A bus drive through Bosnia's ethnic landscape

Post-war identity construction processes in Bosnia-Herzegovina

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Djoelia van der Velden -3472906
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Djoelia van der Velden

"Personally, when I look at people I don't see their nationality but their personality"

- Student from the International University of Sarajevo (April 2012)

Introduction

When driving through the mountainous landscape of Bosnia-Herzegovina, you will not see the deep scars of war at first hand. Despite the large number of abandoned houses and damaged houses of prayer Bosnia

appears to be peaceful. But on a bus drive from Sarajevo to Srebrenica there was one thing that really caught my eye, the nameplates of towns and villages. In some case they will be in both Latin and Cyrillic script and in another case only one of the two. For me these nameplates symbolize the tensions between the ethnic groups in Bosnia. For visitors, town and villages are marked 'Serb', 'Muslim', 'Croat' or 'mixed ethnic composition' upon arrival. Apparently there is still little sense of a 'Bosnian' identity for some people. It seems like members of ethnic groups still feel the need to identify themselves as members of their ethnic group instead of a citizen of the Bosnian state. This means that almost twenty years after the Bosnian War there is still segregation along ethnic lines.

Post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina still appears to be a divided country. This is not only visible in nameplates but also in the country's institutional order. It has a very decentralized state structure as a result of the Dayton agreements that were signed in December 1995. To stop fighting between the Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs the country was divided into two political entities: one Bosnian-Croatian (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina) and one Serbian (*Republika Srpska*). Combined, these two entities form the State of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The entities both have a significant degree of political autonomy, but the Dayton model tries to encourage cooperation between the two on a state level. But a central government as a result of this political cooperation is not working yet; maybe there are too few incentives for political leaders from both entities to invest in the central Bosnian state.

Because politicians have a lot of autonomy on local levels, such as entity or cantonal level, unification of laws at a national level is often obstructed. This not only has consequences in politics but also in the process of identity construction. One could argue that the Dayton divide is based on ethnic identities, for example because the *Republika* Srpska (RS) has a large ethnic Serb majority, which means that the ethnic identity is still a very important social identity in society. This combined with great local autonomy and lack of national unification can motivate local politicians to adopt ethnic policies and thus confirm the 'unique' ethnic identity. The political differences between cantons and entities can motivate this. The Bosnian education system is an example of the divisional Dayton politics. Because education is the responsibility of the cantonal government (in the RS it is on entity level since the RS has a centralized government) it is very divided along ethnic lines. The issue of different (ethnically biased) curricula and the physical segregation of children according the ethnic identity illustrate this divide in the education system.

One of the factors that still influence that segregation of the Bosnian school systems is the Dayton Agreements. Both entities have separate educational systems; although the RS has a centralized government and education ministry the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) has a decentralized government and is divided into ten cantons of which seven have a Bosniak majority, three have a Croat majority and two are ethnically mixed (Clark 2010, 346). So not only do the RS en the Federation have their own ministries of education, each of the Federation's cantons has its own ministry of education. In addition, the Brčko District, in the northeast of the country, has its own ministry. This means that Bosnia-Herzegovina has a total of 13 ministries responsible for education issues. This has led to a great amount of educational bureaucracy and has been an obstruction for educational (and ethnic for that matter) unity (Pasalic Kreso 2008: 360).

Nowadays, students attend mono-ethnic schools and are taught from different curricula with different (history) textbooks in different languages. The education system is still highly politicized due to the ethnic segregation. Especially in the ethnically mixed cantons in the FBiH schools are still organized along ethnic lines. Due to a shortage of school buildings children from different ethnicities have to go to the same building for their lessons. But they don't go there on the same times; the timetables are organized in shifts. This means that children from different ethnicities rarely see each other (NDC Mostar 2011). Organizations (NGO's) like NDC Mostar initiated projects to integrate different actors in schools (pupils, teachers and school board) by promoting interethnic dialogue. In my opinion, the segregation within the Bosnian school system illustrates the ethnic division that is present throughout the country.

Within the cantons, politicians will very likely be reluctant to cede autonomy to the central state because this could mean that their sphere of influence at the local level would be limited. In order to be successful in organizing a centralized state structure, local politicians will have to cede autonomy while

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this could contradict their personal interest. Confirming ethnic identities can help them maintain their position in the power hierarchy. The Dayton Agreements thus provide an interesting framework in which ethnic boundary processes can take place. It can give different incentives to different actors.

The present situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina raises the question about how identity construction works in post war situations. The societal division implemented through Dayton makes it especially interesting to look at how different actors construct identities within this societal framework. In this thesis I will try to provide insight in the processes of post war identity construction.

Understanding identity construction starts with the theoretic distinction between primordialism and constructivism. Because although ethnicity is often perceived as a fixed identity, nowadays many scholars follow the academic school of thought initiated by the work of Frederik Barth. Barth contested the primordialist view on ethnicity in which 'every ethnic group represents a historically grown, uniquely shaped flower in the garden of human cultures.' (Wimmer 2008:971) Barth observed that boundaries between ethnic groups are kept in place even if cultures of different groups are indistinguishable and members could travel from one side of the ethnic border to another. With this observations Barth created a view on ethnicity as a social construct. This idea later developed into what is now called *constructivism*. In this view ethnicity is constructed and presented as a cultural given. Ethnic identities can be constructed in the face of power struggles and violent conflict. In the context of violent conflict ethnic identities can be presented as a cultural given that is acquired by birth and can thus intensify the 'us versus them divide'. People can come to believe they have to defend their own ethnic group against the ethnic other.

Fearon and Laiton (2000) discuss the construction of ethnic identities in the light of ethnic violence. They distinguish various motives for identity constructions that can pave the way to violent conflict. They attribute a great role in the identity construction process to individual actions, this can be either elites that try to maintain or increase political power or the public masses whose actions might influence the boundaries and the content of ethnic groups. (Fearon and Laiton 2000:874).

Andreas Wimmer (2008) developed a model to explain why different actors will pursue different strategies of identity construction and how identities and groups boundaries can change over time. He describes identity construction as a 'dynamic social process'; ethnic identity is shaped through interactions between actors in the social field and the outcome of this interaction is determined by characteristics of the social field in which actors are situated. According to Wimmer actors are not free to choose to pursue their preferred strategy due to several constraints present in the social field. These constraints can provide different actors with different incentives.

Processes of identity construction are mostly discussed in the period before or during the conflict, many scholars have thought and written about the way these ethnic identities and their boundaries are formed and how different actors reify them in the wake of civil conflict. But the sensitiveness of the nameplate issue in Bosnia-Herzegovina, as discussed above, can be considered an example of how deeply imbedded the sense of ethnic identity can be in people's minds and the big role it might play in every day life even in post conflict situations.

It is generally understood that in a period before conflict (ethnic) identity boundaries are more fluid before a conflict. During a conflict, when the 'us versus them' feeling is strongest, the identities are mostly crystalized. In many cases these crystalized boundaries are necessary for a conflict. Conflict requires the existence of an opponent or enemy and most importantly this enemy has to be considered significantly different from the self. The 'other' needs to be defined in opposition to the self. In order to fix this opposition between the ethnic 'self' and 'other' the crystallization of ethnic boundaries is necessary.

But what happens with these crystallized ethnic identities after a conflict? Are identity group boundaries kept in place or are they redefined? There is not much academic literature about these post-war dynamics. This is why this thesis will focus on these post-war dynamics by analysing existing literature on post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina and thus aims to clarify post-war identity construction processes.

In the following chapters I will try to clarify processes of post war identity construction by analysing the actions of actors on two levels; first, the level of politicians within the entities (hereafter local politicians) and secondly at the grassroots level. (NGO's). Using Wimmer's theoretical framework I will explain why actors pursue a certain boundary making strategy. The characteristics of the social field in which actors are situated will clarify their incentives. How can the institutional order, the power hierarchy and the network of political alliances explain why local politicians and grassroots pursue certain boundary making strategies? This will be illustrated with the case study of the Bosnian school system that is, as explained above, very segregated in some regions.

According to their actions in relation to the education system, what kind of boundary making strategy are local politicians pursuing? How can the characteristics of the social field explain this? How do politicians use their position in the power hierarchy acquired through Dayton? This analysis will focus on the actions undertaken by local politicians to either integrate or segregate children with different ethnicities in schools. At first sight it looks like investing in the integration of the ethnic groups within schools and striving for a Bosnian civil identity might not be in their interest. By analysing reports and academic articles about the actions of local politicians, I will try to explore how the characteristics of the social field provide incentives for a certain strategy (or strategies) they are following or are trying to implement.

The same questions will be asked on the grassroots level; what kind of boundary making strategy are they pursuing according to their actions in relation to the education system and how can the characteristics of the social field explain this? Again, by analysing reports from NGO-projects and academic articles about the influence of such projects I will try to explain the followed or desired strategy for identity construction.

After the actions and the preferred strategy of actors at both levels are discussed I will analyse the interactional dynamics and use Wimmer's theory of mechanism of change to see if and how ethnic boundaries in post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina change.

In sum, this thesis aims to clarify processes of post-war identity construction in Bosnia-Herzegovina through analyses of actions of local politicians and grassroots organisations within the larger societal Dayton framework. Through this analysis I will provide insight in post-war identity construction by using Wimmer's framework as an analytic tool. His framework will clarify why actors pursue a certain strategy for ethnic categorization and how boundaries between identity groups can change over time. In the next chapter I will outline and present the analytical framework I will use throughout this thesis.

__Chapter 1__
The dynamics of identity construction processes

I was standing on a path in the mountains and in front of me lay the city of Sarajevo overarched by a rainbow because of the drizzle. But looking at Sarajevo from the surrounding mountains was, besides beautiful, a confronting experience. Although the city itself shows some scars of its violent past, the signs of war are far more present in the hills around the city. Behind me was an abandoned and damaged building that used to be a prison during the Tito regime. In this building Serbs housed during the siege of Sarajevo. From were I was standing you could view almost the entire city and I was told that this was one of the places from were the Serbs shelled Sarajevo. But I found it hard to understand that from this quiet and beautiful place in the hills so many people were harmed and so much damage was done. This view on the city of Sarajevo made me wonder about how strong the sense of ethnic identity must have been among Serbs in order to be capable of sieging and shelling a city for such a long time. And how did this strong sense of identity come into being?

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In the next section I will elaborate on Andreas Wimmer's theory of ethnic boundary making that I will use throughout my analysis in order to be able to explain the actions of different actors in relation to group boundaries. I will use Wimmer's model to explain how ethnic identities are constructed and more importantly how boundaries between identity groups can change. The question of what drives actors to pursue different strategies of ethnic boundary making and thus change existing boundaries can provide insight in post-war identity construction processes. Before introducing Wimmer's theory as the theoretical framework for this thesis I will first give a short introduction of the concept of ethnic identity and present which definition I will use in my analysis.

What is ethnic identity?
Ethnicity can be of great importance for people's sense of self and affect daily life; it often is a big part of one's identity. But what exactly is' ethnicity'? People seem to have a good idea about the meaning of this concept since it can play such an important role in most of their lives. In the academic literature, ethnicity is mostly understood as a social category. A social category is viewed as 'a set of people given a label (or labels) and distinguished by two main features: rules of membership that decide who is and who is not a member of the category; and content, that is, sets of characteristics that are thought to be typical of members of the category, or behaviours expected or obliged of members in certain situations' (Fearon and Laiton 2000: 848).
Social categories can be defined by different characteristics. As mentioned before, rules of membership for an ethnic category are often believed to be determined by descent. The content of these categories is mainly based on shared language, religion, cultural attributes and historical myths (Fearon and Laiton 2000: 848).

As mentioned in Barth's work, because ethnicity is considered a social construct, group boundaries are of great importance for identity formation. Because if groups maintain boundaries even if the differences are almost indistinguishable what is it that gives people the sense of 'groupness'? According to Wimmer (2008) " a boundary displays both a categorical and a social or behavioural dimension", it refers to the representation of a group or community and social classification as well as behavioural script. It sets rules about how group members are supposed to behave and how the 'other' is supposed to the treated. This definition of ethnicity does not imply that boundaries are always strict; they can also be fluid and let people cross from one side to the other.

Ethnicity is thus explained as a dynamic social process; it is 'the outcome of negotiations between actors whose strategies are shaped by the characteristics of the social field'. His model aims to clarify why in some cases actors will pursue strategies for closed group boundaries while in other cases actors pursue the blurring of ethnic boundaries Processes of ethnic boundary making as described by Wimmer are thus shaped by an interaction between actors. The outcome of this interaction, and the form of ethnic boundary that comes out of it, is determined by the context in which it takes place.

Taking after both Fearon and Laiton (2000) and Wimmer (2008) I define ethnicity as a social construct which is constructed through interaction between actors in the social field. Furthermore I will also use Wimmer's notion that actors are not free to choose their preferred strategy because they are confined by the context (social field) in which they operate.

How are ethnic identities constructed?
According to Fearon and Laiton, individuals from different levels, political elites as well as grassroots, can play a role in identity construction. One quite common explanation for ethnic identity construction and ethnic violence is that it is an elite driven process. Elites will pursue their own interests and improve their position in the power hierarchy through the politization of identity construction. (Fearon and Laiton 2000: 853).

But individuals that construct identities do not have to be political or other elites. Identities can also be formed through everyday actions of 'ordinary folk' (Fearon and Laiton 2000: 855). Because individuals define themselves through different social or ethnic categories, they will act in ways that fits these categories, or at least in ways that they feel fit the categories. These actions can then create altered

identities and changes in identity boundaries (Fearon and Laiton 2000: 856). In this way individuals 'on the ground', as well as (political) elites, can construct social identities.

Andreas Wimmer (2008) supports this view that actors at different levels can play a role in identity construction, but he takes it a step further by asking himself why there is such a wide variety of ethnic constellations. He distinguishes four dimensions of variation to which an individual case could belong (political salience of boundaries, social closure and 'groupness', cultural differentiation and historical stability) and states different boundary making strategies actors can pursue.

The first is shifting boundaries through expansion; nation-building is an example of such a strategy since it allows different identity groups to integrate into the larger group of the 'nation'. This can happen through fusion by incorporation, where state elites redefine an existing ethnic group as the nation into which everybody should fuse (a+b=a), fusion through amalgamation where state elites create a new national category through the amalgamation of a variety of ethnic groups (a+b=c) or an emphasis shift to higher level where a higher level of categorical distinction is emphasized that supersedes the existing ethnic distinction.

Contrary to expansion, boundary contraction means drawing narrower boundaries and thus disidentification with the category one is assigned to by outsiders. Contraction can be achieved through splitting the existing category into two (fission) or by shifting emphasis to lower levels of differentiation in multi-tiered systems of ethnic classification. Boundary contraction is an attractive strategy for individuals and groups that do not have access to the central political arena and whose radius of action remains confined to immediate social spaces.

Both boundary expansion and contraction are strategies of boundary shifting where the position is the boundary is changed, but other strategies of boundary making change the meaning of membership instead of the boundary position. Boundary modification can happen through transvaluation, a positional move (either individual or collective) or boundary blurring.

Transvaluation strategies try to re-interpret or change the normative principles of stratified ethnic systems. It changes the existing hierarchical order. Transvaluation can take place by normative inversion, which reverses the existing rank order or equalization, which aims at establishing equality in status and political power.

Positional moves entails changing the position within the existing hierarchy. So in contrast to transvaluation strategies here the hierarchy itself does not change. This repositioning can be either individual or collective (when the position of an entire ethnic category is changed). Individual boundary crossing can happen through either re-classification or assimilation. Massive boundary crossing may affect a boundary itself, since it can leave the category and thus the boundary obsolete.

Lastly, boundaries can be modified through the strategy of boundary blurring which entails reducing the importance of ethnicity as a principle of categorization and social organization.

As mentioned earlier on, actors are not free to pursue a strategy for their preferred ethnic categorization but they are limited by several constraints that can be present in the structure of the social field in which actors are situated. Wimmer distinguishes three types of constraints; institutions, distribution of power and the network of political alliances. This means that the pursued strategy depends on the social field and its constraints. Different political institutions can provide different incentives for actors to pursue different types of boundary making strategies. In this respect, political institutions in a nation-state are especially interesting although it might be compelling to think that these states do not have interest in shaping ethnic boundaries. But the transition to a nation-state provides elites with incentives to pursue strategies of ethnic boundary making. The principle idea of the nation-state that the boundaries of the nation should be congruent with those of the state makes way for the idea of ethnonational representativity of government. This in turn creates incentives for elites to homogenize their subjects in cultural and ethnic terms (Wimmer 2008: 991). Furthermore, the nation-state needs to define its territorial boundaries in ethnic terms. Defining the ethnic boundaries of the nation is therefore of central political importance (Wimmer 2008: 991).

The political institutions of the nation-state can also provide non-elites with incentives for ethnic boundary making strategies. The idea of ethnonational representivity can also be projected on (ethnic)

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minorities, by emphasizing ethnic instead of other social boundaries. Minorities can thus be transformed into 'nations' that demand (or require) their own representative within an existing state (Wimmer 2008: 991). But this could go two ways, majorities can either enforce ethnic boundaries and pursue boundary contraction or they could expand the boundaries and assimilate the minority into the national identity group. Thus, the institutions of the nation-state can provide different actors with different incentives for strategies of ethnic boundary making. But the chosen strategy is determined by the actor's position in the hierarchy of power (Wimmer 2008, 993).

The effects of power on ethnic boundary making are twofold. First, an actor will always choose that kind of ethnic differentiation that is in his or her interest given the power resources available. An actor will try to sustain or even improve his or her position within the hierarchy of power and will thus choose a strategy to fit that goal. Secondly, the actor's endowment with power resources determines the impact the chosen strategy will have on others and how the strategy will be implemented. For example, when one has access to the means of violence, it will be possible to enforce their ethnic categorization by murdering members of different ethnic groups (Wimmer 2008: 994).

On the other hand, such dominant ways of ethnic boundary making should not be overstated. Dominant actors (with access to power resources) can more easily spread their vision on ethnicity to a greater public and their actions might have a greater impact on the lives of others, but subordinates can always develop counter discourses on social categorization (Wimmer 2008, 995). They might propose a different social categorization and pursue other boundary making strategies. In other words, different social classifications than race and ethnicity are emphasized (Wimmer 2008: 995).

But where will ethnic boundaries be drawn, where will the line between 'us' and 'them' be drawn? Which individual will be included in the 'us'-group? Wimmer argues that political alliances will determine where the boundary between the ethnic 'us' and 'them' will be drawn. When looking at the nation-building process, the location of the boundary between nation and minority is determined by political alliances during the early period of this process. If these political alliances are transracial, there is a big possibility that the nation will include groups with different ethnic origins (Wimmer 2008: 996).

Because a social field can be home to different actors who pursue different boundary making strategies it is important to look at how they interact with each other. Different actors will pursue different boundary making strategies depending on their position in the power hierarchy. But if actors want their preferred ethnic classification to be accepted and implemented, they have to convince others of their view of society. In other words, actors have to negotiate with others who might have a different view on the desired ethnic classification and these interactional dynamics can have different outcomes.

Wimmer finds that a cultural consensus is the most likely outcome of this negotiation process. The notion of the cultural consensus does not agree with the notion of the overwhelming definitional power of dominant actors (Wimmer 2008: 997). Subordinates do not just receive and accept dominant discourses they can always start counter discourses. This means that actors (even dominant ones) will always have to find a compromise with their subordinates. A consensus between actors is more likely to emerge 'if their interests at least partially overlap and strategies for classification can therefore concur on a shared view' (Wimmer 2008: 998). Then a boundary will most likely represent the most important division in the social world.

The notion of the cultural consensus explains when and why a 'widely shared consensus over ethnic boundaries will arise' (Wimmer 2008: 1001). But the characteristics of this boundary depend on the nature of the consensus. In a nutshell, Wimmer states that ' the higher the degree of ethnic inequality and the more encompassing the consensus between actors, the more closure and cultural differentiation we expect to observe. The more inequality and the consensus (..) the more politically salient boundaries will be' (Wimmer 2008: 1008)

This brings us to the part of Wimmer's theory that is the most interesting for this research: identify mechanisms that can stabilize or change boundary features over time. Since the aim of this thesis is to provide insight into post-war identity construction, or how identities and identity boundaries can change after a violent conflict, these mechanisms can help explain if, how and why these boundaries change. Firmly stabilized boundaries are less likely to change and produce a high level of identification among their members. According to Wimmer highly salient, socially closed groups with a high level of

cultural differentiation are most likely to stabilize a boundary through the effects of so-called path dependency. Although path dependency can lead to boundary stabilization it is not a deterministic concept; paths can be abandoned and change becomes possible (Wimmer 2008: 1004).

Other change mechanisms create shifts in the characteristics of the social field and can thus provide new incentives for a boundary making strategy. Wimmer identifies three such mechanisms: exogenous shift, endogenous shift and exogenous drift. An exogenous shift can occur when new institutions or actors are introduced into the social field. Major political events can transform the institutional structure and provide incentives to pursue new strategies of ethnic boundary making. The structure of power relations and political alliances can change exogenously through various processes; new actors can enter to field and offer new opportunities for forming alliances and thus provide an impetus to redraw ethnic boundaries. Exogenous processes may also shift to power base of actors.

An endogenous shift may change field characteristics due to intended and unintended consequences of the strategies pursued by various actors. Endogenous change can take place due to consequences of the strategies pursued by actors; when one group does boundary crossing and another simultaneously does boundary expansion, the first group might disappear over time. Small changes in the mix of strategies pursued by individuals may cascade into dramatic shifts in the structure of ethnic boundaries

An exogenous drift can change field characteristics when new strategies diffuse into a social field and are adopted by certain actors that were not part of the existing repertoires. Innovative actors who recombine separate schemes of thinking and acting may invent new strategies or they may, more often than not, be adopted from the outside.

Throughout my analysis I will use Wimmer's model of identity construction of what drives actors to pursue a certain strategy to explore the interactional dynamics between local politicians and grassroots organizations in order to provide insight in post-war identity construction processes.

I will use Wimmer's theory to find an explanation for why actors pursue different strategies and I will do so by analysing the field characteristics that provide incentives for a certain strategy when both actors are discussed I will explore which mechanisms of change are likely to occur and what the outcome of the identity construction process can be.

Chapter 2
Actions by local politicians

We visited Mostar on a rainy day but it still it was a beautiful city. With the clear blue Neretva River calmly running through the historic old town and the Stari Most Bridge overarching the river connecting the two parts of the city. When I walked over the newly reconstructed bridge I discovered just how much symbolism is hidden in it. I stood at the highest point of the bridge, on the top of its arch, and on one side of the river I saw the old Ottoman town with it's mosques and on the other side I saw a giant cross standing on top of a hill. After the bridge was destroyed during the war in 1993 there was a lot of support the rebuild it. In my view the reconstruction symbolized, or at least intended to symbolize, the unification of Bosnia's citizens. But since the reopening of the bridge in 2004 there is a lot of segregation along ethnic lines. Tourists walk over the bridge daily, traveling from the Bosniak side to the Croatian side and back, but for locals the symbolism might still be too big a step.

In this chapter I will discuss some examples of actions undertaken by local politicians in relation to the Bosnian education system. By analysing these actions I hope to give more insight in possible motivations and incentives in post-war identity construction. Due to the complexity of decentralized government as a result of the implementation of Dayton, the actions of politicians are an interesting piece of the post-war

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puzzle. What kind of incentives does the social field in post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina provide local politicians with?

Harmonization of education laws

One example of the complexity of decentralized government is the harmonization of education laws. Due to the decentralized decision-making in education, the form of education differs from canton to canton. Since there are almost no unified laws, education within the cantons can be organized according to the ethnic composition. To counter this the OSCE mission to BiH started a project to harmonize education laws throughout the country.

The Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education entered into force on 1 July 2003, its goal was to have all lower-level laws at the entity and canton level harmonized by 1 January 2004 (OSCE 2005: 6) but this was not accomplished. None of the laws were harmonized before the set deadline. However, most of the local authorities started the harmonization process later on.

As always there are exceptions, three cantons did not harmonize their education laws: Central Bosnia Canton, West Herzegovina Canton and Canton 10 (OSCE 2005: 6). In these cantons either no education laws were passed or they did not comply with the standards set by the Framework Law. The High Representative felt the need to intervene in these cantons and imposed laws and amendments within the cantons after applying political pressure and economic sanctions.

Not everybody appreciated the High Representatives intervention. Quite the contrary, because cantonal laws can only be imposed on an interim basis until formal adaptation in the Cantonal Assemblies, local politicians had the chance to openly counter the imposed laws and amendments.

But why did these three cantons not harmonize their laws? One striking example comes from Croat politicians within the Central Bosnian Cantonal Assemblies. They demanded a guarantee that education still represented the Vital National Interest (VNI) of the Croat people. This meant that a cultural relevant curriculum had to be available and that children should have the opportunity to be schooled in their mother tongue, in this case Croatian (OSCE 2005:6) Local politicians argued 'that segregation was necessary to preserve cultural identity and traditions'. Meanwhile observers and international officials still suggested that reforms were making a significant difference and that steps were made towards a 'common curriculum' indicating multi-ethnic cooperation (Nelles 2006: 234).

This claim of VNI expresses the concern about the position of ethnic groups within in new and harmonized framework of education laws. Politicians feared that the position of the own ethnic group would be subordinate. They stated a harmonization of laws would lead to inequality between ethnic groups and 'assimilation and outvoting of certain peoples' (OSCE 2005:6), while in practise it could mean they were keeping others from the right to education in their mother tongue (Kreso 2008: 365)

On state level the Constitutional Court of BiH rejected this claim and emphasized the equality of ethnic groups in their use of language. The Court stated that "any other legal position, e.g. a solution that would allow a possibility of teaching exclusively in Croatian or Bosnian or Serb language, would represent a violation of the constitutional principle of equality of all official languages in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and would lead to a violation of vital interests of other constituent peoples, i.e. peoples whose language would not be allowed in the teaching process in a school." (OSCE 2005:6-7)

Interim Agreement

In practice this means that decision-making about education is very region-based. There are very few state-level guidelines and the structure and content of education differs widely throughout the country. Normally the curriculum taught in schools is based on the ethnic identity of the majority group in that region, especially with the subject language, history and religion these curricula can be very different from each other.

This variety in curricula posed a problem for internally displaced people (IDP's) and refugees who wanted to return to their home communities from which they were ethnically cleansed during the war (Clark 2010: 347). Parents wanted their children to be taught from a culturally relevant curriculum in their mother tongue.

In September 2003, as the new school year began, observers indicated that segregation,

discrimination, nationalism and a variety of related problems continued while politics still undermined education reforms. There were still quite some divisive practices, such as separate entrances, directors and programmes for different ethnic groups (Nelles 2006: 234).

To give parents the possibility to choose a school that they find fitting their children's needs, the ministries of education signed an *Interim Agreement on Accommodation of Specific Needs and Rights of Returnee Children* on March 5 2005 that gave parents more rights vis-à-vis the education of their children (Clark 2010: 347).

According to Clark (2010) giving parents a greater choice in their children's education can lead to 'bussing children around'. In some cases this could mean that children are bussed to schools in a different entity (or canton). For example, for Bosniak children that live in the RS but want to be schooled in their own language and not in Serbian could cross the border to the FBiH to go to school there. According to the OSCE in BiH,some parents claim that they send their children to school there because 'they were dissatisfied with the curriculum, as well as with the unwelcoming environment (..) in the Republika Srpska' (OSCE 2005: 18). Apparently some people still don't feel at home in the regions where they used to live before the war. This could indicate that a sense of ethnic division is still in place. Furthermore, 'this phenomenon of bussing children from one entity to the other not only lengthens the school day for these pupils but it also reinforces segregation and division between ethnic groups' (Clark 2010: 347)

A second consequence is that children learn from ethnically coloured curricula that were chosen by their parents. They learn history from the (biased) perspective of 'their' ethnic group and learn 'their' mother tongue. For example, pupils who that learn geography in a Serbian curriculum will learn the geography of the RS as a part of Serbia instead of Bosnia-Herzegovina. This form of ethnic schooling "helps to sustain the fundamental cause of segregation by maintaining a system that shields politicization of education" (Clark 2010: 347). So although the Interim Agreement gives parents more say in the choice of curriculum, it also helps sustain the ethnic segregation within the education system.

Two schools under one roof

> *"According to the head of missions at the OSCE in BiH, the phenomenon of two schools under one roof offers "an object lesson in how a purely educational issue can unfortunately metamorphose into a political one. It is a perfect example of why politics does not belong in the classroom"*
> *- (Clark 2010: 349)*

The *Interim Agreement on Accommodation of Specific Needs and Rights of Returnee Children* shows that even agreements with the intention the integrate post-war society can lead to further politization of the education system. It shows that education is BiH is still organized along ethnic lines. Another example of politization can be found in the 'two schools under one roof'-system.

This system is still present in many parts of the country although the international community has heavily criticized it (OSCE 2005:16). In these schools, children and teachers with different ethnicities go to school in the same building but they rarely make contact. Even though the international community pressured local Ministries of Education to take action to unify these schools and issued *Instructions on Administrative and Legal Unification*, still very little action is undertaken to accomplish this. So in most of the cantons where the two-schools-under-one-roof-system is still in place the pupils and the school boards are divided.

But the Zenica-Doboj Canton is an exception; here all schools have been administratively and legally unified. This means that the pupils still attend separate classes but at least there is only one school director, one school board and one student council (Clark 2010: 349)[1]

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[1] It has to be noted that the Zenica-Doboj Canton has a 83% Bosniak majority, Croats (13%) and Serbs (2,5%) are minorities.

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Before 2012, politicians within the cantons have not shown at lot of support for ending the two-schools-under-one-roof-system because apparently 'education is one the last areas where politicians still have a strong grip and they won't let go' (Clark 2010:349). It appears that local authorities want to keep the education system the way it is due to its vulnerability, but most of all because it can be used for political indoctrination and thus enables teachers, pupils and their parents to be taught the importance of ethnic division (Kreso 2008: 365). Most local authorities are not envisioning the influences the segregated education system can have on future society. When young people are educated in this way they will come to believe that intolerance is socially acceptable behaviour, because during their days in school they where indoctrinated with discriminatory attitudes (Kreso 2008: 365). Segregation of groups might seem necessary to them, which makes in virtually impossible to live in a multi-ethnic society.

On April 27, 2012, an important ruling from the Municipal Court in Mostar stated that the "two schools under one roof" system exercised by primary schools in the cities of Stolac and Capljina, both in Herzegovina-Neretva Canton, is discriminatory. It is in direct violation of the law on prohibition of discrimination.[2] The court found two-schools-under-one-roof an act of discrimination because it organizes classes and teaching curricula based on ethnicity. The two schools in question, as well as the Ministry of Education, Culture, Science, and Sport in Herzegovina-Neretva Canton, were "found committing an act of discrimination".
This court ruling was the first to condemn the 'two-schools-under-one-roof' practice and segregation of children on an ethnic basis in schools.

Schools that work with this practice supposed to integrate their pupils, teachers and boards, but the implementation of the verdict can be a challenge. The ruling obliged 'defendants to take specific measures and actions to end discrimination by 1 September 2012' (European Commission Bosnia and Herzegovina Progress Report 2012:18) The Ministry of Education in FBiH has picked up the Mostar Court verdict and designed a plan for its implementation in the whole FBiH. According to the Balkan Insight: "Implementation of the plan will start from September (2012 red.) and will take two years, depending on the readiness of schools to accept the suggested steps, which include administrative and legal acts to unite divided teaching institutions and creation of equal conditions for pupils."[3]

Identity construction by local politicians
With these examples in mind, we can now reintroduce Andreas Wimmer's (2008) model for processes of boundary making. Wimmer's model can help understand why local politicians acted the way they did in relation to the education system and within the larger Dayton framework. I will analyse the examples discussed above with the power hierarchy and institutional framework characteristics. I have chosen to leave political alliances out of the analyses because not enough data was found to make a relevant analysis. After analysing the characteristics of the social field I will discuss what incentives this provides for local politicians and what boundary making strategy they are likely to pursue.

First, how can the distribution of power and the position in the power hierarchy explain why politicians have mostly chosen to counter initiatives of unification of education? As mentioned by Clark (2010) 'education is a field where politicians can still exercise their power', this provides an incentive for them to pursue a certain strategy for ethnic boundary making. The examples discussed above point to boundary contraction as the chosen strategy. By identifying as Bosniak, Croat or Serb the uniqueness of ethnic identities is emphasized and they distance themselves from a 'larger civil identity' as citizens of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Local politicians seem to pursue boundary contraction through an emphasis shift. Although difficult to prove, it might be plausible that politicians have an interest in keeping the segregation in place

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2 Source: http://www.openequalfree.org/two-schools-under-one-roof-ruled-discriminatory/10418

3 Source: http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/bosnia-plans-uniting-divided-schools

(and boundaries quite closed) in order to maintain their position in the power hierarchy. This might explain why some cantonal politicians counter the harmonization law with a claim on Vital National Interest.

In the example of two-schools-under-one-roof, the same claim is made. Parents (and children) have the right to school their children with a culturally relevant curriculum and in their mother tongue. Politicians will defend these rights for 'their' people. Their people should be appointed the same rights as others. Politicians feared that the position of the own ethnic group would be become subordinate. They stated a harmonization of laws would lead to inequality between ethnic groups and 'assimilation and outvoting of certain peoples' (OSCE 2005: 6)

This cultural argument poses an obstacle for unification of schools and harmonization of education laws because it emphasizes the cultural 'uniqueness' of ethnic groups that makes integration within schools (and Bosnia-Herzegovina as a whole) significantly more difficult. Furthermore, this argument offers a legitimation for boundary contraction, by emphasizing group characteristics within education. By educating children with ethnically coloured curriculum, there is a bigger chance that they will identify with 'their own ethnic group' and will view themselves a distinctively different from other groups. Children will come to believe that segregation is necessary because of these differences. Politicians might use this identification with the 'own group' and differentiation from 'the other' as a tool to keep their position within the power hierarchy. Because of BiH's decentralized education system, they still have a large say in the way education is organized. When laws are harmonized and the government more centralized their influence will decrease.

This brings us to the institutional frameworks characteristic. The Dayton division of Bosnia-Herzegovina into two autonomous entities and the decentralized responsibility for education gave politicians the chance to govern the entities on the basis of ethnonational representativity. According to Wimmer's model, the logic of the nation-state makes defining the territorial boundaries in terms of ethnicity of central political importance. So within the Dayton division cantonal (and municipal) politicians can use the cultural argument of Vital National Interest as a justification for ethnonational representivity and thus ethnically politicized education. In other words, because a group has specific characteristics it needs politicians who ensure that they are appointed rights that fit and guarantee their cultural uniqueness. Again, by emphasizing the uniqueness of a group and the differentiation from other groups, boundary contraction can be justified.

The Dayton framework seems to provide local politicians with such autonomy and power that they can use the societal (ethnic) division as a tool for identity construction. Because the Dayton Agreements divided the country into entities on basis of ethnicity and gave local politicians quite some power they were able to promote to uniqueness of their ethnic identities and created (or maintained) the distinction between the 'us' and 'them'-groups. With this strategy they can keep their position in the power hierarchy using the institutions provided by the Dayton framework. Since the unification of two-schools-under-one-roof and harmonization of education laws were countered by politicians in some cantons one might argue that unifying and centralizing Bosnian education is not high on their list of priorities. According to Clark (2010) "For now, the most that can be done is to administratively and legally unify schools and to offer extra-curricular activities that bring parents and children from the different ethnic groups together (Clark 2010: 369).

Chapter 3
Grassroots initiatives and projects

We sat in a large lecture hall in very comfortable soft chairs when we were shown a promotional film from the International University of Sarajevo (IUS). When the film was over the university's students came in and a professor started his speech. His idea was to start a dialogue between Dutch students and the students from IUS, but the conversation took a different turn quite fast. Of course we were interested in the war and the experiences of students who lived in Bosnia during that time. And the crucial question

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(for us at least) is the ethnic division in place according to them? These questions almost immediately spiced up the conversation, the responses became more emotional and the foreign students (mostly from Turkey) were silenced with the 'you-are-not-from-Bosnia-so-that's-easy-for-you-to-say'- argument.

The professor, who wanted us to talk about the future and how we as European students can help and learn from each other, soon interrupted the debate on ethnicity and ethnic differences. He did not want our conversation to be all about the past. But the students thought otherwise. Non-Bosnian students easily neglected the difference between the terms 'Bosnian' and 'Bosniak'. Others quickly corrected this with a fierce response. The central argument came down to this: not all Bosnians are Bosniaks, but all Bosniaks are Bosnians.

Although most students I spoke with said they identified themselves as Bosnian, they also always mentioned the ethnic groups they (or there parents) belonged to. For me this expressed a dilemma most of them are coping with; they wanted to be Bosnian instead of Bosniak, Serb or Croat but societal structures did not yet allow this.

Most of the Bosnian students I spoke with do not necessarily put themselves and others in the categories of ethnicity, but rather want to view themselves as Bosnians. The perception of youth is interesting to look at when researching ethnic boundaries because most of them experienced the war in their childhood and grew up within the Dayton framework. How has the division of their country influenced their perceptions of ethnicity and ethnic differences?

NDC Sarajevo and Saferworld have done research about the perceptions of youth in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In the field of politics they found that 'young people have very little trust in politics and politicians' (NDC Sarajevo and Saferworld 2012: 22). According to NDC's findings, young people see politics as "dirty and linked to criminality" and prefer not to be involved in it. As mentioned in the previous chapter, politicians have not shown much interest in the integration of ethnic groups in education. Their perceptions and opinions can be helpful to keep in mind because can help explain why grassroots pursue certain actions and strategies for identity construction.

There are many organizations present in Bosnia working on grassroots initiatives that strive to improve interethnic relations and change people perception of 'the ethnic other'. Most projects works from the objective that 'besides the fact that the current political situation in both entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina is pushing the young people on the margin of social events, young people have enough strength to resist politics and try to make mutual cooperation and friendships' (Stovel 1998: 130).

In this chapter I will explore several grassroots initiatives that have been taking place in the Bosnian education system since the end of the war. More specifically I will look at how these initiatives and projects have influenced identity construction processes. As in the previous chapter, I will analyse actions of actors in order to provide insight in their incentives and the role the Dayton framework plays in this process.

The projects that will be discussed in this chapter will mostly be projects by NGOs that work either in schools or with youth. The information for NGO projects comes mainly from reports published by NGOs themselves. Although I am aware that this information is biased (and often serves to satisfy donors), I believe they still provide insight in at least the intentions of NGOs in the Bosnian education system and how NGOs intend the start projects within an education system that still experiences a division along ethnic lines.

In the next section I will present several projects that have been active in the Bosnian education system. Later in this chapter I will analyse these projects with Wimmer's model.

Helsinki Citizens Assembly

The projects of the Helsinki Citizens Assembly (HCA) focus on the increase of dialogue between youth from different ethnic groups and the empowerment of youth to start their own grassroots initiatives. They

bring together young people from all over Bosnia by organizing workshops on project proposal writing. Through this contact the project hopes the overcome prejudices and fears towards members of other ethnic groups. Although this project did not take place within schools, they nonetheless provided youth with tools to counter ethnic divisions in society and to increase dialogue between members from different ethnic groups.

The workshop consisted of two parts: the official and the unofficial. The official part consists of two daylong workshops, one on project proposal writing and one on overcoming differences between youngsters in Bosnia (Stovel 1998: 128). The workshops were designed to give people the capacity to run a NGO or grassroots initiative. Ultimately, the goal of the HCA project was to create more contact and co-operation between participants from different ethnic groups (Stovel 1998: 129)

The unofficial part might be considered more important because it is about socializing and building new friendships between the workshop participants from different ethnicities. These social activities should 'confirm once again that there are no significant differences' (Stovel 1998: 128). Many participants have pointed to the importance of media in overcoming the barriers that continued after the war (Stovel 1998: 129). One of the outcomes of the projects was a plan to launch a quarterly magazine called '*Contact'* which was to be made by editors and writers from different ethnic groups from all over Bosnia.

The HCA was not the only project that focussed on creating a multi-ethnic medium such as a magazine or radio programme, the projects of NDC Mostar have also found it a sufficient way the promote interethnic dialogue.

Education for all: bridging the differences in Stolac (NDC Mostar 2011)

> *"Before NDC Mostar collaboration with Stolac high school there was neither interaction or communication across ethnic lines. Nowadays, theabove-mentioned actors are the ones who communicate, initiate, plan and implement joint activities and projects in the school aiming interethnic normalization, cooperation and increased level of integration."*
>
> - (NDC Mostar 2011)

As discussed in the previous chapter the system of two-schools-under-one-roof is found to be problematic for the integration of ethnic groups. Especially in the region around the divided city of Mostar there are still quite a lot of schools that work with this system. In order to reduce segregation along ethnic lines they started a project on a high school in Stolac, a town in the west of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Stolac community was deeply divided in all aspects of every day life (NDC Mostar 2011). The goal of this project was to promote interethnic dialogue and enhance relations between students as well as parents and teachers.

Before the project started, Stolac High School had a deeply divided school routine. For example there were two different student councils, two different curricula being taught and almost no joint extra curricular activities. Furthermore, there was rarely any contact between teachers. There was quite some scepticism in the Stolac community towards NGO projects due to recent failed projects. Stolac High School as the project's location provided the opportunity to improve integration within the school as well as within the community at large.

> *'Stolac High-school is thus an important focal point for entire community and therefore by working in this school NDC address both educational issues and relationships'*
> - (NDC Mostar 2011)

The NDC project was designed to integrate the school on three levels; by creating joint co-operation on common activities; by building relationships among all actors in the school itself; and by institutional and administrative integration (NDC Mostar 2011). In order to accomplish this integration NDC chose an approach where they work with different actors (students, teachers, parents and local authorities) and encourage them to participate in joint projects and work on relation building. From there some progress

in the direction of institutional and administrative integration of the school could be made (NDC Mostar 2011). Furthermore when the joint projects work well, they could also have a positive effect on political actors such as the Ministry of Education, the municipality and political parties. The work done by students and teachers could encourage political actors to work towards institutional integration of schools (NDC Mostar 2011). The NDC approach is thus twofold, it works on a grassroots level to promote interethnic dialogue and on the other hand it hopes to bring about institutional changes.

Between 2009 and 2011 the project accomplished the following results; they organized several ('a relevant number of') joint activities between different actors. Through the opening of the 'Nansen classroom' students were able to participate in joint projects. The renovation of the classroom itself was also the result of a joint project, it was established by the co-operation between students, teachers and school management.

By creating a News Club, students from different ethnic groups have the opportunity to work together in school by publishing news papers that will be distributed through the whole school. Furthermore, this news club also functioned as a student body. According to the NDC 20% of the students and 25% of the teachers were involved in the joint project initiated by the NDC. For the integration of parents in the school (and the community) parents-workshops were established. At the time the report was written in 2011, 16 parents were involved in these workshops.

Most recently the NDC is involved in projects of institutional cooperation. In December 2012 they submitted a proposal and fund application (see Appendix one) for their project on institutional coorperation. After the 'two-schools-under-one-roof' verdict from the Mostar municipal Court earlier that year, they started cooperation with the Herzegovina-Neretva (HN) Cantonal Government to improve the education system in BiH through the establishment of a multi-ethnic network of stakeholders from the HN canton government and two pedagogical institutes. Officials from the Cantonal Ministry of Education will participate in a dialogue seminar at the Nansen Academy in Lillehammer (Norway) about how the education system in BiH can be improved. Next to that, cooperation between the HN Canton and Oppland County in Norway will be initiated, aiming at improving the quality of education system in the canton (and BiH as a whole). One of the elements of this cooperation is the development of a curriculum of the Nansen School for Principles, where principles can be trained in the field of school management and interethnic communication. The institutional cooperation is a long-term project and will last until 2015. NDC Mostar closely cooperate with institutional actors as well as their partners (schools, pedagogical institutes) and monitor activities organized by them.

PAX-projects: drama-in-education (1998)

The PAX-projects focused on the arts as a means to bring people in contact with each other as well as with themselves. They use drama in education (DIE) to give pupils the opportunity to explore 'issues, problems and questions that disturb (young) people about the chosen concept - in this case war-and peace' (Stovel 1998: 108). "DIE works through fiction and metaphor to create imaginative distance for young people to explore and express their thoughts and feelings about carefully chosen themes and concepts. Educationally DIE is open-ended and not prescriptive. It aims to enable an exploration of the issues." (Stovel 1998: 108)

One of the PAX-projects was organized at a school in Bihac, a town in the northwest of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The participating teachers at the school in Bihac choose "The Return" as the theme for their DIE project. This choice of theme was made because the school was planning to return to their village later that year after being away for five years. The students developed this initial theme to include the themes "The Journey" and "The Separation." The three themes were united in a logical sequence: separation, journey and return (Stovel 1998: 109). Because the theme stood very close to reality, the group also had to choose a historical period. This has to become their fictional context for their exploration of their wartime experiences . (Stovel 1998: 109). This fictional part provided some distance from the pupils' own reality, some space to think about their own experiences without having to

relive them. The group then chose a favourite historical period: the Stone Age and created a story about the dilemma a cave men tribe faced about whether to leave their cave or stay (Stovel 1998: 109). The pupils got to experience different sides of the story and played different roles. They explored the roles of dwelling cave men as well as archaeologists who tried to reconstruct the cave men's lives. By trying out and playing different roles, pupils will eventually understand different perspectives of the story and get more insight in the experiences of pupils from a different ethnic group or come to the conclusion that someone they thought was completely different from them (the ethnic 'other') had similar war time experiences.

One of the objectives of these drama sessions was to encourage children to participate in a dialogue with each other as well as with their teachers. The project aims to provide children with a stage to tell their story publicly so they can reconcile with others as well as with themselves. (Stovel 1998: 111)

Identity construction in grassroots initiatives
All of the projects discussed above aimed at the promotion of interethnic dialogue and more co-operations between ethnic groups. According to Stovel (1998), projects that counter the patterns of ethnic segregation are important for reconciliation because that can counter ethnic chauvinism. When looking at these grassroots initiatives from Wimmer's model on ethnic boundary making, what can be said about the incentives provided by the social field and the preferred strategy for ethnic boundary making? Quite contrary to political actions in the education system, grassroots initiatives strive to overcome categorization along ethnic lines and pursue a more integrative approach. All the projects I found were designed to overcome the current ethnic categorization. But the question that I want to answer is *why* all the grassroots projects I found promote ethnic integration.

As in the last chapter I will analyse the examples discussed above with institutional framework and power hierarchy characteristics from Wimmer's model. First, how can the distribution of power and the position in the power hierarchy explain why grassroots actors have mostly chosen to support initiatives of unification of education? It is hard to say whether actors on a grassroots level have an interest in promoting interethnic co-operation from their place in the power hierarchy. One could argue that ethnic integration might improve their power position, by changing the hierarchical order (transvaluation) through equalization the access to political power might become evenly distributed among groups. In order for formerly subordinate groups to have easier access to power resources they will have to redefine the meaning of ethnic categories. Projects such as the Helsinki Citizens Assembly focus on grassroots empowerment, by breaking prejudices and providing people with the tools to start their own projects they can widen their sphere of influence. When more people accept this opinion about the need for interethnic dialogue they can get more say in the decision-making process for these issues. In other words, different social classifications than race and ethnicity are emphasized. This points to a strategy of boundary blurring where different divisions than ethnic are emphasized. But all the projects discussed above are trying to promote ethnic integration within a framework based on ethnic segregation which means that their options for a counter discourse is limited.

This brings us to the institutional frameworks characteristic. According to Wimmer (2008) different political institutions can provide different incentives for actors to pursue different types of boundary making strategies. One could argue that grassroots initiatives are trying the change the present institutional framework through a bottom-up approach. This means that by promoting interethnic dialogue at a local and on a small scale they hope to create incentives for politicians (either local or national) to change the institutional framework, now mostly based on segregation along ethnic lines, into a more integrative one. A reason to choose this strategy can be that the Dayton framework isn't a good starting position for actors at a grassroots level; it does not supply them with the same institutional tools as local politicians. Where politicians use Dayton's decentralized government system to keep promoting ethnic difference, for grassroots this only obstructs their efforts for integration and unification. This can provide grassroots with an incentive to pursue transvaluation through equalization, in a more equalized system grassroots can obtain more say in politics and easier access to power resources.

Projects like that of NDC Mostar are examples of this bottom-up approach used by grassroots; they organize joint projects to change people's perception of the 'ethnic other'. By breaking the 'ethnic

barrier' they hope to promote interethnic co-operation. Because in time this could remove the incentives for politicians to promote ethnic politics (within the canton) when people don't feel the need for segregation along ethnic lines anymore. This way, grassroots could be considered to pursue a strategy of boundary expansion through nation building by emphasizing higher level of categorical distinction. By emphasizing a more encompassing national identity they can shift away from ethnic categorization. When children and parents from different groups have reconciled with each other they might be less willing to support politicians who promote ethnic politics. This in turn might drive politicians to pursue different types of politics, maybe a more integrative one.

Conclusion

This thesis has aimed to clarify processes of post-war identity construction in Bosnia-Herzegovina through analyses of actions of local politicians and grassroots organisations within the societal Dayton framework. Through this analysis I hope to provide insight in post-war identity construction.

As the previous chapters have shown, the actions of local politicians and grassroots in the Bosnia education system differ widely. From my analysis I concluded that local politicians are pursuing a strategy of boundary contraction through emphasis shift. The actions of grassroots, on the other hand, point to several different strategies: boundary expansion through nation-building and emphasis shift, transvaluation through equalization and boundary blurring.

Local politicians use the cultural argument of Vital National Interest, which poses an obstacle for unification of schools and harmonization of education laws because it emphasizes the cultural 'uniqueness' of ethnic groups; which points to a high degree of cultural differentiation and is an obstacle for integration in education. Furthermore this argument offers a legitimation for boundary contraction, by emphasizing group characteristics within education.

According to Clark (2010) 'education is a field where politicians can still exercise their power', this provides an incentive for them to pursue a strategy of boundary contraction through emphasis shift. Although difficult to prove, it might be plausible that politicians have an interest to keep the segregation in place and boundaries quite closed in order to maintain their position in the power hierarchy. This points to a high degree of social closure and might explain why some cantonal politicians counter the harmonization law with a claim on Vital National Interest. In the example of two-schools-under-one-roof, the same claim is made. Politicians stated that a harmonization of laws would lead to inequality between ethnic groups and 'assimilation and outvoting of certain peoples' (OSCE 2005: 6)

It is hard to say whether actors on a grassroots level have an interest in promoting interethnic co-operation from their place in the power hierarchy. When following Wimmer one could argue that ethnic integration might improve their power position. Through grassroots empowerment prejudices can be broken and people are provided with the tools to start their own projects, which can widen their sphere of influence. When more people accept this opinion about the need for interethnic dialogue they can get more say in the decision-making process for these issues. Grassroots initiatives can thus be seen as developing a counter discourse but like local politicians, grassroots initiatives function within the segregation-based Dayton framework. This means that developing counter discourse for ethnic integration might be difficult.

But an important aspect of the analysis is how the actions of different actors in the social field influence the process of ethnic boundary making in a post-war setting. How do the examples mentioned in this thesis illustrate certain changes in ethnic boundaries? Or, in Wimmer terms, what mechanisms of change are present in post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina?

In this case study no actions indicating an exogenous shift were found, no new actors or institutions introduced in the social field were found .The same goes for the exogenous drift; although it was not the focal point of this study it is possible that the international community has introduced new strategies into

the social field. The influence of interaction actors on post-war identity construction is a possible subject for further research.

According the analysed actions in this study there are signs of an endogenous shift, changes that occur due to intended and unintended consequences of strategies pursued by actors. The verdict of the Mostar court in relation to the practice of two-schools-under-one-roof can be considered a consequence of grassroots' boundary making strategies. They strived for more inclusiveness and equality in education.

The verdict led to cooperation between grassroots organizations and politics, like the institutional cooperation project from NDC Mostar where the cantonal ministry of education initiated (or requested) a cooperation with the NDC because of because successful previous attempts to integrate divided schools. Such cooperation shows that local politicians (in this case) seem to be willing to move away from their boundary contraction strategy and take a route towards a strategy of boundary expansion or transvaluation.

The implementation of the integrative education, as ordered by the court, will most likely be a long-term project. This will not directly lead to a lot of institutional changes but more a change in policy and supervision. New supervising mechanisms and policies will have to be adopted in order for integrative changes in schools (and politics) to be sustainable. Projects like that of NDC Mostar will have to proof what kind of outcome the implementation of the verdict will have and what kind (if any) influence this can will have on the process of ethnic boundary making.

Wimmer's model explains why actors will pursue a certain strategy. Whether or not a strategy is realized depends of multiple factors. Wimmer describes the importance (or necessity) of the social field and the inevitability of interaction between different actors. In that sense actors are constraint by in the pursuit of their preferred strategy.

In Bosnia-Herzegovina a complicated decentralized political structure is in place, which is well reflected in the country's decentralized and segregated education system. It is this framework that provides an unfair 'starting position' for different actors. The Dayton framework provides different actors with different opportunities. Local politicians have an advantage; they can use the framework in the pursuit of their preferred strategy, which according to my analysis is boundary contraction through emphasis shift. Contrary to most grassroots initiatives, local politicians have promoted ethnic differences and cultural uniqueness instead of integration. The Dayton framework has contributed to this because the decentralized government within the framework seems to provide local politicians with such autonomy and power that they can use the societal (ethnic) division as a tool for identity construction.

On the other hand grassroots have more problems in the pursuit of their preferred strategy in the current framework. The decentralized and segregated education system is often considered an obstacle for successful implementation of grassroots initiatives. One could argue that grassroots are trying to change the present institutional framework with a bottom-up approach. This means that by promoting interethnic dialogue at a local scale they hope to create incentives for politicians to change the institutional framework, now mostly based on segregation along ethnic lines, into a more integrative one. Where politicians can use Dayton's decentralized government system to keep promoting ethnic difference, for grassroots this seems to obstruct their efforts for integration and unification. Nonetheless, this does not mean grassroots initiatives have no influence at all, as illustrated by the Mostar Court ruling.

Wimmer describes the interactional dynamics between different actors in his multi-level process theory and although not explicitly described, he seems aware of the difficulty of predicting the outcome of negotiations. This process, although very important in the process of identity construction, is dependent on many factors. Negotiational dynamics are context bound, which makes predicting their outcome a guessing game.

Studying the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina it is difficult to find conclusive answers to the question asked in this thesis. Although some trends and changes are distinguishable from the studies material, due to the decentralization the negotiational process can have different outcome in different regions of the country (depending of ethnic composition of the region for example). This obstructs the development of a civic 'Bosnian' identity since the outcome of negotiations can differ regionally. One

can thus encounter various approaches towards identity construction on a bus drive through Bosnia's ethnic landscape.

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