Ashdown, who consequently explained that it put an end to the "Orao affair."'[68] Dragan Mitrović, the new RS Prime Minister (Ivanić had moved to foreign affairs), reflected that 'I regard his resignation as a personal and moral act with the aim to establish new standards of behaviour by those holding public positions.'[69]

Ashdown's public response was clear. He declared that 'the Orao Arms-to-Iraq affair has done more damage to BiH's international reputation than any other event since the end of the war,' and noted that 'it is no exaggeration to say that these activities could have placed this country's stability in jeopardy.'[70] He targeted RS specifically, stating that 'too many in the RS think the RS is a state not an Entity. Signing arms deals with foreign governments are the actions of a state,' and observed that 'if the RS had truly accepted its role as part of BiH, [the arms deals] would not have happened.'[71] Commenting on Šarović's resignation, he emphasised that:

> Mr Šarović was President of the RS when [Orao] signed arms contracts with Iraq in direct contravention of UN Security Council Resolutions. With war now underway in Iraq, possibly involving weaponry exported from this country, I cannot overstate the seriousness of this affair.[72]

Following the resignation of Šarović, Ashdown announced a package of preliminary reform measures, which were approved by both the FBiH and RS. The RS Supreme Council was abolished, entity legislation and constitutions were amended to remove all inference of statehood, independence, and sovereignty, and plans and legislation were requested of both the state and the entity governments for bringing arms industries and international trade under proper control. Furthermore, all Bosnian senior military officers would have to submit details of travel abroad to the state-level Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and measures were to be taken in future to reduce dual structures in the VF. In addition, a commission was established to 'identify constitutional and legal

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[67] Traynor. "Bosnia's arms to Iraq scandal claims top political scalp."

[68] N.Z. "Ostavka mirka Šarovića." *Glas srpski.* (03/04/2003) p.1

[69] BBC. "Ashdown Clips Bosnian Serb Wings." *BBC News.* (02/04/2003)

[70] OHR. "High Representative Comments on Resignation of Mirko Sarovic from BiH Presidency." *OHR Press Office.* (02/04/2003)

[71] OHR. "High Representative Acts to Ensure that Military in BiH are under Effective Civilian Control." *OHR Press Office.* (02/04/2003)

[72] OHR. "High Representative Comments on Resignation of Mirko Sarovic from BiH Presidency."

barriers to effective state-level command and control' of the military.[73] Announcing his plans, Ashdown stated:

> With the resignation of Mirko Šarović from the BiH Presidency, to take responsibility for the Orao Affair, and the reform package which I announced today, I am satisfied that the Arms-to-Iraq affair and the VRS espionage scandal have been effectively addressed.[74]

The Orao Affair triggered a momentous shift in political discourse and activity in BiH. It exposed numerous flaws in the structures and laws which governed post-Dayton BiH, particularly with regard to the management of borders and oversight of the military. Furthermore, the RS leadership was proven to have broken a UN arms embargo, continued business with Iraq after the initial investigations began, endeavoured to hide evidence, and had repeatedly attempted to obstruct or obscure investigations. The revelation that the military autonomy of the VRS had been utilised to spy on international and domestic institutions during the entire investigation served to further illustrate the disregard with which RS leaders held both the Bosnian state and the international community. Furthermore, RS's only significant ally and a crucial benefactor of the VRS, Serbia, was proven to have been the 'mastermind' of the trade and a co-conspirator in the spying scandal, and as a result the Orao Affair had a 'huge impact' in Serbia.[75] The coordination between the defence institutions of Serbia and RS in conducting such illicit operations highlighted many unresolved security issues inherent in post-Dayton BiH. As a result of Orao, all financial and logistical support that the VRS received from Belgrade, and all military collaboration between the RS and Serbia, would be scrutinised and approved at the state-level in BiH. The Orao Affair also led to the Serbian government handing over all records and information concerning Belgrade's cooperation with Iraq over previous decades, including details of a host of military infrastructure projects which Yugoslav engineers had constructed for the Iraqi armed forces, just as US and British forces were preparing to invade the country.[76] Discredited and isolated, and with most of its political and military leadership removed, the RS administration was unable to prevent comprehensive reform from becoming a political priority, nor could it offer an alternative. For the first time since the DPA was signed, the future of the armies that had fought the war and the place they had in society was to be scrutinised, debated, and reformed.

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[73] OHR. "High Representative Acts to Ensure that Military in BiH are under Effective Civilian Control."
[74] Ibid.
[75] Gregorian, interview with the author.
[76] Ibid.

Root and branch reform: The response to the Orao Affair

The most significant impact that the Orao Affair had on BiH was the Defence Reform Commission (DRC) established by Ashdown. It had a broad remit to examine and analyse the complex security environment in post-Dayton BiH and was ultimately tasked with suggesting reforms which could be implemented by the Bosnian parliament if a consensus could be found. If it could not, the Bonn Powers offered a route for Ashdown to force the reforms through. However, such action was considered extremely risky. Ashdown announced the main aims of the DRC in May 2003:

> Bosnia and Herzegovina needs to establish transparency and proper civilian control of its armed forces, in the interests of BiH and its people, but this process will also help BiH achieve its stated desire of joining Euro-Atlantic structures, and in particular, NATO's PfP Programme.[77]

Key to the success of the commission was establishing its legitimacy. Given time to regroup, the leadership of RS had the potential to sabotage any future reforms it deemed to be overreaching. As a result, the commission was composed of representatives from a broad range of institutions and interests, and was overseen by observers from across the international community. Leading the commission was James Locher III, a veteran US policymaker and military expert with experience of reforming the US military. The commissioners included: the Secretary General of the Standing Committee on Military Matters (SCMM), the Bosnian state-level military administration; the OSCE's Head of Mission to BiH; a representative of the FBiH President; the FBiH Minister of Defence; the two Deputy Secretary Generals of the SCMM; a representative of the RS President; the RS Minister of Defence; the Commander of SFOR; a representative of NATO; and a representative of the EU. Observers included representatives of the Organisation of Islamic Conference and the EU Presidency, as well as both the Russian and US ambassadors to BiH.[78] Thus, the work of the DRC was done by Bosnian and foreign delegates working together, with representatives from each relevant institution forming working groups, each of which focused on a particular area marked for reform. In some cases, former belligerents were now designing reforms alongside each other, such as in the Policy Working Group, where the former Commander of the ARBiH during the war, Rasim Delić, worked alongside the former Chief of Staff of the HVO, Slavko Marin, and a leading member of RS's wartime civilian leadership, Dragan Kapetina.[79]

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[77] OHR. "High Representative Appoints Defence Reform Commission." *OHR Press Office.* (08/05/2003)
[78] Defence Reform Commission. *The Path to Partnership for Peace: Report of the Defence Reform Commission.* (Sarajevo, 2003) p.i
[79] Ibid. p.iii

Despite the potential for discord to hinder the work of the DRC, its progress was rapid. An Executive Order issued by Bush on 29 May undoubtedly offered some impetus, as it imposed unilateral sanctions on 150 individuals in the former Yugoslavia, most of whom were either war crimes suspects, or people believed to be helping them.[80] The response from the leading political parties in BiH (all of whom had members on the list) was unanimously one of outrage: a former SDA minister described the list as 'the greatest post-war evil to be committed against the Bosniaks' while the HDZ published a statement labelling it 'humiliating.'[81] However, it served as a prominent reminder of the fragile position the Bosnian political leadership was in and encouraged cooperation with priority measures such as the DRC. The commission submitted a comprehensive report on 25 September 2003, just five months after it had been formed.[82] It identified a number of key problems which undermined the emergence of democratic civil-military relations and BiH's integration into the security apparatus of the PfP programme. These were:

> [The] lack of adequate State-level command and control of the armed forces of [BiH]; ambiguity and inconsistency in the law regarding the competencies of the State and entities for defence matters; insufficient democratic oversight and control of the armed forces, especially by parliaments; lack of transparency at all levels for defence matters; non-compliance with international obligations, primarily OSCE politicomilitary accords; an unjustifiable number of reserves and the small arms and light weapons to arm them; excessive, deteriorating arms at too many locations; waste of human and financial resources in the defence sector; forces sized and equipped for missions no longer appropriate for the security situation.[83]

In response, the DRC recommended the implementation of a range of legislation which would fundamentally restructure the security sector in BiH. These reforms would centralise almost all authority over military matters to the Bosnian parliament and established accountable civilian oversight at the state-level by establishing a Bosnian Ministry of Defence. This was justified as it was within the parameters of the DPA and articulated 'a fundamental principle of Statehood: a State must have the capacity to defend its territorial integrity and sovereignty. To have this capacity, a State must control its armed forces.'[84] The commission also recommended considerable reductions

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[80] Government Publishing Office. *Executive Order 13304 – Termination of Emergencies with Respect to Yugoslavia and Modification of Executive Order 13219 of June 26, 2001.* (29/05/2003)
[81] Amra Kebo. "Regional Report: US Sanctions Alarm Bosnians." *Institute for War & Peace Reporting.* (01/05/2005)
[82] Defence Reform Commission. *The Path to Partnership for Peace.* (Sarajevo, 2003)
[83] Ibid. p.2
[84] Ibid. pp.2-3

in arsenals, military property, and troop numbers. The 19,090 professional soldiers serving in the entity armies were to be reduced to 12,000, and the majority of the 240,000 troops kept as reserves were to be dismissed, leaving just 60,000. In addition, 'the intake of conscripts would be reduced by 50 percent, and the conscript training period shortened from six to four months. The headquarters and field staffs of the entity Ministries of Defence would also be reduced by 25 percent.'[85] Although much reduced in size and capability, the entity armies would remain in place, and the entity governments would be responsible for most administrative aspects of their maintenance, including pay, logistics, and training.

Following the publication of the report, significant diplomatic pressure was placed on Bosnian politicians to accept and implement the findings. The OHR issued a statement informing the Bosnian public that 'the eyes of Europe and the world are on BiH as its leaders decide whether to seize the opportunity to take the first historic steps into NATO and European security structures.'[86] The following day, the ambassadors of EU member-states lobbied the BiH Presidency to support the reforms.[87] Within months, most had passed through the relevant legislatures, and by the end of 2003, BiH was informed that enough progress had been made for NATO ministers to consider its membership of PfP at a summit scheduled for the following June.[88] The state-level Ministry of Defence was established in March 2004, and the entity armies conducted their first joint exercise in May. Six months later, an 'honorary unit' was formed from soldiers of all three ethnicities.[89] Although the reforms were extensive and brought the entity armies under a single command and administration, making them eligible for international integration, they did little to address the underlying issues which continued to threaten to destabilise BiH. Below senior ranks and outside of ceremonial units, the bulk of the soldiers remained segregated from other ethnicities and were still, to an extent, autonomous of the state. Indeed, although the three armies which had fought the war in BiH were now governed by a single administration, they remained for all practical purposes separate forces that were maintained primarily to fight each other. The lack of significant change is best illustrated by the revelation that in 2004, after many reforms had been implemented, the VRS was still using its autonomy to help Ratko Mladić evade international authorities.[90] These concerns led the discussion at the NATO Summit in Istanbul to conclude that BiH was not ready for PfP

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[85] Ibid. p.5
[86] OHR. "The Eyes of Europe and the World are on BiH." *OHR Press Office.* (24/09/2003)
[87] Ibid.
[88] OHR. "High Representative Welcomes NATO Ministers' Positive Response to BiH." *OHR Press Office.* (04/12/2003)
[89] OSBiH Public Affairs Office. *Brochure of the Ministry of Defense and the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina.* (Sarajevo, 2011) p.4
[90] Gregorian, interview with the author.

membership and should instead make 'continuous progress towards the establishment of a single military force.'[91]

In response, at the end of 2004 Ashdown extended the mandate of the DRC for another year and appointed Bosnian Minister of Defence Nikola Radovanović and Dr. Raffi Gregorian of NATO Headquarters Sarajevo to replace Locher as Co-Chairmen of the commission. They were instructed to use this time to 'examine and propose the legal and institutional measures necessary to transfer the competencies of the Entity [Ministries of Defence] to the State level, to enhance State level command and control, and to promote co-ordination with the ICTY.'[92] These were the key areas in which BiH fell short of qualifying for PfP membership, and, in order to ensure the commission formulated policy which would achieve this goal, the new commission was co-chaired by Gregorian, who served as a representative of NATO, along with the Minister of Defence of BiH, Nikola Radovanović. The rest of the commission was, like its predecessor, composed of delegates from across state and entity security institutions and the international community.[93] Gregorian recalls that Ashdown was determined to implement whatever reforms were needed to ensure PfP membership, even if it meant using the Bonn Powers to 'come down like Zeus' and overrule the Bosnian Serbs, who were 'furious' about the mandate of the DRC and said that 'they could never cooperate with NATO, or me. They weren't going to engage in any talks.'[94] However, the PIC legal team judged that using the Bonn Powers in this instance would be unlawful. Gregorian also notes that this demanded thorough negotiations, and an understanding of what Bosnian political leaders needed, rather than wanted. Describing his understanding, he states that:

> The Bosniaks really wanted a central army, a state army. The Serbs were definitely afraid of this large conscript-based reserve force the Bosniaks had, hundreds of thousands of supposedly trained people. The Croats felt overwhelmed by everybody and didn't feel they were getting a good deal in the Federation Army. If you moved it up to the state level then the Croats would have a third of the assistant ministers and one of the three power positions, both in the Ministry and the Joint Staff.[95]

Even with these needs under consideration, negotiations concerning the DRC's report were fraught. Progress was marred by the upcoming tenth anniversary of Dayton, which caused public discourse to focus on the war. This was exacerbated by the emergence of video footage, just two weeks prior to

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[91] OSBiH Public Affairs Office. *Brochure of the Ministry of Defense and the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina.* p.4
[92] OHR. "High Representative Extends DRC Mandate." *OHR Press Office.* (31/12/2004)
[93] Defence Reform Commission. *AFBiH: A Single Military Force for the 21st Century.* (Sarajevo, 2005) p.iv
[94] Gregorian, interview with the author.
[95] Ibid.

when the commission was supposed to sign off the final agreement, of a Serbian paramilitary unit, the *Škorpioni* (Scorpions), executing a group of bound Bosnian Muslim boys during the war. Gregorian notes that this almost led the Bosnian Muslim leadership to back out of the process as it gave weight to concerns regarding the termination of conscription, but recalls an emotional meeting with Tihić in which he reminded the Bosnian Muslim member of the Presidency that 'here I have a single army for BiH. This is what your people fought for, and died for. And over here, you have conscription and more of the same.'[96] Gregorian's point was reinforced by military analysis conducted by the defence reform commission which concluded that the conscript-based reserve force 'had shown to be a paper tiger, not ready for anything. Thus, it was a dangerous deceit to think the reserves offered real protection to anyone.'[97]

As a result, consensus was eventually found on the commission, and its findings were presented to Ashdown in September 2005. The report noted that the commission 'bases its recommendations on the continuing endeavour to secure credible [PfP] candidacy for [BiH]' but was 'sensitive to the unique circumstances of [BiH] as a state with three constituent peoples and others and the needs for its armed forces to belong to and protect all its peoples.'[98] As a result, the reforms suggested in the report were very much the product of compromise between the various interests represented on the commission. However, while lengthy negotiations were held over some of the finer points of the reform, a surprising unanimity was found between the participants of the DRC, including the Bosnian Serb representatives, that any reform package they produced should in fact go beyond their original mandate, as Gregorian explains:

> The terms of reference of the second DRC didn't require the ending of the entity armed
> forces, they just said that they have to have a single personnel system, a single pay system,
> and so on. So administratively they'd be completely linked, but still be separate armies in
> terms of combat power. The process we led and the way we did it, and the leadership in
> place at the time, created that political moment to go beyond [the terms of reference].[99]

He elaborates that it was the RS leadership who requested that the reforms being implemented were comprehensive enough to meet the requirements to join NATO, not as a partner, but as a member, as each reform process cost them a significant amount of political capital and was regarded as being 'incredibly painful.'[100] As a result, the final report of the DRC not only strengthened the

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[96] Gregorian, interview with the author.
[97] Ibid.
[98] DRC. *AFBiH.* p.1
[99] Gregorian, interview with the author.
[100] Ibid.

state-level Ministry of Defence, but also proposed a complete restructuring of the security institutions in BiH in order to create 'a single defence establishment and single military force in Bosnia and Herzegovina under fully functioning state-level command and control.'[101]

The major obstacle to creating a unified military was the challenge of how best to integrate soldiers (or units) from 'three essentially mono-ethnic brigades' which carried the heritage of opposing wartime armies.[102] This task was complicated further as the entities were ardent that some degree of ethnic identification be retained in the new structure.[103] Such demands, however, were consistent with the DPA, which structured BiH as a consociational state composed of three constituent peoples: it was only reasonable that the military reflect the state. Furthermore, numerous militaries in NATO offered some form of ethnic identification, validating it as a method of organising armed forces.[104] Indeed, a strong contingent of former and serving British Army officers were delegates on the commission, and had extensive experience with such methods. Retired Major-General John Drewienkiewicz represented the OSCE as Vice-Chairman of the DRC; John Colston, a senior British Ministry of Defence civil servant, represented NATO; and Major-General David Leakey represented the EU Peacekeeping Force (the successor to SFOR, EUFOR).[105] Furthermore, the commission's Co-Chair, Gregorian, had earned his PhD researching Gurkhas in the British Army.[106] A logical conclusion of the demands of the entities and the expertise on the panel, therefore, was the decision to adapt the regimental system developed by the British Army to the needs of BiH.[107] Gregorian elucidates that the inspiration for applying the model to BiH came from his knowledge of how the British Indian Army arranged brigades of three battalions, each from a different regiment, one of which had to be British. This concept was developed into a practical model by Rohan Maxwell and Gregorian's Canadian military attache, Colonel MacGillivray, who 'were the real experts who advised on the finer points of the regimental system as they knew it from Canada.'[108]

It can be argued that endorsing ethnic separation within the military served to further entrench divisions within a very polarised and fragile state. The alternative, complete integration, had considerable precedent in the region and there was evidence to suggest that it could help stabilise states recovering from conflict. In the case of Lebanon, soldiers and militiamen of all 18 official

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[101] DRC. *AFBiH.* p.1

[102] Ibid. p.21

[103] Rohan Maxwell & John Andreas Olsen. *Destination NATO: Defence Reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2003-2013.* (London, 2013) p.75

[104] The British Army, Canadian Army, and the Belgian Armed Forces all employ ethnic identification.

[105] DRC. *AFBiH.* p.ii

[106] Gregorian, interview with the author.

[107] See Chapter 2.

[108] Gregorian, interview with the author.

religions were enlisted into a unified, fully integrated Lebanese Army following a long civil war. While the post-war state was structured in a manner similar to BiH, with ethnic representation guaranteed in government, the military emerged from the conflict as a truly Lebanese institution and is widely viewed as being pivotal in preventing a return to war.[109] The unique heritage of the Lebanese Army, however, prevented it from serving as a template for BiH. Owing to the influential legacy of its first commander, Fuad Chehab, the military remained aloof of the conflict fought between various ideological and sectarian militias. In doing so, it failed to maintain stability in Lebanon but preserved its reputation as a non-partisan institution. This allowed it to serve as a vehicle to reconcile divisions and, utilising its heritage and reputation, assert an inclusive Lebanese identity once a political settlement to the conflict was reached. In BiH, the pre-existing military structures had been repurposed to fight the war and were, for the most part, resented by the parts of the population they did not represent. Furthermore, while the Lebanese Army's pre-civil war heritage was very much identified with the sanctity of the republic, which was compatible with the post-war political climate, the military heritage of BiH was rooted in socialism, which showed little chance of re-emerging as a force in Bosnian politics. Any military claiming to represent an over-arching identity, including a Bosnian one, was likely to be viewed as illegitimate, and even a threat, by the nationalist leaders who dominated parliament, and would likely lead to their withdrawal from the whole process.

The regimental system agreed by the DRC, on the other hand, found 'a solution for maintaining military heritage and identity within a single military force' which was 'in keeping with the multi-ethnic constitution and laws of Bosnia and Herzegovina.'[110] Indeed, the merits of such a system in the Yugoslav context was highlighted in 1992 by James Gow, who argued that 'it seems self-evident that an empirically homogenous, regimental system could have improved [JNA] effectiveness.'[111] In the proposed system, the Bosnian Croat component of the VF would contribute three battalions to the new military, the Bosnian Muslims another three, and three would come from the VRS. Together, they would form the OSBiH. Operationally and administratively, they would be organised in three brigades, which was the standard (and thus interoperable) model for NATO militaries. Each brigade was to be formed from an infantry battalion from each ethnicity, while command, support, and specialist units were to be formed anew and would be multiethnic. The leadership was to be provided by a Joint Staff, which would oversee both the Operational Command and Support

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[109] See Chapter 2 for a Case Study on the Lebanese Army.
[110] DRC. *AFBiH.* p.21
[111] James Gow. *Legitimacy and the Military: The Yugoslav Crisis.* (London, 1992) p.107

Command.[112] The report also stipulated that the three constituent peoples should be 'equally represented in each senior decision-making level' and, as a result, the Minister of Defence, Chief of the Joint Staff, the Commander of Operational Command, and the Commander of Support Command would 'each have two deputies whose responsibilities are defined in the law. The principal and his deputies cannot be from the same Constituent Peoples.'[113]

It was, however, recognised that 'the brigade structure addresses basic structural operational requirements but it does not address the need to maintain a military heritage and identity.'[114] As a result, an additional layer of organisation was placed over the military for 'ceremonial and military heritage purposes,' in which the units were grouped into three regiments. Each regiment would embody 'the historical military lineage of the component from which it is descended,' although it was reiterated that 'regiments are purely ceremonial organisations and unlike brigades have no operational, training or administrative roles.'[115] Furthermore, legally, the complexion of the regiments was to be defined as multiethnic, although no meaningful measures were taken to encourage mixing of personnel.[116] While the identity of the infantry regiments was inspired by ethnicity, non-infantry units were to be affiliated to regiments based on speciality, such as artillery. In practical terms, the regiments were composed of a handful of staff led by a Regimental Major. Their tasks were designated as the: management of the regimental museum; use of the regimental fund for ceremonial purposes; preparation, research and maintenance of regimental history; preservation of regimental artefacts; guidance on conduct at ceremonial events; direction on regimental custom, dress and deportment; and operation of the Officer's, NCOs and Junior Rank Messes.[117] This correlates exactly with how regiments in the British Army are often described, however it is evident that whomever would command the regiments would enjoy a lot of scope to interpret their duties as they pleased.[118] The rest of the 2005 DRC report largely focussed on reducing overall troop numbers, abolishing conscription entirely (thus making the OSBiH a wholly

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[112] OSBiH Public Affairs Office. *Brochure of the Ministry of Defense and the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina.* p.21

[113] DRC. *AFBiH.* p.9

[114] Ibid. p.25

[115] Ibid.

[116] Gregorian notes that at the time, it was hoped that incentives for promotion and pay associated with a duty station in another location would attract people to move across the Inter-Entity Boundary Line. He suggests that in the first few years after the formation of the AFBiH, such incentives were successful. Gregorian, interview with the author.

[117] DRC. *AFBiH.* p.26

[118] See Chapter Two for a detailed account of the British Regimental System.

professional force), and restructuring the reserve system so that only discharged professional soldiers were retained.[119]

Both entities were largely receptive to the plans, although Rohan Maxwell and John Andreas Olsen explain that the proposals were met with calls for even greater ethnic representation. They recall proposals to 'group non-infantry functions into three non-infantry regiments . . . so that each of the three constituent peoples would get one non-infantry regimental command position,' and others that called for the infantry brigades (rather than battalions) to be mono-ethnic, or for all OSBiH personnel to belong to one of the infantry regiments, regardless of their position in the military, in order to maintain ethnic identification.[120] Maxwell and Olsen argue that extending ethnic identification beyond the infantry would result in 'an [OSBiH] divided into three distinct ethnic groups,' whilst having no ethnic identification at all 'would destroy the regimental compromise that allowed for agreement on a single military force.'[121] 'The application of the regimental system to the infantry,' they concede, 'is the concession to ethnic identity within the [OSBiH].'[122]

By the end of December 2005, most of the relevant legislation had been passed at the state and entity level, establishing the state as the sole authority over the military, and in January, the implementation of the reforms on a practical level began.[123] In July 2006, the Bosnian parliament approved a decision by the BiH Presidency to reduce military personnel to 10,000 professional soldiers, 5,000 reservists, and 1,000 civilian staff, and introduce a system of ethnic quotas based on data from the 1991 census, with the intention of ensuring ethnic representation in proportion to the pre-war population. As a result, its target composition is 45.9 percent (4,826 people) Bosnian Muslim/Bosniak, 33.6 percent (3,533 people) Serb, 19.8 percent (2,084 people) Croat, and 0.7 percent (74 people) Other.[124] This created yet another layer of ethnic identification in the OSBiH, and arguably undermined the regiments that had so recently been introduced, as their function of preserving heritage and identity became, to an extent, the concern of the military as whole.

In December 2006, the freshly unified OSBiH was admitted to the PfP programme, marking the culmination of four years of dramatic change in the post-Dayton security sector in BiH. Attaining access to the programme was a significant feat and illustrated the extent to which the military situation was becoming normalised. Indeed, transforming three large formerly warring armies into a

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[119] DRC. *AFBiH.* pp.6-7
[120] Maxwell & Olsen. *Destination NATO*. p.76
[121] Ibid. pp.76-77
[122] Ibid. p.75
[123] OHR. "SDR Ney Congratulates DRC on Achievements." *OHR Press Office.* (16/12/2005)
[124] OSBIH Public Affairs Office. *Brochure of the Ministry of Defense and the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina*. pp.23-24

unified, professional, and democratically accountable military was the most significant step in stabilising BiH since the signing of the DPA. Not only had the presence of multiple armies within a single state been removed, but the Bosnian state had secured its monopoly on the legitimate use of force, greatly strengthening its position as the sovereign authority in the territory of BiH. Indeed, reflecting on the key reforms (creating a state-level judiciary, tax collection system, and military) that were made in BiH under his oversight, Ashdown observes: 'What is it that defines a state? It is a region bounded by borders in which a single law operates, and the instruments of lethal force lay in the hands of state and no one else.'[125] Furthermore, integration into the PfP offered the OSBiH access to training, exercises, and assistance from the most modern militaries in the world, improving its effectiveness and reinforcing its professionalism. Ashdown argues that 'we could not have created a single army responsible to the state in BiH had there not been NATO as the magnetic pull,' noting that the military leaderships in BiH 'were professional, and they immediately saw the advantage of having a unified army up to NATO standards, and saw a single army in Bosnia as the best context to be professional soldiers. . . That was crucial.'[126] Thus, in the eyes of many Bosnians and the international institutions in the country, military unification and international integration represented a significant step in BiH fulfilling the criteria of a 'successful state' on the 'path to a sustainable peace as a member of the European institutions,' and its military being recognised as a modern and professional force.[127]

Although the OSBiH made rapid and considerable progress in terms of operability and administration, the 'ethnic identification' concession included in the reforms began veering off track almost immediately. Gregorian notes that one of the key aspects of the DRC's conclusions which he was unsatisfied with were the names chosen for the regiments, commenting that he would have preferred 'something innovative like the Una, the Bosna, and the Neretva regiments,' which alluded to the former armies by reference to the location of their headquarters, but did not explicitly state ethnic allegiance.[128] However, unsurprisingly, the names and symbols eventually selected were, for the most part, inspired by ethnicity. The Bosnian Croats chose *Pješadijski gardijski puk* (The Guards Infantry Regiment) and issued the Croatian *šahovnica* (checkerboard) as their regimental emblem, the Bosnian Muslim regiment was called the *Pješadijski rendžerski puk* (The Rangers Infantry Regiment) and received the *Zlatni ljiljan* (Golden Lily) as its emblem, and the Bosnian Serb regiment was called the *Pješadijski Republika Srpska puk* (Republika Srpska Infantry Regiment) and would wear the coat of arms of RS as its emblem. Whilst such variations in appearance are common to the

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[125] Ashdown, interview with the author.
[126] Ibid.
[127] Ibid.
[128] Gregorian, interview with the author.

regimental system and are usually encouraged by its proponents to foster a unique regimental identity, all of the emblems that were chosen in BiH were prominent wartime symbols. Furthermore, the Guards Regiment now appeared, in both name and iconography, almost identical to its counterparts in the Croatian Army, and the RS coat of arms which the Republika Srpska Regiment had as its emblem was only two small *fleurs-de-lis* and some crossed sabres away from being that of the Serbian Army. While it should be noted that the troops in each regiment are required to wear the BiH flag in a superior position to any regimental symbol, and those symbols that are worn are set on a blue background (indicating infantry) and fringed with yellow, a pattern which happens to reflect the colours of the Bosnian flag, the imagery employed by the AFBiH regiments remains unconventional.

The use of imagery associated with other states raises obvious questions regarding the loyalty of such units and highlights the potential for them to serve as a potential fifth column or Trojan Horse in the case of a conflict. Furthermore, by subscribing to an existing identity, the individuality and uniqueness of the regimental identities themselves are undermined. The Royal Irish Regiment of the British Army has perhaps the most in common with the Guards and RS Regiments of the OSBiH, as it historically draws its soldiers from a population who may primarily identify with a neighbouring state, Ireland. However, rather than drawing on imagery from the Irish State, the Royal Irish wear a clover leaf as their insignia, use a motto in the Irish language (*Faugh a Ballagh*; Modern Irish: *Fág an Bealach*; English: Clear the way), and their regimental colours depict a crown, symbolising loyalty to the British monarchy, and a harp, an established cultural symbol of the Irish. As a result, the regiment's Irish identity is clearly displayed, yet it remains clear to what the regiment owes its loyalty, and furthermore, the regimental identity is free to develop separately from Irish national identity. In a similar manner, the Royal 22^E Régiment of the Canadian Army displays its Francophone legacy through the use of the French language rather than imagery from France itself, successfully preserving its cultural heritage without styling itself as being in service to the French state.

Conclusion

Between the conception of the first DRC in April 2003 and the OSBiH's accession to the PfP programme in December 2006, the security environment in BiH was transformed. In 2002, over a quarter of a million soldiers and reserves stood ready to go to war with each other, the state had no real military authority, and security had to be provided by external forces. By the Autumn of 2005, however, the number of soldiers and reserves had been reduced to a total of 15,000, democratically accountable civilian oversight of the military was established at the state-level, and the number of peacekeepers was dramatically reduced, with responsibility for them transferred from NATO to the

EU. Such changes went far beyond what was needed to satisfy the demands and conditionality of the international community, and undoubtedly contributed to increasing stability in BiH and the wider region. Viewed through the prism of peace and conflict studies, it is possible to illustrate the scale of change this represented. The 'loyalty to the ideas of the state' displayed by the leaderships of BiH's constituent peoples by disbanding their wartime armed forces and supplying troops to the state-level military, compounded by the 'improvement in attitudes and practices toward each other' this represented, signifies the most significant step in the transition from a 'negative' peace to a 'legitimate' one.[129] Indeed, it can be argued that military integration alone achieved this progress, as although significant political divisions within BiH remain, any conflict between the constituent peoples is confined to constitutional state institutions.

While a military that was inclusive and representative of the multiethnic population of BiH was created, the development of institutional identity and cohesion has been hampered by the antagonistic political discourse in the state that it serves. Despite the pervasiveness of these issues, progress made with defence reform should not be understated. Ashdown notes that 'I think most people who know anything about Bosnia regard the fact that you have a unified army, responsible to the Presidency, as a miracle.'[130] Considering the potential for the reformed defence sector to serve as a model for other Bosnian institutions, he argues that the military is 'the place where the nation's interests and the interests of those in the organisation have superseded, or mostly superseded, nationalistic tendencies.'[131] Central to achieving this 'miracle' was the Orao Affair. Gregorian argues that the it was 'crucial, vital' for the success of defence reform in post-Dayton BiH, while Ashdown summarises its impact thus: 'in politics you use what levers you can use which are presented to you. If one is presented to you, you use it. And the Orao Affair was certainly a lever to achieve what I wanted to achieve.'[132] The opportunity presented by the Orao Affair was pivotal in illustrating the need for urgent reform, creating the context for it to take place, and building the political and diplomatic capital that was needed to achieve it.

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[129] Johan Galtung. "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research." *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 6, No. 3. (1969) p.183; Anders Themnér & Thomas Ohlson. "Legitimate peace in post-civil war states: towards attaining the unattainable." *Conflict, Security & Development*, Vol. 14, No. 1. (2014) p.63
[130] Ashdown, interview with the author.
[131] Ibid.
[132] Gregorian, interview with the author; Ashdown, interview with the author.

Conclusion

The years 1991 – 2006 represent a period of considerable upheaval and change in Bosnia and Herzegovina (*Bosna i Herzegovina,* BiH). After centuries of being ruled from Istanbul, Vienna, and Belgrade, a sovereign Bosnian state emerged. However, before the institutional and legal framework of the new state was established, the war began. Half of the population were forced from their homes, approximately ten percent served in an array of armed forces, political entities designed to replace BiH were founded, atrocities and genocide were committed, and divisions among the communities of BiH became firmly entrenched. The peace negotiated at Dayton ended the conflict and provided the blueprint for the new state, but gave the architects of the war what they wanted: the partition of BiH and the separation of its population. Since the agreement was signed, nationalist leaders of all ethnicities have perpetuated divisions between their respective constituencies and regularly campaigned against integration at every level. In such a climate, the integration of three formerly warring armies just a decade after the conflict came to an end represents a remarkable achievement of historic significance.

This dissertation charts the story of how such a symbolically powerful moment came to pass while also offering fresh insights into the organisation and development of the five armies that preceded the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina. For the first time, the military history of modern BiH, from independence to the creation of a unified army, has been presented and assessed as an integral whole. In addition, by building on existing research and focusing on the ways in which the various armed forces that operated in BiH in this timeframe approached the subjects of national identity and civil-military relations, the chapters presented here have provided many fresh perspectives on a complex and contentious topic.

The first chapters outlined some models to better understand how multiethnic militaries have been organised historically and assessed how Yugoslav policymakers approached the construction of the Yugoslav People's Army, as well as how they attempted to utilise it. This revealed the extent to which the leadership of Yugoslavia believed that the twin pillars of Brotherhood and Unity and socialism could forge not only a cohesive and effective army from the nations and nationalities they governed, but also a society. The gradual changes in military organisation and the reduction of efforts to use the JNA to promote a Yugoslav identity highlights the limited success of such integrative policies. However, the collapse of Yugoslavia is evidence enough to prove that the more "organic" approach they moved toward was no more effective.

Analysing the Bosnian War through the prism of military organisation illustrates the collapse of Yugoslavia from the perspective of its most important institution, as well as the emergence of three distinct state-building projects. The VRS chapter reveals how a premeditated plan to build an army, conquer territory, and establish a state was executed. It shows how the military was employed to promote the visions and ideas of Milošević, Karadžić, and Mladić, while also offering insights into the rivalry between the three leaders and the problems that emerged due to the ambiguous nature of the VRS's chain of command. Furthermore, the chapter provides an unprecedented analysis of relationship between the VRS and the nascent state it nominally served, highlighting the unparalleled importance of the military in building Republika Srpska, both as a political entity and an idea.

The chapter on the ARBiH and HVO reveals the painstaking process of building armed forces during a conflict and demonstrates the complexity of the relationship between the two militaries. More importantly, however, it charts the gradual decline of the ARBiH's multiethnic outlook and composition. The evolution of the ARBiH from a diverse and inclusive institution into the predominantly-Muslim force it ended the war as shows the difficulties in maintaining such an identity while at war and illustrates the extent to which the military became an arena in which rival visions for the future of Bosnian society competed. Furthermore, the failure to preserve the multiethnic character of the ARBiH exemplifies the extent to which Bosnian society became increasingly divided by ethnicity as the war progressed and highlights the scale of the challenge that those aiming to build a multiethnic military in BiH after the war faced. The development of the HVO, in many ways, mirrors that of the ARBiH. The decline in multiethnicity and its increasing incorporation into the structures of the Croatian military illustrates the extent to which Bosnian society became divided during the war, as well as highlighting further the scale of the challenge that building a multiethnic army after the war represented.

By analysing the ways in which the ARBiH, HVO, and VRS adjusted to peace, the chapter on the entity armies illustrates the many ways in which Bosnian political leaders continued to employ their armies to consolidate their constituencies and, in some ways, continue the war off the battlefield. Such leaders drew legitimacy from their command of their respective armed forces, and by extolling their sacrifices and triumphs in ceremonies and parades and polemicizing about the threat posed by the other armies in BiH, they were able to continue the division of BiH long after the fighting stopped. Furthermore, this chapter exposed a complex security environment, in which the ARBiH and HVO existed as separate forces within the same military and embarked on a comprehensive reform process, while the VRS remained very much linked with Belgrade. The divergent paths of the Army of the Federation and the VRS in this period not only made building a multiethnic military in

BiH more difficult, but also serves as a telling microcosm of the divisions that pervaded post-Dayton Bosnian society. However, by assessing regional political and security developments and the impact they had on BiH, the chapter also provides vital context for understanding how the defence reform and military integration process began.

The culmination of this dissertation is the chapter on the Orao Affair and military integration in BiH. With the previous chapters illustrating the complexity of building a multiethnic military and providing the historical and military context in which unification took place, the final chapter focuses on the various diplomatic initiatives, political events, and technical challenges which steered the construction of the OSBiH. The insights offered by key figures in the process of military integration such as Paddy Ashdown and Raffi Gregorian provide an extraordinary perspective, which reveals both the circumstances which allowed reforms to be implemented and the individual efforts and processes which led to unification. The chapter also highlights a severely overlooked moment in Bosnian history: the Orao Affair. This scandal exposed many of the ambiguities and discrepancies of the Dayton Peace Agreement and was the key factor not only in catalysing the military integration process, but also in consolidating the power of the Bosnian state and driving the integration of BiH into Euro-Atlantic institutions forward. Finally, the rationale behind the selection of the regimental system to organise the OSBiH was explained before an analysis of its implementation. This revealed the reluctance of those implementing reform to move towards a model that resembled the JNA, particularly during its period of "Integral Organisation," and the necessity for compromise, particularly regarding the individual ethnic identities and separate heritages of the three armies that were unified. Viewed in this light, it is clear why a model of "Organic Organisation" was selected. However, the relatively successful experience of the post-civil war Lebanese Army highlights the extent to which there are no clear solutions to the challenge of building a cohesive and effective army from a multiethnic society.

Indeed, this challenge continues to test academics, policymakers, and military leaders to this day, and its salience shows little sign of receding. In 2014, the Iraqi Armed Forces disintegrated in the face of an aggressive and determined foe. Thousands of Iraqi troops deserted their posts rather than fight, abandoning some of the most advanced military equipment in the world, despite outmatching their opponent in every quantifiable metric.[1] Their collapse was due to a 'lack of moral cohesion' and *esprit de corps*, informed in large part by the army's multiethnic composition, despite over a decade

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[1] Major Adam Scher. "The Collapse of the Iraqi Army's Will to Fight: A Lack of Motivation, Training, or Force Generation." *Military Review.* (2016) p.1

of oversight and training by the US military.[2] Indeed, after the collapse of Iraqi forces at Ramadi, US

Defense Secretary Ashton Carter stated: 'We can give them training, we can give them equipment.

We obviously can't give them the will to fight.'[3] Furthermore, of 49 conflicts considered active in

2016, only two were between states.[4] The prevalence of intrastate conflict in the world today

requires the development of better approaches and a deeper understanding of the ways in which

stable states and effective institutions, including the military, can be constructed. Many of the 47

intrastate conflicts currently taking place will, presumably, one day be resolved in peace processes

similar to the Dayton Peace Agreement that ended the war in BiH. The successful Bosnian

experience with implementing defence reforms and integrating formerly warring armies into a

credible and professional military can undoubtedly provide lessons that can contribute to more

effective and sustainable transitions from conflict.

In addition to such policy-relevant implications, this dissertation also offers an original contribution

to numerous academic disciplines. On a political level, military unification signifies the successful

implementation of comprehensive defence reforms which greatly improved BiH's prospects of

integration into institutions such as the EU and NATO, as well as a rare example of consensus in the

Bosnian parliament. This not only fulfilled a specified objective of the Bosnian state but was seen as

the key to building a lasting peace by international actors such as High Representative Paddy

Ashdown. As the largest multiethnic institution in the country, the unified Armed Forces of Bosnia

and Herzegovina (*Oružane snage Bosne i Hercegovine*, OSBiH) also served as a symbol of

reconciliation, and was viewed as a potential model for the reintegration of other aspects of Bosnian

society.[5] Furthermore, while much of BiH remains divided, the integration of the armed forces

constitutes a small step to achieving the democratic, secular, and inclusive society that President

Alija Izetbegović had declared as his vision to world leaders in London in 1992.[6]

From a civil-military relations perspective, the emergence of the OSBiH represents the completion of

two complex processes. Its formation was implemented alongside a reorganisation of the civilian

institutions responsible for the armed forces, resulting in the establishment of state-level

parliamentary oversight and properly accountable civilian leadership. Coupled with the

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[2] Frances Perraudin. "Iraqi army lacks 'moral cohesion' to fight Isis, says UK military chief." *The Guardian.* (25/05/2015)

[3] Vanessa Williams. "Defense Secretary Carter: Iraq's forces showed 'no will to fight' Islamic State." *The Washington Post.* (24/05/2015)

[4] Marie Allandsson, Erik Melander, & Lotta Themner. "Organised violence, 1989 – 2016." *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 54, No. 4. (2017) p.576

[5] Paddy Ashdown, interview with the author. (22/03/2016)

[6] Alija Izetbegović. *Inescapable Questions: Autobiographical Notes.* (Leicester, 2003) p.138

standardisation of doctrine and training, these changes represented the completion of the transition from a socialist to a democratic civil-military dynamic. In addition, through shifting military authority from the entities to the state, the unification of the armed forces meant that BiH fulfilled the key criterion of a Weberian state: a monopoly on the legitimate use of force. By examining this process in such detail, this dissertation provides a fascinating case study of state-formation.

The strategic impact of military integration in BiH was considerable. The presence of three armies in a single state had been recognised as inherently destabilising. Merging these armies into a single military, particularly one which was considered a professional peer to NATO forces, signified one of the greatest steps in promoting stability in the Balkans since Dayton. This alleviated the burden on NATO and EU peacekeeping operations in BiH, and created the conditions necessary for the OSBiH to begin contributing troops to UN and NATO international forces. Although BiH has made little progress towards NATO membership since 2009 (due to obstructions from the Republika Srpska administration regarding the transfer to the state of military property seized in the war), most other conditions of its Membership Action Plan have been fulfilled. Bosnian accession to NATO would have a profound impact on the strategic environment in the Balkans. It would join Albania, Croatia, Montenegro, and, in all likelihood, Macedonia under the banner of NATO in an unprecedented alliance, but would leave Serbia surrounded *tous azimuts* by its historic adversary.[7]

The military integration of former belligerents after civil wars is a topic of considerable interest to the peacebuilding community. The scale of the international community's involvement in post-war BiH make it a prime example of the 'New York Consensus' (building free-market democracies) approach to building peace.[8] Indeed, Kalevi Holsti argues that international intervention in BiH represented a 'prototype' for future interventions and state-building projects.[9] In addition, the unification of the entity armies was the culmination of the demobilisation, disarmament, and reintegration (DDR) and security sector reform (SSR) aspects of BiH's post-conflict transition. As a result, the period 1995 – 2006 illustrates a prime example of the successful implementation of these processes. Furthermore, the decision of Bosnian political leaders to entrust the security of their

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[7] French President Charles de Gaulle spoke of the need for *défense dans tous azimuts* (defence in all directions) during his term of office. James Horncastle applied the term to describe Yugoslav defence policy. James Horncastle. "Tous Azimuts: Yugoslavia's Defence Policy during the Cold War" in Gerrit Dworok & Frank Jacob, eds. *The Means to Kill: Essays on the Interdependence of War and Technology from Ancient Rome to the Age of Drones.* (Jefferson, 2015)
[8] Miles Kahler. "Statebuilding After Afghanistan and Iraq." in Roland Paris & Timothy Sisk. *The Dilemmas of Statebuilding: Confronting the contradictions of postwar peace operations.* (London, 2009) p.287
[9] Kalevi Holsti. *The State, War, and the State of War.* (Cambridge, 1996)

constituents to the state symbolises a significant step in building 'legitimate peace' after conflict and reducing the chance of a return to violence.[10]

Although every effort has been made to ensure the work presented in this dissertation is as comprehensive and expansive as possible, it can of course be enhanced in a number of ways. Developments in BiH did not occur in isolation. While the entire region underwent a period of rapid military change, some of which was addressed in the dissertation, a particular point of interest that would complement the research presented here was the construction of a multiethnic military in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (now North Macedonia). This process took place in parallel to the implementation of defence reforms in BiH, and involved building the framework of a new state, consolidating its authority, and forming a military from a diverse population. While this process was similar to that which took place in BiH, offering a good opportunity for comparative analysis, the most significant aspect of the Macedonia case is that it took place without a war. This offers the chance to analyse the impact of conflict on state and military formation by assessing both processes alongside each other.

A more pertinent addition, however, would be an analysis of the development of the OSBiH since unification and an assessment of the ways it has impacted both the Bosnian state and population. In light of the increasing political polarisation in BiH in recent years, understanding the condition of the OSBiH and identifying its position in Bosnian society demands further research.

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[10] Anders Themnér & Thomas Ohlson. "Legitimate peace in post-civil war states: towards attaining the unattainable." *Conflict, Security & Development*, Vol. 14, No. 1. (2014) p.63

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