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Neither War, Nor Peace: Everyday Politics, Peacebuilding and the Liminal Condition of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Northern Ireland

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by

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis focuses on cultural and everyday practices of local populations in post-conflict peacebuilding. It builds on the "everyday" turn in critical peacebuilding literature by recognizing the everyday as political. Rather than examining the practices of political elites this thesis is concerned with the ordinary citizens of these societies. In other words, I show that it is through practices and cultural forms of expression that local populations enact their agency, at times supporting and at times contesting the broader peacebuilding project. Moreover, rather than viewing the everyday acts as hidden or as evidence of resistance to the dominant peacebuilding approaches this thesis calls for greater attention to the ways that these practices and cultural forms of expression are made visible and provide meaning to the ordinary citizens of these societies. Through the case studies of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Northern Ireland, this thesis aims to generate an account of everyday peace politics that allows for the inclusive, exclusionary and ambivalent practices of the ordinary citizens in these societies. It does so through three key lenses: practices of place-making and "inscription", symbolic practices and competing narratives and performances. While proponents of the liberal peace approach envision peace as "trickling-down", this thesis illustrates that peacebuilding strategies are always interpreted in context-specific ways. Although the literature on "hybrid peacebuilding" recognizes the relationship between local practices and external peacebuilding efforts, a closer look at the liminal conditions of these post-agreement societies shows us how local populations respond to the uncertainty of the war to peace transition in ways not always captured by the literature on hybrid peacebuilding. As a result, this thesis contributes to our understanding of local agency in post-peace accord societies.

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*Places we love we can never leave- I. Lali*ć

Bosnia-Herzegovina (hereafter, Bosnia) started to fall apart just as I was about to enter kindergarten. The unfortunate events of the Bosnian war deeply affected my family and my fellow compatriots. Though I was rather young when my family left Bosnia, I have remained incomprehensibly attached to it. This thesis and much of my graduate education is a result of my attempts to understand how peace can be built in places, such as Bosnia, that have experienced violence and conflict. It is my attachment to Bosnia that led me to Northern Ireland where I met people not unlike my Bosnians with their humour, kindness and difficult histories.

Much of what I have learned and experienced in both Bosnia and Northern Ireland cannot be fully captured in an academic text. However, here I have tried to bring attention to those that are often overlooked, the so-called ordinary citizens of these countries. To them I owe much thanks. They let me into their lives and communities, made me coffee or tea, and sought to make me better understand their perspectives. I hope I have captured some of the hope and frustration with the peace they live that they imparted on me.

This thesis would not have been written without the guidance of Professor Dejan Guzina. Dejan has been a constant source of support. His insistence on clear, well-researched, thoughtful arguments have made me strive to be a better scholar. I hope I have managed to meet (or even come close to) his ever moving targets for my work. *Hvala*! I owe much thanks to Professor Kim Rygiel who, with her keen insights, has made this thesis a much better work. Kim has been a guide, and a role-model since I met her during my Master's studies. I am so grateful for her attention to detail and help in clarifying what it is that I am trying to say. Professor Will Coleman deserves more thanks than I can ever express. Will's nuanced worldview, mild manner, and sharp wit have been central to my graduate education. Will always responded to last minute requests with kindness and wrote numerous letters of recommendation. Will's course on Globalization, during my Master's studies at McMaster University, ultimately shaped my decision to pursue a doctoral degree. Here, I would also like to thank Sonya Zikic for her friendship, encouragement and support. Sonya spent many hours reading some early drafts of this thesis and kindly noting grammatical oversights and errors. She has been a crucial guide to the mysteries of the English language. I look forward to reading her forthcoming doctoral thesis.

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DEDICATION

To my parents, Djordje and Veselinka Marijan,
for your love and for teaching me about the importance of perseverance.

To my nieces and nephews, Lilly Sofia Ćućuz, Marija & Marko Simić, Elena & Aleksa
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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ARBiH	Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina
BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
CNA	Centre for Nonviolent Action
CoE	Council of Europe
DUP	Democratic Unionist Party
EU	European Union
EUFOR	European Union Force Althea
GFA	Good Friday Agreement
HDZ BiH	Croat Democratic Union of BiH
HET	Historical Enquiries Team
ICTY	International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia
IEBL	Inter-Entity Boundary Line
IFI	International Fund for Ireland
INLA	Irish National Liberation Army
IRA	Irish Republican Army
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGOs	Non-governmental organizations
OFMDFM	Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister
OHR	Office of the High Representative
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PDP	Party for Democratic Progress
PIC	Peace Implementation Council
PIRA	Provisional Irish Republican Army
PSNI	Police Service of Northern Ireland
RAAD	Republican Action Against Drugs
RS	Serb Republic
RUC	Royal Ulster Constabulary
SDA	Party for Democratic Action
SDLP	Social Democratic and Labour Party
SDP	Social Democratic Party
SDS	Serb Democratic Party
SF	Sinn Féin
SNSD	Alliance of Independent Social Democrats
UDA	Ulster Defence Association
UDR	Ulster Defence Regiment
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
US	United States
USAID	The United States Agency for International Development
UUP	Ulster Unionist Party
UVF	Ulster Volunteer Force

Introduction

After the Peace Agreements: Peacebuilding and the Liminal Condition

> *'What is most important to peacemaking - more important than any mediator, more important even than the details of the proposed accord - are local leaders, the principal participants in the process'.*

> *...Northern Ireland is already the beneficiary of a peace agreement - the Good Friday or Belfast Agreement. The accord's accomplishments were and are impressive; that said, the agreement more ended the war than built the peace.* (Richard N. Haass, 2014)

Richard Haass' remarks exemplify the international community's belief in the importance of local leaders and elite level processes for post-conflict peacebuilding.[1] Haass acknowledges the role of peace agreements and notes that much has been achieved in post-Belfast Agreement Northern Ireland.[2] At the same time, Hass points to the remaining challenges as well as limits of peace agreements in building peace. He goes on to state that despite the stability of Northern Ireland, the current situation is marked by a sense of "not quite normalcy, not quite peace" (2014). By pointing to the uncertain peace in the polity, Haass captures the sentiments of many observers and scholars of Northern Ireland. Similarly, scholars describe the peace achieved in post-Dayton Bosnia-Herzegovina (hereafter, Bosnia or BiH) as more akin to a "frozen conflict"

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[1] Richard N. Haass, is a former US special envoy for the Northern Irish peace process from 2001 to 2003 and chair of 2013 cross-party talks. The above quotations are excerpts from his remarks given upon receipt of the 2013 Tipperary International Peace Award.

[2] The Northern Irish peace agreement was signed on Good Friday, April 10, 1998. As such, the peace agreement is often named the Good Friday Agreement (GFA). In order to avoid the symbolic burden, the peace agreement is also referred to as the Belfast Agreement as it was signed in Belfast. The official agreement is simply titled as The Agreement: Agreement reached in multi-party negotiations. I use the Belfast Agreement though when quoting others reference to the GFA. In addition, I refer to the Bosnian agreement formally titled The General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina by its more common name, the Dayton Agreement.

than a sustainable, durable peace envisioned as part of peacebuilding projects (Perry, 2009). This growing recognition of the incomplete peace situations might appear to lead to a questioning of the dominant ways peace is built. Yet, as is clear from his statement in the above excerpt, Haass and many other international experts and policy-makers continue to stress the importance of local leaders and elites in resolving the remaining issues. In this perspective, peace trickles down from the leaders to the communities.

However, the vision of a trickle-down peace has been slow to develop in Bosnia and Northern Ireland. Some twenty years since the Dayton Agreement and international peacebuilding projects, Bosnians are divided both mentally and physically. Despite the significant international support little reconciliation has occurred between the members of the different ethnic groups. While some Bosnians have returned to original places of residence, many have not.[3] Meanwhile, in Northern Ireland some seventeen years since the signing of the Belfast Agreement the society remains deeply divided. In Belfast, for example, there are today more walls and barriers between different communities than there were during the conflict and preceding the signing of the peace agreement (McDonald, 2009). The number of "peace walls" in Belfast increased from 24 in 1994 during "the Troubles," to approximately 80 in 2009 and 99 in 2011 (McDonald 2009; Belfast Interface Project, 2011).[4] In both polities, the struggle over

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[3] Displacement of population as a result of the war in Bosnia was significant. When Dayton was signed, some 90 percent of Bosnian Serbs, and 95 percent of Bosnian Croats and Bosniaks had been displaced from their pre-war areas (Weiss- Fagen, 2011, p. 4). As Hariz Halilovich notes, "Of the 2.2 million displaced during the war, only some 400,000 have returned to their original places of residence" (2013, p. 119). Many of the displaced, some 1.3 million individuals, are estimated to have settled abroad, while close to 500,000 individuals remain internally displaced (Halilovich, 2013). In 2014, some 8,600 individuals were still living in collective centres for displaced persons in what the EU describes as "difficult conditions" (European Commission, 2014, p. 22).

[4] The actual number of peace walls is debated. Some sources claim the number to be between 42 and 48 peace walls across Northern Ireland (Byrne, 2011; Black, 2014). However, the Belfast Interface Project (2011) in their documentation of walls and barriers in Belfast uncovers that number to be closer to 99 barriers in Belfast alone. There is general agreement that the number of peace walls has increased from the signing of the GFA.

symbols and emblems, as well as narratives about the past conflict and future of the polity continue to shape the everyday lives of ordinary citizens.

These developments are contrary to the goals of creating more integrated societies, which are central to many peacebuilding initiatives seeking to bolster stability of the post-conflict polity. Liberal peacebuilding strategies aim to transform societies, through institutional formulas, by seeking to inspire shared and integrated spaces and areas for all members of the community, and supporting civil society initiatives, but these have all had limited success. Simply, the integrative goal of peacebuilding in both of these two diverse cases of Bosnia and Northern Ireland is stalled. However, as little significant violence has occurred, actors and experts involved in peacebuilding find themselves facing a puzzle: despite years of peacebuilding initiatives the peace achieved remains incomplete or fragile and divisions between the communities in these societies continue to persist and are arguably increasing.

Why are ordinary citizens in these societies building walls (literal and figurative) between one another? Several related questions also emerge. Why is everyday life continuously marked with ethnic symbols and emblems, and how is citizenship practiced in these contexts? Why are protests and riots occurring over symbolic issues such as flags and parade routes? What types of narratives emerge about the past, why are they meaningful to the populations, and how do they shape societal relations today? Finally, what do these symbolic practices and narratives mean for the future of these places and peacebuilding activities more broadly?

In addressing these questions, I point out that dominant theories and peacebuilding practices ignore the importance of cultural insights and everyday ways in which local populations respond to the peacebuilding strategies. This thesis is about how communities and individuals experience peace and respond to peacebuilding strategies long after peace

agreements have been signed. Here, I attempt to understand the markings of everyday life with both exclusionary and inclusionary symbols and narratives. I suggest that the dominant peacebuilding approaches have overlooked the ways that communities and individuals negotiate the uncertainty of the post-conflict period. In both polities, the peacebuilding strategies and the responses of local populations have led to the perpetuation of what I describe as liminal conditions.[5] In post-peace agreement societies, these are conditions of uncertainty and incomplete peace that are experienced by the populations in their daily lives following the cessation of conflict.

However, ordinary citizens also further perpetuate the liminal conditions through their continued contestations over the future of the polity and the legacy of the conflict, in turn, stalling peacebuilding transformations. This peacebuilding impasse is characterized by symbolic conflicts, divisions of everyday life, and competing interpretations of the past. It is through these mechanisms that liminality perpetuates itself as a condition of incomplete peace. The perpetuation of liminality, thus, I argue, is not simply a result of actions by elites (local and global). The perpetuation of liminality is also a result of the practices and narratives of ordinary citizens. Through everyday practices and cultural expressions of division, ordinary individuals continue to build walls, both mental and physical, between each other. These practices take place behind visible institutional facades of modern liberal citizenship, understood in terms of status and equal legal rights for all member of society, and thus remain out of view. Yet it is precisely these practices that have undermined the dominant peacebuilding strategies.

Therefore, this research ties into debates about the importance of local actors and contexts to the goals and strategies of dominant forms of peacebuilding. I show that in uncertain

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[5] My use of the notion of liminal condition is explained in more detail in the sections that follow. A liminal period is widely accepted to mean a period of transition between different states, stages or roles.

transitions it is through practices and cultural forms of expressions that individuals in post-conflict societies are engaged in an everyday politics that is often less visible in the traditional peacebuilding approaches. By examining such practices and expressions as political, we not only understand the local contexts better, but we also become aware that peacebuilding strategies are not only negotiated in the boardrooms or official institutions, but on the streets and through a myriad of everyday informal, visible and invisible, ways (Watson, 2012, p. 40). Thus, peacebuilding strategies do not merely trickle down from the elites to the communities. Instead, they are interpreted, contested and supported in locally meaningful ways.

The Peacebuilding Debates

To argue that these cultural and everyday practices are political and impact peace interventions is critically to intervene in debates on peacebuilding. Scholarship on peacebuilding remains divided between those that favour institutional, top-down, policy-based approaches and the critical scholars that highlight the need for locally owned, ground-up mechanisms. The dominant approach to peacebuilding, the so-called "liberal peace" approach, focuses on economic development and building democratic institutions, and emphasizes the role played by international organizations and local elites in following through peace agreements. This is not to say that unresolved symbolic and cultural issues are not addressed by the liberal peace approach (see Chandler, 2015). But, when they are, they are incorporated under the same rules of the broader liberal peacebuilding project. A good example of this top-down strategy in practice can be observed in the context of the cross-party talks led in 2013 by Richard Haass, on the issue of disputes arising over flags and parades in Northern Ireland (see chapter four). From this perspective, any remaining concerns in post-conflict contexts can be fixed with better policies.

In contrast to the policy-based approaches, critical scholars have alerted us to important limits of liberal peacebuilding strategies and the ways ordinary citizens interpret these strategies. In other words, critics point out that despite its apparent comprehensiveness, the liberal peace project has led to formulaic approaches, the professionalization of civil society, and a toolbox of various models and templates for transitional justice (Pickering, 2007). Simply put, critics argue that local contexts and local populations are often missing from the top-down strategies (Richmond 2011; Mac Ginty, 2011). Although local ownership and local context are often highlighted rhetorically in the literature, in practice liberal peacebuilding has not been context-specific. Some critical scholars have even gone as far as to refer to this lack of contextual specificity as "peacebuilding from IKEA" where "the vision of peace is made off-site, shipped to a foreign location, and reconstructed according to a pre-arranged plan" (Mac Ginty, 2011, p. 39). In this way, local populations have little input in the types of projects that are supported by external actors and imposed on their lives.

However, I suggest that it is important to recognize that local populations are not simply passive recipients of these institutional formulas. I fully recognize the power disparities between local populations and external peacebuilding actors such as the United States, European Union, United Nations and other international and non-governmental organizations. However, I find that it is ultimately local actors who interpret these top-down strategies. Whether they recognize it or not, peacebuilding actors and their agendas are always interpreted on the ground in context-specific ways. Amitav Acharya has alerted us to the idea of "localization" or, as he defines it, "the active construction (through discourse, framing, grafting, and cultural selection) of foreign ideas by local actors, which results in the former developing significant congruence with local

beliefs and practices" (2000, p. 245). Thus, local actors contest, resist or support different strategies based on the relevance of the strategies to their contexts.

Scholars of peacebuilding increasingly suggest that in practice the liberal peace approach is shaped by various competing liberal and illiberal norms and goals. In addition, it is important not to view local practices as separate from international strategies. Instead, as some critical scholars suggest, the interaction of dominant peacebuilding strategies and local practices and expressions can best be viewed as marked by hybridisation. Roger Mac Ginty points to the importance of hybridity for discussions of peacebuilding. Mac Ginty defines hybridity as "the composite forms of social thinking and practice that emerge as the result of the interaction of different groups, practices and worldviews" (2011, p. 8). As a result of this understanding of hybridity, the idea of the liberal peacebuilding approach as homogenous is undermined. Thus, hybrid peacebuilding approaches recognize that peacebuilding is a result of the entanglement between global and local visions for the polities. As such, understanding peacebuilding as shaped by hybridity allows us to recognize the ways that liberal peacebuilding strategies are influenced by local practices, and vice versa.

Furthermore, an emerging everyday peacebuilding literature offers further incentive to understand the type of peace which develops long after peace agreements have been signed in the spaces of everyday life in these societies. Building on the everyday peacebuilding turn (see Mac Ginty, 2014; Richmond and Mitchell, 2012), I argue that peacebuilding literature needs to engage further with the insights from cultural studies, anthropology, sociology and political geography to understand better how everyday practices both support and contradict visions of stable and integrated societies. From these literatures, I take an appreciation of the need to reflect

on cultural forms of expression and practice that occur within everyday living as an important part of what needs to be included in definitions of politics.

Although at times I point to exclusionary practices of local actors within my examples and cases, I do not see local actors as being responsible for the absence of a sustainable peace. Rather, I see the ordinary individuals as active agents who negotiate the everyday through both inclusionary and exclusionary practices. As such, I see local actors as having more agency than is often assumed but I neither wish to romanticize the practices of local actors nor blame them for the lack of success of liberal peacemaking (Richmond, 2011, p. 3). At the same time, recent critical peacebuilding literature has focused on local practices as evidence of resistance to the liberal peacebuilding agenda and to what are often ethnicized forms of local politics. I am cautious with this highlighting of local "resistance", as the formulation lends itself to interpreting local acts in uncritical ways by, for example, only concentrating on organizations and actors that focus on positive change. In other words, I illustrate that local approaches to peacebuilding are neither necessarily progressive nor regressive. The types of practices that emerge depend on the politics and actions/activities of different actors.

This more balanced view of local agency also avoids simply shifting the blame for the shortcomings of the liberal peace strategies to local elites. For example, scholars increasingly recognize that local elites manipulate the agenda of the international community in building peace and promoting transitional justice, referring to these phenomena as "captured peacebuilding" and "hijacked justice" (Paris and Sisk, 2009, p. 312; Subotic, 2009). An influential hypothesis is that the "spoilers," who are defined as those "leaders and parties who believe that peace emerging from negotiations threatens their power, worldview, and interests, and use violence to undermine attempts to achieve it", are those that pose the greatest risk and

are a cause of limited transformations (Stedman, 1997, p. 5; also see discussion in Newman and Richmond, 2006). As subsequent chapters will show, while this argument is true to some extent, it does not fully explain the particular practices of ordinary individuals, nor account for their agency. It overemphasizes, as Rogers Brubaker notes, the power that elites supposedly have over ordinary citizens and narratives that the populations find meaningful (1998, p. 298). Simply put, a focus on leaders and their actions does not tell the whole story. But more importantly, I suggest that this elite-focused view obscures the understanding of how local populations respond to the uncertainty of the war-to-peace transitions.

Liminal Conditions of Post-Accord Polities

Before further outlining the key arguments of this thesis, it is necessary to explain what I term as the liminal conditions of post-accord divided societies, particularly Bosnia and Northern Ireland examined here. As shown below, understanding the current character of peacebuilding as being marked by a liminal condition is helpful in understanding the uncertainty and contestation that mark the everyday contexts in these polities. This understanding of liminality shifts the focus to the experience of peace that is enjoyed by ordinary individuals in the post-accord phase. It thus challenges established understandings of what a "post-conflict" peace looks like by the dominant peacebuilding approaches and the type of peace that emerges long after peace accords have been signed. Critical scholars have pointed to the fragility of peace achieved by dominant peacebuilding approaches and described post-conflict peace as a period of "no war, no peace" or "virtual peace", as well as the "unending peace process" (Mac Ginty, 2006, 2010; Richmond, 2008; Aggestam and Bjorkdahl, 2011).[6] Building on these insights, I suggest that the notion of

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[6] For an anthropological analysis of the "no peace, no war", see Richards, 2005.

the liminal condition is helpful in further understanding the types of responses to this fragility and uncertainty.

Bosnia and Northern Ireland seem to be stuck in a liminal condition, that of "in-betweenness" or, as anthropologist Victor Turner (1967) described it, being "betwixt and between," that is a condition of neither fully experiencing violence nor a more sustainable peace. Liminality is an anthropological term first used by Arnold Van Gennep (1909) in *Les rites de passage*. Gennep argues that rites of passage are made up of three stages: separation, a transitional, liminal period, and aggregation. Drawing on Gennep's work, Victor Turner expanded the use of liminality beyond its role in ritual, interpreting it more broadly as a transitional condition of being in-between established social categories and roles (Turner, 1967; Neumann, 2012, p. 474). Turner understood liminality as a phase of possibility: one is stripped of previous identities and ties and transitioning toward a final stage.

Scholars suggest that Turner's celebration of liminality as a phase of possibility was well received during his time in the late 1960s (Szakolczai, 2009, p.142). For this reason, Szakolczai suggests that in Turner's work and beyond, "[T]he term became associated with 1968, the happy celebration of anti-structure and difference; the dangerous, troubling, anxiety-generating aspects of uncertain periods of transition, conflict, and crisis, were simply ignored" (Szakolczai, 2009, p. 142). It is these ignored or forgotten aspects of liminality that are central in my appropriation of the concept. Rather than liminality being a period of positive transformation, as Turner's work suggests, I argue that in deeply divided societies, liberal peacebuilding that targets this transition period encounters competing interpretations of the past and contested narratives of the future

resulting in a stalled process.[7] As such, contemporary liminal situations are, as Agnes Horvath

describes, "periods of uncertainty, anguish, even existential fear" (2013, p. 2). This liminality is

what liberal peacebuilders seeking to rebuild these societies overlook. They employ a toolkit of

various strategies that are often not reflective of the context and too focused on institutions and

elites. The liminal now becomes an almost permanent condition, in which the divided societies,

in particular, seem stuck or what Roger Mac Ginty (2006) aptly phrased as a period of "no war,

no peace". Mac Ginty defines this experience as "a grudging hiatus in violent conflict crowned

with an internationally supported peace accord that finds little approval at home after initial

enthusiasm has worn off" (2006, p. 3). Thus, following Mac Ginty (2006), I note that the liminal

condition is marked by a lack of overt violence, but also the inability to achieve a more durable

or sustainable peace.

   This notion of liminality, as I am using it here, differs from earlier anthropological

definitions in an important way. Whereas the liminal period was seen as a transitional stage, a

liminal *condition*, as I describe it, is a more fixed condition of uncertainty, where the very

experience of uncertainty provides the false feeling of transitioning. Liminality is particularly apt

for the two cases examined here because they are governed by what were meant to be temporary

political arrangements and targeted by strategies that sought to lead to a normalization of non-

violent, democratic politics. A polity in condition of liminality can also be understood, then, in

this other sense of the term, as an unsettled and contested polity: citizens contest the possibility

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[7] By using the term "deeply divided societies" I take note of Adrian Guelke's examination of its various meanings. I
agree with Guelke's point that what is an important aspect of the different communal divisions is their contestation
of the legitimacy of the state (2012, p.155). In addition, in both cases examined here the divisions have been
bolstered by violent conflicts. This does not mean as Guelke reminds us that violent conflict is a "permanent
condition or necessarily a reliable yardstick as to whether a deeply divided society exists" (2012, p. 154). Rather, I
do believe that the past violence and the threat of future violence does play a role in maintaining the divisions in
societies where state legitimacy is contested by particular groups. John Nagle and Mary-Alice Clancy also agree that
in deeply divided societies "a deep conflict over the legitimacy of the state itself provides the basis for violent
division" (2010, p. 1).

of a unified and shared understanding of citizenship and a shared future because of uncertainty, lingering fear, as well as different understandings of the place they live in. Group narratives and isolated understandings of identity continue to hold meaning as they each seek to inscribe the same places with their own group symbols and narratives.

Liberal peacebuilding reproduces such liminality, sometimes unintentionally but sometimes as a diplomatic strategy, as it seeks to transform a polity often by suggesting to those more stable and peaceful members of the international community that the state is simply in "transition." The ambiguity and incompleteness of most peace agreements furthers uncertainty but is portrayed as a peaceful means to get the "shooting to stop." The transition from war to peace then is one part of the broader goal of transforming these polities into more stable societies. Therefore, when applied to what are considered large-scale liminal situations, such as those of post-conflict societies, the goal of the liminal stage is not simply to restore the previous orders but rather to establish new, normalized states and polities (Szakolczai, 2000, p. 218 cited in Malksoo, 2010). As part of this transitional process, the goal of peacebuilding and state-building strategies is to establish a citizenship based on equal access to rights as well as a shared sense of belonging. In the context of peacebuilding, the goals of transformation often result in short-term strategies that do not fully resolve the concerns of the communities, thus leading to more strategies and formulas (Mitchell, 2011). As such, some scholars suggest these "transitioning" societies find themselves "caught in the permanent limbo of 'transformation'" (Mitchell and Kelly, 2011, p. 313; Mitchell, 2011). Hence, the continued need for transformation also results in further uncertainty as the peace achieved appears, whether rightly or not, as weak or fragile.

Thus, liminality itself then becomes a condition that the populations react to, at times supporting and at other times obstructing the agenda of the peacebuilders. The population's reaction here is crucial to my understanding of liminality's usefulness as a concept. As Bjørn Thomassen argues, "Turner realized that 'liminality' served not only to identify the importance of in-between periods, but also to understand the human reactions to liminal experiences" (2009, p.14). The population's reactions can be understood as tactical responses contesting the visions for their polity that emerge from liberal peacebuilding strategies. It is important to recognize that contestations are at least two-pronged. Most visible and politicized are competing group narratives. But equally important are the struggles within a group that can split the community between those supporting more inclusionary narratives and those articulating more exclusionary ones. The supported narratives and symbols are many, with some being more or less inclusive and, others as extremely exclusionary.

Liminality, understood in this way, is not inherent to the group's history or culture but is rather "a contextual position that is socially and discursively produced" (Rumelili, 2012, p. 222). This understanding is contrary to the long-standing imaginings of Bosnia, and the Balkans more broadly as torn between different groups and religions (Berber, 2010).[8] Interesting also is that in British and Western discourses the understanding of Bosnian issues is often filtered through the

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[8] One British travel writer, Roy Trevor, remarked in his 1916 account about Bosnia that "This is not Europe, no matter what the map says (quoted in Mac Ginty, 2011, p. 134). See also Neval Berber's (2010) excellent study, *Unveiling Bosnia-Herzegovina in British Travel Literature (1844-1912)*, where she points to the exoticized interpretations of Bosnia and the Balkans in British travel literature. The most famous conceptualization of stereotypes about the Balkans is captured by Maria Todorova and her notion of "Balkanism" in her book *Imagining the Balkans* (1997). Muharem Bazdulj (2013) also offers a great overview of the variety of ways in which imagining of Bosnia and the recent war came to be interpreted in Western literature.

Irish paradigm.[9] In this sense, both cases examined here have historically been regarded as existing in-between or as being liminals often in the pejorative sense of that notion.[10]

As such, I use this term in relation to the peacebuilding agenda to show that liminal conditions result from the engagement between external visions and goals and local responses rather than as inherent features of these societies. Bahar Rumelili (2012) describes this transition from post-conflict society to a "normal society" as a liminal state of becoming. Rumelili is highly critical of what she sees as the hegemony of liberalism. She states that "[B]eing on a trajectory of becoming, they validate the universalistic and transformative pretensions of Western, liberal, and developed countries, yet at the same time, they reproduce their superiority, by always falling short of a complete transformation, remaining second-best, incomplete, and deformed replicas" (2012, p. 502). While Rumelili's thesis is certainly worth considering, liberal peacebuilding strategies and visions do not have complete control over these societies or their populations. Indeed, a key question is "who exactly engages in liminality?" (Davison and Tešan, 2014, p. 33; Mälksoo, 2012). Are the elites, local and international, in charge or do the local populations also shape the process? Zygmunt Bauman, in his analysis of the liminal condition of post-communist East-Central Europe notes that:

> The underdetermination and ambiguity of the liminal condition cannot be said to
>
> serve any specific purpose, and even less a purpose deliberately set and pursued
>
> by the elite currently in charge. It is, rather, a combined outcome of the

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[9] Berber points to the early 19th century when the British understanding of Bosnia became regarded through the "Irish Question" at that time a key issue facing British government (2010, p. xxiii). Though the British found the two societies comparable they still placed Bosnians as culturally and racially inferior and as less capable of developing their own state (Berber, 2010, p. xxiii). Interestingly, the comparison with the "Irish question" would continue well into the mid-1990s, when Home Secretary Douglas Hurd warned European Union foreign ministers against intervening in Bosnia in order to avoid a prolonged commitment like that of the British government in Northern Ireland (McGarry and O'Leary, 2004, p. 141).

[10] On changing external perceptions of Bosnia's liminality, see Buturovic, 2002.

dissolution of past meanings and the nebulousness of promised new ones.

Liminality is inherently ambivalent. It is a condition without clear time-span,

obvious exit and authoritative guides." (1994, p. 17)

As such, I suggest that peacebuilding strategies are always interpreted in context-specific ways, leading to different responses by citizens. In other words, the responses of local populations and their navigation of the uncertainty of the transition play an important role in the perpetuation of liminality.

However, the local population's reactions might not always support the ideals of local resistance as imagined by some critical scholarship on peacebuilding. Local responses can be exclusionary and divisive but they are nonetheless more accurate portrayals of how the peace process is faring. As such, it is important not to romanticize local agency or the possibilities of these local responses in the transitional period. Many theorists, Michel de Certau (1984, p. 30) included, see the "art of being in between" or the in-between space as a space or period of possible transformation. The liminal condition of a post-accord divided society is different. Here the liminal condition is marked with insecurity and furthers the sense of fragility of the peace that has been achieved. Exclusionary practices, such as building of barriers between communities emerge as powerful responses. At the same time, individuals in these societies do develop ways of coping with this uncertainty that are not always divisive and that, in fact, build bridges between the members of different groups. This thesis explores the question of which practices emerge as meaningful to the populations and what this means for peacebuilding and reconciliation more broadly.

Peacebuilding Blueprints, Local Responses and Citizenship

As noted in the above sections, I share the viewpoint of critical scholars who suggest that traditional peacebuilding efforts are met with limited success as they approach the building of peace in a top-down manner and overlook the importance of local actors and contexts. In particular, I argue that this top-down approach is at the heart of the three-pronged peacebuilding blueprint for divided societies. Namely, I identify three dominant strategies for building peace in deeply divided societies: institutional design, civil society building and support, and mechanisms of transitional justice or dealing with the past. I explain these strategies and their development in more detail in chapter two. I note that they are a part of the comprehensive peacebuilding effort that aims to transform divided polities into stable communities. Still, though seemingly comprehensive, these strategies largely overlook the uncertainty of the transitions, the ways that local population navigate the post-conflict period, and how individuals engage with the polity and with each other. Ultimately, the strategies fail to appreciate the need to understand the political as occurring beyond the institutional confines and the formal projects established by the peacebuilding actors.

In order to understand the limited success of dominant approaches and comprehensive peacebuilding strategies, and to appreciate the everyday politics, I argue that we need to understand the gap between the notion of citizenship as promoted by the comprehensive strategies and as experienced by the population. My aim in using the language of citizenship is to reclaim the notion of citizenship in relation to peacebuilding projects and enrich our understanding of citizenship experiences in post-conflict contexts. In other words, by examining local experiences and understandings of belonging in the post-conflict context, I wish to show

that local actors are not simply "wards" of peacebuilding projects (see Mamdani, 2010). Rather, they are actively engaged in the political life of their polities.

Through the polity building strategies outlined above, citizenship is approached as political and legal membership and status in a polity and human rights norms are institutionalised to ensure that all citizens have equal rights. As Sara Shneiderman and Amanda Snellinger (2013) point out, the dominant peacebuilding approach "ultimately envisions that the transition to peace is always effected irreversibly through the establishment of liberal democratic state institutions that protect rights of individuals and minorities, and promote rule of law and free and fair elections." In this way, the institutional protection of individual and minority rights is a central building block of liberal models of citizenship in the dominant peacebuilding model. However, as I note in both Bosnia and Northern Ireland, the institutionalization of equality and protection of individual rights, coexists with arrangements that give primacy to particular ethnic groups. As a result, there is a tension between the institutionalized perspectives that pull towards an ethnicized understanding of citizenship and the human rights norms that ensure equal rights for all members of the polity. This, in turn, means that one's experiences of belonging in the state as well as participation in state institution are still constrained by these ethnicized politics.

Alongside institutional design, peacebuilding actors also focus on a "participatory citizenship" by promoting involvement in civil society organizations (Kurtovic, 2014, p. 97). A rich associational life is seen as bolstering the democratic politics of the country as well as contributing to inter-group trust. Moreover, civil society organizations are central partners in supporting the broader peacebuilding project and furthering the sense of "local ownership" of the peace process (Philipsen, 2014). Still, as I will discuss in more detail in subsequent chapters, a majority of these externally created or supported organizations remain disconnected from

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ordinary citizens. In this way, the civil society perspective on citizenship is still top-down as it relies on organizations that are often more reflective of donor agendas than local needs and experiences. A similar gap exists between the transitional justice or dealing with the past mechanisms and the local populations. Namely, by seeking to promote a unifying account of the past conflict, peacebuilders attempt to build a common sense of belonging that is key to the reconciliation efforts. Still, by attempting to develop official narratives, peacebuilders overlook the ways that memories of the past conflict are contested and shaped by different experiences in local communities.

Simply put, these top-down approaches to citizenship fail to understand the impacts of the uncertain, liminal condition of the polity on the everyday lives of the population. I suggest that it is the lived experience of being a citizen, and the cultural practices in which one engages, that are also important factors in determining citizenship. Below, I explain my understanding of citizenship that draws on the expanded understanding of citizenship developed by critical citizenship studies scholarship to show how narrow definitions of citizenship which are predominant in mainstream, liberal peacebuilding approaches overlook crucial aspects of everyday politics and agency of ordinary individuals. As such, I suggest that citizenship is experienced differently as a result of the cultural and everyday practices of place-making, symbolic expressions and contested narratives. In other words, despite the institutional, civil society and transitional justice attempts to create a shared sense of citizenship and belonging, sociological aspects related to how citizenship is performed or practices are ignored. Viewed from a sociological perspective, the question of citizenship is then not simply a question of status but is also a "lived experience that entails instances of agency, empowerment and participation" (Deiana, 2013, p. 187). In other words, individuals in these societies are not simply subjects of

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the polity-building and peacebuilding agendas but rather active agents who play an important role in shaping their communities and type of peace that emerges.

In the context of liberal peacebuilding in Bosnia and Northern Ireland (but also in other post-conflict states) citizenship is predominantly understood in terms of political membership and legal status. Indeed, much political science scholarship also defines citizenship in terms of particular rights, obligations and membership status in a political community (Rygiel, 2010, p. 22). However, literature on critical citizenship studies has moved beyond this definition to focus on the sociological dimensions of belonging and everyday practices. In other words, the literature in the field of citizenship studies no longer understands citizenship as referring only to membership and legal status within a defined national and territorial political community (see Rygiel, 2010). Rather, citizenship, according to critical citizenship studies scholars, is simultaneously defined by the practices through which individuals and groups make claims to expand or redefine citizenship (Isin and Wood, 1999). Citizenship, in other words, is defined as "*both* a set of practices (cultural, symbolic, and economic) and a bundle of rights and duties (civil, political and social) that define an individual's membership in a polity" (Isin and Wood, 1999, p. 4; emphasis in original). Hence, it is important to understand citizenship in both of these senses: not only as a legal status and institution but also as a set of practices (in particular, cultural and symbolic) that are integral to the experience and materialization of citizenship.

As Engin Isin notes, understanding citizenship as a "social process" entails understanding citizenship as a "substantive experience" and citizens as "politically engaged" in shaping that experience (2000, p. 5; Rygiel, 2010, p. 22-23). Through this political engagement, Isin explains, "members of a polity always struggle to shape its fate" (2000, p. 5). The struggle to shape the fate of the polity is particularly important in contexts where the polity's legitimacy is contested

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and where different visions exist for that polity's future. As such, this more sociological understanding of citizenship inherent to critical citizenship studies approaches allows for a better understanding of the multidimensional agency of ordinary citizens, which is often overlooked in peacebuilding scholarship. As Paula Pickering highlights, "[E]ven though local political elites set the official terms of citizenship, it is ordinary people in the postwar period who interpret official constraints and decide what to do about them" (2007, p. 3). It is precisely this agency of the local population in responding to and developing their own understandings of citizenship as belonging that I focus on in this thesis.

Everyday Peace Politics: Bringing in "Cultural Lenses"

A focus on the everyday symbolic and cultural practices allows us to recognize a range of practices not often understood as "political" in the dominant scholarship in political science and in practice of peacebuilding. For example, in divided societies walking becomes political as it involves negotiating divided spaces inscribed with symbols of different groups. As such, choosing to walk a particular route is often telling of where one feels secure. These practices are also tactical as they are responses to strategies that attempt to create integrated or shared spaces. My use of the notions of strategies and tactics and the focus on the everyday is partly inspired by the work of Michel de Certeau (1984). I build on de Certeau's insights on tactical responses of ordinary citizens as part of the everyday politics in divided societies. It is in the spaces of daily life that peacebuilding strategies are tested and that ordinary citizens enact their own understandings of identity and belonging. For this reason, I suggest that these everyday politics are just as relevant to the broader strategies of peacebuilding as they are to domestic politics and

daily life in these societies.[11] This understanding of what is considered political also draws on insights developed by feminist scholars such as Cynthia Enloe (2014). Enloe (2014) encourages students of international politics to consider practices often seen as merely "domestic" or "trivial" by foreign affairs experts, as central to international politics. Moreover, this perspective recognizes individuals as not simply passive victims but rather agents who respond to difficult circumstances with their own views and actions (Hill, 1999, p. 122).

These everyday practices in divided societies are often, but not always, direct responses to the strategies of peacebuilding. For example, in one neighbourhood in Belfast, ordinary citizens create *de facto* segregated entrances to a building that has been designated by the peacebuilding projects as a "shared" space. That is, individuals in a neighbourhood will use a single entrance that will mark that entrance, and those who use it, as members of that community (Mitchell and Kelly, 2011). Through these actions individuals maintain the divisions and contest the attempts to create a more integrated or shared space. Other times, the practices are subtler and indirect but nonetheless create boundaries around who belongs to the neighbourhood or community. For example, by placing small flags or symbols in the area there is a clear marking of the neighbourhoods or towns. While these may be inconspicuous to an external observer, the local knowledge obtained by living in these places means that they are clearly understood and often shape the uses of space.

The importance of these practices and the links to the everyday is found in the meaning that they provide to ordinary citizens that continue to support them. In other words, the everyday in the post-agreement phase is political and a range of practices, symbolic and cultural, shape the

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[11] Here I echo Audra Mitchell's (2011, p. 6) formulation and argument on why the everyday practices are relevant to broader global politics.

type of peace lived by ordinary individuals. As Marc Howard Ross stresses, there is a need for a cultural perspective that "obliges us to go beyond formal agreements to recognize ritual and symbol as crucial to the implementation of agreements for peacemaking and peacebuilding" (2007, p.3). I also point out the way in which the local population interacts with the liberal discourse of peacebuilding sometimes appropriating it while at other times contesting its particular visions. Simply put, these cultural expressions need to be understood against the background of the different peacebuilding strategies. As such these practices, and the above outlined understanding of the everyday politics, focus our attention beyond the formal spheres often considered by dominant peacebuilding approaches and overlooked by much of the literature. This overlooking by the policy-based and academic scholarship of the everyday politics is an important gap that this thesis aims to fill.

Before continuing, however, I should elaborate upon my use of the term "culture." Following Ross, formal expressions of culture, such as murals and parades are analyzed, but more seemingly banal everyday differences are also examined. As such, I also take note of graffiti messages, everyday practices, such as walking patterns, and language. Wherever relevant I also make a note of novels, TV shows, plays and films and their uses in contemporary developments in divided societies. However, I do not provide an in-depth analysis of literary representations, television shows, theatre plays or films. While I do think that the novels, TV shows, plays and films are important to explore here I am primarily concerned with culture as lived by ordinary citizens. Culture, as anthropologist Clifford Geertz asserted, "is not cults and customs, but the structures of meaning through which men [and women] give shape to their experience; and politics is not coups and constitutions, but one of the principle arenas in which such structures publicly unfold" (1973, p. 312). The point Geertz makes is relevant here to my

research as I show the importance of these meanings and practices beyond the acts themselves. These practices are in and of themselves political because they offer different visions of belonging and the state. More importantly, these practices continue to undermine the goals of liberal peacebuilding and are, therefore, not simply localized acts. Rather, these local practices intertwine with global norms and values in ways that continue to undermine attempts to "neutralize" or build more "shared" communities.

Culture is by no means an easy concept to engage with given its numerous definitions.[12] Culture is itself a contested concept. Scholars have pointed out differences between high culture, focused on elites, and the lived experiences of different groups (Smith, 2000, p.4). While I aim here to capture the interaction between different levels of society I am also aware of the ways in which representation itself reproduces particular understandings of these societies. As Alex Jeffrey notes in the case of Bosnia, "acting and speaking about BiH does not simply report reality but actively constitutes and reproduces political categories and territorializations" (2013, p. 6). Thus, when examining cultural expressions and referring to different uses of culture I highlight the intermingling of different ideas, visions, narratives and actors. Culture is also fluid and malleable. In the practices and enactments subtle shifts do occur. Yet, as I have noted in the previous sections, there are also some continuities in uses of symbols and enactments of narratives that signal a perceived fixedness. For example, the symbols of groups are often used, which in the past have been used to target and prosecute one of the communities in the conflict. The contested histories of such symbols might be perceived as simply representing a person's community and political stance. They could also, however, be interpreted as a clear reminder to the "other" group of the past, with the aim of furthering their sense of insecurity about the future.

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[12] Indeed, as the theorist Raymond Williams has aptly noted, "Culture is one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language" (Quoted in Avruch, 1998, p. 6).

Culture in these uses becomes a political tool. The term culture and its use in divided societies is highly political and thus even more controversial. Ethnic entrepreneurs use culture to justify particular events and policies often followed by "protecting one's culture," as if culture was a tangible, stable thing to be protected. Culture is, in these instances, used by elites to legitimize ethnicized politics. In other words, the presentation of something as belonging to one's "culture" requires a political process of struggle between competing visions of what it means to be a member of one's culture. Aware of this political process, feminist scholars (Nira Yuval Davis, 1998; Iris Marion Young, 1990) alert us to the importance of a politics of representation. These scholars note the power inequalities that exist within groups and that some members, such as political elites, can represent the cultural identity in ways with which less powerful members disagree. From this literature we can take away the importance of understanding how something comes to be seen as representative of that particular identity and culture. But as I will discuss, we also need to look beyond elite manipulations to understand and fully comprehend the ways in which particular narratives and practices become embedded and performed in the daily lives of the population.

Therefore, culture, as I use it here, is formed by the norms, values, beliefs and can be observed by paying attention to the daily practices, symbols and narratives which are meaningful to the individuals who engage with them. These practices occur in particular social and political contexts and become strategic resources and ways for populations to engage with various visions of the society and polity. As Michael C. Williams argues, we should be:

> [T]hinking about 'culture' as a strategic resource, as a form of power, and as part
> of a field of contestations that does not end up simply identifying an amorphous
> realm of 'soft power' or replicating long standing and sterile claims that ideas and

culture are either simply manifestations of more basic material determinants, or

are little more than cynical rhetorical manipulations or rationalization of more

basic interests. (2007, p. 120)

Thus, I see culture and cultural expressions as ways through which particular visions and

understandings of politics are negotiated. That is, the ways ordinary individuals are engaged in

cultural expressions is important to my understanding of group identities as well as experiences

of citizenship.

Methodological Considerations

Analyzing these multilayered and complex issues requires an interdisciplinary approach.

I have used academic scholarship from political science, cultural studies, anthropology,

sociology and political geography to capture the attempts to manage conflict and the responses of

local populations. I examine the post-agreement period using literature from anthropology,

citizenship studies and cultural studies in particular rather than only relying on political science

or security studies scholarship. As such, I follow the interdisciplinary tradition of critical peace

and conflict studies scholarship. In doing this, my goal is to add another layer of understanding

and insight to the peacebuilding scholarship that is not captured within the dominant literature.

In other words, I suggest that the focus on cultural and everyday practices is an overlooked

dimension within the dominant peacebuilding scholarship. In addition, I have also examined a

range of other sources such as primary documents relating to "community relations" and dealing

with divisions (e.g. A Shared Future, 2005), reports from international organizations and non-

governmental organizations (International Crisis Group, 2014; OHR, 2013) and media accounts

(e.g. McDonald, 2009). Ultimately, my field experiences and semi-structured research interviews played an important role in the findings of this thesis.

Through my field work I have had many opportunities to observe cultural and everyday practices and engage in conversation with local citizens about these practices and their significance or meaning. In addition, I have also conducted interviews with key informants, members of community organizations, volunteer groups and local activists engaged in peacebuilding initiatives in both Bosnia and Northern Ireland. These organizations range from formal non-governmental organizations to small cultural or arts-focused groups. All individuals interviewed worked on projects seeking to transform the post-conflict society and repair relationships between communities. Many of the projects received funding from external actors such as the European Union and US. In Bosnia, and to a lesser extent in Northern Ireland, I also spoke to international bureaucrats in order to further understand the dominant approaches to peacebuilding. Following some initial contacts through an online search, I approached people using the "snowball" method, but also paying attention to inclusivity and ensuring that I included a representation of the diverse viewpoints and narratives present in these societies. The interviewees had a choice of confidentiality and many requested that their identities be kept anonymous. As a result, I decided to keep all of the interviews confidential.

Interestingly, in Northern Ireland some interviewees were concerned that criticism of the "peace process" would lead to their labelling as detractors or "dissidents". The latter term is often used for members of paramilitary groups that continue to use violence to fight for a goal of a united Ireland. Yet, these interviewees felt that it was emerging as a label for anyone critical of the way that the peace projects have been carried out. In Bosnia, interviewees requested some anonymity particularly when touching on what they noted as "difficult" or "touchy" subjects

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such as war crimes, or inter-ethnic relations. Only short descriptions of their role or position is mentioned often to differentiate between the types of projects or issue areas in which the individuals or groups engage. Overall, I conducted a total of 50 semi-structured interviews in both cases during my fieldwork in Northern Ireland in the fall of 2011 and Bosnia in the spring of 2012 and September 2013. While the interviews were semi-structured to provide some focus on the post-agreement period I allowed the interviewees to discuss any issues or topics they felt were relevant. I conducted all the interviews in Bosnia in the local language and all the translations of these interviews and other local reports are my own unless otherwise noted.

Many more informal interviews and discussions about the state of peace in both cases occurred during casual socializing and my daily life in these societies. Participant observation also played an important role in my analysis of these cases. In Northern Ireland, I lived in North Belfast, described as a microcosm of the Northern Irish situation, with a young local couple. Given the manageable size of Northern Ireland, I interviewed individuals in Derry/Londonderry and Armagh. In Bosnia, I divided my time between Sarajevo and Banja Luka, while making trips to Mostar and Livno to capture the different inter-ethnic relationships. In Sarajevo, I lived in the Koševo neighbourhood, which is in the Bosniak-Croat Federation, and later moved to Banja Luka in order to observe the dynamics in the Serb Republic. As such, the interviews that I conducted were supplemented by my own everyday experiences and observations during field work in the two cases. In order to analyze the narratives, symbols and practices on the ground, this work also engages in interpretivist methods. Building on the work of Ross (2007) and Wedeen (2008), I analyze the "semiotic practices" as the intersubjective meanings held by groups, which are made visible through practices and performances. Through my field work I

have had many opportunities to observe these practices and engage in conversation with local citizens about their significance or meaning.

An important example of the everyday experience stands out and is relevant here. During my stay in North Belfast, I would often walk to meet my interviewees or to the city centre. I realized early on that when I walked alone I would take the most convenient route. However, when accompanied by my roommates both born and raised in Belfast we would often take an alternate route that seemed to go to in a roundabout way to our destination. Upon my inquiry into this matter, I realized that their mental maps of Belfast did not reflect the official map that I carried around with me and this was confirmed through several other experiences. The knowledge of the divided geography that my roommates, and that of other local researchers and students that I encountered, continued to shape the routes that they would take, often in order, to avoid more contentious areas between the two communities. While avoiding particular areas of cities is common in many places in these contexts the avoidance is a result of the experiences of conflict and post-violent conflict insecurity. I elaborate on this in the chapter on Northern Ireland. Such research observations informed my discussions of the everyday practices and realities in divided societies.

The attention paid to these observations also reflects my methodological approach. This thesis is a work based broadly in social constructivism. As such, my approach to the issue of group identity and ethnicity is to view these identities as constructed and contested. In my view, identities are constituted through social, economic, and political relations and processes. I therefore do not view identity as fixed or bounded in nature, and therefore as unchanging. At the same time, I acknowledge and highlight that in deeply divided contexts group identities cannot

be manufactured wholesale or easily replaced with some new construction by external actors. Here let me briefly touch on my understanding of ethnic identity in this thesis.

Several scholars, such as Kanchan Chandra (2012), provide a constructivist view of ethnic identities and this perspective is relevant to my discussion here. Chandra, in particular, outlines that ethnic identities should be understood as "subset of categories in which descent-based attributes are necessary for membership" (2012, p. 9). Chandra explains that, in the short-term, our descent-based attributes (attributes we acquire through descent, i.e. colour of our skin) constrain the types of "nominal" identities that we can "activate." In other words, though identities are constructed there are certain contextual factors (i.e., ancestry/descent, history, institutional background, social norms, etc.) that constrain the way our identities are changed in the short-term (Chandra, 2012, pp. 14- 17). Chandra (2012, p. 14) explains that, in particular, descent-based attributes are "sticky", or not easy to change over the short period of time.[13] This is particularly relevant for the discussion of group identities in divided societies. Though identities, for example of "Croat" and "Serb", are malleable this does not mean that they are easy to change given the recent conflicts and continued divisions. I will discuss these issues in more detail in chapter four and five.

Consequently, while the literature on ethnic identities offers important insights about identity change I think that an interdisciplinary approach to understanding identity helps us better capture the politics of identity in divided contexts. More importantly, an interdisciplinary understanding helps us avoid several traps when examining identities in contexts such as Bosnia and Northern Ireland. Literature on identity in the two cases, particularly Bosnia, tends to fall into two camps (Buturovic, 2002, p. 32). One is the primordial and portrays individuals in these

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[13] As she notes in the long-term changes can occur that undermine the importance of certain descent-based attributes, for example through the emergence of new rules for interpretation of the attributes (Chandra, 2012, p. 16).

societies as holding onto ancient ethnic hatreds. The other, as Amila Buturovic notes, portrays ethnic politics "as an assault, against the will of Bosnians themselves, on the shared cultural heritage" (2002, p. 32). Neither, as Buturovic notes, fully captures "the politics and poetics of ethnic relations" (2002, p. 32). In other words, neither grasps the simultaneity of exclusionary, inclusionary as well as ambiguous narratives and practice in deeply divided contexts.

Research Ethics

Some ethical concerns arise when engaging in research in deeply divided contexts that are worth addressing here. A crucial concern is that the researcher in examining the exclusionary perspectives ends up uncritically reproducing these perspectives. By discussing the less inclusive and sometimes extremely exclusionary perspectives and practices that different groups find meaningful or engage in I do not accept them as desirable. Exclusionary rhetoric and symbolism, as I explain throughout, is problematic and possesses the greatest obstacles to the building of peace. At the same time, a contextual understanding of different societies and their responses to peacebuilding agendas is crucial to understanding how these conflicts can be transformed in locally meaningful ways. As such, while I find exclusionary practices worrisome and normatively problematic I do think that overlooking them risks misunderstanding the local context.

Along with these concerns there are many others particularly on the role of the researcher in representing societies that have experienced violence, such as the identity of the researcher and conducting research in societies that have experiencing traumatic events (see Dauphinée, 2007; Kappler, 2013). The identity of the researcher plays an important role to individuals and communities in divided contexts as there tends to be a mistrust of outsiders (see Smyth and

Robinson, 2001). In Northern Ireland, my position as an outsider to the conflict was helpful at times as I did not hold a particular affiliation with any of the groups. But it was also my Bosnian identity that was focused on by my interviewees. Interestingly, coming from a similarly divided society I was, as was pointed out to me in interviews, expected to understand the context better than other researchers from Western societies. In Bosnia, my double role as an insider and outsider was interesting to my interviewees. My position as an insider was often helpful as I spoke the local language and understood the local customs. At the same time, I was considered an outsider given that I had left the country at an early age and was no longer residing there. I did however remain vigilant in ensuring that I was representing different perspectives by contacting individuals and organizations in different areas. I also supplemented the interviews with newspaper reports as well as different secondary sources, such as reports from community organizations. Furthermore, while I have highlighted the need for more local voices in peacebuilding, I recognize that I am after all often "speaking for" local actors here and that these are my representations (Hill, 1999, p. 108).

Another concern with representation of these societies and the everyday is the extent to which different perspectives are captured by researchers and how reflective these representations are of the practices "on the ground." Both Bosnia and Northern Ireland can be seen as "over-researched" cases due to the number of scholars and research projects focusing on these societies, partly owing to the perception of these cases as "relatively safe places" to conduct research (Kappler, 2013, p. 135). Indeed, interviewees in both cases often voiced the complaint over too many researchers during my field work. As such, local actors have also developed particular "tactics" in responding to and coping with the research on them and their societies (Kappler, 2013). Stefanie Kappler points to the reality that local subjects, such as NGO

representatives, frame their societies in particular ways that can reflect the interests of the organization more so than providing a balanced account (2013, p. 133). As Kappler suggests, one way to address this issue during field work is to reflect critically on the different interests, goals, and representations. Even still, the interviewees can shape the project outputs through the type of access and information that they provide (or withhold) to the researcher (Kappler, 2013). While there are no simple solutions to the above outlined issues, I do think that as Kappler (2013, p. 139) suggests, acknowledging the multiple tactics of ordinary citizens in a critical and reflexive way is central to recognizing the different layers of everyday politics in peace research.

Why Bosnia and Northern Ireland?

At this stage, I need to briefly comment on the comparative approach adopted in this thesis. The Bosnian and Northern Irish contexts are certainly different, as I outline below. However, I am attracted to both of these cases due to the similar outcomes of the dominant peacebuilding strategies. In particular, I am interested in the similar ways that local populations respond to the uncertainty of the war-to-peace transitions and what these responses tell us about the limitations of dominant approaches to peacebuilding. As Mac Ginty suggests, "Seemingly disparate examples can help illustrate common experiences facing post-peace accord societies" (2006, p. 6). At the same time, I recognize the context specific factors that shape the peace process in these cases. In other words, I aim to explore the experiences and responses to liberal peacebuilding strategies that are common in the two cases, while "acknowledging the unique national and local contexts of specific cases" (Bollens, 2007, p. 4). However, I believe that only by going beyond the single case study can we observe common experiences of what have become standardized peacebuilding approaches (Bollens, 2007). Still, I hope to illustrate these common experiences without suggesting another standardized framework. In the following

section, I examine the differences but also some similarities of what are certainly two diverse cases.

The diverse cases of Bosnia and Northern Ireland provide excellent examples of the salience of cultural expression and their impacts on peacebuilding projects for several key reasons. Despite the difference in scale of conflict, democratic culture, links to EU and international community and different types of political arrangements, the responses to peacebuilding strategies by the local populations have been quite similar. In this section, I outline the details of the differences between the cases while also noting some similarities.

First, these two cases feature different scales and experiences of violent conflict. The war in Bosnia lasted roughly over three years with periods of ceasefires, while the period known as "the Troubles" in Northern Ireland lasted over three decades. Bosnia's conflict resulted in some 100,000 deaths, while the figure in Northern Ireland is less than 3,500. Bosnia is infamous for large-scale massacres, prison camps, war-time rapes, genocide in Srebrenica, and other large-scale atrocities. In Northern Ireland, targeted attacks and bombings characterized the violence which never tipped over into a full-scale war, and the province, as part of the United Kingdom, did not experience state collapse. Thus, Bosnia is seen as a paradigmatic case for contemporary peacebuilding (Kaldor, 2007). Michael Kelly and Catherine Baker point out that "[U]nlike the conflicts in Cyprus or in Northern Ireland, it [Bosnian war] tested the ability of the European and international communities to contain a conflict comparable to that which 80 years before had plunged the continent into the Great War of 1914-1918" (2012, p. 1).[14] Bosnia also came to

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[14] Bazdulj points to the way in which the symbolism of the 1914 assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria captured the imagination of the Western observers (2013, p. 7). For example, the French president Francois Miterrand, chose the symbolic anniversary of the assassination in 1992 to come to Sarajevo to plead the case of Bosnia's implications for global security.

represent the worst atrocities witnessed in Europe since the Second World War and a conflict of a scale that most Europeans had assumed would not occur again on European soil.

Second, given the above, the extent of the internationalization of conflict and external involvement in peacebuilding also differs greatly between the two cases. Bosnia's conflict featured strong involvement of the international community, and through the Office of the High Representative (OHR), this presence is still felt. Northern Ireland was, and is, seen as more of a British and Irish issue, which has limited US involvement and support. Whereas international actors were directly involved in rebuilding the Bosnian state, the involvement in the Northern Irish case was more subtle and lighter in nature. Roger Mac Ginty describes the peacebuilding involvement in Northern Ireland as "an example of liberal peace-lite" (2011, p. 13). The European Union (EU) is, however, a prominent actor in both cases, providing funding for various peace projects and shaping the approach to the projects carried out through its policies and norms (Hughes, 2009). Though the EU has been a key player in both countries, it has had a much more heavy-handed approach to Bosnia, and thinner involvement in Northern Ireland. Yet, the significant investment from the EU as well as the broader international community in both cases points to the commitment to ensuring peace in these states.

Third, while Bosnia's peacebuilding experience also included a transition to democracy, Northern Ireland has not had similar experiences. This is a key difference between Northern Ireland and other countries, which have been the focus of peacebuilding initiatives — that is, it did not experience a sudden transition to democracy (Nagle, 2011, p. 165). For this reason, John Nagle suggests that Northern Ireland should be seen as an "outlier" or as "anomalous" to the broader international liberal peacebuilding (2011, p.165). However, as Audra Mitchell points out, although Northern Ireland did not experience the democratic transition often accompanying

peace missions, the peacebuilding approach in the region is itself a product of the particular liberalizing peace that emerged in the post-Cold War era (2010, pp. 388-389).

It is helpful to think of Mac Ginty's characterization of the peacebuilding in Northern Ireland as "liberal peace lite" and to examine why, although it did not experience the political transition (or full scale conflict), the divides have become further entrenched. Ultimately, as Michael Potter and Hedley Abernethy note, though the conflicts in Bosnia and Northern Ireland may not be directly comparable (nor is that my goal), "there are conceptual similarities in the way individuals respond to the impacts of conflict upon them and how they see their place in the post-conflict environment" (2013, p. 164). Scholars have paid some attention to the symbols and rituals in the peace process in Northern Ireland. A similar focus in Bosnia is necessary to capture exactly the responses of ordinary individuals to the peacebuilding strategies as well as to capture visions of the polity supported by citizens (see also Bojicic-Dzelilovic, 2015).

Finally, while power-sharing arrangements were included in both cases, Bosnia's power-sharing model is corporate in nature, while Northern Ireland's political arrangement is not based on corporate characteristics. Mostly liberal in nature, Northern Ireland's power-sharing arrangement allows for groups to be "self-determined rather than pre-determined" (Nagle and Clancy, 2010, p. 60), although some scholars point out that the group designation and mutual group veto in the agreement can be seen "as a proxy for corporate guarantees" (McCulloch cited in Nagle and Clancy, 2010, p. 60). Bosnia's arrangement, on the other hand, is clearly corporatist and further ensures the dominance of ethnicity in state politics by recognizing the three "constituent peoples" (Bosniaks, Croats, and Serbs).

Given the variations in scale of conflict, democratic culture, the links to the EU and international community more broadly, and the different types of political arrangements, why do

we get such similar outcomes? In short, these two cases show that there are no big solutions to conflict transformation. A context-specific analysis, through an everyday practices and cultural framework, allows us to understand why this is so.

Chapter Outlines

This dissertation has two main goals, both of which will be fully elaborated upon in chapters two and three. First, I illustrate the limits of the dominant top-down peacebuilding strategies, the so-called liberal peacebuilding approach in building a sustainable peace. In this way, I call attention to the need to understand better the quality of peace that has been achieved in post-accord societies. Secondly, I seek to support the case for introducing a cultural lens to peacebuilding, explaining how the traditional peacebuilding model overlooks the centrality of particular narratives and symbols in everyday life. In **chapter two**, I focus on peacebuilding practice and theory and examine the development of the comprehensive peacebuilding approach strategies for divided societies. In **chapter three**, I elaborate on the importance of cultural lenses in understanding these everyday practices. My aim here is to make a strong case that cultural and everyday practices in deeply divide societies cannot be truly explained by referring to the acts of the so-called ethnic entrepreneurs. At the heart of these practices are cultural contestations that go well beyond the role of ethnic elites. My framework shows that these cultural contestations are best understood as tactics used to navigate the everyday realities and competing visions of the polity.

In **chapter four**, on Northern Ireland, the background of the conflict is outlined, and the subsequent attempts to build stronger state institutions in accordance with the consociational political arrangements, is discussed. I show how the legacy of the peace agreement has left a degree of uncertainty about the future of the state and how elite-level power-sharing obscures the

remaining challenges of social division. Next, I analyze the attempts by the EU and local government to build a more cohesive and integrated society. I then show that neither power-sharing institutions, nor the social transformationalist approach has been successful in addressing cultural contestations and ultimately the better integration of society. I point out how the move away from grassroots to professionalized civil society organizations has contributed to a gap between the initiatives being carried out and the concerns of the local population. Third, I focus on the practices that emerge in response to the issue of flags and protests over the removal of the British flag from Belfast City Hall, to the "peace walls" and divided geographies (and the attempts to transform these spaces), and on dealing with the past. I conclude by pointing out that the removal of walls — both literal and figurative — will not occur by simply focusing on the economic or political benefits of doing so, but rather by understanding the meaning of narratives that sustain the need for these barriers.

In **chapter five**, I turn to the case of Bosnia and first provide a brief summary of the post-Dayton political context and socio-economic realities. I discuss the ways that the ethnicized political arrangement and the two entities under an umbrella state, coupled with the demographic realities of policies of "ethnic cleansing," have resulted in the separation of the population and the ethnicization of everyday life. I then examine attempts to provide a more inclusive vision of a Bosnian state, pointing out why these attempts at "citizenization" have been interpreted through an ethnic lens. Next, I briefly examine how a manufactured weak civil society, dependent on donor funds and projects, itself divided along ethnic lines, has not been able to balance ethnic politics. I then examine the everyday and cultural practices, focusing on group narratives that continue in the background, despite the peacebuilding initiatives and activities. I then outline how individuals negotiate space in post-Dayton Bosnia, the struggles over symbols that are

ultimately tied to the different group narratives, and the issue of performances and commemorations of past atrocities. In Bosnia, though physical bridges have largely been rebuilt, many mental barriers remain to a unified vision for all Bosnian citizens.

In **the conclusion**, I summarize the importance of understanding everyday and cultural practices in the post-conflict phase as being key to the politics occurring in these societies. In other words, I point here to the importance of looking beyond institutions, elites, and civil society organizations to understand why more integrated societies do not emerge. This does not mean that I believe that strong states are necessarily very cohesive, or that similar practices are not found in other societies; rather, the power of the cultural lens shows that these contested practices do exist and should be given more attention. However, in countries that have experienced mass atrocities and violence, the context is different. Here, contestations get to the very legitimacy of the state and have the power to destabilize the state over struggles around issues such as flags, narratives and language. Ultimately, cultural lenses shed light on the everyday politics that contribute to the liminal conditions of post-agreement polities.

Chapter Two

Strategies and Limits of the Liberal Peacebuilding Approach

How is peace built in deeply divided societies emerging from violent conflicts? Part of answering this question involves understanding the different strategies of the dominant model of peacebuilding, the so-called liberal peace approach. I suggest that the liberal peace approach has evolved into a comprehensive model that features three key strategies for divided societies: institutional design, civil society building and some form of transitional justice or dealing with the past. These strategies are important to understand as their implementation has shaped the type of fragile peace that has contributed to the liminal condition of these polities, as discussed in chapter one. This chapter develops further the arguments voiced by some critical scholars (Kappler 2014; Mac Ginty, 2011; Mitchell, 2011; Richmond, 2011) that the dominant liberal peace approach is too focused on top-down formulas and overlooks the everyday experiences of ordinary citizens. I build on the insights of this critical scholarship to show the limits of seemingly comprehensive liberal peacebuilding strategies. In particular, following Mac Ginty (2011), I discuss the way that these strategies are guided by the logic of peace as trickling down from official institutions and thereby overlook a range of responses to peace building initiatives that arise at the local level. This insight then leads to my more detailed discussion of the everyday politics that follows in chapter three. The remaining chapters of the thesis shed light on everyday peacebuilding politics in the cases of Bosnia and Northern Ireland.

Peacebuilding practice and scholarship have experienced a spectacular rise in popularity over the last twenty years. With the end of the Cold War, many international actors and non-governmental organizations started to streamline peacebuilding into their work (Call and

Cousens, 2008, p. 3), shaping the current phase of global politics into the "age of peacebuilding" (Philpott, 2010, p. 4). Against this background, Oliver Richmond (2004) suggests that a "peacebuilding consensus" emerged. By this he means a form of external governance and intervention to build peace, undertaken by actors ranging from the UN, EU, OSCE, NATO, international financial institutions and civil society organizations. This consensus is marked by a commitment to what can broadly be referred to as the norms and mechanisms of liberal peacebuilding. The notion of liberal peacebuilding is used to capture the commitment to liberal ideals, such as democracy and pluralism that international organizations and actors espouse (see Mac Ginty, 2011, pp. 21-22). Peacebuilding practices translate these liberal norms and mechanisms into models and projects that can and have been exported for application within diverse contexts. Scholarship on peacebuilding has also grown in response to the increased attention that peacebuilding practices have received from policy makers.

Over the last two decades, peacebuilding scholarship has developed alongside and in conversation with peacebuilding practice. For example, much of the academic, theoretical work builds on the empirical insights gleaned from the practices of international organizations and civil society groups. In turn, scholars have examined the implementation of different strategies and proposed alternative models. Despite the seemingly productive relationship between academic and policy-making circles, a fissure has emerged in academia between two approaches. The first of these is a more policy-based approach found in the liberal peace approach and the second is the "critical" approach, which is concerned with the disconnection between international agendas and local experiences. While policy-based approaches focus on improving current practices and point to possible changes for more successful engagements, some critical scholars suggest that current approaches to peacebuilding need to be fundamentally rethought

altogether. However, the debate is far from settled (Campbell, Chandler & Sabaratnam 2012; Tadjbakhsh, 2011; Goetze and Guzina, 2010, 2008; Mac Ginty and Richmond, 2007).

This chapter provides an overview of the above outlined debates over dominant peacebuilding approaches and shows how the dominant approaches shape the building of peace in divided societies. The policy-based approach remains dominant in the practice of peacebuilding. The so-called liberal peacebuilding model arises from the policy-based practice and scholarship. This largely top-down approach highlights the importance of democratic institutions and economic development and has evolved into a comprehensive model in divided societies. Although there are many versions of the liberal peace approach, with societies experiencing thinner or thicker involvement by the international community and their external agendas, the central tenets of the liberal peace approach have driven the peace projects over the last twenty years. As Shahrbanou Tadjbakhsh explains, the liberal peace approach is based on a belief in the "pacifying effects of open and integrated societies and markets framed by a liberal state and international institutions, laws and norms" (2011, p. 1). In addition, the focus of an expanded liberal peacebuilding approach evolved from security consideration and democratic goals to also include psycho-social elements (Keranen, 2014; Andrieu, 2010; Heathershaw, 2008, p. 600). Despite its evolution into a comprehensive model, critical scholars note that the dominant forms of peacebuilding are still largely focused on top-down institutional strategies that are disconnected from local cultural, political, and economic contexts (Mac Ginty and Richmond, 2007). While peacebuilding models have become more comprehensive, they have not been successful in addressing issues that concern people in their everyday lives, such as inter-group trust and reconciliation.

Beyond outlining the criticisms of the liberal peace approach, this chapter proposes two key contributions to the debates. First, this chapter shows that because it is overly focused on top-down institution building approaches to peace, the liberal peace approach is not attuned to the types of everyday politics that critical scholars have observed as being important to achieving peace in practice, an observation which is also central to this thesis. At the same time, following Mac Ginty (2011), I am neither interested in abandoning nor saving the liberal peace approach. Rather, I suggest that peacebuilders need to pay attention to the myriad of everyday practices that are more reflective of the type of peace that is lived by the population. Second, this chapter explores three key strategies that are relevant to divided societies: institutional design, civil society and transitional justice. I explore debates that have emerged around each of these dimensions. By exploring these strategies, I hope to show that the liberal peacebuilding approach, while not coherent and marked by inconsistencies and contradictions, is nevertheless still guided by the idea of peace as "trickling down" from official institutions, organizations and projects that are supported by international, regional and local actors. Therefore, I suggest that peacebuilding strategies need to pay more attention to context and the way that these strategies are negotiated on the ground in these societies.

This chapter is structured as follows. I first provide some clarification about different meanings and goals of peacebuilding. The background of the rise of peacebuilding practice and theory is also discussed, followed by a brief analysis of liberal peacebuilding literature and criticism of this approach. I then turn to examining what I see as the three-fold comprehensive peacebuilding approach that reflects liberal peacebuilding goals and policy-based mechanisms in dealing with divided societies.

I. Liberal Peacebuilding: Managing the State and Implementing "the Toolkit"

Defining Peacebuilding: Minimalist and Maximalist Goals

Peacebuilding remains a contested, ambiguous, and elastic term (David, 1999), and there is little agreement on external actors' end goal for the state. The difficulty in assessing the progress of peacebuilding arises from a lack of consensus by the various agencies and groups involved in defining the primary goal of peacebuilding. Thus, before examining the rise of the liberal peace approach, we must examine different understandings of peacebuilding and its goals that have emerged in practice and scholarship.

The notion of peacebuilding was popularized more than 20 years ago, following the publication of the Agenda for Peace by the UN in 1992. In the Agenda, peacebuilding is recognized as the fourth pillar of a new approach to peace and security between and within states (Cousens, 2001), following three other pillars: preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, and peacekeeping. Post-conflict peacebuilding is defined here rather broadly as an "action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict" (Secretary-General of the United Nations, 1992). From the outset, the Agenda brought lasting challenges with it, most notably, the tension between achieving the stated goals of long-term, sustainable peace and the short- and medium-term strategies that it envisioned as part of achieving this peace (Haugerudbraaten, 1998). This tension resulted in what has been termed minimalist and maximalist goals of peacebuilding.

Moreover, uncovering the goals of peacebuilding is further complicated by the popularization and growth of the global and regional peacebuilding architecture (Zaum, 2012). Most notable has been the establishment of the UN Peacebuilding Commission and

Peacebuilding Support Office in 2005, the Peace-building Partnership of the European Union (EU) and the African Union's African Peace and Security Architecture (Zaum, 2012, p. 121). Beyond international and regional organizations, key global actors, such as the US and the UK also have departments dedicated to post-conflict reconstruction (Zaum, 2012, p. 121).[15] In short, everyone appears to be "doing" peacebuilding.

The term peacebuilding itself predates its appearance in UN documents by nearly two decades in the literature of peace studies. The term first appeared in the work of Norwegian sociologist Johan Galtung (1976), who identified peacebuilding as a complement to peacemaking and peacekeeping.[16] Galtung advocates dealing with the "root causes" of conflict, and also created the now-familiar distinction between negative and positive peace, which has shaped the minimalist and maximalist distinctions and goals of peacebuilding. Galtung describes the absence of violence as a negative peace, while positive peace, as he describes it, works to ensure equality, justice, respect, and the ability to fulfil one's full potential. The influence of Galtung's thinking on the development of notions of peacebuilding in the Agenda for Peace is for example visible in the stated aims, one of which is "rebuilding the institutions and infrastructure of nations torn by civil war and strife; and building bonds of peaceful mutual benefit among nations formerly at war" (An Agenda for Peace, article 15). Galtung also argues for a sustainable peace built on indigenous foundations. Yet, much of focus on peacebuilding and its subsequent institutionalization in the UN and other international organizations has resulted in promoting

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[15] For example, the U.S. has an Office of the Coordinator for Stabilization and Reconstruction and the U.K. has a Stabilization Office (Zaum, 2012, p. 121). It is also important to note the role of international financial institutions, such as the World Bank

[16] Interestingly, Galtung (1990) has also called for an examination of culture in peace research. Galtung expressed the need to better understand the symbolic aspects of conflicts in order to address what he termed as "cultural violence". Cultural violence, according to Galtung, is defined "as any aspect of culture that can be used to legitimize violence in its direct or structural form" (1990, p. 291). In his earlier discussions he highlighted the idea of structural violence, or the often invisible ways that social structures perpetuate harm against individuals through for example institutionalized racism. While some studies focused precisely on the issues Galtung pointed to his recognition of structural violence remains important.

templates for peace. In other words, Galtung's peace studies perspective and concern with issues outside of traditional top-down research agendas was set aside as the focus turned to states and institutions. This is also visible, for example, in the uses of John Paul Lederach's (1997) pyramid model. Lederach suggests that it is helpful to think of peacebuilding in societies as involving top level, middle range, and grassroots actors (1997, p. 38). While Lederach highlights the importance of grassroots actors, much of the actual practice remains focused on the top level leadership.

In other words, the original, critical understanding of peace studies that gave rise to the term peacebuilding is now dominated by policy-based approaches more interested in improving efficiency of contemporary practices than grappling with systematic questions of peacebuilding (Mac Ginty, 2011). While negative peace forms part of minimalist definitions of peacebuilding, most theorists and practitioners recognize that peacebuilding is about more than implementing peace agreements and reforming state institutions. In the minimalist sense, the goal of peacebuilding is the cessation of large-scale violence and the implementation of some sense of order through the reconstruction of institutions. In the maximalist sense, the goal of peacebuilding is a self-sustaining peace characterized by social justice and development. Middle ground approaches, while also focusing on preventing a return of violence, see the goal of good governance as being of key importance in the peacebuilding phase (Call and Cousens, 2008, pp. 4-7). This focus on good governance emerged out of the international actors' concern with the phenomenon of weak and failing states, as well as the high potential of war recurrence in societies that had most likely experienced previous violent conflicts.[17]

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[17] According to the World Development Report (2011), 67 percent of the conflicts in the 1990s occurred in countries with a previous conflict (pp. 57-58). Some 90 percent of conflicts which began in the 2000s were in countries that had experienced a prior conflict. Initial studies by Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, in the early 2000s, seemed to

Thus, in both practice and theory of post-agreement societies, the crucial issue is of measuring the progress and quality of the peace achieved. While scholars and analysts agree that the reoccurrence of war is a clear sign of failure, beyond this there exists little other agreement about the criteria of failure (Call, 2008, p. 173). Referring to Horst Rittle's notion of "wicked problems,"[18] Erin McCandless (2013, p. 229) suggests that the term best describes "the challenge of measuring progress in peace-building and state-building." McCandless sees the ambiguity and "not having an agreed end state or shared criteria for measuring progress in the fragility assessments" as leading to a more "qualitative and contextually rich approach" (2013, p. 244). This approach, she argues, could allow for more context-specific insights that would, in turn, inform what counted as peacebuilding (and indeed, state-building) success.

Measuring the quality of the peace achieved, however, is fraught with determining the goals, intended and perceived, of the peacebuilding operations. As a result, problem-solving, institution-oriented scholars suggest that peace has been achieved to a greater or lesser extent. They dismiss the questions of the quality of peace by arguing that without external involvement many of the societies would be worse off (Paris, 2012). Policy-based practitioners and scholars view the discussions of peace by critical scholars as unrealistic or out of touch with the constraints facing post-conflict societies (Tadjbakhsh, 2011, p. 2). From this perspective, Doyle and Sambanis suggest, "[S]uccessful peacebuilding is the surprise, not the expectation" (2006, p. 19).

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suggest a 50 percent chance of renewed conflict in the first five years following its cessation (Call, 2008, p.177). Later, Collier et al. would revise these numbers to less than half of their initial estimate for the five years following cessation of violence. Charles T. Call provides an overview of the debates about the rate of war recurrence finding that "[T]he various studies indicate that a country that has experienced civil war faces a 21-26 percent chance of recurrent civil war within five years, and a 35-40 percent chance of relapse within 50 years" (2008, p.177).

[18] Here, the wicked problems are defined as a "class of social system problems which are ill-formulated, where the information is confusing, where there are many clients and decision makers with conflicting values, and were the ramifications in the whole system are thoroughly confusing" (McCandless, 2013, p. 229).

However, critical scholars suggest that the greater concern for international actors is the impact of the peacebuilding missions for their own concerns and interests, and not the quality of peace achieved in local contexts (Richmond and Franks, 2009, p. 5). In this perspective, the questioning of the legitimacy of international involvement and its contribution to the peace achieved in the post-conflict societies deserve closer scrutiny. This critical perspective points to what has been described as a "clash" between the "efficiency-based" policy-oriented perspectives and the "legitimacy-based" critical approaches (Tadjbakhsh, 2011, p. 2).[19]

Moreover, critical scholars suggest that the main limitation to the policy-based approaches is the focus on state institutions and state-building goals. According to critical scholars, the focus on institutions misses the widespread dissatisfaction and lack of popular legitimacy that these institutions enjoy in many post-conflict societies (Richmond, 2011). Against this background, the following sections will shed light on the focus on state institutions and the degree to which dominant approaches have attempted to "manage" conflict through institutional formulas. In addition, I note the expansion of the peacebuilding agenda to include a focus on societal relations as a way to remedy calls for more local participation.

Peacebuilding as 'State-building plus'

Much of the contemporary shift to institutions and state capacity is a result of the increased concern over weak and failing states. At the end of the Cold War, increased intra-state conflicts shifted attention to domestic issues and a need for a reinvigorated international response. Weak and failing states are identified by both academics and policymakers as key drivers of conflict and global instability (Fukuyama, 2004). In peacebuilding scholarship, Paris's

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[19] Charles T. Call (2012), a policy-oriented scholar, also points to the need for legitimacy based approaches. However, his view of legitimacy building is top-down and he sees a role for external actors in legitimacy-focused peacebuilding.

(2004) influential argument emerged that previous missions ignored the need for stronger institutions. Paris saw the focus on democratization and liberalization guiding peacebuilding as having missed the institution-building requirements, or as it became summarized, the need for "institutionalization before liberalization" (2004, p. 7). During this time, the peacebuilding agenda indeed focused on strengthening state institutions and state capacity.[20]

Some scholars suggest that the "weak and failing state" label became widely used and applied to all states that had experienced conflict and violence without recognizing the particularities in some of the cases. As Susan Woodward (2006) points out:

> To the extent that it has any analytical worth at all, however, state failure is a label used more for state *in*capacity, not contested legitimacy — an inability to prevent actions that threaten the security of the major powers of the international system, and by extension, it is said, international peace and security more generally (p. 22; emphasis in original).

Woodward correctly argues that the challenges of peacebuilding — in divided societies in particular — is precisely the contested authority. She therefore sees the attempts at capacity building, or the "public administration" approach of state-building as neglecting power and politics, particularly in the local context (Woodward, 2006, p. 25). In this sense, what has stalled peacebuilding in divided societies is a lack of full commitment and appreciation of the issues regarding contested legitimacy.

But contested legitimacy has not been completely ignored; rather, it has been institutionally managed. Ted Robert Gurr (2002) sees the older practices of forced assimilation

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[20] David Chandler (2015) suggests that Paris' insight and the policy shifts that occur are no coincidence. Chandler argues that Paris in fact observed the shift in policy towards state-building and highlighted in his scholarship.

or racial separation as having gone into the "dustbin of history" (p. 28) and argues that the international community now sees "pluralism, power-sharing, and regional autonomy within existing states" as the norm (ibid.). In Gurr's words:

> [a new global doctrine for managing conflicts] is based on premises that communal contention about access to the state's power and resources should be restrained by recognizing minority rights and negotiating power-sharing arrangements; that threats to divide a country should be managed by the devolution of state power; and that the international community has proactive responsibility for promoting these outcomes (2002, p. 28).

This doctrine incorporates five key elements: human rights regimes (particularly norms on individual and group rights); democratization (including the promotion of institutions for pluralism and power-sharing); autonomous solutions for self-determination disputes; international engagement in containing ethnic conflict; and the international use of force to contain armed conflicts (Gurr 2002). This doctrine is at the core of the comprehensive peacebuilding approach, the so-called liberal peace. Particularly important from this perspective is the top-down, institutional management of the competing visions for the state as well as the prominence of international norms and standards.

However, critical scholars such as Roger Mac Ginty (2011) and Carla Castañeda (2012, p. 123) suggest that this institutional management and focus on international human rights norms has led to assumptions of a "trickle down peace." As Castañeda explains, the evidence in post-conflict societies does not support the belief that strong institutions will lead to development and more stable and peaceful societies. Furthermore, the dominance of institutional approaches also

shapes peacebuilding efforts even when civil society actors and organizations are included in the approach (Kappler, 2014).

The centrality of the top level leadership and state institutions to the dominant approaches and the critiques of this perspective have led some scholars to suggest a need for clarification in the terminology that is used. Roland Paris and Timothy Sisk (2009) suggest that there is a need for distinction between such terms as peacebuilding, state-building and nation-building. According to Paris and Sisk, state-building is a sub-component of peacebuilding not a supplement. As such, they separate the focus on state institutions as a part of the state-building approach. The attempt to prevent further violence is, however, the main aim of peacebuilding (2009, p. 14). In this way they also do not see a nation-building component as part of the state-building approach (Paris and Sisk, 2009, p. 15). In my view, their distinction misses the messy entanglement between the projects in practice and in particular, the centrality of the state in peacebuilding activities and programmes (Richmond and Franks, 2009). As Mac Ginty explains, "[T]he state is the centre-piece around which other elements of liberal peacebuilding are arranged" (2011, p. 134). As such, peacebuilding in practice involves both a focus on preventing a return to conflict but also building liberal democratic institutions as well as societal peace. Thus the distinction between state-building and peacebuilding made by Paris and Sisk is not reflective of the realities of peacebuilding practice.

However, Paris and Sisk are correct in noting that peacebuilding is more than just state-building. Peacebuilding missions are increasingly guided by a commitment toward building multi-ethnic states, preserving plurality, and inspiring social cohesion (Belloni, 2007). These efforts at rebuilding multiethnic states still reflect the ultimate goal of preserving the integrity of state institutions and ensuring support for these institutions among the population. Yet, although

nation-building projects are largely outdated in contemporary peacebuilding practice, there is still an attempt to promote shared societies by the international community. Roland Kostić (2007, p. 23) suggests that the contemporary liberal peacebuilding model has an important nation-building dimension, which seeks to build social cohesion by developing an inclusive identity that includes all of the groups in a given society and, most importantly, supports the legitimacy of the (re)created polity. For example, in Bosnia, international actors were involved in designing new state symbols and reconciliation projects in order to bolster the functioning of state institutions that were meant to represent all citizens of Bosnia (see chapter five). This strategy was partly a response to the local nationalists and their exclusionary identity-building projects. However, this strategy overlooks the agency of local citizens that can be asserted in a way that is against the interest of state builders. Thus, the distinctions between nation-building and state-building as aspects of peacebuilding cannot be clearly drawn when the focus is primarily on seeking societal peace. It also means that when examining the quality of peace, it is insufficient to simply point to the absence of large-scale violence, as the goals of the involvement have certainly expanded beyond this minimalist standard.

Despite this commitment to the social reconstruction noted by Kostić and others, international actors have maintained this distinction between state-building and nation-building, reluctantly engaging in the nation-building aspects of peacebuilding.[21] State-building, or capacity building, has been regarded more favourably given its technocratic nature. Nicolas Lemay-Hébert (2013) captures the distinction, describing state-building as a largely apolitical and technical aspect of rebuilding state institutions to ensure the control of society. Nation-building,

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[21] For example, Fearon, Humphreys and Weinstein note that significant portion of the aid funds for post-conflict countries are "spent on 'community-driven reconstruction' (CDR) programs, which support the establishment of new local institutions in order to promote social reconciliation" (2009, p. 287). Nonetheless, as Paris and Sisk (2009) observe the appetite for more intrusive state-building is on the wane.

as he points out, is understood to be linked to the socio-political cohesion of society. This distinction, then, stems from the belief that state-building can be carried out without engaging in the messy, contested aspects of nation-building (Lemay-Hébert, 2009). In the US academic and policy context, however, nation-building has been used interchangeably with state-building, and means what Lemay-Hébert (2009) points to here as state-building specifically.

Some scholars are suspicious of the very idea of nation-building if understood in terms of supporting the creation of a single, common identity. For example, Marina Ottaway (2002, p. 17) notes that "the goal of nation-building should not be to impose common identities on deeply divided peoples but to organize states that can administer their territories and allow people to live together despite differences" (see also Lemay-Hébert, 2009, p. 34). Ottaway's sentiments are shared by most of those who disagree with the integrationist ideal of building peace through the imposition of a civic identity in divided societies. The issue that emerges, whether one supports the integrationist or accomodationist approach to nation building, is how to achieve mutual respect and recognition of groups and a balance between the politics of these divided communities.

Currently, this balance is mostly managed through political arrangements and power-sharing formulas that seek to include the various groups in society and ensure their representation in state institutions. Beyond the institutionalist approach, though, Lemay-Hébert (2009) rightly argues that the legitimacy of a socio-political cohesion of societies has largely been overlooked. While he accepts that there should be a focus on institutions in the first stages of state-building, he points to the need for considerations of underlying legitimacy of the state in the longer term (ibid.). Lemay-Hébert points to two potentially different approaches to state-building: an institutional approach and a legitimacy approach. In his words: "An institutional

approach focuses on the institutions of the state, while a 'legitimacy' approach is more concerned with socio-political cohesion and the legitimacy central authorities can generate; whereas the former emphasizes efficiency of state institutions, the latter is more focused on their legitimacy" (Lemay-Hébert, 2009. p. 22). Though the legitimacy approach might bring us precisely to the issues that lead to contested actions, the focus remains on state institutions. While Lemay-Hébert recognizes that legitimacy is more in the realm of sociological and anthropological studies, he too stops short of examining the practices that are the focus of this thesis. As I will try to show in my two case studies, studies of legitimacy need not focus only on the state institutions but should also pay attention to informal practices and those that exist in the cultural sphere. In uncertain situations examined here, the attempts to recreate a sense of citizenship and legitimacy of the state are faced with the continued distrust and fear among the population. As such, citizens' responses and negotiations of the post-conflict environment are also telling of the extent to which the visions for the shared society are succeeding.

Despite scholars' and practitioners' reluctance, peacebuilders are involved in more than just the building of state institutions; they "build" nations as well. As Sven Gunnar Simonsen (2004, p. 290) defines it, nation-building involves "the efforts and/or process of (re)building a sense of community within the population of a polity." Thus a reduction in the importance of ethnic identities is sought by focusing on the shared experiences and institutions of the state. Some examples of nation-building policies include those focused on refugee returns, security for minority populations, as well as support for activities which bring about contact between groups, show relevance and inspire loyalty to the same institutions (Simonsen, 2004, p. 290). However, these policies do not pay sufficient attention to the ways in which group identities, in the context of societies that have experienced violence, continue to shape the interactions between

individuals and institutions. In other words, in contexts where state legitimacy is contested, state institutions are not effective in bringing groups together, as the divisive visions for the future of the polity remain. Despite attempts by peacebuilders to create neutral state symbols or to provide support for cross-community initiatives, the vision of the state that citizens support might not be the same as those of the peacebuilders. Hence, the overt focus on state institutions and local leaders misses these underlying contestations by ordinary citizens.

Before exploring the three-fold peacebuilding formula in practice and scholarship any further, the issue of liberal peacebuilding, which I argue dominates the discourse, must be analyzed. I address some of the debates and concerns regarding the focus on liberal peacebuilding and the controversy of the "liberal" labelling itself. It is worth addressing this debate and providing my understanding of the liberal peacebuilding approach as it underpins the dominant strategies for peace.

The Liberal Peace Approach and its Critics

The rise of peacebuilding and the dominance of the liberal peace hypothesis emerged simultaneously in the aftermath of the Cold War. The core of the liberal peace hypothesis — the idea that democratic states do not go to war with each other — was expanded to include liberalism as a common goal. Scholars have identified the roots of the liberal peace paradigm in the Wilsonian belief in promoting democracy as a necessary ingredient for societies to be peaceful (Paris, 2004). Mac Ginty notes that some of the scholarship, which has focused on democratic and liberal peace between states, misses the basic fact that most recent conflicts have been intra-state conflicts (2011, p. 22). Nonetheless, "liberal peace" is labeled as such because it promotes liberal democratic norms and values and exports the model of the Western state. It

focuses on building democratic institutions, highlights the roles of international organizations and local elites, human rights instruments, economic development, and more technical aspects of peace agreements. Alongside democratic institutional arrangements and free market reform, liberal peacebuilders seek to create local ownership and reconcile different groups by supporting civil-society building. Rhetorically, the liberal peacebuilding model is based on the principles of local ownership and local context. In practice, however, this has not materialized (Sending, 2009). This fact is partly a result of the donor-driven projects and external funding prioritizing donor preferences, as I show in my two case studies.

The backlash against the liberal peace model emerged from scholars concerned with the record of peacebuilding missions and from those advocating more bottom-up perspectives (Richmond, 2008; Mac Ginty, 2011). A central critique by critical scholarship of the liberal peace is the "top-down" nature of the peacebuilding missions and neocolonial practices. This debate has led to two approaches in post-conflict peacebuilding: an orthodox liberal peace approach, described by its critics as "dogmatic and statist" (Richmond, 2010, p. 1), and the more critical school, which is seen as "hyper-critical" (Paris, 2012, p. 28). These two camps generally align with the earlier distinction made between policy-based and critical scholarship, respectively.

A key critique of much liberal peacebuilding is that it reflects Western values and interests and leads only to the illusion of peace. Scholars have suggested that neoliberal interests of Western states have shaped their peacebuilding activities (see, for example, Pugh 2005). Similarly, informed by a Foucauldian perspective, some scholars suggest that ultimately Western powers control these societies as their interest is in ensuring that these fragile or weak societies do not cause further instability and therefore adversely affect their material interests (Jabri, 2013;

Duffield, 2007). The critiques against liberal peacebuilding have mounted to the point that, as

Paris suggests, "[I]f the practice of providing large-scale assistance to post-conflict societies is to

continue, peacebuilding will need to be 'saved' from this exaggerated backlash" (2012, p.12).

Paris' statement shows the extent of the divisions between the two approaches.

In his important analysis of the development of peace in international relations, Oliver

Richmond emphasizes the dominance of the liberal peace strategy, which he argues is "made up

of a victor's peace at its most basic level, an institutional peace to provide international

governance and guarantees, a constitutional peace to ensure democracy and free trade, and a civil

peace to ensure freedom and rights within society" (2008, p. 439). However, as Richmond

demonstrates, the reality is more of a "virtual peace," where the states and institutions are

disconnected from the everyday life and experiences of its citizens (2008, p. 440). The reality of

"virtual peace" is a consequence of the promotion of liberal democratic ideals by the

international community, which has put far too much emphasis on institution building. This

insight is valuable, as Richmond points to the gap between the strategies of peacebuilding and

their implementation in the local contexts. Despite this significance, Richmond's description of a

"victor's peace" is not entirely correct.[22] Rather, the situation on the ground arises precisely

because there are no clear victors and the ambiguous agreements have created the uncertainty

about what has actually been won or lost. Most recent peace agreements include some type of

power-sharing arrangement, which allows all groups to be included in the governing structures.

Still, given the predominance of power-sharing arrangements, there is a tension between liberal

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[22] Christine Bell suggests that, "Between 1990 and September 2007, 646 documents which could lay claim to the name peace agreement were signed, addressing 102 inter- and intrastate conflict dyads spanning 85 jurisdictions" (2008, p. 5). She notes that over 91% of the conflicts were intrastate ones and that most are compromises among various fractions (Bell, 2008, p. 5). As such, the nature of the new peacemaking is more aptly described as one of a compromise peace. In fact, between 1995 and 2004, negotiated settlements were three times more likely to occur than outright victories (Call and Cousens, 2008, p. 5).

peace (as imagined by its supporters and critics) and its implementation. Richmond also acknowledges in his more recent work that the number of negotiated settlements has increased. He also recognizes that the number of civil wars and civilian deaths seems also to have decreased. However, as Richmond correctly points out, while significant "it also masks a widespread, local dissatisfaction with what the liberal peace actually represents for its subjects in post-violence environments" (2011, p. 4). Thus, Richmond alerts us precisely to the lack of attention paid to the everyday experiences of ordinary citizens. However, not all scholars agree with the criticism of dominant peacebuilding approaches or the labelling of the approach as "liberal peacebuilding."

How Liberal and How Coherent?

In responses to the critical scholarship on peacebuilding and the acknowledgment of much of this scholarship on the widening of the liberal peace goals, some scholars have questioned the use by critical scholars of the notion of "liberal" peacebuilding. This issue is important to examine because analytical controversy regarding the labelling and categorization of the ideational driving forces behind peacebuilding interventions has gained some traction in the literature (Dodge, 2013, p.1192). As I refer to the dominant approaches as being characterized by the "liberal peacebuilding approach", it is important to address how "liberal" the liberal peace approach really is, and to explain my use of the label.

Dominik Zaum, for one, suggests that "it is high time to abandon the term liberal peacebuilding" (2012, 122; emphasis in original). Zaum explains that the term "offer[s] little analytical purchase, its main purpose today is as an effigy for the pyre of critical peacebuilding scholarship, distracting attention from many of the highly problematic consequences of

contemporary peacebuilding practices that much of this literature touches on but leaves unexplored" (2012, p. 122). While Zaum agrees that critics have pointed out the consequences of top-down, technocratic approaches, he does not believe that liberal peacebuilding really characterizes the ad hoc, piecemeal responses that have shaped much of external involvement. Though liberal states, institutions, and norms have been dominant, he argues, a consistent framework has not emerged (Zaum, 2012, p. 125).

Similarly, Jan Selby (2013, 81) suggests that the "liberal" prefix to peacebuilding, as well as the academic claims on its purported global reach, are nothing more than "myths" requiring greater scrutiny. In particular, Selby finds little normative consistency in various cases and argues that in coming to peace agreements, more attention is usually paid to strategic interests than global norms — if any attention is paid to the specifics of the peace agreements at all (2013, pp. 58-59). He argues that "the liberal peace-building narrative is only sustained by the abstraction of peace-building from its broader war-ending contexts, which are not explicable solely in terms of liberalism" (2013, p. 80). Indeed, as Selby points out, the extent to which peacebuilding activities can be labelled as "liberal," given group-oriented power-sharing arrangements and geo-political considerations, is an important question. He argues for putting the geo-political, economic, and power dimensions at the heart of the analysis.

Stephen Ryan also explains that the approaches of different organizations and states, such as the United Nations, the European Union, and the United States, end up with varying agendas (2013, p. 32). Within each of the organizations themselves, there are also many disagreements. For example, within the UN, some particular states such as Russia and China, are reluctant to support any actions that they see as undermining state sovereignty. More importantly, this top-down focus on the main actors tends to ignore cases such as Northern Ireland, where external

actors are not as imposing and are more eclipsed by the local and regional dynamics (Ryan, 2013, p. 33).

Still, I do not think that the critiques, while important, merit completely dismissing the concept of liberal peacebuilding. Variation and expansion of the liberal peacebuilding goals and approaches do not mean that the dominant perspectives have been abandoned. While I agree with some of the above assessments about the need for more nuanced accounts of peacebuilding, I propose that liberal global norms and strategies have, indeed, emerged, driven to some extent by particular liberal internationalist norms. Paris captures the prevalence of global norms stating, "despite the number, variety and relative autonomy of the actors involved, most peacebuilding agencies have worked towards the transformation of war-shattered states into liberal market democracies" (2003, p. 450). In other words, the prefix 'liberal' relates to the normative agenda of the dominant approaches to peacebuilding. As such, liberal norms and values do shape the rhetorical reasoning and many of the practices of diverse actors. This is for example visible in the important role of civil society and transitional justice initiative that are meant to counteract overtly non-liberal elements of institution building based on power sharing. However, I suggest that the liberal peacebuilding approach is still the dominant framework for international engagement in peacebuilding. The goals of the liberal peace, a focus on democratic institutions, civil society and social and economic development are all central to contemporary projects.

To summarize, in my analysis of the comprehensive liberal peacebuilding approach I recognize the expansion of the model beyond the goals of liberalism, but the core goals of liberalism remain central to much traditional peacebuilding. This expansion of liberal peacebuilding has led to the application of various strategies in diverse contexts, with some regions experiencing thicker (or thinner, as the case may be) international involvement.

Moreover, as Richmond argues the liberal peacebuilding consensus is best described as a loose, rather than cohesive one (Richmond, 2004; Richmond, Bjorkdahl and Kappler, 2011, p. 452). The liberal peace approach is at times contradictory and piecemeal but it forms the background of much policy-based practice and scholarship.

Taking the above discussions into consideration, I am in agreement with scholars such as Audra Mitchell (2011) of the need to move the debate beyond the discussion of the ideology of peace to focus more on the norms, logics and impacts of the strategies of the dominant peacebuilding approach. In this next section, I examine the three key strategies at the core of a more comprehensive liberal peacebuilding approach.

II. Three Dimensions of Comprehensive Peacebuilding

While examining these three dimensions does not help fully to understand or overcome the current challenges, a focus on institutional design, civil society approaches, and dealing with the past or transitional justice models allow us to avoid the pitfall of homogenizing cases while still recognizing a particular, even if loose or disorganized, peacebuilding formula.[23] In particular, it helps us capture the hybrid nature of peacebuilding, or the many competing goals and norms of local and international actors. Understanding the implementation of dominant peacebuilding strategies as marked by hybridity is crucial as it allow us to understand that local actors shape the implementation of these strategies.

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[23] John Nagle (2011) also points to the triadic peacebuilding model. He points to the three strands: democratization through consociationalism, neoliberal economics and civil society. However, I suggest a focus on the past has also been prominent and plays a crucial role in attempts to integrate the society. Economic goals and benefits are also important and pointed to by peacebuilders. While not examining the economic arguments specifically I do think they form an important part of the background against which actions should be examined.

Institutional Design: Power-Sharing and Citizenship in Post-conflict Societies

Institutional design is a central strategy in post-conflict peacebuilding. Namely, the goal of building strong state institutions reflects the prominence of state-building projects discussed earlier. It also reflects the belief in the building of peace from the top down by including formerly warring groups' elites in the governance of the polity. As such, the norm of power-sharing, is a prominent feature of many recent state-building efforts (Sriram, 2008; Hartzell & Hoddie, 2007).[24] However, the institutional strategies also extend beyond power-sharing. They include security sector reforms, human rights legislation, and citizenship provisions. In what follows, I first examine the prominence of power-sharing and the debate between its supporters and critics. I then turn to the other institutional mechanisms, in particular, citizenship provisions. I argue that through the provisions of equal citizenship at the institutional level there is an attempt to build support for the post-conflict political arrangements that ensure the liberal character and stability of the polity.

To begin with, power-sharing is often seen as the only realistic model for democracy in divided societies and is therefore promoted by liberal peacebuilders. This conviction in power-sharing by liberal peacebuilders persists despite the fact that group-oriented political arrangements are built on the tension between liberal (individual oriented) values and the focus on group rights. Paradoxically, for some, while seeking to create more liberal, civic-minded societies, contemporary peace agreements have included elements of power-sharing to ensure representation of the different groups involved in a conflict. Prominent supporters of power-sharing, such as John McGarry and Brendan O'Leary, point out that the compromises made are

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[24] Here I mean consociational power-sharing. Brendan O'Leary (2005) points out that sharing of power can occur in other than consociational ways, such as through federation. As O'Leary (2005) explains "[W]hat makes consociational power sharing distinctive is that it mandates power sharing across communities through formulae of proportionality and autonomy" (p. 37, see supra note 3).

necessary in the short to medium term in order to build democratic polities in deeply divided

contexts.[25] Supporters highlight that power-sharing provides ethnic groups a role in the post-

conflict polity and allows elites to work out their difference through the political process. Critics,

such as Andrew Findlay, suggest that power-sharing leads to further entrenchment of ethnic

identities in the political life of post-conflict societies. Still, others note that the apparent peace at

the top, obfuscates the type of "virtual peace" experienced by ordinary individuals (Richmond,

2009). Much debate in the scholarship has focused precisely on the issue of institutionalization

of identity and the extent to which elite-level power-sharing contributes to inter-group

reconciliation. Once again, the scholarship can be, albeit imprecisely, divided into supporters and

critics.[26]

From their perspective, McGarry and O'Leary point to the need to differentiate between

the idea of liberal and corporate consociational arrangements. The peace agreements examined

here, the Belfast Agreement for Northern Ireland and Dayton Agreement for Bosnia, have both

been shaped by consociationalist theory.[27] However, Bosnia's political arrangement is corporatist

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[25] Will Kymlicka (1995), for example, also finds these compromises to be necessary and important in the development of a new recognition of pluralism. For Kymlicka the institutionalist recognition is a key component in ensuring rights for all groups. But Kymlicka is aware that there must be additional mechanisms in place in order to ensure that individuals are protected from their own group representatives. As such, for Kymlicka, liberalism is compatible with group-oriented arrangements through the idea of group-differentiated rights.

[26] The critiques of consociationalism are varied. Some critics suggest that the broader issue with consociationalism is that it "assumes that identities are primordial and exclusive rather than malleable and relational" (Wilson and Wilford, 2003, p. 6; quoted in Finlay, 2011, p. 3). McGarry and O'Leary respond that, "there is a major difference between thinking that identities are durable and maintaining that they are immutably primordial' (2004, p. 32; also quoted in Finlay, 2011, p.3). Shane O'Neill suggests that in fact McGarry and O'Leary's revisionist approach is post-nationalist in the sense that it "requires an acceptance of national diversity and an abandonment of any illusion of national purity" (2009, p. 97). For an excellent overview of this debate, see Rupert Taylor's edited collection on consociational theory in the context of Northern Ireland (2009).

[27] The term is most frequently associated with the work of Arend Lijphart (1977). Consociationalism is "characterized by such protections for segmental interests as the grand coalition, mutual veto, proportional allocations, and autonomy" (Rothchild & Roeder, 2005, p. 35). The classical debate is between the consociationalists and the integrative approach. Donald Horowitz (1985) suggests that an integrative approach that seeks to provide incentives for interethnic cooperation is better able to manage conflict and to avoid

in its character, implying that power is shared between predetermined ethnic groups (Bosniaks, Croats, and Serbs). In contrast, Northern Ireland's political arrangements are seen to be more liberal since groups are not predetermined.[28] As such, McGarry and O'Leary (2009) see the liberal approach as being more effective in improving the relations between groups, who were formerly in conflict with one another, as the focus on groups is not as salient. Furthermore, McGarry and O'Leary, argue that critics of consociationalism collapse differences between liberal and corporate arrangements. In their view, liberal consociational arrangements, such as the Belfast Agreement, are more desirable as they allow societies to avoid being stuck in identity politics, as is the situation in the case of post-Dayton Bosnia. They seem to suggest that most critiques are focused on the consequences of corporate arrangements rather than the liberal approaches that they advocate.

Yet despite this distinction between liberal and corporatist arrangements critics suggest that the underlying logic remains the same. For example, Robert Aitken states that "[D]espite the differences between the Dayton Peace Agreement and the Good Friday Agreement, both peace agreements institutionalized ethnicity through their representation of society as composed of discrete cultural communities who need to be represented and protected by vetoes" (2010, p. 240). In Aitken's view the institutionalization of ethnicity limits the transformation of these

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institutionalization of ethnicity. Philip G. Roeder (2005) makes the case for power dividing as an alternative to ethnic power-sharing.

[28] I have outlined the difference between the two agreements in the introductory chapter. Still, it might be useful to explain in more detail the differences and specifics between the two agreements in regards to the scholarship on consociationalism. Dayton is seen as a "corporatist" agreement. While the Belfast Agreement is described as more liberal in nature. The main difference is that, "corporate consociation accommodates groups according to ascriptive criteria, and rests on the assumption that group identities are fixed, and that groups are both internally homogenous and externally bounded" (McGarry, 2007, p. 172). Liberal consociation allows for different salient identities to emerge. Though McGarry and O'Leary do separate the liberal from corporatist approaches not all are convinced by this distinction. Some scholars, such as Finlay, are sceptical about the liberalism of the GFA suggesting that it does not really allow for the right to individual self-determination, self-identification, or even of exit from their designated ethno-national group (2011, p. 4).

societies and in essence keeps them wedded to ethnicized politics. In addition, Andrew Finlay (2010) suggests that there is a price to pay for the consociationalist approaches in both cases. For Finlay, the institutionalization of ethnicity alone is not the issue but rather "that they make ethnicity itself normative and in doing so they close down the space for other ways of being, other ways of being political, other forms of political conflict" (2010, p. 10). In other words, Finlay, among others, sees the building of institutions based on group identities as further entrenching these identities and perpetuating the view of the polity as divided among particular groups. This in turn means that group identities remain the most salient and important politically.

Similarly, a key critique of power-sharing relevant to the peacebuilding perspective is that, by including group identities in state institutions, power-sharing arrangements "freeze" these identities in the structures of the state in ways that adversely affect reconciliation (see for example, Jarstad 2008; Wilson 2009; Farry 2009). This leads to the further entrenchment of divisions by tying individuals to group identities and as a result does not allow for reconciliation. Moreover, Paul Brass in the now classical critique of consociational political system notes that it is undemocratic for it fails to provide protection to and may lead to the oppression of individuals who wish not to be identified with or wish to free themselves from identification with particular cultural groups (1991, p.342; Also cited Farell, 2009, p.13). Once again, the tension between individual rights and the group centered arrangements is brought forth.

Robert Hayden raises yet another concern. He sees the "requirement of consensus" in consociational arrangements as particularly problematic given the lack of social contract to begin with. Hayden argues that "[I]f there is no real consent to inclusion in the state in the first place, it is extremely unlikely that there will be much consensus on issues of governance within it, and requirements of consensus become tools for ensuring state dysfunction. After all, a requirement

of consensus is not a mechanism for reaching decisions, but rather one for preventing decisions from being taken" (2005, p. 242). Hayden sees the consociational arrangements as simply making states unworkable as they do not address the crucial issues of the contested legitimacy of the state. Hayden touches precisely on the issue of contested legitimacy that most consociational agreements seek to balance. Consociationalism, while balancing the different visions of the state, does not fully solve the issue of contested legitimacy. As a remedy for this concern, the international community has prioritized the building of strong and supported institutions in order to decrease the salience of group rights (McEvoy, 2010).

In response to critics who note the troublesome primacy of ethnic group rights in power-sharing, McGarry and O'Leary suggest that they are merely recognizing the reality in divided contexts. Interestingly, given the broader liberal peacebuilding approach it is liberal concerns with individual rights that are prominent in critiques of power-sharing. Thus, the inclusion of consociationalism as part of the liberal peacebuilding approach is not without paradox. As John McGarry explains regarding the consociationalist paradox, "Liberals may not like it, but the fact is that ethnicity is durable and a force to be reckoned with. The 'institutional accommodation of rival groups' can bring peace and an 'extensive period of cooperation between them is more likely to transform identities in the long run than any... [liberal] integrationist options" (McGarry, 2001, p. 124; quoted in Finlay, 2010, p. 3). Still, McGarry and O'Leary refer to themselves as "revisionists" or "liberal consociationalists" (2004). In other words, while generally supporting liberal ideals, McGarry and O'Leary find that abstract notions of liberalism underestimate the extent of the divisions in divided societies. Hence, they recognize that in the short to medium term group identities need to be taken into account given their salience in these

societies. This is precisely the view of dominant peacebuilding actors as they seek to recognize group identities and ensure that each group is represented in key state institutions.

Moreover, some of the concerns identified regarding the impacts of power-sharing arrangements are seen as unjust by its supporters (see Taylor, 2009; Norris, 2008). Most notably, McGarry and O'Leary suggest that the divides and violence between the communities in the post-Agreement period in Northern Ireland may be overstated. In defense of the power-sharing arrangement and the post-agreement peace, they suggest that "any assessment of the Agreement's impact must compare post-Agreement Northern Ireland with the pre-Agreement period, before then comparing the Agreement's actual effects with the postulated possible impacts of its main integrationist and centripetalist alternatives" (McGarry and O'Leary, 2009, p. 51). Much has been achieved in Northern Ireland since the signing of the peace agreement and McGarry and O'Leary are right to suggest that there has been little significant violence. Beyond just challenging the critics of consociationalism however, McGarry and O'Leary are also not convinced that the divides between the communities, or the quality of the peace in the communities, are as weak as critics argue. They point to the variety of statistical proof that shows that, in fact, Northern Ireland and its capital city of Belfast are much safer than many other democratic countries (McGarry and O'Leary, 2009, pp. 51-53). Moreover, McGarry and O'Leary find that there is little prospect for any significant violence among the former paramilitary groups.

For all intents and purposes, according to McGarry and O'Leary, the power-sharing arrangement has in fact achieved the best level of peace, given the circumstances. Still, even McGarry and O'Leary, have themselves referred to the peace which emerges after political agreements as being a "cold" peace (Guelke, 2009). Yet a positive peace and full agreement is

sometimes seen as being out of reach for the parties in deeply divided societies. The best that can be hoped for then is that the "constructive ambiguity" which leaves the question of the future state up for later discussion is pushed even further away into the future (Dixon, 2002). At the same time, as Adrian Guelke notes, "[T]he difficulty remains that, if a mutually hurting stalemate persuades the parties to put aside the full achievement of goals that they continue to consider legitimate for the sake of peace, when the opportunity arises again, elements in one community or the other will resume the struggle for their original goals" (2012, p. 157). From this perspective, power-sharing is then merely a temporary solution.

The debates in power-sharing scholarship are many (Guzina & Marijan, 2013) and the above is a brief overview of some relevant debates to the cases I look at as well as the broader argument. It is beyond the scope of this work to evaluate all particular approaches in their complexity. My aim here is to simply show the reasoning behind these approaches and strategies and the ways scholars in this field have engaged with the current impasse in the societies examined here. Moreover, it is necessary to include a discussion of consociationalism as it is relevant in both Bosnia and Northern Ireland, since consociationalism has been a key strategy for peacebuilding in both countries. Yet, in both cases, the peace agreements include provisions that extend far beyond the traditional concerns of consociationalist scholarship (Finlay, 2011, p. 2). For example, these peace agreements include other issues such as disarmament and demobilization, human rights policies, and addressing past injustices. More importantly, these arrangements "begin to redefine the state, sovereignty, belonging and citizenship in quite novel ways" (Finlay, 2010, p. 2). For these reasons, Finlay argues– and I agree – that consociationalism or power-sharing is merely one piece of the comprehensive approach to peacebuilding.

Indeed, a focus on citizenship is a crucial dimension of "nation and polity-building" aspects of the comprehensive peacebuilding model (Staeheli and Hammett, 2010, p. 668). The notion of citizenship is important in these contexts as it links individuals both to the recreated polity but also to one another. As part of the peace agreements, modern liberal citizenship is institutionalised and various documents ensure that all members of society, regardless of communal identity, have rights within the territory of the entire state. In many of the formal documents (constitution, citizenship law, etc.), there is also a blending of the more liberal approaches to citizenship focused on individual rights, with what are traditionally understood as more communitarian elements, focused on group rights (see Isin, 2000). This blending is particularly applied given the context of divided societies and contested legitimacy of the state. Scholars have also noted that citizenship is most often a combination of civic and ethnic identities (Brubaker, 1992). However, it is important to clarify that despite recognition of group identities in post-conflict societies, the aim is to build a civic citizenship, meaning that anyone who is a member of the polity is supposed to have equal rights as member of the polity. In practice, this balancing and strategies of peacebuilders have had different outcomes as will be explored in the subsequent chapters.

Furthermore, even though group identities are recognized in political arrangements, there is also an attempt in the peacebuilding strategies to support a common identity for all citizens that is based on liberal democratic values. This is visible in some of the peacebuilding strategies and initiatives on creating shared spaces, identities and symbols. They aim at further promoting the norms of an inclusive citizenship and sometimes creating a unifying national story (Smith, 2003; also cited in Staeheli and Hammett, 2010, p. 669). In the contexts of peacebuilding, citizenship can thus be understood as a quintessential tool to be used to rebuild/integrate a

divided community. Will Kymlicka notes that as a strategy of nation-building citizenship becomes a project of "citizenization" (2011, p. 305).[29] He explains that citizenization is an attempt "to replace earlier uncivil relations of distrust, animosity, and intolerance with relations of democratic citizenship" (2011, p. 305).

The blended approach to citizenship, used in both cases examined here, is one of two strategies pursued in the context of post-conflict societies. Two approaches of citizenship building, part of the "nation-building" dimensions of peacebuilding and transitional justice more specifically, have been identified by Kymlicka. The first approach, he explains is focused on delegitimizing ethnic and racial identities and seeks to build a unified identity. Kymlicka points out that purely civic approaches to nation building can be interpreted as little more than assimilationist goals of various groups in contexts where violence and conflict of different visions have occurred.[30] The second approach, Kymlicka points to is characterized by public recognition of the different group identities and rights in the formal institutions thereby "normalizing ethnic politics" (2011, p. 306). Though this approach does not reduce the salience of ethnic identity, it seeks to allow any disputes between different identity groups to occur within the framework of the political institutions. He discusses this approach in the case of Guatemala but this is also the approach employed in both Bosnia and Northern Ireland.

Neither of the two approaches is truly without problems and Kymlicka is cautious about their impacts. In particular, and relevant here, with respect to the second approach, Kymlicka is concerned that this approach may lead to "parallel societies" described as "groups living side-by-

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[29] As Kymlicka notes, "citizenization" is a term introduced by James Tully (2001, p. 25). Kymlicka expands on its use by Tully, who referred to it in the context of multination democracies, by examining the phenomena in cases of recent polity building.
[30] For example, Kymlicka points to the case of Rwanda, where attempts at promoting national unity and de-ethnicization by focusing on a "Rwandanness" have largely been ineffective as new categories emerged in practice with the same ethnic markers (Susanne Buckley-Zistel, 2006; Kymlicka 2011).[30] For example, the label of "victim" and "perpetrator" have emerged as ethnic codes for "Tutsi" and "Hutu", respectively.

side in relative peace, but unable or unwilling to work together, not feeling any sense of shared purpose or solidarity" (2011, pp. 306-307). Kymlicka is nonetheless optimistic about the emergence of a new consensus (in the West, at least) that "requires acknowledging and suspending, rather than resolving and foreclosing, issues of definition of peoplehood and sovereignty" (2011, p. 315). Kymlicka sees this in particular in the case of Northern Ireland and the Article 1 (vi) of the Good Friday Agreement.[31] He sees the Good Friday Agreement as allowing for protection of various group identifications as well as for a conversation and negotiation about the future of the polity.

Still, Finlay (2004, p. 4) observes that despite the recognition of the diversity of identities in section 1.6 and section 1.5, section 1.5 posits that the "parity of esteem" (in Northern Ireland) is accorded to the "two communities".[32] As such, it is only the British or Irish, unionist or nationalist identities that are ultimately accorded the parity of esteem. In the case of Bosnia, as I will discuss in more detail in chapter five, despite all citizens being equal only the members of the constituent nations (Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs) can be elected to the presidency and the House of Peoples of the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Moreover, as I discuss further in chapter three, while institutionalized protection is important, and indeed local populations in Northern Ireland welcome the choice of formal citizenship, the reality is that citizenship is experienced differently as a result of place-making, symbolic practices, and

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[31] Item 1(vi) of the Good Friday Agreement states that: "The two Governments recognise the birthright of all the people of Northern Ireland to identify themselves and be accepted as Irish or British, or both, as they may so choose, and accordingly confirm that their right to hold both British and Irish citizenship is accepted by both Governments and would not be affected by any future change in the status of Northern Ireland."

[32] Item (v) of the Belfast Agreement states that the parties to the agreement "affirm that whatever choice is freely exercised by a majority of the people of Northern Ireland, the power of the sovereign government with jurisdiction there shall be exercised with rigorous impartiality on behalf of all the people in the diversity of their identities and traditions and shall be founded on the principles of full respect for, and equality of, civil, political, social and cultural rights, of freedom from discrimination for all citizens, and of parity of esteem and of just and equal treatment for the identity, ethos, and aspirations of both communities."

narratives. As such, despite the claims to equality of status and rights, the reality of citizenship in practice looks different.

In summary, the above discussion has highlighted several short-comings of the institutional design strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding. First, power-sharing may offer a respite from violent conflict, but its effects in the long-term remain questionable (see Sriram, 2008). In other words, since the contested legitimacy of the polity is left to be addressed for some future time, there is little assurance for the population of what the end state may look like. As such, this heightens the sense of uncertainty for the population in the interim. Moreover, as Guelke notes, it allows the groups with incompatible goals an opportunity to pursue their goals when an opportunity to do so arises (2012, p. 157). Second, the attempts to promote citizenship by ensuring provisions of equal citizenship overlook the reality of belonging in both societies. Kymlicka's concern about parallel societies is well-founded and seems to have emerged despite both the institutional and community-peacebuilding strategies of peacebuilders. However, the continued societal divisions are not simply a result of the political order and choices made in the institutional design, though this certainly plays a role, but are also a result of the types of practices that emerge in response to the uncertain transitions. These sociological aspects are overlooked in the liberal peacebuilding approach to citizenship. Institutional recognition of equal citizenship, alone, cannot guarantee an acceptance of the broader polity's legitimacy nor lead to internalizing citizenization norms. In the uncertain period of transition in post-violent conflict societies, the responses by populations play important roles in shaping citizenship norms and values.

In the following section, I turn to civil society support and building strategy pursued in compliment to the institutional design strategies outlined above. Civil society is after all expected

to balance the group-oriented political arrangements and to provide a space for more inclusive citizenship through participation in the civil society organization. In addition, a wider process of reconciliation is also a crucial part of sustaining the institutional arrangements and rebuilding relationships (Hamber & Kelly, 2005). Once again, civil society building and support is approached from the top-down.

Supporting Civil Society and Promoting Participatory Citizenship

A focus on the positive role of civil society in deeply divided contexts is prominent in peacebuilding practices and scholarship (Kappler, 2014; Belloni, 2001, p. 163). As Roberto Belloni notes, in regards to the Bosnian context, but also more widely, "civil society has become an integral component of international intervention" (2001 p. 163). As mentioned above, civil society is expected to act as both a check on state power but also as a key promoter of more inclusive politics and identities (Keranen, 2014, p. 129). This prominence of civil society actors in peacebuilding arises from the view of civil society as a progressive, democratic force, a view that emerged following the events that occurred in Eastern Europe at the end of the Cold War (Gellner, 1991, p. 495). Scholarly interest in the potential of civil society increased thereafter as academics noted the role of non-state actors in contributing to the democraticizing agenda of states and international organizations. [33]

Yet this view of civil society as a progressive force homogenizes the various organizations and groups that are seen as relevant in these societies and omits many other less progressive civil society actors. In this way, civil society is romanticized, echoing my earlier

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[33] This role of non-state actors in promoting global norms featured prominently in the mid- to late-1990s scholarship and policy practice (Chandler, 2013). For some examples of this scholarship, see Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998; Keck & Sikkink, 1998. For much of this scholarship, non-state actors were seen as partners for the spread of global liberal democratic norms. From this perspective, any unprogressive practices of dominant elites would be addressed by civil society actors. Moreover, civil society actors could bypass the problematic elites by appealing to the international community of like-minded liberal organizations and governments.

criticisms about the broader romanticization of the local actors. Several scholars have highlighted the problematic lack of attention within traditional peacebuilding approaches given to the diversity of civil society actors (Belloni, 2001; Mitchell, 2011). Against this background, the following section examines the debates over the role of civil society in peacebuilding and points out the ways in which this focus misses the importance of agency of ordinary individuals.

The rebuilding of civil society has several key functions in regards to the broader integrative goals of peacebuilding in divided societies. First, the idea of a robust and democratic civil society is expected to counter the effects of more formal group-oriented political arrangements by providing citizens with another venue for engaging in local politics. In other words, while more formal and institutional political arrangements are focused on accommodating particular groups in society, civil society is often portrayed as the space in which everyday group conflicts can be negotiated and resolved at a more micro or bottom-up level. As Christoph Spurk explains, from the perspective of literature on peacebuilding, civil society is regarded as a sector composed of many different, often voluntary, organizations with specific interests that are in competition with each other (2010, pp. 6-7). As Spurk notes these organizations are independent of the state but they do interact with the formal political and economic sectors (2010, p.7). As such, civil society organizations in transitional contexts are seen as mediating between the state and the citizens.

This leads me to the second point. From the perspective of the peacebuilding and state-building practice and literature, civil society is often used to discuss issues of citizenship and belonging. The ability to rebuild a sense of inclusive and democratic civic citizenship among diverse groups is partly seen as emerging from a more inclusive civic sphere. Cross-community relationships and links made between the different community organizations and groups are an

important part of these strategies (Spurk, 2010). As such, the hope of much external support is that these organizations will act as a bridge, crossing societal divides, and in turn inspiring trust between communities and legitimizing the (re)created polity. In addition to being the moderating factor and inspiring inclusive citizenship, civil society is expected to be the middle ground between or alternative to different group visions. Ultimately, in divided societies, civil society serves as the key vehicle for "citizenization" efforts.

This has in turn led to the homogenization of civil society and its representation as inherently democratic and progressive. But this view overlooks the reality that a wide array of organizations with differing interests are a part of the civil society, sometimes referred to as "uncivil" society. For example, paramilitary groups and organizations also form a part of these uncivil elements of civil society (Belloni, 2009). Interestingly, as I will discuss in chapter four, many former paramilitaries have joined the civil society sector in Northern Ireland. While some have joined the externally supported NGOs, others continue to work for local community organizations. Still, others belong to organizations aiming to transform the paramilitary groups from focus on violence to focus on peace and political research. This is not to say that more inclusive or progressive organizations are not present but rather to show that these "uncivil" elements are also present and often supported by the communities.

In post-conflict divided societies, these organizations became partners for creating the new polity around liberal ideals. As discussed above, a stronger civil society sphere is also seen as crucial to building inter-group interactions, and repairing cross-community relationships as well as, the space in which to generate legitimacy and acceptance for peacebuilding activities (Kaldor 2003; Paffenholz 2010; Donais 2012). Karin Aggestam and Annika Bjorkdahl (2013, 15) also see civil society promotion as a key part of the emerging EU peacebuilding framework.

In their words, civil society support is "a strategy to counterbalance elite power, to enhance accountability of the elite by the society, and to circumvent political stagnation" (ibid.), but they also recognize that state-centrism prevails from the perspective of the EU institutions (see also Kappler, 2012).

Another important critique of civil-society building by the international community is the view that it has tended to result in an abundance of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that are dependent on external funding and often have little relevance to or support from local communities (Pouligny, 2005). Some scholars suggest that Western governments provide support to these organizations in order to ensure that the problems are contained to these areas and that Western countries' security is not impacted (Duffield, 1997). Still others suggest that NGOs are project driven in a sense that they respond to donor preferences more than their local applicability. Even in contexts such as Northern Ireland, where civil society has enjoyed a long history and closer ties to the population, I note that there has been an increasing professionalization driven by donor funding, from the EU in particular (see chapter four).

Furthermore, many of these organization are divided along ethnic lines. Even more seemingly progressive and democratic NGOs can be linked with a particular community when one looks at the key participants (Belloni, 2009). In addition, the most effective organizations in post-war settings tend to be the victims' groups and war veterans' associations, which focus on ensuring recognition of the rights and victims of their own group. These groups further support their "own" group narratives and stories about the past conflict. As such, these organizations are not merely vehicles through which conceptions of peace developed by international actors can be disseminated. Rather, these groups are impacted by their own agendas and the type of legitimacy granted to them by the local population.

The legitimacy of these externally supported organizations, and hence their local support, is complicated by the fact that civil society organizations are portrayed as playing a variety of roles in rebuilding society. Thania Paffenholz and Spurk outline seven basic functions of civil society relevant to the context of peacebuilding. These are: protection of citizens, monitoring of accountability, advocacy and public communication, socialization, building community, intermediation and facilitation between citizens and state, and service delivery (2006, p. 13). Some of these roles, such as the service delivery role as well as the expected goal of fostering inclusion and cross-community engagement lead to confusion for local populations. In the words of Alex Jeffrey:

> This dual function (welfare and reconciliation) immediately places NGOs in a contradictory political space: they are both part of the state in terms of the delivery of services, and (and often within the same organization) supposed to provide the opportunity for people to come together to resolve contestation with civility. This precarious institutional position creates ambiguity among the wider population as to the purpose or role of such institutions within the new institutional architecture of emerging states. (2013, pp. 108-109)

As such, their dual role in many cases is not conducive to inspiring a thicker engagement in sensitive issues such as inter-group trust and reconciliation.

Moreover, transnational actors, such as international NGOs, at times fund projects that do not correspond to the local needs but rather reflect their wish to maintain their prominence in aid work (Cooley and Ron, 2002). Vanessa Pupavac, for example, argues that some global advocacy NGOs in Bosnia are "parasitical" on local organizations and projects that they support as their ultimate goal is to increase their institutional legitimacy in international development work

(2010, p. 486). In their pursuit of global legitimacy, these transnational actors increase uncertainty by competing with each other, and providing short-term contracts that in turn lead to distorted understandings of the local contexts (Cooley and Ron, 2002). In addition, given their donor-driven agendas, in post-conflict low trust contexts many civil society organizations are not effective in addressing issues of inter-group relations that require building long-term relationships.

These developments have also impacted who is considered to have a legitimate voice in representing the communities in peacebuilding initiatives. Though NGOs are pointed to as one aspect of civil society, they have become the primary partner for international and regional organizations involved in peacebuilding (Richmond and Carey, 2005). International actors thus primarily interact with organizations they deem to be legitimate (Kappler and Richmond, 2011). As Alison Watson suggests, international actors support and interact with the local actors "that they (donors) perceive to be closest to their own image" (2012, p. 40). As such, the wide variety of perspectives of the local population is often not represented through the official NGOs with which international actors interact and engage.

Beatrice Pouligny (2005) further adds an interesting point regarding the tension between recreating a civil society and the technical rather than political focus of much of the work. In this way, the goal of civil society support is to ensure peace and stability rather than focus on the bottom-up ways that citizens organize to address issues that concern them. This element of stability maintenance and addressing past hurt and wrongs is also further focused in the various transitional justice strategies. Transitional justice, as I use it here, is an umbrella term that captures the formal mechanisms of dealing with the past, such as international tribunals, as well as less formal attempts such as supporting community dialogue to address and commemorate the

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past. As with the civil society dimension, the overall goal is to rebuild community relations and sense of belonging.

Transitional Justice Strategies

A third dimension of the comprehensive peacebuilding approach is the inclusion of transitional justice and "psycho-social governance" (Shaw and Waldorf, 2010, p. 4). In the last twenty years, transitional justice has come to focus equally on institutional, judicial approaches as well as non-judicial aspects. Thus transitional justice includes bringing justice to victims, reconciliation, (re)building social cohesion and trust, and ensuring the prevention of further violence. Transitional justice encompasses a wide range of experiences as in the extensive use in Bosnia and less so in the case of Northern Ireland. Still, these discussions remain relevant in both cases and as such at times I refer to this dimension as dealing with the past. Dealing with the past takes into account both the formal and informal strategies of addressing past hurt and paving the way for reconciliation. The more formal approaches, such as official apologies and trials, compliment the strengthening of democratic political systems and commitment to human rights by reinforcing the rule of law in post-conflict societies (Andrieu, 2010, p. 539). Less formal projects carried out by international organizations and NGOs, are aimed at societal repair and include projects that bring together individuals from both communities to share their stories of the conflict and in this way contribute to establishing a shared account of the conflict. In this regard, dealing with the past includes nation-building aspects as the goal of reconciliation is to build a common national narrative and inspire a sense of shared belonging, or what Kymlicka refers to as citizenization attempts.

Memory work and commemorations, for example, form a part of transitional justice strategies for divided societies. These models of memory approach the current remnants of the past as something that can be resolved or addressed through particular formulas. Rosalind Shaw and Lars Waldorf describe the variety of methods as forming the "toolkit" of transitional justice (2010, p. 3). In some cases, such as Bosnia, a range of tools, including war crimes prosecutions, truth commissions and memorials, is applied. In other cases, such as Northern Ireland, the goals are less ambitious but there is an attempt to rebuild communities by changing those symbols that are perceived by the communities as being divisive, by providing support for trauma victims, and ultimately by supporting projects that focus on a shared future. In this way, transitional justice is as Kora Andrieu notes is both "backward-and forward-looking" (2010, p. 538). As Andrieu explains, "[I]t affirms that successor governments must build institutions that will seek justice for past transgressions, while showing their commitment to good governance in the future" (2010, p. 538). Still, not all scholars are enthusiastic about the contemporary uses of transitional justice in nation-building and state-building projects.

The contemporary uses of transitional justice have been shaped by the practices in the post-Cold War period. Most important has been the shift from the post-World War II goals of universal human rights to a recent focus on bolstering state-building and nation-building projects (Teitel, 2002). Ruti Teitel suggest that contemporary transitional justice is "closely associated with diverse nation-building projects and related local understanding of the rule of law and legitimacy" (2002, p. 893). Teitel recognizes the current hybrid approach of most transitional justice processes that are not only focused on international norms and standards but also attempt to strengthen national mechanisms and newly created institutions. She suggests that this focus on national structures and strategies emerged with the goal of stabilizing the polity during transition

(Teitel, 2002, p. 898). According to Teitel, the transitional justice strategies work towards, "producing a joint accounting of a past conflict that would be acceptable to all, so as to offer a basis for a stable transition" (2002, p. 898). As Teitel suggests, the ultimate goal for contemporary transitional justice strategies is to aid in the maintenance of peace and stability.

This maintenance of stability is crucial and, as Teitel suggests, the type of approaches that I have referred to here as part of liberal peacebuilding approach are often short-term. After all, the primary goal is to ensure stability and to prevent the return of violence while at the same time also supporting the (re)created state institutions. But Teitel outlines a problematic aspect of maintaining stability. She states that, "[T]ransitional justice has a close relationship to these present political circumstances, where the discourse is directed at preserving a minimalist rule of law associated with the preservation of a threshold order in conditions of heightened political violence" (2002, p. 902). Teitel is critical of the shift within transitional justice approaches from a concern with universal norms of democracy and rule of law to the current focus on stability, state and nation-building (Campbell and Ni Aolain, 2002, p. 880). As she suggests, the focus within transitional justice approaches has now become one of a minimalist rule of law rather than a thicker legitimacy of the institutions. Teitel argues that the limited approach of many top-down transitional justice mechanisms do not address the issues of contested legitimacy. As such, her concerns mirror my own assessments of the dangers of contributing to conditions of perpetual liminality within divided societies where, by maintaining a minimum sense of order, these institutions obscure the level of contestation that actually exists. As such, while some order is maintained, the weaknesses of this minimalist sense are exposed, for example, in the annual summer riots in Northern Ireland. These riots in Northern Ireland, explored further in the fourth chapter, point to the constant uncertainty that chips away at the achievements made by

peacebuilding efforts. They also point to the limits of formal mechanisms and attempts to develop a narrative of the past that is shared by all of the different groups within the conflict.

Still, in some societies, formal mechanisms such as the *ad hoc* tribunals in the former Yugoslavia and in Rwanda have shaped the judicial approach to address the past. These formalized ways of addressing conflict are expected to prosecute those responsible for crimes committed during the war, as well as to provide a factual account of the events that have taken place. While formal mechanisms are also often aimed at reconciliation, reconciliation is often seen as secondary to the primary goal of prosecuting the crimes that were committed. Increasingly, scholars have noted the limits of these top-down approaches to achieving reconciliation between communities. Moreover, developing a common narrative of the past remains challenging independent of implementing formal mechanisms and commissions. Formal mechanisms miss the multiple accounts of the past that persist despite official records. Official records can also be seen to privilege one group's narrative at the expense of another group's narrative. This then leads to more rather than less contestation.

Against this background, some scholars suggest that liberal peacebuilders have thus become "global memory entrepreneurs" due to their focus on memorializations and templates for addressing the past (Mannergren-Selimovic, 2013, p.338). Scholars are weary of some attempts to address the past through institutionalized approaches. Vanessa Pupavac (2002) notes that this development of "therapeutic governance" ultimately overlooks the local coping mechanisms. Instead, it forces on these societies an administrative approach to dealing with the experiences of violence. As such, local actors are seen as victims with little agency. In some cases external actors have led the development of transitional justice in both the judicial as well as the non-judicial sphere. In Bosnia, for example, the decision on the location of the cemetery and

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monument for victims of Srebrenica was passed down by the Office of the High Representative (Mannergren-Selimovic, 2013, p. 342). The local politicians and communities in Bosnia could not agree on the location so international officials stepped in, arguing that it would be "an affront to humanity" not to do so. These struggles about the past invariably impact the local populations and their visions for rebuilding their communities. As such scholars have called for a better understanding of the local responses to these approaches. As some scholars note the local experiences and needs are not always most visible in internationally led projects (Richmond, 2011).

Many scholars also recognize the unintended consequences of international projects. Jelena Subotic (2009), in particular, has highlighted the ways that local ethnic elites respond to global agendas of transitional justice. Subotic alerts us to the reality that in many post-conflict societies local elites have hijacked the process for their own interests and goals. She uncovers how widespread this phenomenon of "hijacked justice" is by tracing its presence in many diverse post-war societies. Ultimately, ethnic elites filter the global policies to suit their own goals and needs. For Subotic, ethnic elites are in control of the broader narratives and their abuse of the original intentions prevents any real reconciliation.

In turn, scholars criticize the support and design of transitional justice mechanisms as its own form of "hijacking". Florian Kuhn points out that "[T]he work of truth commissions, community councils, or reconciliation policy in this regard appears to be a fig leaf to secure consent-supporting management of risks, de-territorialized political authority and the politics of expert technocracy" (2012, p. 404). Kuhn suggests that peace has become a virtual concept, in which contemporary peace "includes transitional justice and reconciliation as rhetorical devices for its legitimization" (2012, p. 405). As such, critical scholars see the attempts to include

reconciliation in the peacebuilding strategies as further resulting in templates and formulas that have little meaning on the ground. Some scholars point to the inclusion by peacebuilders of more traditional mechanisms of resolving disputes, such as Gacaca courts, as ultimately changing the meaning of these mechanisms.[34] Mac Ginty (2013) suggests that their institutionalization and use by Western actors ultimately changed the original forms thereby making them less relevant in the local context.

Still, others argue that transitional justice mechanisms are about more than just the reconciliation of communities or uncovering past abuses. For example, Lara Nettelfield (2010) notes that in Bosnia the transitional justice tools, such as the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, have ultimately led to democracy building. In this way, the strategies for uncovering the past, while perhaps limited in their contribution to reconciliation amongst the different communities, can contribute to democracy and polity building. Although the past may not be dealt with *per se,* the community may move on and the polity become more stable.

However, Brandon Hamber and Richard A. Wilson point to the emergence of liminality as a result of the unanswered questions about the past and the lack of attention paid to the trauma that the survivors experienced. In particular, they point out that many families of victims, particularly those that have been "disappeared" during conflicts, remain in a liminal space as a result of the unsettled past. In my view, the survivors and victims do not only experience liminality, as Hamber and Wilson argue, but it is also absorbed by the wider society. Still, Hamber and Wilson make an important point when they claim that nation-building discourses of official mechanisms such as truth commissions fail to account for the needs of individuals and

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[34] The Gacaca court is a part of the traditional justice mechanisms used in Rwanda. It is essentially a local dispute resolution mechanism that mirrors trials though in front of the wider community or village assemblies.

their practices. Hamber and Wilson state that, "[T]ruth commissions aim to construct memory as a unified, static and collective *object*, not a political practice, or as a struggle over the representation of the past that will continue to be vigorously contested after their existence" (2002, p. 36; emphasis in original). As Hamber and Wilson state, the truth commissions and other tools of transitional justice should provide a framework for discussion of the past to continue while limiting historical revisionism. Yet, as I will discuss in the cases of Bosnia, debates over the past continue despite the official account. In Northern Ireland, the top-down strategies for investigating unresolved crimes and developing a shared narrative have strengthened the contestations over the past as each group attempts to show its narrative as more legitimate. Therefore, in the subsequent chapter I illustrate that the liminal condition of both communities is further perpetuated by the contestations over the past.

Conclusion

This chapter has analyzed the contemporary rise of peacebuilding practice and theory. I have pointed to the tension between the short-term strategies of peacebuilding and the long-term challenges facing societies that are emerging from violent conflicts. Given the continued obstacles peacebuilding responses have expanded by becoming more comprehensive and inclusive of more domestic factors. Still, much of this approach remains top-down and technocratic. I have proposed examining the current comprehensive approach by focusing on the three dimensions of institutional design, civil society building and addressing the past transitional justice mechanisms. By focusing on institutional design, civil society building and transitional justice, comprehensive approaches to peacebuilding nonetheless obscure the levels of contestation found "on the ground" in these societies. For example, by focusing on elites, institutional design tends to shift our attention away from the ways that ordinary citizens

navigate their societies. So too, civil society building, by seemingly being composed of numerous organizations tackling the divisions, also seems to point to an engaged citizenship, while, in fact, underlining the "ethnic" character of civil society. In supporting transitional justice mechanisms, liberal peacebuilders aim to preserve the stability of the state by addressing past wrongs, but ultimately fail in curbing historical revisionism. As such the dominant approach, although comprehensive, fails to see the types of practices that I point to due to its focus on more formal, top-down and technocratic strategies.

The task in the subsequent chapter is to connect the peacebuilding literature with the cultural lens approach that I am proposing. Recent peacebuilding literature points to the importance of the everyday (Mac Ginty, 2014; Richmond and Mitchell, 2012). In the following chapter, I further explore engagements with the concept of culture within relevant disciplines. I also uncover understandings of place-making, symbolic cultural expressions, and competing narratives and performances that are central to everyday peacebuilding. My goal is not to offer a comprehensive summary of the literature in the various disciplines discussed in the chapter. Rather, I aim to highlight the contributions of these works to the understanding of the ways in which people negotiate and respond to the peacebuilding visions and seek to transform their lives and spaces in the process. Hence, I see the use of a cultural lens as an important part of examining the everyday peacebuilding and an additional lens to understanding how ordinary citizens navigate post-conflict periods of uncertainty and transition.

Chapter Three

Culture and Everyday Peace Politics

Why do cultural expressions and everyday practices matter for understanding post-agreement polities and for peacebuilding? In this chapter, I further discuss the central claim of this thesis that cultural forms of expression and practices that occur within everyday living are an important part of the politics of peacebuilding. Chapter two sought to show the limitations of dominant approaches to peacebuilding in responding to local and everyday practices in post-agreement polities. This chapter follows from this critique of top-down strategies and argues for cultural forms of expression and practices to be considered as variables in peacebuilding practice and scholarship. Considering cultural practices as variables in peacebuilding requires going beyond the elite discourse and paying attention to the everyday lives of the local populations.

I develop my argument that the everyday politics of peacebuilding can be observed through three key lenses, or dimensions of everyday politics in deeply divided societies: practices of place-making and "inscription", symbolic practices and competing narratives and performances. In short, practices of place-making, as well as other symbolic markings of everyday life, are used alongside competing narratives and performances to contest or support the type of state envisioned by peacebuilders. In addition, competing narratives about the past and different visions of the future point to the continued disagreements and fears, both about the past and the future of the polity. These practices of place-making, symbolic practices and narratives contribute to the liminal condition of the post-agreement polities.

This chapter begins with a note on why culture is important to understand for peacebuilding practice in divided societies. I then briefly explore the different understandings of

culture in the literature. My goal in this section is to make the case for an understanding of culture that is relevant to the political studies of divided societies rather than to comprehensively review the vast literature across several disciplines. I situate these discussions of culture in the context of peacebuilding in order to show the need for more robust understandings of culture in peacebuilding. I then examine the importance of everyday spaces and practices. Following this discussion of the everyday, I develop the three above outlined alternative lenses from a cultural perspective (place-making, symbolic practices and narratives) that can help us understand the types of expressions that ordinary citizens use to navigate different realities, visions and goals. This chapter concludes with a discussion of how cultural expression and practices that occur within everyday living can be incorporated in the everyday peacebuilding literature.

Why Culture?

Before outlining my understanding of culture, let me first explain why I think culture needs to be better understood within peacebuilding practice and scholarship. I suggest that there are at least three reasons for considering culture in peacebuilding scholarship. First, while large-scale violence is neither present in the post-war Bosnia nor Northern Ireland, struggles over symbols and narratives continue to be potentially or already destabilizing. Indeed, beyond divided societies symbols and cultural forms of expression, such as cartoons, flags, and choice of dress have sparked protests and in some cases led to violence (Ross, 2009). However, in post-conflict polities addressing symbolic or cultural contestation is essential, as these are the primary ways through which conflict (albeit without eruptions of large-scale violence) continues to occur during times of "peace." Scholars have noted that using the measure of whether or not there is overt violence ignores "many subtle ways in which a conflict continues by other means in the absence of [physical] violence" (Bryant and Papadakis, 2012, p.2). As John Nagle points out in

relation to Northern Ireland, "[D]espite the resolution of major issues, apparently secondary concerns — the flying of flags and public parades — have generated destabilizing violence during the peace process" (2013, p. 2). Simply, in the context of post-conflict divided societies culture is both a site of politics and source of contention.

Second, cultural expressions matter for peacebuilding because culture is constitutive of group identities and how groups define their interests (Ross 2007). Struggles over symbols and narratives are important because they are "*reflectors* of groups' worldviews and on-going conflict" (emphasis in original; Ross, 2007, p. 3). As such, Ross argues that cultural expressions can exacerbate, inhibit, or cause conflict (2007, p. 3). He explains that the worldviews, which emerge through the cultural expression, can range from being exclusionary to inclusive. The more the narratives are exclusionary the less likely it is that intergroup relationships will change. Similarly, where symbols and narratives are more inclusive, the more likely it is that positive relationships can be built. Hence, these narrative struggles are significant as they point to the concerns of the community, which in divided communities has often to do with fear and the belief that the "other" community seeks to pursue its own goals. Consequently, attempts at building shared, neutral or re-integrated communities are often interpreted as benefitting the other and it is not surprising that attempts at neutralization or integration result in political contestations.

Third, as Stefanie Kappler (2014) notes, cultural expression can be a "vehicle of agency and a platform on which voices can be made heard vis-à-vis diverse structures of power" (p. 50). Paying attention to culture practices allows us to focus on the agency and politics beyond the elites and formal, institutional arenas. For these reasons, culture needs to be better understood by peacebuilding scholarship. Indeed, as I explain in the following sections, culture has been

understood in a limited way by dominant approaches to peacebuilding. However, before addressing the understanding of culture in peacebuilding I first present an overview of the concept of culture.

Culture – Contested and Shared

Scholars writing on culture conceptualize culture in a variety of ways that are important for my own analysis. Some scholars argue that culture arises from contestation while others focus on culture as something that is constituted from shared symbols and narratives. I look at each of these aspects in turn.

In the first case, scholars such as Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson (1997) explore how culture is contested. According to Gupta and Ferguson, recent understandings of culture have focused on the ways in which culture becomes reworked, transformed and utilized by a diverse body of actors. The view of culture as dynamic and constituted through relational ontologies has emerged as a result of the "cultural turn" in social and political theory (Clifford, 1988; Chaney, 1994; Bonnell & Hunt, 1999; Nash, 2001; Scott, 2003). A key feature of this turn is the recognition that culture can be considered as a "site of politics and power" (Kappler, 2014, p. 52). In anthropology, the problematique of culture has also been seriously debated and rethought. For this reason, David Scott suggests that a more apt description of "cultural turns" applies as a turn to culture from other fields, but also as a new rethinking of the cultural sphere within anthropology (2003, p. 106). While some scholars turned to culture as an important variable to be considered in explanations of political and social phenomena, anthropologists have moved away from conceptualizing culture as the property of, or as inherent to, a geographically bound group of people. This shift in the understanding of culture and identity reflects the broader constructivist and post-positivist approaches in social sciences.

Against this background, constructivist-oriented scholarship stresses the importance of contestation that arises from the understanding of culture as open to negotiation by multiple actors in society (Hall 1992, 1997). Susan Wright emphasizes that the cultural turn in anthropology has involved reconceptualizing culture from being largely constituted through "essential meanings" to a concept defined through "contestations" (1998, p. 10, note 3). In this way, Wright notes that culture should be viewed as a struggle and as a political process whereby groups and individuals attempt to define and control what comes to be seen as a particular culture. Culture then needs to be understood in the sense of *culture as politics*, where cultural practices and expressions matter for political process. *Cultural politics* also refers to the idea that different groups and individuals struggle to define a community in ways that may exclude certain individuals and narratives. As Gupta and Ferguson highlight, "[R]ather than simply a domain of sharing and commonality, culture figures here more as a site of difference and contestation, simultaneously ground and stake of a rich field of cultural-political practices" (Gupta and Ferguson, 1997, p. 5). In this view, culture is constructed through practices that reflect a negotiation and competing understandings of what culture is between and within groups.

In contrast to scholars who look at culture as primarily concerned with contested practices of identity making, other scholars emphasize the importance of culture being constituted through shared symbols and narratives (see for example Chabal and Daloz, 2006). While these scholars recognize that culture is not static, they nonetheless tend to emphasize the centrality of shared meanings and understandings to the relevance of culture for politics. Ross provides a clear explanation for the importance of maintaining shared meanings as central (in comparative political analysis) when he argues that "[F]irst, culture is a system of meaning that people use to manage their daily worlds, large and small; second, culture is the basis of the social

and political identity that affects how people line up and how they act on a wide range of matters" (Ross, 1997, p. 42; Also cited in Chabal and Daloz, 2006, p. 22). Ross points us to understanding how individuals draw on common expressions and symbols in their daily life that are often tied to their group identities. This is of particular importance in the context of divided societies where group identity shapes an individual's interaction with institutions of the state as well as with other groups in the community.

Cultural symbols also become central in the broader struggle and have a significant political meaning precisely as a result of their ties to group identities. As such, paying attention to culture tells us much about the worldviews of the groups in conflict. In the context of deeply divided societies, cultural infrastructure, such as newspapers, is in place that further highlights the other groups as not to be trusted (Mac Ginty, Muldoon and Ferguson, 2007). In this way, this cultural infrastructure shows that conflicts are not products of "ancient hatreds" but are rather produced and supported through different practices and processes.

Still, Hall raises two important concerns when focusing on culture solely in terms of "shared meaning". He suggests that such a view can result in an understanding of culture that is "too unitary and too cognitive" (1997, p. 2). First, Hall (1997) highlights that we need to recognize the multiple interpretations of particular narratives and symbols that can exist even within communities. Second, he argues that meanings are not only "in the head" of the individuals that belong to a particular group but rather shape the practices of these individuals (Hall, 1997, p. 3). Noting these concerns, Wedeen calls for a focus on culture as composed of "semiotic practices" (2002).[35] Wedeen is particularly concerned with what she sees as the

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[35] Other scholars, most notably Bourdieu (1990), also call for a similar focus on culture as composed of contested practices. Bourdieu's perspective and framework has been influential and important in the works of many scholars, particularly anthropologists. For a sophisticated use of Bourdieu in relation to international security, see Williams

emphasis on "semiotic coherence" found in the works of Geertz and his followers. She suggests the need to "shift our conceptualization away from culture as a fixed system of meaning to culture as the practices of meaning-making through which social actors attempt to make their worlds coherent" (2002, p. 720). In this way, Wedeen moves away from viewing culture as defined through deeply held meanings that can be understood only by members of the same shared culture.

Instead, Wedeen sees meaning and shared knowledge as something that is debated and negotiated through practices. She is concerned with the understandings of culture that focuses on "intelligibility" rather than on attempting to uncover the "inner essence" (2002, p. 721). By focusing on intelligibility, Wedeen draws our attention to the ways in which meaning is constituted, represented and made visible. In this way, she echoes Hall's sentiment that culture can be observed by paying attention to practices and symbols that are prominent in a society. As a result, culture is observable by and accessible to individuals outside of this context and particular group. In this way, Wedeen differentiates "intelligibility" from "common knowledge" in two important ways: first, as observable and second, in terms of a "minimalist sense of what is shared" (2002, p. 722). Hence, rather than understanding culture as a set of deeply held beliefs, Wedeen suggests the need to focus on the broadly held views and practices. In this way, Wedeen prefers a focus on practices that are made visible and, in examining the minimalist sense of what is shared, she avoids the attempt to try and "get into the head of informants" (2002, p. 721).

In contrast to Wedeen's emphasis on culture being something visible, others argue that culture is something that relies on hidden codes or transcripts. For example, scholars suggest that there are "hidden transcripts" (Scott 1990); that is, that the actual way of functioning in a

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(2007), and Pouliot (2010). For my purposes here, Wedeen's approach to culture as composed of semiotic practices is best suited to capture the making visible different worldviews of groups in divided societies.

particular community is somehow hidden. Hence, it is not easily observed and available to outsiders. In contrast, the visible practices are what Scott (1990) in particular describes as "public transcripts". It is true that practices are "dual" as they entail both what the "the outside observer can see and of the actors' understandings of what they are doing" (Pitkin 1993, p. 261, cited in Wedeen 2007, p. 15). But Wedeen's perspective allows us to analyse precisely the practices which are made visible and that allows us to observe some of what is meaningful to the communities. As Anthony Giddens points out, "society's culture comprises both intangible aspects-the beliefs, ideas and values which form the content of culture- and tangible aspects- the objects, symbols or technology which represent that content" (2001, p. 22; also cited in Mannergren-Selimovic, 2013, p. 337).

Indeed, I suggest that in the context of divided societies, in subtle and not so subtle ways cultural beliefs and worldviews are made visible or public. As Sarah McDowell and Peter Shirlow point out in relation to Northern Ireland:

Yet much of what constitutes identity, affiliation and belief is centered upon public displays of ethno-sectarian divisions. The extent of wall muraling, ethno-sectarian interfacing, sporting allegiances and divergent constitutional beliefs form much of the character of culture, memory, resource competition and attitude. It is within the emotional geographies of conflict and harm that public and political discourses are performed and the future is centered upon the choice between cultural reductionism or cultural plurality. (2011, p. 701)

As such an understanding of culture that pays attention to the public displays of cultural forms of expression allows for a better understanding of the politics of these societies. While it may be true that some of these practices are "non-obvious" to external actors (Mac Ginty, 2013, p. 425),

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and that international peacebuilding culture is disconnected from local experiences, it does not mean that these meanings are impossible to grasp or always out of view.

Therefore, in my analysis I suggest that culture is not just contested but is also shared. Shared meanings are particularly relevant and tied to group identities in the context of divided societies. At the same time, practices and narratives are contested both between and within groups. As such, Hall (1997) notes that what is important then is how meaning is represented through practices and interpreted by individuals. Practices allow us to observe which narratives and symbols emerge as meaningful to the population in their daily lives. For example, Ross describes the importance of the "we" feeling amongst groups that is expressed through symbols and rituals, and which draws on group experiences and views of the past, present and future (1997, p. 45). This sense of shared past experiences of violence in the context of post-conflict societies can result in exclusionary practices and narratives. However, alongside these exclusionary practices and narratives there are also more inclusive understandings and practices of community and citizenship. Thus, following McDowell and Shirlow (2011), peacebuilding has not paid enough attention to the ways that the "emotional geographies of conflict and harm" play out in the everyday sphere and what they tell us about the success of peacebuilding projects.

To summarize my argument thus far, I argue against seeing culture as monolithic or static. While the symbols and narratives that emerge are generally supported within a particular group, nevertheless not everyone within that group will support them, and within a particular group or community contestation will occur. As Ross notes, not all members of a group necessarily accept these meanings and symbols. Wedeen (2002) also agrees that a cultural approach does not have to exaggerate the coherence in the understandings of the practices. The relevance of the cultural approach lies in its uncovering of these practices as meaningful in order

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to understand the broader politics of these societies. Nor can the identities of individuals be reduced only to their (often ethnic or religious) group identity (Bougarel, Helms and Duijzings, 2007). Nonetheless, in divided societies, group identities tend to be most salient given the recent experiences of conflict and violence. Despite this, as Ross highlights, "it is crucial to recognize that common ground is often overestimated: what people who share a group identity believe is shared is often greater than what is actually shared" (2009, p. 5). Ross's as well as Gupta and Ferguson's insights of culture as a rich field of social practices are helpful as they allows us to understand that culture is not static or without contestations even within groups. Rather, it is negotiated and debated on a daily basis and can be observed by examining the ways in which these negotiations occur. In addition, these practices also have to be understood against the background of the broader peacebuilding context. As such, whether dividing or integrative practices are more supported or visible is shaped by the broader context and structural factors.

As discussed above, culture is an important variable to understand in relation to the politics of divided societies. The next section of this chapter ties these discussions of culture to the peacebuilding literature and post-conflict context of the divided societies examined here. In dominant peacebuilding strategies culture as politics is rarely engaged with or seen as important in understanding local agency (Kappler, 2014, p. 50; Richmond, 2009).

Culture and Peacebuilding

When considering the role of culture in peacebuilding Kappler asks a crucial question: "What is it that is missing in contemporary peacebuilding policies (2014, p. 52)?" Following Kappler (2014), I suggest that culture has been understood in a limited way in peacebuilding literature and practice. In what follows, I first touch on these limited understandings of culture by

dominant peacebuilding approaches. I then explore the importance of understanding culture as politics in peacebuilding practice and scholarship.

Dominant peacebuilding strategies rarely engage with an understanding of culture as important to the political processes (Kappler, 2014; Richmond, 2009). Instead, much of the external engagement is driven by the belief in the universal values of the peacebuilding missions (Kappler, 2014, p. 51). If culture is engaged with at all, it is to provide legitimacy to the broader peacebuilding project (Richmond, 2009). In some cases, David Chandler (2010) highlights, culture is used to portray the often non-Western world as irrational or as holding onto customs and traditions that prevent the success of the peacebuilding processes. Chandler argues that cultural forms of expression are rarely seen as political but rather as reactionary. As a result, dominant peacebuilding projects attempt to address the perceived troublesome "cultural" tendencies of the local actors through international norm promotion (Kurtovic, 2014; Chandler, 2013).

Another view of culture that emerges from dominant peacebuilding approaches is the reduction of culture to the customary and traditional. Andrew Finlay (2010) further suggests that culture is often understood by peacebuilders as referring to traditional practices or "folklore" (cited in Kappler, 2014, p. 52). As such, cultural practices are depoliticized and portrayed as only tied to tradition and traditional knowledge (Shaw & Waldorf, 2010, p. 6). However, cultural practices need not be particularly traditional or customary, and they are certainly political.[36] In other words, street art such as murals and graffiti are equally relevant in the politics of post-conflict societies as the formal debates occurring in parliaments and other institutions of the

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[36] At times local actors in their everyday practices do draw on more traditional practices or engage with more "traditional imaginaries" (Schröder and Schmidt, 2001). Still, we must recognize that even more traditional cultural forms of expressions and practices also draw on a diverse set of international, regional and local elements (Appadurai, 1990).

polity. As I will discuss in subsequent chapters, graffiti messages for example often reflect the particular community's view on a peacebuilding strategy or present a view on the contemporary political developments.

At the same time, it is important to acknowledge that some actors in the post-conflict polities attempt to obscure the political nature of their cultural practices by claiming that they are a part of their tradition and as such are depoliticized (see Blake, 2015). This is for example noted by Jonathan S. Blake (2015) who points to the loyalist parades in Northern Ireland. Blake uncovers that parades are described by the local participants, organizers and supporters as "cultural" and as part of their tradition. In this way, Blake posits the notion of culture as separate from the political sphere is expressed in order to protect these practices from both "critique and compromise". In this way, the culture as tradition label is a powerful tool that communities at times use to justify their practices and to avoid compromising with each other. Nonetheless, the politics of these cultural practices are not lost on anyone, particularly members of the "other" community in a deeply divided society.

This brings me to another view of culture and politics worth addressing here. Namely, scholars of ethnic politics suggest that leaders often mobilize, for their own political interests, the symbols and practices that are embedded with meaning and seen as representative of a group's identity.[37] In this perspective, elites manipulate the population, and cultural symbol, practices and narratives are tools that leaders develop and use to achieve their political interests. As such, local practices and symbolic displays are merely reflective of the perspectives of elites. However, I suggest that this idea of elite control of the population is not correct. Local actors

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[37] See Chip Gagnon (2004) for an analysis of the role of elite manipulation in the conflicts in former Yugoslavia. For a wider discussion of elite manipulation, see Snyder (2000).

have agency and ethnic leaders (and for that matter international elites) cannot simply impose their views on the population.

Here, I follow Rogers Brubaker's (1998) views on the limits of elite manipulation. Brubaker notes that elites cannot simply impose their agenda on the population. In fact, he uncovers that in the case of the Yugoslav conflicts elite manipulation was effective in some regions of the country due to the already existing narratives of past persecution (see also Guzina and Marijan, 2013). [38] In other words, ethnic leaders seized upon the narratives of the past trauma that were sustained by the local population and passed on to the next generation (Brubaker, 1998). In turn, local populations drew on these narratives and it was their fears of reliving the past persecution that played a role in their support of elite positions. Far from simply being puppets or objects of the ethnic leaders' views, local populations had agency. This insight is central to both my views on local agency, that practices of ordinary individuals are political, as well as the potential consequences of overlooking the presence of exclusionary narratives. Namely, while external peacebuilding actors may not be attuned to the practices and narratives on the ground, this does not mean that some elements in these societies are not. While it may seem unlikely in the short- to medium- term, in both cases examined here, the uncertain conditions of these societies and the presence of exclusionary practices and narratives leave open the possibility for the emergence of leaders who will continue the violent conflict. [39] As such, cultural practices of ordinary individuals can potentially be used by ethnic leaders. Ultimately, ordinary individuals play an important role in determining the types of practices and narratives that they find meaningful.

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[38] Stuart Kaufman (2001) also suggests that many of the myths that were seized upon by leaders in the former Yugoslavia were already present in the communities.

[39] Szakolczai (2009) refers to the importance of the trickster figure in liminal situations. Tricksters are unsavoury characters on the margins of society that in liminal conditions have the potential to emerge as "charismatic leaders" (Szakolczai, 2009, p. 155). See also, Davison and Tešan, 2014.

This point about the central role that individuals play in determining what is meaningful is central to my analysis of the cultural dimensions (place-making, symbolic practices and narratives). Namely, I show that while practices and decisions of elites do play an important role in, for example, shaping the everyday environment (such as changing street names to reflect dominant group narratives) individuals still determine how they engage with the particular places. They can, for example, use old street names, dismiss newer names as instances of manipulation, or accept these newer names when they are reflective of one's own view on the conflict and new polity.

In other words, local populations have agency and determine the types of practices that they find to be meaningful. In the three dimensions identified here (place-making, symbolic practices and narratives), I have specifically drawn on research interviews and field observations in understanding how local populations engage in the different practices and narratives. In calling attention to specific practices, I have compared the information provided by the civil society members and activists with the discussions and observations of practices by ordinary individuals. Even still, I acknowledge the difficulty in determining the extent to which certain practices are a product of or instances of elite mobilization. At times, the cultural expressions mirror views or actions of the elites. But in many of the examples I discuss, the practices and narratives that emerge are in opposition to elite discourses and at times presented as an alternative to the ethnicized politics. Ultimately, there are no simple ways to resolve the extent to which elite actions impact on the practices that I discuss here. However, I suggest that one way to address these concerns in a critical and reflexive way is to pay attention to the practices that occur in everyday living.

Theorizing the Everyday

In this section, I turn to examining why cultural forms of expression that occur in the everyday lives and spaces of the local population need to be seen as political. My primary goal here is to show that it is the lived experience and the interaction between the citizens and the spaces of the everyday that shape the politics that emerge. As Richmond and Mitchell observe, an everyday knowledge – or as they refer to it a *savoir faire* – is developed as a result of the lived experience (2012, p. 22).

Scholarship on the everyday is useful then as it alerts us to the importance of local experiences and knowledge as the driving force behind the daily practices rather than top-down elite discourses. In peacebuilding practice, this contextual local knowledge has often been set aside and the more exportable models and technical insights have become dominant (Richmond, 2011; Kappler, 2014). This has then further exacerbated the disconnection between the top-down strategies and the everyday lives of the population (Richmond & Mitchell, 2012). Speaking broadly about international relations scholarship, Vincent Pouliot suggest that the lack of contextual specificity and attention to local experience is a result of an "epistemic shift" in Western scholarship away from the practices of everyday life and "towards formal and abstract representations of the world" (2010, p. 15; See also Chabal and Daloz, 2006). Yet there is an observable move towards the study of the everyday in cultural studies and beyond (Watson, 2012). This is driven by the recognition that, as Siniša Malešević notes, the "world of abstract principles, complex and distant ideas, and grand vistas has to be transformed and concretized into accessible images, familiar personality traits, stark metaphors and the general language of everyday life (2006, p. 17)." Hence, it is the embedding of the abstract notions and theories as well as the responses to this embedding by ordinary citizens that marks the everyday as political

and worthy of study. Thus, the everyday can be understood as the site of struggle, where the different visions of global and local actors meet.

This conceptualization of the everyday as a site of struggle and contestation is important here, as scholars have noted that the literature on the everyday also tends to be seduced by the idea of the everyday as a site of resistance or solidarity (Richmond and Mitchell, 2012, p. 16). I suggest that by thinking of the everyday as a site of contestation and struggle we can understand the multiplicity of actors and practices that shape the responses that emerge. The everyday is thus neither transformative nor problematic. Rather, it depends on the types of practices, cultural expressions, and everyday politics. Hence, the importance of the everyday in the context of peacebuilding partly arises due to the perception by local populations of it as "a sphere in which people find security" and also where local actors are more likely to voice their agency (Kappler, 2014, p. 3). It is this everyday sphere, Kappler notes that due to its complexity and difficult access has remained overlooked by policymakers and academics interested in peacebuilding (Richmond, 2011; Kappler, 2014, p. 3).

These academic discussions of everyday life owe much to Michel de Certeau's (1984) seminal work, *The Practice of Everyday Life*. In his analysis, de Certeau points to ordinary practices of walking and dwelling as important to the ways that individuals navigate the attempts of society to control their actions. In his view, through their daily practices, ordinary individuals use "tactics" to respond to attempts to control their lives and therefore carve out spaces for themselves and their activities. As such, de Certeau alerts us to a key point. Despite the official plans, goals and visions, individuals in their daily life can create alternative visions or contest the official plans by using subtle tactics at their disposal. These tactics can be seen as coping mechanisms. But it is important not to romanticize these tactics as I will illustrate in the case

study chapters; sometimes these practices reflect exclusionary narratives. Moreover, in my view, local actors act both consciously and unconsciously (see also Mac Ginty, 2011). While the everyday is filled with repetitive practices, individuals are still aware of their actions. In other words, ordinary individuals engage in different practices and navigate the everyday in particular ways that reflect their understanding of their communities.

Recent scholarship on everyday peacebuilding also builds on de Certeau's work and is important to discuss here. For example, Richmond and Mitchell (2012) draw on de Certeau's tactics to point to what they term "everyday agency" in response to dominant peacebuilding approaches. Richmond and Mitchell (2012) note that the tactics are an appropriation of the different strategies by ordinary citizens. Similarly, Mitchell and Kelly (2011) observe the everyday tactics and responses to the strategies of peacebuilding in transforming spaces in North Belfast. In de Certau's work, and that of other scholars focused on the everyday such as Henri Lefebvre, the everyday navigating of spaces is important as it involves creating a tie to the space (Richmond and Mitchell, 2012, p. 22). In their view, these tactical negotiations of everyday spaces are shaped by the lived experiences of these communities and reflect their understandings of the spaces and their communities within these spaces. As such, external peacebuilding strategies that attempt to impose particular understandings of these spaces, or to transform them according to their own imaginings or interests, are often disconnected from local practices of meaning-making that the local population finds most relevant in their everyday life.

Yet this is not to suggest that these everyday spaces are completely disconnected from the national, regional or global processes. In post-conflict societies, national, regional and global dimensions also shape the local context. In particular, dominant peacebuilding strategies attempt to embed a particular vision of the polity, its institutions and symbols, into the daily lives of the

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population. However, dominant peacebuilding approaches tend to depoliticize the everyday, overlooking the importance of contestation and the agency of the local population (Richmond, 2011; Richmond and Mitchell, 2012). Simply put, there is a tension between the attempts to embed the polity as supported by peacebuilders and the struggles to assert the alternative group narratives (Ó Dochartaigh, 2010, p.174). This is particularly true where the broader state is contested and is not able to assert itself in everyday spaces. Local experiences of violence and conflict then shape the uneven mobilization of actors, such as militants, or the support for particular extremist rhetoric. In other words, groups choose to renegotiate political outcomes at the local level as they are able to accomplish certain things at the local level that they may not be able to do at the national (or global) level. Therefore, groups appeal and work through different sites and levels of governance strategically as well.

Scholarship on nationalism has also examined the ways in which the notion of the nation (or "nationess") has been embedded into everyday life through cultural expression and symbolic practices (Surak, 2013).[40] While the practices I point to should not be reduced to simply instances of nationalism, this literature provides important insights into the internalization of state-level identities. In his influential book, *Banal Nationalism*, Michael Billig (1995) alerts us to the routinized, mundane practices of nationhood in Western nations. In this way Billig seeks

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[40] Kristin Surak explains that two trends have emerged in studies of nationalism. One is focused on macro, historical developments of nationalism and nation-building, while the other examines more micro, contemporary practices of nationness (2013, p. 2). Surak suggests that combining both broader ideological developments and everyday practices should bridge these two trends. She refers to her approach as "nation-work" (Surak, 2013, p. 2). Surak defines "nation-work" as the "social labor of objectifying the nation" or as "making this abstract concept identifiable and tangible" (2013, p. 2). Surak's work is precisely focused on the types of everyday embedding of broader national identities and reflects a turn in the nationalism scholarship. The "ethno-symbolism" school of nationalism also examines the importance of symbols to group identities. But this literature is not concerned with the post-conflict peacebuilding context where certain symbols are particularly salient given the recent conflict. Moreover, this literature, by viewing symbols as results of elite manipulations, which some certainly are, cannot tell us how ordinary individuals navigate the symbolic landscape in post-conflict societies experiencing peacebuilding projects. As Outi Keranen (2014) notes in the case of Bosnia, while some symbols are new or invented, many are based on historical grievances. However, this does not mean that they are unchanging or primordial, simply that the lack of reconciliation following recent conflicts has contributed to their saliency.

to bring studies of nationalism from their focus on peripheral countries to the Western democracies. Billig argues against exoticized, outsider-oriented examinations of nationalism, pointing instead to nationalist practices as being routinized in the everyday life of the citizenry of Western nations. Billig states that "[D]aily, the nation is indicated, or 'flagged', in the lives of its citizenry. Nationalism, far from being an intermittent mood in established nations, is the endemic condition" (1995, p. 6). As he explains, in many banal ways, whether flags or stamps, citizens are reminded on a daily basis of their belonging to a particular polity. But Billig overlooks the ways in which ordinary citizens respond to this "top-down" flagging of the nation and how they themselves respond. In other words, the key question is which view of the polity do citizens themselves sometimes literally "flag" in their everyday living?

Cultural Lenses and the Politics of the Everyday in Divided Societies: Key Aspects

In the above sections, I have sought to show that far from being passive the everyday is highly political. In this section, I outline three key aspects, or cultural lenses, that form a part of these everyday politics that scholarship on peacebuilding needs to take account of and engage with. These are imprecisely divided into practices of place-making, symbolic practices, and competing narratives and performances. Some practices can be seen as addressing more than one of these aspects. For example, the graffiti found in particular neighbourhoods marks the space as belonging to a particular community but it also reflects the broader narratives about the past conflict. However, the strength of this framework lies in precisely allowing for this fluidity, interaction and multiplicity. Moreover, practices of interest here can be brief, fleeting or can be highly organized events that occur on specific days (Ross, 2010). Some practices and expressions are routinized in everyday life while others are organized spectacles that occur on

particular days. Ultimately what links all of these practices together is their meaning-making for in-group solidarities and strengthening of broader, group narratives, or, as Ross puts it, "the almost automatic affective connections people make between the symbolic expressions and the within-group bonds they strengthen" (2010, p. 63). These group bonds can be exclusionary or inclusionary depending on the group that is being symbolized (i.e. all citizens of the polity, or particular groups within the polity). Often the most effective practices and narratives in a divided society are those that support the divisions. These are most effective as they build on the mistrust and fear that follows violent conflict and uncertainty about the future intentions of the "other" group(s).

I) Place-making and "Inscription"

While geographers and anthropologists have focused on daily practices and the marking of spaces through symbols and rituals, political analysis of divided societies has only recently started to link the spaces of everyday life to the political sphere. Political geographers have certainly paid closer attention to the ways in which space is performed or enacted politically but the way in which space is used to display cultural and symbolic meaning of the state has also been undertheorized (Painter 1995; Marston 2004; Graham 2011). Even within anthropology, visual displays have received less attention than textual representations (Schröder & Schmidt, 2001, p. 10). Ingo Schröder and Bettina Schmidt aptly refer to markings and displays as "inscriptions" and as representative of worldviews "inscribed in the cultural landscape as images displayed on banners or murals" (2001, p. 10; See also Jarman, 1997). As a result, scholars have focused on inscriptions as key to the ways in which different groups struggle over the visibility of their own symbols. After violent conflict ceases, the symbolic sphere remains a space in which the broader conflict can continue.

In divided societies, these inscriptions are sometimes made visible for the benefit of one's own community rather than to target opposing groups. Flags, for example, are one common sense way of understanding the allegiances of a particular community. The presence of religious institutions are another. Such examples are not always threatening to "other" communities directly but they indicate the way a particular space is both used and marked as belonging to a particular community. Following mass scale population displacements in Bosnia, particular ethnic groups moved into areas that had been previously populated by members of other groups. What followed was not simply a movement of population but also the spread of cultural symbols that marked the spaces as belonging to that group (Nettelfield and Wagner, 2014, p. 14). Some inscriptions provide more direct messages, such as banners supporting former military generals (accused of committing war crimes but seen as heroes by their own communities) that litter the landscape in some parts of the Western Balkans. Others are subtle markings, with for example scribbled graffiti on the side of buildings. Many invisible boundaries also exist, such as particular streets and roads in Belfast that form a part of the invisible boundaries that local populations "just know to avoid" (Personal communication, October 19, 2011). These subtler boundaries are generally found in areas where the violence of the conflict was most prominent. Moreover, these inscriptions form what Ross refers to as a "symbolic landscape" (2009, p. 2). The notion of a symbolic landscape is important, Ross suggests, as it highlights "which groups and people are present and which are absent in it and how different groups in society are portrayed when they are present" (2009, p. 2). Hence, markings of space become an important aspect of the struggle for representation in a society where one or more groups share the same territory. In turn, these markings become routinized and normalized into aspects of everyday life that shape the way that individuals live their lives (for example, by walking in some areas and avoiding others). This

negotiation of space is particularly important in divided societies where the route one chooses to walk can be tied to the particular group identity and a feeling of being at risk in another area. As a result, what is important about the symbols is their perception in the particular contexts (Ross, 2009, p. 15). As Siobhán McEvoy-Levy argues, "The meaning of a place is grasped through the experience of being within it, participating in its activities, and telling stories about it, which allows for places to shape people's identities and values" (2012, p. 2)

In the post-violent conflict period, spatial and demographic changes also play a role in the perceived ownership of territory. Some spatial changes are top-down transformations of spaces. For example, officials in Bosnia have changed street names often to reflect the dominant ethnic group's narrative about the past. However, local populations who hold their own understandings of the past and future of the society respond to these official changes in their own way. Some locals will use "old" street names, while others will refer to "new" names, and sometimes through these seemingly banal types of practices they will reveal their own political understandings of the recent events. This is visible when examining citizens' "mental maps" of the territory that at times contradict the official maps and boundaries. For example, in Belfast the actual spatial activity of ordinary citizens is shaped by perceptions of the areas as "safe" or not to members of their group. Individuals largely stay in areas deemed safe or acceptable for that community.

However, peacebuilding strategies that aim to transform spaces traditionally seen as the domain of one group to more inclusive spaces are in turn faced with subtle ways of maintaining the previous divisions. Audra Mitchell and Liam Kelly assess the extent to which the focus on creating "peaceful spaces" in Belfast in particular have impacted the spatial sense of the conflict. They found that the various peacebuilding initiatives aimed at transforming the conflictual

spaces have, in fact, created "bubble spaces" that often remain removed from the issues in surrounding areas. Indeed, sometimes they are designed in ways that allow those using the spaces to remain oblivious to the "conflictual" spaces that surround the "bubbles". Nonetheless, these spaces are impacted by the local patterns of social divisions and thus contest the vision of these spaces as peaceful or integrated. One such example is the City Side shopping centre in North Belfast situated between a predominantly Catholic neighbourhood and a predominantly Protestant one. Even though the shopping centre was meant to be a site of integration, local segregation patterns have been reproduced simply because the communities use separate entrances (Mitchell and Kelly, 2011, p. 315). This example shows that choosing to focus on providing more integration in these societies will not necessarily result in more integration nor will it change the dynamics of ways in which the local populations negotiate the spaces of their communities.

Perhaps no clearer sign of inclusion and exclusion in a territory exists than a presence (or absence) of a barrier, or wall between neighbourhoods populated by different groups. Scholars of political geography exploring the significance of walls note that walls can represent both "conflict infrastructures" as well as "infrastructures of peace" (Till, 2013, p. 52). Walls are more often thought of as "conflict infrastructures" as they divide spaces and individuals often according to group membership. The presence of walls and barriers points to the instability of the broader polity and its vulnerability (Brown, 2010, cited in Dowler, 2013). It is therefore not surprising that the number of peace walls have increased since the signing of the peace agreement in Northern Ireland (Geoghegan, 2010). However, walls and borders are porous. Some groups, such as women in the case of Northern Ireland, who are deemed to be less

political, are able to cross the boundaries and engage across the divides (Dowler, 2013).[41]

Moreover, as Dowler discusses, the presence of the walls lead to particular portrayals of

neighbourhoods and areas as "no go areas". Yet even this portrayal can prompt new responses

and possibilities for more inclusive political expression. Hence, when examining the presence of

walls and barriers we must also consider them as not only powerful images of territoriality,

which they surely are, but to also look beyond these understandings to see how individuals

respond to their presence. Still, the building of barriers and walls, as in the case of Northern

Ireland examined later, is of particular significance because it is the communities that are

engaged in their construction, contrary to the wishes of the state and international agencies, such

as the EU, that seek to remove them. As such they emerge as part of the struggle between the

communities for "control of the symbolic landscape" (Dowler, 2013, p. 60), but also as responses

to the broader goals of transformation.

II) Symbolic Cultural Expressions and Practices

Still, other practices are not concerned with the physical marking of spaces and are less

organized and formal. They mostly reflect what Billig (1995) would see as banal practices, albeit

here seen as emerging from the bottom-up. Their seemingly mundane nature does not take away

from the significant role that they play within group interactions. As David Kertzer notes,

"[P]olitics is expressed through symbolism" (1988, p. 2). At times their impact on group

relations seems insignificant, precisely because often no overt violence occurs. Yet, in contexts

of divided societies the symbolism is rarely missed. Some of these expressions are truly banal as,

for example, paying attention to the pronunciation of words or letters, or consciously modelling

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[41] This is a product of gendered notions of nation. Women are also seen as political but in different ways (see Yuval-Davis, 1998). In Northern Ireland, these gendered notions portray men as the key political actors due to the direct involvement in combat.

one's dialect in a way that signals one's ethnic identity. This is, for example, visible in the case

of Bosnia where certain words are pronounced slightly differently and in this way pronunciation

signals the ethnic identity of the speaker. This often reflects a post-conflict reality of hyper-

ethnicization, where individuals scrutinize words and their pronunciation in order to place other

individuals within particular ethnic categories. Hence, the prevalence of Turkish loan words in

one's language use signals the Bosniak identity of the speaker. Others, on the other hand, such as

those of Croat and Serb background, avoid using these terms, choosing instead to model their

speech upon the dialects in their respective kin states of Croatia and Serbia. This is also coupled

with the formal uses of the Croatian and Serb school curriculums in the Bosnian Croat and Serb

dominated areas. I argue that these practices are important as they imbue interactions between

individuals with ethnic markers. Through these subtle ways particular areas of the country

become less welcoming to different ethnic groups and "returnees" thereby preventing

reintegration.

III) Competing Narratives and Performances

A recent perspective in the anthropological examinations of societies that have

experienced violent conflict focuses on the link between experiences of violence and the

narratives created in response by individuals (Kolind, 2008). As Torsten Kolind captures in this

perspective, "[T]he focus is on actual victims' subjective *experiences of war*, violence and

torture, and on the *narratives* people construct in their attempts to (re)create meaning, identities

and social relations in a shattered world (2008, p. 42; emphasis in original). The focus in this

perspective is on the individual experiences and narratives. However, following Ross, I argue

for an intersubjective understanding of the narratives, rather than a focus on individual

experiences. A cultural approach focuses on understanding narratives as constituted as shared

meanings among groups rather than as constituted from an individual's perspective (Ross, 1997, p. 63).[42]

Narratives that are created as a way of understanding events and violence of the past are important because they represent intersubjective interpretations and collective memories.[43] Another relevant point that Ross makes is "how we understand [that] the past grows out of our present needs" (2009, p. 12). These narratives about the past are then tied to a group's current worldviews, even if factually incorrect. In other words, whether outsiders perceive these narratives to be legitimate or correct is of less importance if we are seeking to understand how these narratives represent common perspectives shared by group members about the past. These narratives are of central importance as they also tell us much about fears, particularly about the future of the polity that members of a group share. As numerous scholars (e.g. Nagle, 2014) have noted, speaking about the past or marking the past is less about the past and more about the future.

Moreover, Vamik Volkan (1997) points to the "time collapse" in encounters between members of opposing communities in the context of divided societies. In these contexts, past traumas and present political struggles are linked. In particular, Volkan's notion of "chosen trauma" is especially relevant in post-conflict contexts. Volkan defines "chosen trauma" as "the collective memory of a calamity that once befell a group's ancestors" (1997, p. 48). Volkan specifies that his use of chosen is important as groups do not of course choose to be traumatized but they do choose to mythologize these events. Hence, the choice is in the interpretation and use of these past traumas. In turn, narratives also highlight "chosen glories" or events that showcase

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[42] Ross makes an important point worth quoting: "The power of psychocultural interpretation lies in their shared social character, not those idiosyncratic features that distinguish one person's account from another's" (1997, p. 69).
[43] There is some debate about the usefulness of the notion of collective memories in political and sociological scholarship (See Olick, 1999).

success or triumph that enhance the groups' self-esteem (Volkan, 1997, p. 81; Kinnvall, 2004).

Volkan notes that chosen traumas tend to be more powerful because they "bring with them powerful experiences of loss and feelings of humiliation, vengeance, and hatred that trigger a variety of unconscious defense mechanisms that attempt to reverse these experiences and feelings (1997, p. 82). While Volkan is interested in exploring the deep psychological dimensions, I focus more on the visible performances of these narratives. Particularly interesting and disconcerting is the way in which groups in Bosnia for example "taunt" each other through graffiti and slogans about their traumas. This will be explored further in the chapter on Bosnia. Suffice it to say that a groups' sense of (ontological) security and identity is perceived to be undermined through these contestations and practices, including through such banal practices as graffiti.

While political elites often manipulate narratives about the past for their own purposes, local populations also play a role in developing such narratives. As such, elites do not have complete control over these narratives. For example, this is visible when local populations continue to contest a more inclusive narrative than that supported by political elites. As such, local populations also have agency and broader narratives are always interpreted in context-specific ways.

Still, some broader group narratives are expressed in more formal ways. These narratives are made visible through performances, such as commemoration ceremonies that highlight the most significant group narratives. Commemoration ceremonies are a great example of the performative aspects of narratives. It is through the commemoration of specific dates that a group's beliefs and fears are highlighted. As Ross highlights, "[P]olitical rituals offer meaning in ambiguous, uncertain situations and are crucial to the dynamics of identity construction and

maintenance, particularly in periods of change" (Ross, 1997, p. 59). In uncertain situations, these narratives and performances highlight aspects of the past that are important. In this way, they reflect what Susan Sontag suggest is the "collective instruction" (cited in Hite, 2012, p. 5). Sontag suggests that is more useful to think of collective instruction than the notion of collective memory. She explains that "[W]hat is called collective memory is not a remembering but a stipulating: that *this* is important , and this is the story about how it happened, with the pictures that lock the story in our minds" (quoted in Hite, 2012, p. 5; emphasis in original). Approaching narratives and performances of the past in this way is important to my analysis. It shows us why symbolic politics matter and what they tell us both about the past and the future.

Conclusion: Cultural Lenses and "Everyday Peace"

These cultural lenses are important as they highlight the ways that ordinary citizens respond to the goals and visions of peacebuilders. As a result they have significant implications for the analaysis of peacebuilding. Particularly, cultural lenses alert us to the everyday politics that scholars have also focused on in examining everyday peacebuilding. Richmond and Mitchell suggest that "[T]he framework of 'everyday peace', therefore, does not suggest a mundane conception of peace, but rather attention to the dynamics and interactions that make every form of peace unique, dynamic, contextualized and contested" (2012, p. 2). By shifting the focus from elites, institutions and top-down formulas, an everyday peacebuilding approach allows us to examine how ordinary citizens negotiate post-violence conflict realities in various spaces. Rather than replacing the focus on institutions and interests, including culture as a variable reveals the limitations of these approaches in understanding what is meaningful to the populations in these societies.

However, the call for peacebuilding activities and good governance approaches to pay greater attention to place-making, symbolic practices and narratives is not without problems. Audra Mitchell points to the necessity of spaces for contestations to occur. Contestation is, as she explains, healthy for any society; especially a divided one. It allows the society an opportunity to carry out conflicts without necessarily resorting to violence. Mitchell has an important point with her discussion of "world-building". She is highly critical of transformationalist attempts to create new words for the population by external peacebuilders. Richmond and Mitchell note that "[E]ngaging with the everyday in peacebuilding settings *simultaneously* emancipates and entraps, enriches and depletes, enhances the quality of life and tightens control over it" (2012, p. 21; emphasis in original). This concern over the attempts to control everyday life and practices is not to be dismissed as it does open up a necessary discussion regarding control of population. Ross, also recognizes that in pushing for inclusive narratives there is a concern that such a call could be interpreted to mean that one side should give up its identity and claims in order for the conflict to disappear (2007, p. 318). This is morally undesirable and would not work. As Ross recognizes, such a stance would likely result in more violent conflict. I am in agreement with both Mitchell and Ross about these concerns. A focus on the everyday politics and cultural lenses is no panacea. There is no easy overarching model to follow in order to establish a more inclusive narrative and practice.

Moreover, Ross finds that while there is a need for inclusiveness there is also a wish on the part of individuals to differentiate themselves. As Ross puts it, "What this means is that either extreme separation or merger of individuals and groups induces strong fears; it is not something that can simply be mandated, and is politically unproductive when it is tried" (2007, p. 319). As such, peacebuilders need to be aware of the limitations of the culturalist approach. I also stress

that the practices and expressions I point to here should not be used as templates for new models. Rather, those involved in peacebuilding activities and strategies need to pay attention to these responses without attempting to control or utilize these practices. The risk of such actions is that they will merely replicate and bolster the very divisions they are seeking to address. In fact, a more effective approach might well be to provide for a plurality of identifications and expression (Finlay, 2010, p. xiii). Where responses and strategies are exclusionary it is context-specific responses that need to be developed that engage with this context without further pushing them to the periphery.

In this chapter, I have argued for the need to pay closer attention to cultural expressions and contested practices within peacbuilding theory and practice and, particularly, within the context of liminal states that experience peacebuilding strategies. In periods of transition and uncertainty, responses by ordinary individuals shape the type of society that emerges. Peacebuilders engaged in transforming these societies have often overlooked the importance of the types of cultural lenses that I have pointed to here. In what follows, I illustrate the ways in which the standardised, technocratic approaches to peacebuilding have missed the local responses in the cases of Bosnia and Northern Ireland.

In the subsequent chapters, I will use these three lenses (place-making, symbolic practices and narratives) to provide richer insight into the liminal conditions of the cases of Bosnia and Northern Ireland. By paying attention to the types of symbols, narratives and practices that are a part of the lived experience of peace in these polities I suggest that their enactments contribute to further perpetuation of the liminality of these polities. It should be clear that despite the comprehensive peacebuilding efforts, discussed in chapter two, local actors play an important role in negotiating these peacebuilding strategies. In both cases, the lack of

agreement on the future of the polity is made visible through the everyday practices and cultural expressions.

Chapter Four

An Uncertain Reconciliation in Northern Ireland

We have ended up with a very fractured society... Our peace is still in a state of flux. In post-conflict societies, you can't leave it to your politicians once you have your agreement. It takes ordinary people to cross many barriers. (Personal communication, October 26, 2011)

Northern Ireland's peacebuilding experience is best described as ambiguous. While much progress has been achieved in building a more peaceful polity, there are also persistent divisions and disagreements. This ambivalence of peacebuilding in Northern Ireland is clearly illustrated by the following examples. On June 27, 2012, news media reported that the deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland and Sinn Féin politician, Martin McGuiness shook the hand of Queen Elizabeth II during her visit to Northern Ireland. This historic gesture was widely seen as a symbol of the strength of the peace process and as a "momentous" step for "Anglo-Irish" relations and the politics of the polity ("Queen and Martin McGuinness," 2012). After all, McGuiness is a former senior member of the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA), a paramilitary organization that sought Northern Ireland's independence from the United Kingdom and a unified Ireland, and he has long been a key republican figure. The historic handshake also followed a particularly successful year of cooperation at the Northern Ireland Assembly (Guelke, 2014, p. 137). On the surface, at least, politics in Northern Ireland had entered a new era.

Yet, by December of 2012, events re-cast such readings of any political transformation in "Anglo-Irish" relations as being premature. Riots and clashes erupted in Belfast on December 3, 2012, following a vote to restrict the flying of the Union flag on Belfast City Hall from year round to designated days. The riots were seen as a sign of renewed tension and symbolic struggle

over the future of the polity. The flag dispute particularly brought to the surface the dissatisfaction and fears of working-class, loyalist communities that their symbols and cultural practice were being undermined in order to accommodate the nationalists/republican communities (Nolan et al., 2014). The protests lasted well into February 2013 and some £20 million was spent on policing the protests during the period between December 2012 and February 2013 (Guelke, 2014, p. 140). The Belfast City Hall flag protests and associated violence were particularly disappointing for the key peacebuilding supporters, such as the EU and US, who largely saw the Northern Irish problem as settled.

As such, while much has changed in the post-Belfast Agreement Northern Ireland, the continued tensions between the communities and symbolic struggles offer a lens into the quality of peace that has been achieved. In this chapter, I turn to the examination of liberal peacebuilding strategies and the cultural and everyday politics that have contributed to Northern Ireland's ambiguous peace. To begin with, Northern Ireland is an interesting case to examine, as it is an established democracy and a part of a prosperous region (Nagle, 2011, p. 162). In this way, it is different from the Bosnian case examined in the subsequent chapter. However, the Northern Irish experience of peacebuilding remains incomplete despite these favorable conditions. Contrary to the expectation of external supporters and local actors, post-conflict developments show little reconciliation among the different communities in Northern Ireland. Instead, partisan symbols, segregation, and lack of agreement about the past shape the sense of belonging and citizenship of the population.

In analyzing the Northern Irish experience of peacebuilding and the contentious cultural and everyday politics, this chapter proceeds as follows. In the first section, I provide a brief background of the peacebuilding "light" approach in Northern Ireland and the broader socio-

economic context. In the second section, I examine in more detail the triadic liberal peacebuilding strategies such as power-sharing, civil society support and dealing with the past aimed at institutionalizing good relations, shared notions of community and inspiring reconciliation and dialogue. Then, I turn to analyzing the salience of cultural expressions and the types of practices that are enacted in everyday living.[44] This chapter concludes by highlighting that the ambivalent peace in Northern Ireland is sustained by the actions of ordinary citizens and that the persistence of contested identities and views about the polity continue to undermine attempts of peacebuilders to create a "shared society".

On Shifting Ground? Post-Belfast Agreement Northern Ireland

The 1998 Belfast Peace Agreement brought to an end some thirty years of small-scale violent conflict in Northern Ireland commonly referred to as "the Troubles".[45] The ability to reach an agreement in what many saw as an intractable conflict, between the largely Protestant unionist/loyalist community and the largely Catholic nationalist/republican community, is seen as an important triumph for conflict resolution.[46] While there is little agreement on the causes of the conflict, one of the key issues throughout the history of the polity was the different visions for the governance of Northern Ireland, or the north of Ireland, and ultimately the consequences

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[44] Here I draw on the everyday interactions and observations made during my stay in Northern Ireland in the fall of 2011. Throughout the chapter I also refer to some 25 semi-structured research interviews conducted with members of community organizations, volunteer groups and local activists engaged in peacebuilding. These organizations ranged from formal non-governmental organizations, to small community centres and arts focused groups. I have kept these interviews confidential and I only refer to the broad roles of the individuals interviewed.

[45] The reference to "the Troubles" is often used to describe the recent violent conflict. Arthur Aughey also points out that some use the term "the recent troubles" in order to distinguish recent conflict from that surrounding the partition of Ireland in the 1920s (2005, p. 7). Still, most analysts and local commentators refer to the recent conflict as "the Troubles."

[46] Republican and loyalist monikers are used to denote members of the nationalist and unionist community who are often perceived as more militant and extreme by members of the other community.

for citizenship and group rights.[47] While the Catholic/nationalist/republican community preferred

a reunification with Ireland as the best way to guarantee their rights, the

Protestant/unionist/loyalist community sought to remain a part of the UK.[48] The Troubles had

started in the late 1960s and continued well into the 1990s. Over the course of the conflict,

approximately 3,600 individuals lost their lives and some 40,000 were injured (Tonge, 2013).[49]

In a polity with an estimated population of 1.8 million these numbers meant that the conflict

touched most members of the population in some way.

The conflict was largely fought by paramilitary organizations representing the two

communities with the involvement of the British Army and security services. Of the republican

groups, the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA) was the most dominant with the smaller

Irish National Liberation Army (INLA) and some other smaller groups also engaging in the

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[47] These opposing visions for the polity have deep historical roots in the history of the island. See Hennessey, 1997;
McKittrick & McVea, 2001; Cochrane, 2013 for the historical background. Here it is worth noting that the 1921
partition of Ireland into two entities, created modern day Northern Ireland and Ireland (at the time Irish Free State).
The partition of Ireland was a result of the struggles for self-government from Britain by the Irish Home Rule
Movement in the late 19th century. However, the struggles over British political rule in Ireland had a much longer
history. The tensions on the island were increased due to the 17th century "Plantation", when the Scottish and
English Protestants colonized crown appointed lands in Ulster, a province in the north-east part of the island (Ross,
2007, p. 91). These lands had belonged to Catholic "Old English" and Irish natives (Hennessey, 1997, p.1). The
"Plantation" resulted in the political dominance of the largely Protestant land owners and in turn subordination of
the Catholic population. The rise of the home rule movement contributed to the sense of unease for the Protestant
population. For their part, the Protestant population in Ulster feared that self-government by the dominantly Catholic
Ireland would lead to discrimination and their treatment as second-class citizens (Hennessey, 1997; Hays, 2010). As
such, they opposed home rule. As a result, the six out of nine counties of Ulster, the north-eastern province with a
Protestant majority, remained a part of the United Kingdom and comprise modern day Northern Ireland. In Northern
Ireland partition led to the political dominance, and generally preferential treatment of the Protestant population—
and in turn, discrimination against the Catholic population. The divisions between the communities in Northern
Ireland about the future of the polity persisted with sporadic violence by republicans (Smithey, 2011, p. 55). In the
1960s, a civil rights movement emerged to challenge the inequality of the Catholic population particularly in regards
to housing and employment (Smithey, 2011, p. 55). Afterwards, a series of events contributed to the outbreak of
violence and the intervention by the British Army.
[48] McGrattan and Meehan (2012, supra note 3) note that the state's proper name is just Ireland, not "Republic of".
Throughout I follow the proper name of Ireland unless quoting others.
[49] Kaufmann (2011, p. 374) refers to Malcolm Sutton's figure of 3,562 conflict deaths during the period 1969-2001.
There is general agreement around the figure being between 3,500-3,600 deaths. See Breen-Smyth (2012; 2013) for
an examination of the experiences of injured individuals and their families.

conflict.[50] On the loyalist side, the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) and Ulster Defence

Association (UDA) were the key loyalist organizations. Republican groups engaged in attacks on

the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), an overwhelmingly Protestant police service, the British

Army and the local military auxiliary, the Ulster Defence Regiment (UDR) as well as prison

officers (Kaufmann, 2011, p. 373). The number of British soldiers was largely dependent upon

the events and disturbances but at the peak of the conflict there were some 27,500 soldiers in

Northern Ireland (Nolan, 2014, p.47). The British Army and state responded to republican

attacks and there is some evidence of collusion between British security services and loyalist

paramilitaries (McDonald & Bowcott, 2012). At the same time, there is also evidence that in at

least two cases the Irish police and the PIRA colluded in the murder of two RUC officers

(McDonald, 2013a).

Given this background, peacebuilding in Northern Ireland is seen as "light" in nature as the

conflict was mostly treated as a British and Irish issue and did not feature a large scale

international peace operation. Indeed, the 1998 Belfast Agreement was the outcome of a British

and Irish elite-led and designed process that had started in the mid-1970s.[51] Yet, the push for the

Agreement was also reflective of the broader shift in conflict management that followed the end

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[50] The provisional name reflected the split within the Irish Republican Army, between the "officials" and the "provisionals". The officials were Dublin-based and disagreed with the use of violence (see Hanley & Millar, 2009; Shanahan, 2009). However, the violent responses by the British Army tipped the popular support towards the provisional agenda. Over time, Sinn Féin (SF) as the political branch of PIRA came to be seen as an important tool in the struggle. INLA, a more Marxist group, emerged in the 1970s.

[51] Recognizing the consequences of the continued violence, in 1973-74, the British government pushed for a political resolution and what would become the Sunningdale initiative (Ruane and Todd, 2014, p. 21). The Sunningdale initiative was an attempt to institute power-sharing among the unionist and nationalist parties. It was brought down by a loyalist industrial strike that also gained the support of mainstream unionists (Ruane and Todd, 2014, p. 21). The lack of political will on the part of the British government to save the power-sharing institutions and to engage in a confrontation with the unionist community led to the collapse of the early attempt at conflict management (Ruane and Todd, 2014, p. 21; see also Kerr, 2011). Subsequently, the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985 recognized the important role that the Irish state would play in brining stability to Northern Ireland (Ruane and Todd, 2014, p. 23; see also Byrne, 2001). For an overview of the background and role of the Irish government in achieving the settlement in Northern Ireland, see Susan McDermott, 2014. For a discussion of the British policy in Northern Ireland, see Dixon, 2001. These earlier initiatives were important in building a process that would lead to the Belfast Agreement.

of the Cold War. As Michael Cox (1998; 2006) notes, the end of the Cold War contributed to the change in the global context that prompted the republican leadership to reconsider their strategies. Against this background, the political arrangement was a "pragmatic" choice as parties to the conflict recognized that violence was no longer effective in helping them achieve their goals (Aiken, 2010, p. 175). As such, external support for the process, notably that of then US president William "Bill" Clinton, was important in providing the legitimacy and push needed to reach the agreement. The role of the Americans was also prominent in the peace negotiations as the former US Senator George Mitchell chaired the talks that resulted in the 1998 Agreement (McKittrick and McVea, 2001).[52] Therefore, although the Northern Irish conflict was largely a British and Irish matter for many years, the role of the US and other external actors, such as the European Union, should not be overlooked.

These external actors, particularly the European Union and United States, alongside the British and Irish government have supported over the last sixteen years peacebuilding projects centered on shaping a vision for a shared society. Over the years, the European Union has provided significant funds for peacebuilding activities, including some €1.3 billion since 1995 (European Commission's Northern Ireland Task Force, 2014). Initial EU programs focused on

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[52] There is some debate on the role of the US in the Northern Irish peace process. Adrian Guelke (2012) suggests that while the US involvement was important it should not be viewed as a causal factor in the peace process. Guelke is correct that the importance of the US involvement should not be overstated. Still the US role in the conflict and peace process is important on at least two levels. First, the attention of American leadership and calls for peace did speed up the process in achieving the agreement by urging the leading actors to settle the matter. Moreover, this interest has continued with the current US envoy to Northern Ireland Gary Hart pointing out that the US has remained "disproportionately interested" in Northern Ireland (Page, 2014). Second, on a more informal level the support of the Irish lobby and IRA sympathisers in the US is often described as important by locals who were witness to the financial support received from these individuals and groups. Interestingly, a former member of security services in Northern Ireland notes how the individuals in the US, particularly in Boston, would put money in the "jars behind the bar in Boston's pubs for the cause back home." Moreover, former members of the republican paramilitary organizations also explained to me that the events of September 11th, 2001 and the attacks on the US played a role in the republican approach to politics in Northern Ireland. Republicans understood that militant elements of their movement needed to be curbed as the US perception towards the actions of such movements had changed. Indeed, the eventual disarming by the IRA was partly triggered by the events of September 11th and the resulting American pressure on the republicans (Cadwallader, 2001). See Clancy, 2010 for more details of the US political pressure as well as the impact of external actors on the power-sharing arrangements.

economic development and the regeneration of the local communities, followed by a focus on

reconciliation between communities. This external support for economic development and

stability of the Northern Irish polity reflected the liberal peacebuilding agenda. Here, economic

prosperity and stable power-sharing institutions were seen as building blocks for a more shared

society. Eventually, the EU expanded its approach and current efforts are focused on

"reconciling communities" and "contributing to a shared society" (SEUPB, 2015).[53]

As a result of this external support much has changed in Northern Ireland beyond the

cessation of hostilities. Former enemies share power in government, an internationally supported

decommissioning process has ensured that most weapons are beyond use and the police service

has undergone reform and become more representative of the population (Todd, 2010, p. 149).

Economic inequalities between the communities have also largely been addressed (Aiken, 2010,

p. 174). Although Catholic men, for example, still face higher unemployment rates as compared

to their Protestant counterparts (12 percent compared to 7.4 percent), this is still an improvement

from the 30 percent gap in employment between the two communities during the Troubles

(Sergie, 2014). In addition, individuals from unionist and nationalist communities are

increasingly employed in shared workspaces.[54] Foreign investment also followed the political

stability with some $2.2 billion invested (mostly by US investors) in financial services,

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[53] The EU has provided funding for peacebuilding in Northern Ireland through its Structural Funds programme. There have been three PEACE programmes (I. II and III) for Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland. PEACE I was implemented from 1995-1999, and its aim was largely support for economic development and employment. PEACE II was implemented from 2000-2004 and extended until 2006, and in addition to supporting economic and social development also sought to address the legacy of the conflict. PEACE III covers the period from 2007-2013, and it aims to "reinforce progress towards a peaceful and stable society and to promote reconciliation by assisting operations and projects which help to reconcile communities and contribute towards a shared society for everyone" (SEUPB, 2015).

[54] As a result of the extent of the structural inequalities between the unionist and nationalist community several equity and human rights policies were developed. For example, the Fair Employment and Treatment Order of 1998 outlawed discrimination based on religious or political opinion in employment and housing and allowed for affirmative action to ensure fair representation (Aiken, 2010, p. 173). In addition, a Human Rights Commission was established in 1999. Human rights and equality provisions were included across the board in, for example, police reform.

pharmaceuticals, and technology (Saul, 2008). Viewed against this background, the economic realities and local politics in Northern Ireland have indeed shifted ground.

Furthermore, the Belfast Agreement provides a balance of the different views for the status of the polity, either as part of United Kingdom or a part of Ireland. The Agreement reaffirms the place of Northern Ireland as a devolved region of the UK, yet allowing for the possibility, if the majority wishes it, to hold a referendum and vote on the region joining Ireland. This unclear resolution formed the "constructive ambiguity" of the Agreement (Dixon, 2002, p. 736). The Agreement left the future of the state open ended so that it could be described as a victory by both the unionists, who saw Northern Ireland remaining a part of the UK as their victory, while the republicans could interpret the Agreement as a road to a united Ireland. This balancing act also supports Will Kymlicka's arguments, discussed in chapter two, of the emerging recognition that the question of contested sovereignty cannot be fully resolved. Nonetheless, this ambiguity provides reassurance to the anti-Agreement unionist population of Northern Ireland's constitutional position as a part of the UK (Nolan, 2014, p. 12).

Still, in working class loyalist communities there remains a perception that the Catholic/nationalist/republican communities have benefitted more from the peace process. In the view of loyalist communities, nationalists/republicans have benefitted both in terms of their socioeconomic as well as political position in comparison to unionist/loyalist communities. However, as Adrian Guelke (2014, p. 147) notes, this perception of "Protestant disadvantage" is not reflected in regards to the fact that out of the 20 most deprived wards in Northern Ireland, 16 are located in areas with a Catholic majority. Yet, as he notes in terms of educational attainment, Catholics do outperform their Protestant counterparts, with 60 percent of university positions being held by Catholics (Guelke, 2014, p. 147; see also Nolan, 2014). The unemployment

statistics for youth, aged 16 to 24, also show this growing divide between Protestants and Catholics. While 24 percent of Protestant youth were unemployed, this compared to 17 percent of their Catholic counterparts. As such, these trends contribute to the sense that the future of the country seems to be inclined towards the Catholic population.

Changing demographics have only compounded these fears as it became clear in 2011 that Protestants now made up less than half of the population (Guelke, 2014, p. 141).[55] The Protestant population declined from 53 percent in 2001 to 48 percent in 2011 (Devenport, 2012). In turn, the Catholic population has increased from 43.8 percent in 2001 to some 45 percent in 2011 (Nolan, 2014, p. 21). Moreover, the Protestant population is older and of those 65 and over, 64 percent were brought up as or are Protestant (Nolan, 2014, p. 21). Belfast, long seen as a unionist "citadel", now has a slightly larger Catholic population (Nolan, 2014, p. 22; Guelke, 2014, p. 148; see also Kaufman, 2011). The position of the loyalist and unionist communities and their view of the post-agreement politics is captured by a member of a peace research centre in Belfast: "For loyalists/unionists there is a sense of fear that the long term trajectory, even if it is in very small steps, is likely to be towards a united Ireland" (Personal communication, September 22, 2011). This fear of a shift in the identity of the country persists in loyalist communities despite the fact that the support for a united Ireland has diminished over the years, with less than 20 percent of the population favouring a united Ireland (Nolan, 2013, p. 5). Interestingly, this concern of an identity shift is not simply constitutional but rather also in the symbolic realm and is being understood as a "culture war" on the symbols of loyalism/unionism

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[55] Anderson and Shuttleworth note that "sectarian headcounting" became a part of politics in Northern Ireland (1998, p. 188). For example, the selection of the six out of nine counties reflected the unionist politicians' goal to establish a polity where they thought they had a "safe two to one majority of Protestants, assumed to be British unionists, over Catholics, assumed to be Irish nationalists" (1998, p. 188). See McEldowney, Anderson & Shuttleworth (2010) for the politicization of demographic trends in Northern Ireland.

such as flags and parades (Nolan, 2014, p.12). Some loyalist and unionist communities claim that the Britishness of the state is being undermined and needs to be maintained.

Interestingly, residential segregation has decreased somewhat from 2001 to 2011, with some 37 percent of electoral wards being of single identity (either Catholic or Protestant) compared to 50 percent a decade ago (Nolan, 2013, p. 8). However, this mixing of the population is not always welcomed and as a result of the flag protests and increasing tensions some 411 individuals were intimidated out of their homes in 2012/13 (Nolan, 2014, p. 11). This intimidation showed that the simmering conflict has the potential to rise to the surface and acts as a deterrent to increased mixing between the two communities.

Still, significant numbers of individuals in Belfast avoid going to the closest health centres if they are in an area considered to belong to the "other" community (Shirlow and Murtagh, 2006). Many undertake longer journeys in order to obtain essential services and the overwhelming majority avoid socializing in areas dominated by the "other" community. In their 2007 study of the cost of the divides in Northern Ireland, Deloitte estimates that close to £1.5 billion is spent annually as a result of the divides. The British government has thus far provided the necessary funds to sustain the current system. For example, in 2012 the British government provided a subvention of some £10.5 billion to the Northern Irish government (Clarke, 2014). However, London plans to cut its funds to Northern Ireland by 1.6 percent in 2015 and due to the lack of agreement on UK-wide welfare reform by the local politicians some £114 million may be lost in 2015 alone (Clarke, 2014). These cuts will have an important impact on the local population dependent on these support systems. Though there have been economic benefits associated with the peace process, the poverty levels in Northern Ireland have risen from 18 percent in 2002 to 22 percent in 2013 (Porter and Pouvreau, 2014).

At the same time, despite the lack of larger scale violence, there remain uncertainties about the levels of security experienced by individuals in their daily lives. Some of this insecurity is experienced in the intimate relationships and personal sphere. Domestic violence has increased dramatically since the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) started to keep track in 2004/2005. In 2012, for example, the rate was 20.2 percent higher than in 2004/2005 (Hoewer, 2013, p. 226). Suicide rates from 1998 on are staggering. In the period between 1998 and 2008 suicide rates rose by 64 percent (Hoewer, 2013). To put this in perspective, almost as many individuals have died from suicides in Northern Ireland following the peace agreement, as during the Troubles (Torney, 2014). Males make up approximately 77 percent of all suicides and the rates are highest in Belfast (Torney, 2014). Moreover, Mike Tomlinson (2012) notes that the highest rates of suicide are found among individuals who were children during the worst periods of the conflict in the 1970s. He suggests that these individuals grew up in an environment where division and externalized aggression were acceptable (Tomlinson, 2012, p. 477). The transition to peace however, has meant that outward aggression is no longer socially approved and these views become internalized.[56] On top of this, according to a study carried out by the University of Ulster and local trauma experts, Northern Ireland has one of the world's highest recorded rates of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) ("Post traumatic stress," 2011).[57]

However, the sense of security in the polity is also diminished due to the perceptions of remaining violence and tensions at the communal level. Local newspapers are filled with reports of pipe bombs found by the police, "punishment shootings" carried out by former paramilitary groups, and petrol bombs thrown at houses or at the police. For example, in 2013 bomb disposal officers responded to more than one security alert per day (Kilpatrick, 2013; Seth-Smith, 2014a).

[56] See Hoewer, 2013 for a discussion of the changing gender dynamics as another factor in the high male rates of suicide in post-conflict Northern Ireland.
[57] On the trans-generational impacts of the Troubles, see Commission for Victims and Survivors, 2015.

Organized crime groups are estimated to have grown from about 60 to 170 over the last decade ("The troubles are over," 2014; Seth-Smith, 2014b). Former paramilitary groups remain in the background often exerting influence on the types of peacebuilding projects that can be carried out in most affected areas. Some groups, for example, the Republican Action Against Drugs (RAAD) formed to address the drug dealing and "anti-social" activities in their neighborhoods in Derry/Londonderry.[58] A small number of "dissidents," mostly republicans, who do not support the Belfast Agreement and seek complete independence and reunification with Ireland, continue to carry out minor attacks. In addition to controlling particular areas, these groups have, for example, attacked the members of the police service, thereby signifying their lack of acceptance of the current political arrangements. In 2012, RAAD joined forces with the Real IRA and a coalition of smaller independent groups (McDonald, 2012).[59] Audra Mitchell also notes that these actions by dissident groups show that they "exist in a parallel world in which the cycle of violence which constituted the Troubles continues, but the source of the threat is now the polity-building process, initiated by the GF/BA, instead of simply the British Government" (2011, p. 196). Even still, these groups continue to target police officers and members of the security service as was the case during the conflict.[60] Thus, the segregation of the society, persistent low-level violence and continued presence of former paramilitary organizations present the context

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[58] In 2012, there was some information pointing to the establishment of a similar organization in loyalist areas of Londonderry/Derry, calling itself Prods Against Drugs (PAD) (McDaid, 2012).

[59] Real IRA was formed following a split from the PIRA. It claimed responsibility for the Omagh bombing in 1998 that killed 29 people. The only group outside of this new dissidents amalgamation is the Continuity IRA (CIRA). CIRA is a much smaller group that was also formed from the split with the PIRA.

[60] For example, in 2009 two soldiers and police officer were killed. In 2011, a police officer of Catholic background Ronan Kerr was murdered by dissident Republicans in an act that many saw as seeking to deter Catholics from joining the police services. Following the murder graffiti appeared on the Bogside estate, a predominantly Republican area, in Derry/Londonderry praising the murder of Kerr ("Ronan Kerr murder," 2011). Though the graffiti was condemned by the political parties and representatives it was still a powerful message aimed at those individuals in the nationalist/republican community considering joining the reformed police service.

within which the contested practices occur. It is against this background, that the peacebuilding strategies and local practices must be examined.

The Liberal Peacebuilding Toolkit: Rebuilding Northern Ireland

This section explores further the three dimensions of the comprehensive peacebuilding model developed in chapter two, namely institutional design, civil society building and support, and dealing with the past mechanisms. Particular emphasis is given here to analyzing the way that peacebuilding strategies in Northern Ireland came to center on a vision of peace as "trickling down" from the top-level to the communities. In this way, I suggest that the agency of the population and their responses were overlooked as crucial aspects of politics.

The Belfast Agreement and the *Power-Sharing plus*

Power-sharing, in particular, is the crucial element of the peace agreement and the peacebuilding approach in Northern Ireland. Most scholars view the Belfast Agreement as clearly consociational in that it seeks to accommodate the two sides rather than push forward integration and it is designed to maintain a delicate balance by appealing to the competing political visions of the community.[61] In addition, the Agreement also features interesting provisions for building relations between Irish and British governments, thus providing reassurance to both communities in Northern Ireland that their visions for the polity are protected. As such, Brendan O'Leary (1998) suggests that the Agreement is best understood as "power-sharing plus". It meets all the consociational elements: executive power-sharing,

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[61] Most notably, Paul Dixon (2005) has disagreed that the Agreement is consociational. He instead suggests that "[T]he Good Friday Agreement is best characterised as an integrationist variant of power-sharing" (Dixon, 2005, p. 365). For Dixon, the Agreement is more democratic than what he sees as the more segregationist nature of the consociational theory. For Dixon, consociationalism is based on assumptions of unchanging identities and this leads to further entrenching of group identities.

proportionality, communal autonomy and equality, and minority veto rights (O'Leary, 1998). Crucially, it is bi-national, as it recognizes the British and Irish communities, and also respects the differing visions for the polity by having nationalist ministers take a Pledge of Office, rather than an Oath of Allegiance to the Crown or to the Union (O'Leary, 1998, p. 1634). The Agreement thus establishes the "parity of esteem", or recognition of the equality of identities of the two main communities. In addition, it created the North/South Ministerial Council, formed by Ministers of the Northern Ireland Executive and the Irish Government, and the Council is also expected to ensure compliance and consideration of EU policies and programs.

From the outset, then, the peace agreement links Northern Ireland to both the UK and Ireland but also, however tenuously, to the broader entity and governance mechanisms of the EU. In order to balance the all-Ireland "confederal relationship" there is a British-Irish Council which both "met unionists' concerns for reciprocity in linkages – and provided a mechanism through which they might in the future be linked to the United Kingdom even if Northern Ireland becomes part of the Republic" (O'Leary, 2001, p. 62). The Anglo-Irish framework and their joint EU ties serve as the "safety net" to prevent any major breakdown of the peace process (Guelke, 2009, p. 108). Thus, the political arrangement and the power-sharing institutions reflect the broader conflict management strategies for divided societies in that the contested constitutional issues remain open ended (Brown & Mac Ginty, 2003, p. 84).

This strategy is also mirrored in the approach to the issue of dual citizenship. Through the Belfast Agreement and subsequent equality legislation the goal is to provide institutional mechanisms to ensure citizenship rights to all members of the polity despite differing visions of what this polity might look like. The Belfast Agreement highlights the commitment to diversity

of opinion on the nature of the polity and belonging by allowing for dual citizenship. This is explicitly stated in section 1(vi) that ensures that the parties to the Agreement:

> recognise the birthright of all the people of Northern Ireland to identify themselves and be accepted as Irish or British, or both, as they may so choose, and accordingly confirm that their right to hold both British and Irish citizenship is accepted by both Governments and would not be affected by any future change in the status of Northern Ireland.

This formal recognition of the differing understandings of the status of the state is certainly innovative. By providing the members of the Northern Irish polity with a choice, the Agreement supports Kymlicka's perspective of the need for compromise in regards to contested sovereignty. Interestingly, the provision also states that should a change in status of the polity occur, individuals would still be able to hold onto their British and Irish citizenships. Still, this view also reflects institutionalist understandings of citizenship in terms of a legal status and membership. Furthermore, the Agreement recognizes "the sensitivity of the use of symbols and emblems for public purposes, and the need in particular in creating the new institutions to ensure that such symbols and emblems are used in a manner which promotes mutual respect rather than division" (The Agreement, 1998). In this way, the Agreement recognizes the contentious nature of the symbols yet also acknowledges a need to revisit the issue of symbols sometime in the future. As such, the political arrangements and provisions for equal access to citizenship are essentially confidence building measures that are meant at some point to allow the issue of the contested status to be dealt with without violence.

Still, despite the initial praise of the Northern Irish elites in achieving the agreement and establishing the institutions, the power-sharing institutions stopped functioning in 2002. It was

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not until 2007, as a result of the October 2006 St. Andrew's Agreement, that the Assembly

started to govern again. During the period from 2002 to 2007, Northern Ireland was once again

under direct rule from London. This prompted Adrian Guelke to argue that "[W]hat this surely

means is that only a very limited weight can be given to the role of the functioning of

consociational institutions in underpinning the peace" (2009, p. 104). Guelke's assessment is

certainly apt for, as Robin Wilson notes, even after the institutions were renewed, there was a

five month period in 2008 when the power-sharing Executive was unable to meet (Wilson, 2010,

p. 8).

　　Also supporting Guelke's point, albeit from a different perspective, Jennifer Todd claims

that consociational institutions may not be as important as either the supporters or critics of the

consociational approach seem to argue (2010, p. 150). Todd explains that the informal

coordination and expectations, among other factors, play a greater role in how institutions

function than either of the two camps acknowledge (2010, p. 150). In her view, the North-South

and British-Irish provisions, alongside security reform and a focus on equality legislation, are

much more important to maintaining stability in Northern Ireland than the consociational form of

representation (Todd, 2010, p. 151). Still, Todd does agree that consociational institutions did

contribute to providing support for moderate politics and practices. This reflects the view that

consociational institutions do reduce levels of violence as an important building block for a more

durable peace (see chapter two). Yet even here she points out that the moderate rethinking had

less impact on public attitudes than was expected (Todd, 2010, p. 151).

　　This was particularly visible following the St. Andrews Agreement when two hardline

political parties, the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) and Sinn Féin (SF), came to the forefront

in the governance of the polity. Below is a map of the 2010 Westminster election results from

Northern Ireland Elections. The map clearly shows the dominance of SF in the west, north-west and south of Northern Ireland, all areas where Catholics form the majority of the population, as well as the prominence of unionist parties in the east and north-east where the Protestant population is the majority (see Nolan, 2014, p. 22). In addition, the two dominant parties have two opposing visions for the future of Northern Ireland. The DUP states that, "Our vision is to maintain and enhance Northern Ireland's constitutional position within the United Kingdom, achieving long-term political stability to deliver a peaceful and prosperous future for our people" (DUP, 2014). This vision can be contrasted with that of Sinn Féin, which describes itself as committed to achieving a unified Ireland (Sinn Féin , 2014). The support for SF and DUP has grown over the years, replacing earlier support for the more moderate Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) and Ulster Unionist Party (UUP).[62] In addition to these four main parties, a smaller more moderate party, The Alliance Party, seeks to draw support from both nationalist and unionist communities. Nonetheless, the DUP and Sinn Féin remain the dominant actors in what the Alliance Party and East Belfast MP Naomi Long has suggested is a "cosy carve up" that she sees as maintaining the prominence of the two communities as "separate but equal" ("Alliance leader says," 2012).

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[62] The dominance of DUP and Sinn Féin is visible in the 2011 Northern Ireland Assembly Elections as well. The DUP holds 38 seats, while the UUP holds 16. In the nationalist bloc, Sinn Féin won 29 seats, while SDLP only won 14. The Alliance has some 8 seats and others hold 3. This can be contrasted with the 1998 Northern Ireland Assembly Elections when the UUP had 28 seats, compared to 20 held by DUP. The SDLP had 24 seats and Sinn Féin 18. The Alliance party won 6 seats.
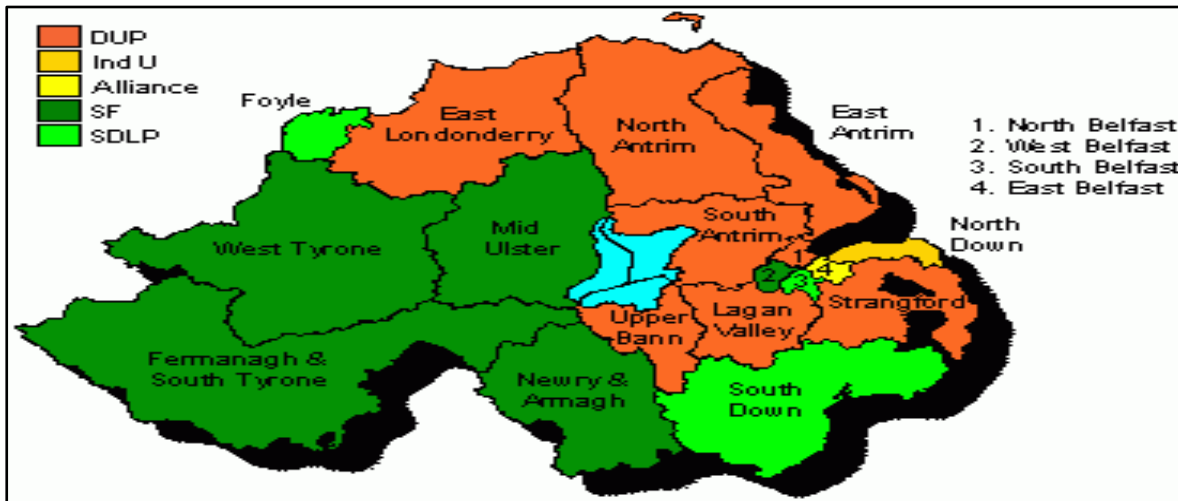
Figure 4.1: Map showing results of 2010 Westminster elections[63]

Nevertheless, in 2010 the DUP and Sinn Féin managed to conclude the Hillsborough

Agreement, an agreement which finalized the devolution of justice and policing powers (Guelke,

2014, p. 138). Even before the devolution, Sinn Féin's support of police reform in 2007 provided

legitimacy to the new police service. Police reform was seen as necessary as the Royal Ulster

Constabulary (RUC) was not representative of the nationalist communities. The transformation

from the RUC to the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) was an important step in the

rebuilding of the legitimacy of this institution and also in underpinning the confidence in the

peace process. Importantly, the symbols of the RUC were changed in order to signal a break

away from the RUC history and to ensure wider support in nationalist and republican

communities. In 2011, when the 50-50 recruitment process, a provision to ensure that half of all

recruits were of Catholic background, ended some 30 percent of the PSNI was made up by

Catholics ("PSNI 50/50 recruitment," 2011). As such, Todd is correct to argue that security

reform played an important part in contributing to the stability of the state. However, the reform

of the RUC and the removal of former emblems and symbols were not well received in unionist

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[63] Map available from Northern Ireland Elections: (http://www.ark.ac.uk/elections/fw10.htm).

communities who saw these steps as further catering to the nationalist/republican community (Personal communication, September 28, 2011).

As such, given the contested views of the symbolism and belonging in the polity there was also recognition that elite level processes and power-sharing need to trickle down to the communities as well. In this way, policies and strategies for a shared society and spaces as a means to deal with societal divisions emerged. Prominent among these were initiatives to rebuild a shared community and to re-imagine the communities. In 2005, a Good Relation Strategy: A Shared Future, published by the government, outlined the vision for a shared society.[64] However, the government in Westminster put the document together as the power-sharing executive in Northern Ireland was suspended and, thus, it was not very effective in gaining support amongst the political elites in Northern Ireland. Interestingly, while rhetorically promoting the notion of a shared future, the Northern Ireland Office, that oversees Northern Ireland's devolution settlement, in 2007 supported the building of the 25-foot-high wall that ran through the playground of Hazelwood Primary Integrated School in north Belfast (Monaghan, 2013, p. 146). The fact that this wall was built on the grounds of an integrated school, sparked outrage and calls for the need for the walls to be taken down. But it also seemed to go against the policy for building a shared future as it echoed earlier practices of division and separation.

After the re-establishment of power-sharing, the Northern Irish government sought to develop its own strategy for good relations. In 2010, the Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration (CSI) was sent out for consultation and received overwhelming criticism from the

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[64] The promotion of good relations by public bodies was not a part of the Belfast Agreement (Committee on the Administration of Justice, 2014). However, it was enshrined in section 75(2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 by the Northern Ireland Office. The Equality Commission of Northern Ireland defines Good Relations as: "[T]he growth of relationships and structures for Northern Ireland that acknowledge the religious, political and racial context of this society, and that seeks to promote respect, equity and trust, and embrace diversity in all its forms" (Northern Ireland Assembly Commission, 2012, p. 4).

civil society sector that described it as a "fluffy" document (Personal communication, October 20, 2011). Though the document stresses the equality of all citizens and seeks to build a shared society this was perceived as "token talk" without an effective strategy (Personal communication, October 20, 2011). Given the backlash against the policy, the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM), decided to design a new document incorporating the feedback received from the consultation.

On 23 May 2013, OFMDFM announced the publication of the new strategy for community relations, "Together: Building a United Community". While it is beyond the scope of this work fully to analyze these documents, there is a marked recognition of the need to address cultural expressions in the new document, and to build shared neighborhoods and education campuses, as well as to take down "peace walls". However, the implementation of the policy has been hampered by political disagreements between Sinn Féin and DUP and by the residual effects of the flag protests. The broader political environment also contributed to the stalemate in the discussions led by Richard Haass and the vice chair Meghan O'Sullivan as part of the Panel of Parties in the NI (Northern Ireland) Executive in 2013. The Panel brought together the five executive parties in Northern Ireland: DUP, Sinn Féin, UUP, SDLP, as well as the Alliance Party. The creation of the panel was proposed as part of the May strategy and is meant to tackle parades and protests, flags, symbols, and the issue of the past (Panel of Parties, 2014). With the establishment of the panel, the Northern Irish parties recognized the remaining issues and contentious practices that I point to as crucial to peacebuilding. In addition to the elite level talks there were also consultations held with civil society groups. Ultimately, the final proposed agreement was not endorsed by all political parties, although the parties did agree to continue the

discussion on these matters.[65] Still, while the outcomes from this process showed more of the same deadlock on contentious issues by political parties, it also reflected the belief that these contentious practices can be settled by top-down policies and leadership.

The issues of the flags and parades and the lack of agreement on how to deal with the past have also affected the cooperation between the DUP and Sinn Féin. In September 2014, Peter Robinson, DUP leader, stated that political arrangement was no longer "fit for purpose" and that there was need to remove the "checks and balances" that include cross community agreement and veto power in order to speed up the decision-making process (Mulgrew, 2014). This prompted Sinn Féin leader Gerry Adams to state that the political institutions are in "serious difficulty" (Mulgrew, 2014). As such, the power-sharing among the elites can be seen as one step forward and one step back, as whatever progress is made is undermined shortly thereafter. The constant squabbles between the leaders leads to a sense of "immaturity" about the politics at the top-level and the lack of conviction that these same leaders can contribute to positive change on the ground (Personal communication, September 22, 2011).

This brief analysis of the power-sharing and the institutional approach to rebuilding a shared sense of citizenship in Northern Ireland suggests that there are limits to these top-down strategies. While elites were able to agree on security reforms and continue to work with each other they are still unable to agree on the matter of contentious symbols and the past. Moreover, as a member of a community relations' organization in Belfast explains, "The fact that you have a power sharing arrangement at the top conceals the fact that below it is a society and community where divisions are still very deep" (Personal communication, October 7, 2011). As such, a focus on elite level politics misses the micro-level politics. At the same time, provisions ensuring equal

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[65] The proposed agreement is available here: http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/haass.pdf

access to citizenship and equality of the different political views on the polity are welcome ways to navigate the contested statehood. However, the contested legitimacy of the polity co-exists alongside these measures. More importantly, the strategy of permitting contested sovereignty overlooks the understanding of citizenship as a substantive experience. In other words, the formal recognition of the different identities present in Northern Ireland not only underestimates but also legitimises the struggles over identity and territory that are (as a result of the previous conflicts) embedded in the daily life of the population. Similarly, strategies for establishing a shared society and managing contentious practices are misplaced in their belief that some shared sense of belonging can be engineered from the top-down. In some cases, as in the building of the wall on the grounds of an integrated school in north Belfast, the practices of the Northern Ireland Office contravened their efforts of inspiring a shared community. In what follows, I examine the specific civic strategies and policies developed to tackle the social divisions and to build a sense of community and belonging for the population in Northern Ireland.

Civil Society Support

Civil society, as discussed in chapter two, is a key pillar of the liberal peacebuilding approach. This is especially evident in the case of Northern Ireland, as civil society organizations are key partners for the implementation of official strategies for a shared future and for promoting reconciliation. The community building role of the vibrant local civil society sector has been highlighted throughout the conflict and in the post-agreement period. In the last twenty years, the key supporters of peacebuilding initiatives, such as the EU and the US, have increased their focus on building civil society through funding opportunities for civil society organizations. The EU has implemented several peace initiatives that allow local organization to obtain funding for their projects. In addition, since the 1990s, the US has contributed some 500 million through

the International Fund for Ireland (IFI), an international organization that is largely supported by the US government (Archick, 2014, p. 16). This external economic support aims to promote shared projects at the grassroots level as well as to provide support for democratic values and aid in the economic development (Byrne, Thiessen & Fissuh, 2007; Byrne, Matic & Fissuh, 2007). As a result, some scholars suggest that the funding for these bottom-up initiatives reflects the "vested interest" of the peacebuilders with the goal of establishing support for the top-level strategies at the grassroots level (Creary & Byrne, 2014, p. 67). Thus, the civil society sector has been recognized as a key source of legitimacy as well as a benign mechanism that will support the top-down peacebuilding initiatives and their goals of reconciliation and improved community relations.

In response to increased funding, particularly by the EU, community and voluntary organizations in Northern Ireland have increased in number. For example, in 1975 there were some 800 voluntary organizations in Northern Ireland, but by 2000 there were over 5,000 civil society organizations (Nagle, 2011, p. 174).[66] At the same time, as a result of the increased attention, the civil society sector became more professionalized and more donor and project oriented. This in turn shaped the development of the civil society sector in Northern Ireland from a grassroots movement toward more formal non-governmental organizations. This was partly prompted by the external funders such as the EU who prefer to interact with formal organizations (Kappler, 2014). This has led to the concerns that these organizations are merely implementers of the top-down agendas and often composed of middle-class individuals disconnected from the realities of daily life in working-class neighbourhoods (Cochrane, 2006, p. 259).

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[66] This a part of the parallel worldwide trend in rapid growth of NGOs and civil society organization that does reflect funding patterns but also broader trends as a result of neoliberalism and changing nature of state.

The external nature of the funding has also prompted some concern that the peacebuilding projects that are pursued reflect the preferences of the funders rather than the local community needs (Creary & Byrne, 2014). Recently, concerns over whether the EU would continue to provide funding for peacebuilding also pointed to the unsustainability of many of the initiatives, as they are dependent on external funds (Braniff & Byrne, 2014, p. 54). In this way, as scholars critical of the liberal peacebuilding approach note, the external actors set the agenda, often funding projects that are not relevant in the local context. As Brandon Hamber (2003) also notes, the organizations are well versed in the language of the funding applications and tailor their projects to reflect the expectations of the funders (also cited in Braniff & Byrne, 2014, p. 56). As such, the projects often reflect the donor preferences rather than the needs of the community. This means that the civil society organizations are implementing liberal peacebuilding strategies without necessarily being attentive to the everyday peacebuilding politics.

Similar sentiments are found more broadly about the role of community representatives and the civil society organizations involved in building a more inclusive society. Many of the interviewees point out a gap between the professionalized community sector and ordinary citizens. As one member of a Belfast-based non-governmental organization concerned with this gap in his own neighbourhood reflects:

> One of things that I have noticed is that there is a growing disconnect between
> what paid community representatives say about the local community and what
> local residents say. Many local residents have been excluded from community
> activities. This is because they do not fit in with the community leader or the paid
> community worker. We have this phenomenon of paid community workers and

there is less community work going on now then there ever was. (Personal

communication, October 19, 2011)

Several interviewees pointed to this lack of wider involvement of local residents in the civil

sector organizations, noting a discrepancy between the official representatives and the local

communities. Dominant organizations tend to professionalize and to lack broader support from

local communities. Some of the community workers are also affiliated with the dominant

political parties, for example in republican areas many are affiliated with Sinn Féin. The

prominence of political parties in community work was also voiced as a concern by some local

residents who do not necessarily support the dominant political party in their area and hence are

suspicious of the community workers' commitment to peacebuilding in their neighbourhoods.

Furthermore, the majority of civil society organizations in Northern Ireland are split along

ethnonational lines, representing either the nationalist or unionist communities (Nagle, 2011, p.

174; Belloni, 2008). They are engaged in so-called single identity work that seeks to build

confidence within their own communities. However, by remaining focused on their own

communities they do not build mutual trust or bolster reconciliation between groups (Nagle,

2011, p. 174). Indeed, a member of a civil society in Belfast notes, "Certainly some of the single-

identity work, particularly around history has probably reinforced divisions rather than

challenged it" (Personal communication, October 18, 2011). This is not to say that there are no

cross-community organizations in Northern Ireland; there are, but they co-exist, as Belloni

(2008) notes, with some "uncivil" elements such as paramilitary organizations and other

important associations that reflect the communal divisions. As such, as discussed in chapter two,

external actors tend to bypass a vast array of organizations that do not agree with their

perspectives. In other words, they try to focus on the more "civil" organizations or organizations

that reflect the norms and values of the donors (Cochrane, 2006). Thus, when speaking about civil society in Northern Ireland, dominant peacebuilding approaches are focused on NGOs and formal organizations that support the goals of the peacebuilders.

Interestingly, the situation on the ground looks less clear cut. The Orange Order, a Protestant politico-religious organization, that excludes non-Protestants, has received funding from the British and Irish governments in order to support a move to more moderate politics and to support the "civilising" process of the Order and thereby the Protestant/unionist/loyalist community (Mac Ginty, 2011, p. 197).[67] Mac Ginty (2011) notes that the inclusion of the Orange Order and support by key peacebuilding actors reflects the hybrid nature of peacebuilding. At the same time, he questions whether an exclusionary organization can contribute to civil society goals of capacity building programmes. As a result of the increased funding to the civil society sector many individuals who were involved in paramilitary organizations, who are unable to find other employment, have become increasingly involved in community organizations (Clubb, 2014). This development challenges the perceptions of civil society as a depoliticized sphere, as these individuals had a direct role in the conflict. However, it also shows that while preferring more civic minded NGOs the key stakeholders, such as British and Irish governments, but also the EU, have in practice engaged with these actors. Ultimately, the goal of the external support is the moderating of exclusionary organizations and the broader goal of the shift to a "normal" society.

The involvement of former combatants in peacebuilding activities in Northern Ireland also reflects a broader understanding of ideas about post-conflict transformations in society and the necessity of reintegrating former combatants. In Northern Ireland, former members of

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[67] Catholics, and anyone married to a Catholic, are forbidden from joining the Order and members are banned from attending Catholic mass (Mac Ginty, 2011, p. 197).

paramilitary organizations have been included in the political process and some hold political offices.[68] This inclusion of paramilitaries in political processes is often seen as helpful in the transition from violence to democratic politics. As Shelley Deane notes, "In an effort to bring armed groups from murky political depths, peace processes may introduce a transitional space, a political hyperbaric chamber for paramilitary groups to de-compress their military and extra-judicial elements" (2008, p. 432). In Northern Ireland, former paramilitaries, many who were imprisoned during the conflict for their paramilitary activities and serious crimes, have become prominent in both the political process but also in the civil society sector. As a result, many of the potential "spoilers" were brought into the peace process rather than being kept out of it. Some former loyalist and republican paramilitaries have contributed greatly to peacebuilding efforts in their neighbourhoods (Clubb, 2014; Shirlow & McEvoy, 2008). Yet, some suggest that the prominence of the "ex-combatants" in the civil society sector, while welcome, has resulted in less involvement of the ordinary individuals who did not participate in the violence.

Still, some interviewees welcome the engagement as they feel that the communities, and areas where these individuals work, tend to distrust outsiders (see also Braniff & Byrne, 2014, p. 60). As such, the former paramilitary organizations, and indeed those that have not "gone away you know," as is often pointed out, have some influence in the everyday spaces and lives of ordinary individuals.[69] As discussed in chapter three, it is in these everyday settings that the paramilitary groups and individuals have the most support within the community. These self-styled community leaders or authority figures are more credible and legitimate, and they enjoy

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[68] This is certainly the case in regards to former republican paramilitaries. However, loyalist paramilitaries are not as well integrated in the political process.

[69] The remark that "they haven't gone away, you know" is commonly used to point to the continued presence of paramilitary elements in Northern Irish society. It echoes a remark made in 1995 by Gerry Adams, Sinn Féin president and alleged leader of the PIRA, when someone in the audience exclaimed that the IRA should be brought back (Keefe, 2015). Adams replied that, "They haven't gone away, you know" (Keefe, 2015).

more support in the communities than the often "programatic community relations initiatives" (Smithey, 2009, p. 92). In other words, the formulaic projects for creating a shared society have not been able to connect to the issues that concern individuals and instead have allowed paramilitaries to step forward as representatives of these communities. Moreover, through the use of mobile technology, in some of the flashpoint areas in Belfast former paramilitaries and community workers have contributed to maintaining peace in areas where state structures have not been as effective in engaging the community (Clubb, 2014). For example, former paramilitary members and ex-prisoners have developed a "phone network" that allows them to communicate across the divided communities and de-escalate potentially violent riots and protests (see Clubb, 2014; Personal communication, October 7, 2011). Still, in the Union flag protests and riots in 2012-2013, the mobile network broke down as the differing views on the future of the polity meant that the community workers could not agree with each other (Clubb, 2014, p. 855). As such, these networks and actors are ultimately unable to overcome the contested views on the polity.

However, the role of former combatants in civil society is also a cause of concern for members of the community that have not participated in the conflict. In interviews with civil society members, who have not participated in the conflict, members portray these individuals as "gatekeepers" and barriers to further involvement in a particular area. These gatekeepers tend to be individuals of influence in Republican and Loyalist areas, such as ex-combatants or community workers. Gatekeepers are also the ones that continue to uphold group narratives within the communities, often bringing in line individuals who do not follow the norms of the area. Sometimes the warnings are not as subtle. The punishment attacks by paramilitary groups are an example of control of community members but also evidence that violence continues in

the post-Agreement phase. Punishment beatings and shootings are carried out against individuals within the community who engage in "anti-social" behaviour such as drug dealing, criminal activity but also as a way to discipline those seen as challenging the organization (Jarman, 2004, p. 423). In 2009/2010 the PSNI recorded some 457 punishment shootings and charges have been brought in only 16 of the cases (McAleese, 2014). The lack of charges is partly due to the intimidation of these communities by the former paramilitaries but also to some extent the acceptance of these actors as local security providers. Matt Baggott, former Chief Constable of PSNI, stresses that, "We need a lot more focused work in those difficult disadvantaged neighbourhoods where paramilitarism has its roots, to try to improve the life of particularly young people, and deal with the angst felt by working-class Protestantism and republicanism" (McKittrick, 2013). Therefore, in these working-class areas the paramilitaries have remained important.

Echoing the concerns about the involvement of "gate-keepers," a member of a peacebuilding organization states:

Those who were involved in the conflict are coming to the fore in politics in governmental and community sector. Where ex-combatants from both loyalist and republican backgrounds have taken the lead. I think what we have lost along the way is the ordinary citizens. In the work that I do it is difficult to go and meet with the local people; there is always some sort of person in front of that group who has either been involved in a paramilitary group or is a former prisoner (Personal communication, October 25, 2011).

It is then difficult even for the members of local organizations to have the participation of a variety of individuals without the involvement of these gatekeepers. Still, others also agree that,

while it is a positive step that those who were involved in the violence become more involved in the work of civil society organizations, these ex-combatants have not brought the rest of the population with them. A representative of a religious organization in Armagh states:

> I think there is a strong cohort of people who have been and who have done a lot of cross-community work and probably there are more people involved in the conflict like ex-combatants. They have done a lot of good relations. If they are from a loyalist or republican background they understand each other. They are probably over 40 years old. But behind them then lies a huge mass of segregated people who are more segregated now than in 1998, who have never encountered a Protestant or a Catholic. (Personal communication, October 20, 2011)

Interestingly, according to the representative of a religious organization, ex-combatants often engage with each other and the cross-community initiatives more than other citizens from their community. As such, former members of paramilitary organizations can also promote peacebuilding goals, such as cross-community engagement and better relations between the different groups.

However, there is also a sense that their engagement is superficial and does not translate into greater interactions between ordinary citizens. A loyalist ex-combatant, who is now involved in cross-community work in Belfast, expressed similar concerns and explained to me the difficulties of bringing in his community in his work. Moreover, while involvement of the ex-combatants from one's own community is seen as positive there is not a similar support for the "other" community's ex-combatants. As a member of a Protestant religious organization in Belfast explains, the division into theirs and ours continues to be applied to the community workers as well. He states,

What I find fascinating is that people will say it was wonderful the way those

guys who had been terrorists really started to do bridge building and doing

community development work and community relations. But they don't

necessarily give the same credit to people who were IRA and did the same thing.

Because they killed our people. Whereas ours killed their people. That's why I

would love to say that what we think is totally gone is not (Personal

communication, September 27, 2011).

While former prisoners and ex-paramilitary individuals are the most visible gatekeepers this role

can also be performed by a variety of adults in the community who have particular experiences

of the conflict. For example, a Belfast youth group leader explains the extent to which these

gatekeepers affect the types of peacebuilding projects that are supported in the communities:

There are a lot of gatekeepers within communities and sometimes it is the adults

that block that kind of engagement. We did a project about policing (in a

nationalist area) and young people were willing to talk about that. A lot of adults

did not want us to talk about these issues because a lot of adults had their own

biographical issues with policing. (Personal communication, October 26, 2011)

As he goes on to explain, the project was limited in its reach due to the lack of support by the

adults in the community. Other scholars have also noted the role of the gatekeepers in having an

impact on the delivery of the projects (Braniff & Byrne, 2014, p. 59). As these examples show,

there are multiple levels of authority within the communities and the political elites are not

simply able to shape the responses of these communities. At the same time, many of the ex-

combatants and community workers have been empowered by being brought into peacebuilding

projects. Yet, this may not always be positive as sometimes the role of the former paramilitaries in society became embedded through the civil society sector.

Hence, the overall contribution of the civil society sector to peacebuilding in Northern Ireland should not be overlooked. However, external support for building civil society, which lies at the heart of the liberal peacebuilding approach, has led to mixed results. Many groups and organizations are overly dependent on external funds and this funding, in turn, shapes the types of projects developed. In addition, the lack of a more nuanced understanding of civil society in the Northern Irish context has resulted in a romanticization of these groups as inherently progressive. The evidence from Northern Ireland suggests that illiberal and liberal elements continue to co-exist, with groups navigating the external funding and resources provided through the civil society building. As such, actors that have become prominent in the community and voluntary sector in Northern Ireland include former members of paramilitary organizations. These "former combatants" continue to play an important role in the formal organizations or as representatives of their neighbourhoods and areas. Yet, they can also impede the development of cross-community dialogue in acting as "gatekeepers". Ultimately, civil society organizations are themselves often divided along ethnonational lines and concerned with promoting one's "own" communities' wellbeing and concerns.[70]

Dealing with the Past

Mechanisms of transitional justice may appear to be less prominent in peacebuilding strategies in the case of Northern Ireland as opposed to their larger role in other cases such as

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[70] It is also important to note that there are many internal divisions. Within the republican community, there is a division between the PIRA supporters and INLA supporters, as well as between those who vote for SF and SDLP. In the loyalist communities, the UVF and UDA infighting adds an additional layer of complexity. Generally, these internal differences are set aside when an issue arises that the "other" community is seen to have instigated.

Bosnia. After all, Northern Ireland did not experience the scale of violence and the level of

atrocities that were seen in other conflicts. Nor did the Belfast Peace Agreement feature any

official provision or mechanism for "truth-telling" or addressing past abuses (Bell, 2002, p.

1097).[71] Still, as Colm Campbell and Fionnuala Ni Aolain (2003) suggest, the Northern Irish

case should not be viewed as an exception. The post-conflict challenges there, such as the need

to address crimes committed during the conflict and to reconcile the divided communities, mirror

challenges found in other post-conflict societies. Moreover, mechanisms for dealing with the past

in Northern Ireland have been established, although these are best described as "decentralized"

and "piecemeal," in that they combine both governmental and non-governmental initiatives

(Aiken, 2010; Bell, 2002). A combination of public inquiries, historical murder investigations by

the PSNI, and non-governmental support for victims groups characterize the mechanisms of

dealing with the past in Northern Ireland.

It is worth noting that projects and organizations focused on reconciliation, through the

framing of improving community relations, have been supported by the British state throughout

and after the conflict (see McVeigh 2002; Komarova 2011). The British state provided funds

from 1970s onward for reconciliation between the "two communities" (see Shirlow & McEvoy,

2008). Milena Komarova notes a shift in the practice of community relations, "from an openly

government-led venture headed by a Ministry of Community Relations and a Community

Relations Commission (1969-1974), to being spearheaded by the Community Relations Council

(after 1987) in a move to increase the involvement of non-governmental and community sectors"

(2011, p. 144). However, these efforts by the British state were not well received during the

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[71] The Agreement did however contain a controversial provision about the early release of paramilitary prisoners (see McEvoy, 1998 for a detailed discussion). This was largely done to gain support for the peace process and it was interpreted by republicans as an acknowledgment by the British government that the conflict was political in nature (McEvoy, 1998). This provision was unpopular in unionist communities who saw republican prisoners as terrorists and also disliked the loyalist paramilitaries who they saw as extremists (Aiken, 2010, p. 177).

conflict with republicans, suggesting that in this way the role of the British state in the conflict is obscured. Unionists did not accept the inclusion of republican groups in reconciliation efforts as they saw republicans as the primary instigators of the violence. Scholars have also been highly critical of these state-led initiatives, noting the lack of recognition of the British state's role in the conflict (McVeigh 2002). Still, some have noted that the shift in policy includes tackling some underlying concerns such as equality and human rights and is, therefore, an effective response (Komarova, 2011, p. 144). Others point out that it is ultimately the EU funding that contributed to the commitment of significant resources to peacebuilding and questions of reconciling communities (Morrow, 2012, p. 33). Indeed, the EU peace programs for Northern Ireland have funded many of the non-governmental initiatives over the last sixteen years.

A key point of debate for republicans on the past in Northern Ireland is the British state's role. Initially, the British state sought to portray itself as a neutral actor dealing with local animosities. However, subsequent reports of past events have undermined this representation of the British state. For example, the most famous inquiry to date is the Saville inquiry into the events that occurred in Derry/Londonderry in 1972, commonly known as "Bloody Sunday," when British troops opened fire on civil rights protestors, killing 13 people. All of the victims were unarmed Catholics and this event is often described as important turn in the escalation of the conflict. However, republicans never really accepted as legitimate the earlier investigation into the incident, which exonerated the British forces (Aiken, 2010, p. 178). The Saville report in 2010, which was an outcome of an investigation started in 1998 and led by Lord Saville and which took some 12 years to complete, challenged these earlier findings. Saville described the actions of the troops as "unjustified and unjustifiable". Following these findings, British Prime Minister David Cameron issued an official apology for the Bloody Sunday events. The apology

was seen as important in providing some closure as well as a shift in republican views towards dealing with the past (McEvoy, 2010). However, Cameron's apology did not significantly undermine the contestation over the role of the past by the communities in Northern Ireland.

In addition to the formal inquiries, the British government has also attempted to deal with the crimes committed during the Troubles by supporting investigations into these past crimes. The Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) was one of the key organizations tasked with investigating the murders and abuses committed during the conflict. However, Aogan Mulcahy (2006) notes that, from a policing perspective in Northern Ireland, the "past" is often seen in a negative light. Ultimately, the logic behind the investigations is, as Mulcahy suggests, to "regulate" the past so that it does not come back to haunt the present. As such, the British state has sought to treat past abuses as a matter of technical investigations. In 2005, the Historical Enquiries Team (HET) was set up as part of the Police Service for Northern Ireland (PSNI) to review some 3,000 unsolved murders that had occurred during the Troubles. However, while supporting the investigation led by HET, the broader process of investigations has not satisfied the different concerns of the dominant stakeholders. According to the republicans, the PSNI has paid insufficient attention to the state actions during the Troubles. At the same time, unionist politicians feel that not enough attention has been paid to the crimes committed by republican paramilitaries. On their part, victims groups from both sides suggest that HET and the broader process of dealing with the past have not addressed the needs of victims and survivors. In 2014, the PSNI announced that it would close down the HET due to budget cuts; some of these cuts were a result of the broader lack of agreement on welfare reform by the key political parties discussed earlier. The HET is to be replaced with the smaller Legacy Investigations Branch ("Troubles killing unit," 2014).

As the discussion above highlights, part of the challenge with government-led initiatives to deal with the past is that governments can often be ready to close the chapter on the conflict much earlier than individuals (Hamber & Wilson, 2002, p. 45). In promotion of a post-conflict Northern Ireland, the British government alongside the EU failed to appreciate how the uncertainty of the transitions and the legacy of the past would be experienced by ordinary citizens in their everyday life. As many interviewees pointed out to me, there is much talk about reconciliation by the politicians but it does not really translate into the everyday experiences of most people. Moreover, the general feeling is that far from being dealt with, the past has been "swept under the carpet" (Seth-Smith, 2014a). This reluctance to tackle its actions in the past is visible in the passing of the Inquiries Act of 2005, which "effectively limited the independent and public nature of future inquiries by placing them under the direct control of government ministers" (Aiken, 2010, p. 179).

Returning to the core arguments of this thesis, I have noted that the above outlined strategies of peacebuilding have largely depended on an understanding of peace as trickling down from the institutions and leaders to the local level of people's everyday lives. However, as I have argued, these strategies in reality often remain at a distance from people's everyday lives. As Brian Graham astutely argues, these strategies are based on assumption that "politics are placeless and that identity contestations can be elided" (2011, p. 87). As Graham recognizes, in divided contexts, the marking of territory and narratives about the past create a sense of belonging, one which legitimizes groups' narratives about the present and which, therefore, need to be understood as important to peacebuilding processes (2011, p. 87). Even in those cases where cultural and symbolic politics were recognized as important issues in need of attention, the overall logic of a trickle-down concept of peace has not changed. Most of the strategies

developed for tackling the cultural and symbolic issues in the last few years have also relied on top-down formulas as is visible in the Haass talks. Undoubtedly, formal political institutions and practices play a role in building a sustainable peace. However, formal political institutions alone cannot guarantee the sustainability and deepening of the peace achieved. Nor do they alone shape the type of peace that emerges. Instead, local actors also engage in their own ways of navigating the post-conflict period (as my previous example of former paramilitaries as peace promoters, but also as gatekeepers, has shown). The following pages address the informal everyday practices and politics in the post- agreement period where the legacy of the conflict and current challenges are negotiated.

Everyday Peace Politics

In the remaining sections, I explore in more detail the cultural forms of expression and the everyday, tactical responses of ordinary citizens to transformative goals of peacebuilding. These tactics are not always direct responses to the strategies outlined above but they nonetheless show the ways in which ordinary citizens understand identity and belonging in the post-agreement period. Moreover, it is against the background of the above noted institutional design, civil society and transitional justice strategies that these everyday practices and expressions should be observed. Here, I draw on issues and examples repeatedly mentioned in the interviews and conversations I had with the local population, often unprompted without my specifically asking about them. However, I do not wish to imply here that there is a single, coherent picture of ordinary citizens' responses to peacebuilding strategies and tactics for navigating everyday life. Indeed, there are many forms of cultural expression and practices, some which are more inclusionary and others less so. Examining both the exclusionary and inclusionary practices and expressions is important for understanding how peacebuilding is supported or contested in the

daily lives of the population. As outlined in chapter three, I focus specifically on the practices of place-making and inscription, symbolic practices, and contested narratives and performances.

Place-making and Inscription

Why are scribbles on a wall or the flags stuck on lamp posts in neighborhoods across Northern Ireland important for understanding the peace process? What do these symbols and practices reveal about how individuals and communities navigate their post-conflict environment? The significance of the symbolic landscape of Northern Ireland has been examined in some detail in the literature (Rolston, 1991; Jarman, 1997; Santino, 2001; Shirlow, 2001; Brown & Mac Ginty, 2003; Smithey, 2011). As I discussed in chapter three, scholars have noted that the political views about the future of the polity are often made visible and contested in the streets and neighborhoods. As such, in this section I use the insight of this scholarship to note the importance of place-making and inscription to the broader peacebuilding agenda.

Walls and murals in Belfast and Derry/Londonderry have attracted much international media and tourist attention for their role as public canvases of the conflict.[72] Yet, for some individuals, the walls, murals and flags, among other types of symbols, provide a sense of familiarity and security. In this way, these symbols connect the individuals and their daily lives to the broader group narratives and evoke a sense of belonging that seems more secure than the promise provided by political arrangements. At the same time, community struggles can occur over, for example, murals that are seen as threatening or as representative of the past conflict. In their support for or contestation of the markings of everyday places ordinary individuals navigate both the peacebuilding strategies as well as their own understandings of the status of the polity.

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[72] Londonderry is the official name of the city but the name is more likely to be used by someone from a unionist background. While, Derry is predominantly used by Catholics (Cochrane, 2013, p. 9).

Undoubtedly, the observable shifts in the post-Agreement symbolic landscape, such as the repainted murals or the regeneration of the city centre of Belfast, have played a role in softening some of the more exclusionary perceptions (Smithey, 2011, p. 6). In Northern Ireland, to a greater extent than in Bosnia, a greater focus exists on cultural initiatives that seek to create shared spaces and to transform markers of conflict. Among the most prominent actors in this arena is the Arts Council of Northern Ireland. Several projects, particularly the Re-Imagining Communities Initiative, are specifically focused on transforming the visual landscape of Northern Ireland's divided past into a shared future. Re-branding efforts in Northern Ireland have sought to ensure a place-making of their own by repainting murals that are seen as "negative" or reflective of the conflict (McEvoy-Levy, 2012, p. 4). Instead, these images are replaced with more inclusive, "safe" images and symbols that promote reconciliation and peacebuilding.

The goal of these projects is to transform spaces and promote positive associations with neighborhoods so that all citizens feel that they belong. In this way, the removal of negative images is also expected to undermine the influence of exclusionary narratives. However, the efforts at transforming spaces have remained alongside the exclusionary practices and understandings of belonging. Similarly, some public spaces have been promoted as shared, such as the city centres and malls. Yet, as Ash Amin (2002) suggests, public spaces do not exist apart from the broader ethnic and racial politics of the polity. As Amin notes, individuals – even those participating in these shared spaces – may hold onto negative views of other groups. In turn, areas that are sometimes portrayed as ones which should be avoided due to their association with one community or another can be more open to different identities and engage in cross-community work.

Despite these changes the local population often describes a fear of entering or walking through areas dominated by the "other" community. This is partly a result of the symbols and markings that designate the area as belonging to or being associated with a particular community but is also influenced by narratives shared by group members which portray certain areas as places to be avoided (see also Shirlow, 2003). Feelings of uncertainty about places are also described as central to the lives of the population. A member of a Protestant religious community organization notes:

> I suppose we got used to the divides and don't really think about them. But yet we would know where we are comfortable. Because I was driving a nun home one night from a course we were doing at the university. And I was driving her across North Belfast. And she says, "I am so glad to get out of that area." Whereas it was a Protestant area and I said to her, "Why is that?" She replied, "Oh, I just feel happier when I am out of that." I said, "Funny when I go the other way (into nationalist/republican areas) I feel the same." Cause it is the unknown and yet no one is likely going to do anything. (Personal communication, September 27, 2011)

As such, the navigation of space in particular ways is influenced both by the particular inscription of the spaces but also by the broader community narratives and politics. For example, graffiti and acronyms such as KAT (Kill All Taigs) or KAH (Kill All Huns), meaning Catholics and Protestants respectively, are common in neighborhoods across Belfast. As Mitchell notes, despite their "genocidal" message, such messages are written by young people as a way of marking their territories and the local population neither interprets these messages literally nor acts upon them (2011, p. 27). Still, these messages play a role in creating the degree of security

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or belonging which an individual may feel in a particular area. It also serves as a powerful reminder of the latent conflict even if violence is not present. As I discuss below, at times perceptions of spaces are also shaped by the historical experiences and understandings of their conflictual nature.

Moreover, the high levels of residential segregation shape the perception that many of the towns and neighbourhoods are clearly understood as representative of the particular community. This is most visible in the so-called "interface areas", or the areas where the predominantly Catholic and Protestant neighbourhoods are found in close proximity to one another. Interface areas are often clearly marked with physical barriers that are meant to minimize violence between the communities (see *Figure 3.2* below). However, as a member of a community organization in North Belfast highlights, they also "make it difficult in the divided communities to have that day to day interaction" (Personal communication, September 30, 2011). Interfaces and so-called peace walls are most common in Belfast. While the British Army initially constructed the walls in 1969 as a way to curb the violence between the divided communities, they have remained and multiplied (Byrne, 2011). Moreover, the walls were mostly built and have continued to proliferate in Belfast (Byrne, 2011, p. 10). In some interfaces, the areas around peace walls are a sort of no man's land with no housing or businesses. While in others the peace walls run through the backyards of homes. In these latter cases, bricks and other projectiles are thrown over the walls, most often by youth in the two communities. In response to this, the barriers are built higher or an additional layer of fence is added on the top to prevent the objects

in coming down on the other side.

Figure 4.2. Peace line along Cupar Way, Belfast. The wall divides a predominantly loyalist area of Shankill Road from the predominantly nationalist/republican area of Springfield/Falls Road. Taken by the author.

This distrust is further supported through everyday narratives of the past conflict and current violence. Peter Shirlow and Brendan Murtagh suggest that, "Interfaces are also an endurable 'aide-memoire' of harm done and threat unstated" (2006, p. 9). Interestingly, as Shirlow notes in his research interviews with individuals living in the interface areas, violent acts by members of the other community are highlighted while the intra-community disagreements and violence tend to be omitted (2001, pp. 71-72). In this way, the focus is on the "other" community as the cause of the insecurity and as the reason for the barriers. Local residents that lived in these areas often pointed out the need for the barriers to remain.

Still, the consequences of the maintenance and indeed building of walls and makeshift barriers are noted by a Belfast community relations officer who suggests that,

> We manage division. Rather than try to remove it. The walls are an example of that. The people on either side of the wall feel safer because the wall is there. The walls have been strengthened, they have been built up...I mean we are almost like

a novelty for visitors who come here. You see the tourists coming with their

cameras, they want to go and see these weird people who live with walls between

them. That is embarrassing. (Personal communication, October 7, 2011)

Members of civic organizations, most who do not live in the contested areas, often share this

view of the walls as embarrassing. Yet, those who live in the area where the peace walls are most

numerous (such as North Belfast) express a different view of the walls. As a republican member

of a community organization in a prominent interface area in North Belfast notes, the walls are

seen as practical ways to keep neighbourhoods "safe":

We have barriers that some say this is a civic duty to remove. Most people think

of moving on with their lives, putting food on the table, trying to get a job. But

someone comes along and says, "look that peace wall it's an affront to civic

society." And people here are like hold on we live here. That wall keeps us safe.

And there are people who don't live in these areas that think those that live in the

interface areas should take down the walls and take on the risks as their civic

responsibility. For working class communities, this idea of civic responsibility

and citizenship is difficult. I mean we hear it in school but what does it mean?

Some of the people here do not accept the legitimacy of the state they are in.

(Personal communication, October 10, 2011)

These contested views of the walls and barriers have been noted by researchers from the

University of Ulster in their report to the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister

(OFMDFM). They note that while some 78 percent of individuals across Northern Ireland would

like to see the walls come down, 69 percent of individuals that live near the walls see them as

necessary (Byrne, Heenan & Robinson, 2012). In Belfast, the politics of territoriality and identity

are particularly challenging as there is growing demand for housing in Catholic areas. As such, walls and barriers between communities are as much about providing safety as preventing the expansion of certain communities (Geoghegan, 2012). This is often the case with housing; demand is high in Catholic areas, while the majority of the available housing is in what are considered Protestant areas. Again, walls and barriers are important in maintaining the territoriality of the neighborhoods. Jonny Byrne, a researcher at the University of Ulster explains the differing views from the Catholic and Protestant communities' perspectives:

> Catholics see peace walls as a problem to their community developing. For
> Protestants peace walls protect their way of life, their bonfires, their flags. The
> question is how do we create the conditions in which Protestants don't see the
> removal of the wall as a threat to their existence as a community? (Geoghegan,
> 2012)

As such, the maintenance of places as belonging to a particular community at a very localized level in this case get to the heart of the existential fears of the Protestant communities in Northern Ireland. Namely, the changing demographics and higher demand for housing by Catholics has resulted in an existential fear over the future for working-class, Protestant communities.

However, the wish to remove the walls by the peacebuilders and some segments of the populations remains out of touch with these fears and the narratives that sustain these barriers. Indeed, some high-level events outlining the strategies for removing barriers are often described as removed from the communities where the barriers are most numerous. A Belfast community worker, who identifies himself as coming from a loyalist background in North Belfast, points to a conference that he attended on interfaces and the need for the walls to come down. He notes

that in the presentations and in the discussion period the views of the populations that live in the interface areas were rarely brought up. Therefore, in his view there was no serious effort to understand the local politics in interface areas or why the walls remained. This top-down approach seemed to miss for him also the daily practices in some areas that sustain these divisions, even if the physical walls are not present. For example, he pointed to the divided bus service: locals know that one bus stop is largely used by people from the Protestant community, while another down the road is used by Catholics.

Similarly, Kate Clarke, a community worker with the North Belfast Interface Network states, "[A] lot of the interfaces don't have physical barriers, but there is an invisible dividing line that local people are aware of, because, historically, they were, and to a degree, still are, threatening and unsafe places" (O'Hagan, 2012). These comments reflect what Frank Burton (1978) long ago recognized as the knowledge of spaces as "safe" and "unsafe". The demarcation of spaces according to these labels reflected the experience of conflict and violence with areas that saw a disproportionate level of violence being recognized as "no-go areas". These visible and invisible divides, the mental maps that local populations use to navigate territory, remain overlooked in the formal policies for the removal of these barriers. Instead, much of the discussion by external actors has focused on the need for the walls between the communities to be torn down. While this is a laudable goal, what external observers tend to miss, and the local interviewees highlight, is the fact that even if a barrier does not exist or is removed that does not necessarily mean that local populations will go into these areas. This knowledge of areas which are safe and those which should be avoided is particularly relevant in Belfast and Londonderry due to their experiences of conflict. But this knowledge is also well developed in smaller towns such as Armagh. There is often a perception that in the smaller towns and rural communities the

interfaces do not exist, yet in reality many are simply "silent" or "hidden" (Carvill, 2013, p. 8). Individuals know which parts of the town and shops are friendly to them and generally avoid the unfriendly areas (Carvill, 2013, p. 8). As a result of the barriers, both physical and mental, the "other" community is often portrayed as untrustworthy.

Despite the efforts of transforming neighbourhoods many individuals still continue to rely on the above outlined understandings of spaces as either safe or unsafe. These practices also have very practical implications as individuals residing in these spaces would know, for example, which side of the street to take if they are to take it at all. The interviewees often describe this as something that "you just know" or very quickly learn once you move to these areas. A member of a community relations group in Belfast explains it in the following way: "There are lots of streets without walls. People just know in the psyche. People from the village will come into city centre but they would not travel outside of that. This is the interface between the macro politics and the everyday" (Personal communication, October 7, 2011).

Another community member in North Belfast expressed a similar perspective noting that these practices were important in navigating the pre-peace agreement period but have remained difficult to change:

> If you were from a particular community you would automatically turn left, you
> don't go right ever. Cause you know that's how it is. And it becomes ingrained
> and you don't think anything wrong with that. People taking their kids out to the
> community centre will (still) watch what they wear or how they call them. That's
> just the way things are. But that's beginning to slowly break down now ...It's
> ongoing though (Personal communication, October 10, 2011).

Navigating everyday life also points to the reality that individuals still follow mental maps based on compartmentalized space. In other words, while individuals can now go into most areas it does not mean that they do. Still, the community worker identifies albeit a slow breakdown in these practices.

Earlier research on Northern Ireland has noted that the classification of individuals is relatively easy given the high levels of segregation (see Stringer & Hunter, 2014). For example, by obtaining an individual's name and the school attended one can often guess that person's religious/ethnic background. Given the context of a divided society the group categorizations should be seen not merely as divisive practices but rather as a way to negotiate the divided context. But they also serve as powerful mechanisms for building in-group solidarity and excluding those that do not share the background of the dominant group in that area. This awareness of one's communal belonging is captured by Jarman and Bell's (2012, p. 47) description of a "sense of being known" that in turn affects how individuals navigate different parts of the town. This sense of being known is a result of what Nils Zurawski (2005) highlights is the continued importance of "people watching" in Northern Ireland. While people watching developed as a defense mechanism during the conflict to identify potential threats or irregularities within one's own community it has remained an important practice given the uncertain transition. In other words, individuals are hyper-aware of who is present in their neighbourhood and tend to be suspicious of outsiders. As such, these understandings of one's own area persist despite peacebuilding efforts aimed at promoting a shared society.

Perceptions of spaces continue to shape the way individuals navigate their environment and thus also speak to the effectiveness of peacebuilding initiatives in creating a sense of shared spaces. The city centre in Belfast in particular has been the focus of much transformation and

peacebuilding work that has sought to portray the city as a "normal and rehabilitated" (Shirlow, 2001, p. 68). Several interviewees describe the city centre as a shared space in which youth, in particular, interact with one another from across communities. While this has, to a large extent, been successful in the city centre, the areas beyond the centre have not been entirely transformed. As one member who identifies as coming from a loyalist community notes, even in the city centre "still you are watching who you are talking to and all that" (Personal communication, October 7, 2011). Even shared spaces like the city centre are perceived differently during the day and at night. There is a general agreement that at night people are reluctant to remain in these shared spaces and instead retreat to their own communities (Personal communication, October 18, 2011; see also Jarman & Bell, 2012). Another community worker explains how despite the attempts to transform spaces, "[T]he biggest thing that stops people from being mobile is fear. Cause they don't know what's over there. They have never been over there. They go around the particular neighbourhood" (Personal communication, October 25, 2011). Normalization of the divisions and memories of the conflict geography and experiences are still imprinted in the understandings of the spaces and communities in Northern Ireland.

The extent of the segregation and the normalization of this reality is often encountered by members of civil society organizations focusing on cross-community engagement. As one member describes it,

> We will go into a Protestant area and they will say that they don't need any cross-community work because it a Protestant community and there is no Catholics in their area. We say to them but this is precisely what you need the work on. Why aren't there any Catholics here? But it is hard... (Personal communication, October 6, 2011)

Even in areas that are perceived to be "mixed" there seems to be an understanding of the territorial domination of one group. As a civil society member from Derry/Londonderry notes, he moved to an area that he saw as mixed. However, he had asked why the Union flags were flying on all the lamp posts given that the area is mixed. He was told that while he saw the area as mixed, "This is a Protestant area. And if you decide this is where you are going to live then you like the flags or you go" (Personal communication, October 4, 2011).

Perhaps the clearest example of the ways in which particular understandings of space continue to matter despite attempts to "regenerate" or make certain spaces less threatening is in the area of Duncairn Gardens in North Belfast. Duncairn Gardens is a road in North Belfast which divides the predominantly Catholic area of New Lodge Road from the predominantly Protestant community of Tiger's Bay. There are also barriers along the fences on the side and community gates on the either side of the road. It is one of the prominent "interface" areas and the site of riots between the two communities and, as such, it is an area that is generally avoided by individuals who do not reside there. The map below shows the different barriers and "blighted spaces", land adjacent to the interface area that is not used or is under used, on Duncairn Gardens compiled by the Belfast Interface Project. The interface points on the map are marked in blue and the "blighted spaces" are in red.
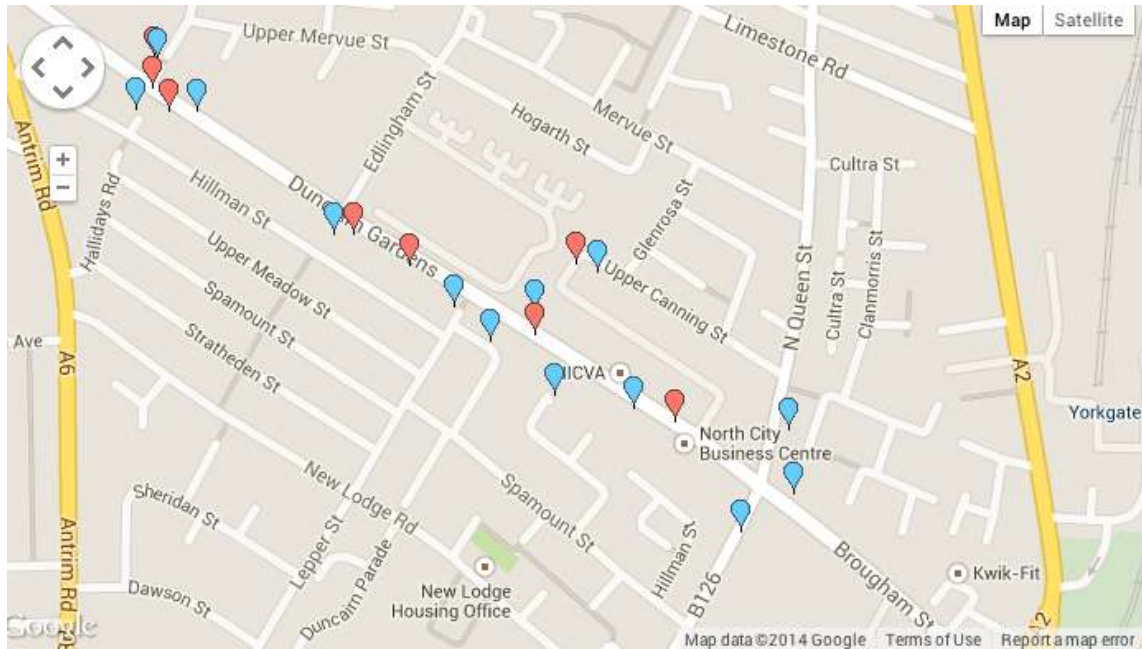
Figure 4.3 Map of Duncairn Gardens showing the interfaces in blue and the blighted spaces in red. Image courtesy of Belfast Interface Project.

As is illustrated on the map, Duncairn Gardens and the area is relatively small. However, it is a well-known interface area and a no-go zone for locals. My discussion of having wandered down Duncairn Gardens prompted an interesting exchange between some of the locals I met in Belfast who are between the ages of 20-35. It is worth reporting here as it happened:

Participant 2: "Duncairn Gardens is a big one (an area to be avoided)."

Participant 1: "I still wouldn't walk down Duncairn Gardens. You would get lynched like."

Participant 3: "I did it once. I zigzagged down though."

Participant 1:"Aye. You do automatically change on the off chance that somebody might see you."

Such understandings of the area and continued fear are just one example that continues to prevent the development of more shared spaces and community. The sentiments are all the more interesting in this example as Duncairn Gardens has been the focus of peacebuilding projects.

Visible on the road is also the intermixing of the new regeneration efforts, often not completed

and, as Mitchell and Kelly describe, "caught in the permanent limbo of "transformation" (2011,

p. 313). There are also several civil society organizations (such as, Ground Work Northern

Ireland and the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action) focusing on volunteering and

cross-community work. As such, the avoidance of walking in that area shows that regeneration

efforts in the Duncairn Gardens area remain incomplete. This example also shows how local

knowledge and practices persist that do not necessarily respond to attempts to transform these

neighbourhoods.

Understanding where one belongs or not is often shaped by the types of markers that are

present in the area. Flags as markers of identity and symbols of particular land ownership have

been noted in a diverse body of scholarly work (Billig, 1995). In relation to Northern Ireland, the

issue of flags is long-standing, well noted and has been address through policies on the flying of

flags (Nagle, 2014; Bryan & Stevenson, 2009; Patterson, 1999; Bryson & McCartney, 1994).[73]

In the post peace agreement phase flying of flags, painting of kerbstones, murals and graffiti

have continued to remain important to the local conceptions of space as well as the broader

community. A member of a volunteer organization points out, "If we take people to the US (for

conflict resolution workshops) one of the things they notice is the large amount of flag flying.

Lots of people fly the flag. The problem is with symbols here (as opposed to the US) there is no

unifying effect. So all the symbols are divided. You know whether it's flags or other emblems"

(Personal communication, October 11, 2011). Flags in particular get to the heart of the conflict

and the different conceptions of the space of Northern Ireland. The uses of flags further shows

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[73] For example, the 1954 Flags and Emblems Act proscribed the use of nationalist symbols and the Irish tricolour
(see Nagle, 2014, p. 474). Interestingly, Gerry Adams, a key republican figure, noted that seeing the removal of the
Irish flag by the police in an incident in 1964, led to his resolve in joining the republican movement (Nagle, 2014, p.
474).

the crucial issue in the society divided in struggles over flags represent, namely, "which state, now and in the future, is to rule over Northern Ireland?" (Wilson, 2000). Marking of different estates and areas of towns with flags is a clear symbol of the particular answer the community has to that question. The Union flag is displayed in unionist and loyalist communities while the Irish tricolour is seen in nationalist and republican areas. Still, as Dominic Bryan and Clifford Stevenson (2009, p. 69) argue, the putting up of the flags is often done by groups and individuals associated with former paramilitary organizations. As a result, they point out that there is little appetite within these communities to challenge these groups.

While former paramilitaries remain behind the scenes of the flag disputes and flying in some areas, they still serve as an important marker of the community. This is evident in interviews and broader discussion when attention is drawn to the flags of the other communities. A civil society member in Derry/Londonderry summarizes the use of flags from the perspective of a local resident. He states that "if you are living in a particular area and the flags are of your particular community you don't see them as a threat. When you go to another community and you see their flags well you are not really threatened because you don't live in that area but you become more aware of them rather than your own flags" (Personal communication, October 4, 2011). By becoming aware of the particular flags and symbols of community, various interviewees and local residents point out that you do alter your route or follow a more comfortable one. Flags and other symbols of the area can lead to individuals avoiding traveling through certain areas of the "other" community. So although flags may not be particularly threatening, they are still important in the socialization of behaviour, as individuals will avoid roads and areas where they perceive they are not welcomed.

Furthermore, the contentious nature of the way local communities use flags and the potential of symbolic disputes to result in violence is evident in the 2012 flag protests. On 12th of December 2012, the Belfast City Council voted to fly the unionist flag on 18 days of the year as opposed to year round (Stringer & Hunter, 2014, p. 138). Shortly after the vote, protests were organized and violent confrontations between the protestors and police occurred. The issue once again was that the unionist community wished to see the Union flag flying year round as it had since 1906. However, nationalist political parties, Sinn Féin and SDLP, preferred that no flag be flown. The vote itself was evidence of the rising influence of nationalist political parties. In 2011, the nationalist political parties for the first time held more seats than the unionist parties and the moderate Alliance Party held the balance of power (Stringer & Hunter, 2014, p. 138). The Alliance Party provided the compromise that the flag be flown on 18 designated days, as is the case with the Northern Ireland Assembly, thereby seeking a middle ground between unionist parties and nationalists/republicans. Unionist parties sought to delegitimize this stance of the Alliance party in their communities by handing out some 40,000 pamphlets that showed the Belfast City Hall in two side-by-side photos, one with the flag one without (Guelke, 2014, p.140). The caption was poignant, "A SHARED FUTURE FOR WHO?" (Guelke, 2014, p. 140).

However, the protests should not be seen as merely a product of the unionist parties. For in large part the protests pointed to the dissatisfaction with the peace process in many working class loyalist areas that perceived themselves not to have benefitted as much from the peace funds. Hence, the flag protests highlighted the loyalist concerns and sentiment that nationalist parties and politics were dominating political life to the detriment of the unionist visions for the polity. Eugene McNamee argues that the protests are an example of "cultural backlash" to the institutional solutions and the peace process (2014, p. 2). In other words, the flag protests made

visible the discontent with the attempt to accommodate different groups through institutional and legal mechanisms.

Similarly, attempts to transform conflictual practices such as parades and bonfires and to provide incentives to communities have been met with particular understandings of what is important to the communities. The summer "parading season" or "marching season" as it is known locally, due to the number of parades organized by the Protestant and loyalist organizations, is a time when the tensions tend to rise in the communities (Komarova & McKnight, 2013). While the majority of the parades are peaceful, a small number of some 3 to 5 percent are considered sensitive (Parades Commission, 2013, p. 13). Of those considered to be sensitive or contentious, about 90 percent involve loyalist and unionist parades through areas that are predominantly nationalist. While unionists defend their right to parade as an important part of their culture, nationalists see the parades as sectarian and triumphalist (Komarova & McKnight, 2013). As such, the riots and protests that occur during these parades are about the ownership of territory and claiming of this territory for one's own community. As part of the peace process, The Parades Commission for Northern Ireland is tasked with regulating the parade routes and ensuring that the more contentious parades and practices are addressed. The Parades Commission is therefore disliked by the unionist/loyalists who describe them as undermining their identity and cultural rights.

During the parading season symbolic politics are heightened and the unionist/loyalist symbols are prominent.[74] A Catholic member of a voluntary organization explains the views in nationalist areas, "[T]he difficulty that a particular section of the community would have in accepting the total overkill on symbols and flags, all of that sort of stuff that doesn't speak for

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[74] On the symbolism and rituals associated with the parades, see Jarman, 1997; Bryan, 2001; Ramsey, 2011.

them or to them. And it is just so in your face" (Personal communication, October 26, 2011). In response to the parades, members of the nationalist/republican community stage protests as they go through nationalist/republican areas. In this way, the struggles over the territory occur in quite dramatic ways. However, the protestors are often seen as being influenced by Sinn Féin and not necessarily representative of the local community.[75] As a member of a community organization explains, local residents in North Belfast remark that, "When the loyalist parading and Sinn Féin protestors go home this area is nice and quiet" (Personal communication, October 19, 2011). Despite this view of the protestors and those engaged in parading as not being representative of the neighbourhoods there is still an acknowledgment of the impact that the parades and the counter protests have on the neighborhoods.[76] As Jack Santino has noted, "[B]ut in Ulster both the civilian population and the paramilitaries use the same forms of festive popular display - parades, murals, bonfires - to debate issues of power: Who controls the government, the economy; who gets to define the geopolitical state" (2001, p. 6). As such, the view of the protests as controlled by political parties and paramilitaries is not entirely accurate.

The issue of symbols and territorial politics also become prominent on July 11th each year, as the lead up to the 12th celebrations when bonfires are built of wood pallets and tires.[77] On top of the bonfires there is usually an Irish tricolour or other symbols of nationalism/republicanism, such as a Glasgow Celtic football shirt. The engulfing in flames of these symbols is usually followed by cheers (Jarman, 1997; Simpson, 2009). The burning of the symbols of the nationalist/republican community is seen as provocative and as setting the limits to the dialogue

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[75] As Jonathan S. Blake (2015) uncovers, unionists/loyalists often blame republicans for "politicizing" the parades. In the view of the unionist/loyalist members he interviewed parades are cultural and should not be seen as political. However, as Blake notes by claiming that cultural practices, such as parades exist outside of politics, these communities "neutralize criticism and avoid compromise"(2015, p.1).

[76] See Bryan, 2001 for a background discussion on the parades.

[77] The July 12th celebrations mark the victory of Protestant King William III of Orange over Catholic King James II at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690. Every year the Orange Order commemorates this event with parades.

that can be achieved between the two communities. However, the loyalist communities see the bonfires as central to their annual celebrations and their culture. Still, the bonfires have been seen as "shows of strength" by the loyalist paramilitaries, such as the Ulster Defence Association and the Ulster Volunteer Force, that would sometimes appear at the bonfires and engage in celebratory gunfire (Simpson, 2009).

As a result there have been attempts at regulating the bonfires through the Bonfire Management Programme developed in 2005 by the Belfast City Council and supported through EU funds. The Belfast City Council has sought to encourage loyalist communities to use "a custom-built beacon - a pyramid-shaped metal-cage filled with willow wood-chips, and set on a base of sand to protect the ground below" (Simpson, 2009). If the communities agree to use the beacon, and do not put up paramilitary flags or burn tyres, they can qualify for £1,500 from the Belfast City Council (Simpson, 2009; Byrne & O'Riordan, 2009). In 2013, some 45 groups in loyalist areas as well as 12 in republican areas received the funds from the Program (Morris, 2014). Yet, the Irish News reported that in half of all the loyalist areas signed up for the Program the nationalist/republican symbols were still burned (Morris, 2014).

More interesting perhaps is the graffiti response in the Rathcoole housing estate in Newtownabbey, a small borough outside of Belfast, in May 2014 (see image below). The "Culture Before Cash" message is a direct response to the attempts to manage the bonfires and to provide the communities with funds for less contentious celebrations. Subsequent graffiti appeared in August 2014 stating that "Real Loyalists Will Never be Bought" as another response to the scheme (Extramural Activity, 2014). In this way, the graffiti expressed the contestation of the attempt to manage the types of practices that the community found meaningful.

Figure 4.4 Culture before cash mural. Photo courtesy of Extramural Activity and available here: http://extramuralactivity.com/2014/05/14/culture-before-cash/

One member of a peacebuilding organization in Belfast points to the consequences of the bonfires, parades and riots on the community relations:

> I think peace is fragile because of the cyclical nature of festivities and cultural life
> in Northern Ireland. Where we seem to stagger from parading season to parading
> season. And the temperature is okay now (October) and things will probably get
> to an optimal best in April and it will wind up again with the advent of the
> parading season (July). The parading season is a very tangible thing you know
> that can put the temperature up. It can bring people out on the streets and leads to
> trouble on the streets. (Personal communication, October 26, 2011)

As such, the parades have a ripple effect on peacebuilding activities beyond the parading season. These claims are also echoed in the report from the "Women: Dealing with the Past" Workshop

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held on October 8, 2013 in Belfast. The report provides a summary of the reflection by participants on the consequences of the flag disputes on community relations. For example, the participants noted that following the disputes there was a "reduction in cross-community work between community groups and women's groups" (Carville, 2013, p. 6). Interviewees also note that it is difficult to engage in cross-community work following these events as local residents are less likely to be open to dialogue. As a result, any gains made in attempting to create "shared" spaces or promoting more inclusive narratives, such as through painting inclusive murals, are difficult to sustain in the lead up to and aftermath of divisive events, such as the parading season. As such, the importance of symbolic politics extends beyond the particular events and in very real ways affects peacebuilding work in these communities.

Still, this is not to suggest that the symbolic inscriptions are static. For example, murals or graffiti inscriptions often reflect the issues that are most relevant at a particular point in time. As other issues become more important some murals are abandoned, repainted or fade away as new images appear (McCormick & Jarman, 2005; Rapp & Rhomberg, 2012). Yet, paying attention to these changes or continuities is useful for navigating the current political debates. For example, following the controversy over the Boston College tapes and interviews with former republican paramilitaries the graffiti inscriptions in predominantly nationalist areas in Belfast appeared stating "In-former republicans".[78] The inscription, a play on former and informer, is perhaps a warning to the former paramilitary members of not speaking about the past. In this way, the message is a powerful silencing of the republican community. This is all the more important as there have been calls for a formal "truth telling" initiative to be created for Northern Ireland.

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[78] The Belfast Project, launched in 2001, was an oral history project led by a journalist, Ed Moloney. As part of the project, former loyalist and republican paramilitaries provided information on their involvement in the Troubles. The interviews were to be held at Boston College and meant to be sealed until the death of the participant. However, the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) requested access to the tapes to aid investigations of past crimes, and already received some of the interviews making the entire project very problematic.

Moreover, it is important to remember that despite the high levels of segregation and struggles over territory there are still many individuals who engage with each other regardless of their ethnic/religious/political affiliations. Even in some particularly contested areas in Belfast, for example the Shankill and Falls Road communities, some residents meet informally to discuss specific issues associated with living in these areas (Personal communication, October 19, 2011). In acknowledging common challenges and their interdependence these individuals contribute to the creation of a shared sense of belonging. Women's groups from these areas also tend to host small gatherings to address gender specific challenges that are largely overlooked in their communities. However, these individuals tend to work at a "lower level", as they acknowledge, and they are not interested in formalizing their activities. This is partly due to the perceived politicization of the civil society sector and the influence of political parties and paramilitaries within this sector.

In the above section, I have sought to explain the importance of seemingly banal and not so banal markings of neighborhoods and spaces as belonging to a particular community through the uses of walls, flags and graffiti. However, I also note the ways that mental maps of spaces have developed and how these local understandings of spaces shape individual behavior. I suggest that these markings are important as they both show how ordinary individuals navigate belonging in the post-conflict society but also that individual's daily practices as they go about their everyday lives are also crucial to the success of peacebuilding transformations. Thus, the idea of peace trickling down to communities misses how these communities themselves will respond to these strategies and the struggles over territory that continue despite these strategies. I now turn to the analysis of the symbolic expressions and explore how belonging is practiced through a myriad of

informal ways that not only mark the neighborhood but the individual as a member of a certain community.

Symbolic Cultural Expressions and Practices

Symbols in Northern Ireland are divisive as noted above in the marking of spaces and practices of territoriality. However, the importance of symbolic cultural expressions and practices extends beyond the marking of territory. Individuals also acquire the skills of "telling", that is developing the skill or ability to easily discern someone's identity by paying attention to speech, symbolism, and clothing (Burton, 1978; Jarman & Bell, 2012, p. 41). For example, the interviewees and locals often point to the pronunciation of the letter "h" as a way to distinguish the identity of the individual. A member of a Protestant community organization explains, "It is the letter h that is the thing. I would say "h" but some of the kids from nationalist/republican areas say "hech". Whenever I work on projects with youth in these areas I would try to remember their pronunciation" (Personal communication, September 27, 2011). She explains that sometimes when working on projects the younger children would not believe that she was a Protestant. By trying to remember their pronunciation she seeks to avoid and confuse the types of symbolic markers that children assume they know. But as she admits it is difficult to challenge their perceptions due to her identity as an outsider in the community and particularly as "one of them". As such, the symbolic practices and expressions themselves sustain the divisions by constantly emphasising who belongs and does not belong in that community.

The head of a peacebuilding research centre in Belfast explains that uncertainty over the future of the polity has resulted in the lack of shared symbols or practices on which to build more inclusive identities. As he suggests,

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What it has left is that we have no common symbolic attachments. People have

different names for the country they prefer different flags, different anthems,

different sports there is no common anniversaries there is no common historical

occasions. There are no key figures that unite all the communities. There is no

event anytime in the year that brings everybody together in a common setting.

(Personal communication, September 22, 2011).

As he goes on to explain, this in turn means that symbols gain a heightened importance. For

example, given the divided context one takes into consideration the area when wearing a jersey

of a certain soccer (or Gaelic football) team. Indeed, it is common knowledge in Northern

Ireland that wearing a Glasgow Celtic jersey or a Glasgow Rangers jersey points to one being a

Catholic or Protestant, respectively.[79] As such, most individuals tend to avoid wearing these

jerseys in the neighbourhoods dominated by the other groups.

However, these symbolisms are often normalized in the everyday setting that they are

taken for granted. A member of a Belfast-based NGO focused on peacebuilding explains that

when engaged in activities in the communities youth do not at first think about the different

symbols as identifying them. However she notes once you ask them, "Would you wear your

school uniform in this area? Or would you wear your Gaelic top in this area? They would say no,

of course not" (Personal communication, October 5, 2011). Once prompted, the youth explain

their understanding of the different neighbourhoods and where they feel comfortable expressing

their sporting allegiances. Moreover, even without the intention of distinguishing themselves

children are easily identifiable from the sports that they play or jerseys that they wear. As a youth

worker from North Belfast notes, "I suppose at times these markers enforce their identity. Other

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[79] A similar split in support exists for the Everton and Liverpool soccer teams. Catholics tend to support Everton, while Protestants support Liverpool.

times it just makes it clear who they are and the community they belong to" (Personal communication, September 30, 2011). This "making it clear who they are" provides the children with a sense of belonging to their particular community.

Still, when coming into contact with someone from the other community, the awareness of one's "outsider" status is heightened. The same youth worker provides an example of a bus taking Protestant children home from one of the cross-community initiatives. Despite the fact that these children live close to the youth centre, it is located in a nationalist area and Protestant kids are put on buses to avoid any confrontations. However, one of the children had a Glasgow Rangers top that immediately identified him as a Protestant. The children started to complain about a young guy down the street glaring at them. But as the youth worker explains, "They just felt the animosity through the bus, though the window. The guy did not do anything or say anything. But that was their perception. This guy was being antagonistic as he saw them as not being from the area" (Personal communication, September 30, 2011). Still, it is important to remember that though these often "routine" practices of segregation contribute to the persistence of divides they are not rigid, instead there is fluidity as individuals have more positive experiences their perceptions change (Jarman & Bell, 2012, pp. 43-44).

In contrast to the ability of "telling", there is the prominence of practices of "avoidance" (Jarman & Bell, 2012, p. 41). Local interviewees explain that in "mixed company" and mixed workplaces there is an avoidance of political and religious issues (see also Jarman & Bell, 2012). However, while this is perceived to be at times necessary to build a minimum level of tolerance, it also leads to superficial interactions. As a member of a Protestant religious organization notes in regards to cross-community dialogues, "In cross-community initiatives everyone is on their best behaviour and trying to say things that will not offend. But in so doing people are often not

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saying what they actually think" (Personal communication, September 27, 2011). The tactic of avoidance particularly in cross-community peacebuilding initiatives is a way for individuals to maintain their worldviews even while seemingly engaging in peacebuilding activities. As a result, any account of peacebuilding on the ground level has to acknowledge the ability of ordinary people to contest the intended goals of the project by simply avoiding the controversial topics.

Competing Narratives and Practices

In the first part of this chapter, I suggested that the strategies developed to deal with the past in Northern Ireland have had limited success in developing a narrative of the conflict accepted by all sides. Local communities continue to use commemorations and commemorative symbols to support their own versions of the narratives of the past and future of Northern Ireland.[80] The republican narrative links the experience of the Troubles to a linear narrative of the struggle for civil rights and freedom against an oppressive state (Graham, 2011, p. 95). Moreover, republicans demand the investigations of actions by the British state as central in dealing with the past in the polity. As one former republican paramilitary member from North Belfast states, "I will not talk about what I did in the past until the British government and all those that were in state security services talk about what they did" (Personal communication, September 19, 2011). Loyalists, on the other hand, point to the defense of the community against republican terrorists and feel that republicans have not been held responsible for their actions. As such, the groups disagree on who was a victim of the violence. Republicans/nationalists seek acknowledgment of their victimhood, while unionists/loyalists believe that the definition of victim should not include those who committed terrorist crimes and their families.

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[80] On memorialisation practices by non-state actors and local resident responses, see Viggiani, 2014.

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The attempt to remember the past as a way of moving forward by inscribing it with current

rhetoric of the new Northern Ireland as an example of a successful peace process is visible in the

Maze prison project. The Maze prison, itself a symbol of the republican struggle against the

British state, and the place where the hunger strikes were carried out is to be transformed into a

centre for the study of peace and conflict resolution and an industrial park (Dalby, 2013).

Supporters of the project interestingly point to the economic prosperity as being brought about

by this initiative and as part of the vision for the future. Chairman of the Maze/Long Kesh

Development Corporation pointed out that "[O]ur vision, from Peace to Prosperity, is intended to

demonstrate how economic development can help consolidate and build upon our peace"

(McDonald, 2013b). Daniel Libeskind, an architect also working on the ground zero site in

Manhattan and the Jewish Museum in Berlin, developed a design, which preserves the H shaped

block where the hospital was where the 10 republican hunger strikers died (McDonald, 2013b).[81]

Yet the attempt to transform this space from its role in the conflict and indeed the understanding

of the past is unsurprisingly controversial for particular elements of the unionist community.

Even here, there is within the community contestation over its symbolism. Some representatives

of the unionist political party see the attempts to transform this site as nothing more than an

attempt to create a "shrine to terrorism" (Dalby, 2013). Other unionists supportive of the project

see these statements as "scaremongering" and as misunderstanding the intentions behind the site.

In 2013, the EU funding program withdrew its support of 18 million pounds for the Maze project

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[81] The Hunger Strikes are a well-known event in the Northern Irish conflict. The Hunger Strikes were a response to the 1976 withdrawal of a policy on the "special category status" for prisoners convicted of "terrorist" offences. The special category status for example allowed those arrested for terrorism the right to wear civilian clothes. The special status was granted by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, William Whitelaw in 1972. The 1976 withdrawal of this status meant that the offences would now be "criminal". Republican prisoners refused to wear prison clothes and only wore blankets in protest. Following this the republican prisoners engaged in the "dirty protest" where the prisoner smeared their excrement on their cell walls. As this had very little effect on changing British government policies, the prisoners decided to pursue a hunger strike. The first hunger strike from October to December 1980 was unsuccessful. In March 1981, the second hunger strike was initiated and over the course of seven months ten of the men had died, including prominent figures such as Bobby Sands.

after it became clear that the DUP would not support its development and due to the opposition

from the unionist and loyalist communities ("EU body withdraws," 2013).

Still, within the wider community there is a questioning of the attempts to transform these

contested spaces. Part of the concern with sites like the Maze is that accepting their revised role

is still about accepting the republican narrative on the past. As such, members of the unionist

community refuse to support the Maze project as it is perceived to favour the republican

narrative of the long struggle against an oppressive state. Brian Graham argues that, "[I]n zero-

sum circumstances heritage sites like the Maze cannot be read as neutral arbiters of the past;

inevitably, they form part of the struggle to achieve the hegemony of one particular memory

discourse at the expense of others" (2011, p. 95). This disagreement over the perceived

equalization of victims and perpetrators is central to the contested narratives of the past. In 2012,

the appointment of Eibhlin (Evelyn) Glenholmes, a former republican once known as the "IRA's

most wanted suspect" to the Victims and Survivors Commission outraged the unionist

community (Rowan, 2012).

Still, several storytelling initiatives have emerged from community organizations. Cahill

McLaughlin (2014) points to three recent storytelling initiatives that have emerged as a powerful

response to the lack of official mechanisms agreed upon by the leadership, particularly the DUP

and SF. One such example is the oral histories that have been gathered as part of the "Living

Through the Conflict: Belfast oral histories" by the Falls Community Council, Shankill

Women's Centre and several other organization representing the different communities in

Belfast (Lavis, 2014; McLaughlin, 2014). Some 100 hours of audio recordings 2000 pages of

transcripts were gathered and are available through a publicly accessible archive, Dúchas or

heritage. The goal of the project is to promote cross community understanding and ultimately to

leave a legacy for youth in the hope that they will learn from the past (Lavis, 2014). A similar storytelling project, Green & Blue, has been developed, supported by the EU Peace III funds, that gathers stories from former police officers from the RUC and the An Garda Síochána, national police service of Ireland (Green and Blue, 2014). The Wave Trauma Centre, a grassroots community organisation, also has an online storytelling project, Stories from Silence, that highlights the stories of ordinary individuals who were injured or lost loved ones.[82] McLaughlin also points to The Prisons Memory Archive that has 175-filmed recordings of former prisoners, prison staff, probation officers and relatives. As McLaughlin (2014) points out in this way the project "challenges the idea that there are only two sides to the Northern Ireland conflict." Therefore, projects such as these do emerge from the grassroots as individuals want to share their stories. A challenge to these storytelling initiatives emerged following the Boston College's Belfast Project fiasco when the researchers that had promised anonymity to the participants had to hand over their recordings to the PSNI (Macauley, 2014). Shortly afterwards, graffiti appeared in West Belfast stating "In-former republicans, Boston College touts" (Extramural Activity, 2014).

However, despite these cross-community initiatives and the wish to move beyond dichotomous narratives, group narratives remain paramount. Youth, in particular, are faced with contradictory messages that they receive from their families, within their neighborhoods and through civil society initiatives. On the one hand, the negative consequences of the violence and the human cost of conflict are meant to discredit any attempts at valorizing the violence. On the other hand, youth that have not experienced the conflict will often have negative views of the police or will have romanticized views of the past. As such, their experience of post-conflict

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[82] The stories can be accessed here: http://storiesfromsilence.com/.

Northern Ireland is shaped by these earlier experiences and memories and contributes to the sense that in some areas the conflict is ongoing. Siobhan McEvoy-Levy notes for example that "For some young people the contradictory valorizations and repressions of past violence and discrimination, as represented through transformed post-conflict spaces, may promote 'transgenerational haunting' and the (re)transmission of trauma and violence" (2012, p. 4). A community worker from north Belfast explains that "there is a reservoir of folk memories and so on of the troubles that the youth hear in their communities" (Personal communication, September 30, 2011). In this way, youth in predominantly working-class areas continue to live in an environment of high uncertainty.

Conclusion

This chapter highlights the everyday and cultural forms of expression that shape the post-conflict environment in the case of Northern Ireland. At the heart of the contestations and marking of spaces are the differing views on the future of Northern Ireland. The "constructive ambiguity" of the Belfast Agreement has contributed to the sense of what one local community worker describes as an "interim peace". As he points out, the challenge is that each community has a different end goal in mind for Northern Ireland. While republicans describe the Agreement as a step towards independence and (re)unification with Ireland, unionists see the end goal as being the maintenance of Northern Ireland in the United Kingdom. This leads to further uncertainty and as he notes ultimately the question is, "How long does the interim last?" This sense of an uncertain future has contributed to the liminal condition of Northern Ireland.

Yet, as I have shown, the sense of the interim or liminal condition of the polity is also a result of the contested practices of citizenship by ordinary citizens. The contested nature of the

polity as well as the legacy of the past conflict shapes the uncertainty that is experienced by the population. In turn, individuals engage in a variety of practices that show their understanding of belonging, that at times contests and at other times supports the goals of peacebuilders. In this way, ordinary citizens engage in politics and perpetuate the liminal condition of the polity due to the uncertainty, lingering fears as well as a lack of reconciliation between the communities. Therefore, peacebuilding strategies that are not supported in the everyday practices and cultural expressions are unable to create a shared society. At best, as is visible in the case of Northern Ireland, it leads to a coexistence that is still based on mistrust of the members of the "other" community.

Chapter Five

Bosnia's Unsettled Condition

Children in Bosnia today are growing up with invisible walls.
-Personal Communication, September 11, 2013

I think we all need dialogue. We cannot import it from the West, the High Representative cannot bring it in and I think that the politicians cannot do it either because we do not have sufficiently honest politicians who could start that story. I think it has to start with the common people, the members of the public. That is the only way to come to reconciliation. -Adnan Hamidovic "Frenkie", 2013[83]

Bosnia's experience with peacebuilding has not proceeded as expected by the international officials. Over the past twenty years, the international community (UN, OSCE, Council of Europe, EU, US) has dedicated significant resources and supported numerous projects focused on strengthening state institutions, developing a market economy, building civil society, and supporting reconciliation and social reconstruction in the country. However, while these peacebuilding efforts and visions have contributed to the relative stability and maintenance of peace in the polity, international policy-makers and scholars agree that sustainable peace remains elusive. In addition, according to the latest Global Peace Index (2014), Bosnia is among the ten countries likely to deteriorate in peace over the next two years. Political stalemate and continued infighting between Bosnian politicians, competing visions for the state, and lack of meaningful reconciliation between the different ethnic groups all contribute to the sense of Bosnia's unsettled condition.

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[83] Adnan Hamidovic "Frenkie" is a Bosnian rapper. The quote is taken from the documentary film inspired by Frenkie's song A Letter for Milan. In the song, Frenkie raps a letter to his friend Milan (a Serb), in which he tackles issues of reconciliation. The film is available here with English subtitles: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BEbByzpTy90

In response, the international community continues to prescribe more of the same top-down formulas, calling on the Bosnian elites to engage in dialogue with each other and to work towards membership in regional and international organizations, such as the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). In this way, the international community seeks to improve the political deadlock in the country, often blaming local elites while seemingly accepting the "good enough" nature of the peace that has been achieved (Richmond, 2014, p. 2).[84] Yet, the Bosnian population is increasingly dissatisfied with both the international community and the local elites. From the perspective of Bosnian citizens, the international community has not succeeded in transforming the economic, political and social realities faced by ordinary Bosnians (Kappler, 2014). At the same time, Bosnians view the political elites as corrupt, siphoning public funds and employing their relatives and friends in state institutions. However, any grassroots attempts to transform Bosnian realities are faced with lingering fear between members of different ethnic groups, divisive views of constitutional legitimacy and disagreements over the past conflict. In this political context, most ordinary Bosnians support exclusionary group narratives. At the same time, more inclusionary practices and narratives do exist. However, the latter tend to be weaker in a society still coping with the legacy of large scale atrocities.

Recent events offer an instructive view into the possibilities and challenges of overcoming divisive symbols, narratives and contested legitimacy of post-war Bosnia. In June 2013, protests erupted when the politicians' lack of agreement on identity numbers for citizens, left newborns without passports. As a result, several babies were unable to travel to receive

[84] For example, consider the EU Commissioner for Regional Policy, Johannes Hahn's statement that: "The EU is ready to look with fresh new eyes at the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and how we could consider potential next steps, if there was a serious response from the side of the political leaders and institutions of the country" (European Commission, 2014).

necessary healthcare in other countries. At first it seemed that the so-called *Bebolucija*, or baby

revolt, had managed to unite Bosnian citizens, as protestors came from all over the country. The

initial protests were described as apolitical by the organizers with the key goal being access to

services for all Bosnian citizens (Imamovic, 2013). However, the protests were overtaken by

marginal groups, one that calls itself "Anti-Dayton," that put up flags and symbols, such as the

wartime Bosniak flag, that are perceived as divisive (Imamovic, 2013).

In February 2014, masses of Bosnian citizens took to the streets to protest against the

high levels of unemployment and corruption in their country. The February 2014 protests

brought out the frustration felt by Bosnians facing economic struggles and corrupt elites that are

out of touch with their electorate. These protests enjoyed wider support than the *Bebolucija*

revolt and citizens assemblies, or plenums, were organized in order to engage the population

further. Some analysts took these protests as a sign of an important change in the status quo.[85]

Ultimately, the protests and plenums did not spread equally across the country, with a small

number of protests actually occurring in the Serb-dominated areas.[86] Moreover, in the October

2014 elections nationalist parties once again received the largest number of votes. As such, the

February 2014 protests did offer a glimmer of a civic revival in Bosnian society. Yet, this was no

early "Bosnian Spring" as some analysts had hoped.[87] In fact, the protests and their aftermath

brought out once again the persistence of fears and divisive visions for the Bosnian state that

ultimately shape the experience of citizenship and belonging in the country.

In examining Bosnia's unsettled peace, this chapter proceeds as follows. In the first

section, I outline the background of the extensive international peacebuilding approach and the

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[85] See Arsenijevic (Ed.), 2014 for a rich discussion of the importance of the protests and plenums.
[86] Though some protests did occur in the Bosnian Serb parts of the country these did not receive much media attention and were stopped by the RS police.
[87] See Marijan and Guzina, 2014.

broader socio-economic context. In the second section, I examine in more detail the dominant

liberal peacebuilding strategies carried out in Bosnia, namely power-sharing, civil society

building and transitional justice mechanisms and their experiences in the local context. In the

third section, drawing on interviews and observation made during my fieldwork in Bosnia, I then

analyze the specific local responses and practices, such as place-making, symbolic practices, and

competing narratives and performances.[88] The chapter concludes by examining the ways that

practices of ordinary citizens undermine the dominant peacebuilding approaches of the

international community.

Bosnia's Post-Dayton Quagmire

In 1995, The General Framework Agreement for Peace (more commonly referred to as

the Dayton Agreement) brought to an end the three years of large scale conflict in Bosnia. From

its beginning in 1992 to the end in 1995, the war in Bosnia resulted in close to 100,000 deaths,

many more injuries and displacement of half of the population.[89] The conflict was a result of a

complex number of factors and interrelated with the wider disintegration of Yugoslavia. But

crucial to the discussion here are the contested visions for the Bosnian state that emerged in the

1990s.[90] Following events in the other Yugoslav republics in early 1991, Bosniaks and Croats,

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[88] In addition to the everyday interactions and observations made through casual socializing, I also conducted some 25 semi-structured interviews with local activists, members of community organizations, and international non-governmental organizations. These interviews were carried out from May to June 2012 and September 2013 in Sarajevo, Banja Luka, Mostar and Livno. My interviewees varied in age and ethnic background. The latter I ensured by contacting organizations that were focused on particular segments of the population (for example, an organization focused on Bosniak women and their involvement in politics). Questions concentrated on the post-conflict period and contemporary experiences of peace in the everyday and cultural spheres.

[89] During the war, and indeed after, in some scholarly work and official reports the figure of 200,000 casualties in the Bosnian war is cited. However, the Research and Documentation Centre, an NGO based in Sarajevo, has confirmed the number to be around 100,000 (see Guzina & Marijan, 2012, pp. 257-258 for a more detailed discussion).

[90] The Bosnian war was intertwined with the broader disintegration of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s. Much has been written on the conflict and the literature recommended here is merely focused on most recent or comprehensive works related to the discussion here. For an overview of the history of the conflicts in Bosnia and the region, see

called for Bosnia's independence from Yugoslavia. However, Bosnian Serbs wished to remain a part of Yugoslavia and in 1992 proclaimed an independent Serb Republic. In March 1992, after a referendum, boycotted by a majority of Bosnian Serbs, Bosnia declared independence. Shortly afterwards, war broke out between these communities with Bosniaks and Croats initially joining forces. Bosnian Serbs had the support of the Serbian government and majority of the Yugoslav National Army (JNA) resources and engaged in a campaign of removing non-Serb populations from areas controlled by the Bosnian Serb Army. Bosnian Croats, and to a lesser extent Bosniak forces, also engaged in population removal. A falling out between the Bosniaks and Croats also led to additional layer of complexity, as Croats sought to create their own entity. Though international actors were initially reluctant to intervene in Bosnia, the targeting of civilians, ethnic cleansing of territory and widespread human rights abuses eventually led to a large scale international intervention.

The intervention came after several attempts at brokering a deal between these different sides in the Bosnian conflict were unsuccessful. Indeed, it was only after the NATO bombing of the Bosnian Serb military positions that the US-led efforts at a peace agreement were reached in Dayton. Following the cessation of violence, Bosnia became a testing ground for international peacebuilding strategies. As Patrice McMahon and Jon Western note, "[B]y the end of 1996, 7 different foreign governments, 18 UN agencies, 27 intergovernmental organizations, and about 200 nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) – not to mention tens of thousands of troops from across the globe – were involved in reconstruction efforts" (2009). The NATO-led peacekeeping force featured some 60,000 troops and was responsible for ensuring the maintenance of stability

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Clark, 2014; Ingrao & Emmert, 2012; Toal & Dahlman, 2011; Bougarel, Helms & Duijzings, 2007; Glenny 1992, 1999. On Yugoslavia and its dissolution, see Bieber, Galijaš, & Archer, 2014; Djokic & Ker-Lindsay, 2010; Woodward, 1995.

and to prevent a return to conflict (Belloni, 2009, p. 359). All of these external actors played some role in the multidimensional reconstruction efforts in Bosnia that included the rebuilding of critical infrastructure, security sector reform, democratization, economic reforms and transitional justice mechanisms. However, given the number of international actors, the peacebuilding efforts have been full of inconsistencies, as diverse actors drew on their cultural and political systems when carrying out projects (see Sebastián-Aparicio, 2014).

Following Dayton, Bosnia emerged as a federation comprised of two entities, the predominantly Bosniak and Croat Federation and the Serb-dominated Republika Srpska (Serb Republic or RS). The Bosniak-Croat Federation is further divided into ten cantons adding an additional layer of decentralization and division in the country. An area over which little agreement could be arrived at, the District of Brčko, has a special governance arrangement that is independent of the two entities.[91] An Inter-Entity Boundary Line (IEBL) delineates the two entities and the Brcko district. In some cases, individuals living near the Inter-Entity Boundary Line (IEBL), a boundary between RS and Federation, find their homes and properties in different entities (Karabegović, 2012). *Figure* 5.1 below shows the political map of contemporary Bosnia. For a country of some 3.8 million according to the 2013 census, this multilayered institutional setup is often seen as unnecessarily complex and costly. The journalist Tim Judah (2012) suggests that given its population size, "Bosnia in an ideal world would be run (brilliantly) by one mayor and a town hall." In reality, Bosnia has close to a hundred and fifty ministers, three presidents and many more representatives at various levels all meant to ensure an equal balance among the ethnic groups. However, the balancing of ethnic group representatives and interests

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[91] See Keil, 2013 for a detailed account of the Bosnian "imposed federalism".

has led to the increased salience of ethnic identity in the politics of the country and the citizenship structures.

Figure 5.1 Map of Bosnia and Herzegovina**.** Source UN, Retrieved from:
http://www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/map/profile/bosnia.pdf

As a result of the extensive international oversight and involvement, Bosnia remains at peace and there has been no significant inter-ethnic violence following the signing of the peace agreement. As further proof of Bosnia's stability, the number of international troops has

dwindled from tens of thousands following the war, to some 600 in 2014 (EUFORBIH, 2014).[92] However, the prominence of ethnic balancing in the Dayton Agreement and post-Dayton institutions and daily life has contributed to the sense of Bosnia as an "unfinished state" (personal communication, Sarajevo, 2012; see also Fischer, 2007, p. 454). In other words, Bosnia remains on the verge of a crisis despite the international involvement and continued intervention in the local politics. There remain three different visions for Bosnia's future. Bosnian Serb politicians such as Milorad Dodik, the RS president, has called for the independence of the RS while the Bosnian Croat politicians have supported the creation of a third entity for Croats. Bosniak politicians call for a unified state and the need to reform the Dayton structures.

This latter vision for an integrated Bosnia is not well received by the Croats and Serbs who fear giving up the protection provided by Dayton and being absorbed in the numerically stronger Bosniak state. [93] According to the preliminary results from the 2013 census, Bosnia's population is estimated to be around 3,791, 622. Of these some 2.371.603 live in the Federation, 1.326.991 in RS, and 93.028 in the Brcko District (Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2013). Though no official results of the ethnic makeup of the country have been released at the time of writing, the Bosnian daily Dnevni Avaz released unofficial information that it claimed has been received from a reliable source (Kristović, 2014). According to Dnevni Avaz, Bosniaks make up close to half the population in Bosnia (48.4 percent). Bosnian Serbs represent some 32.7 percent while Bosnian Croats represent close to 14.6 percent of the

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[92] In 2004, the European Union Force Althea (EUFOR) replaced the NATO-led Stabilization Force. NATO maintains a military headquarters in Sarajevo and provides assistance to EUFOR. A local security expert suggests that NATO deals with more senior level issues, while EUFOR take care of practical, junior level tasks (Personal communication, September 11, 2013).

[93] Though the Bosnian census was finally carried out in October 2013, 22 years since the last census, the information regarding the ethnic makeup of the country has not been released at the time of writing in June 2015.

population. Bosnian Croats, in particular, are concerned about their status in the country as their population has declined according to some estimates from just over 800,000 prior to the war to less than 500,000 following the war (Belloni, 2009, p. 361).

More telling are the unconfirmed numbers regarding the ethnic makeup of BiH's population. According to the data released by Dnevni Avaz, in the Federation some 69 percent of the population are Bosniaks, 20.9 percent are Bosnian Croats and Bosnian Serbs represent about 4 percent of the population. Some 6 percent declared themselves to belong to the category of others. In the RS, the Bosnian Serbs form some 83.2 percent of the population, while some 13.2 percent are Bosniaks and some 2.5 percent are Bosnian Croats, with only about 1.1 percent declaring themselves as others. While these numbers are unconfirmed, the picture they present is unsurprising for local Bosnians and political analysts interested in Bosnia. More importantly, these unofficial statistics show the limits of the international attempts to reverse engineer Bosnian society by inspiring refugee and displaced people's returns to original residences.[94]

Following the war, the population shifts were significant. For example, in 1996 only 5 percent of Bosnian Croats and Bosniaks that in 1991 lived in the area that is now RS, remained in the area (Jansen, 2011, p. 141). Only 10 percent of Bosnian Serbs that lived in the area that is now the Federation remained (Jansen, 2011, p. 141). Recognizing the extent of this shift, international representatives developed policies for the return and reintegration of Bosnian society that would support the full implementation of the Annex 7 of the Dayton Agreement.[95]

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[94] For the most thorough account on the consequences of ethnic cleansing, see Toal & Dahlman, 2011.

[95] Annex 7 states that: "All refugees and displaced persons shall have the right freely to return to their homes of origin. They shall have the right to have restored to them their property of which they were deprived in the course of the hostilities since 1991 and to be compensated for any property that cannot be restored to them. The early return of refugees and displaced persons is an important objective of the settlement of the conflict in BiH. The Parties confirm that they will accept the return of such persons who have left their territory, including those who have been accorded temporary protection by third countries.' The focus on refugee returns also reflected the interests of Western European countries that provided Bosnians fleeing from violence a safe heaven, such as Germany. As such, Western

This vision of an integrated Bosnian society was also thought possible due to the high rates of intermarriage and multiethnic, tolerant nature of Bosnian society prior to the war.[96] As such, policies for return and reintegration called for a return of displaced individuals and refugees not just to the country but more specifically to their original places of residence (Pickering, 2007, p. 5). Still, given the population shifts that were a result of policies of ethnic cleansing, and voluntary displacements caused by the violence and fears for safety, this meant that individuals were facing return to areas dominated by the other ethnic groups. Many now minority returnees seeking property restitution faced obstruction by the local authorities in charge of the property returns, and also individuals from the now majority group who had taken up residence in their homes during the war.[97] Though physical property restitution was largely successful, most individuals decided to remain in the areas of their own group rather than return to their original residences. Some individuals also chose to rent out their property, while others subsequently sold or exchanged the properties to remain in their own group dominated areas.

Therefore, in Dayton Bosnia the links between identity and territory have emerged as important and shape individuals sense of belonging in the country. As such, RS today is populated largely by Bosnian Serbs, while the Federation is largely populated by Bosniaks and Croats. In the Federation, five out of the ten cantons have a Bosniak majority, while three are predominantly Croat and two are mixed (Perry, 2014).[98] More importantly, the experiences of

European support for refugee return in Bosnia was as much about domestic concerns regarding asylum seekers and welfare resources as it was about the integration of the Bosnian society (see Harvey, 2006; Jansen, 2011).

[96] There is some debate about the actual extent of intermarriages in Bosnia. It is widely acknowledged that the rates of intermarriage were low in the rural population and higher in the cities, particularly in Sarajevo (Hromadzic, 2011, p. 277).

[97] For a discussion of the property return process see Toal and Dahlman, 2011; Philpott, 2006; Stefansson, 2006.

[98] The cantons with a Bosniak majority are: Una-Sana (Bihac), Tuzla, Zenica-Doboj, Bosnia-Podrinje (Gorazde) and Sarajevo. The cantons with a Croat majority are: Posavina, West Herzegovina, and Canton 10. Meanwhile, the two mixed cantons are: Central Bosnia (Travnik) and Herzegovina-Neretva (Mostar) (Perry, 2014). All of this information can only be fully supported by the latest Bosnian census. Interestingly, the flags for the three cantons

violence during the conflict led to the fear of the other communities as well as belief in safety and protection in areas where one's own ethnic group forms the majority. According to the 2013 United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office (UNRCO) survey findings, some 80 percent of Serbs, some 62.2 percent of Croats and 74.4 percent of Bosniaks stated that they prefer to live in areas where their ethnic group is the majority (United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2013, p. 23). In addition, most political parties, civil society groups, and media outlets are divided along ethnic lines (International Crisis Group, 2014, p. 8). On top of this, the education system is divided and children are taught national subjects that reflect their own group narratives. The "two schools under one roof" phenomenon, where children of different ethnic backgrounds attend the same institution sometimes at different times and follow a different curriculum, is still present in 34 schools in the country (European Commission, 2014, p. 40). All of this contributes to the sense of insecurity and uncertainty about the future of the country.

The precariousness of the Bosnian state has been largely kept in check and overseen by the international community, namely the Peace Implementation Council, through the Office of the High Representative (OHR).[99] In addition to the OHR and other key international and regional organizations (such as, EU, OSCE and UNHCR) numerous international non-government organizations also became prominent in the country (Belloni, 2001). The involvement of the OHR extended beyond overseeing the peace process and supporting Bosnian

with a Croat majority all feature the Croat checker shield. In the case of Canton 10, the flag was deemed unconstitutional as it represents only the Croat population.

[99] Following the Dayton negotiations, a Peace Implementation Conference was held in London from December 8-9, 1995. The meeting led to the creation of the Peace Implementation Council (PIC). PIC is composed of 55 countries and agencies including Canada, EU, Russia and US among others. The PIC provides funding for the OHR. The OHR budget for 2014/2015 is 6, 497 million Euros (Office of the High Representative, 2015). The breakdown of the budget is as follows: EU 53%, USA 22%, Japan 10%, Russia 4%, Canada 3.03%, Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) 2.5% and others 5.47% (Office of the High Representative, 2015).

institutions. For example, the OHR directly intervened in the development of common license plates, a flag and currency (Roeder & Rothchild, 2005, p. 334). The OHR, through the use of so-called "Bonn Powers," also removed and in some cases banned elected officials from power. As a result of the international community's active role in Bosnian politics, there is the perception that Bosnian institutions are overly dependent on external actors for their functioning and have made Bosnia more akin to an international protectorate than an independent state (Bose, 2002; Knaus and Martin, 2003).[100] Others highlight the gap between the stated goals of the international community and their actions. In particular, frequently noted is the fact that for all of its efforts promoting democracy, the international community imposes its will on Bosnia without being accountable for its actions to Bosnian citizens. This has prompted some scholars to suggest that the international community is "creating a liberal democracy through illiberal means" (Belloni, 2009, p. 362; Chandler, 2006).

Still, the key strategies supported by the OHR all reflect the comprehensive liberal peacebuilding approach. State institutions and state-building are the central strategies as the stability of Bosnia is seen as crucial to maintaining the gains already made. According to the OHR (2015) website, "One of the OHR's key tasks is to ensure that the institutions function effectively and in a responsible manner." As such, state-building remains a key focus though the OHR has also directly intervened in local politics, as outlined above, thereby also engaging in nation-building (Kostić, 2008). Over time, the international community has also come to focus more on building a European future for the country and the role of the EU has become more prominent (Kappler, 2014). The EU provides some 200 million KM (about €102 million) in financial assistance to Bosnia each year and provides support to the European Union

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[100] Indeed, the English version of the constitution, written by the US State Department, is the official version.

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Force/Operation Althea that in 2004 replaced the NATO led forces (EUBIH, 2014; EUFORBIH, 2014). From the perspective of the international community, the goal is to help Bosnia move from Dayton to Brussels.

The European path is often seen as leading to a normalization of politics in the state. Through a "sticks and carrots" approach, international representatives push forward the benefits of European membership as furthering the peace dividend in the country. For example, the current HR Valentin Inzko has repeatedly stated that in addition to fully implementing and respecting the Dayton agreement local authorities also "need to deliver more efficient decision-making mechanisms that will create economic growth and jobs, fight crime and corruption and enable the country to move towards Euro-Atlantic institutions" (Jazvić, 2012). Inzko's statement fully captures the liberal peace concerns that have shaped the international community's engagement in post-conflict Bosnia. In other words, the international community has concerned itself with transforming the governance of the state and economic development, as well as providing a moral and ethical compass upon which the state should model itself in becoming an EU member state (Mitchell, 2011, p. 1637). These sentiments were also echoed in the November 2014 open letter by the British and German foreign ministers to the Bosnian people. In the letter, the German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier and Britain's Philip Hammond stated that, "[T]here is only one path into the European Union – through reforms that help Bosnia and Herzegovina reach the standard of governance and economic development of EU Member States" (Jukic, 2014c). Thus, the key concerns of the international actors in the country include the Bosnian state's stability and capacity building, with the ultimate goal being reform that would bring the country closer to EU membership. Also important to this vision is the idea of

promoting European values and standards as a means of transforming Bosnia into a European country.

This focus on state institutions and elites is one part of the new package of reforms but important also is economic reform and job creation. The latest calls for reform come after a series of transitions and previous reform efforts further contributing to the sense that Bosnia remains in a constant state of transition. The war-ravaged economy in particular and the push for a market economy that liberal peacebuilders implemented early on have not resulted in a more stable economic reality for the population. Instead, only a select few have benefitted from previous economic reforms. For example, local businessmen have benefitted greatly from the privatization process and through their ties to political parties, particularly in the privatization of formerly state owned firms.[101] Following the war, Bosnia received some $14 billion worth of aid for its transformation from a war-torn country to a multiethnic, liberal democracy (McMahon & Western, 2009; International Crisis Group, 2014, p. 2). However, this external assistance has not translated into sustainable economic development.

For most Bosnians, everyday life is a struggle given the dire economic reality. Bosnia has staggering unemployment rates. Youth unemployment, in particular, is estimated to be at about 62 percent, with the average rate for the rest of the population being about 28 percent (BHAS, 2014; Vincelette et al., 2014, p.43). The lack of economic opportunities and concerns of the

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[101] Timothy Donais (2002) describes a well-known example, the sale of the Holiday Inn in Sarajevo, of the shady deals that emerged following the process of privatization. The rather unsightly hotel was home to the international media during the Bosnian war and as a result is found in most war-time footage. As Donais notes a substantial share was initially sold to a local businessman for a fraction of the price pointing to the lack of transparency of most deals (2002, p. 1). After an international outcry, this deal was cancelled. However, many similarly arbitrary deals continued to occur. As such, the rather mismanaged privatization process was also a result of the international community's push for "early and rapid" privatization in a country recovering from conflict and experiencing the transition to a market economy (see Donais, 2002).

stability of the state and have resulted in a further "brain drain" in the country. Following the war, significant numbers of educated and trained professionals left Bosnia and many of the Bosnian refugees settled permanently abroad. According to some estimates about 79 percent of research and development engineers, 81 percent of individuals holding master's degrees and some 75 percent of people with doctoral degrees have left Bosnia to date (Mitrović, 2013). This exodus of educated people from Bosnia has continued and many young individuals continue to leave the country. Some 10,000 individuals between the ages of 25 to 35 leave Bosnia each year (Jukic, 2013). Many pursue their studies abroad and settle in those countries due to the lack of employment opportunities in Bosnia (Personal communication, May 9, 2012). Those that do come back face a bureaucratic maze in ensuring that their qualifications are recognized (Personal communication, May 9, 2012). This loss of educated and young individuals further undermines the economic development of the country.

Equally pressing are the estimates about the levels of corruption in Bosnian institutions. Transparency International places Bosnia 80th out of 175 countries in the world (Transparency International, 2014). High levels of corruption result from many causes, one of them being that the fragmented state has enabled elites to use institutions for personal gain (Donais, 2003). Bosnian politicians, in particular, have benefitted from the multilayered governance structures. The salary of Bosnian Members of Parliament (MPs) is estimated to be six times the national average, placing them among the wealthiest in Europe, relatively speaking (Nardell, Dzidic & Jukic, 2014; Jukic, 2014b).[102] In addition, most locals note that employment in state institutions is based on nepotism (see also, Krstin, 2014). Locals also point to having a *štela*, sometimes referred to as "contactocracy," where individuals have contacts in firms or government

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[102] For example, a German MP earns just over twice the average German salary (Jukic, 2014b). Of course, the salaries in Germany are significantly higher than in Bosnia. However, this example shows in relative terms the extent of the gap between the average salary in Bosnia and those of the Bosnian MPs.

institutions that provide them with everything from employment opportunity, to speeding up the bureaucratic process for other aspects such as receiving formal documents, or even receiving timely medical care (see also de Borja Lasheras, 2014).[103] Thus, informal institutions play an important role in the lives of ordinary citizens who rely on them to navigate the post-Dayton frameworks.

As a result, the trust in state institutions is low, as corruption has also permeated everyday life and individuals' interactions with these institutions. Some 32 percent of individuals responding to Transparency International's 2013 Global Corruption Barometer claim to have paid a bribe to the police within the previous year and an equal number have paid bribes for access to medical and health services. Bribe paying is often pointed to by locals who allege that one can even "buy" employment in most state institutions with estimates of a position costing about €10,000 (Personal communication, Sarajevo, May 2012; see also "On Fire," 2014). Similar allegations are made about the selling of "votes", the practice that individuals will take bribes of as little as €20, from political parties to vote for them (Personal communication, Banja Luka and Sarajevo, May/June 2012).[104] Thus, everyday life in Bosnia is shaped by the uncertainty of employment and high levels of corruption, which further undermine the sense of stability within the state. Moreover, corruption and bribe paying have been unsuccessfully targeted by the international community in their attempts to transform and modernize the Bosnian economy and society (Pugh, 2005; Mitchell, 2011). Many of these campaigns are focused on promoting new norms and thereby overlooking the post-conflict economic and

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[103] Another commonly used term is veza, or a connection.

[104] Following the 2014 elections, RS prime minister Zeljka Cvijanovic was secretly taped saying that her party, the Alliance of Social Democrats (SNSD), had bought two MPs in order to ensure a parliamentary majority in the RS. The release of the tape by a local news website, Klix, led to a swift response by the police and a raid of Klix's offices ("Bosnian Police Raid Top News Website", 2014). Many analysts noted that while the news website was investigated in order to obtain the source of the recording, there was no investigation into the claims that seats were bought.

structural factors that have led to the high levels of corruption (Kurtovic, 2014). As such, Bosnians tend to perceive the international community as disconnected from how ordinary people live their lives and the challenges that they face (Personal communication, Sarajevo, 2013).

In summary, the constant crisis of the Bosnian state, external interventions, the different visions for the future of the country, continued fears and divides, coupled with high levels of unemployment and corruption, all provide fertile ground for competing narratives and practices of the population. While in the latter section I focus on cultural and everyday practices, I suggest that they have to be understood within this broader context of post-Dayton Bosnian realities. Against this background, I first examine the dominant liberal peacebuilding strategies and show how they have been unable to overcome competing narratives and practices. In the third section, I turn to examining the cultural and everyday practices that I suggest further contest and perpetuate the uncertainty of the Bosnian state. But they also show the entanglement of both inclusionary and exclusionary practices and narratives and the shifts between these in the local contexts.

Liberal Peacebuilding Strategies

The following section addresses in more detail the dominant peacebuilding strategies developed and supported by the international community in the Bosnian case. Over the past twenty years, the strategies of the international community for building a sustainable peace remained focused on institutional design, civil society building and promoting transitional justice mechanisms. In what follows, I outline these three key strategies noting their reliance on elites,

and top-down formulas and the disconnection from the practices and concerns of the local

population.

Power-sharing and Citizenship, Dayton-style

Power-sharing is central to the peacebuilding project in Bosnia. The Dayton Agreement

and the Constitution (Annex 4) clearly represent the consociational formula meant to preserve a

unified Bosnian state while also ensuring group representation and enshrining of group rights.

Dayton reflected the view that peace at the top levels, ensured by the political representation of

the key Bosnian communities in the state institutions was the best option for ending the conflict

and eventually contributing to reconciliation among Bosnian citizens. As noted in the first

section of this chapter, the Dayton formula did lead to the achievement of the minimalist

peacebuilding goal, that is of preventing a return to conflict (Belloni, 2007, p. 1). However, the

international community hoped that eventually the Dayton structures would "wither away,"

allowing for the emergence of more integrated, reformed institutions and an integrated society.

Carl Bildt, a Swedish diplomat and the first High Representative of Bosnia from 1995 to 1997,

expressed such sentiments. Bildt stated "[T]he peace agreement balances the reality of division

with structures of cooperation and integration, and is based on the hope that over time the

imperative of integration in the country and region will be the dominant factor" (cited in Bose,

2002, p. 1). As a result, over time there has been an increasing push to reform the Dayton

institutions and to build a multiethnic state where the salience of group identities and rights

would be diminished by focusing on individual rights (Sebastián, 2012, p. 598; see also

Sebastián-Aparicio, 2014). Yet, the subsequent attempts at reform have mostly been a product of

international design, once again leaving local actors, apart from few key political parties, on the

sidelines.

As such, Dayton's shortcomings are well known. Much has been written on Dayton and its limitations in building a sustainable peace in Bosnia (see for example, Bieber, 2006; Belloni, 2009; Keil, 2013). Scholars and practitioners agree that the institutional recognition of the equality of all Bosnian citizens, and the international community's attempts to promote a sense of being Bosnian, coexist with a political arrangement that makes ethnicity the most salient feature of political life. The Bosnian Constitution, that is the Annex 4 of the Agreement, recognizes the Bosniak, Croat and Serb communities as the constituent nations. As such, power is shared between the representatives of these three communities, most notably in the tripartite Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as the House of Peoples. Ethnic quotas are also incorporated within various levels of government in order to ensure proportional representation.[105]

Moreover, each constituent nation has veto rights to ensure the protection of group interests. By evoking the "vital national interests" using veto rights, the politicians can block the passing of laws and regulations that undermine the rights of their communities. These provisions are often seen as contributing to the political deadlock in the country. Still, as Florian Bieber (2006) notes, it is the prominence of nationalist parties who threaten to use these vetoes, and not the particular provisions themselves that are problematic. The political elites have certainly seized on the tensions and legacy of the war in order to gather votes. At the same time, as a result of thick international involvement in local politics, there is less willingness to compromise.

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[105] There has been some pragmatic interpretation of these quotas by Bosnian politicians. In 2014, several Bosnian MPs "switched" their declared ethnicity in order to obtain positions in legislative bodies reserved for members of other groups (Jukic, 2014a). However, the country's main electoral body has stated that this switching will not be allowed. More importantly, the implementation of ethnic quotas is less clear. Regional news media has reported that the number of Bosnian Serbs employed in the institution of the FBIH to be about 4.2 percent with some 17 institutions of the entity employing no Bosnian Serbs (Breberina & Popadic, 2011; also cited in Bojicic-Dzelilovic, 2015, p. 10).

Local politicians often have the expectation that international actors will step in if local actors do not agree amongst themselves. When the international actors do not step in there is often a deadlock between the key parties. For example, following the October 2010 elections, it took 15 months for the government to form.

As a result of the continued deadlock, the international community sought to reform the Bosnian institutional arrangements. Two key efforts occurred in 2006 with the so-called April Package and the 2009 Butmir process. Both of these efforts were attempts to tinker with the existing Dayton structures.[106] However, these attempts at reform were ultimately unsuccessful for a variety of reasons. One of the key limitations to the success of the reforms was the fact that they occurred in a political environment that from the 1990s on has been dominated by nationalist parties (Bieber, 2014).

Several nationalist parties dominate the political landscape in Bosnia and are worth mentioning here.[107] It is fairly easy to discern which ethnic community the party appeals to as the parties explicitly state this in their mission statements, party names or by using nationalist symbols in their party logos (McClelland, 2013, p. 14). In the Bosniak dominated areas the key party is the Party for Democratic Action (SDA). SDA describes itself as a party founded in order to ensure the representation of the Bosnian Muslim population and is committed to a unified Bosnian state (Stranka Demokratske Akcije, 2015). The SDA logo features a crescent and a fleur-de-lis, the latter having been a war-time symbol for Bosniak troops. In the Croat dominated

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[106] For an excellent overview of the constitutional reforms process, see Sebastián-Aparicio, 2014.
[107] The dominance of these parties is visible in the 2014 elections results and particularly in the selection of the members of the presidency. The Bosniak member of the presidency is Bakir Izetbegović, from the SDA, the Croat member is Dragan Čović, from the HDZ. The Serb member of the presidency is Mladen Ivanić, from the coalition formed between SDS and the Party for Democratic Progress (PDP) among others, who narrowly beat out Zeljka Cvijanić, from SNSD.

areas the most notable party is the Croat Democratic Union of BiH (HDZ BiH). In its vision

statement, HDZ BiH makes explicit its commitment to protecting the rights of the Croatian

population in Bosnia (HDZ BiH, 2015). The logo for HDZ BiH features a checkerboard square

thereby alluding to the red checkerboard found in the Croatian flag (see also McClelland, 2013,

p. 14). In the Serb Republic, the key parties are Serb Democratic Party (SDS) and the Alliance of

Independent Social Democrats (SNSD). SDS see itself as central to the foundation and

preservation of the RS, and its logo features the Serbian tricolor (Srpska Demokratska Stranka,

2015).[108] The SNSD is the party of leading Bosnian Serb politician Milorad Dodik who often

calls for greater autonomy for the RS. As such, voting continues to occur along ethnonational

lines despite the hopes that more moderate and cross-national parties would emerge.[109]

In contrast to the nationalist parties, the Social Democratic Party (SDP) is often seen as

more moderate and describes itself as a party of all of Bosnia's citizens (Socijal Demokratska

Partija Bosne i Hercegovina, 2015). Indeed, the SDP was long hailed as the only multi-ethnic

party in Bosnia. However, it has not been able to achieve cross-national support and remains

mostly supported by the Bosniak population. Among the young, urban Bosnians, another party

has become more prominent, Nasa Stranka (Our Party). Yet, Nasa Stranka's support is mainly

concentrated in Sarajevo and Tuzla, and it has not received much support in the RS (see Touquet,

2011).

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[108] In its party program, this central role of the SDS in establishing the RS is noted: "Creation and international recognition of the Republic of Srpska according to the Dayton Peace Accords was a reward to the Serbian Democratic Party for its combat for the realization of national goals of the Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina acting in difficult and challenging times. In this sense the existence of the Republic of Srpska is a heritage of the political activities of the Serbian Democratic Party" (Srpska Demokratska Stranka, 2015).
[109] See Hulsey, 2010 for a discussion of challenges in ensuring electoral support for moderate political parties in Bosnia.

As discussed above, the Dayton agreement and power-sharing formula has placed ethnicity as central in the political life of the country. This, in turn, has important implications for the type of citizenship that has been implemented in the Bosnian context. While referring to the equality of all Bosnian citizens, the international community ultimately developed and supports a political arrangement that promotes the rights of the constituent peoples over others. Keranen notes the contradiction in the rhetoric of the international community and the institutional set-up of the Bosnian state. She points out, "whereas the 'demos' is endorsed in public statements and promoted through policies such as common citizenship law, it is ultimately 'ethnos' that provides the basis for the country's institutional framework" (Keranen, 2014, p. 136). So while the international community created Dayton with the vision of an integrated Bosnia, the Agreement also ensured the salience of ethnic identities in the country.

This primacy of the constituent peoples in the Bosnian political system was highlighted in the case brought in front of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). In the case, Derbo Sejdic and Jakob Finci, a Roma and Jew, respectively challenged the provisions that ensured that only constituent people could be elected to the presidency and House of Peoples. In 2009, the ECHR ruled that the Bosnian Constitution does in fact discriminate against the other communities in the country and needs to be changed. Attempts at constitutional reform and the implementation of the Sejdic and Finci ruling have resulted in political stalemate as little consensus on the state exists among political leaders. The Sejdic and Finci case is also particularly important as it brought to light the fact that despite the claim to equality of all Bosnian citizens, not all Bosnian citizens are equal. In other words, when it comes to eligibility in running for office, according to the Constitution and electoral law, one has to belong to the constituent peoples. In 2014, the international community decided to save the country from

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"death by stagnation" over the lack of agreement on the Sejdic-Finci ruling, and pushed back the implementation of the ruling to be dealt with some time down the road (Judah, 2014). As such, this move by the international community shows that the primary concern for international actors is the stability of the Bosnian state. Therefore, the rights of minorities have been sidelined due to the focus on the ethnic balancing.

At the same time, the International Crisis Group suggests that even amongst the constituent peoples a paradox of citizenship has been created:

> This paradox torments Bosnia: if its citizens are equal as individuals, then its three peoples are unequal, since some are much larger than others and have more political power. If its peoples are equal, then its citizens are not, since members of the smaller peoples have votes that weigh more heavily than those of the larger community. Measures to secure equality at the group level undermine those to protect it at the individual level and vice versa. (2014, p. 9)

Nonetheless, this give and take of individual rights and group rights reflects the consociational strategy for maintaining peace between the different ethnic communities.

Despite these short-comings on minority rights in the institutional design, the international community supported the integrationist ideal for Bosnia and sought to develop a sense of shared civic citizenship for all Bosnians (Ivie and Waters, 2010, p. 449). In this regard, international actors sought to promote integrated communities in order to reawaken a sense of being Bosnian, or as Keranen (2014) terms it "Bosnian-ness", that would contribute to the stability of the state. In other words, the international community hoped that by promoting a common sense of belonging and rhetorically supporting "Bosnian-ness" the salience of ethnicity would be diminished.

Once again, there is a gap between the visions and practices. Even though formally Bosnian citizens are equal wherever they live, in practice, individuals' identities are based on their ethnic/religious identities first, on their entity ties second, and lastly on their belonging to the federal state (Guzina, 2007). Indeed, the OHR had to intervene to ensure that Bosnian citizens were first citizens of the state and then the entity (either the Federation or RS) (Sarajlić, 2012, p. 371). Despite this intervention by the international community the issue of the relationship between the state and entity citizenship remains ambiguous. One must possess an entity citizenship (either in the Federation or RS) in order to be considered a Bosnian citizen.[110] Entity citizenships are "mutually exclusive" and as such a Bosnian citizen can only have the citizenship of one entity (Sarajlić, 2013, p. 89).[111] Entity citizenship is based on residency, and in the case of a change of residency there is a change of entity citizenship. This means that one loses the previous entity citizenship and with it the civil and political rights associated with that citizenship, such as for example the right to stand for office in that entity (Sarajlić, 2013, p. 89).[112] Furthermore, according to article 27, if an individual loses citizenship in one entity, without ensuring it in the other, then the individual loses state citizenship, effectively becoming stateless (International Crisis Group, 2014, p. 6).[113]

However, owing to the decentralized structures of the country and the demographic shifts there is some room for interpretation of entity citizenship. Elena Stavrevska (2013) points out

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[110] In the Brcko District, residents can choose their entity citizenship regardless of ethnic origin (Sarajlić, 2012, p. 373). According to Article 25 of the Law on Citizenship of Bosnia and Herzegovina (1997), having state citizenship means that one also holds citizenship in one of the entities. Change of entity citizenship does not affect BiH state citizenship. That is unless an individual loses one entity citizenship but fails to secure the other entity citizenship.

[111] There is a centralized database and one can legally only obtain documents of one entity. However, see Stavrevska (2013) on the factors that influence entity citizenship selection.

[112] As Sarajlić explains (2012, p. 377). "For example, a Serb individual residing in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bosniak-Croat dominated entity) cannot run for the office of a Serb member of the state presidency, nor can he/she vote for it, because only individuals from the Republika Srpska (Serb entity) are able to run and vote for this particular office.

[113] However, the Constitution, Article I (7)a, states that "[N]o person shall be deprived of Bosnia and Herzegovina or Entity citizenship arbitrarily or so as to leave him or her stateless."

that some individuals are registered in one entity while actually residing in another. For example, some choose to register in the entity where they are eligible for better benefits, such as pensions and healthcare. This is possible due to the fact that all that is needed in order to meet the residency requirement is an address in that entity, the individuals do not have to show proof they actually live there (Stavrevska, 2013). Still, by registering in one entity and residing in another individuals are ineligible to vote in the entity where they actually live.

In addition, any understanding of the multiple layers of citizenship and belonging in Bosnia has to take into account that some Croats and Serbs, hold citizenships from their kin states, Croatia and Serbia respectively. This has very practical implications for example that Croat and Serb students from Bosnia will choose to do their university-level studies in Croatia and Serbia respectively, rather than attending for example, the University of Sarajevo. More importantly, Eldar Sarajlić notes that significant numbers of Bosnians hold dual citizenship with their kin state. For example, he suggests that approximately 500,000 Bosnian Croats hold dual Croatian citizenship (Sarajlić, 2013, p. 176). As such, Bosnian Croats can vote in Croatian elections and many do as was visible in the most recent Croatian elections in January 2015.[114] Thus, in the case of Bosnian Croats and Serbs kin state allegiances play an important role in shaping belonging and further fragments any sense of Bosnianness.[115]

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[114] Sarajlić (2012, p. 375) notes that Bosnian Croats tend to vote for right-wing parties and candidates thereby impacting domestic Croatian politics and in turn the relationship of the Croatian government to Bosnia's political dilemmas. In the 2015 Croatian elections, Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic had overwhelming support from Bosnian Croats. Grabar-Kitarovic belongs to the Croat Democratic Union (HDZ) party. After winning the 2015 election, the new President of Croatia, Grabar-Kitarovic stated that she supports the creation of a separate Croatian entity in Bosnia (Jukic, 2015). Later, Grabar-Kitarovic expressed that she did not mean to "meddle in Bosnia's internal affairs" (Jukic, 2015). Still, she did state that she supports the equality of Bosnia's constituent groups. This can be interpreted as her reassurance of the Bosnian Croats that she will support their calls for greater equality in Bosnia.

[115] As Sarajlić (2013, p. 176) also notes a significant number of Bosnian Serbs have obtained Serbian citizenship. Moreover, changes of law on obtaining Serbian citizenship have made it easier for Bosnian Serbs to obtain Serbian citizenship. In an interesting twist, it is not only ethnic Serbs from Bosnia that hold Serbian citizenship but also ethnic Muslims from the Sandzak region of Serbia who had migrated to Bosnia (see Sarajlić, 2013, p. 176).

Simply put, the integration of Bosnian communities did not occur as the international community had hoped. As Roberto Belloni notes "[P]rofound differences about the territorial boundaries of the political community and the rights of citizenship divide the three main national groups" (2009, p. 358). Namely, attempts at "citizenization" in the context of a divided state are never seen as neutral. State-level citizenship and calls for a unified Bosnian identity are well-received by Bosniak representatives, who often emphasize the Bosniak "ownership" of the polity (Sarajlić, 2012, p. 376). By contrast, and in response, Bosnian Serb and Croats both argue against these centralized policies as they fear losing their rights against the numerically stronger Bosniak population. Peacebuilders' notions of a shared and common citizenship are then met with local implementation and interpretations of citizenship as contested and which reflect the local political dynamics.

In conclusion, the power-sharing arrangement developed in Dayton was seen as an interim solution that reflected the goals of ensuring cessation of violence, stability and rebuilding the Bosnian state. However, subsequent attempts at transforming the arrangement and moving away from the ethnicized structures have proven to be difficult. As I had discussed in chapter two, the focus on state institutions and state capacity by the state-building project overlooks the contested legitimacy of the Bosnian state. Thereby further resulting in a weak legitimacy of the political elites but also in preventing an informal power-sharing among Bosnian citizens who remain divided both physically and mentally. In order to counter these competing political projects and to inspire a bottom up sense of belonging in the country, the international actors turned to the civil society organizations.

Civil Society

Civil society support and building has been an important part of the liberal peacebuilding approach in Bosnia for at least two reasons. First, the growth of civil society was meant to counterbalance the overly ethnicized political sphere and Dayton structures and in this way support the democratization process. While support for NGOs and other civil society organizations in Bosnia started during the conflict, the main goal at the outset was to provide humanitarian relief rather than to promote democracy (Fagan, 2005). Democracy promotion became more central in the post-Dayton era when the focus shifted to ensuring the sustainability of state institutions and creating democratic consciousness in the country. Second, the support for a multiethnic society and the rebuilding of relationships among Bosnian communities, and ultimately reconciliation efforts was seen as emerging from a rich associational life. In this way, the rebuilding of social networks and organizations was described to be the necessary 'societal glue' to ensuring long term peace and stability (Ian Smillie, 1996, p.13 cited in Chandler, 1999, p.135). This followed from the belief in the importance of "social capital" that would reduce tensions and support inter-ethnic cooperation (Pickering, 2006).

However, the civil society sector in Bosnia has largely been developed and financed by the international community leaving it with tenuous ties to the local communities (Chandler, 1999; Belloni, 2009). Some of the newly emerged organizations are partners of the local offices of international NGOs. Many other organizations though seemed to spring up overnight and tend to be described as "one man shows" with little link to the communities they supposedly represent. As an interviewee in Banja Luka explains, in Bosnia "[C]ivil society was perceived as a fast food chain." Most of the organizations created as a result of the external funding disappeared in the early 2000s when the international assistance was scaled back (Belloni, 2009,

p. 364). According to some estimates, of the 8,000 civil society organizations purported to exist in Bosnia, only between 500-1,500 are actually active and an even smaller number are professional organizations (BTI, 2014). Civil society organizations emerged as one of the key employers leading to questionable sustainability of the international attempts to promote associational life in Bosnia.

The organizations that remain are dependent on the disappearing international funds. As a result, the civil society sector in Bosnia tends to be project and donor oriented. This has meant that projects focused on reconciliation and the rebuilding of trust among communities have often been dependent on short term funding. As a local member of an international NGO in Sarajevo explains in 2012, "when the money goes so does the project. Then it's onto the next thing. This year the EU is providing funding for projects with the Roma community so we are doing work with the Roma" (Personal communication, May 30, 2012). This jumping from project to project is described as challenging by several interviewees and as undermining the work that is achieved. This reliance on donor funding has also contributed to the view of civil society organizations as mouthpieces of international projects. The prominence of the international community as a donor in shaping civil society also reflects the economic realities in Bosnia. Most Bosnians remain skeptical of involvement in civil society organizations. According to a 2011 Gallup poll, Bosnia was among the 11 (out of 130) least civically engaged countries (English, 2011).

Moreover, in developing the civil society sector as a supporter of the democratization project there has been a focus on the role of the organizations in implementing the broader liberal peacebuilding agenda. Roberto Belloni notes that, "rather than providing a space for new social contract, civil society has become an arena for the implementation of a technocratic governance

agenda" (2013, p. 281). This technical role of civil society is visible, for example, in voter education programs funded by international donors. As such, the international community, through civil society organizations, has attempted to appeal to the Bosnian population to vote for "change" by not electing their wartime leaders and instead choosing to vote for multiethnic parties (Belloni, 2007, p. 73).

Still, international organizations are often perceived as more visible than their local counterparts. For example, in the lead up to the 2014 elections international actors were prominent in calling on Bosnians to vote. For example, USAID released a video, *Glasaj ili Trpi* (Vote or Face the Consequences), as part of a voter education campaign that urged Bosnians to vote and hold their politicians accountable (USAID, 2014; see also Bassuener, 2014). However, the video clearly featured the USAID logo and the US Embassy logo, raising questions about the influence of external actors on democratic processes. [116] Similarly, many other international representatives and civil society organizations call upon the population to evaluate the dismal record of Bosnian politicians, and encourage voting based on merit and not ethnicity (Halimovic, 2014; Sadikovic, 2014). In this way, these organizations attempt to support the broader peacebuilding agenda, as Belloni notes. At the same time, the way internationally-led projects are funded, supported and operated by local NGOs raises the question of the authenticity of the civil society sector and the Bosnian population's trust in these organizations.

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[116] A blog post criticizing the local authorities by US diplomats, David Barth, mission director of USAID in Bosnia, and Scott Miller, the US Defense Attaché, caused a storm in a teacup of Bosnian politics (see Jukic, 2014d). In particular, Barth and Miller criticized the lack of action in responding to the 2014 floods that Bosnia experienced (May 2014). Barth and Miller outline that any achievements made in reconstructing schools and allowing business to reopen are due to the work of the European Union, United Nations and partner governments, such as the Swedish and Norwegian governments. This prompted the response of Bosnian politicians that criticisms by international representatives were not appropriate, particularly as it came some three weeks before the general election held on October 12, 2014. This latest rift between international representatives and Bosnian politicians points to the uneasy relationship between the different stakeholders in the Bosnian state.

Given their donor and project oriented nature, the organizations are not perceived as fully capturing local concerns. Consequently, as Larisa Kurtović points out, among many ordinary Bosnian citizens these organizations are known as *prodavači magle* or "merchants of fog" (2014, p. 98). This sentiment is also echoed by a local Bosnian activist in Banja Luka, who also notes the important limits of the project-oriented work and the lack of trust that has resulted between communities and these organizations. The project-oriented nature limits the resources and issues that the organizations deal with. She explains then, "When citizens rise up due to some concern and local organizations do not support them even though they deal with that issue it leads to further deterioration of the trust in our work" (Personal communication, June 6, 2012). This distrust between communities and civil society organizations is also noted by a member of a youth organization in Sarajevo who explains that:

> A key problem for us (civil society organizations) is that we have been recipients of external ideas and these ideas have not emerged from the grassroots. They do not reflect the concerns of the grassroots... If we receive financial support, then our projects start to reflect donor funding because we need the support to continue to function (Personal communication, May 23, 2012).

In this way, local actors are rarely consulted in the development of projects. However, it is important to keep in mind that some degree of translation always occurs in the implementation. Some interviewees, activists and members of civil society organizations, point out that they try to be mindful of the context, and engage with the populations in ways they know will be more effective.

An important obstacle in the development of the bottom up, cross-community initiatives is the reality that many of the organizations remain divided along ethnic lines or oriented towards

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their own communities. Many of the NGOs market themselves as multiethnic or committed to inter-ethnic reconciliation as they knew that this increases their chance of funding (Helms, 2010, p. 19). In reality, some of the most influential organizations are, for example, war veterans associations and associations of former prisoners. These groups tend to lobby the government for pensions and other support for their members. They also often support their own group narratives about the past. For example, in 2014, a plaque honouring Ratko Mladic, currently in the Hague for crimes committed in Srebrenica, was put up in Eastern Sarajevo by a Bosnian Serb war veterans association ("Obnovljena spomen-ploča," 2014). Shortly after it was put up, a tar-like substance was poured on the plaque by unknown individuals only to be cleaned up and restored after the incident. In this way, many of the civil society organizations do not contribute to reconciliation efforts as envisioned as part of the liberal peacebuilding approach. Indeed, while these organizations can be considered "uncivil" they still exert influence at the grassroots levels.

However, this is not to say that there is no support for reconciliation even amongst groups such as war veterans associations. Indeed, in 2012 Bosniak and Croat soldiers and veterans sent financial aid to their Serb counterparts in the Serb Republic when the RS failed to provide them with pensions. In 2010, the RS parliament forced older soldiers to retire yet it did not ensure that there were funds in the budget to provide these individuals with pensions (Cerkez, 2012). In response, Bosniaks and Croats soldiers set up a fund, each donating some €5. The gesture was appreciated by the soldiers in the RS, and it was also seen as symbolic as the former enemies were helping each other. Similarly, other organizations have sought to organize across ethnic boundaries. A coalition of 24 Bosnian NGO's has developed a campaign, "Be a Citizen" that reflects the ideal of a civic belonging and that calls for ending discrimination that results from the ethnicized political arrangements. The campaign seeks to end the discrimination by removing

ethnic quotas and calls for constitutional reform that would do away with the privileges given to the constituent nations. While some support for these initiatives exists, a young activist in Banja Luka notes the difficulty in overcoming the fears and suspicions that remain present in the communities (Personal communication, June 6, 2012). Moreover, as she points out, engagement in issues is fine just as long as it does not touch on sensitive issues of the past. In the following section, I explore how these divisive narratives have persisted despite attempts to reconcile groups and to develop shared understandings of the past conflict.

Transitional Justice

Transitional justice is one of the key pillars of the liberal peacebuilding approach in Bosnia. Much like the internationally designed institutional order and civil society building described in the above sections, transitional justice in Bosnia is an internationally-led endeavour. Given the scale of atrocities committed in the Bosnian war, international actors see transitional justice as directly linked to the peacebuilding and the state-building project. As a result, local populations have viewed transitional justice efforts as more proof of external influence on the country and not as a locally owned process (Saxon, 2005, p. 562). Indeed, dealing with war crimes and improving human rights in the country is also a condition placed on Bosnia's EU membership (Fischer, 2014; Subotic, 2009).

A vast array of scholarly literature has examined in some detail the transitional justice efforts and mechanisms in the Bosnian case (see Nettelfield, 2010; Subotic, 2009). Amongst these mechanisms the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (hereafter,

ICTY, or the Tribunal) has received the most attention.[117] Established in 1993, the Tribunal preceded the signing of the Dayton Agreement and is widely regarded as pioneering a new trend of supranational prosecution of war crimes. However, the ICTY has been less successful in contributing to the reconciliation of Bosnian communities. Located in The Hague, Netherlands, the Tribunal was expected to establish judiciary truth that would trickle down to the communities and lead to support for a common narrative about the conflict. However, this has not happened. Scholars have noted that the facts established at the ICTY are not recognized publicly and that different ethnic groups continue to present their own versions of the events (Delpla, 2007, p. 216).

From the outset, the Tribunal did not communicate well with the domestic publics in Bosnia. It was only in late 1999, that an Outreach Programme was established, some six years from the creation of ICTY. The ICTY was then not only geographically and linguistically (official languages are English and French) distant but also largely invisible to the wider population. Moreover, the trials are long, complex and few Bosnians have seen more than the clips shown on the evening news (Saxon, 2005, p. 563). Similarily, Janine Natalya Clark (2009) finds that many individuals in Bosnia are either poorly informed about the Tribunal or view it negatively while those that live in areas, which are not the objects of focus of the ICTY, are largely indifferent to its work. As such, the evidence gathered and decisions made by the ICTY added to the cacophony of voices on the Bosnian war. In other words, instead of leading to an emergence of a single account of the events of the war and crimes committed, the ICTY rulings and evidence gathered are yet another account of the events. Each community has its version of the Bosnian war, narratives which I will discuss in more detail in the latter section. It is

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[117] For recent assessments of the ICTY, including lessons learned and impacts on reconciliation, see Clark, 2014; Gow, Kerr, & Pejic, 2014; Meernik and Guerrero, 2014; Steinberg, 2011; Hayden, 2011; Nettelfield 2010, Subotic 2009.

important to note here that each community in Bosnia (Bosniak, Croat and Serb) portrays itself as the victim and other communities as perpetrators of violence. Where decisions of the Tribunal were supported, it was likely because the decision supported the broader group narrative of the events. As a result, the support for the Tribunal has varied according to the ethnic background of the individuals being tried in The Hague (Saxon, 2005). Bosnian Serbs, in particular, tend to perceive ICTY as biased towards the Serb population, pointing to the overwhelming number of Serbs that have been prosecuted.

Furthermore, Jelena Subotic (2009) suggests that domestic elites in Bosnia have hijacked the transitional justice process, supporting the process when it benefits their political aims and resisting it when it does not. While certainly important this insight into the elite actions does not provide the whole picture of dealing with the past in Bosnia. In other words, Subotic and other analysts that focus on elite-level actions, overlook the way that ordinary citizens engage in developing, sustaining and also contesting group narratives.

Over time, international actors have also focused on building the capacity of domestic courts to prosecute war crimes cases and to encourage governments in the region to work together. Practically, this meant that international judges and international prosecutors were included in Bosnia's newly established state-level War Crimes Chamber meant to address atrocities committed during the Bosnian war. However, there was little teamwork and insufficient knowledge sharing between international and national staff (see Human Rights Watch, 2012). Domestic courts are described as being at the mercy of the different political elites and lacking the necessary resources to investigate the cases (Personal communication, September 11, 2013). The domestic response beyond the courts is also lackluster. For example, the Bosnian government announced only in October 2014 that 2014 is the "Year of Missing Persons". There

are still some 8,000 people that are believed to be missing from the Bosnian war. This announcement is further proof that there is little appetite among Bosnian elites to actually address the events of the past conflict. A similar lack of political will was evident in the response to the attempt to develop a state-level Transitional Justice Strategy developed by the Expert Working Group. The Expert Working Group, with the assistance of the UNDP in Bosnia, presented a draft strategy in the fall of 2012. The draft strategy was however renounced by some groups and civil society organizations in the RS. These groups felt that the version of the conflict presented in the strategy was biased. This has led to a stalemate on the discussions of the past. Hence, the idea that reconciliation projects will trickle down from the formal tribunals, civil society organization initiatives does not consider how the community politics on the ground will shape these projects.

The gap between the goals of international transitional justice efforts and the different perceptions on the past by Bosnian communities are most evident in the case of Srebrenica.[118] Srebrenica was a town in eastern Bosnia where in 1995 Bosnian Serb troops under the leadership of Ratko Mladić murdered some 8000 Bosniak boys and men. The ICTY has classified the massacre at Srebrenica as a case of genocide (Duijzings, 2007).[119] However, the events in Srebrenica remain hotly debated.[120] For Bosniaks, the events at Srebrenica have left a permanent mark on the community's consciousness. Every July 11, commemoration ceremonies are held. From the Bosniak perspective, events in Srebrenica are an example of the genocidal roots of the Serb Republic and the role of the Bosnian Serbs aided by Serbia as the sole perpetrators in the Bosnian war. Bosnian Serbs tend to contest the fact that genocide was committed in Srebrenica,

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[118] There is a large and diverse body of scholarship on the Srebrenica case. Some recent scholarship worth mentioning includes Nettelfield & Wagner, 2013; Delpla, Bougarel & Fournel, 2012; Duijzings, 2007.
[119] See Goldstone & Hamilton, 2008 for a discussion of the Bosnia v. Serbia case in front of the International Court of Justice.
[120] See Simić & Daly, 2011 for a discussion of changing perceptions on Srebrenica in Serbia.

and for some who admit that there was a large scale atrocity committed, the numbers and events have been exaggerated. While the ICTY has clearly ruled the events in Srebrenica as a genocide this judicial fact is not supported by the narratives within the Bosnian Serb community. Instead, the narratives that emerge are diverse and show the gap between the truths established at the Hague and in the everyday lives of the population.

In addition to the judicial aspects and formal strategies, several reconciliation projects have been implemented in the country. Some of these do attempt to address the different group narratives and to present individual experiences of the war from the different sides. The "My Story: Choosing Peace Together" project developed in partnership between international and local organizations, such as Catholic Relief Services and the Forum of Tuzla Citizens, and supported by USAID has sought to promote dialogue between the diverse perspectives (Bubalo, 2015). Still, the project is focused on individual experiences and is not meant to address the broader public dialogue on the conflict. In this way, similar dialogues while important are often unable to reach wider audiences. Individuals that attend these types of events are already more committed to an inclusionary Bosnian society (Personal communication, May 17, 2012).

Moreover, though some may attend trainings and workshops on reconciliation and engage with individuals regardless of their ethnic background this still does not undermine the broader narratives about the conflict. As a member of a religious organization in Sarajevo notes, "We do not have enough individuals who are strong enough to stand up to their communities and the dominant narratives" (Personal communication, May 30, 2012). Other interviewees also often describe the challenge as one of having to deal with the consequences of not following one's own group narratives. An activist in Banja Luka notes that while working with some Bosniaks and Croats on a project her parents were often told that she was "against Serbs"

(Personal communication, June 6, 2012). She explains then that if one is to support reconciliation projects this might not be well received in their community. This pressure of the community then prevents the emergence of a critical discussion on the past events and also sustains the divisive narratives.

In addition, some regional civil society initiatives led by local organizations, such as the Centre for Nonviolent Action (CNA) which has offices in Belgrade and Sarajevo, have been able to engage certain elements of the population. In the case of CNA, the individuals that participate in the projects are mostly former veterans from the different sides of the conflict. Through the work of CNA these individuals have been able to engage in dialogue and share their experiences with each other. An example of their activities is the visit to Velika Kladuša, a town in the northwest of Bosnia, where during the war the predominantly Bosniak population was split between supporters of the Army of Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (ARBiH) and a smaller paramilitary group supported by Fikret Abdić, a local businessman. On October 26, 2014 CNA organized the veterans from both ARBiH and Abdić's paramilitary group as well as veterans of the other military groups, such as the Serb and Croat forces, in a visit to graveyards where members of the ARBiH and Abdić's group were buried (Delić, 2014). This was the first time following the war that the individuals from these two groups had engaged in a shared activity (Delić, 2014). Such activities certainly point to some important changes in the relationship between citizens in this Bosnian town. However, the difficulty lies in ensuring that the veterans who participate in such initiatives are representative of the individuals living in their communities in addition to ensuring that a wider section of the community also becomes involved. Therefore, the involvement in reconciliation projects remains limited to small sections of society.

To sum up, while transitional justice mechanisms are prominent in the Bosnian case they have not been able to contribute to a shared narrative of the past conflict accepted by all three ethnic groups. Transitional justice projects instead became interpreted through different ethnic group lenses becoming supported only when legitimizing one's own group's accounts of events. As such, the ambitious goals of transitional justice in the Bosnian case have not had the intended effects.

To return to the core arguments of this thesis, the above sections have illustrated that the Bosnian peacebuilding experience has been largely designed, supported and carried out by international actors. Bosnia's institutions and power-sharing is sustained by direct intervention and financial support of the international actors in domestic politics. Even in the case of civil society, the majority of the organizations are dependent on donors and project funding. Transitional justice as well has largely been externally driven as evidenced by the focus on the ICTY. All of this has contributed to the sense that the local population has been viewed as a mere recipient and not a partner in the peacebuilding process (see Kappler, 2014).

However, ordinary Bosnians have agency and do respond to the attempts to transform their state and communities. Consider this Bosnian joke: Two foreigners meet on the street in Bosnia. One asks the other, "When did you come, how long are you staying and what are you doing? The other answers: "I came yesterday, I'm leaving tomorrow and I'm writing a book entitled Bosnia today, yesterday and tomorrow" (recounted by Jakob Finci in Sandić-Hadžihasanović, 2014).[121] In this way, Bosnian citizens use humour to express their dismay with external experts who come for short-term projects and treat their society as a laboratory. In the

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[121] Most Bosnians refer to the international community representatives as stranci or foreigners. This labelling in itself could be interpreted as a form or resistance, as external actors are in fact quiet prominent in domestic politics. By labeling external actors who often wield much power in the country as foreign, Bosnians do in a way reassert ownership of their own society.

following section, I examine the multiple ways that Bosnians continue to navigate the uncertainties of the war to peace transition.

Everyday Peace Politics

As the above section has illustrated, the international community has developed several strategies for rebuilding the Bosnian polity and reconciling its communities. I have shown that the dominant peacebuilding approach has contributed to providing Bosnia with a semblance of peace. However, many of the strategies remain disconnected from the everyday life of Bosnian communities. To better understand how peacebuilding strategies are responded to and interpreted by the ordinary citizens in Bosnia, I now take a closer look at the everyday practices of peace politics. I particularly focus on the examples of cultural expressions and everyday practices that interviewees noted as important or meaningful.

Fragmented Place-making and Inscription

Territory and remaking of territory, both in the physical and symbolic sense, has been key to the type of belonging and citizenship imagined by the different ethnic group projects in Bosnia. As such, it is not surprising that inscription of territory remains important in the post-war phase. During the war in Bosnia, religious buildings, monuments and cultural sites, more broadly, were targeted in an effort to erase particular group identities as well as the shared history from these areas. The destruction was described as a "cultural catastrophe" and "cultural cleansing" in early reports to the Council of Europe by international experts (Council of Europe, 1993). Martin Coward points out that these attacks on buildings of cultural heritage as well as "everyday built environment" (homes, town squares and shops) contributed to the sense of destruction of Bosnian community and plurality (Coward, 2007; 2009). Similarly, Toal and

Dahlman point out that ethnic cleansing and population displacement carried out by ethnic elites served as a way to reimagine the space as belonging to particular groups, followed by an ethnicization of space (2011, p. 5; see also Duijzings, 2007, p. 153). In order to support this cleansing of territory, local elites and nationalist leaders constructed a new spatial order signified through such practices as changing street names and putting up exclusionary flags. Toal and Dahlman (2011) suggest that in this way the previous multiethnic "spirit" of the Bosnian state was attacked and a new ethnicized reality imposed on the territory.

In response to the ethnic cleansing and the symbolic inscriptions in the landscape, international actors sought to reverse the effects through the refugee return process. But key international players (OHR, OSCE and US) also sought to restore a sense of belonging in the country by rebuilding the physical environment and promoting inclusive symbols. In this way, international actors attempted to restore a somewhat idealized Bosnia of the past, marked by tolerance and multiethnic communities.[122] This is, for example, visible in the overwhelming focus on return to original places of residence. In doing this, Marita Eastmond suggests that international actors in Bosnia assumed a "rootedness" of the individuals' sense of belonging (2010, p. 9). However, as Eastmond notes, this perception of a fixed belonging stands in contrast to anthropological insight that places are made through a variety of historical and social processes (see for example Gupta and Ferguson, 1997). In other words, international actors underestimated the extent to which the transition and displacement of individuals from their homes would impact on their sense of belonging following the conflict.

In addition to the physical reconstruction, the international policymakers sought to transform the Bosnian landscape by encouraging the removal of divisive symbols and

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[122] However, as David Campbell (1999) alerts us despite the wish for reintegration, much of the international diplomatic effort actually ended up entrenching the war-time division.

encouraging the use of official state symbols. Unsurprisingly, international representatives had to step in and design the state symbols (such as the flag) as the local politicians could not agree on shared symbols that would be representative of all Bosnian communities. Former High Representative Carlos Westendorp, imposed the current flag of Bosnia though describing it as an interim solution (Kolstø, 2006, p. 683). The design was meant to be neutral, avoiding association with any particular group, and linking the country symbolically to its European future (Kolstø, 2006, p. 683). This external imposition of state symbolism reflected the top-down nature of the approach taken by the dominant peacebuilding actors.

This role of external actors, state symbolism and peacebuilding approaches is brought together in a popular 2003 Bosnian film, Gori Vatra (Fuse), directed by Pjer Žalica. In particular, there is a poignant scene where the (Bosniak) officials of a small Bosnian town, Tešanj (in the Federation) are preparing for a visit from the US President Bill Clinton. However, no one is quite sure of the new design of the flag since the old fleur-de-lis flag has been banned. One of the officials points out that the design is similar to that of a brand of motor oil. Throughout the film the town's mayor and other officials use the symbols of the new Bosnian state and try to showcase the supposed unity among the formerly warring groups. Interestingly, one town official describes symbolic and cultural life in the preparation for the visit as "camouflage". Similarly, reconciliation projects and return of refugees are arranged for the benefit of the "foreigners". Žalica does not spare the local elites who, in addition to being corrupt, are simply "cultural animators" for the West and out of touch with the problems of the population (Rawski and Roman, 2014, p. 195). Ultimately, Žalica offers a critique of the international community's role in post-war Bosnia and reflects the population's perception about the insufficient attention paid to the local context. Much like the new Bosnian flag that no one is sure of throughout the film,

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Bosnia under international oversight is presented as a country that has been emptied of meaning, and re-branded according to international wishes rather than Bosnian realities.

Given its lack of connection to the meaningful symbols of the population the support for the state flag is uneven. In drafting a new flag international actors underestimated the contested legitimacy of the state. As noted earlier, attempts at promoting a Bosnianness or a vision of a unified Bosnian state and citizenship overlooked the lack of agreement on the state. Indeed, group symbols have remained important despite the efforts to promote the new Bosnian state symbols. The official symbols of the Bosnian state as designed by the international community are most likely to be displayed in the Federation, and particularly in Bosniak areas. In Croat dominated areas, the Croatian flag and the checkerboard shield, or *Šahovnica*, are likely to be prominent. In the RS, the Serbian tricolor with a cross and four Cyrillic letters "s", interpreted as an acronym for "Samo Sloga Srbina Spasava" or "Only Unity Will Save the Serbs," is displayed prominently with the official flag mostly missing from the picture. In this way, it is the Serbian and Croat nations that are to use Billig's words "flagged" in the daily life of the Bosnian Serb and Croat communities rather than the Bosnian state (Keranen, 2014, p. 137). According to Kolstø, in these uncertain nations the flags and other state symbols do not promote unity but illustrate instead divisions within the polity (2006, p. 679). This is certainly visible when driving through Bosnia with the different flags marking the towns in the Federation and the RS.

The marking of spaces in Bosnia goes beyond the use of flags with even the scripts on the signs or the names of streets providing important clues as to the identity of the dominant community. The presence of the Cyrillic script for example is widespread throughout the Serb Republic. Following the war, most of the Cyrillic signs in Sarajevo were removed (Robinson et al., 2001). In contrast, and reflecting the demographic shifts in Banja Luka, Cyrillic signs

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became more prominent. Road signs in the Federation will often have the Cyrillic version

painted over or scribbled over as is the case of the sign below (image) near Livno. A university

student in Banja Luka explains that these vandalized road signs in parts of the Federation are

clues and powerful reminders sending the message, "Serbs are not welcome there" (Personal

communication, June 5, 2012). By crossing out the Cyrillic script local populations contest the

presence of the symbols of the Serb community despite the official attempts to signal a shared

Bosnian state. At the same time, in the RS, the use of the Cyrillic script is perceived by several

Croat and Bosniak interviewees as an attempt to entrench Serbian identity in places that prior to

the war had few Serbs. Though many, particularly older interviewees of Bosniak and Croat

background, acknowledge that they read Cyrillic, everyone admits that following the war it is

seen as the Serb script.[123] Regardless of who paints over the signs, or puts up the new signs what

is important here is how individuals interpret them and how they shape their uses of space or

sense of attachment to the particular place.

Figure 5.2 Image of a dual script road sign approaching Livno. Taken by author, June 2012.

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[123] In nearby Croatia, there have been anti-Cyrillic protests and in the town of Vukovar, a scene of intensive war-time fighting, dual script signs were destroyed by members of the public (see Ilic, 2014).

Changing street names are another example of the politicization of space. In Banja Luka, RS the streets are tied to Serbian history, while in Sarajevo the street names reflect the largely Bosniak population and history. Interestingly, some of the street names have been changed to their earlier forms reflecting the contemporary politicization of historical events.[124] Many of the names though reflect the dominant group narratives. In Sarajevo, street names have been changed to reflect the Bosniak and to some extent Croat communities, while few names of prominent Bosnian Serbs have been kept. Not all individuals accept the new street names. When providing directions several long-time Sarajevo residents noted the former names of the streets. At times, my interviewees would draw my attention to these changes pointing out that they have not forgotten or are aware of this renaming process. For many others, the new street names are the only ones they know, having moved from other areas of the country. Road signs and street names are important to examine in the Bosnian context as they "have an immediate practical reality for the populace" (Gill, 2005, p. 481 quoted in Drozdzewski, 2014, p. 66). In other words, street names and road signs make visible the struggles over the landscape and also act as reminders of the broader group narratives.

But the script and symbols are also important to the reshaping of places, and in many ways act as invisible borders between Bosnian communities. As one interviewee in Banja Luka explains the consequences of this reshaping impacts understanding of citizenship and belonging in the country:

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[124] For example, Muharem Bazdulj (2014) observes that the street names in Sarajevo that had been dedicated to the fighters of Mlada Bosna, or Young Bosnia, have been changed to their previous names or new names. A well known example of this change is the name of the Latin Bridge, in Sarajevo that was formerly known as Principov most, or Princip's bridge, referring to Gavrilo Princip. In 1992, the old name of the bridge (Latin Bridge) was brought back. Mlada Bosna was an organization of revolutionary Bosnian youth. Gavrilo Princip was a member of Mlada Bosna, and became infamous for shooting the Archduke Franz Ferdinand near the Latin Bridge in Sarajevo in 1914. Princip was at the center of the debates on marking the centenary of the outbreak of WWI. In the Serb Republic, Princip is celebrated as a freedom fighter while in the Federation he is seen as terrorist.

I don't think that a Bosniak or a Croat in Banja Luka feels like a citizen of the

Serb Republic. I don't think that a Serb in Sarajevo feels like a citizen of the

Federation. Whatever that may mean. I go there (Sarajevo) but I do not feel that

welcome because of, you know, they way things are being carried out. In my

opinion, it will be hard to change perceptions in one generation. Not likely in

these 30 to 40 years after the war. (Personal communication, June 6, 2012)

As such the symbolic differences and changed demography further the sense of where one

belongs. Symbolic markings are a guide in the areas where Bosnians feel comfortable and

welcomed. Locals explain to me the sense of unease at seeing the flag of the "other" community

as it often reminds them of the war and that they do not belong in these areas.

Others point to a complete "makeover" of the communities that excludes particular

segments of the population. The consequence of the overwhelmingly homogenous areas is

pointed to by a local journalist in Sarajevo. She suggests that, "Divisions are stronger now than

before. The potential fear of the other prevents further contact" (Personal communication,

September 10, 2013). She explains her statement that divisions are stronger due to the population

displacements and that few people venture out of areas dominated by their groups. In addition,

attacks on religious objects are also pointed to as a sign of the insecurity that the population feels

and as a way to mark the space as belonging to the particular group. An imam of a mosque in

Prijedor explains that: "The damage is not simply in the physical destruction, of a broken

window, rather the damage is in that feeling of fear that Bosniaks that live here feel. Because it is

repeated every time there is some Orthodox festival or if a Serbian sports team is playing..."

(Milojević, 2014). Similar sentiments are also found in other parts of Bosnia. Local festivals or

meetings such as the motorcycle rally in Livno that occurs annually in the first few days of

August is viewed as a predominantly Croat event. These types of festivals are in general avoided by the other ethnic communities who fear confrontation with these groups.

This sense of being unsettled is often described in discussion with ordinary individuals whose displacement is most often signified in their discussion of their neighbourhood (*komšiluk*). Prior to the war, Bosnians, particularly in urban areas but also in some rural settings, tended to live in ethnically mixed neighbourhoods and everyday life was marked through the practices of komšiluk (neighbourliness) (Bougarel, 1996). These neighbourly practices ranged from coffee visits to assisting each other with various tasks. As such, individuals of different ethnic groups were brought together through these practices as a result of the mixed nature of most urban and some rural areas. Indeed, the demographic map of Bosnia prior to the outbreak of the war is often described as a "leopard-print" mix of the different ethnic groups (Bose, 2002). Major towns, such as Sarajevo, Banja Luka, Mostar and Tuzla were known as the multicultural centres of the country. In rural areas, the villages were more likely to be ethnically homogenous but there were still interactions between different ethnic groups. In general, in both urban and rural areas, where the different communities lived in close proximity, the practices of komšiluk were prominent (Bringa, 1995). There is some analytical debate on the notion of komšiluk (see Sorabji, 2008; Hayden, 2002). While some scholars suggest that komšiluk served as a mechanism of social interaction that promoted tolerance, others suggest it served to keep the ethnic relations in check. It is important to keep in mind the intuitive point that functions of komšiluk always depended on the particularities of one's neighbourhood. The ethnic makeup of komšiluk, as well as the history of previous conflicts in the area shaped the relationships between individuals that lived in close proximity. This is also evident in contemporary practices of

komšiluk. More importantly, practices of komšiluk have been seen as tied to the understanding of citizenship in the Bosnian context (Solioz, 2002).

During my fieldwork older Bosnians were likely to refer to the notion of komšiluk in very practical terms. Neighbours help each other with various tasks in a reciprocal manner. Prior to the war, and to a lesser extent now, komšiluk allowed for a sense of belonging not tied to ethnic identities (Henig, 2012, p.16). A member of an NGO in Sarajevo puts it the following way, "I grew up in Sarajevo where my komšiluk in my building was the center of my world. I assumed that everyone lived like that but then these people from rural areas came (to his building) and they were supposedly of my background but they did not have the same views that I shared with my komšiluk" (Personal communication, May 29, 2012; see also Jansen, 2013, p. 236). This divide between the urban and rural is well-noted in literature on the Bosnia.[125] Long-time Sarajevo residents often note how the rural newcomers, "došle" have completely changed their sense of their city, often in a negative sense.[126] A commonly heard complaint is "There is no one to drink coffee with anymore." In other words, their former neighbours are no longer there. For long-time Sarajevo residents, the remaking of Bosnia has completely transformed their understanding of their city. In response, most long-term Sarajevo residents noted that they continue to interact with the few neighbours of different ethnicity that remained in the city or returned but do not engage much with the newcomers. Hence, the sense of belonging and to some extent moderating views that the practices of komšiluk allowed have been altered due to the demographic changes that have occurred.

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[125] For an examination of the portrayals of the Bosnian war as a conflict between the urban and rural segments of the population, see Bougarel, 1999.

[126] Some of these newcomers are referred to as "papci" in plural (hoofs, as in pig's hoofs). The term papak (singular) for example has various definitions in Sarajevo's urban dictionary. Often it is used to refer to an outsider that does not reflect the urban values. See Jularic, 2010 for a more detailed description.

In most other towns, there is now little interaction between members of ethnic groups due to the demographic changes. As one Bosnian Serb woman explains this is particularly evident in Banja Luka, "In my whole neighbourhood there is no one but Serbs. That's the way it is now" (Personal communication, June 5, 2012). Even when there is interaction it is often constrained. A young Serb activist in Banja Luka explains, "We are physically and mentally divided. We do not have a chance to communicate with each other. If we do get a chance to communicate we are afraid of each other in a way. And that of course leads to this superficial interaction" (Personal communication, June 6, 2012). These superficial interactions in turn are barriers to the development of shared belonging. For many, there is a clear understanding of "who belongs where" (Personal communication, June 23, 2012). As a young high school student from Prijedor notes about the focus on differences, "You can notice them in Prijedor. You know who goes to which cafes. At home we are filled with the different narratives" (Boračić, 2013). He goes on to describe that crossing these boundaries is not accepted by one's own community and not supported by any formal institutions. As such, these understandings and acceptance of everyday spaces as "ours" and "theirs" prevent an organic inter-mingling between youths from different communities (see also Bojicic-Dzelilovic, 2015, p. 11).

Mostar is one example of a place where both visible markings, cultural practices, and invisible divisions have emerged. Mostar is a small town with some 72,000 citizens but it has duplicate services such as two postal services, that serve the Bosniak and Croat communities (Sito-Sucic, 2012). The eastern part of town is mostly Bosniak while the Western part of town is mostly Croat. A journalist Zlatko Serdarević notes that in Mostar: "There are invisible walls that are just as strong as those made out of concrete perhaps even stronger. As long as these walls are in the minds of individuals, as long as they are mechanisms that sustain divisions in the city, we

have not moved much towards a new era" (Behram, 2014). The persistence of these mental barriers stands in stark contrast to the attention that the rebuilding of the old Brige in Mostar received from international diplomats. The Ottoman-era (16th-Century) bridge, blown up in 1993, was re-built with the assistance of the international community and (re)opened in 2004. Perhaps no other symbol captured the imagination of international policy-makers and scholars like this bridge. It was seen as a symbol of the wider Bosnian society and the rebuilding of the bridge as a success in bringing Bosnian communities together. However, despite the rebuilding of the bridge, Mostar remains divided and many do not accept the Old Bridge as a shared symbol (see subsequent section, p. 59). Different communal affiliations in Mostar shape everyday life. Similar to the case of divided towns such as Belfast and Derry/Londonderry some of the nuances of belonging are only accessible to those with a better understanding of local context.

For example, Azra Hromadzic (2011) has written on what she refers to as a "(co)overt ethnicization of the school spaces" in Mostar's supposedly integrated high school. While the school is integrated in the sense that students attend the same building they receive their instructions separately in different curricula. Hromadzic points to the practice of marking Croat classrooms differently than the Bosniak classrooms. Where a Croat classroom would be for example (I-b) with a Roman numeral and lowercase English-alphabet letters, while a Bosniak classroom would be (I-2) with a Roman numeral and a number. In this way, the students are aware of the background of the individual by learning about the class that they attend. Still, Hromadzic uncovers what she terms "bathroom mixing" where Bosniak and Croat students transform the space of the bathroom into a shared space. However, even if they mix, most of the students hold onto their different group identities and narratives. For Croats in Mostar their identity is firmly tied to the Croatian state. The different understandings of geography are made

light of in the following joke recounted to me by locals in Sarajevo: How do you know you are attending elementary school in Herzegovina? Because you hear for the first time in grade 5 that Mostar is a part of BiH (Personal communication, May 30, 2012).

Another example of the banal use of symbols occurred during my fieldwork visit to Livno in June 2012. Livno is small town in Western Bosnia close to the Croatian border. It is largely populated by the Bosnian Croat population. The surrounding villages were ethnically divided prior to the war and even more starkly following the war. Bosnian Serb villages are mostly found in Livanjsko Polje, a rural area between Livno and Bosansko Grahovo, while Croat and a few Bosniak-dominated villages are found in the other areas surrounding Livno. After having coffee in the town square in Livno, I walked by a parking lot where I noticed the Serbian cross with four "S" scrawled in the dirt on the rear windows of some cars. Upon inquiry with my hosts in Livno, they described this as an act of some teenagers or troublemakers. They noted, as did some of the individuals on whose cars this was written, that such acts are not lost on anyone. The markings were specifically placed on the cars of individuals of a Bosnian Serb background that come to the Livno area to visit their elderly relatives or their homes during the summer months. Everyone recognized this marking as problematic as it sends a message that Bosnian Serbs are not welcomed back to the town. In turn, these incidents are added to the repository of similar stories retold amongst the Bosnian Serb community as an example of the fact that "they" cannot be trusted and evidence of "their" dominance in the area.

Still, in their everyday lives people in Livno and the surrounding area do engage in practices that Mac Ginty (2011) has described as a prosaic peacebuilding that is seemingly banal. It is prosaic as it is not a part of a reconciliation project but rather due to being employed in the same place or the need to obtain certain goods. This is for example visible in the Bosnian Serb

villages around Livno where a Croatian man has put together a sort of mobile grocery store that allows the mostly elderly Serb returnee population to purchase goods without having to make the some 30 km or more trip to Livno. He arrives two times a week and brings them the necessities. The interaction between the grocer, a Croat, and his customers, Bosnian Serbs, is friendly and collegial. He also takes their special orders and brings them items that they request. The grocer explains to me that he started his business as a result of lack of employment opportunities in Livno. He points out that this arrangement works well for him and his customers as most are elderly while their families live in the RS, Serbia or abroad. As such, a mutual understanding and benefit exists and for practical reasons Bosniaks and Croats interact with the local population in the Serb villages. On an individual level as well there are many instances of people interacting regardless of the different background. However, all agree that in most cases sensitive subjects are avoided and that these everyday interactions between individuals do not translate into reconciliation between the groups.

Down the Rabbit-Hole of Bosnia's Symbolic Politics

Similar to the case of Northern Ireland, ordinary Bosnians have developed the skill of "telling" that is being able to understand the ethnic background of the individuals they meet. Many Bosnians acknowledge the nuances of ethnic markers in contemporary everyday interactions. A member of a women's group in Sarajevo suggests that it is possible to discern someone's ethnic background, should one feel inclined to, from the individual's name (Personal communication, May 30, 2012). She also notes that the choice of dialect or pronunciation of certain words is another way to differentiate individuals according to their ethnic background. Though the ability to "tell apart" individuals according to ethnic background was also possible

prior to the war, it has become more prevalent following the conflict. I examine these politics of telling and differentiating in the following examples.

A young Bosnian Serb student, Djordje, recounts his experience the day when we meet to have coffee in the Sarajevo city centre.[127] Djordje was waiting at a bus stop not far from the city centre and started talking to an older man waiting for the bus with him. Upon learning Djordje's name the older man asked him if he lived in Lukavica, a suburb of Sarajevo now in the RS, signaling to him that the older man identified him as a Serb. For Djordje, who in fact lives and has lived near the city centre all of his life, this marking of him was disappointing. He states, "He didn't probably mean anything by it. But it does make you feel uncomfortable" (Personal communication, June 1, 2012). In this case, Djordje's name serves as a marker of his ethnic identity even if he does not particularly share or approve of the views of the country associated with the Serb perspective. But the constant reminders, as he explains, are further proof of the ethnicization of everyday life. This sense of being known in the post-conflict context is contrasted often with the statement that, "Before the war, no one paid attention to your name." Paula Pickering also notes that Bosnians remark that, "Before the war, I didn't know what my ethnicity was" (2007, p. 19). By this statement Pickering notes, particularly urban Bosnians express the unimportance of ethnic identities and the lack of attention paid to them. However, in the post-war context ethnicity has become central not only to the political arrangements of the country but also the dominant force in the lives of the Bosnian population.

Similarly, others explain that they would not mention their names in some towns for the fear that it would mark them as belonging to a particular group. A young Bosniak student in Sarajevo explains, for example, that for her seeking employment in the Serb dominated part of

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[127] I have changed the student's actual name to another clearly identifiable Serb name.

Sarajevo (Eastern Sarajevo) is not even a thought she would entertain. She feels that her clearly

Bosniak name would identify her as such and make her employment situation difficult in the

predominantly Serb part of the city. But more importantly she suggests that it would also mean

that she is somehow legitimizing the existence of this to her incomprehensible entity of the Serb

Republic (Personal communication, May 4, 2012). In her words, "To me the whole idea of the

Serb Republic is nonsensical. I mean just the whole concept of this entity." Hence, intertwined in

the fear and identity politics are also broader issues of group narratives and visions of the state.

These symbolic politics are best shown in the debates about which language is spoken in

Bosnia. Up until the war, the official language of Yugoslavia was referred to as Serbo-

Croatian.[128] However, since the war there is little agreement among ordinary people as to which

language they speak. Bosniaks are likely to state that they speak Bosnian, while Bosnian Croats

will say that they speak Croatian, and Bosnian Serbs will state that they speak Serbian.[129] In

addition, Serbs and Croats are likely to protest the idea of a Bosnian language (bosanski jezik) as

it implies that this is the language of all Bosnians when in fact it represents the Bosniak

community (Jozic, 2012). In their view, Bosniaks should more correctly refer to it as the Bosniak

language (bosnjački jezik). Thus the choice of language is often a way to also express one's

political preferences and views. Experts have shown that Bosnian, Serbian, and Croatian have

minimalist linguistic differences though the debate is far from settled (May, 2012, p. 160). In

order to appeal to the different group views, international actors make reports available in the

three languages referring to the language of Bosnia as (B/C/S, or Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian). For

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[128] See Greenberg, 2004 and Pupavac, 2006 for a discussion of language rights and linguistic variants in the former Yugoslavia. Here it is useful to note the differences in Serbo-Croat relevant to the language debates in Bosnia. In Bosnia, the variant of stokavian dialect of Serbo-Croat is predominantly jekavski (or ijekavski). Meanwhile, in Serbia the stokavian dialect takes on a ekavski variant. Hence, in Bosnia the word for wind, is vjetar while in Serbia it is vetar. In some parts of Croatia, the *ikavski* variant is prominent, and the word for wind is vitar.
[129] See also Majstorović & Turjačanin, 2013.

example, the website of the Office of the High Representative as well as the Council of Europe among others are all available in the three different languages.

More interesting from the perspective of the key arguments of this thesis is how ordinary individuals model their speech or stress particular sounds in order to mark their identities. In the Serb Republic, it is not unusual to find people using the ekavski variant normally associated with Serbia. In the Western part of Bosnia, Croats tend to use more Croatian forms of words and use the ikavski variant associated with Croatia. As Ross suggests, language use or misuse is particularly important in contexts where identity is contested (2007, pp. 130- 131). In Bosnia, the differences in dialect variants are not new but these difference have grown and emerged as more important following the conflict. For example, in the past, the prominence of the phoneme h in many words, as well as the greater use of Turkish and Arabic words, was more common in the speech of the Bosniak population (see Greenberg, 2004, p. 144). Bosnian Serbs tended to drop the h and used fewer Turkish loanwords, while Bosnian Croats often used words associated with Croatian forms. However, as several of my interviewees note, in contemporary usage there is now a greater stressing of these differences.

An often mentioned example is the way one orders their coffee. A Sarajevo-based writer, Nenad Veličković (2013), observes that if one cannot tell the individuals' background from the name all one has to do is listen to how they order their coffee. As such, the word for coffee is *kahva* when used by Bosniaks, while the letter h is missing when used by Croats, hence *kava*. The letter h is replaced with an f in *kafa*, commonly used by the Serbs. The word for a pub or bar, *kahvana, kavana, kafana*, can similarly also follow this pattern and serve as a signal of the individual's identity. Admittedly, these word games are often mocked and individuals will emphasize certain pronunciations in a joking manner. Greetings can also be politicized. A young

university student in Sarajevo suggests that at times people do not know how to greet each other. Some greetings such as a simple *Zdravo* or Hello became associated with the Yugoslav era, while other more traditional greeting have become politicized. In turn, some Bosniaks prefer to use the Turkish greetings *Merhaba* or the religious greeting *Selam Alejkum* (Salaam Alaikum). These religious greetings were common in rural areas prior to the war. However, these group specific greetings in the post-war context and with the demographic shifts only further highlight that one does not belong if not a part of this group (Personal communication, June 5, 2012; see also Pickering, 2006).

Several of my interviewees pull out their cigarette packs to demonstrate the language politics and often comment on the absurdity of these policies. The use of cigarette packages as an example is not surprising given the extent of tobacco consumption in the country.[130] Cigarettes in Bosnia often have the statement "Smoking kills" in the three languages printed on the packaging. Hence, "Smoking Kills" translates as *Pušenje Ubija* in Bosnian, *Pušenje Ubija* in Croatian and the same in Serbian except written in the Cyrillic script. The recognition of these absurdities leads many to dismiss attempts to create the differences where they do not exist. Several interviewees remember the pre-war sketch comedy show, Top lista nadrealista (Surrealists' Top Chart or Top List of Surrealists), and point out that they are living in an episode of the show.[131]

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[130] Smoking is described as an endemic problem in Bosnia by the World Bank (2012), which estimates that close to half the adult population in Bosnia smokes. The World Bank (2012) ranks Bosnia 8th in the world in terms of smokers per capita.

[131] The Surrealists are a Bosnian version of Monty Python (Hunt, Durakovic, and Radeljkovic, 2013, p. 24; Rowland, 2014). For an interesting discussion of Yugoslav popular-culture and the Sarajevo based counterculture movement, the New Primitives, that the Surrealists represented, see Misina, 2013. The video clip of the show that my interviewees refer to is available here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dtKQJhJKI58. In the sketch, the host explains that there are now six different languages in the region of (now former) Yugoslavia. Interestingly, they show a clip of everyday situations where individuals no longer understand each other and need a dictionary or an official translator. Many other Surrealist sketches have been seen as foretelling the post-war Bosnian realities. Particularly, one show that aired in 1989 and set in 1995 focuses on the division of Sarajevo that indeed happened. This episode can be seen here https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kTiiXEf9nJM. In 2014, one of the leading members of the Surrealists, Nenad Jankovic, better known as Dr. Nele Karajlic released an autobiography, *Fajront u*

A member of a community organization in Sarajevo sums up his views on the language and symbolic politics in contemporary Bosnia when he states that "Sometimes a normal person in this country feels like Alice in Wonderland" (Personal communication, May 29, 2012). Still, many others use humour and point out that perhaps Bosnians, stereotyped in the Balkans as slow, need to be told three times about the dangers of tobacco consumption.[132] In this banal example, ordinary people respond to the attempt at the politicization of language by mocking and bringing to light the absurdity of some of these practices. In an interesting twist on the cigarette package warning label, in 2013 activists in Sarajevo marked the International Day Against Fascism and Anti-Semitism, with a message of "Nationalism Kills" in the three languages printed in the similar style as the cigarette package warning labels ("Dan borbe protiv," 2013). A poignant sign during the February 2014 protests stated, *Gladni smo na tri jezika* or We are Hungry in Three Languages.

The struggle over language and its ties to identity is given heightened importance due to the divided education system. Following the war, Bosnian children attend ethnically segregated schools or classrooms and follow separate curriculums. Each ethnic group has developed their own national subjects such as mother tongue and literature, history, geography, religion and nature and society (Jukic, 2013). As previously mentioned, the phenomenon of "two schools under one roof" is particularly problematic when viewed from the perspective of citizenship. Many interviewees note the importance of shared education to the development of a sense of citizenship and belonging in a country. A youth worker in Sarajevo summarizes the issue: "The political situation is such that generations which haven't experienced the war are given the

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Sarajevu or *Last Call in Sarajevo*. His book and views on Sarajevo and Bosnia caused some controversy in Sarajevo as Nele is perceived as a traitor for having fled Sarajevo and resettled in Serbia. Moreover, he has in the view of all those who stayed in Sarajevo, taken a decidedly Serb stand of the conflict.
132 For a discussion on the Bosnian use of self-deprecating humour and its links to identity see Vučetić, 2004.

system a priori divided. There are three curriculums and very little cooperation between the schools within the whole country" (Personal communication, May 23, 2012). In turn, this also means that generations born during or following the conflict tend to be least interested in reconciliation or peacebuilding initiatives. Research carried out by the University of Edinburgh in partnership with local Bosnian organizations further uncovered the reality that young Bosnians remain least likely to support peacebuilding processes (Isovic, 2014).

Amongst these symbolic disagreements is the interesting case of the Santa Claus affair in Sarajevo kindergartens and preschools. Namely, in 2008, then director of 24 kindergartens and preschools, Arzija Mahmutovic banned the presence of Santa Claus in these institutions. Her reasoning was that Sarajevo is now a predominantly Bosniak city and Santa Claus, locally called Grandpa Frost (*Deda Mraz*), is not a part of the Islamic tradition. This was largely seen as a blow to the idea of civic culture that Grandpa Frost represented, that prior to the war had visited kindergartens and schools across Bosnia and delivered presents on New Years' Eve (Hemon, 2012). Many individuals protested in Sarajevo's city centre following this ban on Grandpa Frost becoming public. One of my interviewees describes how he put on a Santa Clause suit and went to the local kindergarten in his neighbourhood. This individual's spontaneous activism arose from his view that this was an attempt to politicize the childhood experiences of Bosnian children. The international community had also put pressure on Mahmutovic and in this way the local population supported the actions of international actors.

Still, in 2013, posters were put up in one neighbourhood in Sarajevo, Hrasno, that stated that *Nova godina i Djeda Mraz su kršćanski praznici!* or New Year and Santa Claus are Christian Holidays! (Malagić, 2013). The posters followed the decision to close the schools in the Sarajevo canton for Christmas Day (December 25th). Shortly after they were put up they were being taken

down and torn by individuals in the neighbourhood. These debates, though seemingly innocuous, are important as they illustrate the struggles over a contemporary sense of belonging in Sarajevo. On the one hand, there is an attempt to signify the change in Sarajevo's ethnic makeup from a multicultural to a predominantly Bosniak city. On the other, there is an attempt to preserve a Sarajevo and sense of Bosnia of the past, where civic figures such as Santa Claus transcended ethnic belonging. They also show that questions of symbols, identities and belonging are not only negotiated in the offices of local elites or international representatives but in the neighbourhoods and communities.

A similar attempt to establish a civic sense of belonging is visible in the *Čokoladni Neredi*, or Chocolate Riots held in Mostar on 22nd June 2012. The Chocolate Riots emerged as spontaneous response to the hooliganism and the ethnicized violence that spills out on the streets of Mostar whenever rival sporting teams play (Pavković, 2012). These peaceful protests were organized after an outcry on social media regarding the violence after yet another violent clash between youth from the Bosniak and Croat communities. A Tumblr account (http://chocolution.tumblr.com/) was set up that allowed people from around the world to lend their support to the protestors. The goal of the protests was to show another side of Mostar and to allow citizens to engage with each other. These protests were held again in 2013 and in 2014 they spread to Sarajevo and Banja Luka. At the protests, individuals share chocolate with someone they do not know and spend time with each other in a public space. In Mostar, the protestors took over the town square that was used by the hooligans to riot thereby also taking back the public space as a shared space. While the response to the protests was largely positive, there were also more skeptical views that suggested that this was merely a group of "hippy, yugocommunist youth" (as cited in Sopta-Mlinarević, 2015).

The criticisms of the overly optimistic views of these events were certainly brought out following the release of a Radio Free Liberty Europe (with support from the US organization, The National Endowment for Democracy) video series, *Perspectives*. As part of the series, youth in Mostar were interviewed on their views on growing up in Mostar and the divides in their schooling and everyday life. In the second episode, Ante, a Croat youth from Mostar, explains that he has never visited the Old Bridge in Mostar and that he does not visit the "other' side of the town.[133] More problematically, he asserts that he can recognize Bosniaks when they cross over to the Croatian side by the colour of their skin, stating that they are darker. He also notes that he can tell by the way they speak, the way they move, and by the clothes they wear. He also notes that, he cannot wear the Croatian national football jersey, on the other "side" as he fears for his safety. Still, in episode three, Ante visits the Old Bridge and states that he "fits in" and that he did not feel any different. In this way, Ante's journey, as captured in the series, is indicative of the possible changes in perspectives for many Bosnian youth. In the following section, I will note both the possibilities as well as challenges in changing dominant group narratives.

Contested Narratives and Performances: A Vicious Circle?

As noted in earlier sections, there is little agreement on the events of the Bosnian war. Each community continues to remember and commemorate the past in line with their particular understanding of the conflict. This leads to multiple ceremonies commemorating each group's victims. The narratives can be summarized as follows: the Bosniak population points to the genocide committed against their population by Bosnian Serbs and suggests that the Serb Republic is created on the foundations of genocide. Bosnian Croats on the other hand suggest

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[133] This episode is available here: http://www.slobodnaevropa.org/media/video/perspektiva-druga-epizoda-mostar/26849554.html.

that they fought a war of defence where their primary concern was protecting their population. In the 2013 UNRCO survey, these diverse views of the conflict are clearly evident. According to the survey, some 77.4 percent of Bosniaks view the Bosnian war as a result of aggression, with 57.9 percent of Croats sharing these views (United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2013, p. 20). Bosniaks and Croats see Bosnian Serbs and Serbia as key actors responsible for the aggression. However, only 9.4 percent of Serbs view the war as an act of aggression, with 61.5 percent viewing it as a civil war. Bosnian Serbs for their part suggest that the Serb Republic is an expression of their need to protect the Serb population in the country, often pointing to the traumatic experiences of the Serb population during WWII as a key reason for this need. By pointing to the events of WWII, the Bosnian Serb leadership seeks to undermine claims that RS is an illegitimate entity and that it was built upon a genocide (Gilbert, 2013, p. 167).

These statistics portray the reality that becomes clear from the views expressed during discussions by Bosnian citizens. There is not a single coherent account of the past conflict although it is precisely such coherent accounts that transitional justice projects seek (Obradovic-Wochnik, 2013). However, as Jelena Obradovic-Wochnik notes, narratives that emerge in the everyday sphere are often contradictory, containing both acknowledgment and denial. They are at times confused and ambiguous (Obradovic-Wochnik, 2013, p. 8). In other words, individuals engage in producing their own narratives and views that do not necessarily reflect the wishes of the transitional justice projects. For many, despite initial discussions of how terrible the war was for all of Bosnia's citizens, their group is often described as having suffered the most. This need to ensure that the researcher hears about "our" victimhood is inescapable in any discussion.

As such, despite the attempts to promote reconciliation by the international community and civil society organizations the notion is not readily accepted. A Sarajevo resident who remained in the city during the war, frustratingly notes, "I don't want to talk about reconciliation and forgiveness. This has to be an individual experience. All of these foreigners come here and all they want to talk about is reconciliation" (Personal communication, May 21, 2012). In this way, ordinary citizens can refuse to talk about past events, and remaining silent is a tactic that allows local populations to address the past in their own ways, at their own pace. Moreover, this view suggests that silence is not necessarily detrimental to the overall reconciliation. At times, silence can be a form of "civility", a way to live and work together with individuals of the "other" ethnic group in the same town and same place of employment (see Eastmond & Mannergren-Selimovic, 2012).

Still, at other times, the silence is presented as the wish to move forward with more important issues, such as the lack of economic prospects. However, even those individuals that are seemingly focused on the shared economic concerns hold particular views on the state that is not necessarily shared by all. A Bosnian Serb member of a civic organization explains to me what he would do if he had the power to impact on the local and international politics on Bosnia. He states, "I would freeze all talks about changing Dayton, the constitution and the like. All this talk does not put food on our tables" (Personal communication, June 6, 2012). But when I probe further I realize that while he is primarily concerned with unemployment and poverty levels, he also has a view on the country reflecting the maintenance of the RS. As such, even if economic problems were resolved, these different views of the future, and avoidance of discussion of the past, would remain obstacles to reconciliation.

For others remaining silent or avoiding discussions of the past is a way to preserve group narratives. There is also a "social silencing" in that individuals do not speak out against dominant narratives in their communities due to the consequences of such actions. As I noted in the previous chapters, resistance is not necessarily a positive response. In this case, it undermines the goals of reconciliation projects. As a result, many interviewees describe attempts to deal with the past as a vicious circle, *začarani krug*, which from their perspective has to do with the fact that few Bosnians are willing to acknowledge the crimes committed by "their" own group. More worrying is the tendency to perceive individuals from one's own community as traitors when they seek to understand or commemorate the victims from the other communities. In a documentary film, Bosnia, Divided Peace, a participant expressed the conundrum from a Serb perspective: "How can we end the stereotype in Bosnia-Herzegovina that I am a traitor if I visit the Srebrenica Memorial? Or if I have enrolled my child in a university in Sarajevo, the city where she was born? Let's look at that and how to get out of this vicious circle?"[134] For many, the social silencing from their own social circle is more powerful than any discussions by elites.

This is clearly evident in the diverse stories of Srebrenica that were voiced in discussions and interviews in Banja Luka. Some individuals fully deny the labeling of Srebrenica as genocide and do not wish to discuss the matter. From this perspective, a commonly heard story in Banja Luka is how individuals of Bosniak background from the Srebrenica region have come back from abroad only to find their names on the lists or plaques of the dead and missing. From this perspective, the events around Srebrenica are hyped up by the Bosniak community. Still others attempt to rationalize the events and suggest that Bosnian Serb troops committed such

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[134] The documentary is available here https://vimeo.com/50772358. It was filmed in collaboration with a local NGO, Fondacija Lokalne Demokratije. I have slightly adjusted the translation of the speaker's statements to more accurately reflect his statements than in the video translation.

crimes only after going through Serbian villages in the area and finding that the ARBIH had

murdered Serbian civilians. The attempts to discuss Srebrenica using the facts of the ICTY are

often met with the response of "But what did they do to us?" The particular tragedy of this

response is that even when recognizing that the events at Srebrenica were horrific, the attempts

to call attention to one's "own" hurt, end up condoning the crimes committed. In this way, there

is a justification of crimes committed against "their" victims for all the crimes committed against

"ours". This response also leads to the continuation of the dominant narratives and contestations

of the past. Each group seeks to ensure that their victimhood is recognized thereby not only

preventing reconciliation but also furthering the conflict.

These contentious views of victimhood were brought out with the release of the 2006

film *Grbavica* by Bosniak director, Jasmila Žbanić. The film was perceived as problematic,

particularly in the RS, due to its focus on bringing to light the war time rapes of Bosniak women

by Bosnian Serb soldiers. In fact, the film was centered on the post-conflict period and struggles

faced by one of these women and her daughter that was born out of the rape. The film was well-

received abroad and won a Golden Bear at the Berlin International Film Festival (Helms, 2013,

p. 1). In her acceptance speech, Žbanić called for the arrests of Ratko Mladić and Radovan

Karadzić, the key Bosnian Serb war-time leaders, wanted by the international community who at

that time had evaded arrest.[135] In Bosnia, the film proved divisive. While it was supported in

Sarajevo and by the Bosniak population as it brought to light the suffering of Bosniak women, in

the RS it was largely perceived as depicting the Bosniak narrative of the conflict by portraying

Serbs as perpetrators.

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[135] Both Karadzić and Mladić have since been arrested and brought in front of the ICTY to face war crimes charges.

In this way, the film brought to the surface the dominant narratives and the struggles over "national innocence and victimhood" (Helms, 2013, p. 1). As Elissa Helms explains, in Bosniak discourse the rapes are used as proof of the innocence and victimhood of the Bosniak population and the barbaric nature of Bosnian Serbs (2013, p. 26). *Grbavica* was not shown in the Serb Republic after Oskar Film, a key film distributor for the RS, stated that the film was not "art" and was mired in the political agendas of the film director (Husanovic, 2010, p. 212). However, following its showings on a TV station BHT1, the station claimed that *Grabvica* was the most viewed BHT1 program in the RS (Husanovic, 2010, p. 213). Nonetheless, the debate would replay again along similar lines in 2011, with the release of the film *In the Land of Blood and Honey* directed by Angelina Jolie.[136]

Moreover, struggles over memorialization have also brought out the contested views of the past conflict. In this regard, the memorialization efforts and practices in Prijedor are instructive. The Prijedor municipality is the site of infamous detention camps, such as Omarska, Trnopolje, and Keraterm, where Bosniaks were held by Bosnian Serb troops.[137] However, attempts by Bosniak survivors and civil society organizations at building a memorial centre on the site of these camps, particularly Omarska, have been denied by the town's Bosnian Serb leadership. Still, survivors of the Omarska camp and their supporter hold an annual pilgrimage to the site of the camp (Halilovich, 2013, p. 87). Only one small memorial exists on the site of a camp known as Keraterm, but it is hidden from view (Clark, 2014, p. 95). At the other camp site, Trnopolje, there is in fact a monument to Bosnian Serb soldiers and the site is a primary school now attended by mostly Bosnian Serb children (Halilovich, 2013, p. 90). As such, Hariz Halilovich notes that the site has been turned into a "memory site of Republika Srpska" (2013, p.

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[136] See Helms, 2013 for a discussion of the wider implications that the making of this film and others had on the discussions regarding war-time rape in Bosnian society.
[137] Several policemen and guards who ran the camps have been sentenced by the ICTY, see Clark, 2014, pp. 92-96.

90). Halilovich also notes that, children in the school, which was a former camp site, do not learn about the events in their own town and in this way the RS curriculum also furthers the dominant Bosnian Serb narrative (2013, p. 90). Indeed, memorials to Bosnian Serb soldiers and victims are much more prominent in Prijedor and the local Bosnian Serb population continues disputing the existence of the camps (see Clark, 2014).

Beyond Prijedor, competing memorialization practices abound.[138] For example, in September 2014 in Sarajevo a makeshift cross was erected to the Bosnian Serb victims killed in the city (see *Figure 5.3*). The location of the cross, on Zlatište, an area on Mount Trebević, is particularly significant as it was the stronghold of the Bosnian Serb Army during Bosnia's 1992-1995 war and used for shelling the city of Sarajevo. The area is now in the Bosnian-Serb entity of Republika Srpska (RS). The cross is believed to have been put in place as a monument by the Union of Camp Prisoners of RS to commemorate the deaths of Bosnian Serb civilians in the city. The cross has been dismissed as an instance of political manipulation as it was put up about a month prior to the 2014 elections.

Figure 5.3 Cross on Zlatište prior to being taken down. Photo credit: Dzidic, 2014b. Available here: http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/serb-cross-above-sarajevo-brought-down

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[138] This is certainly true of the broader Balkans region as well. See for example Ramet, 2014; David, 2014. On the commemorative practices in the Balkans but also in for example Northern Ireland, Sri Lanka, South Africa among others, see McDowell & Braniff, 2014.

However, the installation of the cross prompted anger and outrage and small protests in Sarajevo for its location is seen as insensitive to the citizens of Sarajevo who suffered under the heavy shelling of the city. The installation of the cross in Zlatište is one of many examples of struggles over symbols in the country. But more interesting was the response by a Bosnian citizen of Serb background, Vladimir Stanišić, published on his Facebook account and widely reported in the Bosnian media (see Stanišić, 2014). In his letter addressed to those individuals who put up the Zlatište cross, Stanišić argues against their supposed intentions, as he himself a Bosnian Serb was shot by the Bosnian Serb Army snipers. His family had remained in the Hrasno area of Sarajevo throughout the conflict and his father fought in the Bosnian Army, alongside Bosniaks and Croats. Stanišić in this way shows that this monument does not represent him and his family, but also the within group contestation of these attempts to mark the landscape with the particular narrative. While Stanisic's personal story differs from the intended audience of the cross, the reaction in the Bosnian Serb communities, particularly on social media among youth, was similarly negative. In October 2014, local Serb authorities announced that the illegal cross would be taken down and remarked that it cannot be even called a cross as it is really two light poles (Dzidic, 2014b). As this example shows, local populations play an important role in deciding which symbols matter.

However, shortly after the building of the cross on Zlatište, Orthodox clerics put up a cross, without official approval, in the village of Jasenova near the Potočari memorial centre. While an Orthodox cleric insisted that the cross marked a spot where a church had existed in Ottoman times, the mostly Bosniak population in the village perceived it as a provocation. Hajra Ćatić, a member of the Srebrenica Women's association and survivor of Srebrenica, points out that "Jasenova is a Bosniak village, there are no Serbs living there. It's the same story as the

cross above Sarajevo, they're all provocations" (Dzidic, 2014a). Munira Subašić, the president of the Mothers of Srebrenica and Zepa association, expresses her views on the goals behind these markings, "If this is a way for someone to show that there is no place here for Bosniaks, it won't work; these are our homes, our backyards and our skies. I think the best thing for us to do is to ignore it" (Dzidic, 2014a). The attempts to mark the areas as belonging to one group, and in this way to also establish the groups narrative, is also present in the case of the cross on Hum Hill above Mostar. As these examples show, the choice of locations for the monuments are those areas most affected by the conflict (Jukic et al. 2013). More importantly, for the local populations, they are perceived as provocations and undermine the progress made in the inter-ethnic relations.

Still, actions of a Bosnian youth initiative, *Jer me se tiče* (Because it concerns me), prove that there is a more inclusionary attempt to commemorate the past and develop a common narrative. A group of youth erected "guerilla" memorials, in the form of marble plaques, to commemorate the victims in three Bosnian towns, Bugojno, Foča and Konjic (Sito-Sucic, 2013). What was unique about their actions was in fact the commitment to commemorating all the different groups thereby acknowledging the dynamics of the conflict in these diverse areas. The plaques all had the same message (and also printed in Cyrillic), "So that it never happens again. In memory of the victims of war crimes committed in the area of (Foča, Bugojno or Konjic)" (Sito-Sucic, 2013. See *Figure 5.4* below). Though the plaques were subsequently taken away, as the municipalities stated that proper permission was not granted for the memorials, a powerful message had been sent. Namely, the organization showed the need to commemorate victims of the Bosnian war and also that events in these towns have not been forgotten. In this way, they responded to the lack of recognition of these victims and to the dominant narratives in the areas.

Figure 5. 4 Photos of the memorials, in Foča, Konjic and Bugojno. Taken from the Facebook page of the Jer me se tiče organization.

Similarly, some individuals continue to challenge the narratives that focus on "our" victims and not theirs. In Banja Luka, a group of individuals that work for non-governmental organizations have sought to demand more information about Bosniak and Croat victims and to open up a discussion of the crimes against these populations. Similar sentiments are found among their Bosniak and Croat counterparts. In an article published on the news portal Buka, Haris Jusufović, a local Bosnian history teacher, demands to know what happened to his Serbian neighbours in Sarajevo and how many Serbs were killed during the war.[139] In this way, Jusufović wishes to open up a dialogue about the victims from the other communities thereby moving past the "but what did they do to us" sentiment. In an interview with the Radio Free Liberty Europe, Jusufović notes that much of the NGO and research centre driven discussion of the past conflict does not reach the ordinary Bosnian citizen (Sandić-Hadžihasanović, 2014). Jusufović notes that

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[139] The article is available here: http://www.6yka.com/novost/66798/haris-jusufovic-hocu-istinu-sta-se-desilo-sa-mojim-komsijama-srbima-u-sarajevu. The title of the article in translation is: I want the truth, what happened to my Serb neighbours in Sarajevo. *Buka* is an independent online news portal run by the Banja Luka based Centre for youth information decontamination, and is often critical of the official politics in the RS.

using the social media platform of Buka enabled him to bring the discussion to a wider audience. Still, Jusufović remarks that his efforts and those of the group in Banja Luka have been met with a "wall of silence" in their own communities. Indeed, his column was absent from the media portals in the Federation (Sandić-Hadžihasanović, 2014). At the same time, in the RS there was an interpretation of his column as supporting the Serb victims without understanding the point of needing to ask now what happened to their Bosniak and Croat neighbours.

Perhaps one of the few cases that has managed to unite the competing narratives is the story of Srdjan Aleksić. Aleksić, was a young Bosnian Serb who died in 1993 from the injuries he sustained while protecting his Bosniak friend from fellow Bosnian Serb soldiers.[140] By standing up for his Bosniak friend, Aleksić's story is seen as evidence of the humanity that exists in spite of the brutal war. Aleksić has been honoured with streets in Sarajevo, Podgorica, Montenegro as well as in Novi Sad, Serbia, and he has been praised by Bosnian Serb politicians and Bosniak politicians alike. However, while Aleksić is a hero to many Bosnians of all ethnic backgrounds his story has not entirely escaped different perceptions among different groups. Among Bosnian Serb youth in Trebinje the opinion is divided; while some support his actions, others do not readily discuss his actions as heroic (Maglajlija, 2015). An often heard comment in response to Aleksić's story is that there are no examples of Bosniaks and Croats having stood up for Serbs. By contrast, some Bosniaks point out that Aleksić is one of the few "good" Serbs. Even in the case of Aleksić the different ethnicized politics simmer below the surface.

Still, interesting efforts have emerged from the cultural sector in bringing different communities together. Among these, the Photography of the Year BiH Festival, for example,

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[140] Several films and documentaries have been made about Aleksić's story. The most prominent is the 2013 Serbian film Circles (Krugovi). The film was well-received in both Bosnia and Serbia.

brings together photography enthusiasts from across the country and the region.[141] However, some of these organization are reluctant to portray their efforts as "political" given the over politicization of the context in Bosnia. In particular, one member of a cultural organization in Sarajevo stresses her reluctance to discuss the political arrangements and the political scene in the country though admitting that it does naturally impact their work (Personal communication, May 28, 2012). The director of the Hrvatsko Narodno Kazalište- HNK (The Croatian National Theater) in Mostar expresses similar sentiments regarding the collaboration with the Narodno Pozorište (The National Theater) also in Mostar. The collaboration is for a play that deals with the conflict between the Croat forces and the Bosnian Army in Mostar during the war. Given the theme of the play and the divided context of Mostar this partnership can be seen as political. However, Ivan Vukoja, the director of HNK, notes that their partnership is not political but rather, "It can only be seen as cultural politics, as we believe that this city is one city, and that it should function as such and that all of the people in this city should have access to all aspects of this city's context..." (Behram, 2014). In this way, Vukoja allows for a different interpretation of cultural politics as not only divisive but also inclusionary.

This section has examined the different group narratives and ways of addressing the past in Bosnia. I sought to show how exclusionary narratives remain dominant that continue to stress the importance of one's own group suffering. At the same time, I note the ways that some young activists have attempted to commemorate the victims of all communities. Thus, the past remains contested in post-Dayton Bosnia with little agreement and reconciliation among ordinary citizens. However, I also suggest that in their everyday lives individuals do interact with each other and more inclusionary practices exist. It is these more inclusionary practices that suggest

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[141] The website for the contest and additional information: http://fotografija.ba/konkurs/.

that there is still an opportunity for developing a common sense of belonging in the post-war polity. Yet, I argue that the exclusionary group narratives are still dominant and emotions run high and each group holds onto their narrative of the past.

Conclusion

Post-war Bosnia has received substantial international peacebuilding assistance and support. The dominant peacebuilding strategies employed in the Bosnian case are comprehensive. As I have discussed, international actors have been involved in every aspect of rebuilding the post-war Bosnian state, from rebuilding the destroyed infrastructure to designing the new national flag. In addition, numerous projects on reconciliation in Bosnia were funded and continue to receive international support.

Still, the outcome of this external support in Bosnia is a peace that has fallen short of the expectations of both international actors and the local population. Peacebuilding strategies, and particularly the Dayton straightjacket, have made ethnicity the most salient factor in the political life of the country. Ethnic leaders' lack of agreement on the future of the country has also contributed to the sense of Bosnia being constantly on the edge or on the brink of falling apart. Lack of economic opportunities and high levels of corruption further this sense of Bosnia's potential demise.

What all of this means for ordinary people in Bosnia is that the everyday is shaped by the constant tension between exclusionary and inclusionary practices and narratives. In this chapter, I have argued that these everyday and cultural practices should be seen as political. In Bosnia, *politika* or the "political" is often see as immoral and as existing above the ordinary individuals (see Helms, 2007). However, I suggest that what people in Bosnia do in their everyday lives is a

part of politics. In other words, whether they interact with their neighbours of a different ethnicity, or whether they go to their "own" group cafes, all of these decisions are political as they ultimately shape the understanding of belonging in post-war Bosnia. In particular, I have highlighted how a group's "own" narratives on the past and future of the country influence these everyday decisions. Whether ordinary individuals acknowledge it or not, the narratives that they support all showcase political understandings of Bosnia's past, present and future. As such, group narratives should not be seen as merely products of elite manipulation. As I uncover then, many of the practices and narratives are meaningful to the local population and individuals use them to showcase and justify their worldviews. More importantly, they show that ordinary Bosnians have agency and do engage in politics. By supporting and engaging in either exclusionary or inclusionary practices and narratives ordinary individuals provide their views on belonging and the future of the country.

Conclusion

There is still an ongoing conflict here and it's around identities and symbols.
-Personal communication, October 10, 2011

[The] discourse filling the radio waves for almost two hours sounded like the country I was driving through had just exited a war the day before ... or was about to enter a new one the day after ... locked in a horrible limbo that was neither war nor peace. -Srećko Latal, 2014

During his visit to Northern Ireland in June 2013, US President Barack Obama while speaking at a town hall meeting for youth, suggested that Northern Ireland is a model for other conflict-affected zones. In his words these other countries are, "wondering, perhaps if Northern Ireland can achieve peace, we can, too. You're their blueprint to follow" (The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, 2013). Similarly, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon (2012) has praised Bosnia on the achievements it has made, and pointed out that its peacebuilding lessons are relevant in other contexts. While external observers do point to the need to continue the course and further ameliorate the peace in both cases, they do perceive the peace achieved as "good enough".[142] In contrast to the praises of the peace achieved in Northern Ireland and similar remarks on how far Bosnia has come, we can posit the above comments by a local Bosnian political observer and a community worker in Northern Ireland. The view of the limbo situation in post-war Bosnia, and the sense that conflict by other means persists in Northern Ireland, points to the uncertainty and dissatisfaction with the peace that has been achieved in both cases. As this thesis has shown, when viewed from the bottom-up, the peace achieved does not look as certain

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[142] Commentators describe the peace achieved in Northern Ireland as a miracle (Delaney, 2008) and despite the remaining issues as a "country made new" (McCann, 2013). On Bosnia, consider Tim Judah's (2012) remarks that, "Clearly it remains rather poor and divided, but given the orgy of killing that took place there between 1992 and 1995, the transformation since has been almost miraculous."

as some external observers or dominant peacebuilding scholarship focused on institutions in these societies would suggest.

Moreover, portraying Northern Ireland as a blueprint or accepting the "good enough" nature of the peace achieved in Bosnia, has important consequences for these societies and for peacebuilding activities more broadly. Namely, it means accepting a limited understanding of peace, a negative peace, and ignoring the growing dissatisfaction and concerns expressed by local populations. This, in turn, means accepting the high likelihood of conflict recurrence. That is not to undermine the achievements that have been made in both cases and the at least short-to-medium term benefits provided by the cessation of hostilities. Still, much of the policy-based scholarship views the success of peacebuilding through the "war-no war" perspective (Themner & Ohlson, 2014). In other words, if there is no return to large scale violence then the case is considered to be a successful example of peacebuilding. Any calls for a thicker understanding of peace are seen as overly ambitious by dominant peacebuilders. In this way, dominant approaches overlook the cases where there is a liminal condition, of "neither war, nor peace" and once again privileges external actors understandings of peace over local experiences. In other words, this minimalist definition of success limits our understanding of the peace that is experienced by the local population. It is also the lack of attention paid to everyday experiences of peace that has contributed to the belief that more top-down, policy-based approaches will address any remaining concerns.

However, it is precisely these top-down approaches that have failed to address the key questions explored by this thesis. While the two cases explored here differ in many regards, the peace experienced by the population is telling of the quality of peace that liberal peacebuilding can achieve (see also Mac Ginty, 2006). The so-called liberal peace approach is based on the

idea that a particular toolkit of liberal peace strategies will contribute to the building of a sustainable peace. As the cases examined here show, in practice, the peace process is often unpredictable and complex, and liberal peacebuilding is only one part of the puzzle. While dominant peacebuilding scholarship calls for more of the same, top-down and elite focused approach in response to the remaining challenges, critical scholars have recognized the emerging gap between the strategies promoted by external actors and the local experiences of peace. Building on critical scholarship, I have claimed that understanding cultural and everyday practices illustrates not just the limitations of the top-down strategies of liberal peacebuilders, but also that practices found in everyday living are another often ignored piece of the peacebuilding puzzle.

This thesis demonstrates that while dominant peacebuilding strategies have contributed to a semblance of peace in both cases, and much has indeed changed in both polities, there is a growing disappointment with the quality of peace achieved. In chapter two, I illustrated that dominant peacebuilding approaches have been too focused on elites and top-down strategies. Moreover, I have explored how they have contributed to the uncertainty of the peace that has been achieved in several ways. The much lauded peace agreement and power-sharing arrangements did not, ultimately, address the underlying contestation of the polity. Instead, the peace agreement left the questions over the polity's future for some other time (in the case of Northern Ireland), or hoped that the divisive structures would wither away (in the case of Bosnia). Moreover, in each case, ethnic identities were institutionalized and remain the most salient factors in shaping experiences of citizenship. Civil society and transitional justice strategies have only further highlighted the gap between the external actors' views and local needs and experiences. Much of the work of the civil society sector is based on donor

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preferences, and the transitional justice efforts fail to deliver the types of justice local communities seek.

In providing this overview of liberal peace building processes in each case, I have also sought to highlight the fact that a focus on the liberal peacebuilding approach is only one part of the story. Equally important to understand is how local populations react to the uncertainty of the war-to-peace transitions. Indeed, I have stressed that ordinary citizens have agency and are not passive recipients of peacebuilding strategies. Through cultural and everyday practices individuals are involved in what can be termed everyday politics, which reflect their views on the polity, societal relations, and the questions of the past conflict. As I have discussed in chapter three, through their engagement in place-making, symbolic practices and narratives, individuals also shape the type of peace that emerges. Ultimately, these everyday politics are an attempt by ordinary citizens to shape the fate of the polity. Thus, through their practices, ordinary citizens perpetuate the liminal condition, as lingering fears and contested visions for the future prevail over more inclusive narratives. The local context then should be seen as a "two-way street", with citizens as agents that are able to influence the type of peace that emerges (Guzina & Marijan, 2013). In this sense, liberal peacebuilding is often faced with limited success precisely because it is too formulaic and misses the need to account for how the liminal condition is responded to and furthered by the actions of ordinary citizens.

This is not to say that peacebuilders are oblivious to the shortcoming of top-down, one-size fits all approaches. Nevertheless, regardless of how aware and often well-intentioned they may be, they continue to reproduce the same programs and strategies from one case to the other (see Autesserre, 2014; 2010). This reproduction in part occurs as a result of the "lessons learned" and "best practices" promoted by international practitioners of peacebuilding (Mac Ginty, 2014,

p. 551). This more of the same approach is particularly evident in the peacebuilding actors attempt to improve upon the current stalemates in places such as Bosnia and Northern Ireland. From my discussion, I suggest that in Bosnia and Northern Ireland another crucial issue in peacebuilding emerges, which is the understanding of these societies as "post-conflict" and as relatively successful in comparison to more violent contexts. This understanding obscures recognition of the liminal conditions. In this way, as Richmond (2014) points out, external actors accept the peace that has been achieved as "good enough," even while calling for more societal transformations.

By focusing on the cultural and everyday politics of ordinary citizens in the cases of Bosnia and Northern Ireland, I have wanted to further the insights about everyday peace in critical peacebuilding scholarship. I have followed the work of Mac Ginty (2014; 2011; 2010; 2006), Richmond and Mitchell (2012) and Kappler (2013), among others in order to show why the cultural and everyday practices of ordinary individuals matter in shaping peacebuilding. However, I also went beyond this scholarship by emphasising the importance of the liminal condition of societies experiencing the war-to-peace transition. This enriched understanding of local agency as political is a central contribution of this thesis. In pointing to both the exclusionary and inclusionary practices, symbols and narratives I have sought to respond to the overtly schematic conceptualization of local actors in dominant and critical peacebuilding scholarship.

In dominant peacebuilding scholarship, local actors are portrayed as spoilers, as holding onto ancient hatreds, or as passive recipients. Throughout this thesis I have sought to undermine these perceptions. Firstly, I have sought to move away from the so-called "spoiler" argument prominent in dominant scholarship. While some of the discussion presented in this thesis may

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reflect this "spoiling" by local elites, I find this argument deeply unsatisfying. Namely, this argument places the blame squarely on the local context, without examining how external policies and strategies contribute to the contemporary situations in these societies. More importantly, it often focuses on elites thereby ignoring how local populations are perhaps contesting elite strategies and finding ways around them (Kappler, 2014, Keranen, 2014). As such, it ignores the possibility that local actors and practices can, in fact, also support a more inclusive peace (Richmond, 2014, p. 2). At the same time, literature on "ethnic hatreds" seems to portray populations in post-conflict deeply divided societies as being unable to see past these hatreds. This is also limiting as it misses the myriad of ways individuals engage with each other across ethnic lines. This is not to say that these societies are bastions of plurality, they are not as I have shown, but rather my argument is that these divisions are maintained and sustained by the different practices and performances of differences. Thirdly, the dominant scholarship rarely engages with the everyday lives of the population. Rhetorically the "local" and "local ownership" are highlighted in the peacebuilding strategies. But rarely are local populations consulted in the development of the peacebuilding plans (Richmond, 2014). From this perspective, local populations are passive recipients.

In contrast, critical scholarship offers nuanced understandings of local actors as active agents that shape the implementation of peacebuilding strategies. My primary concern with critical scholarship has been to call attention to both inclusionary and exclusionary practices. Often times, it is the more inclusionary local responses that are highlighted by critical scholars in order to support their grassroots peacebuilding focus. Dominant policy reports often feature the "multiethnic" or "shared" projects in their reports as well. Critical scholars are aware of this tendency, and Mac Ginty (2011) in particular notes that this romanticization needs to be avoided.

In my view, local actors are political agents that at times engage in practices not supported by external peacebuilders. Simply, ordinary citizens are active agents navigating an uncertain environment and still dealing with the traumas of the past-conflict.

Moreover, by exploring the cultural practices found in everyday living, such as place-making, symbols and narratives, I have drawn on insights from diverse scholarship. In this way, I sought to open up a conversation between anthropologists, sociologists, geographers and critical citizenship scholars with the peacebuilding scholarship. As such, this exploratory work draws on diverse bodies of literature in order to draw attention to how ordinary individuals engage in the everyday politics of peacebuilding. I suggest that critical scholarship needs to engage further with these different disciplines in order to understand how ordinary people shape the types of peace that emerges in the post-conflict context.

To clarify, I do not suggest that a focus on these cultural and everyday practices alone can explain the persistence of division and incomplete peace processes. I have simply argued that a focus on these practices sheds light on some of the everyday politics in these societies. They can in turn tell us why some strategies and attempts at transforming these societies have been met with little success. Too often peacebuilding projects underestimate the level of fear, distrust and uncertainty that results from the legacy of the conflicts. Moreover, I have shown that in both cases, peacebuilders focused on political elites, formal arrangements and a professionalized civil society sector to address and support the integration of the communities at the local levels. In addition, attempts to deal with past abuses and hurts were similarly approached in such top-down fashion. This in turn has contributed to the lack of attention being paid to a myriad of formal and informal, visible and invisible ways that local populations establish their sense of belonging and how they understand their communities.

As such, this study should be seen as the beginning of a rich research agenda. This thesis has presented several important insights worth exploring further. Perhaps the most interesting insight concerns the assessments of the quality of peace in post-accord societies. Further examination of the quality of peace and the ties to everyday politics could alert us to a reconceptualization of the thick and thin peace distinction. While thin, or negative peace, is generally understood to mean the absence of violent conflict, there is much debate about the thick, or positive peace. An examination of the quality of everyday life and politics in the post-accord period would enrich our understanding of how to approach thicker conceptions of peace. Further research into the specific practices is also needed. It would be particularly interesting to observe how the practices change (or not) in response to different events or policies. Equally important would be to examine whether conflict transformation processes, such as arts projects, lead to more sensitive policy approaches. Overall, further investigation in the policy implications of the everyday practices is needed.

Still, I would like to also highlight limitations to my approach. While I have discussed some of these issues in chapter three they are worth repeating and expanding on here. Particularly, when one considers the policy implications and possible policy translation gained from the research findings. An important point worth considering is that these everyday politics are a way for the groups to engage in conflictual practices that may allow them to negotiate the peace on their own terms. As such, Mitchell (2011), alerts us to the possibility that practices that are seemingly exclusionary may well be necessary for the communities to avoid violence. Another concern is that by identifying the practices of ordinary citizens as inclusionary or exclusionary, researchers can unintentionally contribute to a greater control over those practices. In other words, as Ross (2007) cautions us pushing for inclusive practices may be interpreted as

meaning that one group should give up its claims or identity. This would have disastrous effects on the simmering conflicts and would lead to more violence. Another aspect of the control over the practices is the concern that insight into the everyday may potentially lead to bio-political control over the everyday politics. Along the same lines, is the concern that the dominant peacebuilding approaches would appropriate these insights to further their own agenda without considering the views or concerns of the population. As such, any "embedding" of contextually informed researchers in the peacebuilding missions is problematic. Simply, everyday politics and practices provide are a way for ordinary citizens to shape their communities and ideas of belonging. Attempts to control them or order them would diminish their meaning to the communities.

Building peace in the aftermath of violent conflict is understandably difficult. Experiences of Bosnia and Northern Ireland also show that peacebuilding is a long process with no easy answers. Peacebuilding strategies, such as institutional design, civil society building and creating dialogue between the communities, provide stability and a semblance of peace. However, as the Bosnian and the Northern Irish cases show, these strategies alone are not enough. Even though the cases of Bosnia and Northern Ireland, as I fully elaborated upon in chapter four and five, are different in many ways, what unites them is the condition of liminality, the ways ordinary citizens respond to the state of permanent "transition". Thus, both cases point toward the crucial role of the ordinary individual experiences in the post-conflict period. For this reason, symbolic markings of spaces and everyday interactions as well as narratives about the past that communities find meaningful should be seen as crucial to the peacebuilding project. In the end, I suggest that the analysis of these two cases can contribute to the critical discussions of peacebuilding and speak to a wider range of cases than the two examined here. However, this

dissertation does not provide me with the space to explore further comparative cases. Instead, the

two cases presented here should be seen as a starting point for further research across cases.

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Appendix A: Interview Guide for Key Informant Interviews

This appendix contains the sample questions asked of the key informants, members of community organizations, volunteer groups and local activists engaged in peacebuilding initiatives. In addition to the questions posed by the researcher, the interviewees were encouraged to discuss any issues or topics that they felt were relevant, even if not directly asked.

1. Introduction

Let me begin by introducing myself and my project.

a. My name and university affiliation.

b. About the project

In this research project I am interested in understanding the quality of peace in post-conflict societies. I want to know how you view the transition from conflict to peace and your everyday life in this society. I am interested in your views and perceptions of the peacebuilding process, what you consider to be important issues that have and/or have not been addressed and your thoughts on the remaining challenges.

C. About the interview

Again, I am interested in your views of the peace process. What I want is for you to share your thoughts and experiences with me. You decide the information that you would like to share with me and you can stop the interview at any point in time. If you have any questions or concerns during the interview, please feel free to ask me.

D. Consent

After completing this consent form, I will begin the interview. You can state "no comment" for any questions you do not wish to answer, and I will move to the next question. I will be writing notes while conducting the interview. The interview will take a maximum of 45 minutes. You may stop the interview sooner if you wish by notifying the interviewer.

This interview will be voice recorded using a digital recorder. You must consent in writing to the use of this device. If you do not consent to the recording, I will not be recording this interview. Your name will not be recorded without your consent. However, please note that your occupational position will be recorded, which could personally identify you. There are no foreseeable risks to this identification, but do not answer questions for which you do not want your response known publicly.

Quotes from this interview will be used, with your permission. Quotes will only be used if your written consent is received (on the bottom of the consent form). As I have obtained your consent, I would like to start the interview. Please let me know if something is not clear or if you have further questions.

2. Interview

a. Quality of peace

- How would you describe the peace that has been achieved?
- How satisfied are you with the current state of peace?

b. *Political Arrangements*

- How effective do you find the political arrangement? The power-sharing institutions?
- Do you feel that citizens are taken into account by the political arrangements?
- In your opinion, do the power sharing arrangements encourage citizen engagement?

c. *Citizenship*

- What does citizenship mean to you?
- How do you practice citizenship?
- Do you find that community organizations are in touch with the local communities? Do they work with each other?

d. Practices

- How do people respond to the official politics?
- How do they engage with peacebuilding projects?
- Have external organizations played a role? How effective have they been in your view?
- Are there initiatives or events that you can think of that are cross-community that transcend the divides?
- Are the youth perhaps more engaged? Do they care about the divides as much?
- Are there any physical barriers that prevent interaction? Are there mental barriers how important are they?

Please let me know if there is anything that you would like to add.

3. Concluding remarks

Thank you for your time and participation.
I appreciate your assistance. If you are interested, I will send my thesis to you once it has been completed.