Protest and ethnic identity:
Resisting an institutionalized ethnic identity structure in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Master thesis Human Geography: Conflict, Territories and Identities

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'Our presidents don't make our future; we want to make our future'

Azra: high-school student and protest leader Jajce

Acknowledgements

Executive summary

This research explores under which circumstances resistance, against a highly institutionalized ethnic identity structure where ethnicity is salient and ethno-nationalism is promoted, can emerge. The theories in the academic field of ethnic identity and conflict, explaining how ethnic tensions can cause conflict and instability, are dominantly structural. Ethnic tensions resulting in instability and conflict are either caused by elite manipulation (Oberschall, 2000), by natural cultural attachments (Huntington, 1993) or by the social construction of these tensions (Bourdieu, 1992). The strength and significance of someone's ethnic identity, in this situation, is determined either naturally or by the political and /or social structure, whereas the individual has very little control over its own ethnic identity. There is little attention for the individual level and the role of agency in this debate is widely overlooked. The focus is on groups, elite-manipulation and structures (Brubaker, 2009). When the debate about ethnic identity in Bosnia-Herzegovina is considered, this becomes particularly apparent.

The case of Jajce, however, shows something else. It shows that even though people live in a structurally very divided society where ethnic identity is highly institutionalized and ethnic segregation is promoted both on the political and the social level, movements opposing this structure do exist. The protests in Jajce, where a group of high-school students resisted the country's ethnic identity structure by protesting ethnic segregation in schools, proved that not everyone copies whatever the structure prescribes. Nevertheless, because the role of agency in the development of ethnic identity in these settings is understudied, very little is known about how resistance against a structure can emerge. The lack of studies identifying which factors can contribute to the emergence of this resistance leaves a gap in the academic debate on ethnic identity and conflict.

This research attempts to fill this gap by exploring which circumstance made it possible for this anti-ethno-nationalist resistance to emerge. By conducting an in-depth single case study, based on 12 interviews and one focus group, the research explored how the protests in Jajce were able to emerge and how they were organized by answering the question: *'How does resistance and anti-ethno-nationalist mobilization develop in a highly institutionalized ethnic identity structure'?*

The main findings show that one of the most important elements that established the foundation for these protests was the fact that the high schools are integrated and the different ethnic groups go to school together. This is unique because in ethnically diverse towns such as Jajce, schools are normally ethnically segregated. The integrated high schools provide a space for them to meet. By going to school with peers from the other ethnic group they realize they are not so different. This opposes the structure created in Bosnia and Herzegovina that promotes division and emphasizes the

ethnic differences. The finding that the inter-group contact these students had in schools contributed to the emergence of the protest movement supports the claims made in contact theory. Contact theory claims that through long-term, qualitative and frequent inter-group contact, specifically inter-group friendships, inter-group relations will improve (Kenworthy, 2005, Pettigrew and Tropp, 2005). The other important conditions, next to the ones mentioned above, are an equal group status, common goals, intergroup cooperation and support from the authority. Besides, the support from the authority, Jajce meets all these requirements. The inter-group friendships were by many respondents even mentioned as the main motivation for them to start protesting. These friendships and other forms of inter-group relations contributed to the emergence of resistance against ethnic segregation because they did not want to become separated from their friends. Friendship gave them the motivation to resist the structure. This study finds that contact theory can be a valuable tool in developing circumstances that can generate resistance against a divisive ethnic identity structure.

It is therefore important to integrate the claims of contact theory into the examination of the role of agency and how resistance emerges in ethnically salient conflict or post-conflict situations. Contact theory can, next to a tool for improving ethnic relations in general, also be an important element in creating bottom-up resistance against ethnic segregation because it gives people a strong motivation to fight for.

Three additional elements contributed to the emergence and organization of this protest. The presence of the youth centre COD Jajce and the local activists, that were able to support the students right from the start, was an important element in the beginning of the movement. Thanks to the direct availability of these capacities, the students were able to quickly draft a strategy, based on the past experiences of these activists or the youth centre, and effectively start to gain support and broader attention. This support built the capacity of these students and made them able to transfer their resisting ideas into a protest movement.

Another important contributing factor was the *Srednja Strukovna Skola* which was one of Jajce's high schools. Most students from the protest came from this school which is not surprising considering the other school forbade students to participate. The *Srednje Strukovna Skola* supported the students openly. Besides, this school welcomed class discussions and allowed their teachers to interpret the mandatory curriculum in their own ways. During the protest this was a topic that was also discussed in class. The character of the school is significantly different than the character of the other school of which the principle did not allow teachers and students to even speak about the protests. It is therefore likely that the *Srednja Strukovna Skola* also contributed to the development of ideas that opposes the ethnic identity structure and helped with transferring these ideas into a protest.

A factor that contributed to the success of the movement was the major support they gathered, especially during the second round of protests. This major support was partly due to the a-political nature of the protest and the sincerity of the demands. There were no hidden agenda's or secret power games. Considering the general aversion in BiH against the political sphere, this a-political character benefited the protests. Together with pressure from international organizations, it led the protests to success.

These main findings identified which circumstances can encourage local agency to emerge. It shows the importance of inter-group contact, and how local, national and international support enabled them to achieve their goals. This gives valuable insights on which factors can contribute to the emergence of resistance in a context where ethnic identity is institutionalized and on how these ideas can be transformed into a successful protest movement.

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List of abbreviations

ARBiH	Armija Republike Bosne I Herzegovina
AVNOJ	Anti-Facist Council of the People's Liberation of Yugoslavia
BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
COD Jajce	Centar za Obrazovanje i Druzenje
DPA	Dayton Peace Agreement
FBiH	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
HDZ	Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica Bosne i Herzegovina
HVO	Hrvatsko Vijece Odbrane
JNA	Yugoslav National Army
NDC	Nansen Dialogue Centre
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OHR	Office of High Representative
OSCE	Organization for security and Co-operation in Europe
RS	Republika srpska
SDA	Stranka Demokratske Akcije
SDS	Srpska Demokratska Stranka
SFOR	Stabilization Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina
SFRY	Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
SHL	Schuler Helfen Leben
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
VRS	Vojska Republike Srpska

1. Introduction

There is little space for individualism in theories on the role of ethnic identity in conflict. Although identity seems like a personal issue, theories explaining ethnic identity are dominantly structural. This means structures and not individuals are the agents of human action (Demmers, 2012:15). Within ethnic identity theory, the main debate is whether this is primordial, instrumental or socially constructed (Oberschall, 2000: 982-983). Primordialists believe that ethnic identity is fixed and pre-determined and that the cultural differences between ethnic groups generate conflict (Huntington, 1993, Kaplan, 2005). Instrumentalists claim ethnic identity is a tool used by elites to manipulate the public for their own benefit which could lead to conflict (Bacova, 1998, Oberschall, 2000). Social constructivists argue ethnic identity is constructed by the social context which could generate tensions and conflict (Fearon & Laitin, 2000, Sen, 2006). All these theories provide numerous explanations of how ethnic identity becomes a source of conflict but little attention is given to individual agency. It is either your blood, the way you are manipulated by the elites, or your social context, that determines (the strength) of your ethnic identity and generates conflict.

This would mean that in post-conflict societies where, as a result of ethnic conflict, ethnic identities became highly institutionalized, people are caught in a very salient ethnic identity structure. The emphasis of these theories is on how people, in this context, are passive subjects of the ethnic structure. However, if ethnic tensions can be a driver of conflict but individuals have no control over the strength of their ethnic identity, they have no control over preventing ethnic conflict or improving ethnic relations. If individuals have no control over these issues, why study it? Therefore, studies focusing on how individuals can break out of such a structure and start resisting certain structural arrangements have been very limited in the ethnic identity and conflict debate.

The lack of knowledge about how resistance against structure emerges in this debate causes a limited understanding of how individuals in a conflict or post-conflict situation can resist the political manipulation of their ethnic identity. This knowledge can be very valuable in the search for ways to improve ethnic relations and change a certain ethnic identity structure from bottom-up. Therefore, it is important to study how resistance and mobilization against a highly institutionalized ethnic identity structure emerge from the perspective of the ethnic identity and conflict debate to emphasize that agency can and does matter.

This thesis will focus on a case that resisted the ethnic identity structure and examines how agency, in a context where ethnicity is considered to be salient, still emerges and how it is organized. Through examining the case of Jajce, a small town in Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH) where local high school students protested against ethnic segregation in schools, the emergence and organization of

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agency in a context where ethnic identity is highly institutionalized will be researched. BiH still struggles with grave ethnic tensions resulting from the Bosnian war in the 1990s, when the three ethnic groups living in BiH, the Bosniaks (Bosnian Muslims), Serbs (Bosnian Serbs) and Croats (Bosnian Croats), fought each other extensively and ethnic cleansing campaigns were widely implemented resulting in mass murders and genocide (Tabeau and Bijak, 2005: 210). The peace accord that stopped the war implemented a power-sharing system. Although this effectively stopped the war, this peace accord highly institutionalized ethnic identity in BiH's political and social institutions (Bieber, 2000).

Today, BiH is still struggling with ethnic tensions and a flawed system that facilitates the power of ethno-nationalist parties (Pinkerton, 2017: 1-2). Therefore, BiH provides a perfect setting to explore how resistance against such a structure can emerge. The high school students who set up the protests developed ideas that opposed the discourses of BiH's ethnic identity structure. They organized the first successful protest against ethnic segregation in education and were able to prevent their schools from being separated. This showed they were not mere subjects of the structure but were able to exercise agency in a context where ethnicity is very institutionalized. For that reason, the case of Jajce can give valuable insights into how this resistance emerged.

The research explores the circumstances that made it possible for resistance to emerge and how these protests were organized. The findings contribute new valuable insights into how resistance against a highly institutionalized ethnic identity structure emerges. Through conducting an in-depth single case study, the study finds that support from one of the schools and the presence of support from local activists and a local NGO helped the students in the early stages of this protest. The most important factor that created an environment for these students to develop different ideas about ethnic identity was the fact that the high schools in Jajce were mixed. This is unique as most schools in BiH are either ethnically segregated or largely mono-ethnic. Because the students in Jajce were going to school together they had frequent, long-term and qualitative contact with their peers from the other ethnic group. This deconstructed their prejudices and made them realize they were not that different, resulting in inter-group friendships and a more tolerant perspective towards each other. This finding shows support for the contact theory, which claims that inter-group contact, under certain conditions, can improve inter-group relations (Pettigrew and Tropp, 2004: 264-266). The research finds how the contact theory can be applied to the case of Jajce and can contribute to the emergence of resistance against a salient ethnic identity structure. Therefore, the contact theory could be a useful contribution to future studies exploring the emergence of resistance in ethnically tense conflict or post-conflict situations: if people's everyday experiences oppose what the structure dictates, people might become more resistant for ethnic manipulation, or other top-down structural and divisive practices.

With this conclusion, the research contributes valuable new insights to the academic debate and can be used for future projects aiming to encourage resistance against an institutionalized ethnic identity structure in similar contexts. This chapter will start with discussing the relevance, presenting the research objective and a brief research outline.

1.1 Academic relevance

In a context where ethnic identity is highly institutionalized, researching how people develop ideas that are at odds with these structural arrangements and mobilize these ideas into protest movements, is highly relevant for both academia and practice. This section discusses the academic relevance of this study.

A sense of identity can give meaning to the relations people have with others. It can give a sense of belonging and create a community of people who help and support each other. However, it can also be a source of exclusion, or worse, conflict (Sen, 2006: 2-3). In the context of ethnicity in particular, identity has been a core feature of many conflicts and tense political situations in which people seem to ignore other less confrontational features of people belonging to the other side (Sen, 2006: 2-3). Therefore, studying ethnic identity is crucial to understand more about why, how and to what extent people identify with certain ethnic groups, how these ethnic identities emerge and why this can lead to tensions and conflict. Such understanding could enable us to find out how these hardened and opposing identities can be altered into more peaceful ones (Ibid: 3-4). Dominant theories on the relationship between ethnic identity and ethnic conflict mainly focus on structural explanations. This means that they depart from the perspective that human action is determined by structural arrangements, for example the state, and individuals do not have much control over this (Demmers, 2012: 15).

Most of these theories explain the development of ethnic identity in relation to conflict with either a primordial, instrumental or a social constructivist argument. The academic debate has an elite-bias, focusing on how the ones in power of social categorization produce (ethnic) identities (Brubaker, 2004: 52). These theories are dominantly informed by groupism, meaning groups and not individuals are seen as the subject of examination. There are few studies into the daily life experiences of an individual's ethnic identity in conflict and post-conflict settings (Brubaker, 2009: 28). Due to the structural nature, the elite-bias and the focus on groups in the academic debate, studies of if and how individuals can be resistant towards these structures are very scarce. However, the case of Jajce shows that this resistance does exist. Bottom-up change can be possible, even in a post-conflict society where

ethnic identity is highly institutionalized, and it is possible for individuals to resist this structure. Gaining insights into how this resistance is generated and successfully organized in an anti-ethno-nationalist movement can be very valuable. It can point to factors that can contribute to generating opposition against a system and improving ethnic relations in post (ethnic)-conflict societies. It could even point to factors that could prevent such societies from returning to conflict by finding out how these individuals resisted the salient ethnic identity structure.

The elite-bias is also apparent in the academic debate on the conflict in BiH. Most explanations on the conflict and lasting tensions in BiH focus on the problem of elite manipulation of the political parties. Individuals are assigned little agency in the academic debate about ethnic identity in BiH and are often depicted as tools that can be used by the political elite. This picture is too simplistic, especially regarding the post-war generation. As one of the high-school students interviewed for this study stated: *'They might be able to manipulate our parents because of the war, but they can't manipulate us'*[1]

Jajce provides a case where local agency is exercised and people mobilize against the dominant ethnic identity structure. In Jajce, a group of high-school students protested against the separation of ethnic groups in schools with success. These students were able to develop distinct ideas about ethnicity and mobilize these in a context where the main theories would suspect them to be passive subjects of the ethnic identity structure. This shows that resistance against a highly institutionalized ethnic identity structure is possible. By researching how this resistance emerged and could be organized into a movement, this study fills the gap that the dominantly structural academic debate left. By gaining more understanding on the circumstances that made local agency possible and how these students were able to resist the structure, valuable insights into how bottom-up change can be generated, and how people in post-conflict societies can resist ethnic salient identity structures is developed. This could point to concrete elements that contribute to enabling anti-ethno-nationalist movements and improve ethnic relations.

1.2 Societal relevance

Apart from a clear relevance for the academic field, this study can also contribute valuable insights for the societal level. Firstly, researching resistance against a salient ethnic identity structure where ethnicity is highly institutionalized as a result of the power sharing system implemented after the war

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[1] Focus group: Hana

(Bieber, 2004: 2), can lead to important insights on how to improve similar post-(ethnic)war situations around the world. In BiH, the peace agreement that ended the war was later transformed into the new constitution. This established a power-sharing system that completely institutionalized ethnic identity and deeply divided the country institutionally and territorially, making governing ineffective (Bieber, 2004: 5-6). However, this is not unique to the case of BiH. Many other post-conflict areas, such as Northern Ireland, Macedonia and Lebanon, have seen a power-sharing system implemented in the aftermath of ethnic or sectarian conflict that made the conflicting ethnic identities more salient and formalized (Taylor, 2006, Bieber, 2004, Salamey and Payne, 2008). Insight into how people resist these structures can lead to new elements that might help to improve the ethnic relations in these countries. Seeing as ethnic tensions can generate more conflict or instability, exploring how people resist the structures that feed these tensions can provide valuable insights on how to encourage change and improve ethnic relations. Therefore, this study is not only relevant for the situation in BiH but can lead to beneficial insights for other areas where people are dealing with institutionalized ethnic tensions.

Identifying the circumstances in which people oppose divisive and ethno-nationalist ethnic identity structures could contribute to improve future projects focused on reconciliation and advocacy. The case of Jajce shows how contact theory can contribute to an explanation as to how a situation is created where individuals become (partially) resistant for the ethno-nationalist propaganda. The fact that these students made inter-group friends, contributed a great deal to their resistance against the ethnic identity structure that tries to keep them divided. Due to these friendships and other forms of relations these students had with the other ethnic group, they started to oppose the ideas spread by the structure and break out of that system. This finding can contribute to increased understanding in the field on how bottom-up ethnic manipulation or ethno-nationalist discourses can be opposed. Hence, it provides useful insights for organizations working on improving ethnic relations, resisting ethno-nationalist propaganda and promoting a culture of solidarity by showing how contact theory could help to create a situation, from bottom-up, where such movements could be developed.

For the case of BiH, this study can serve several purposes. First of all, it can contribute to the peace-building and reconciliation field in BiH by understanding how people, in particularly youth, mobilize themselves against the current structure in BiH. By finding out how and why they were able achieve this, it is possible to make new recommendations on how projects aimed at improving ethnic relations and emancipating youth can be more effective and how similar movements could be encouraged. This provides useful information for people who are dedicated in changing and improving the situation in BiH: it does not focus on how divided the situation is, but on how it could change.

This research could also provide some insights into how these protests ended up successful. Since protest movements in BiH often yield few results, identifying which factors made this movement successful can help future protest movements in developing new strategies. Future protest movements can learn from the successful ways these students obtained support from important national and international actors. The way these students delegitimized the information provided by the authorities could also be a useful lesson, since this efficiently showed how the authorities had little support for the segregation of the high schools. Hence, the success factors identified in this research can be valuable for future protest movements.

1.3 Research objective

The main goal of this research is to gather more insights into how resistance against a highly institutionalized ethnic identity structure emerges and is organized. This can fill the gap in the literature left by the focus on structural explanations, mainly elite manipulation, and the emphasis on groups, in the field of ethnic identity and conflict. By filling this gap, the research tries to find out how resistance from bottom up, in situations like these, can emerge and organize. The ultimate aim is to explore the circumstances that made the emergence and organization of an anti-ethno-nationalist movement possible. Investigating these circumstances can determine which factors contribute to developing resistance against a highly institutionalized ethnic identity structure.

Because this research explores a phenomenon that is understudied and is looking to explain certain patterns the research is inductive with a grounded theory approach (Coreley, 2015:601). The research finds new elements that show how people resist the structure that can lead to a new focus in the academic debate and new explanations on ethnic identity, ethnic conflict and the improvement of ethnic relations after conflict. The following research question is leading:

'How does resistance and anti-ethno-nationalist mobilization develop in a highly institutionalized ethnic identity structure?'

In a grounded theory approach the main question is supported by some carefully constructed sub-questions in order to identify all the circumstances that made this anti-ethno-nationalist resistance possible (Coreley, 2015: 603). The following sub-questions are formulated:

1. *'What is the ethnic identity structure in Bosnia and Herzegovina and how did this structure develop?'*
2. *'How do people in Jajce experience the ethnic identity structure and to what extent do the ethnic identity theories apply to this case?'*
3. *'How did these students develop ideas that resist the ethnic identity structure?'*
4. *'How did the students organize themselves and build a movement to resist the school segregation?'*
5. *What were the key elements that led to the successful outcomes of the protest?'*
6. *'Why did this protest emerge in Jajce?'*
7. *'What does the case of Jajce tell about the circumstances that makes the emergence of resistance against the ethnic identity structure and the organization of protest possible?'*

1.4 Research outline

In this first chapter the introduction, relevance and research objective have been addressed. The second chapter elaborates on the theoretical foundations of the research by providing the theoretical framework. It defines the important concepts and discusses the status quo of the academic debate on ethnic identity and ethnic conflict, the theoretical debate on BiH and what the debate is lacking. Following this overview, the methodological choices made in this research will be discussed. Moreover, the limitations accompanying these methodological decisions will be identified. The fourth chapter answers the first sub question. It sketches context in which this research is conducted by addressing the history and the social and political situation of BiH. After the general context, an overview of the specific context of the case will be sketched. The fifth chapter presents the collected data by answering the sub questions one by one, ending with the analysis. The final chapter presents the conclusion and main findings, as well as an answer to the research question. Following the conclusion, a reflection and several recommendations for further research and practice are provided.

2. Theoretical framework

This chapter discusses the existing literature regarding the relationship between ethnic identity and violent conflict or societal tensions, elaborating on the theoretical foundations of this research. The first part provides definitions of the main concepts. After the conceptualisation, the theoretical debate on ethnic identity and conflict and the academic debate on BiH will be discussed.

2.1 Conceptualization

Before discussing the theoretical debate on ethnic identity, it is important to provide definitions of the concepts used in this thesis. Often there is confusion about the definitions of ethnicity, nations and nationalism, which are not so clearly distinct from each other (Majstorović and Turjačanin, 2013: 13). Therefore, it is important to discuss the different contexts in which the concepts are used.

The concept of ethnicity is rather modern: its roots could be traced back to the old Greek word *ethnos*, but the modern use of this concept became prevalent in the 1990s. Ethnicity describes a collection of cultural, religious, traditional and national traits that are shared amongst a larger group (Dyrstad, 2012: 817). Some consider these traits socially constructed and some consider them natural (Brubaker, 2004:31). Currently, the word ethnicity or ethnic group is, in a Western context, most often used as a term for ethnic and racial minorities within the nation-state (Majstorović and Turjačanin, 2013: 13-14). Before the Bosnian war in the 90s, ethnicity in a Yugoslavian context was used as a synonym for nationalities. In this context, nations referred to the larger state, while nationalities referred to the smaller (ethnic) groups (Majstorović and Turjačanin, 2013: 14). The nation is defined as: *'a citizenship relation, presuming the nation to be a collective sovereignty emanating from common political participation, and a relation of ethnicity, presuming a common language, history and cultural identity' (Verdery, 1993: 180).*

The distinctions between these concepts are often unclear and vary among cultures or a person's scientific perceptions (Brubaker, 2009:23-24). When discussing the case of BiH, it is impossible to avoid these concepts, but equally important to acknowledge the complexities these concepts contain. In this thesis, the concept of ethnic identity will be central. Ethnic identity is defined as the attachments individuals have with their ethnic group that are composed by cultural attributes such as religion, language, customs and shared historical myths (Fearon and Laitin, 2000:848). The term ethno-nationalism is often used in the case of BiH, especially to describe political parties. This concept entails the desire to keep the (ethnic) nation homogenous and separated from other groups,

and loyalty to the group is stronger than loyalty to the state (Dyrstad, 2012:818). Hence, in an ethno-nationalist system ethnic identity is salient. When ethnic identity is salient, the ethnic layer of someone's identity gains importance over the other identity layers: one most strongly identifies oneself through his or her ethnic identity (Gil-White, 1999:808). Therefore, ethnic identity is not a constant identity, but a complex identity of which the salience depends on the context (Dyrstad, 2012: 818). As ethno-nationalist parties have dominated the political arena in BiH in the post-war system and ethnic identity is highly salient, being a Bosniak, Serb or Croat, for many, became the main identifier (Toquet: 2012:2013).

However, stating ethnicity is salient in a certain context does not necessarily mean a person's identity mainly originates from their ethnicity. There is often a difference between the structural character of a system and the daily life experience of ordinary citizens (Brubaker, 2004, 52-53). Especially in the case of BiH, it is important to make a distinction between the structural arrangements, meaning the political system and public institutions, and the people. This is because the division on this structural level can often be different from the division on an individual level. Although the political structure might be thoroughly divided, it would be too simplistic to suggest that those living in BiH are divided as well. Therefore, this thesis emphasizes the salience of the ethnic identity structure, and not ethnic identity itself, to make this distinction clear and to avoid a simplistic account of the situation.

Lastly, it is important to define the concept of agency. This concept is part of the fundamental academic structure-agency debate that considers either structures or individuals as the agents of action. In this case, structure refers to patterns of social relations that are reproduced, even when the actors engaging in these relations are unaware of these patterns or do not desire their outcomes (Sewell, 1992:3). Hence, individuals have no control over these social relations, but it is determined by structural patterns such as the way authority is organized. In the case of this thesis, structure mainly refers to the political arrangements in BiH that institutionalized ethnicity. The institutionalization of ethnicity in BiH means that ethnic identity has been embedded in the political and public institutions in the country. The groundwork for this institutionalization has been established by the political system designed in the Dayton Peace Agreement (DPA) (Bieber, 2004). Chapter four discusses this in more detail. Agency refers to the level of influence the actions of individuals can have on the outcomes in society (Demmers, 2012: 15). If people believe individuals have a lot of agency and they themselves decide what happens in history, they belong to the individualist approach to science; if people believe this is not determined by individuals but by structures, they have a structuralist perspective on science (Demmers, 2012: 15). The aim of this thesis is not to prove one side right or wrong and take a clear stance within this debate, but to show how, despite of the structural arrangements, agency can still occur and an anti-ethno-nationalist movement can emerge.

Accordingly, agency in this context refers to a situation in which people have been able to escape the structures, develop different ideas and mobilize these ideas to generate change into their communities.

2.2 The ethnic identity debate

The academic debate on ethnic identity is characterized by three main schools of thought: primordialism, instrumentalism and social constructivism (Fearon and Laitin, 2000: 847). The first, primordialism, originates from the ideas of Geertz (1963), who defined a primordial attachment as particular ties that exist within every individual inferred from a feeling of natural, almost spiritual affinity, rather than from social interaction (112-113). Primordialism believes that social categories are fixed by human nature rather than social convention and practice (Fearon and Laitin, 2000: 848). This means that becoming a member of such a group is not a matter of choice, but of tradition and a certain history that binds these individuals together (Gil-White, 1999: 802).

A good example of primordialist thinking can be found in the work of Robert Kaplan. His book 'Balkan Ghosts', first published in 1993, was influential on the policy of the United States regarding the interventions in BiH (Demmers, 2012: 1). The book describes Kaplan's journey through the Balkans, where he observed the importance of religion, ethnicity, tradition and culture among the different groups living in this area. Using history, his experiences and discussions with locals, he shows how the animosity between ethnic groups in the Balkans dates back to an ancient history of hatred that has perpetually been present in the area (Kaplan, 2005). The image sketched by Kaplan created the idea that these ethnic identities were fixed and the mistrust and hatred between these ethnic groups were a historic given. An outburst of violence appeared just below the surface, since these ethnic groups had been fighting each other endlessly (Oberschall, 2000: 982). However, the book disregarded the more peaceful times in which the ethnic groups cooperated and lived together (Oberschall, 2000: 988).

Another prominent thinker in the primordial school is Samuel Huntington with his 'Clash of Civilizations' theory. He argues that the new dominating source of conflict will be cultural, and that the borders between cultures will be the new battle lines (Huntington, 1993: 22). Huntington's theory divides the world into eight major civilizations and claims the differences among civilizations are based on history, culture, tradition and religion. These different civilizations have fundamentally different beliefs about these topics. To protect these beliefs, civilizations will try to defend their cultural line in an effort to stay separated from each other. This causes conflict. According to Huntington, this clash is predetermined by a century long history of certain traditions and beliefs

which are almost impossible to change. Hence, belonging to a specific civilization is not something one chooses, but rather something one is born into (Huntington, 1993: 25-29).

The main critique on primordialism is the simplification and essentialization of ethnic identity: identities are not fixed and pre-determined but can be multiple and change over time (Fearon and Laitin, 2000: 848-849). For instance, primordialism fails to explain how ethnic identities have changed in the course of history; where people born out of mixed marriages fit in; or the case of people who change their ethnic identity during their life (Majstorović and Turjačanin, 2013: 16). In the current debate, many scholars have come to argue that ethnicity itself is a social construction. This would mean that ethnic identity is not a natural trait: people are not born bearing an ethnic identity, but rather, these identities are socially constructed (Anderson, 2006; Sen, 2006; Bourdieu, 1992). The section about social constructivist theory will elaborate more on this critique.

Today, most academics have moved away from the idea of fixed identities (Brubaker, 2004: 45). However, in practice a primordial ethnicity discourse continues to be widespread. For example, in the case of BiH discourses containing stories on ancient hatreds and old ethnic feuds are still very common in both political speech, as in the media (Majstorović and Turjačanin, 2013: 89).

The second school, instrumentalism, partially acknowledges the complexities of ethnic identities. Ethnicity can be something you are born with or which is constructed throughout one's life, but can be strengthened and politicized through political manipulation. How these identities are manipulated depends on the salience of ethnic identity (Varshney, 2009**:**282) The main argument is that ethnic identities are constructed as tools for certain groups, mainly the political elites, to achieve a goal or situation that is most beneficial to them (Bacova, 1998: 33). This means ethnic identity is mainly instrumental (Gil-White, 1999: 803). Most instrumentalist theories link this to elite manipulation, stating ethnic loyalties are manipulated by the political or intellectual elite to achieve their political ends (Oberschall, 2000: 983). By creating fear for the 'other', elites manipulate the masses, who will in turn develop a strong affiliation with their own ethnic group. They use these fears for their own benefit, to achieve a specific goal or sustain their privileged position. These identities either become salient or a source of conflict when this is beneficial to the elites (Oberschall, 2000: 989).

For example, according to Collier (1999), the most important driver of conflict is the economic agendas of groups. His research emphasises how rebel groups gain certain economic benefits by using ethnicity as a narrative to legitimate and create support for conflict. In this case, ethnicity is used as a tool to gain wealth (Collier, 1999: 3-5). Accordingly, as Collier argues, if you take away these opportunities to benefit from conflict, you take away the incentives for using ethnicity to generate conflict (Collier, 1999: 15). Another main driver for certain elite groups to use ethnic

identities as a tool is to obtain power. In BiH, for example, the system of power-sharing and the ethnic division on many levels secures the position of the ethno-nationalistic political parties. Therefore, it is more beneficial for them to maintain the status quo than to try to improve ethnic relations, since that could undermine their own power. This is why many scholars argue the ethno-national political elite in BiH uses ethnicity as a tool in order to secure their position of power (Mujkić and Hulsey, 2010:143-144).

The issue that occurs within the instrumental approach to ethnic identity is that it does not provide an explanation for how specific ethnic identities survive even when they bear no beneficial ends for a certain elite or rebel group. Moreover, it does not provide a sufficient explanation on the emotional function of ethnic groups. Even though this might not be the primary aim of instrumentalist theory, it enlarges the danger of simplifying ethnic identity (Majstorović and Turjačanin, 2013: 17). Instrumentalist theories simplify the emotional layer of ethnic identity. It is unable to explain why people risk their lives for their ethnic identity. It does not provide an explanation to why ethnic identity in particular is used to mobilize the masses, and also fails to explain why whole masses follow a leader based on ethnicity while it might not be beneficial for them individually. Although elites might employ manipulation tactics, in the beginning stages of ethnic mobilization people are not coerced but voluntarily follow the masses, even when violence is involved. This points to an emotional aspect of ethnic identity that is overlooked in instrumentalist theory (Varshney, 2009: 282). Hence, instrumentalism does not explain why ethnicity in particular is so widely chosen by elites to mobilize the masses. Why not opt for other incentives, such as mobilization based on economic or ideological programs? It does not sufficiently explain why ethnic identity can drive people to violent actions (Varshney, 2008: 283-284). Apart from this, it fails to explain resistance against the ethnic identity structures elites are trying to create or sustain. If the strength of ethnic identity is determined by elite manipulation, individuals would not have a say. However, the case of Jajce shows that forms of resistance do indeed exist.

Social constructivism looks at ethnic identity differently. This third school of thought does not consider ethnic identity as something natural, but as something that is socially constructed. Social constructivism is part of a broader scientific perspective which supports the view that human activity is not simplistic and deterministic, and that the social world is formed not through natural, biological processes, but through the differing ways in which meanings are constructed and reconstructed. It believes that how people make sense of the world is the product of socio-cultural processes: facts are not neutral, but also part of these social constructs (Lock & Strong, 2010: 6-8). Regarding identity, this perspective opposes primordialism, saying identity is socially constructed and people are no pre-determined entities with an urge to uncover their essential self, but are formed through their social interactions and environment (Lock & Strong, 2010: 7). In social constructivism, an identity refers to a

social category in which an individual member takes special pride or views as a more-or-less unchangeable and socially consequential attribute (Fearon and Laitin, 2000: 848).

The social constructivist debate on ethnic identity and conflict is largely dominated by the perception that ethnic identity is determined by the reproduction of patterns prescribed by a social and/or political structure (Anderson, 2006: Bourdieu, 1992). Benedict Anderson (2006) elaborates on this in his book *'Imagined Communities',* in which he claims nations and nationalism are imagined communities. Anderson defines them as imagined because a group of people feel united through specific traditions, cultures, myths and most importantly, language, while not knowing each other personally (Anderson, 2006: 4). These imagined communities are not something natural and ancient. They are socially constructed as part of an ideological and political project of which its roots are linked to the preservation of imperial-dynastic interests. These imagined communities are used by the political elite to mobilize the masses to pursue their agendas with the purpose of building nation states and uphold their positions of power (Ibid: 159-162). Thus, Anderson argues that the nation-state, nationalism and ethnic groups are constructed as a political project in order for the elite to sustain their powers or pursue their agendas.

Bourdieu also discusses the construction of ethnic identity as an exercise of power. However, while Anderson speaks the construction of these communities by political elites, Bourdieu speaks more generally about identity and links the concept to discourses and institutions. He claims that groups and social categories are socially constructed through discourses and institutions (Bourdieu, 1992: 223-226). This corresponds with Foucault's notion about discourses that emerge as a result of power and the power these discourses can have. He argues how knowledge and language are constructed into discourses as a product of power and how these discourses construct people's perspectives on the world (Bevir, 1999:349). Bourdieu claims that the individual is an effect of power, because powers exist throughout society, making everyone in society a subject of this power. An individual is a constructed identity made by this regime of power (Bevir, 1999:349). Bourdieu argues a similar case for ethnic identity, with an institutional focus. He states the shaping of groups, creating of regions and determining who belongs where, is an act of authority. Thus, the making and unmaking of groups is not a natural process, but an exercise of power. The ones who have the monopoly over power are the ones who can impose the structures and legitimate definitions of existing groups. They spread these definitions through socialization, using the public institutions such as education and mass-media (Bourdieu, 1992: 223-226).

The development of ethnic identities can also be used as a weapon (Sen, 2006: 21). Sen argues that although individuals can have a certain level of choice in developing their (ethnic) identity, these choices can be extremely reduced in certain circumstances. There are numerous constraints that can

limit the agency in choosing your own identity. For example, the influence of how others perceive you can limit to a great extent how we see ourselves (Sen, 2006: 5-6). Hence, he argues that if someone lives in a context where ethnic identity is salient, the multiplicity of identity can be ignored. When political elites or other groups start to emphasize the singularity of identity and the difference between groups, this can lead to conflict (Ibid: 20-21). Nagel (1994) agrees with this notion, arguing that in some situations, people can have a degree of agency in the development of their ethnic identity. However, when compulsory ethnic categories are imposed by others, both informal in the form of the social structure, as formal in the form of state authority, the extent to which ethnicity can be freely constructed by individuals is very limited (Nagel, 1994: 156). Especially when political access is organized along ethnic lines, stronger and more conflictual ethnic identification can be promoted and the agency in developing your own identity gets extremely limited (Nagel, 1994: 159). This indicates that the social structures still largely determine the freedom you have in developing your (ethnic) identity, and therefore, in many cases what this identity will be (Sen, 2006: 31). This means that in the case of BiH, where ethnic identity is salient, you are expected to identify with the ethnic group you are supposed to belong to. Because political access is promoted along ethnic lines, the agency in developing an ethnic identity in BiH is almost non-existent.

These authors claim that structure determines someone's identity in a context where ethnic identity is salient. They project ethnic identity as an act of power that is reproduced by discourses and institutions, or the political elites, in order to sustain their position. There may be some element of choice, but in a context like BiH, this is eliminated because of the social context people develop their identity in. This means that individuals are mainly subjected to this reproduction of ethnic identity and have little to say in the process. Having discussed the dominant discourse on ethnic identity, there are two issues that become apparent in these theories. Firstly, they share an instrumental element, arguing that (ethnic) identity is often used, manipulated or even created to serve the interests of the political elite. Second, there is an elite bias in the debate on ethnic identity and conflict, mainly emphasizing manipulation by elites and overlooking the role of individuals in this process (Brubaker, 2004: 52). Brubaker (2004) argues that ethnic identity theory is dominated by groupism. This means that these theories tend to treat groups of people as if they are internally homogenous with common purposes (Brubaker, 2005: 28). They take ethnic and racial groups and nations as the basic constituents of social life and the chief protagonist of social conflict (Brubaker, 2009: 28). In this academic debate, groups are the fundamental units of analysis. Brubaker, however, argues that groupness is a variable and not a constant. He claims that the specific dynamics of violence are not reducible to those that govern ethnic, racial or national stratification. There should be an increased focus on the individual and their everyday experience (Brubaker, 2009: 30).

Ordinary actors do have room for manoeuvre in their everyday live, even in highly institutionalized and powerfully sanctioned categories (Brubaker, 2005: 33). This everyday employment of ethnic identity is often overlooked in the current ethnic identity and conflict debate. Instead, this debate emphasizes how structure, often meaning the state and the ones in power, defines identities. Examining this room for manoeuvre by researching how people resist a salient ethnic identity structure is important to gain more knowledge on this understudied topic.

2.3 Bosnia and Herzegovina in theory

As explained in the first chapter, the DPA, apart from putting an end to the violence, also provided an institutional and political framework that deeply divided the political and public institutions in BiH among the three ethnic groups: the Serbs, the Croats and the Bosniaks. This consolidated the power of the ethno-nationalist political parties who created numerous divisive policies and discourses, which they spread throughout education, the media and other social institutions (Majstorović and Turjačanin 2013:2) This implemented an ethnic identity structure in which someone is first of all member of one of the three ethnic groups, this membership being one of the primary, or even the only, criteria in political and public life (Bieber, 2004: 4). For example, if a person wants to run for any political position, it is not allowed if that person does not belong to any of the three ethnic groups (Majstorović and Turjačanin 2013:12-13). There have been many scholars who have elaborated on how BiH is divided and failing, and how the political, economic and social system contribute to this (Bieber, 2004, Mujkić and Hulsey, 2010, Bahtić-Kunrath, 2011, Pugh 2002, Torsti, 2009). However, the focus of most of these academic studies, of which the majority is on elite manipulation through the political, educational, social or economic system, has several implications.

Within the academic debate on BiH, the passiveness, dependency, lack of political participation and mobilization of citizens of BiH and the image of them being 'easy' subjects of manipulation, have often been claimed as part of the core problems of the country, either caused by themselves or the international community (Oberschall, 2000, Chandler, 1999, Bieber, 2002). This has created an image of the people living in BiH as passive, and not ready for democracy or to take care of themselves (Chandler, 1999: 114). This image was not only apparent to outsiders looking into the case of BiH, but also within the BiH society, where narratives like these contribute to the widespread discourse of people living in a dysfunctional state, dominated by self-centred nationalistic elites, where change is only possible through war or through intervention of the international community (Majstorović and Turjačanin 2013:90-104). This negative image of pessimism and passivism, stating

bottom-up change is not possible and protest and activism do not work became a dominant mindset, especially among the younger generation (NDC and Safeworld: 2012:22-23).

Most narratives that have been identified in BiH can partly relate to this image of the 'ordinary citizens' being powerless and subjected to structure. These narratives are created and reinforced not only by politicians and media, but also by the outsiders' perspective on BiH (Chandler, 1999: 114-115). However, research into the post-war generation shows that although most are well aware of their differences, not everyone perceives the other ethnic group negatively. For example, post-war generation in BiH are aware that all parties committed crimes during the war, something that is often not taught in schools or shown in the media. Although raised in an ethnically aware environment, they show resistance against these categories and do not seem to appoint great value to the 'blood and soil' story that emphasizes how one's ethnic group fought to save and preserve their cultural values (Majstorović and Turjačanin, 2013: 128). This shows that the issues of division and political passiveness are not as simplistic as the media and some researchers are portraying it to be, and that people can develop different ideas even if they are socialized to be ethnically divided. The portrayal of people living in BiH as divided through elite manipulation and an impossibility of change is too simplistic. It is important to discover how these people are driven to these different thoughts. How they do take action and how they organize themselves during these actions could give important insights into how change is possible to break these passive and pessimistic narratives.

There is a small section of literature on BiH that already looks into protest movements and non-ethnic mobilization. Toquet (2015) for example, researched a mass protest in Sarajevo in 2008 in which she shows how protesters were able to successfully mobilize people without involving their ethnic identity. By emphasizing their collective identity, the fact that they were all citizens of Sarajevo, they were able to transcend the ethnic division (Touquet, 2015: 406). Murtagh (2016) also examined civic engagement in BiH by exploring the mass protests that occurred in Sarajevo in 2014. He noticed that the movements that developed around these protests were characterized by an ideological rejection of the post-war political regime and avoided all political connections. Based on this, he claims that these protests emerged from a long-term shift in civic consciousness (Murtagh, 150). This means that despite of the repressive context of BiH, there is a level of civic consciousness which allows people to oppose the system. This research however, does not link the findings to the ethnic identity and violence debate and its focus on structuralist explanations. These researches mainly focus on protest itself and not on the circumstances that contribute to the emergence of ideas resisting the ethnic identity structure in the first place. Moreover, this type of research has mainly been conducted in cities such as Sarajevo, which has a relatively homogenous demographic composition, whereas this is not the case in Jajce. This homogenous population could have made it easier for people to be persuaded to stand side by side, considering the presence of one clear majority. Therefore, it is

important to link the mobilization debate to the general ethnic identity and conflict theory to point to the importance of agency in this issue and extend the research on how this agency can be developed in other cases.

3. Methodology

To examine and answer the research question: *'How does resistance and anti-ethno-nationalist mobilization develop in a highly institutionalized ethnic identity structure?'*, a single-case study was conducted. This chapter elaborates on the methodology used to answer the research question and justifies the methodological decisions made in this process.

3.1 Methodological position and case selection

The research departs from an interpretivist epistemological position. The central focus is not on seeking causalities but to explore the meaning of action (Demmers, 2012: 16). Interpretative science emphasizes the way how meaning is constructed by people and tries to acquire knowledge by interpreting how actors understand the world. Collecting objective knowledge is not possible, it is always an interpretation (Demmers, 2012:16-17). Hence, the results presented in this research will not be presented as objective facts, but will be an interpretation of how actors understand the social world. The ultimate aim is to understand a case from within, because the context is believed to be crucial (Ibid: 17). Because the main motivation of this thesis is to find out what factors make people resist a certain ethnic identity structure, the main aim is not to establish a causal relationship but to understand how people behave and what factors could drive behaviour towards resisting ethnic segregation. It does not aim to explain why people behave a certain a way but aims to understand the behaviour itself and how this behaviour occurs. The interpretivist epistemological position reflects this wish to understand the behaviour of individuals and puts their perspective and interpretations of the world central (Bryman, 2015: 30).

As aforementioned, the objective of this thesis is to gain more insights into how, in a context where the ethnic identity structure is highly institutionalized, resistance against this structure develops and anti-ethno-nationalist mobilization emerges. This can provide more insight into how bottom-up agency in such a context can be generated, a phenomenon that is widely overlooked in the ethnic identity and conflict debate due to the structural nature of most theories. Therefore, this is a theory-developing research that tries to contribute something new to the academic debate. The research can lead to new, important points of attention within this debate, which is the main purpose of theory developing research (Verschuren and Doorwaard, 2010: 33-44).

Theory-developing research is mostly accompanied by qualitative research methods. Because the question is aimed at the circumstances that made it possible for resistance to emerge in such a

context, mapping out the contextual factors is a key element of this research and in-depth examination is necessary. Qualitative methods are able to deal with this complexity and make it possible to take all the contextual factors under consideration (Verschuren and Doorwaard, 2010: 22-23). Moreover, there is no clearly identifiable independent variable, because there is not one single factor that could have caused the dependent variable, the anti-ethno-nationalist mobilization. Therefore, it is key to first identify the important elements before quantifiable relationships can be examined. Qualitative methods are best suited to deal with this consideration (Verschuren and Doorwaard, 2010: 22-23).

A single case was selected for two reasons. First, the case is unique in BiH because it actually generated change, compared to other cases of anti-ethno-nationalist mobilization that did not directly achieve their aims. Therefore, the case provides a good fit for the objective formulated in this research. Another reason is the limited scope and time available while conducting this research, which made it necessary to focus on one case only in order to be able to explore it in great detail. This made it possible to conduct an in-depth research, engaging all important contextual factors, preventing simplification and superficial conclusions (Ibid).

The case of Jajce was selected because it provides a case that is situated in a context where people have been living in a country where ethnic identity is highly institutionalized since the end of the war in 1995, and where this structure is embedded in all social and political institutions (Bieber, 2002). Hence, a whole generation grew up knowing nothing else than these structures. This makes it particularly interesting to examine a case in BiH, as these structures are entrenched in every layer of society. By researching youth who resist this structure, never having experienced another context, it rules out early-life experiences in a different setting that could have caused deviating thoughts. It makes it possible to explore how youth were still able to develop resisting thoughts. The specific case of Jajce is chosen because it is, as was mentioned before, unique in the fact that the protest movement achieved their aims.

3.2 Grounded theory approach

To conduct a qualitative, in-depth, single-case study, a grounded theory approach is implemented. The grounded theory approach looks for patterns of behaviour that explain a certain phenomenon. It is an inductive approach, meaning the theory follows from the research (Bryman, 2012:712). This allows for studying phenomena with little theoretical understanding (Coreley, 2015: 601). The aim of a grounded theory approach is to discover social processes and produce new explanations about certain phenomena. Through developing different categories, links between these categories can be established. This eventually points to one or two core features that caused the

explored phenomenon (Bryman, 2012: 570). The grounded theory approach engages a phenomenon from the perspective of those living it. This perspective suits the interpretivist position of this thesis which aims to understand a case by collecting knowledge on how actors understand the world (Coreley, 2015: 601).

In the grounded theory approach the collection of data and the analysis proceed simultaneously. Throughout the data collection, different categories are developed. These categories indicate what kind of further data is needed to answer the main research question. During this process, the different categories are constantly compared to each other to find the links between them. The aim is to end up with saturate categories. If the category is saturate, it means no new information is obtained within these categories and the research subjects repeatedly confirmed what was previously stated (Bryman, 2012: 568-571).

Because the independent variables are not evident in this research, it is not possible to establish a causal mechanism that can be researched. A causal mechanism is aimed at identifying a relation whereby X contributes to producing Y (Beach and Pendersen, 2012). A grounded theory approach is well suited to address these issues. This research is about identifying the circumstances in which a certain phenomenon could emerge, instead of establishing a direct causal relationship. The grounded theory approach provides the tools needed to reveal these circumstances.

Since the structural dominance in theory in the ethnic identity and conflict debate often overlooks cases where agency did play a role and little attention has been awarded to how this agency can be generated, the grounded theory approach can help to explore new elements of attention that can contribute to the emergence of agency and come to new conceptions or theory. By discovering emerging patterns in the explored case through examining those living these patterns, further insights can be gathered. This can result in the development of theoretical explanations for the existence and functioning of those patterns (Coreley, 2015: 601). Developing not only insights into what is happening, but into how and why it is happening (Coreley, 2015: 601). Because the data collection and analysis proceed simultaneously, the approach gives more room for in-process adjustment. The starting point is a general idea of what is aimed to be understood, guided by carefully constructed questions. However, during the process there is room to reframe these questions as the research context becomes more familiar (Ibid: 603). In the early stages of this research it was not known yet which factors were more or less important in the development of anti-ethno-nationalist mobilization, therefore this flexibility made it possible to reframe preliminary expectations and adjust the research questions based on the experiences obtained during the research. This allowed for the right questions to be asked. Section 3.3 and 3.4 discuss how this approach is implemented in the data collection and the analysis.

3.3 Data collection

The main method used to collect the data was interviews. This is a method that fits well into the grounded theory approach, since it puts the experiences of the people living the patterns that are explored in a central position. To complement the interviews, triangulation (using more than one method: Bryman, 2012: 392), is implemented by using two additional methods to increase the internal validity. Firstly, a desk-research was conducted exploring the general context the case is situated in and the specific history of the case itself. This made it possible to back the findings in the interviews with historical and contextual factors and link them together. Second, one focus group was organized in order to consider the way the central topic was discussed in a group-setting, and to emphasize a specific theme in a more in-depth conversation (Bryman, 2012: 503).

The research population consists of the students in Jajce that engaged in the protests, a teacher, and the NGOs who supported the protests. For the research, 12 interviews were conducted with 14 respondents in total. The interviews consisted of 10 individual semi-structured interviews, and two duo-interviews. Moreover, one focus group was conducted consisting of four respondents. First, several expert interviews with NGOs and international organizations involved in the protest were conducted to get an expert perspective on the situation in BiH in general, and on what happened in Jajce. Apart from that, several in-depth interviews with activists, students and teachers directly involved in the protests were held to gain insights in how they organized, why they started to protest and how they achieved to develop such a movement. Third, one focus-group and one duo-interview were organized to take the group dynamics of these students into account and to examine how they discuss these topics with each other.

The semi-structured interviews are used as a tool to explore the topic in detail and to map out what happened by discussing these events with different actors involved. These interviews are also important to uncover elements that might not be discussed in a group setting, because they may be too sensitive. During these semi-structured interviews, an oral history interviewing method was used. This is a method in which a respondent reflects on a specific event (Bryman, 2012: 491), in this case the protests. The questions were designed, ranging from broad to more particular, to map out the contextual factors that could have played a role in the development of these protests. Next to the semi-structured interviews, a focus group was organized. Focus groups are group discussions in which a target group, with common features, discusses different aspects of a specific topic (Ivanoff & Hultberg, 2006: 125). In a focus group not only the answers, but also the group interaction is used as research data (Ivanoff & Hultberg, 2006: 126). These group interactions can be useful to see how and

if ethnic identity still plays a role in what can and cannot be discussed, and how and if it plays a role in the group dynamics by comparing them to the individual interviews with students.

Focus group methodology sees the participants as the experts and tries to discover how they think and talk about a particular issue. Specifically, not only what they think is important, but why they hold that view (Ivanoff & Hultber, 2006: 127). By looking at how the respondents respond to certain topics during a focus group, some of their, maybe unconscious, sentiments towards topics, can be revealed. Through this, it is possible to find out which topics are easy to talk about, which are more controversial, and to what extent students share these sentiments with each other. Moreover, a focus group can provide a more natural and friendly environment for the participants than a one-on-one interview. The respondents can encourage each other to participate actively and feel more comfortable in a friendly environment (Ibid: 128). Because this research is focused on high-school students, a focus group could provide a more pleasant setting. Being surrounded by their peers allows them to feel more comfortable to participate than in a one-on-one interview.

The method for the selection of the respondents was theoretical sampling. This is a common method in grounded theory research and selects respondents based on what is relevant for the theory. The selection is based on strategic choices, in order to engage actors that are relevant for the case you are studying (Bryman, 2012: 418). The respondents for the interviews were for a large part selected with the help of the youth centre COD Jajce. They provided access to the community and reached out to the students and one teacher. The NGOs were selected on the basis that they were involved in the protest. A downside of this selection process is an unavoidable selection bias, as COD Jajce was influential in selecting respondents. This will be addressed in the discussion section. The processing of the interviews in this thesis has been done on first name basis to protect the privacy of the respondents and meet the sensitivity of the explored topic.

By using semi-structured questions, for both the individual-interviews, the focus group, and group-interviews, the answers the respondents could give were open. This prevented the interviews from being influenced by the researcher and placed the respondent in the expert seat (Yin, 2003: 90). By only slightly structuring the interviews, it was clear which topics would be discussed to make sure the important issues for the research were talked about. A broad structure was established for the interviews, but there was a lot of space for the respondents to decide where they wanted to go with their answers. This prevented their answers from being too biased and sketched an image of their perspective that was as accurate as possible (Yin, 2003: 91). Nonetheless, interviews will always be subjected to bias to a certain extent (Ibid). This issue will be discussed in the discussion section below. The interview questions are included in the appendix.

The end of the data collection was established by data saturation. This means that the interviews reached a point where the basis of establishing important factors that played a role was created and confirmed in its importance. In that case, there is no need to continue with data collection because the findings are repeated. The new data no longer stimulates new theoretical understandings (Bryman, 2012: 420). Data saturation achievement is an important part of the grounded theory approach and marks the end of the open coding stage which is discussed in the next section (Bryman, 2012: 420). Despite the limited number of interviews, the issues mentioned in the interviews with students and the NGOs/ activists, started to repeat themselves in the end stages of the research. No new issues arose in the last few interviews. This could be a sign that for these groups all important factors that played a role in this case were already identified and the data is rich enough to base conclusions on. Data saturation for these two groups was most likely achieved. For the parents and teachers, this was however not the case. This will be discussed in section 3.5.

3.4 Analysis

The analysis of the interviews and the focus group proceeded simultaneously with the data collection. Preceding this, an analysis of secondary literature about the context of BiH in general and Jajce specifically was conducted. By analysing literature on the situation in BiH, it was possible to establish if, and how, ethnic identity is institutionalized in BiH and how this came about. This analysis identifies what the ethnic identity structure in BiH looks like. Analysing the situation on the national level and connecting this to the case helped to establish to what extent the local and the national level differentiated to take into account the specific historical and cultural traits in Jajce that could have played a role in the emergence of protest. Moreover, the analysis of secondary literature provided the first framework by which the interview questions were constructed.

The interviews and the focus group were analysed through three stages of coding as described in the grounded theory approach. The first stage is open coding. In this stage, specific themes appearing from the data are revealed. During this process the first factors important for explaining the phenomenon are identified (Bryman, 2015: 569). With the support of the information obtained from the study of secondary literature, several sub questions were developed. These sub questions address the variables that possibly influenced the emergence of the protests and its success. In this stage, the sub questions were constantly redefined based on the findings that appeared from the interviews in order to take into account all the important factors that played a role in the case. After the interviews the important passages in the transcripts that gave answers to the sub questions were highlighted and categorized into different themes. An important part of this stage was the constant comparison

(Bryman, 2015: 568) in which the answers of the respondents were compared with each other and with the analysis of the secondary literature. The comparison and categorization of these answers revealed a few central themes. Eventually this open coding process led to the identification of the main factors that influenced the occurrence of the phenomenon and answered sub questions 2 up to 5.

In the second coding stage, reflected in the sixth sub question, the most important factors identified in the previous questions were connected to each other. The axial coding stage aims to connect the factors identified in the first stage and links it to context, consequences, to patterns of interaction and cause (Bryman, 2015: 569). This process clarifies how different contextual factors such as the historical, cultural and demographic traits of Jajce and the integrated high-school system played a role in the development of resistance against the ethnic identity structure. It also shows how different intervening variables such as NGO and activist support, the open character of one of the schools and wide-spread support helped with laying the foundations for these protests. This coding process identified the most important circumstances that made the protests happen.

The last stage of coding, selective coding, selects the core category. The core category is the factor that played a central role in the occurrence of the studied phenomenon (Ibid). This is the most important element in explaining the central phenomenon. This leads to the main findings and the new theoretical contribution of the research. It identifies how inter-group contact was crucial for the emergence of resistance in Jajce and links this to contact theory. This is addressed in the last section of chapter six.

3.5 Discussion

The methodological choices had several consequences on the outcomes of this research. Because of the depth of the research, that tried to engage all possible contextual factors, together with the triangulation of methods using a desk-research, interviews and a focus group, the internal validity is quite strong (Bennet, 2004: 19, Bryman, 2012: 392). This means that it is less likely an important factor in the studied circumstances is overlooked and biases the conclusion, as the case is studied in such great detail (Bennet, 2004: 19). The inevitable trade-off, however, is the external validity. The external validity is low because the findings are based on a single-case study and therefore so specific, it is difficult to generalize the conclusions to a broader context (Bennet, 2004: 19).

However, despite of Jajce's specific context, the political institutions and the ethnic identity structure in place are similar to the rest of BiH. The local ruling parties in Jajce are the same as the ones most popular in the majority of BiH (Centralna Izborna Komisjija Bosne I Hercegovina). The

political sphere and the ethnic identity structure are similar to other regions in BiH. This similarity makes it possible to generalize the findings to other cases because they have the same ethnic identity structure. Apart from that, a similar ethnic identity structure is not only present in BiH. In many post-ethnic-conflict situations such as Northern-Ireland and Lebanon, ethnic identity became institutionalized (Taylor, 2006; Bieber, 2004; Salamey and Payne, 2008). There are many similarities with the way ethnic identity was institutionalized in BiH. In Lebanon, for example, the power-sharing system also mainly served the sectarian political elites and gave them a chance to consolidate their power (Salamey & Payne, 2008: 455). Therefore, the findings in this research, although caution is necessary with generalization, could be generalized to other contexts where the ethnic identity structure is similar to the one in Jajce and point to factors that could help to develop resistance against this structure. This is discussed in more detail in section 7.2 of the conclusion.

Another limitation of the research is the relatively small number of interviews. It was difficult to gain access to the community, and many people were reluctant to give an interview. This is partly because the protests gained a lot of attention: the people in Jajce had to deal with a lot of media and multiple researchers coming into their town. Now, more than a year after the protest, many students and teachers are tired of the subject, and do not have the energy to speak about it anymore. This made the search for respondents more difficult. Next to that, most teachers and parents were reluctant to speak because they were likely scared of the consequences. During the protests, the authorities threatened many parents of participating students with losing their jobs. This has also been the case for many teachers that were employed through the political parties, especially in the *Nikola Sop* high school. There, the director forbade teachers and students to publicly say anything about the protests. This made people fearful of speaking openly about the protests and made it challenging to get an interview with them. Because of this reason, the perspective of the parents is not directly represented in the research, and the perspective of the teachers is based on one interview. The open coding stage was forced to end before complete data saturation was achieved because these groups could not be reached. This biases the outcomes of the results and increases the possibility that certain variables were overlooked.

However, the interviews with the most important groups: the students who engaged in the protest, and the NGOs and local activists that were involved, did achieve data saturation There was hardly any new information or perspectives coming from these interviews at the end stages of the open coding process. There were no new elements named that could have contributed to the emergence of the protests during the last few interviews and the factors previously mentioned were confirmed. Since these two groups were directly involved in the protest, and therefore the ones who directly opposed the ethnic identity structure, these were the most important groups for the research. This indicates that the collected data is valid enough to draw conclusions based on the information obtained.

Bias also occurred in the selection process. The students that were interviewed for this research were largely approached through the local youth centre, as was mentioned before. Without COD Jajce, it probably would not have been possible to reach the number of students that have been reached. The consequence is that the selection is not random, and only the respondents connected to the youth centre were reached. However, almost all students that participated in the protest were also active inside COD Jajce, which means this link would have been inevitable even if the selection would not have been through the organization. Still, this results in bias in the findings of this research. Another bias affecting the results is the fact that the students who participated in the focus group were all friends. Although this created trust and a friendly setting, it can also influence the answers they give and, in some cases, prevent participants from sharing their views openly (Ivanoff & Hultber, 2006: 129).

Another limitation is the personal interpretation bias of the analysis. To come to a conclusion, the answers provided by the interviews had to be interpreted. As interpretation is always personal, this inevitably results in interpretation bias. This bias is increased by cultural differences and language difficulties, since not all respondents were fluent in English. Although the level of English was sufficient for the interviews, there may have been discrepancies in what the respondents meant and how they expressed themselves. Therefore, it is important to emphasize that the findings in this research are subjected to interpretation and do not state facts, but an interpretation of what happened.

Lastly, there were two practical limitations to this research: the limited time, and the fact that the internship accompanying the research was not located in Jajce. Because the internship was located in Sarajevo, it was not possible to live in Jajce. Although a lot of time was spent in Jajce, and going up and down from Sarajevo was very well possible, this did not allow for the possibility to blend into the community and build a network. Therefore, the network of COD Jajce was necessary to reach the students. If the three months would have been spent in Jajce, the chances of reaching more respondents, including parents and teachers, might have been bigger. However, this was not possible due to practical constraints. If more time would have been available, it also would have been easier to build a network within the community. However, it was not possible to reach more respondents with the limited time.

Despite of these methodological limitations, the achievement of data saturation with the two most important groups, the length and depth of the interviews, the triangulation of data and backing the interviews with the study of the recent history of Jajce, makes the data obtained substantial enough to draw conclusions. The data provides new insights into which circumstances could lead to the emergence of the resistance against structures where ethnic identity is highly institutionalized. Moreover, it was possible to link these findings to a theoretical explanation, adding new insights into

the ethnic identity and conflict debate in relation to the emergence of agency. This shows how more attention needs to be directed towards this topic, since agency does exist in these situations, and can generate change.

4. Bosnia and Herzegovina: how ethnic identity became institutionalized

This chapter discusses the context in which the research takes place and answers the first sub question: '*What is the ethnic identity structure in Bosnia and Herzegovina and how did this structure develop?*'. It discusses the history and the current social and political situation of BiH. It focusses on the ethnic relations, how the ethnic identity structure in BiH developed and how this influenced the Bosnian society and the civil society and resistance movements in particular. The chapter discusses how the structural arrangements developed in post-Dayton BiH institutionalized ethnicity. This shows the strength of the ethnic structure in BiH and how institutions like discourses, ethno-nationalist parties and other structures keep the population divided.

4.1 Historical background

BiH has always been a borderland between what is considered to be 'East' and 'West'. Its geographical location was on the edge of the Ottoman empire and the Western European empires, such as the Austro-Hungarian empire. The history of BiH is marked by the struggles from foreign rulers of these 'Eastern' and 'Western' empires to control the region (Andjelic, 2003: 6). The presence of multiple influence spheres in BiH's history is an important element in the primordialist explanations for ethnic conflict in BiH. In Huntington's view, the fact that these different influences were present and the fact that BiH has always been in between different worlds, caused a clash of civilizations which destabilized the country (Huntington, 1993: 25-29). Accordingly, this is where Kaplan bases his explanation of what caused the Bosnian war in the 1990s on. This explanation emphasizes the conflicting identities that root back to the ancient history of the country (Kaplan, 2005).

After conquering the land of the Bosnian kings, the Ottoman empire ruled for a long period of time, from the 15th until the 18th century. In 1878, the Austro-Hungarian empire conquered BiH and ruled over the country until the beginning of the First World War, which started in Sarajevo with the killing of Prince Franz Ferdinand. After WWI, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was established, which lasted until the Second World War After WWII, the Kingdom transformed to the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) which would last until the war in 1992 (Andjelic, 2003:6-17).

As Huntington and Kaplan show, a popular interpretation of BiH's history is a narrative of ethnic tensions and ancient hatreds, in which the ethnic groups living in the region have always been hostile towards each other. This narrative was used to explain the events during the collapse of the

SFRY. However, there is proof for a different narrative. According to historian Andjelic (2003), there is more historical proof for a narrative of solidarity and tolerance, than one of hostility (p.5). He describes how during the Ottoman rule, although Islam was the official national religion, other religions were tolerated. There were no large conversion campaigns, and people were generally not persecuted because of their faith. This is in contrast with many Western European countries at the time (Ibid: 7). During the Austro-Hungarian period, there equally were no persecutions of religious groups (Cuvalo, 2007: xc-xci). Cuvalo also describes that although BiH had always been inhabited by many different religions and groups, the construction of the current ethnic identities only began in the beginning of the 20th century (Cuvalo, 2007: xci). Before, ethnic identity was of less importance and not as politicized as during the 20th and 21st century (Andjelic, 2003: 7).

Despite this, discrimination was present at that time. During the Ottoman empire, for example, Muslim citizens clearly enjoyed a more privileged position compared to other religious groups (Cuvalo, 2007: Ixxxi). This mainly applied to upper-middle class citizens who wished to enter elite circles. On the other hand, people living in the countryside and lower-class workers were left relatively free in choosing their religion. Considering the general religious restrictions that applied to most countries in Europe around that period of time, this is especially notable (Andjelic, 2003: 6). However, in the late 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, ethnic identity and the fight for independent nation states of each of these groups started to increase (Cuvalo, 2007: xci).

In the final years of the Austro-Hungarian rule in BiH, nationalist groups started to gain popularity. The majority of the orthodox groups started to embrace Serbian nationalism, which entailed the creation of a 'greater Serbia' where BiH needed to become a part of. Most Catholics started to embrace Croatian national movements. On the other hand, the Muslim population was ambiguous regarding their national orientations. They wished to retain BiH as a separate political unit, so that they could preserve their traditions and privileged position (Cuvalo, 2007: xci). Between 1912 and 1913, these nationalist movements clashed in the first and the second Balkan war. In the first war, the Serbians, Montenegrins, Bulgarians and Greeks attempted to defeat the Turks left on the Balkan territories. Their efforts were successful but led to war between the allies over what should happen with the territories taken from the Turks. In the second Balkan war, an alliance was formed against Bulgaria which was defeated and deprived of some of its territories. These wars mostly benefited Serbia, which more than doubled its size and was encouraged in pursuing its expansionist policy (Ibid: xcv).

After a young Serb nationalist killed Archduke Francis Ferdinand in Sarajevo, the First World War broke out. At the end of the war, the Austro-Hungarian empire disintegrated and BiH became part of the kingdom of Yugoslavia, of which each state had its own administration and a certain level of

autonomy (Ibid: xcvi-xcvii). This, however, could not silence the nationalist movements. Several movements now transformed into institutionalized political parties (Ibid: xcvii). These nationalist tensions erupted again in the Second World War. The Second World War again provided an opportunity for the neighbouring countries to annex parts of BiH and expand their territories (Redzic 2005:1). The Croatian nationalist movement, the Ustasha's, allied with the Germans who promised them territories in BiH. The Ustasha's killed large numbers of Serbs, Jews and Roma. The Serbian nationalist movement, the Chetniks, started to fight against the Croats and also directed their aggression to the Muslims. Another important group were the Partisans, led by the communist party and Tito, who fought against the Nazi's in an alliance against fascism (Redzic, 2005:1-2). The Partisans became the victors of the conflict and created a new communist state, the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY), led by Tito (Ibid).

The two World Wars and the two Balkan wars had a big impact on the ethnic relations within the SFRY. Nonetheless, Tito largely succeeded in creating a unified state where the principle of 'Unity and Brotherhood' was leading. Although the past was not forgotten, he did succeed in the promotion of a unified Yugoslavian identity, which was, particularly in Bosnia, adopted by the majority. During this time, tolerance and co-operation amongst the ethnic groups was the norm (Andjelic, 2003: 27-29). However, after Tito's death in 1980 this ethnic solidarity slowly started to transfer into animosity, resulting in the disintegration of the SFRY. Why the SFRY eventually collapsed is highly contested. Some say it was mainly caused by the ancient ethnic hatreds (Kaplan, 2010), others say it was the nationalist elites who started to promote ethno-nationalism and fear for the 'other' (Oberschall, 2000). Some say it was because of the institutional and economic breakdown (Ulriek-Schierup, 1992) and some blame it on international intervention (Herman and Peterson, 2007). Even though the aim of this thesis is not to answer this question, it is important to keep in mind the contested nature of the analyses of these events while providing an overview of what happened during the time of the SFRY.

In the years surrounding Tito's death, the economic prosperity the SFRY had known for years started to decline. Moreover, Tito's death caused a power-vacuum to emerge, which led to instability in the Communist Party they were unable to restore. The economic decline, together with the instability within the Communist Party, contributed to the opportunity for Milosevic to seize power (Andjelic, 20-21). In 1987 Milosevic, the right-hand of the president of Serbia at the time, was sent to Kosovo to resolve the issues between the Serbians and the Albanians in the autonomous region. Although protocol of the Communist Party was that no ethnic group should be favoured over the other and the discourse of 'Brotherhood and Unity' should always be implemented, Milosevic specifically addressed the two ethnic groups promising the Serbians to protect them from the Albanians. This was the start of a new nationalistic agenda within the political elite of the SFRY (BBC, 1996). Once the Communist Party gave up its monopoly of power in 1990, the nationalistic parties quickly took over in

most nations, and the nationalistic agendas prevailed (Cuvalo, 2007: ciii). The first free elections were organized in BiH that year, in which the power of the three ethnic parties who are still ruling today - SDA for the Muslims, HDZ for the Croats and SDS for the Serbs - was established (Cuvalo, 2007: ciii).

Meanwhile, Milosevic kept expanding his power in the SFRY. When he became president of Serbia, he removed officials from Serbia's autonomous regions, like Kosovo, to replace them by people loyal to him. In the end, Milosevic managed to control almost half of the SFRY. This led to anger in the other republics and they started to resist. Slovenia was the first state to declare its independence, after which Croatia followed quickly (BBC, 1996). BiH declared independence in 1992 when a majority voted to leave the SFRY in a referendum. The new states were quickly recognized by the international community. Milosevic did not accept their independence, however, and sent the Yugoslav National Army (JNA) to 'protect' the Serbians living outside of Serbia (Cuvalo, 2007: civ-cv). His aspiration was to create a 'greater' Serbia, in which all territories where a large percentage of Serbians lived belonged to them (BBC, 1996).

The multi-ethnic composition of Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs in BiH, made the situation far more complex than the Croatian and Slovenian case. The consequence was a war with intense violence and large numbers of civilian casualties (Tabeau and Bijak: 2005: 188). Strategies of ethnic cleansing were implemented to drive people from their hometowns to preserve them for (displaced) members of other ethnic groups and create an ethnically clean geographical area. All three parties took part in ethnic cleansing, although the largest ethnic cleansing campaigns were conducted by the Serbs (Tabeau and Bijak, 2005: 189). Apart from the displacement of ethnic groups, ethnic cleansing sometimes resulted in mass murders, mass rape or even genocide. The most famous case is the genocide in Srebrenica, where Serb forces systematically killed over 8000 men in July 1995 (Dyrstad, 2012: 821). This resulted in over a hundred thousand deaths, mainly Muslim civilians, and around two million displaced persons. However, estimations of the casualties of the war are still contested (Tabeau and Bijak, 2005: 210).

The international community had a significant involvement in the war. The UN was involved from the beginning but focussed mainly on humanitarian needs. In 1992, a UN protection force (UNPROFOR) was sent to BiH to protect the provision of humanitarian aid. Eventually, approximately 23.000 peace keepers were present in BiH. However, their responses such as sanctions and creating UN 'safe areas' did not succeed in keeping the civilians safe and confirmed the impression that they tried to avoid direct involvement in the war (Cuvalo, 2007: cvii-cviii). Meanwhile, the great geopolitical players were also hesitant to intervene. It took the international community almost three years to undertake direct action against the Serbs with NATO air strikes on

Serb targets. With the Serb position weakened, the US stepped in to negotiate a peace treaty. This led to the signing of the General Framework for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, also known as the Dayton Peace Agreement, which ended the war in 1995, (Cuvalo, 2007 cix-cx).

4.2 The Dayton Peace Agreement and the new political system

The Framework for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, better known as the Dayton Peace Agreement (DPA), ended the war in BiH and was later transformed into the new constitution. The new political system that was created is considered to be a consociationalist system. Invented by Arend Lijphart (1969), consociationalism is a system of power-sharing, which is often implemented in divided societies to bring more stability. It is a group-based democracy model in which different groups have a level of autonomy and self-rule, where there is proportional representation and where there is some veto-voting mechanisms that prevents one group from outvoting the other (Bahtic-Kunrath, 2011: 900).

BiH was divided into two entities, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) and Republika Srpska (RS). In addition to these entities the Brčko District is another separate territory with its own international administration. This district was carved out for arbitration but a proper agreement, also after the war, about this region was never reached and it stayed in this position ever since (Divjak and Pugh, 2008:374). The three ethnic groups, the Serbs, the Croats and the Bosniaks, were turned into the three constituent people: this means only if you are a member of one of these groups, you can be a representative within the political system (Majostarović and Turjačanin, 2013:23). The inter-entity border largely mirrors the front lines present at the time the DPA was signed. After the systematic ethnic cleansing policies implemented during the war, which either killed or banned the 'other' ethnic groups, BiH's previously multi-ethnic regions were completely cleansed. The RS consists of 90% Serbs, while the FBiH is shared between 70% Bosniaks, and 30% Croats. The FBiH is again ethnically structured in cantons with the exception of some of the larger cities (Bahtic-Kunrath, 2011: 900). Hence, the DPA transformed the ethnic cleansing policies into official legislative territorial divisions, for a large part officially erasing BiH's multi-ethnic demographic composition. Although the right to return was accommodated within the DPA, this territorialisation of ethnicity made it impossible or unfavourable for many internally displaced people to return home, especially in the first years after the war (Fischel de Andrade and Delaney, 2001: 316).

Both entities have a high level of self-rule. They have their own government, taxation system, educational policies and to some extent, their own foreign policies (McMahon and Western, 2009: 69).

The RS has a centralized entity government with its own president, while the FBiH is divided further into different cantons, also with a certain level of autonomy. At the national level, the presidency is divided between the three constituent people. This entails that every four years, a Croat, a Bosniak and a Serb president is elected and rotates the presidency (Bahtic-Kunrath, 2011: 901). The national level has two chambers: The House of People, which has 15 members, 5 of each ethnic group, elected by the national assemblies of each entity, and the House of Representatives, which consists of 28 directly elected members from the FBiH and 14 from the RS (Bahtic-Kunrath, 2011: 901). The system is based on proportional representation. Apart from this, there is a veto-voting mechanism in place to prevent one ethnic group from imposing a decision on the other groups (Ibid: 900). At the moment, the three presidents elected in the last presidential elections are delivered by the SDA, the HDZ and the SDS, the three most popular ethno-nationalist parties which have been in power since the war on both the local and the national level, with some exceptions (Centralna Izborna Komisjija Bosne I Hercegovina).

Another important institution that was brought into existence by the DPA is the Office of the High Representative (OHR). This institution was created as a temporary actor ran by the international community, to oversee the implementation of the DPA and to make sure there were no violations to the agreement (Caplan, 2004: 55). The OHR's powers increased in the 2000s, for example with the ability to remove public officials from office. Although these extra powers have since been retracted, the departure of the OHR from BiH keeps being delayed every year (Manning, 2004: 62). This is a sign of the extensive international involvement in BiH that has been present since the end of the war, and is still significant (Lai, 2016: 316).

The framework developed in the DPA and the constitution that followed from it constructed a very complex political system of power-sharing with many levels of governance divided along ethnic lines. This has led to several complications and a vast amount of literature criticising the DPA has been written. Their main critique is that by dividing the political institutions along ethnic lines, ethnic identity became institutionalized (Bieber, 2003; Pinkerton, 2017; Majostarović and Turjačanin, 2012). This means that ethnicity is still a primary political identity, which makes it difficult to pass beyond ethnic issues because they are ingrained in all political institutions of the country (Bieber, 2003: 2). The power-sharing system, designed with the idea in mind that it would eventually encourage cooperation, did not lead to a harmonious power-sharing system, but to institutionalizing the ethnic divide (Bieber, 2003: 3). Coalition building and bargaining possibilities were very limited in this design, and the government fails to work as cohesive cabinets, but rather divides the power without much cross-group coordination and cooperation (Ibid: 5). Not only does this fuel the ethnic divide, but it also renders governance of the country very ineffective, as people are working against each other. For example, the veto-mechanism has little limitations and decisions can be vetoed without any constraints. This creates an ungovernable situation, as most policy decisions are vetoed by one of the

ethnic groups, obstructing the policy making process (Ibid: 7). The many levels of government make the system bureaucratic and vulnerable for corruption, which is another one of BiH's major problems (Divjak and Pugh, 2008: 374).

Another feature of the institutionalization of ethnicity in the DPA is that it gives little incentives for the political parties to work together. Because power is divided between the ethnic groups, competition is limited and there is always a certain share of power secured for the ethno-nationalist parties, as long as voters keep voting for their own ethnic group. Hence, multi-ethnic cooperation and less division can threat the positions of the ethno-nationalist parties, which makes it more beneficial for them to keep people divided and fuel ethnic hate and distrust. By keeping the people scared of each other, they drive them into choosing the 'safe' option, which is the party that protects your specific ethnic interest (Mujkic and Hulsey, 2010: 151-152). This makes the ethno-nationalist political parties in power more interested in maintaining the status quo than in moving towards less division and more progress. One of the main tools used to pursue this is through the veto-mechanism, which prevents more radical policy initiatives that would disrupt the status quo from passing (Bahtic-Kunrath, 2011: 900).

Another critique on the DPA is the extensive international engagement, specifically the creation of the OHR. This institution has significant power in BiH, which is considered undemocratic by some (Chandler, 1999). Some scholars argue that the OHR created a dependency issue that obstructed the democratization process of the country. Because of the extensive international involvement, the political institutions often did not take responsibility and left issues they did not want to deal with for the international community to handle. This weakened the political institutions, did not give incentives for taking responsibility and made them partly dependent of this international involvement (Bieber, 2002: 26-27). Moreover, this has caused major legitimacy problems towards the international community, as politicians started to feel more accountable towards international actors than towards the people of BiH because of the extensive international intervention. There was no mechanism to hold the international community accountable for anything (Belloni, 2001: 172).

A final major problem of the system created by the DPA is that it is exclusionary. If you do not belong to one of the three constituent people, it is not possible to obtain a political position (Majostarović and Turjačanin, 2012:23). This has also become the case in society in general. If you do not belong to, or especially if you could belong to one of the three groups but do not identify with any of them, it may be harder to find a job since the ethno-nationalist parties also control a large part of BiH's economy (Divjak and Pugh, 2008: 375). This will be explained in more detail in section 4.4.

Ethnicity is still the most important socio-political categorization and organization, which is for a large part caused by the DPA. Although the DPA was meant to create ethnic-cooperation, it

fuelled division and empowered the war-time parties. Apart from that, it makes the opportunity for institutional change difficult as every attempt at change can be blocked immediately through veto-voting. This shows the extent to which the DPA institutionalized ethnic identity into Bosnian politics, and how the elite is benefitting from maintaining this system.

4.3 Local political institutions and the educational system

The previous section showed how BiH is territorially divided. Because of this division, a lot of political power is situated at the entity and local level. In the case of the RS, there is a centralized administrative structure and an entity-level ministry that regulates policies in the 64 municipalities. In the FBIH, however, the system is much more decentralized (Jokay, 2000: 94-95). This section discusses the local arrangements in the FBIH and explains how the educational system is constructed. Since Jajce is situated in the FBIH, the local political system of the RS is not relevant for this thesis and will therefore not be discussed in detail.

The FBIH has ten cantons. Each canton has its own legislatures, constitutions, governors and ministries. Each canton has a separate set of local government laws and is free to create independent canton ministries. The FBIH does not have a strong central body of legislation to govern the subnational units, and most of the power is situated at the canton levels. Therefore, regulations and institutional arrangements between the cantons can differ to a great extent. There are considerable variations in redistribution of taxes, the allocation of other resources and municipal tasks (Jokay, 2000: 95). In general, the level of authority the municipalities enjoy is mostly decided upon by the canton. However, if the municipality has a majority population that is different from that of the canton as a whole, then education, housing, culture, public services, land use planning and several other services must be allocated to the municipal level to protect the minority within the city (Ibid: 97). In practice, this means the FBIH has ten different systems of local government, making BIH's governing structure very complicated and bureaucratic (Ibid: 97). The cantons are responsible for most public services, including education. Each canton has a Ministry of Education, which takes almost all important decisions, such as the requirements of curricula. There is a central Ministry of Education too, but its role is limited to general coordination and setting general rules, such as the age children need to go to school (Mrsic, 2016). Primary education begins at the age of five and lasts nine years. Secondary education lasts three or four years and begins around the age of fifteen. Admittance into higher education is based on achievements during secondary education (Mrsic, 2016).

The education system is organized according to the 'tripartite pattern', which is based on the area in which people live and the ethnicity they belong to (Hromadzic, 2008: 544). The content of the curricula in BiH is divided between the three ethnic groups. There is a Bosniak, Serb and Croat curriculum teaching their own language, religion, values and cultural traits and history (Torsti, 2009: 67). Which curriculum is taught where is mainly dependent upon the demographical composition. In the RS, where almost only Serbs make up the population, the schools teach the Serb curriculum, while in Tuzla, with a large majority of Bosniaks, most schools teach the Bosniak curriculum (Torsti, 2009: 68). This has caused several issues for the cantons along the Croatian border, where the demographic composition is a mix between Croats and Bosniaks. To accommodate this problem, the 'two-schools-under-one-roof-system' was invented, indicating a school of which is divided between two ethnic groups, each group teaching its own curriculum (Hromadizic, 2008: 544). This phenomenon will later be discussed in more detail. Jajce was also part of one of these cantons, having no clear majority of one of the three ethnic groups. However, Jajce did not request the segregation of their high schools. This fact is addressed in the chapter that discusses the history and current situation of Jajce.

4.4 Civil society building: activism and protest in Bosnia and Herzegovina

This section discusses the development of civil society as part of the peace building process after the Bosnian war. This is relevant to discuss, because it shows how civil society and activism are perceived in BiH, and what happened in previous resistance movements. The peace building process, in which the international community was highly involved, focused for a large part on civil society building. Civil society is a public space where individuals get the chance to participate, negotiate and argue with each other and with the centres of political and economic authority. This happens through voluntary associations, movements, parties and other types of groups (Kaldor, 2003: 585). It is a space between citizens and authorities, where the interests of the citizens can be represented (Puljek-Shank and Verkoren, 2016: 184-185). Building this space is considered crucial for sustaining peace and stability after conflict (Puljek-Shank and Verkoren, 2016: 185). This was one of the main goals of international actors, who strived to develop a strong non-nationalist civil society with good inter-ethnic relations (Bieber, 2002: 27). Despite the large amount of foreign aid that has been invested in BiH and the efforts of many civil society organizations, a strong non-nationalist society has not been achieved, and the ethnic relations have not improved (Ibid). This part discusses the main problems that arose in the peace-building process, the mistakes made and the implications this has had for BiH's civil society, the space for protest and activism, and the mobilization of agency.

One of the main issues that hindered effective peace- and -civil society-building responses is the lack of legitimacy of organizations created or supported by foreign donors. A large part of the population perceives civil society as something external that is imposed on them. Many of them feel that civil society efforts have been run by the international community, who do not take into account the Bosnian history, culture and values (Bellloni, 2001: 169). Some even experience the call for civil society building as an insult, as it gives them the feeling they need to be 'civilized' (Belloni, 2001: 169). There is a wide-spread perception that the international community completely ignored the Bosnian versions of civil society that have existed in the past (Belloni, 2001: 169). Moreover, the enormous amounts of foreign funding caused a 'mushrooming' of NGOs: NGOs were established that did not represent society. These NGOs are run by locals and appear to meet local needs but were initially set up to serve the agenda of the international community and collect funding, while estranging themselves from the local community and local needs (Bieber, 2002: 27-28). This lack of legitimacy has alienated a large part of the population of BiH from this form of civil society (Belloni, 2001: 169). There are organizations that enjoy local legitimacy and are able to involve citizens in their projects, but they are often not considered legitimate by donors, as they do not fit in their frameworks (Puljek-Shank and Verkoren, 2017: 185-186). Therefore, these NGOs often operate outside the reach of the international community and often struggle finding sufficient funding. This has created a division between civil society organizations that enjoy local legitimacy but no donor legitimacy, and civil society organizations that enjoy donor legitimacy but no local legitimacy. The ones that enjoy both are very scarce (Puljek-Shank and Verkoren, 2017: 185-186). The issue is that civil society organizations (CSOs) with a strong 'ethnicness', characterized by specific ethnic traits and often mono-ethnic, are perceived as legitimate by the local population, but not by international donors who avoid cooperation with mono-ethnic organizations. The 'ethnicness' of a CSO, however, is not always that black and white, and mono-ethnic CSOs should not automatically be disregarded. Sometimes a CSO is mono-ethnic because it resides in an area that is largely homogenous in its demographic composition or because of the system they find themselves in (Puljek-Shank and Verkoren, 2017: 195-196). This shows a gap between local needs and the needs donors are trying to accommodate. Hence, apart from civil society projects implemented or funded by the international community, there are organizations operating outside this internationally implemented framework. This has fragmented the Bosnian civil society and has created an atmosphere of distrust between organizations (Kappler and Richmond, 2011: 262).

The development of civil society in BiH has to deal with legitimacy and trust issues and is unable to bridge the local needs with the donor objectives. This is obstructing the development of a strong civil society network which could mobilize movements and create support. This has been the case in Jajce: students were accused of being puppets of the international community and being paid

by them to protest (Sarah-Freeman-Woolpert, 2016). In this way, the ethno-nationalist parties tried to use distrust to damage the reputation of the students. This shows that although the civil society efforts of the international community have been major, the results were small. The international community did not succeed in developing a vibrant multi-ethnic civil society, while local actors were often either busy with pleasing the international agenda for funding, or resisting them by starting their own initiatives without international involvement. This does not mean civil society initiatives have always been unsuccessful, but this did create a divided, distrustful civil society. Still, non-nationalist mobilization does exist, although it is not widespread. This shows that although these groups are small, alternative political identities do exist (Touquet, 2012:203).

The biggest case of non-nationalist mobilization was the national mass protests of 2013 and 2014. The protest in 2014 has even been called '*the most significant bottom-up challenge to the ethnically constituted disorder*' (Majostorivc, Vuckovac and Pepic, 2015: 663). These were protests without an ethnic agenda that generated support from the whole country. The protest managed to displace the usual ethno-nationalist discourses and instead had a strong focus on socio-economic issues (Majostorivc, Vuckovac and Pepic, 2015: 663). Similar to a smaller protest in Sarajevo in 2008, this was an a-political movement. By emphasizing collective identities such as being Bosnian, or being citizen of the same city, these movements gained major support (Touquet, 2015: 404). Since there is a wide-spread aversion in BiH against politics because of corruption, nationalism and the invasive practices of the international community (Pickering, 2006: 92), this a-political frame was very successful (Touquet, 2015: 404).

These waves of protest led to a feeling of optimism, after which people started to believe change is possible. Many saw this as an opportunity to start implementing change in Bosnian politics (Majostorivc, Vuckovac and Pepic, 2015: 663). However, in the end, the protests had very little effect and almost no change was implemented. Many activists were intimidated or 'invited' to report to the police and politicians tried to damage the reputation of the protesters (Mujikc, 2016: 237). The demands of the protesters were ignored and the political elite managed to return back to the status quo (Majostorivc, Vuckovac and Pepic, 2015: 663). This left many activists disillusioned, pessimistic and many lost their hope that bottom-up change would be possible.[2]

Although the peace-building and civil society building processes have had some small successes, it did not achieve the creation of a healthy, well-functioning democracy where cooperation is the norm and a strong and critical civil society exists. The lack of legitimacy and distrust prevented the development of a strong and connected civil society. A wide-spread feeling of pessimism is

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[2] Interview 5

present in BiH, especially among youth (NDC and Safeworld, 2012: 22-23).[3] A feeling which the failed protests in 2013 and 2014 likely only increased.

4.5 Ethnicity and the structural divide

In practice, the institutionalization of ethnicity is visible on many levels. Through media, education and corruption internal division is kept alive. This section will elaborate on the ethnic divide and shows how most structural arrangements in BiH are designed to keep people segregated.

As aforementioned, there are three main ethnic groups. The Croats, the Serbs and the Bosniaks, which are connected to three religions, Catholic, Orthodox and Muslim. If you are a Croat, you are automatically assumed to be a Catholic. However rare, there are exceptions (Majostarović and Turjačanin, 2012:35). The three groups have a different definition of nationhood, and there is no widely accepted common name that emphasizes the groups are living in the same country. Most Serbs, for example, will say they are from RS instead of BiH. Hence, there are three different projects of nationhood within one country (Majostarović and Turjačanin, 2012:66). An example of this is the language. Although Croatian, Serbian and Bosnian are practically the same, they are treated as different languages and indicated as the separate official national languages of BiH. If someone says: 'I speak Bosnian', it often does not mean this person speaks the language of BiH, but that he or she speaks the language of the Bosniaks (Majostarović and Turjačanin, 2012:124). These three nationhoods, with their own traditions, language, religion and so on, are being reproduced through different divisive institutions. The most influential ones are the media, education and corruption. Although corruption is a problem that transcends the ethnic and might not resolve when the ethnic tensions would improve, the fragmentation of authority into different ethnic units does provide opportunities for corruption (Divjak and Pugh, 2008: 375). One of the aspects of corruption in BiH is that a high number of businesses and industries are state owned, not only public institutions such as schools and governmental positions. The private sector is controlled for a large part by the ethno-nationalist parties. The consequence is that people in key positions in these businesses, managing boards and so on, likely obtained these positions because of their ethnic identity and contributions to the political party in control. In this way, the political parties have a large influence on the employment of people (Divjak and Pugh, 2008: 375-377). Thus, if you wish to increase your chance on employment in many places, it is necessary to become a member of a particular party. By providing jobs the political parties also divide professions between the ethnic groups because a Croat will not get

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[3] Interview 5

a job in a company owned by the Bosniak parties, and the other way around. Next to facilitating more division, it secures voters because during elections you are most likely to vote for the party that employed you. If not out of ideology, out of fear of losing your job.

Another way in which ethnic groups have been successfully segregated is through the education system. When the war started, the schools that were still open quickly changed the Yugoslavian curriculum into one that taught 'their own' culture, language and values. This resulted in the development of three different curricula, a Bosniak, a Croat and a Serb one (Torsti, 2009: 66). Although numerous efforts have been made after the war, these curricula were never unified into one 'Bosnian and Herzegovinian' curriculum. Today, these three curricula still exist, teaching different histories, languages and religions. These curricula often contain a lot of 'us-them' terminology, in which hostile stereotypes about the other are constructed and their own group is portrayed as a victim of the aggression of the other groups (Torsti, 2009: 67).

This situation worsened with the construction of 'two-schools under one roof'. This was an initiative supported by the Organization for security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), that was meant as a temporarily solution in the FBiH for returning refugees, either Croat or Bosniak. Many returnees came home to a village mainly inhabited by the ethnic group that held the power over that village during the war. This meant that the schools also taught the curricula of that group. To accommodate the needs of the returnees who did not want their children to be subjected to the curriculum of the other ethnic group, the schools were divided in two: one part for the Bosniaks and one part for the Croats, with the intention of eventually unifying them again.[4] However, this resulted in even more division and the famous concept of 'two-schools under one roof', where children were taught in the same building while being completely separated from each other (Ibid: 73-74). Only three out of the 54 schools where this system was implemented have been unified again, although only on the administrational level, with two different curricula still (Hromadiz, 2008**:**544). This will be elaborated on in chapter five.

The last important way of spreading nationalistic and divisive narratives in BiH is through the media. The media is, despite a few exceptions, divided along ethnic lines. Moreover, most media are financed and controlled by one of the ethno-nationalist parties (Majostarović and Turjačanin, 2012:3566). Most media reflect the ethnic interest of one of the groups, and there is a limited market for other (more critical) sources, or international media, that might argue against these nationalistic narratives (Majostarović and Turjačanin, 2012:3568-69). Although there is a governmental agency

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[4] Interview 2

that condemns and punishes hate speech, it is still widely present: if not directly identifiable, often indirect through arrogance, neglect and disregard for certain themes or histories (Ibid).

This is what the institutionalization of ethnicity looks like in practice. It is apparent that most systems, the political, educational, media and so on, are designed to please the interests of the ethno-nationalist parties and used as tools to spread their agendas. Hence, children in BiH grow up in a context where their institutions attempt to divide them, and where parents are still struggling with the legacy from the war. When considering the political systems and the institutional framework created in BiH after the war, the picture is not very hopeful. With little cohesion, a weak civil society, institutionalized ethnicity, divisive narratives and an ineffective political system, the Bosnian population is kept divided. This shows that the structure in BiH does not encourage to transcend ethnic tensions and does not advocate for a more inclusive society. Following the dominant theories of social construction of ethnicity through elite manipulation and state power, it is expected that the ethnic identity of individuals is strong, conflictual and based on these structural arrangements. However, this is not always the case. Some do resist these structures, even under circumstances such as the mass protests in 2014 (Murtagh, 2016) or the Sarajevo protest in 2008 (Touquet, 2015). However, the case of Jajce is a unique example, as they were successful in achieving their aims, the protest was initiated by youth and because the protest did not take place in a large city. The next chapter will discuss the context of this case and what happened during these protests.

5. The case of Jajce

To be able to understand the context in which the protests in Jajce developed, it is important to understand its historical background. This chapter discusses the important historical events that happened in Jajce. After elaborating on these events, a sketch of the current situation is provided and the events surrounding the protests are discussed.

5.1 Jajce, the city of kings

Jajce is a place of great significance and regional history in BiH. The city is also known as 'the city of kings', because of numerous major historical events that took place there (Sahovic and Zulumovic, 2012: 248-249). It was one of the last towns that fell during the Ottoman conquest in the 16th century. In more recent history, it was the place where Tito's SFRY was born and an important industrial centre in the region at the time (Dahlman and Tuathail, 2005: 653). Like many BiH towns before the war, Jajce was a multi-ethnic town with a small majority of Bosniaks, living mixed throughout the city (Dahlman and Tuathail, 2005: 653).

During the SFRY Jajce was of specific importance, as the second meeting of the Anti-Facist Council of the People's Liberation of Yugoslavia (AVNOJ) was located there. The AVNOJ was a political body led by Tito and his communist party that served as an umbrella organization for anti-fascist movements in the region. At this second meeting, the AVNOJ was transformed from a resistance movement into a political system, which would create the new Yugoslavia (Sahovic and Zulumovic, 2012: 247-248). The building where the second AVNOJ meeting was organized quickly turned into a museum and one of the most important monuments in the SFRY. It became a place that represented the Yugoslav pride, identity and ideology of brotherhood and unity. This made Jajce an important educational and touristic place, frequently visited by school trip visits from all around the country (Sahovic and Zulumovic, 2012: 249-252). During and after the war, this Yugoslav heritage was destroyed and neglected, but the symbolic importance remained. In 2007, the museum was restored and became an important historical site in Jajce again (Ibid: 255-257).

5.2 Events during the war

During the war, Jajce changed sides twice. In October 1992, it was taken by the *Vojska Republike Srpska* (VRS), the army of the RS. In September 1995, just before the end of the war, the town was retaken by the Bosnian Croat Army, the *Hrvatsko Vijece Odbrane* (HVO). During these two occupations, different strategies of un-mixing of the once multi-ethnic town occurred (Dahlman and Tuathail, 2005: 653). During the occupation of Serb forces, a campaign of ethnic cleansing was implemented. While Serbs from all over the Central Bosnia canton fled to Jajce to seek safety, the Bosniaks and the Croats fled the town. When the Croats recaptured the city, they violently expelled the Serbs living there. This means that all inhabitants of Jajce experienced displacement at some point (Dahlman and Tuathail, 2005: 653-654).

The Croats and the Bosniaks first joined forces against the Serbs. However, their relations worsened when a large number of Bosniak refugees came to the Central Bosnia region, at the time largely held by friendly forces: the HVO and the *Armija Republike Bosne I Herzegovina* (ARBiH), the army for the Bosniaks (Ibid). The Croats worried the demographic composition of the region would change, which would benefit the Bosniak political party, SDA, while the Croat party, HDZ, could face political loss. When the HVO began to expel Bosniaks from the town of Prozor, the alliance between the Croats and the Bosniaks started to fall apart (Ibid). The Serbs benefitted and took the opportunity to take control over Jajce. 30,000 to 40,000 persons fled Jajce, of which most Bosniaks tried to find their way to the Central Bosnian towns controlled by the ARBiH, and most Croats tried to enter Croatia, meaning the vast majority of Jajce's population became displaced and the town was reduced to its Serb population (Ibid).

Meanwhile, the HVO and the ARBiH fought each other over control of the Central Bosnia region, where there were cases of ethnic cleansing on the side of the ARBiH in the attempt to create areas where Bosniak refugees could resettle (Ibid: 654-655). In February 1994, the HVO and ARBiH agreed on a ceasefire. Together they started an operation to take back Western Bosnia from the Serbs. Jajce was taken on September 13th and the Serbs fled to Banja Luka, controlled by the VRS. After Dayton, the inter-entity border appointed the Western part of Jajce to the RS and renamed it Jezero, while the largest part, including the major industries, was appointed to the FBiH (Ibid: 655). This left Jajce with a largely Croat population that increased in the years after the war when many displaced Croats returned home, or sought new places to live because their original home in RS was now situated in enemy territory (Ibid).

5.3 The post-war period

As a result of the war, Jajce lost its multi-ethnic nature. Before the war there were around 17.380 Bosniaks, 15.811 Croats and 8663 Serbs living in the city. After the war, only 6000 Bosniaks and 98 Serbs remained, while the Croats slightly decreased to 14.900 (International Crisis Group, 1998: 3). The Croats controlled the town, led by the Croat nationalist party HDZ, and were not planning to restore the multi-ethnic character the town once knew. Right after the Croats seized Jajce, the HDZ leaders promised to keep the town 'pure'. This meant that the former Bosniak and Serb inhabitants were not allowed to re-enter the town and nearby villages (Dahlman and Tuathail, 2005:655). Croat refugees, who were not originally from Jajce, settled in the abandoned Serb and Bosniak houses. This promise of the HDZ leaders gave the Croats a feeling of security and settled a permanent base of political support for the HDZ leaders (Dahlman and Tuathail, 2005: 655-656).

The few initial attempts of Bosniaks who did try to return were violently prevented in order to keep them out of Jajce. In this way, the HDZ successfully stopped the Bosniaks from returning the first few months after the war (Ibid: 656). However, the international agencies responded and the OHR, together with the UNHCR and the SFOR, took action. In 1997, these parties organized new returns and sent outside police forces to ensure security (International Crisis Group, 1998: 4). This process did not go smoothly. Many Croats lived in houses previously owned by Bosniaks and were reluctant to move out. Moreover, the authorities did not push these people to move out. For Serbs it was made even harder to return, which led to a very small amount of them actually returning (International Crisis Group, 1998: 7). Between 1996 and 1998, around 6000 Bosniaks returned to Jajce. Although this was more than most other towns in the Central Bosnia canton, 25000 of Jajce's original residents were still displaced (Dahlman and Tuathail, 2005: 656).

One of the main problems with the return politics in Jajce was that, due to the important symbolic and strategic position of Jajce, many Croat residents had resettled in Jajce without expressing a need to return home. At the same time, a large part of the original inhabitants of Jajce were still displaced with the wish to return home. This made the politics of return extremely complex (Dahlman and Tuathail, 2005:657). Despite of the efforts of the OHR and the OSCE, the right to return in Jajce was constantly obstructed by the HDZ, who dominated the administration in Jajce (International Crisis Group, 1998: 10-11). Nonetheless, due to several new successful property laws, the efforts of the international community and minor political cooperation, half of Jajce's Bosniaks and ten percent of Serbs had returned in 2005 (Dahlman and Tuathail, 2005:657). However, there are signs the HDZ tried to encourage the Croats to live together in certain neighbourhoods, so that even when the Bosniaks would return, they would not be mixed (International Crisis Group, 1998: 11).

Therefore, the multi-ethnic character of the town was never completely restored. Despite this, Jajce was one of the more successful cases regarding the return of refugees (International Crisis Group, 1998: 1).

Eventually, more and more Bosniaks found their way back. Today, the Croats and Bosniaks share the power in Jajce. The last census of 2013 shows that currently, 13.269 Bosniaks and 12.555 Croats live in Jajce: almost an equal part of both groups make up the demography of the town (Agencija za statistiku Bosne i Hercegovine, 2013). This means that the demographic balance between the Croats and the Muslims has become similar to before the war. The Serbs, however, never returned. At the moment, the Bosniak party is in power, having received 54,88% of the votes in the 2016 municipal elections, while the Croat party received 45,12% of the votes. This means Jajce is currently controlled by a Bosniak mayor (Centrala Izborna Kimisija Bosne I Hercegovine, 2016).

The Bosniak ethno-nationalist party SDA and the Croat ethno-nationalist party HDZ are the two parties in charge in Jajce. There is no other party with significant power. As a result of this ongoing power struggle and the traumas of the war, Jajce houses a lot of internal ethnic tensions. Because the balance is currently half-half, there is always a power struggle. Because Bosniaks mainly vote for the SDA, and Croats mainly vote for the HDZ, they are insured half of the votes. This also means that if there are more Bosniaks, the SDA probably gets the most votes and the other way around.[5] Therefore, although some competition is present, if the demographic composition stays stable the ethno-nationalist share of power remains relatively secured. There is no political competition between the ethnic parties, as a Croat will not vote for a Bosniak ethno-national party and vice versa. For the ethno-nationalist parties, it is key to keep their own ethnic group attached to their party. As politicians, this means that the ethnic group you belong is more important than your skills. Moreover, a large part of the local council of Jajce still consists of war veterans who gained their power position during the war, and not because they were educated to be politicians.[6] This makes that the political discourse, similar to most places in BiH, is dominated by an 'us' versus 'them' narrative from both sides. Apart from this, politicians are trying to keep the community divided by a divided education system and the division of employees in public or party-run institutions.[7] This has created a tense political, and to some extent social, situation between the Croats and the Bosniaks in Jajce.

One of the examples of how politicians try to keep the community divided is through the elementary school system, which became segregated in the early 2000s (Beharic, 2017). Not only did

[5] Focus group: Anel

[6] Interview 9

[7] Interview 9

this happen in Jajce, but throughout the whole Central Bosnian canton, with the establishment of the so-called 'two-schools under one roof'. Because of the ethnic cleansing during the war, most villages and cities in the Central Bosnian canton were left with a large majority of either Bosniaks or Croats. The majority ethnic group implemented the curriculum that was in line with their cultural values. In Jajce, this was the Croat curriculum, which meant that the schools would teach the Croatian language, Croatian history, Catholic religion classes and Croatian geography. The returning refugees, however, were unhappy with this arrangement and demanded their own curriculum. To accommodate this, the OSCE implemented the 'two schools under one roof' system that divided one school into two ethnic groups, so they both could be taught their own curriculum. Although this was meant to be a temporary measure and the curricula were meant to be integrated on the long run, the measure is still in place in many schools today.[8] However, in contrary to most other schools in the Central Bosnia Canton, the two high schools in Jajce, the *Srednja Strukova Skola* and the *Nikola Sop,* are integrated and Bosniak and Croat students go to school together. They teach the Croat curriculum, except during the language and religion classes (after the protest, history and geography were added), where they do get separated. Any classes on Serb culture, religion or language are not existent, although there still is a small Serb minority in Jajce (Beharic, 2017).

In BiH, elementary education lasts nine years until the age of fifteen, and secondary school three, to four years, depending if you enrol in general (4 years) or vocational schools (3-4 years) (Mrsic, 2017). The *Nikola Sop* is a gimnazija, meaning all students are enrolled for four years. The *Srednja Strukova Skola* is a vocational school, hence students can take either three or four years. The first nine years of elementary education are segregated in Jajce and until the age of 15, children only go to school with their peers of the same ethnic group. However, in high school, the schools are integrated and all students go to class together. Therefore, youth growing up in Jajce both have the experience of being separated and the experience of being together. Although there was some displeasure about the fact that all students were taught the Croat curriculum, the majority did not mind students going to school together. However, this was all about to change in 2016 when the opening of a new school, Bosniak only, was announced. This would have meant that the Bosniak community in Jajce would have gone to the new school, while the Croat community would have stayed in the already existing schools. The two ethnic groups would be divided and both taught according to their 'own' curriculum. Why this happened and how Jajce responded is discussed in the next section.

Despite the divided elementary education, the trauma of the war and the difficulties that occurred during the return of refugees, stating that Jajce is divided is inaccurate. Jajce's social and daily life is extremely mixed, as it is a small town where everyone lives together. They go to the same

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[8] Interview 2

café's, the same stores and the same parks (Beharic, 2017). Contrary to cities like Mostar, no internal boundary between a Croat part and a Bosniak part was established after the war.[9] This does not mean there are no ethnic tensions, but again, the image is more complex.

5.4 The protests

Although it seemed the majority was satisfied with the situation at the time, the local politicians decided it was time for a change. During the summer holiday in 2016, SDA, with the support of the HDZ, decided to open a new school that was meant only for Bosniak students. According to the parties, this was to accommodate the demand of many parents who were unhappy with the Croat curriculum, and who wanted their children to learn about Bosniak culture and history. A reasonable demand that many sympathized with. Separation, however, was not the solution people had in mind (Beharic, 2017).

According to one of the local activists involved in the protests from the beginning, the opening of the new school was intended mainly for economic reasons, and to gain political success right before the elections. A new school would mean new job openings, and a new way for the SDA to employ people. This would automatically ensure these people's political support for them. They were supported by the HDZ because it was a new way to spread more division. And so, under the guise of improving quality of education and respecting cultural values, the division mainly served economic and electoral benefits (Beharic, 2017).

Many high school students who just got used to the fact they had classes together, could not bear the fact that they would be separated again after nine years of separation in elementary school. To protest the decision, a small group of high school students began to organize. Although the politicians strategically announced the opening of the new school in the summer when most students were on summer holiday, they were unable to prevent opposition. A group of nine ethnically-mixed high school students organized a march through the streets in Jajce, on July 8th. There was some media attention, and the students were supported by the OSCE who applied pressure onto local authorities. This led to postponement of the plans (Freeman-Woolpert, 2016).

Nonetheless, in March 2017, local politicians again announced they were preparing for the opening of the new high school in the coming year. They had already started hiring teachers and administrative staff, and the director of the school was also appointed. Moreover, the SDA presented a

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[9] Interview 10

survey signed by 500 parents that supported the school, to legitimize the plans (Freeman-Woolpert, 2017). However, students did not believe the outcomes of this petition, which was never made public, and started to organize their own survey. They asked 419 (of 538) students, 380 parents and 47 staff-members of the *Srednja Strukova Skola* to give their opinion. Their survey provided three options: remaining the status quo, opening a new segregated school, or creating a non-nationalistic unified curriculum. The majority voted for the last option, while most of the others voted to remain the status quo. Only 2% of teachers and parents and 4% of students voted for a separated new school (Beharic, 2017). This showed a completely opposite image from the petition the politicians presented and gave the students proof that there was almost no support for division. This empowered the students even more, and the protest grew bigger. Many NGOs and local organizations, such as the youth centre COD Jajce and the association of high-school students, started to get involved and supported the students. Many students from divided schools all over BiH expressed their support for the protest (Freeman-Woolpert, 2017).

In spite of the increase in support, it was not easy for the students. Protesting sometimes cost them friends, and for some led to confrontations with their parents and the school board. The *Srednja Strukova Skola* was supportive of the protests, while the *Nikola Sop* school forbade students and staff to protest and threatened them with expulsion if they did, making it very difficult for the school to engage in the events.[10] The influence of this is discussed in the next chapter. The support from NGOs grew, and they assisted the students in building their capacity, helping them with developing new strategies and so on. According to the students, NGOs like the Schule Hilfe Leben (SHL) and the Nansen Dialogue Centre (NDC), both national organizations that focus on youth and education, helped a lot with their support, for example by organizing a conference for students all over BiH in Jajce to spread the word.[11] The students also gained a lot of international support, receiving visits from many ambassadors who openly supported their protest.

In June the students, together with a group called Nasa Skola (our school) and several other youth NGOs from all over BiH, planned a protest in front of the cantonal Ministry of Education in Travnik. This was accompanied with an enormous amount of media attention and support from all over the country. On June 18th, the Minister of Education Katica Cerkez announced that the plans to establish the new school would be abandoned. Instead, they decided to implement the Bosniak national curriculum for history and geography classes. Moreover, the Herceg-Bosna symbol (the flag of the Bosnian Croats) that was put on the diplomas after graduation and created trouble for some

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[10] Interview 11 and focus group

[11] Interview 7, 9, 10 and 11

Bosniak students because certain institutions did not accept diplomas with this symbol because it was not an official country[12], could from then on also be replaced by the national flag of BiH (Freeman-Woolpert, 2017).

Although no unified curriculum was implemented and the students were separated in two extra classes, the politicians stopped the complete segregation into a new school and the protests were considered an enormous success. It showed people in BiH that a small group of high school students was able to generate change and spread hope in BiH (Freeman-Woolpert, 2016). The end of this particular protest did not mean the end of the fight against educational segregation. A part of the protesting students started a new movement, trying to spread their story and motivating other students to follow their lead.

This example shows that despite of the structural arrangements that are aimed at keeping the population divided in BiH and Jajce in particular, people still find ways to resist. Researching how this resistance has emerged and was mobilized into a protest is valuable in order to gain more insight into how change in a divided society can be generated. Because bottom-up resistance emerged and proved to be successful in Jajce, it provides a perfect case to investigate what is needed for such movements to develop. The next chapter presents the data collected through the interviews and focus group by answering the sub questions.

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[12] Interview 7

6. How resistance emerged

Chapter 3 on methodology explained how semi-structured interviews have been conducted in order to answer the sub questions. For this research, 12 interviews and one focus group were conducted with 18 respondents in total. In this chapter, the information obtained from these interviews is presented and analysed. Using the grounded theory approach, the first stage of coding, that proceeded parallel to the data collection, identified important factors that could have played a role in the emergence of resistance. The first five sections present the data collected and discusses the important factors one by one. Each section answers one of the sub question. Section 6.6 connects the data presented in the previous part and identifies which circumstances influenced the emergence of resistance. This reflects the axial coding stage. The last section discusses the main findings and explains which element was most important in the emergence of the protests. This reflects the last selective coding stage in which the new theoretical contribution is presented.

6.1 The ethnic experience

The second sub question explores how people in Jajce, particularly students, experience the ethnic identity structure and if these experiences match the explanations described in the ethnic identity theories. The following question is answered: *How do people in Jajce experience the ethnic identity structure and to what extent do ethnic identity theories apply to this case?* The theoretic framework discussed the dominant theories within the ethnic identity and conflict debate that explain how people develop a strong affiliation with their ethnic identity and how ethnic tensions within a society emerge and are maintained. These explanations mainly focus on ethnic manipulation or the social construction of identities through the use of discourse and hegemonic power. Little attention is given to the individual and to what extent they have control over developing their ethnic identity. This first question looks at how the respondents speak about ethnic identity and the political and social structure in BiH.

The answers given by respondents sketch an ambiguous picture. To some extent the theoretical explanations do apply, since the ethnic manipulation and the ethnically divided institutional system is influencing the way people speak and think about ethnic identity. However, at the same time the interviews highlight the agency of individuals, which theory tends to overlook. By starting by applying the current academic debate to the interviews, this chapter will show both sides.

One thing that became clear after the interviews is that most students went through an often confusing process of them becoming aware of their ethnic differences. Multiple students described how they, when they entered elementary school, were suddenly separated from their friends without understanding why. Later they began to understand the separation occurred because they were different, mainly because of what their parents and teachers told them. Most of the time, these differences were not recognized before entering elementary school.

'So, growing up I had a best friend who was a different nationality than I am. My best friend since birth. When I was a kid, I did not even know that nationalism and nationalities exist. […] Then when we started school, we were the same age. […] She went into one classroom and I went into the other. For me that was kind of like: Wow! What happened? We were supposed to go into the same classroom, we are the same age. […] Then after a few years, you start to find out that you are one nationality and she is the other. That your friend that you know for such a long time is different than you and you did not even see it.' [13]

Especially for children who were living in a relatively mixed neighbourhood, it was confusing to enter elementary school and being separated from the children of the other ethnic group they used to play with in their neighbourhood.

'So, we are really good friends from childhood and every day we grew up together. […] The first day in primary school she went on one side and I went on the other side. Because our primary school is divided. We have two schools under one roof. So, we don't go to the same school. We went to school for eight years in that system.' [14]

This shows two things. First, it indicates that most students only started to experience difference when they entered into elementary school. This supports the claim that ethnic identities are socially constructed, and not something you are born into. It also shows that before elementary school, at least in the experience of the students, ethnic identity is not yet an important topic in children's lives, and their parents do let them play with children from other ethnic groups. Therefore, the recognition of ethnic differences starts when children enter the educational system. This observation supports the ideas, as discussed in the theoretical framework, that ethnic tensions and conflict mainly develop

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[13] Focus group: Hana

[14] Interview 11

through either ethnic manipulation (Oberschall: 2000), or become constructed by certain discourses, institutions and state authority (Bourdieu: 1992). It shows that ethnic division is not the norm from the start, but that this idea is constructed by structural arrangements such as the segregation in the educational system. During elementary school, the students slowly started to understand that they were different from the other ethnic groups, and that they were only supposed to play with peers of their own group.

'It is not like anybody was telling us to not hang out with them, or talk to them, but it was just visible. It was like a thing that you could feel and that you felt like you should not do. It is not like anyone told you to do it, but you just did it. You did not talk to other nationalities. That's when I felt it.' [15]

'There is no visible evidence that someone is different but people keep telling you […]. Our teachers would tell me don't go to that bathroom it is not ours and I was like: it is the same building why can't I go there? It took some time for me to understand as I grew up that we were separated like that. As Ena said, the hostility could be noticed. Not necessarily hostility but the lack of tolerance towards others. The teachers would not tell us not to talk to them or stay away from them, but you could see on their faces that they were not happy that you were doing this.' [16]

These stories clearly show how the ethnic division and ethnic differences were slowly constructed by the experience of being separated in school, and the disapproval the adults showed when the children attempted to transcend this division. At that age, it is likely that this strongly affected them.

Another element that was often mentioned in the interviews, which supports the ethnic manipulation thesis, is the affiliations most adults in Jajce have with the ethno-nationalist parties. A large part of the population in Jajce is employed through the political parties, hence their opinion on public issues often matches the opinion of the political party out of the fear of losing their jobs. This was an issue for both teachers and parents during the protests who could not openly support the students because they were threatened with losing their job.

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[15] Focus group: Hana

[16] Focus group: Anel

'Even a lot of them do vote for nationalistic politicians and nationalist political parties not because they really believe in their agendas but because they have to vote. A lot of them even need to take a photo of their ballot and bring it to their party chief. That is how people are getting their jobs and how people get employed as high school teachers, primary school teachers, doctors, nurses, university professors, you name it.' [17]

This shows how the political elite tries to maintain power in the community by keeping people divided and forcing them into supporting the nationalist narrative by giving them jobs. So, even if these people would not agree with the party, and would not want to vote for that party, they do it anyway because they are forced by the structure the political party established in the town. This indicates the extensive influence of the political parties.

'The politics are integrated into every part of our country. For example, if you are in one of the parties, if the party wins in the election you are immediately going to get a job or a promotion. So basically each institution has employed some of the party members. The party that owns the governmental institutions hires their own people. So, if you want to succeed in our town you have to be in one of the parties.' [18]

Just as BiH in general, people are expected to belong to one of the three ethnic groups. If you do not belong to any of these groups, you belong to the category of 'others', which makes your life difficult in many respects. It makes it harder to successfully participate within society. When looking for a job in the public sector, for example, it is often the case that one of the nationalist parties is in charge of hiring the staff. If you do not affiliate with one of the three ethnic groups, the chance that any of the nationalistic parties will employ you is very low, since you are not 'one of them'.[19] Moreover, you are expected to identify with one of the three groups socially. If you have a Muslim name, but do not identify as a Bosniak, people will nevertheless put that label on you.

'They are not citizens anymore they are like Bosniak, Croat or Serb or others. If you make your identification with others you don't have any rights. So, it is really frustrating. Here people connect language with ethnic and national identity. If I am Amela, I need to be Bosniak and I need to be Muslim and I need to speak Bosnian

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[17] Interview 9

[18] Focus group: Anel

[19] Interview 9 and 12

language. So, if you are not on that path, you are out of the system It is really hard to feel that you do not have rights like other citizens.' [20]

This shows that public institutions in Jajce, like in many other places in BiH, are divided by the political parties who maintain the division through the educational system and by employing people to keep their political support. This implies a structure that is hard to resist, and developing an identity that does not adhere to this structure is not welcomed.

However, there is also another picture that can be painted. Daily life in Jajce is quite mixed, and people drink coffee in the same places, go to the same supermarkets, live in the same streets, and so on. This is partly due to the relatively successful returnee processes Jajce had in comparison to most other Central Bosnian towns, making Jajce's population a relatively mixed one (International Crisis Group, 1998: 1). Contrary to some other towns in BiH, like Mostar, where after the war an invisible boundary was established between the Muslim part and the Croat part of the city, Jajce's city centre never got divided.[21] Jajce never returned to the ethnically diverse town it had been before the war, but it also did not establish an internal border or became largely homogenous, like in most other towns in the Central Bosnia canton and the other regions along the Croatian border.

'So, okay there was a fight but without a clash between the Muslims and Catholics. Which is really important because this is what happened in Mostar. What happened there, is there was a similar situation with the Serbian forces but in the end there was a conflict between Muslims and Croats. That is why the situation in Mostar is a little bit more complicated than the situation here because there is no direct conflict. That is why it makes it more easy here. Still Jajce is part of a larger country where nationalist parties still rule including in Jajce itself, so, it's not super easy but it's easier than the rest of the country.' [22]

Although the fact that people go to the same store or coffee house does not necessarily mean they have better relations with each other, it could have played a role in Jajce's sentiments against ethnic segregation. The fact that the high schools were not separated could be a sign of that. When the 'two-schools-under-one-roof' system was implemented, most Central Bosnian towns and villages directly requested this system in their schools, the request often initiated by the displaced group who were

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[20] Interview 12

[21] Interview 10

[22] Interview 10

returning to the town. This also happened in Jajce's elementary school but was never requested for the high schools.[23] This is interesting and makes Jajce unique in comparison to other towns with a similar demographic composition.

As explained in chapter five, the 'two-schools-under-one-roof' system was implemented to accommodate the needs of the returning displaced population in the cantons along the Croatian border, where there is no clear majority of one of the three ethnic groups. Most schools in this canton requested such a system. In 2010, there were 54 'two-schools-under-one-roof' (OSCE: 2010). Although some of them have been integrated on the administrational level, for students, almost all of these schools are still separated (Freeman-Woolpert: 2017). These schools are all situated in the cantons close to the Croatian border, because most of these towns have a relatively equal share of Bosniaks and Croats (Census, 2013). The difference becomes clear when the demographic numbers of the cantons are compared. The two cantons where most 'two-schools-under-one-roof' are situated are the Central Bosnia canton and the Neretva-Herzegovina canton (OSCE, 2010). The first consists of 57,6% Bosniaks, 38,3% Croats and 1,2% Serbs, while the latter consists of 41,1% Bosniaks, 53,3% Croats and 2,9% Serbs. Compared to other cantons, such as the Tuzla or Sarajevo canton, of which the first consists of 83,8% Bosniaks, 4,2% Croats and 3,2% Serbs, while the latter exists of 88,2% Bosniaks, 5,3% Croats and 1,6% Serbs, it becomes clear that the composition of the cantons where the 'two-schools-under-one-roof' system is implemented is more heterogeneous than the other cantons (Census, 2013).

The reason that schools in cities like Tuzla and Sarajevo are not segregated is likely not due to a more tolerant climate there, but because they did not feel a direct threat from another group because of a clear majority. This makes the case of Jajce unique, as they did not have a large majority, but did not implement the 'two schools under one roof' system in their high-schools. Although the collected data does not contain enough evidence to explain why the population in Jajce never requested this system, it is an interesting element that could indicate that this multi-ethnic character of the town might have entailed more than going to the same store and drinking the same coffee. Nonetheless, the ethno-nationalist parties do still control the town, and parents and teachers are still forbidding children to play with the other ethnic group. This means the multi-ethnic character of the town could be slightly stronger than other nearby towns, but it should not be exaggerated.

Still, the students in Jajce managed to develop ideas that oppose the division of ethnic groups. These ideas, which are most likely at the roots of the emergence of resistance against the ethnic segregation, cannot be explained by the structural theories that dominate the ethnic identity debates.

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[23] Interview 2

How these ideas developed and how they were organized in a resistance movement will be addressed in the next two sub questions.

6.2 Developing opposing ideas

The previous sub question showed how the ethnic identity structure in Jajce is aimed at keeping the ethnic groups divided and the ethnic tensions alive, but also how people escape this structure and do live together. This section will explore how, despite of the structure, these students developed ideas opposing this. To examine this the following question is answered: *How did these students develop ideas that resist the ethnic identity structure?*

The most important experience for these students was realizing, during their high school period, that division is not natural. When they entered high school around the age of 14/15, they were suddenly allowed in class together. Although they were still separated in language and religion classes, they attended other courses together. At first, this was quite unusual for many of these students, coming from a segregated or mono-ethnic elementary school where they had been taught how different they were. However, after a year in high school, students realized they were not that different from the other ethnic groups, and that separation did not make sense.

'Then secondary school came and we started going to the same school. [...] Then we all kind of got together and got to know each other. For example, Marin, he is a different nationality than I am and we are still best friends. I never see him as somebody that is different than me. I see him as my friend and as someone that I trust. Most of my friends are different nationalities. I have one close friend that has the same nationality as I am. So, I don't see it, I don't see any differences. I see Anel, I see Marin, I don't see Bosniak or Croat.' [24]

'So, they ruin their prejudice about each other. Because in elementary school they are totally split and they came in high school with all that prejudice. We have here (in BiH) a lot of small places which are ethnically clean. There you don't have any chance to meet someone else from another culture. In Jajce when you come in high school it's different. It's still not great, but it's much better than in elementary school.' [25]

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[24] Focus group: Hana

[25] Interview 12

'In high school, the place where the students from the divided schools actually come together to be one. That is the place where the morality of everybody is working properly.' [26]

These stories show how the students started to realize that they are not that different, and that the whole idea of separation is not what they want at all. They started to realize, like Nikolas says, that going to school together is actually how it should be. This is where many students, like Nikolas is saying, actually start to realize that ethnic segregation is not the moral thing to do. This is a very important experience. Interesting is that, according to the interviews, the parents and teachers are still stuck in the nationalistic discourse and do not see it the way their children see it. High school teacher Amela says: '*I know their parents are so afraid and mostly nationalists, [...] parents never said anything against segregation.*' [27]. The parents are not the ones who are (publicly) opposing segregation. Moreover, the curriculum is teaching the nationalistic narratives. Many students named multiple situations in which friendships and relationships were not accepted because of the ethnicity of the other person. Therefore, what they were taught in school and at home often did not match the anti-ethno-national ideas they developed. Nevertheless, due to the mere fact that were in school together, they got to know each other at an age where prejudices are more easily broken and made them think differently from the prescriptions of the ethnic identity structure.

'I mean, I just think that, coming back to politics, we are very messed up. We just have three people working together to manipulate and undermine our parents and then us in the end. But thank god, at least in Jajce, you can't really manipulate us. In the end if I get to know someone you can't tell me that he is bad because you know he is not.' [28]

Although the students followed the nationalist Croat curriculum, a lot of their parents were tied to the agenda of their political party (either voluntarily or involuntarily). The political system was still highly segregated, and the simple fact of going to school together made many students oppose the ethnic segregation. This is an interesting observation, because it shows that despite of the dominant discourse or political manipulation, if (young) people have a space to meet, they can develop different ideas and oppose these discourses.

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[26] Interview 8

[27] Interview 12

[28] Focus group: Hana

One element that could have contributed to this for the group of protesters who were going to the *Srednja Strukova Skola* is that they were known as a rather 'liberal' school.[29] The staff at this school, for example, was not hired based on ethnicity but based on skill, in contrary to the *Nikola Sop* school.[30] The teacher interviewed for this research also taught at the *Srednja Strukova Skola* and described how she got some relative freedom to organize extra-curricular activities, such drama classes, and how there was room to interpret the curriculum in her own way. She, for example, described how she could speak about ethnicity and even about the protests in class using the classical Greek stories that were prescribed in the mandatory curriculum. This is a large contrast with the other school in Jajce, where the principal, who, according to the students, had only been hired because he was the brother of some important political actor, forbade the teachers and students to get involved or even speak about the protest.[31] During the protest, the students engaged were mostly from the *Srednja Strukova Skola* which also openly supported the protest. Hence, there is a significant chance that this school also played an important role in the development of these anti-ethno-nationalist ideas. However, this is largely dependent on the teachers the students faced and how they interpreted the curriculum, since the basis was still the nationalist narrative.

'So, I think it's something the school needed because the school is actually the place where we fought. The principal was actually the man who gave us everything that we needed.' [32]

Before going to the next sub question, it is important to mention that for this research, only the students who engaged in the protests were considered to explore how they were able to resist the ethnic identity structure. Although they all described this experience when going to an integrated high school, this is not a representative image for all high school students in Jajce or in BiH, and does not mean that this experience is the same for high school students that did not engage in the protests. This research does not aim to generalize these experiences onto high school students around BiH, but merely attempts to sketch the context in which this resistance was able to emerge.

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[29] Interview 2

[30] Interview 2

[31] Interview 11 & focus group

[32] Interview 8

6.3 The organization of the protests

The emerging ideas among high school students about ethnic division as not desirable, as described in the previous section, were the foundations of the anti-ethno-nationalist mobilization that emerged in 2016. This section describes how the students transferred these ideas into a movement by answering the following question: *How did the students organize themselves and build a movement to resist the school segregation?*

How the students organized and what exactly happened is described in more detail in chapter five but will be briefly summarized before presenting the data. During the summer holiday in 2016, the ethno-nationalist parties announced the opening of a new mono-ethnic high school that was meant for Bosniak students. This would mean that the current high school students would be segregated. The political parties claimed they wanted to accommodate the needs and demands of the Bosniak parents. It was never clear, however, who these parents were and if they really had the support they claimed to have (Beharic, 2017). The students, many of them just getting used to being in school together after going to a segregated elementary school, liked going to school together and were not pleased with the opening of this new school. They organized and protested this decision, beginning with a small protest-march, with a group of around 15 students. Quickly, the protest caught broader attention from media and international organizations, and the authorities were pressured into delaying the decision (Freeman-Woolpert, 2016).

In 2017, however, the political parties started a new attempt to open the school. This time, the students got even more attention and many media, NGOs, international actors and local youth organizations started to get involved. This resulted in a mass protest in Travnik in front of the cantonal Ministry of Education, resulting in the withdrawal of the plans. This was a major victory for the students and a sign of hope that things can be changed in BiH. The upcoming section discusses what motivated the students to start the protest and how they started to organize.

Most students interviewed for this thesis were entering the second grade when the news of a new Bosniak-only school arrived. At first, most of them did not believe the news was true and even thought it was a joke. In their experience, the idea came out of nowhere and there were no good apparent reasons for separating the schools.

'And I remember my first reaction was why? That was the first question, why? We never had any trouble!' [33]

'H; At first when we found out about it, we just thought that it was not important. I thought that it would not happen and that somebody just made it up.

E; Yeah just a stupid thing that people made up.

H; Yeah, I mean it was not divided for so many years why would they divide it now?' [34]

The students had been going to school together for one or two years and started to see the benefits from being united. So, when this decision was announced, most of them were very unhappy with it. The realization that they would be separated from their friends again made them sad, but also angry.

'For a moment I started crying because I really thought we would be separated. I was thinking: how can this happen to us again and how can I go to school for one more year or two more years without some of my friends? Then I just started to participate.' [35]

The fact that they did not want to be separated from their friends gave them a strong motivation to start resisting this new school, as it touched them on a personal level. The youth centre, COD Jajce, immediately stepped in to help the students organize this protest and to draft a strategy. Therefore, although the movement was small and quite informal in the beginning, they had some support they could rely on from the start. This also helped the students in reaching out to media and important actors to gain wider attention for the issue. They also got some help from local activists from the start, with experience in organizing resistance.[36] Due to the strong motivation and help of the youth centre and local activists, the students were able to transfer these feelings of anger into a protest movement and to resist the opening of a new school.

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[33] Interview 8

[34] Focus group: Hana and Ena

[35] Interview 11

[36] Interview 9

Although the summer holiday was a difficult time for the students to get this movement started, as most students were away from town, the students still managed to organize a rally which gained significant media attention. Larger NGOs and international organizations also started to get involved. They were able to pressure the authorities into delaying their plans, achieving their first success. However, they knew the authorities would soon come up with a new plan to segregate the high schools and they had to stay alert.[37]

Still, the first victory likely gave the students a feeling of empowerment, making their motivation to resist the new school even stronger. Together with the capacities they built in their experience with the first wave of protest, they were able to build an even stronger resistance when the authorities again announced they wished to open a new school. Although the authorities also came prepared, presenting a survey in which they showed they had support for this school, the students with their new feeling of empowerment and freshly obtained protesting skills, did not let them win. They skilfully delegitimized the petition in which the authorities claimed 500 parents and teachers signed to support this new school, by organizing their own survey, revealing completely opposite results. More NGOs got involved and the international community, including embassies, the office of the high representative and the OSCE, also started to take a bigger interest in the protests and began to pressure the local authorities.[38] The students organized a meeting in which they invited many ambassadors residing in BiH to come to Jajce and listen to their story. In this way, they managed to get many powerful international actors on their side. The Association of High School Students (AsuBiH) also started to get involved during the last three months of the protests.

A big protest in Travnik was planned in front of the cantonal Ministry of Education. Preceding this protest, the international organizations applied extensive pressure on the authorities and there was lot of media attention. The protest in Travnik was not only attended by students from Jajce, but by students and activists from all over BiH that showed their support and their resentment of the segregated school system in BiH in general. After this protest, the cantonal Minister of Education finally announced that they would abandon the plans.

The organization of opposition against the plans of the Ministry of Education started in a very small and informal form but grew into a bigger movement of resistance with support from almost all sides, except from the politicians. By writing letters, speaking to many actors, and delegitimizing the arguments of the politicians, they managed to gain massive support. Even unexpected actors like the religious community organizations, who normally follow the nationalistic discourse, supported the

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[37] Interview 9

[38] Interview 8

protest. The support of these religious organizations really helped to gain support within Jajce's community because of their influence on the population in Jajce.

'It didn't take long until we also got support from the ordinary people. Later on it was very important to lobby with the religious communities. The Islamic community in Jajce was with the students and also the Franciscan youth expressed their support for the students. The Islamic community and the main imam even invited students into his office and gave them support. He openly criticized SDA and the Bosniaks for segregating the schools' [39]

Although in the beginning many students characterized the organization of the protest as unprofessional and chaotic, they did manage to professionalize and create a bigger movement with support from various actors. To some extent, the movement is still active now.

'We were successful, the schools are not separated for now. I am building a legacy to continue everything that we built so far. I am very optimistic, actually realistic about it, because I know that these are just brilliant minds. We defended our schools, now it's on the next generation to conquer the rest.' [40]

The next part discusses how these students manage to build this bigger movement and wider support which led them to success.

6.4 The key elements for success

During the interviews, the respondents named several factors they saw as crucial for the successful outcome. This section discusses these factors by answering the fourth sub question: *What were the key elements that led to the successful outcomes of the protest?* The first thing most experts mention is the admirable persistence of the students, who simply did not want to give up. The reason for this, some claim, is the simplicity and the sincerity of their message: they just did not want to be separated from their friends. They were not affiliated with any politicians and even declined any attempt of a political

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[39] Interview 9

[40] Interview 8

party to engage in their movement, and they did not have a secret agenda. They just wanted to go to class with their friends. This made it hard for most people to oppose their goals.

'I think, these are the things which are really true like friendships and living together. They were probably very good friends and for them it matters that they should not be separated in their 2nd grade or 3rd grade. It was really genuine in a way because they had the aim of staying together with each other. Having this plan to bring alliance between Croats and Bosniaks. I think this genuine aim was recognized by the people outside who were listening to them speaking. [...] So, I think that was it, they were not thinking in these political connotations and these political connections. They just didn't want the politicians to separate them. They wanted to stay with their friends until the end and I think this is what made them so persistent in their fight for this.' [41]

Apart from a strong story to gain support, this provided the students with a very sincere motivation. It was about friendship and staying together, and nothing else. This is partly caused by their experience of going to school together, after which they realized how beneficial this is. They made friends from the other ethnic groups and realized, as discussed in sub question two, that there are no (clear) differences between them. This realization was made possible by the space created by the integrated high schools, where students from different ethnic groups could meet each other. This gave the students a very strong sense of that they were doing the right thing during the protest. This gave them the power to continue their struggle, despite the challenges they met on the way.

'The first motivation for me to start anything is the friends I have in high school. Because I met a lot of people and made a lot of friends and I know how it's like in primary school' [42]

Another important element, often mentioned as a key factor in the achieved success, was the support from NGOs and international organizations such as the OSCE. The international organizations were particularly useful in applying pressure onto authorities, while the smaller-scale local NGOs delivered an important contribution in the capacity building of the students and making them feel supported. In the interviews, there was significantly more criticism on the larger international organizations. The two NGOs that were seen as most helpful by the students and local activists involved were the Nansen

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[41] Interview 9

[42] Interview 11

Dialogue Centre (NDC) and the youth centre, COD Jajce. The reason they were seen as most helpful was mainly because they were already there before the protest and stayed in Jajce afterwards. With other organizations, there was a sense of distrust or fear that participated for their own benefit. The motivations of COD and NDC were always seen as legitimate and genuine. They helped the students to build capacity to equip them with the skills needed to gain support, attention and mobilize a bigger movement.

'The only two organizations who I can mention who never did something selfishly are NDC and COD Jajce. [...] To be honest, they just gave us the basic things that we needed to like spread it. Even now they still want to make events. I'm even more grateful because they are still building the same legacy that will continue this.' [43]

The international and national organizations involved were mainly positively evaluated, and seen as essential for the successful outcome, but more criticized than the local organizations. An example of this criticism was that the OSCE, in the beginning, did not have the right approach in addressing the authorities. They had too little knowledge of the political culture in Jajce. They tried to be diplomatic, but by doing this in a setting where most political actors are war veterans and the political culture is led by being tough, the OSCE was first perceived as a weak laughing stock for the local politicians. Therefore, they were not taken seriously in the beginning.

'He (the former OSCE ambassador) wanted to do it nicely with politicians from Jajce, to be diplomatic. He wanted to negotiate and mediate. [...] But in Jajce in the council most of the politicians are former war veterans and war generals who are not diplomatic. [...] So, he should have been much tougher with them from the beginning on. For the first couple of months they were really laughing them out [sic] and saying: hey see! the internationals are coming and going back and they are not achieving much.' [44]

Another common perception was that bigger organizations such as the OSCE, but also NGOs like SHL and the Association of High School Students, got involved too late and at a time when it was becoming more and more likely that the students would achieve their goals. Therefore, some of the students expressed some distrust towards such organizations, stating they were doing it to gain a

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[43] Interview 8

[44] Inteview 9

personal win. However, the pressure and support from bigger NGOs like SHL, The Association of High School Students and the international organizations were needed to gain wider attention and put pressure on the authorities. The NDC and COD Jajce created a fertile ground on which these students could develop the movement, while the other organizations helped in the end stages by strengthening support and pressuring the authorities.

A final smaller but very effective factor was the organization of the questionnaire that was developed to respond to the petition of the local authorities. This delegitimized their facts and effectively countered the arguments they provided in favour of a new segregated school (Beharic, 2017). In this way the students, very effectively, poked through the manipulative practices the authorities used in order to gain support. Together with their lobby with local religious organizations, of which they also received support, this helped a lot in gaining support with the general population of Jajce. This, in the end, created a feeling of everyone standing together against the local authorities.[45]

The key elements that made these students successful, based on these interviews, were the sincerity of their motivations which made them very persistent, the technical and political support they got from the activists, NGOs and international organizations who got involved and the major general support later on. In the last sub question, these elements will be transferred into recommendations on what is needed to build a fertile ground for anti-nationalist resistance. First, however, the question of why this happened in Jajce will be explored.

6.5 Why Jajce?

These student protests were the first large protests against ethnic segregation in the educational system since the end of the war in 1995. This section explores why this happened in Jajce by asking the sub question: *Why did this protest emerge in Jajce?*

The main reason why this happened in Jajce, according to almost all respondents, is the fact that the high schools there are not segregated. As explained in the previous part, in the regions with no clear demographic majority schools usually get segregated and a 'two-school-under-one-roof' system is implemented.

Therefore, these students had a space to meet each other and, as high-school teacher Amela said, break prejudices about each other. Many students mentioned examples of friends or family from

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[45] Interview 9

other towns, where high schools were separated, who could not understand how they could befriend people from the other ethnic group. For them, segregation was the norm and they never had a chance to experience going to school together.

'I think that we are very lucky that we live in this town. Even though we hate living here, when you think about it we are lucky. Because for example my two cousins, they live in Zenica which is a mostly Bosniak town, city actually. They are going to a high school which has only Bosniaks [...]. When I told them for example that my best friend is Croat, they just got confused. Like how can you have a best friend who is Croat? Do you not feel like he will kill you? Okay, not really like that but like how can you just be friends with them? Because they are not familiar with the other nationality, they don't see it, they don't experience it, as much as we do.' [46]

'When we went to another city they said to us: how are you two hanging out? Because I am Bosnian and she's Croatian and they didn't really understand that.' [47]

'In Jajce we have no secondary schools that are segregated, so the secondary schools in Jajce are integrated [...]. In other schools, like Mostar, Gonji Vakuf, we have high schools that are segregated and primary schools are also segregated. In these kind of cities young people are taught that they are different from each other from beginning until the end, until they go to university. So, there is really no place for them to meet each other. In Jajce there was this place. [...] Then they see we are the same and we are not so different than we were taught in primary school. That's why this happened in Jajce because someone wanted to segregate them but they knew that they were the same.' [48]

Another possible element the respondents point to when they were asked about why this happened in Jajce, was the particular history of the city. As described in chapter five, Jajce's history is characterised by many major historical events. This has created a feeling of pride among its citizens and gave Jajce a dominant place in BiH's history. Especially the fact that the SFRY was established in Jajce, which turned Jajce into one of Yugoslavia's most important towns, could still have an influence on the people living in Jajce. Many say that Jajce has been, and to some extent still is, a multi-ethnic town. It is true that, in contrary to for example Mostar, there is no clear border between a Croat and a Muslim part, and the inhabitants of Jajce live rather mixed. The city centre is an especially mixed space, where everyone goes to the same places. This is partly because of the successful returnee policies after the war as described in chapter five. In this sense, Jajce might still be a multi-ethnic town

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[46] Focus group: Ena

[47] Interview 11

[48] Interview 9

to some extent and is not as divided as most other towns. This historical importance, together with the fact that the town is not as clearly divided as many other towns in BiH, could have softened the perception of ethnic differences. The fact that Jajce never requested a segregated high-school could also be a sign of these softened perceptions, since this is quite unique when compared to towns with similar demographics, as explained in section 6.1.

'Jajce is a specific community because Jajce is a very ethnically mixed town. It has always been. For example, during the time of Yugoslavia, it was a very important historical town. It represented the major changes which led to the formation of Yugoslavia so it was always seen as a town which was strongly supporting multi-ethnicity. [...] Another thing in Jajce is that in some other local communities in Central Bosnia canton very bad war crimes and atrocities happened but not in Jajce. Jajce is a pretty tolerant community where people have better tendency to co-exist and do things together than these other divided communities. You don't have this situation in other communities in Central Bosnia canton because in those communities secondary schools are divided. ' [49]

A final element that could have contributed to the fact that these protests emerged in Jajce instead of anywhere else in BiH, is the presence of a local youth centre, COD Jajce, that was able to immediately support the students when they expressed the wish to protest the new school. Apart from that, the Nansen Dialogue Centre (NDC) has also been working in Jajce, mainly in the *Srednja Strukova Skola,* for a longer period of time. In this period, they claim to have improved the ethnic relations between the staff at this school, which could have influenced their way of approaching the topic of ethnicity and the perceptions of students. Similarly, COD Jajce has been running projects in which they tried to bring children from different ethnic backgrounds together. Apart from the immediate support they gave, the presence of these NGOs could have contributed to the development of a fertile ground on which anti-ethno-nationalist ideas could grow. The data obtained in this research is not sufficient however, to ground this claim. Yet the second claim, stating that NGO and activist support was of large importance in the beginning stages of the protests, is affirmed by several respondents.

'Of course results are not immediately visible but we worked in Jajce for six years. When we came to Jajce, teachers were divided along ethnic lines. They didn't even share the same restroom. They had one for Croats and they had one for Bosniaks. Step by step they all worked on this division. They sit together now and they work together and they supported the kids during the protest. Of course there are some who were against that and who were for division, but all teachers that we worked with were supporting them.' [50]

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[49] Interview 5

[50] Interview 1

In conclusion, the integrated high schools paired with Jajce's specific history and demographic composition, and the presence of NGO and activist support in the first stages of the protest, were the reasons that this happened in Jajce instead of anywhere else in BiH.

6.6 The necessary circumstances

The last question ties the previous questions together and discusses which circumstances, before and during the protests, could have made mobilisation possible. The following sub question will be answered: *What does the case of Jajce tell about the circumstances that makes the emergence of resistance against the ethnic identity structure and the organization of protest possible?*

Based on the interviews, the fact that the students had a space where they could meet each other seemed most important. Although the high school system is by many described as imperfect, because of the divisive Croat curriculum, it does provide a space for different ethnic groups to meet. This space breaks the prejudices the students developed during elementary school, and perhaps even earlier in their childhood, and shows the students that they are not that different at all. As Hana, one of the students, stated earlier, '*You can't really manipulate us because in the end if I get to know someone you can't tell me that he's bad because you know he's not.*[51] In this quote lies the core of the issue that structural theories on ethnic identity overlook. A structure can be manipulative, authoritarian and divisive, but this does not stop people in their daily life from having different experiences. As long as people are kept divided this structure might prevail, but as soon as they are united, they realize how irrational this structure is.

Therefore, a space where people, especially youth, can meet each other without being separated could be crucial for anti-nationalist mobilization to arise. Before movements like these can emerge, people first need to realize the senselessness of segregation and break their prejudices towards each other. This space does not have to be in school, it could be in youth centres, sport classes and so on, as long as this space exists. The findings in this analysis again show how important it is to provide such a space because without it, you will not be confronted with proof that you are not that different from the other. In a space, like the teacher Amela said, it will become natural for you. This is the first and most important element that made these protests possible. A child is, as the interviews show, not born as a nationalist. This is socially constructed throughout someone's life, and many children at first do not understand these differences until they enter the system. Hence, if this lack of understanding of

[51] Focus group

differences is encouraged when a child is small, it is much more likely that it will develop different ideas about nationality and ethnic identity than the dominant narratives in BiH are spreading.

This is different from other schools in BiH that are not divided because, as shown in section 6.1, the regions where schools are not divided are much more homogenous than places like Jajce, where there is no clear demographic majority. Therefore, the likelihood that you meet many children form a different ethnic group is much smaller and the effects for inter-ethnic relations will probably be minor. Therefore, this integrated school in Jajce is a special case and shows that in such a context, the power of simple things such as making friends can transcend the ethnic prejudices and make people realize differences are not that big. Another interesting factor that could have contributed to more positive circumstances for such a movement to develop is that Jajce did not request a segregated high school in the first place, contrary to most other places in Central Bosnia. This could imply that the division was less strong than in other towns to begin with. More research, however, is needed to substantially support this claim.

Another element that could have contributed to the transformation of resisting ideas to protest is the presence of small community of NGOs, such as COD Jajce, that got directly involved from the beginning, and later NDC, who were already working in this community and therefore already had a lot of knowledge and helped to equip the students with the skills necessary to build a successful protest movement. Because they were already present in Jajce and provided a space for the students to hold meetings and draft strategies together with staff-members who already had some experience in activism, the students had access to valuable expertise. Without the presence of such organizations it might have been harder for the students to find a point to start.

The mixed high schools together with the presence of organizations that could directly support the students once they started to resist, provided an environment in which these students felt comfortable and strong enough to stand up for their rights, despite of the institutionalized ethnic identity structure. These were the circumstances that helped them to organize the protests and resist the ethnic identity structure. The specific historical significance of Jajce as described in this chapter, together with the unique fact that despite of the demographic diversity the high schools were not segregated could point to a local culture in Jajce that might differentiate from the rest of BiH. If these circumstances would have the same effect in another context is therefore hard to say. However, the ethno-nationalist political parties in power in Jajce are the same as the ones in power in most regions in BiH and the same effects of ethnic manipulation as described in chapter four are described in many of the interviews, like the ethnic division of jobs. Besides, many of the respondents describe how the ethnic relations between the different groups are still very tense. Although there could be a small difference with other towns in BiH the situation still largely resembles the rest of BiH. Hence, the

structure in Jajce remains similar to the rest of BiH, despite of the local history. This makes it possible to generalize the circumstances mentioned in this section to other contexts. This is further discussed in chapter seven.

Because the mixed high-schools are named by everyone as one of the main contributors to the emergence of this protest, it is important to separately discuss this element and go into more detail. The next section addresses this and links it to theory but first the aftermath of the protest and the current situation in Jajce is discussed.

6.7 Influence of the protests and situation now

During and right after the protests, the high school students in Jajce received major attention. They called for more protests in other cities and to dismantle the 'two-schools-under-one-roof system. They showed students from all over BiH that it was possible to change something. Although the protests achieved their aims, they did not stop their movement and they began telling their story to students from other regions, to inspire them to do the same. Many participants, however, lost their energy and interest and eventually stepped out of the movement. As a result, only a small group is now left. [52]

This does not mean that they have no influence anymore. By organizing panel discussions and going to places all over BiH, they try to keep the debate on ethnic segregation in BiH alive. It is a hard struggle, but many respondents believe that it is possible to spread this protest movement to other places in the country.[53] Many of them, however, also acknowledge that transferring this movement to other places will be difficult, because of the specific circumstances that are only present in Jajce, such as the integrated high schools. Hence, some of the students are still active in this resistance movement and try to inspire others to also resist ethnic segregation in schools. However, most respondents were very pessimistic about the future of BiH and therefore pessimistic about the question whether this movement is enough to transfer these ideas and get other places to resist the divisive ethnic identity structure.

'I think we showed that people from BiH are just tired of being separated. They want to move forward. They just want to change something.'[54]

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[52] Interviews 2,6,7,8,10,11

[53] Interviews 2,6,7,8,10,11

[54] Interview 11

6.8 Main finding: support for the inter-group contact theory

One of the conclusions that can be drawn from the data is that the fact that the two high schools in Jajce were mixed is likely the most important factor in the circumstances present that made the protests happen. This conclusion implies that the fact that these children had regular contact with each other contributed to the development of ideas resisting the dominant discourses of ethnic division. Accordingly, it is likely that contact theory could contribute to explaining how anti-ethno-nationalist mobilization emerges. The data obtained in the research seems to support the claims made in contact theory. This section connects the data presented in the sub questions to contact theory. Linking the results to this theory provides a possible theoretical explanation for what happened in Jajce and shows the need to integrate contact-theory into the study of resistance and anti-ethnic or anti-nationalist mobilisation. First, a brief introduction into contact theory is provided and then linked to the findings of this research. This section ends with what contact theory can contribute to the examination of future similar events.

The basis on which most contemporary contact theory is grounded can be found in Allport's *'On the Nature of Prejudice'* published in 1954. In his intergroup contact theory, he argues that prejudice is inevitable because we need to think in categories. If social prejudice is repeated enough, it becomes embedded in social mechanisms. This structural prejudice is often a cause of tension or even conflict between different groups (Dovidio, Glick and Rudman, 2005: 3-8). However, Allport claims that even though prejudices are inevitable, conflicting prejudices can be broken. He describes in his intergroup contact hypothesis the factors needed for breaking prejudices. In this hypothesis, he explains that intergroup contact can break prejudices and improve the relations. However, contact alone is not enough. There are certain conditions that need to apply to this contact in order to have a positive effect (Dovidio, Glick and Rudman, 2005: 8-10). These conditions are: 1) there needs to be an equal status of the conflicting groups; 2) there needs to be a common goal: if groups are both involved in active efforts towards a shared goal, contact has a more positive effect; 3) there needs to be intergroup cooperation: the attainment of the shared goals should be interdependent efforts based on cooperation rather than competition; and 4) there needs to be some level of support from authorities, law or custom. When intergroup contact is backed by explicit support from authorities and social institutions, it is also more likely to have positive effects (Pettigrew and Tropp, 2004: 264-266). Although Alltrop's conditions have been downplayed and are now mainly seen as facilitating, rather than essential for positive intergroup contact, they are still leading in the field of contact theory (Pettigrew and Tropp, 2005:271-272). Another condition often mentioned is that contact needs to be frequent, for a longer period and not superficial (Kenworthy et al., 2005: 282).

Contact theory needs to be approached with caution, because like many studies have shown, contact needs to be of a certain quality to have a positive effect. Superficial contact between groups can even make intergroup relations worse, as it can reinforce stereotypes by failing to provide new information about each group, or via a self-fulfilling prophecy whereby cautious avoidance of intimacy is mutually interpreted as distrust or dislike, confirming initial suspicion (Kenworthy et al., 2005: 278). A study into inter-group relations in BiH, for example, shows how although people live in the same neighbourhood and express the willingness to mix, they appear unable to break through the social boundaries that prevent the type of contact necessary for reconciliation (Leaonard et al.,2016: 22-23). Therefore, the nature of contact is very important and must reach below the surface (Kenworhty et al, 2005: 280). Moreover, a certain level of awareness of their own group identification needs to be present in intergroup communication. If this awareness is not present, personal perceptions will most likely not be generalized to more positive perceptions towards the group (Pettigrew et al., 2011: 277).

One of the most effective forms of contact that can generate positive outcomes is friendship. Intergroup friendship invokes several of Alltrop's original conditions, since in friendship there is often an equal position, common goals and ideals and cooperation (Pettigrew et al., 2011: 275-277). Children are a particularly interesting group in the potential of breaking prejudice, because their prejudices are often still unstable and less sophisticated. They are tight to direct emotions and change more easily (Aboud, 2005: 313-314). However, when children grow up in an environment of insecurity, where hatred between groups is promoted, a fertile ground for prejudicial emotions can negatively influence the instability of their prejudices (Aboud, 2005:310).

Hence, contact theory deals with many uncertainties and no clear principles have established yet that have proven to be essential instead of facilitating for positive contact effects. However, the case of Jajce seems to provide support for the claims made in contact theory that under certain circumstances contact can establish positive intergroup contact, even in a context where ethnicity is institutionalized. The conditions facilitating positive intergroup contact mentioned in this section, which are Alltrop's four: equal status of groups, common goals, intergroup cooperation and support of authorities, law or custom with the additions of the contact needing to be long-term, frequent and not superficial and preferably friendship-based for an optimal outcome, were all present in Jajce in times of the protests.

As presented in the previous parts, the students were involved in long-term and frequent intergroup contact because of the mixed high-schools. At this time, they started intergroup friendships which made the contact reach further than a superficial level. Moreover, because of the almost 50/50 power balance both political and demographical, there is no strong ethnic competition going on in

Jajce. Due to the political and social system in BiH, where most members of each ethnic group vote for their own party, the Bosniak and Croat party in Jajce have secured a relatively stable share of power. When the demographics stay the same, it is not likely that the political power balance will change soon. Therefore, the two groups have a relatively equal status and, although always looking for more, have limited competition with the other group since they are not a potential voter group. Apart from that, because of the equally distributed demographic balance, it is also not likely that one group will greatly outnumber the other.

Another important factor that might have enforced the intergroup contact is the common goal the students strived for when they started to fight the segregation of schools. This gave them a common goal with no competitive element. This possibly made contact even stronger and helped them to stick with each other and their aims. Support from the authorities, however, was lacking. The major support from almost all other institutions such as religious organizations, international organizations and local NGOs, likely compensated for the lack of authority support, since Allport did not only talk about authorities, but also about social institutions.

But most important was the intergroup friendship. Just like Pettigrew argued (2011), intergroup friendship invokes several of Alltop's conditions and can be very effective. In the interviews, many respondents also mentioned the strength the movement had because of the simple fact they just wanted to stay with their friends. Most of the students interviewed stated this as the main reason for participating in the protest. Hence, these intergroup friendships made them mobilize and resist the dominant discourses.

Long-term intergroup contact that reached under the surface and met the conditions established by contact theories was achieved in Jajce due to mixed high-schools. Although Jajce is not the only mixed high-school in BiH, it might be one of the few that meets all of these conditions. Mixed school in Sarajevo, for example, likely do not have an equal group status since Croats and Serbs are a clear minority there. Contact in school there might be more segregated, and the intergroup contact might be more superficial. In Jajce, however, the respondents clearly stated that intergroup contacts that resulted into friendships made them realize that segregation is not desirable.

Although contact theory is quite well-known in the field of conflict and reconciliation, it has not often been perceived as a means to create anti-ethno-nationalist mobilisation and as an encouragement for people to resist ethnic identity structures. The finding that contact theory might have been an important factor in the circumstances that made the protests possible, might therefore be a valuable step into integrating contact theory more substantially into the mobilisation and protest literature.

7. Conclusion: how contact can break the structure

This final chapter starts with the conclusion of the research and some reflections and then discusses recommendations for further research and practice.

7.1 Conclusion

The academic debate regarding ethnic identity and how ethnic tensions can lead to conflict base most of their theories on structural foundations, meaning their focus is on how structures influence and form the status quo and the behaviour of individuals. According to these theories, ethnic tensions in a conflict or post-conflict situation emerge either because of some ancient historical feud, the elite manipulation of ethnic identity or certain social and institutional structures that are created to promote a certain identity. These theories emphasize how the individual is subjected to structure and develops their identity based on what this structure dictates. Hence, if elites tell certain groups to hate each other, or the social context socializes people in such a way this idea is promoted, people will eventually start to hate each other. However, this is not always the case. Not always is this structure followed blindly, but because of the emphasis on structural theory in this particular academic debate, this notion is often overlooked and understudied.

For that reason, this research tried to explore the role of the agency of individuals in a structure where ethnic identity is highly institutionalized, to find out how people can break out of such a structure. By researching how resistance against the ethno-nationalist policies in BiH emerged and is mobilized, new insights into this understudied topic have been collected. The student protests against ethnic segregation in schools in Jajce is a perfect example of a case where people managed to oppose the ethnic identity structure and started to resist by protesting the division in education in BiH. This case can contribute to increased understanding about how youth, growing up in the context of a highly institutionalized ethnic identity structure and never having experienced something else, started to oppose this structure and managed to resist. Since Jajce is a unique case as the protests achieved their goals, something that is very rare in BiH, it can show which circumstances contributed to the emergence and the success of these protests.

By conducting a single-case study based on desk-research, interviews and a focus group, the following research question was answered: *'How does resistance and anti-ethno-nationalist mobilization develop in a highly institutionalized ethnic identity structure'?* Through this question, an

in-depth examination of the circumstances that made the protests possible was conducted, attempting to include all the contextual factors that could have played a role in this process. After three months of doing fieldwork in Jajce, a set of circumstances that contributed to the emergence of resistance and anti-ethno-nationalist mobilization could be identified.

First of all, the findings show that the fact that the high schools were integrated was very important for the way the students perceived their ethnic differences. The fact that these schools were integrated is quite unique, because in towns where there is no clear ethnic majority high schools are normally segregated in order to make sure each ethnic group gets taught their own curriculum. Places where schools are not segregated are mostly so homogenous in its demographical composition that the schools are still largely mono-ethnic. The case of Jajce is therefore special, because it has a diverse population but no segregated high schools. The integrated high schools provided a space for students to meet with other ethnic groups. Students started to engage in frequent and long-lasting intergroup contact, resulting in friendships or romantic relationships. This contact deconstructed their prejudices about the other ethnic group and showed them they were not that different as they were told by their parents, teachers and politicians. The students describe how they did not understand the differences before going to elementary school. Then, after enrolling in a segregated elementary school, they started to see or understand the difference. This became deconstructed again when they started to go to the integrated high school.

This finding shows two things. First, it shows support for the social constructivist claim that people are not born with a feeling of ethnic distrust or hostility. The students interviewed described how they had inter-group friends in their childhood but became separated from them in elementary school and did not understand why, because they did not feel different from them. The most important finding, however, is the fact that the integrated high school likely played a crucial role in the emergence of protest. This supports the claims made in contact theory. This theory claims that inter-group contact, if long-lasting, frequent and not superficial can dismantle prejudice and improve inter-group relations (Kenworthy et al., 2005: 282). Apart from this, it is important that the groups that interact have an equal status, a common goal, cooperate with each other and have some support from authorities (Pettigrew and Tropp, 2004: 264-266). The intergroup contact the high school students had, meets all these conditions. The students saw each other almost daily for a longer period of time. They made intergroup friendships, making their contact non-superficial. Because of the almost 50/50 demographic and political balance, there was a relatively equal status between the groups and the wish to stay together gave them a common goal and made them cooperate. The only factor that was lacking was support from the authorities, but the major support the students received from other powerful actors like the OSCE, likely softened the negative effect of this missing condition. Therefore, because

the context in Jajce meets these requirements and the existence of intergroup contact played a crucial role in the emergence of the protests, this case supports the claims made in contact theory.

Thus, contact theory can be helpful in explaining which circumstances are needed in order for anti-ethno-nationalist mobilization to emerge. If there is a certain level of inter-group contact, this can contribute to the dismantling of prejudices and can develop ideas opposing a highly institutionalized ethnic identity structure, driving people to resist this structure. Therefore, it can be valuable to integrate contact theory into the ethnic identity and conflict debate more, especially when researching how resistance against a structure can develop and be encouraged. Contact theory helps to understand better how this can emerge and provides tools to establish intergroup contact to also encourage resistance in other cases.

Another element that contributed to the emergence of the protests was the presence of local activists and the youth centre COD Jajce, who were able to provide assistance to the students right from the start of the protest. Because the youth centre was already present in Jajce, they were immediately provided with technical support when starting the organization of the protest. This youth centre, together with some local activists, helped the students with drafting a strategy and gaining wider attention. They provided both technical assistance and emotional support, which gave the students more skills in the organization of the protest movement. This support was likely fundamental for the start of the protest, when the general support was still very limited. Hence, local community centres such as a youth centre can be an important factor in the emergence of protest, because it provides a space for people to meet, learn and acquire more skills from local activists who already had some experience with protesting.

Another main finding concerns the way in which the students transferred this foundation into a resistance movement and started protesting. An important element in their motivation to protest and the persistence they showed was the fact that their aims were genuine and simple. They just did not want to be separated from their friends. There was no political gain, power games or hidden agenda, and the students knew they were standing on the right side. This made them feel very strong about themselves and continue until the end. Together with the fact that they did not accept any help from political parties, it made supporting the students' protest easier, because their message was so honest and simple. This implies that protests with a clear and concrete aim and without political affiliations have more chance to succeed, because they can create wide support more easily. Hence, in the case of BiH, the further the protest is removed from the political sphere, the more likely it is to get wide support.

However, success was not achieved by the students alone. Although the protest was bottom-up and the students started it by themselves, help from bigger actors was eventually needed in order to

achieve their goals. Without the pressure from several national and international actors, like the OSCE, SHL, the media and many embassies, the students likely would not have been successful. Organizations like OSCE and the US embassy applied high pressure, particularly in the later stages of the protest, on the local authorities in Jajce. Considering BiH has received and still receives a high amount of foreign aid money, they are partially dependent on actors like these (Bieber, 2002). International organizations are therefore quite capable of pressuring the BiH authorities, which worked out in favour of the students. Moreover, the broad media attention gave the students support from all over BiH, also applying extra pressure on the local authorities. However, these elements only contributed to the successful course of the protests and were not part of the initial circumstances that developed anti-ethno-nationalist resistance. The role of actors like these, however, needs to be mentioned because their support is crucial in later stages of resistance.

Another circumstance that is harder to prove because it did not directly contribute to the emergence of the protest, is the particular history of Jajce. The town always had a certain historical significance throughout the history of BiH. During the war, inhabitants of Jajce did not directly fight each other, contrary to many other towns in BiH, as the Sebs almost immediately took the town and expelled all the Bosniaks and Croats. Hence, these groups did not fight with each other in their direct living environment. Apart from that, after the war Jajce had a relatively successful returnee policy, making it possible for many to return home. Moreover, no internal border was created, unlike many other cities like Mostar, where there is a clear boundary between the Croat and the Muslim part. These elements could have contributed to a softer position of Jajce's population towards the other ethnic group. The fact that they never requested a segregated high school could be a sign of this. How significant this influence has been and how this differs from other place in BiH cannot be established based on the findings in this research.

The last main finding is the character of the *Srednja Strukova Skola* as a contributing factor to the emergence of the protests. Since this school does not hire its staff based on ethnicity and gives teachers significant space to interpret and teach the mandatory curriculum in their own way, it has quite an open character. The teacher interviewed from this school also told that she regularly discusses topics like ethnic identity with the students and that an open discussion about this is provided. Moreover, the school openly supported the protest and some teachers even participated in it. In contrast, the director of the *Nikola Sop* school, where it is claimed people are hired based on ethnicity, forbade the students and staff to participate and even to speak about the protests. During the protests, the largest part of the students who participated came from the *Srednja Strukova Skola*. This implies that the way topics were discussed and the curriculum was implemented in that school, together with the support they expressed for the students, might have contributed to the emergence of the protests.

Thus, the most important circumstances that made resistance against the ethnic identity structure possible were the character of the school, the particular history of Jajce, the direct support of the local youth centre and some activists and most importantly, the fact that there was qualitative intergroup contact. These findings point to the fact that daily life experiences can oppose certain structures and that intergroup contact can create an environment where resistance against divisive ethnic structures can emerge.

Like Brubaker claims, individuals should play a bigger role in the theoretical debate (Brubaker, 2004: 52). The structural nature of the theories explaining ethnic identity and conflict give too little attention to agency and the circumstances that could generate change. This ignores the potential of individuals and prevents insight into how anti-ethno-nationalist movements that resist the structure could be encouraged. This study provided these insights and showed how, even in a context where ethnic identity is highly institutionalized, such movements can emerge. It shows partial support for the constructivist theories of manipulation through discourses, institutions and state authority (Bourdieu, 1992), because it shows how people can be highly influenced by such structures. However, it nuances this power by showing how, despite of these structures, resistance still occurs. This shows these structures are not as powerful as implied in most theories in the academic debate. Although this single case is not sufficient to generalize the findings, it does point to factors previously ignored, that develop a foundation for new agency-focused research in the ethnic identity and conflict debate. It shows that intergroup contact can be a starting point in encouraging protest against ethnic division and a good basis for generating change. Most of all it shows the power of simple things like going to school together and friendship.

7.2 Reflection and theoretical and social contribution

This section reflects on the research process and findings and discusses what these findings contribute to both theory and practice. An important reflection is that this study only explored which circumstances are needed for resistance against a salient ethnic identity structure to emerge, but does not look at the durability of such resistance. Although exploring this is in this particular case is not yet possible, as only a year has passed since these protests happened, this is important to consider. The research did try to address these issues by looking at resistance that has been successful and did influence a situation on the short-term. However, as discussed in section 6.7, it is questionable how long this resistance movement will continue to protest segregation in the education system and if these protests will transfer to other places in BiH. Whether or not this resistance will have a long-term and

wider influence is therefore hard to say. The findings of this research only say something about the emergence of resistance, and not about the durability of this resistance.

Another reflection concerns the limited number of respondents. Besides the sensitivity of this topic which made parents and teachers hesitant to talk about the protests, the wide-spread attention the students received during and just after the protests made the data collection more challenging. Because of this wide-spread attention from media agencies and domestic and foreign researchers, many students and other actors involved became tired of the topic and reluctant to speak about it. Although the attention has decreased in the past few months, many students became demotivated to speak about the protests partly because of all the attention. Many respondents also described how the insensitivity and rude behavior of some researchers and journalists, especially from abroad, developed a distrust towards these people in the community. Dealing with the reluctance of students to speak about the protests together with the damaged reputation of foreign researchers made it hard to individually reach out to the students. The only way they were willing to participate in an interview was when the local youth center contacted them.

This indicates two things: first of all, although attention to such topics is good and necessary in order to spread the story of what happened in Jajce and can find factors that can encourage anti-ethno-nationalist resistance, caution is needed when researching this. Especially when it mainly engages youth. It is undesirable that because of all this attention, or (cultural) insensitivity from those who want to write about the events, the students participating in the protests become demotivated and tired of the subject. This might have affected the energy these students had in continuing their resistance. This does not mean it is because of this attention that students started to distance themselves from the protest movement, but it did, to some extent, spread some negativity around the topic. Researchers can therefore also negatively influence such a movement if it is not treated with caution. Research also becomes harder if the reputation of researchers is not good. If so, they might not be taken seriously and not welcomed into the community, making it harder to properly explore such protest movements. During this research this formed an obstacle in the data collection.

Fortunately, by contacting the youth center, it was possible to reach enough students. By speaking with a local activist and researcher active in Jajce in the beginning, the issue of the poor reputation of researchers in Jajce was discussed. This made it possible to take this into account during the research and try to prevent the mistakes previously made by others. The combination of the support of the youth center and the advice of some locals helped during the interviews. Partly thanks to that, the students seemed to feel comfortable during the interviews and shared openly about their experiences.

Lastly, it is important to reflect on the specific historical context of Jajce and the external validity of the findings. As described in chapter five and six, Jajce has an important position in BiH's history. They have a relatively diverse ethnic composition but did not establish a specific ethnic border in the city after the war, like in Mostar. They also never requested the segregation of high schools in Jajce, contrary to other towns with a similar demographic composition. This could be a sign of a local culture in Jajce that is different from the rest of BiH, where there might be more ethnic tolerance than in other places. Jajce's specific character makes it hard to generalize the findings.

However, there are also many similarities. The political situation is similar to the rest of BiH. The political parties in power are the same parties in power on the national level and in most other regions of BiH where Croats and Bosniaks live. In Jajce, the same strategies of ethnic manipulation by the political elites can be seen as in the rest of BiH. The ethnic structure as described in chapter four also applies in Jajce. Respondents repeatedly mentioned examples that resemble the structural arrangements described in this chapter. Jobs, for example, are for a large part distributed by the ethno-nationalist parties to secure political support. In high school, although they are not segregated, the Bosniaks and Croats still get separate classes on religion, language, history and geography. Hence, the ethnic identity structure in Jajce largely resembles the structure in BiH in general. Most respondents also describe how friends, parents, teachers or other family members distrust other ethnic groups. This shows that the ethnic tensions also do exist in Jajce and the situation is, despite of the particular history, not that different from the rest of BiH. The findings can therefore also be valuable for other contexts in BiH and it is possible to generalize them to some extent.

The findings can also be generalized to situations outside of BiH where similar ethnic identity structures exist. As mentioned before, in many post conflict situations such as Lebanon, Macedonia and Northern-Ireland, ethnic identity became highly institutionalized. There are many similarities between these structures and the structure in Jajce. All these countries implemented a certain form of power-sharing after conflict which institutionalized ethnic identity (Taylor, 2006, Bieber, 2004, Salamey and Payne, 2008). In Lebanon, for example, the fragmentation of sectarian groups into politics gave the sectarian political elites the chance to dominate the political system and divide the access and control over public resources between these groups. This system resulted in establishing the power of the political sectarian elite that both lacks national accountability and undermines government commitment to the public good (Salamey & Payne, 2008: 455). The same happened in BiH, where the power sharing system ended up facilitating the power of the ethno-nationalist political elite. The peace agreement that stopped the conflict in Northern-Ireland also ended up promoting an ethno-nationalist group-based understanding of politics (Taylor, 2006: 217). Macedonia implemented a political structure that has similarities to the BiH one where, although not territorially, also a proportional representation system for the parliaments was adopted (Bieber, 2002: 8). Ethnic

manipulation through media is another example that is present in all these cases. Political elites in Northern-Ireland used the media to manipulate the public opinion on the future of the country (Dixon, 2002:739). In Lebanon the media is also widely used by political elites to serve their agendas (Dajani, 2013:8). These are examples of similarities between the structural arrangements in these countries. People living in these countries, although the cultural and historical traits are different, have to deal with a similar ethnic identity structure as the one in Jajce. In this structure similar tools are used to manipulate the public. Because this structure is similar, the elements found in the case of Jajce that made people resist such a structure could be useful for these other cases. It might be possible that the implementation of these circumstances in the context of for example Lebanon, could have a similar effect. Because of these similarities, the findings in this research could contribute to research into the emergence of resistance in such countries. The particularities of Jajce, however, still need to be taken into account and further research is needed to test the transferability of these results.

The research also contributes to inter-group contact theory and the conflict and ethnic identity debate by showing the need to integrate the two theories more. Although contact theory is not new in conflict studies and has been used extensively to try to improve ethnic relations, it has not yet been seen as a tool to encourage resistance and a factor that can contribute to a set of circumstances that develops resistance against a highly institutionalized ethnic identity structure. This is a new perspective in which contact theory can be used. This is a valuable insight for research that explores how an institutionalized ethnic identity structure can be changed and how people can resist ethnic political manipulation.

Next to integrating contact theory into the ethnic identity and conflict debate, the research also shows that people can exercise agency in a context where ethnic identity is highly institutionalized. This reveals the need for focus on agency in this debate and proves there are ways to resist the structure. By researching how this agency emerged it also shows the discrepancy between the ethnic identity structure and daily life experiences. It shows the boundaries of ethnic manipulation and that this process is more complex. This is an important contribution to the theoretical debate because it emphasizes the need for more studies into the 'room for manoeuvre' within salient ethnic identity structures and shows how this worked in the case of Jajce.

These findings are a first step in understanding the role of agency in conflict and post-conflict situations. Gaining knowledge on how ethnic manipulation can be resisted eventually leads to factors that can prevent post-conflict situations to fall back into violence because of tense ethnic identity structures. It does not only generate important understandings for post ethnic-conflict situations, but the findings can also shed light on how ethnic manipulation before conflict can be resisted. This could lead to new understandings of how ethnic identity could be prevented from becoming a driver of

conflict by encouraging resistance against the manipulation of ethnicity. Besides theoretical significance, this can also contribute to practice because it provides insights into how individuals can resist ethnic propaganda and develop different ideas on ethnic relations. This can help protest movements and people working in the field in finding methods to break these ethnic structures and change it from bottom-up.

7.3 Recommendations for further research

This section puts forward different recommendations for further research. First, the findings need to be tested in other contexts in order to improve generalizability. It can be useful to explore similar cases and examine if the same elements caused mobilization. In this way, the circumstances identified can be further examined and more insights in how this works can be generated.

The most important recommendation is to integrate contact theory into research on how resistance against certain structures emerge in situations like BiH, to see if this theory is also supported by other cases. Hence, future research should focus more on the individual aspect of conflict and ethnic identity and gain more insight into how resistance against structure emerges. More knowledge on this topic can bring forward new ways of how to generate change, and how to transform certain ethnic identity structures by starting from bottom-up.

Also important is to explore if the resistance that emerged out of the identified circumstances generated long-term changes. It is necessary to further examine this to see what the durability of this resistance is. If these circumstances only produce short-term resistance, without any long-term effects it might not be as effective to generate change as implied in this thesis. This thesis mainly focused on how the structure can be broken but not on what happens afterwards. It is therefore important to conduct further research into if these circumstances can also produce long-term resistance.

Another interesting, more specific, element for further research is to explore the historical significance of Jajce and the influence the relatively successful return policy had on the character of the town. Since in Jajce a large part of the Bosniak original population was able to return, which made the town more multi-ethnic than most other places, it could have influenced people's perceptions of each other. The data in this study does not give proof strong enough to uphold this claim, because it focused on a more recent event. However, it could be valuable to examine its role, because it could point to the importance of returnee policies after ethnic conflict and the reconstruction of the demographic balance before the conflict. This could be a valuable insight for research in all post-(ethnic)-conflict settings.

Lastly, this research focused on youth and how they develop ideas opposing the ethnic identity structure. Whether the findings can be applied to adults, however, did not become clear in this research. Further research is needed to see if a space to meet each other could also build the described foundation in another context. The emphasis of this research is on individuals who have not yet completely emerged into the structure, which leaves space for agency and resistance. How this space works for individuals who have passed 18 is unclear. Therefore, further research can provide more insights into these aspects.

7.4 Recommendations for practice

Based on the main findings the following practical recommendations can be made to help encourage local agency and anti-ethno-nationalist movements. Before these movements can emerge, it is important to provide a space where people, especially youth, can meet. If people have more intergroup contact, based on the conditions mentioned in the previous chapter, it can improve intergroup relations. This can prevent people from abiding by the dominant narrative of ethnic distrust and hostility and start resistance against this. For example, when intergroup friendships are established, it can give people a strong motive to resist nationalist policies. Spaces and projects encouraging this contact and encouraging intergroup friendship can therefore be an important contributor to the development of resistance against the structure. However, it is key that this space needs to encourage a certain kind of contact. People need to meet there on a regular basis, for a longer period of time and the contact should not stay superficial. This could be done by organizing discussion groups or providing a topic for people to talk about. A youth centre could fulfil this role. Moreover, this thesis supports the importance of working with youth, because with them, the chance of prejudices being broken is much larger.

The findings show how inter-group contact can be a powerful tool. This does not only apply to improving ethnic relations but can also be a useful tool for generating anti-ethno-national resistance and resisting a specific ethnic identity structure. This is a new perspective on how contact can be used which should be implemented in future projects that try to encourage bottom-up change and protest movements. Inter-group contact, specifically friendship, can be a powerful tool to oppose the ethno-national political elites. Using this tool can be valuable for building a narrative that opposes the dominant ethnic identity structure and show people ethnic manipulation can be resisted.

Another recommendation is that when mobilizing anti-ethno-nationalist support, an a-political frame together with simple and concrete aims might be most effective to gather major support. Due to the aversion against the political sphere in BiH, it can help your movement to gain more legitimacy

when people feel you are not at all involved in this game. Because the students had a claim that was seen as genuine and it was clear what they wanted, they succeeded in getting support (although not always publicly) from the whole community.

The last recommendation is the importance of education. The fact that students from one school participated in the protests on a much larger scale than students from the other school, shows there must be a difference between the schools. One school even forbade the students from participating, and people claimed many teachers were employed through the political party. The other school, according to the teacher, provided more freedom. This could have enabled a more supportive environment for such resistance to grow and shows the influence education can have. Hence, supporting projects that work with schools to create a more tolerant environment, could be an important step in encouraging space for anti-ethno-nationalist movements.

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Appendix A: List of respondents

NGO interviews:

1. Interview with Ljuljjeta: director NDC, 04-04-2018, Sarajevo: 39:40
2. Interview with Sanja: Education Officer OSCE on 05-04-2018, Travnik: 84:14
3. Interview with Goran, International Network of Peacebuilding on 11-04-2018, Sarajevo: 62:16
4. Duo-Interview with Adnan and Meriam SHL on 26-04-2018, Sarajevo: 42:10
5. Interview with Dijana, Genesis on 27-04-2018, Sarajevo: 41:07
6. Interview with Nzedad, Association of High School Students on 19-04-2018, Sarajevo: 33:41
7. Interview with Nejra, COD Jajce on 25-04-2018, Jajce: 48:00

Interviews protesters and activists engaged (students and activists)

8. Interview with Nikolas, student Nikola Sop and main figure in the protest movement on 13-04-2018, Jajce: 51:49
9. Interview with Samir, former student Nikola Sop and youth activist on 28-05-2018, Jajce: 38:38
10. Interview with Marko, youth activist on 24-04-2018, Jajce: 52:08
11. Duo-interview with Azra, student Srednja Strukovna skola and leader protest movement and Lucija, student Nikola Sop and participant protest on 15-05-2018, Jajce: 53:04

Interview teacher

12. Interview with Amela: teacher at Srednja Strukovna Skola and participant protests, 12-04-2018, Jajce: 51:41

Focus group participants:

All students Nikola Sop on 24-05-2018, Jajce: 82:36

1. Anel
2. Hana
3. Ena
4. Marin

Appendix B Interview outlines

Outline focus group:

1. Start with introduction of yourself and the research
2. Introduction of the group members: Tell me about yourself?
3. How would you describe yourself?
4. What does identity mean for you? How would you define your own identity?
5. How do you think other will describe you? And why?
6. When and how did you become aware of this identity you described?
7. What does ethnicity mean to you?
8. Can you describe the relationship between ethnicity and identity? Are there any differences/ similarities?
9. What do you think about how your surroundings speak about (ethnic) identity?
10. What do you think about how the public and political sphere (media and social media and so on) speaks about ethnic identity?
11. What is the relation between these views and your own about ethnic identity?
12. How is this the same/ different? And why?
13. If you have different views, why do you think you think differently about this than others and how did you come to this idea?
14. Do you struggle with issues like your identity, ethnicity and your perception about all this?
15. Do you feel your environment is supportive in this struggle? Can you speak with your parents or teachers or friends about this?

Now I would like to start speaking about the protest

16. When did the idea of organizing a protest first occur?
17. Why did you think this was necessary?
18. Did you believe it could be successful?
19. How did you start to organize and unite with each other?
20. How did you reach a broader audience and attract the media attention?
21. Was your environment supportive when you told them you were protesting? How did your friends, parents and teachers react?
22. What enabled you to start this protest?
23. How did you gain support to make the protest a bigger movement?
24. Protests like these are quite unique in Bosnia, especially because they were successful, why do you think you succeeded in achieving the goals of these protests?

25. What can explain these elements of success? Did you get any particular support that helped you to achieve your goals?

26. Is there something different in Jajce, compared to the rest of Bosnia-Herzegovina?

27. What did you learn about these protests?

28. Are you going to keep protesting?

29. Do you have any tips to mobilize similar movements in other cases?

30. How do you see the future of BiH?

31. Do you want to add anything?

Outline NGO-interviews

1. Introduction

2. Can you tell me a bit about yourself?

3. Can you tell me a little bit about the situation you work in, is the context enabling or not? Do you have the feeling your work is supported publically/ politically? What do you think about the context you are working in?

4. How has this situation developed over the years? Do you feel it has become better or worse, or stayed the same?

5. Why do you think it has developed this way?

6. How do you see your work in relationship to these developments? / Do you have the feeling you achieved some of these changes?

7. If so, how do you try to change the situation?

8. What do you think about how the public and political sphere speaks about ethnic identity and why do you think this is like this?

9. What do you know about Jajce?

10. Could you describe the context of Jajce and the social and political situation in Jajce?

11. Do you think Jajce is any different than the rest of Bosnia-Herzegovina?

12. What do you know about the protests in Jajce in 2016 and 2017

13. Did you have any role in this protest?

14. What, do you think, enabled these students to organize these protests?

15. If you has a role, how much influence did you have on these protests?

16. Why were these protests successful?

17. What makes it that this succeeded in Jajce, while this never happened anywhere else in Bosnia-Herzegovina?

18. Do you think this could have happened anywhere else in Bosnia, or is it something particular about the context of Jajce?

19. Do you think these protests can extend to other parts of the country?

20. Do you think movements like this can eventually change the ethnic identity norms/ public and political debates in Bosnia?

21. What do you think is the future of peacebuilding in BiH?

22. Do you want to add anything?

Outline teacher interview

1. Introduction

2. Tell me a bit about your self

3. Can you describe the social/ economic situation in Bosnia and what you think about it?

4. What do you think about how people speak and think about identity in your surroundings?

5. Where do you identify yourself most with?

6. What do you think about how people speak and think about identity in the public sphere (media and social media and so on).

7. What do you think about how people speak and think about identity in the political sphere?

8. How did you deal with (ethnic) identity growing up

9. Could you speak about this topic in class/ with parents/ friends?

10. What was the first thing on your mind when you heared about the separation

11. How did you start to organize the protest?

12. Can you talk me through what happened and your perspectives on all of this

13. Why do you think these students started this protest?

14. A successful protest, why do you think this particular protest was successful?

15. What was the role of international NGOs?

16. Do you think Jajce is different compared to the rest of Bosnia-Herzegovina? And why? Why did this happen in Jajce specifically?

17. Do you believe these movments could spread to other parts of BiH?

18. What did you learn from these protests?

19. How do you see the future of BiH?

20. Do you want to add anything?

Outline individual student interview

1. Introduction

2. What did you think about the group discussion we had the other day? What did you think about the reaction of you and your peers?

3. Can you tell me a bit more, in more detail about how you would describe yourself, what is most important about you, most typical, what you struggle with?

4. Can you tell me a bit more about how you would describe your identity, why, how others see this? How you came to this identity?

5. Can you tell me a bit more about your own perceptions on ethnicity and identity and the relations between these two. Are you able to choose your ethnic identity, how important is it for you, are these two concepts the same or different, what are the similarities and difference then?

6. In the focus group you said ….. could you explain a little bit more about why you think that way?

7. How would you place yourself in relation to your surroundings? Does it feel familiar, or maybe different? Do you feel you fit in?

8. How do you see yourself in relation with your parents? Do you feel the same as them, different? Do you have the same ideas or different ones?

9. How do you see yourself in relation to your friends? Do you feel the same as them, different? Do you have the same ideas or different ones?

10. What do you think about your perceptions and believes in relation to your friends and parents?

11. Do you feel you can speak about issues like your identity and ethnicity with your parents?

12. Do you feel you can speak about issues like your identity and ethnicity with your friends?

13. Do you feel you can speak about issues like your identity and ethnicity in class?

14. Do you feel listened to if you speak about such issues?

15. About the protest, when did you first think about protesting and why?

16. Did you think you could be successful, had any control over this situation?

17. How did you find each other and decided to organize together?

18. Did you get any support from your surroundings?

19. Why do you think you were successful and what did you learn?

20. Do you have any tips and tricks for other cases?

21. Do you want to add anything?