

Bosnia and Herzegovina: The Favourite Experiment of the International Community?



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Abstract

This thesis looks at the various effects a consociational system can have on a war-torn country such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, focusing primarily on whether the international community is right to propose consociationalism as the solution to a conflict involving different groups. These issues were investigated through qualitative methods of research in the form of a document analysis of relevant publications and articles by academics and semi-structured, in-depth interviews with actors from Bosnian NGOs. The latter was chosen because NGOs are under-represented in the literature, while their views are enriching having experienced Bosnia's reconstruction up close. From both methods various strengths, weaknesses, threats and solutions have emerged. By combining these results with an extensive review of the current scientific literature, this thesis concludes the following: although consociationalism successfully ended the Bosnian war by bringing peace and stability to Bosnia and Herzegovina, the country has moved into a negative hybrid peace situation. Consociationalism has brought a situation where the interests of elites and the status quo are maintained. This has hampered progress in Bosnia and Herzegovina for 26 years.

Keywords: Bosnia and Herzegovina, General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Dayton Peace Accord), consociationalism, liberal peacebuilding

Note: the picture on the front page shows a segregated high school in Travnik (Halilovic-Pastuovic, 2017)

Preface

Growing up, I went on holiday to Bosnia and Herzegovina every summer. As we drove through the country on our way to visit relatives, I remember driving past signs saying ‘Welcome to Republic of Srpska’ and flags of other colors than the blue and yellow Bosnian flag. These signs always confused me, so I would ask my parents if we were still in Bosnia. My parents did not know how to answer this question.

Today, I understand why my parents could not answer. At that time, we were indeed driving through Bosnia, but specifically through a certain entity or canton that is allowed to govern much autonomously. This is all because of the Dayton Accord that was drawn up in 1995 to end the Bosnian war and transform the country into a multicultural democracy in which the three largest groups govern with each other. It made me wonder whether it has indeed helped Bosnia to move forward. Has the accord succeeded in helping the country to rebuild itself? Has it given the different groups tools to live together in peace? Could an agreement like this be the solution to all conflicts involving different groups? These questions have inspired me to focus this master thesis on the effects the Dayton Accord has had on Bosnia.

This preface is my way of saying thank you to all the people who have made this master thesis possible. It goes without saying that this thesis could not have been done without the participation of many NGO employees in Bosnia. Although I could not travel to Bosnia because of the COVID-19 crisis, they were all ready to talk to me online. *Puno hvala*¹ for your honesty, openness and time! I would also like to thank Bert Bomert, my most apt supervisor, for his guidance through my research process. Especially his quick response to all sent mails and documents surprised me every time. Not to forget, I would like to give my thanks to Dion van den Berg and Puco Danilović of PAX for Peace, a Dutch peace NGO, for the opportunity and space to work with them. Their large network helped me a great deal in finding relevant respondents. Last, but definitely not least, I want to thank my boyfriend, family and friends. Without their support and understanding I would never have finished this thesis.

Thank you for reading this work.

¹ *Puno hvala* means ‘Thank you very much’

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1. Introduction

It has been 26 years since the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, commonly known as the Dayton Accord, was reached, ending the three-and-a-half year long Bosnian war. Since this war came to an end, enough time has passed for a new generation to be born, educated, grow up and start their own families. Life has continued, either in Bosnia and Herzegovina² or living somewhere else in Europe or beyond as part of the vast diaspora. Yet, although a quarter of a century has passed, it is fair to question what has essentially changed in Bosnia during this period of time (Perry, 2018).

Over the years, the country has not progressed much. This is partly reflected in its economic situation, which is close to dire (Pajot, 2018). Its average annual income of \$11,000 makes the country the third poorest in Europe, after Kosovo and Albania (International Monetary Fund, 2019). Unemployment in Bosnia is also one of the worst: 18.4% of the active population and 40.2% among the younger generations (O'Neill, 2021). Industry, once the main driving force in Yugoslavia, is in decay (Pajot, 2018). All of these problems are exacerbated by corruption and criminality. It has, for example, played a central role in driving away foreign investment (Kartsonaki, 2016). On the political front, there is not much progress either. There, too, Bosnia finds itself in dire straits. Political institutions function poorly, and discussions between the main political leaders continue to revolve around who controls which territory and how, how ethno-national groups connect with their kinship states, and how to formulate and apply the rights of the 'us versus the them' (Perry, 2018).

As the Bosnian population today has to struggle with economic stagnation, unemployment, corruption, incapable politicians and crime, it keeps a 'deep reservoir of frustration' towards politicians. They have little hope that these conditions will change soon (Ó Tuathail, O'Loughlin & Djipa, 2006). As a result of this, the country is facing a brain drain. "All the young people want to leave the country", a member of the French embassy in Sarajevo states, "those who are able to develop the country, to change it, are no longer here. This benefits the politicians more so than anyone else" (Pajot, 2018, para. 8).

Many academics blame all or at least a large part of the stagnating political, social and economic situation in Bosnia on the Dayton Accord: the constitution which created Bosnia as

² Hereafter referred to as Bosnia.

one state, with two entities, ten cantons, and three constituent peoples³ along with Others⁴ (Kesić, 2007; Perry, 2018). Among other things, it is claimed that the accord has turned Bosnia into a weak, dysfunctional country, dividing it along ethnic lines. This has prevented the country from making any progress (Chollet, 2007; Pejanović, 2014). To what extent can the Dayton Accord indeed be blamed for the problems Bosnia has experienced since the war? This will be investigated in this thesis.

To answer this question, however, not only the opinions of academics on the matter will be considered. Special focus will also be given to the views of actors from Bosnian non-governmental organizations (NGOs). During and after the Bosnian war, NGOs played a vital role in the country and were key implementing partners for massive bilateral aid, for example in the reconstruction activities and implementation of refugee return (Martin & Miller, 2003). However, not much information is available about their views on the Dayton Accord. This thesis will be a first step in this direction, in which the findings will be thoroughly examined, juxtaposed, and compared with each other.

1.1 Societal relevance

Since the Bosnian war took place more than a quarter of a century ago, one may wonder why, after all this time, it is still important to pay attention to this case. Are there no other conflicts and problems in the world today that deserve our attention more? Perhaps there is some truth in that. However, these current events are precisely the reason why it is so important to keep a close eye on the Bosnian case. It is a case from which much can be learnt due to the widespread international attention it has received.

During and after the war, Bosnia was the playground for international intervention by various stakeholders, such as the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU) and several foreign governments (McMahon & Western, 2009). It has even been said that it was “a laboratory for what was arguably the most extensive and innovative democratization experiment in history” (McMahon & Western, 2009, p. 69). An experiment that was considered successful. European and American leaders routinely touted the country as proof that the

³ Muslim Bosniaks, Bosnian Croats and Bosnian Serbs.

⁴ Bosnian inhabitants who do not recognize themselves as one of the three constituent peoples, such as Roma, Jews, Albanians, and Yugoslavs (Džankić, 2015).

international community, under the right circumstances, could successfully reconstruct conflict-ridden countries (McMahon & Western, 2009).

However, if one begins to look for literature on the matter, one can see that many academics disagree. The most important product of international intervention in Bosnia, the 1995 Dayton Accord, has come in for a lot of criticism over the decades. Much has been said and written about its problems, shortcomings, and failures (Kesić, 2007). Some academics have argued that the accord has in fact left Bosnia with a weak, decentralized, complex and expensive system (e.g., Chollet, 2007; Belloni, 2009; McMahon & Western, 2009; Pasic, 2016). Others have stated that it divided Bosnia on the basis of ethnic lines, as ethnicity became dominant in the country's functioning and organization (e.g., Weller & Wolf, 2006; Belloni, 2009; McMahon & Western, 2009; Kartsonaki, 2016). This has even led to claims that the system that emerged from the agreement is a discriminatory one (Džankić, 2015; Benková, 2016).

Because of all these criticisms, the Bosnian case should not be treated as a closed case, since it is not. By continuing to look at it thoroughly, we can learn a lot from its successes, failures, missteps and even its effects at a later stage. This research will contribute to this learning process by examining not only how academics view the Dayton Accord, but also how actors from Bosnian NGOs perceive it. The choice to look specifically at Bosnian NGOs is partly due to the limited literature available on the subject. When I started my readings, I discovered that there is not much to be found about what these organizations think of the Dayton Accord. I found this surprising, considering that the Dayton Accord practically formed the state of Bosnia in its current form (Kartsonaki, 2016). Another reason to focus on Bosnian NGOs is the fact that these organizations have been through the whole process that Bosnia has gone through since the war and the signing of the Dayton Accord. For these reasons, this thesis is an interesting and useful study to gain more insight into their views, and to see whether they agree with the academics who are critical about the Dayton Accord.

1.2 Scientific relevance

The Dayton Accord was not solely drawn up with the idea of putting an end to the Bosnian war, it was also supposed to transform Bosnia into a multi-ethnic, democratic and tolerant state. To achieve this, elements of consociational power-sharing were included in the accord and subsequently institutionalized in Bosnia (Merdzanovic, 2017). Since this thesis deals with the support and criticism of the way the Dayton Accord set up Bosnia, it is theoretically based

mainly on the concept of ‘consociationalism’. In consociationalism, the central premise is that leaders of different groups in a society should agree to rule jointly over a common polity and make decisions by consensus, thus alleviating the unfortunate consequences of majority rule in pluralistic societies (Lijphart, 1975). In this way, fragmented political cultures could be transformed into stable democracies (Lijphart, 1969). For Bosnia, this was put into practice by giving the country’s three main ethnic groups – Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats⁵ – the mutual share of power. The country was divided into two entities and ten cantons, each with its own authorities. To prevent any of the ethnic groups from dominating, ethnic quotas and a mix of minimum representation requirements were adopted and veto options were interwoven within each level of governance (Merdzanovic, 2017; Perry, 2018). Today, this layout is still maintained, making the Dayton Accord the longest standing experiment involving power-sharing (Roeder & Rothchild, 2005).

The choice of the international community to set up Bosnia in a consociational manner was not an unusual one. Particularly after the end of the Cold War, it became the favorite instrument for the international community to bring peace and ensure stable democratic governance in conflict situations with multi-ethnic societies (Roeder & Rothchild, 2005; Merdzanovic, 2017). Consociationalism is therefore intertwined with the concept of liberal peacebuilding, the second key concept of this thesis, which is defined as “the promotion of democracy, market-based economic reforms and a range of other institutions associated with modern states as a driving force for building peace” (Newman, Paris & Richmond, 2009, p. 3). This liberal way of making peace in war-torn countries has been widely criticized in recent decades (Paris, 2010; Zaum, 2012), but is still considered by some to be the best solution to conflicts, despite its limitations (Paris, 2010). This thesis will explore whether the latter is also true for Bosnia.

1.3 Research objective and research question

This thesis examines whether the consociational structure institutionalized in Bosnia through the internationally brokered Dayton Accord has been successful in rebuilding the country. As mentioned, this is important to find out because Bosnia is seen as the example for peacebuilding by the international community in other similar war-torn countries. The answer to this question

⁵ By Serbs and Croats I mean Bosnian Serbs and Bosnian Croats.

will be drawn from the works of academics as well as from interviews conducted with actors of Bosnian NGOs. This leads to this study's main research question:

To what extent do actors of Bosnian non-governmental organizations, in the light of the academic debate, consider the consociational way in which Bosnia and Herzegovina was structured after the 1992-1995 war through the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina as the right solution to the war?

The results will be compared with each other, looking not only at the differences in views between the various Bosnian NGO staff, but also whether there is a significant difference between the perspectives of Bosnian NGO staff on the one hand and academics on the other.

To be able to answer this research question, the following sub questions have been formulated:

1. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina according to actors of Bosnian non-governmental organizations, in light of the academic debate?
2. What have been the threats to the implementation of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina according to actors from Bosnian non-governmental organizations, in light of the academic debate?
3. How do actors of Bosnian non-governmental organizations perceive the liberal peacebuilding of the international community during and after the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in light of the academic debate?
4. Do actors from Bosnian non-governmental organizations, in light of the academic debate, see possibilities for improving the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina and, if so, how?

Thus, this study will look at the strengths, weaknesses and threats of the Dayton Accord, at the solutions to the accord, and at how the international community has intervened in Bosnia in the eyes of Bosnian NGO actors and academics. These results will ultimately provide more insight in the objective, which is to find out to what extent the 1995 General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina can be blamed for the problems Bosnia and Herzegovina has experienced since the war of 1992-1995.

1.4 Thesis structure

This section briefly explains how this thesis is structured in order to answer the main research question and sub-questions. The theoretical framework is addressed first in the next chapter, describing the various theories and ideas related to the objectives and questions that have been presented above. Theoretical concepts and definitions on consociationalism and liberal peacebuilding will be presented here, which provide the scientific justification for this research and form the basis for the next chapters.

Following this, Chapter 3 delves deeper into the context. The chapter begins with a brief historical overview of Bosnia when it was still part of Yugoslavia. Then it will be explained how Yugoslavia disintegrated and why various wars broke out across the region, of which the Bosnian war was the worst. Next, the Dayton Accord will be discussed, which brought the Bosnian war to an end. It will become clear here what exactly this accord meant for Bosnia, with the most important change that the country was reorganized on the basis of consociationalism. It is important to know this background of Bosnia before getting into the analyses of this research. Without this knowledge, it is difficult to understand how the country has changed as a result of the war and the Dayton Accord, and therefore the results of this research may be interpreted differently.

Next, in Chapter 4, attention will be paid to the methodologies used in this research, the first being a documentary analysis in which publications and articles by academics relating to the Dayton Accord were studied and the second being semi-structured, in-depth interviews with actors from Bosnian NGOs. The data collected from both methods have been analyzed by means of content analysis, the meaning of which will also be explained in this chapter. It is important to show exactly which steps were taken in the research process in order to ensure reliability and validity.

Chapter 5 contains an analysis of the data collected during this research. The strengths, weaknesses, threats and solutions related to the Dayton Accord that emerged from the interviews with respondents and the academic debate are discussed here. These results are linked to the literature from Chapter 2, from which four different lessons are drawn as to whether consociationalism has been a good way for the international community to rebuild war-torn Bosnia.

The concluding chapter, Chapter 6, combines all the information from the previous chapters. It will provide a systematic reading of the results and an informed conclusion to the research questions. It will show that, although consociationalism successfully ended the Bosnian war by bringing peace and stability to Bosnia, the country has been in a negative hybrid peace situation ever since. Finally, a number of recommendations will be made that may change this negative situation.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1 Consociationalism

In terms of conflict resolution theory, the framework laid down for Bosnia by the Dayton Accord is an empirical application of the notion of ‘consociational democracy’ (Tzifakis, 2007). For this reason, it is necessary to gain more insight into the theories of consociationalism in order to understand how it works and why this power-sharing model has been chosen for Bosnia. In this section I will therefore start with its basic theories and will then go into the ways in which it has been criticized, refined and applied in practice.

The notion of consociational democracy was first introduced by Arend Lijphart at the end of the 1960s. He explained this concept as follows: “government by elite cartel designed to turn a democracy with a fragmented political culture into a stable democracy” (Lijphart, 1969, p. 216). Lijphart introduced the notion of consociational democracy as a remedy for ‘fragmented political cultures’, by which he referred to deeply divided nationalistic, linguistic, religious and/or cultural societies (Lijphart, 1969). Societies such as these are prone to “producing unstable politics and volatile types of governance”, where leaders can act as if counterparts of other subcultures were their competitors, make use of ethnic outbidding that ethnically polarizes societies, and prioritize their own grievances (Keman, 1999, p. 249). According to Lijphart, in order to achieve a stable democracy, avoid clashes and limit tensions, consociationalism can be applied, the central premise being that leaders of different groups of a society must agree to rule jointly over common polity and make decisions by consensus (Lijphart, 1975).

Lijphart’s (1979) consociational democracy is characterized by four principles. A key element in all four of these is the need to alleviate the unfortunate consequences of majority rule in pluralist societies. The primary principle is the grand coalition, in which political leaders from all significant groups in society govern the pluralistic society together as ‘stakeholders’. Instead of decisions being taken by majority vote, in this case they are taken by compromise or amicable agreement (Lijphart, 1979). In majoritarian democracies, politicians will form coalitions that are just big enough to win. Such a system can work well in relatively homogenous societies with a high degree of social tolerance and trust as well as a stable democratic apparatus (Norris, 2008). In societies where these features are missing, a

majoritarian system can entail serious risks, as it places decision-making in the hands of the winning majority. By forming a grand coalition cabinet, this will not occur, and minorities will feel that their demands are being heard (Lijphart, 1999). It is, however, important to note that a grand coalition does not necessarily have to be in the form of cabinets in parliamentary systems; according to Lijphart, they can also be set up in other bodies such as committees and advisory councils (Lijphart, 1977). The cooperation of political leaders at the highest level in any significant governmental body will strengthen the reconciliation between their adherents. It is, thus, a top-down process that contributes to the stability of democracy (Lijphart, 1969).

The second feature of Lijphart's (1979, p. 500) consociationalism is that of segmental autonomy, which represents minority rule: "in contrast with majority rule, it may be characterized as minority rule over the minority itself in matters that are the minority's exclusive concern". To put it in simpler terms, it means that all matters of common interest are taken jointly by the group leaders in the grand coalition, but decision-making on all other matters is left to each group individually. In the view of Lijphart, the principle of segmental autonomy together with the grand coalition are the most important characteristics of a consociational model, as they complement each other (Lijphart, 1979).

Mutual veto is the third principle of the consociational model. It allows each group in the grand coalition "the power of protecting itself" by vetoing a policy change (Lijphart, 1977, p. 37). According to Lijphart, this is necessary because the grand coalition does not offer full political protection to minority groups when their main interests are threatened, since the majority can still outvote them. Mutual veto right can prevent such situations. With this principle, however, Lijphart admits that there is a risk that this could result in policy immobility. But he thinks that this will hardly happen, as each segment will want to maintain the stability of the system (Lijphart, 1979).

The fourth and last consociational principle is that of proportionality, which acts as the primary standard of political representation, the appointment of civil servants, and the allocation of public funds. The idea behind this is that decision-making is moved as far up as possible from the citizens and done in secret, so that at this level political leaders can work beyond their cleavages and make good decisions. According to Lijphart, conflict takes place when politicians speak openly to their supporters. To avoid this, decisions need to be made behind closed doors (Lijphart, 1979).

2.1.1 Favorable conditions for consociationalism

These four principles clearly show that the role of leadership is a decisive aspect in Lijphart's consociational theory, but what makes leaders willing to cooperate with leaders from other segments of society? Lijphart (1977, p. 54) identifies conditions "that are conducive to overarching elite cooperation and stable non-elite support". These include a multiparty system, a favorable balance of power, equality in wealth and income across the relevant communities, crosscutting cleavages, a small-sized state, and a common overarching territorial, national or cultural identity (Lijphart, 1977). However, these conditions are among the most disputed aspects of Lijphart's consociationalism. On the one hand they are perceived as inductive, since Lijphart identified them on the basis of an equation of cases where consociationalism proved to function (Steiner, 1981). According to Steiner, "because they are not deduced from a common set of assumptions", these conditions "are not sufficiently interrelated" (Steiner, 1981, p. 351). On the other hand, it is claimed that the conditions that Lijphart identified are incoherent (Bogaards, 1998). This is shown by Bogaards in an overview of four publications by Lijphart, in which Lijphart refers to fourteen different favorable conditions (Bogaards, 1998).

A more complete list of favorable conditions is given by Schneckener (2002), which he based not only on those presented by Lijphart (1977), but also on those presented by other leading academics such as Nordlinger (1972) and Steiner (1974). He roughly categorized the conditions into two types: structure-oriented factors and actor-oriented factors. Obviously, the first relate mainly to existing or non-existent structures, the second relate to the behavior, perceptions, and limitations of actors. The structure-oriented factors are listed by Schneckener as follows:

- (1) Relative equilibrium: the state is not dominated by a clear majority group.
- (2) No significant socio-economic differences.
- (3) Territorial segmentation: the groups live territorially apart from each other.
- (4) Overarching loyalty: there exists a common loyalty which holds the groups together, for example a shared national or regional identity.
- (5) Cross-cutting cleavages: there are political or other cleavages, which prevent the formation of homogenous groups and leads to overlapping memberships.
- (6) Moderate pluralism vs. national fronts: every group is represented by several political parties rather than a united front.

The actor-oriented factors are the following:

- (7) Dominant elites: political leaders of each group are in the position to gain internal support for agreements and compromises.
- (8) Respecting the status quo.
- (9) Traditions of compromise and mutual understanding (e.g., previous experiences of conflict management).
- (10) Comprehensive participation: all significant groups or their political parties are represented at the negotiation table and included in the institutionalized power-sharing system.
- (11) Internal compromise vs. external pressure: the consociational solution was not coerced upon the groups by external power(s) but created by themselves (Schneckener, 2002).

The more of the above-mentioned conditions are met, according to Schneckener (2002, p. 217), “the more likely it is that a power-sharing structure will be successful”. The total sum of the fulfilled factors is an important indicator as they are not fully independent of each other. They can even reinforce each other in certain respects. An example given by Schneckener is that traditions of compromise and mutual understanding (9) generally promote the respect of the status quo (8). Although these correlations make it difficult to assess which conditions are more important than others, his analysis does show that actor-oriented factors appear more relevant than structural conditions. The way group elites behave therefore plays a major role: “whether and how elites change their behaviour over time from confrontation to cooperation”, determines the success or failure of consociationalism (Schneckener, 2002, p. 224). Their commitment to the power-sharing agreement will likely also encourage the support from their followers, as was previously also stated by Lijphart (Schneckener, 2002).

How the four principles of Lijphart’s consociationalism have been implemented in Bosnia, and which of Schneckener’s favorable factors are present, will be discussed in the next chapter, following a brief description of the history of the country.

2.1.2 Support and critique for Lijphart’s consociationalism

Support for Lijphart’s consociational power-sharing model is echoed in various academic publications (Spears, 2000). For instance, Zartman (1995, pp. 22-23) writes that the

eventual key to the effectiveness of mediators and negotiators is an outcome that returns the conflict to normal politics. [...] Generally, this involves creating a new political system in which the parties to the conflict feel they have a stake, thus in a very positive sense co-opting all parties – government and rebels – in a new creation.

More straightforward, Ottaway (1995, p. 248) argues that a “power-sharing pact [...] may be the only attainable short-term goal compatible with long-term democratization”. In addition, Lijphart’s theory has not only been praised, some academics have also recognized its value for problems other than those occurring on the political level. Hartzell and Hoddie (2003) are among those academics. They state that consociationalism can also be applied at, for example, the economic and military level to avoid some groups from being economically or militarily marginalized. Because of this multifunctionality, the two scholars argue that Lijphart’s power-sharing institutions can be of particularly great value in efforts to stabilize peace in states recovering from civil war (Hartzell & Hoddie, 2003). As they argue: “by dividing and balancing power among rival groups, power-sharing institutions minimize the danger of any one party becoming dominant and threatening the security of others” (Hartzell & Hoddie, 2003, p. 319).

Although Lijphart’s consociational model was groundbreaking and has been extensively discussed and used by academia, such as those mentioned above, it has also received many critical reviews since its introduction in the 1960s. One of the main critiques is that the model could in fact worsen the prospects for peace in ethnically divided societies by deepening and widening ethnic divisions. Horowitz (1985) was one of the leading scholars who argued this. In his work, he questioned the basis of Lijphart’s consociationalism, which suggests that an ethnically divided state should live with ethnic divisions through a grand coalition of majorities and minorities rather than wanting these divisions to disappear. According to Lijphart, this will create peace and stability. Co-operation between the leaders of different ethnic groups is essential in this process (Horowitz, 1985). However, Horowitz did not agree. For him it was rather the other way around. Consociationalism, he argued, is likely to deepen and widen ethnic divisions, since grand coalitions in most cases will not work, because of the dynamics of intra-ethnic competition. “The very act of forming a multiethnic coalition generates intraethnic competition – flanking – if it does not already exist” (Horowitz, 1985, p. 575).

Instead, what a deeply divided ethnic society needs is an electoral incentive which makes interethnic political cooperation rewarding (Horowitz, 2004). For this, Horowitz proposed the ‘alternative vote’ system for both parliamentary elections and the direct election of an executive president. Under this system, voters have to fill in an ordinal ballot in which

candidates are ranked 1, 2, 3, and so on. If no candidate obtains a majority at the first count, the candidate with the least support will be eliminated. The second preferences of his or her voters are then reallocated to the remaining candidates as if they were their first preference. This process of elimination is repeated until one candidate gets the absolute majority (>50%). Thus, a party may win seats because of votes from voters of groups other than its own (Horowitz, 2004). “Since such voters will not give preferences to candidates or parties that are opposed to the interests of their own group, the price of such recurrent exchanges is reciprocal moderation and compromise on ethnic issues” (Horowitz, 2004, p. 508). Vote pooling across ethnic lines, according to Horowitz, will therefore promote both the growth of more conciliatory political parties and the creation of resilient interethnic coalitions (Horowitz, 2004).

The reason why consociationalism is unlikely to work the way Lijphart assumed, is because he based his theories on cases where only conflicts of relatively low intensity occurred (Horowitz, 2002). As Horowitz has shown, in cases where ethnic conflict has been very intense, such as in Africa, the Middle East and Eastern Europe, only a small proportion of the consociationalist attempts have been successful and lasted. This is because in these cases it is very hard to adopt a consociational democracy, given the many obstacles that must be overcome. It is no ‘one size fits all’ model (Horowitz, 2002).

The adoption problem of consociationalism is also more or less asserted by Spears (2000, p. 106), who states that “power-sharing agreements are difficult to arrive at, even more difficult to implement, and even when implemented, such agreements rarely stand the test of time”. Focusing on Africa, he states that there are relatively few cases where consociationalist power-sharing has been both formalized and successful. On the contrary, there are several examples where it has failed. In the eyes of Spears, it is therefore surprising that consociationalism is seen as a viable instrument for resolving conflicts, as it remains relatively unproven (Spears, 2000).

Another important point of criticism on Lijphart’s consociationalism is voiced by political realists, who claim that it does not provide a solution to the security dilemma that exists between the various groups in the society in question. For this reason, such power-sharing models are no solution for the restoration of multiethnic civil politics after civil war (Kaufmann, 1998; Tzifakis, 2007). As Kaufmann (1998, p. 122), one of the leading political realists, stated: “as long as both sides know that the best security strategy for each is to engage in offense and in ethnic cleansing, neither can entrust its security to hopes for the other’s restraint”.

Instead, Kaufmann (1998), along with other political realists, proposed another solution, which is that the international community should adopt separation, through population transfers or partition, as a solution to civil wars and the maintenance of peace and stability (Kaufmann, 1998; Tzifakis, 2007). If this is not done, Kaufmann argued, the processes of war will separate peoples anyway, but in all likelihood at a far higher human price.

[T]hus the question in the midst of severe ethnic conflict is not whether the groups will be separated but how – with protection, transport, subsistence, and resettlement organized by outside powers or institutions, or at the mercy of their ethnic enemies and of bandits? (Kaufmann, 1998, p. 124)

Failure or refusal to set up the necessary population transfers does not protect the population from becoming refugees, but, according to Kaufmann, will only bring disaster to them (Kaufmann, 1998).

Moreover, Kaufmann (1998) argued that separation does not lead to illiberal states either. While it is true that not all secessionist successor states are liberal democracies, the states he examined in his study are no less democratic than their predecessors or their neighbors. “Even though several of the successor states have discriminatory laws, such discrimination is generally less intense than what the pre-partition minorities would likely have faced under majority rule” (Kaufmann, 1998, p. 124).

Lijphart (2004) has rebutted most of the criticism he has received on his consociational democracy theories by pointing out that few of his critics have offered a serious alternative to the power-sharing model. Those that have been suggested offer few empirical cases. Horowitz ‘alternative vote’ system, for instance, was only partly adopted in 1999 in the Fijian constitutional system which already collapsed in 2000. Moreover, multiple successful cases, such as Northern Ireland, Bosnia and South-Africa, showed that the consociational power-sharing models are no ‘one-size-fits-all’, as Horowitz has claimed. In these countries, each institution differs in the way it functions. Thus, consociational democracy has proven to be the only democratic model that seems to have a good chance of being adopted in divided societies (Lijphart, 2004). However, Lijphart (2004, p. 99) does state that Horowitz’s ‘one-size-fits-all’ “should serve as an inspiration to try to specify the optimal form of power sharing”.

2.2 Liberal Peacebuilding

Despite the criticisms of consociationalism, it has been an often-used instrument by the international community to resolve conflicts through peace negotiations, to establish stable democratic governments, and to create peaceful coexistence between groups (Merdzanovic, 2017). As Merdzanovic claims, since the end of the Cold War it has become the international community's favorite model for managing severely divided societies, and many cases have demonstrated the importance of international intervention in establishing such a model (Merdzanovic, 2017). For this reason, consociationalism is closely linked to the second key concept of this thesis: liberal peacebuilding. This concept will be explained below, discussing how liberal peacebuilding has become the basis for Western foreign policy and international peacebuilding after the Cold War, and what criticism it has received since then.

Liberal peacebuilding is defined as “the promotion of democracy, market-based economic reforms and a range of other institutions associated with modern states as a driving force for building peace” (Newman, Paris & Richmond, 2009, p. 3). In this line of thought, by implementing democratic institutions and globally integrated market-oriented policies, a state will experience stable and lasting peace and development (Newman, Paris & Richmond, 2009). Across the literature, liberal peacebuilding has often been described as external peacebuilding interventions conducted by liberal, Western states in response to a large-scale human rights violation somewhere else in the world or as a result of the sense of an international ‘responsibility to protect’ (Zaum, 2012).

Liberal peacebuilding gained prominence and legitimacy at the end of the Cold War, when many authoritarian and communist states transitioned into a liberal democracy (Paris, 2010). According to Paris, during the time, it was widely believed that political and economic liberalism was the solution to a broad range of political, economic and social problems, such as famine, disease and under-development. This ‘spirit of liberal triumphalism’ was also recognizable in the way in which international organizations, such as UN agencies, multilateral donors and NGOs, began to promote peace in countries torn by war, as they started to encourage political and economic liberalization for a stable and lasting peace, which was based on the idea of constitutional limits to governmental power, supporting judicial mechanisms, elections, promoting economic development, and respect for civil and political rights (Paris, 2010). As a result, the liberal ideology became the basis for Western foreign policy and transformative programs by international organizations across the globe (Jahn, 2007; Zaum, 2012).

To this day, this is still the case. However, the image of liberal peacebuilding is no longer as perfect as it was back then, since it has been widely criticized in recent decades (Paris, 2010; Zaum, 2012). Four of the main critiques are explained below, which are the following: it produces mixed results, it is a one-dimensional linear approach, it is top-down Western hegemonic peacebuilding, and it produces a hybrid peace.

2.2.1 Critiques of liberal peacebuilding

Mixed results

First, it has been claimed that liberal peacebuilding does not automatically lead to peace and stability, as it ought to, but rather produces very mixed results (Belloni, 2012; Zaum, 2012). Paris (2010) mentions a list of cases from the 1990s where liberal peacebuilding efforts did not reach its goals: Angola, Rwanda, Cambodia, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Bosnia, Kosovo, Sierra Leone, East Timor, and Liberia. In Angola, for example, the 1992 postwar elections did not bring peace to the country but prompted one of the former warring parties to resume fighting instead. According to Paris, this was partly due to the absence of institutional mechanisms to resolve election disputes, the lack of serious measures to disarm the warring forces before elections were held, and insufficient local and international forces to uphold the results. In Bosnia, on the other hand, fighting did not return after the Bosnian war ended, but the rapid elections did strengthen the power of Bosnia's most nationalist actors, who were least devoted to the pursuit of inter-ethnic reconciliation (Paris, 2010).

One-dimensionality

In addition to producing mixed results, critics have also claimed that liberal peacebuilding efforts are one-sided and locally-insensitive, which is why they often fail to address the root causes of the conflict in the society in question (Mac Ginty, 2008; Newman, Paris & Richmond, 2009; Selby, 2013; Zaum, 2012). According to Mac Ginty, for example, liberal peacebuilding efforts are operationalized into highly standardized templates, which are strictly followed by external peace interventions under the umbrella of internationally sponsored peacekeeping, peacebuilding or state (re)building in civil wars. The danger of such standardized templates is that peace-support interventions become uniform and non-reflexive, and that, in practice, interventions "in Bosnia-Herzegovina come to resemble those in East Timor, Bougainville,

Mozambique or Sri Lanka. It becomes peace from IKEA; a flat-pack peace made from standardized components” (Mac Ginty, 2008, p. 145). In other words, little room is left for other, more localized and traditional, methods (Mac Ginty, 2008).

Top-down Western-oriented approach

Third, a great deal of critical literature has emphasized the ways in which peace is promoted and imposed through liberal peacebuilding, claiming that it is actually a top-down mechanism of internationally designed institutional solutions to the political and social problems of a society deemed to have caused the conflict and violence. These societies are encouraged to adapt their policies to the values and interests of the external actors rather than their own local ones (Mac Ginty, 2008; Selby, 2013; Zaum, 2012; Wai, 2014). Some academics extend this criticism even further, arguing that liberal peacebuilding is a new means for Western hegemonic forces to transmit specific Western ideas and practices (Mac Ginty, 2008; Selby, 2013; Wai 2014), “whereby its local agents are not merely compelled to receive, they must also transmit” (Mac Ginty, 2008, p. 144). For example, Wai (2014, p. 492) claims that:

liberal peace is in fact a neo-imperialist posture potentiated by a Western will to power and domination. [...] It is a hierarchical notion of power that re-territorialises and re-centres global relations within blocks of power through spatial displacement and the redefinition of traditional notions of sovereignty.

These processes are not only geopolitical, but also economic, ideological and geocentric (Wai, 2014).

This imperial criticism on liberal peacebuilding was fueled after 9/11, when the United States announced the ‘war on terror’ and invaded Iraq and Afghanistan (Paris, 2010; Wai, 2014). According to Wai, the United States used the 9/11 attacks as an excuse to launch “a destructive course of global militarism that has intensified mass surveillance, created a permanent state of siege and state of exception that suspends rights and freedoms”, and intensified racial profiling of Muslims in particular (Wai, 2014, p. 495). In addition, concerns about fictitious weapons of mass destruction were being used as an opportunity to invade and occupy the sovereign states of Afghanistan and Iraq (Wai, 2014).

As a result of this, many academics claim that for the dominant Western states worries about humanitarian disasters and human rights have become a means to intervene in the affairs

of non-hegemonic societies and to pursue their own imperialistic aspirations (Mac Ginty, 2008; Wai, 2014). For this reason, the concept of liberal peacebuilding is not seen by these academics as something positive but is used to criticize the way peace is promoted (Mac Ginty, 2008). It is, for example, explained by Mac Ginty as:

the concept, condition and practice whereby leading states, international organizations and international financial institutions promote their version of peace through peace-support interventions, control of international financial architecture, support for state sovereignty and the international status quo (Mac Ginty, 2008, p. 143).

Hybrid peace

The last point of criticism is more or less related to the previous three. Due to the fact that liberal peacebuilding does not achieve its desired results, does not focus on the specific needs of the society in question, and does not keep the society in its value, it has been claimed that it leads to hybrid situations (Belloni, 2012; Zaum, 2012; Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2015). According to Belloni (2012, p. 21),

liberal peacebuilding has led, time and again, to a situation characterized by the presence of political and social institutions that are only superficially democratic, accountable, and effective and are perceived as illegitimate, constraining, and unsuccessful by those experiencing them.

In other words, the situation might seem to change, but actually all preexisting economic, political, and social conditions stay largely intact. Thus, instead of creating a liberal peace, out of intervention a hybrid situation has arisen in which liberal and illiberal, democratic and undemocratic components coexist and sometimes clash. Formally, liberal institutions, for example, are challenged by both client and criminal networks and corruption, but also by assertive international policy (Belloni, 2012). By creating a hybrid situation, Belloni (2012, p. 21) states, “the absence of a full-scale war resembles a truce more than a substantive version of peace”.

However, according to Belloni (2012), there is no way to prevent a hybrid situation from occurring, because it simply is the ongoing condition of all human cultures. Every cultural, social and political structure is the product of a prior hybridization and therefore cannot be regarded as ‘pure’ liberal or illiberal. As Belloni (2012, p. 23) states, “countries currently

experiencing a peace process have been integrated into the world political system and global economy for decades”, and are thus already hybridized. The same goes for external agents who may adapt local practices (Belloni, 2012).

In order to make a clear distinction, Richmond (2015) defines hybrid peace as either positive or negative, which he bases on the distinction made earlier by Galtung (1996). A positive hybrid peace represents a “contextually rooted process through which broader political and social injustice is addressed, across local and international scales” (Richmond, 2015, p. 51). A balance is struck between localized power structures and international preferences; however, it remains situated in everyday life. But a positive hybrid peace is above all emancipatory and empathic, since it uses approaches which are ultimately defined by its subjects and not by external actors (Richmond, 2015).

Negative hybrid peace, on the other hand, has oppressive political, military or social structures in which the interests of elites and the status quo are maintained (Belloni, 2012). As Belloni also states, negative hybrid peace stems from the fact that it does not take into account the tensions from international-local encounters, causing international and local interests, norms and actors to remain opposed to each other. Hybrid politics is what it is based on, in which liberal norms are undermined and structural violence is upheld (Belloni, 2012). Lastly, Richmond (2015) argues that the negative hybrid peace process outsources power and norms from the international to the local, instead of creating means for emancipation and local empowerment (Richmond, 2015).

2.2.2 Critiquing the critics

The experiences with liberal peacebuilding since the 1990s have led many academics and practitioners to be skeptical about the promotion of democracy and market-orientated economics as a solution to civil wars (Paris, 2010). The entire undertaking is seen as “folly” (Bain, 2006, p. 47), “futile” (Scheuer, 2008, p. 37), and “hubristic” (Cooper, 2007, p. 610), and destined to produce “enemies instead of allies and [to heighten] insecurity instead of enhancing security” (Jahn, 2007, p. 212). This kind of peace is seen as unable to cope with the psychological and affective dimensions of war and peace-making (Mac Ginty, 2008), as it is a standardized, imperialist, top-down mechanism that disregards local practices of conflict resolution and peacebuilding and neglects the many uncertainties of everyday life in post-conflict societies (Selby, 2013).

However, proponents of liberal peacebuilding, of which Paris (2010) is the most prominent, argue that it still is the best solution to conflict, despite its limitations. Abandoning liberal peacebuilding “would be tantamount to abandoning tens of millions of people to lawlessness, predation, disease and fear” (Paris, 2010, p. 338). For this reason, Paris states that it needs ‘saving’ from its ‘irrationally exuberant’ ‘hyper-critical writings’. According to him:

While the mixed record of more than 20 operations to date has shown that democratisation and marketisation are not all-purpose elixirs for societies emerging from civil conflict, the recent backlash against liberal peacebuilding is just as immoderate and mistaken as the earlier optimism (Paris, 2010, p. 347).

He argues that the criticisms are reckless and that some of them, such as those claiming that liberal peacebuilding is imperialistic and have done more harm than good, have gone too far. By claiming that liberal peacebuilding needs to be saved, Paris does not mean blindly defending international practices of today. On the contrary, the objectives and practices of these missions need to be continuously analyzed and challenged, but potential criticisms need to be well-founded and justified. Therefore, “critical perspectives themselves need to be subject to ongoing scrutiny and review” (Paris, 2010, p. 339). According to Paris, academics have an important role to play in this, since their writings bring more insights about liberal peacebuilding missions and in that way help to inform debates (Paris, 2010).

That is exactly what this thesis is trying to do. By taking an open but critical look at the implementation of the Dayton Accord, not only through my own eyes but also through those of academics and Bosnian NGO staff, this thesis tries to determine whether the liberal way in which peace has been built in Bosnia by means of consociational methods has been the most suitable way. This detailed chapter about the concepts and the criticisms of those concepts has laid the necessary foundation for this. However, it is important to keep in mind not to think too much in these boxes, since they can be too universal and uniform. For liberal peacebuilding this means that it should not automatically be disregarded as harmful and imposed, just because it is inspired on Western values. The same way caution is needed in comparing local with illiberal (Mac Ginty, 2008; Belloni, 2012). As argued by Mac Ginty,

liberal peace has been modified in recent decades through the mainstreaming of human rights, the rise of the human security perspective, the growing influence of conflict resolution NGOs, and the incorporation of Alternative Dispute Resolution techniques into some approaches to peace-building (Mac Ginty, 2008, p. 145)

The same goes for consociationalism that Lijphart has constantly refined since he first introduced the power-sharing theory in the 1960s and on which many other academics have elaborated as well.

It is also important to not overlook the agency of local actors. As Keesing (1992, p. 2) stressed, we need to recognize “peripheral populations as active agents in shaping and controlling their engagement with the outside world, giving local meaning to alien ideas, institutions and things, in various ways resisting them”. Thus, the ways in which peace is dealt with differs from one context to the next (Richmond, 2005; Mac Ginty, 2008).

Before discussing how the international community and the local population have dealt with the establishment of peace in Bosnia, it is however necessary to first sketch a short history. I strongly believe that one cannot understand a conflict without understanding the background of the conflict and the affected area. After a brief historical sketch is given, the realization of the Dayton Accord and its 11 annexes are presented. Thereafter, the views of academics and interviewed staff of Bosnian NGOs on the Dayton Accord will be extensively discussed. Here, the thoughts behind the two main concepts of this thesis will be clearly evident.

3. Diving into context

This chapter deals with the context of the subject of this thesis, namely the Dayton Accord. As the following chapters will analyze and evaluate in depth the perceptions of academics and interviewed staff of Bosnian NGOs about what the Dayton Accord has done for Bosnia, it is important for the reader to first understand the background of the country and how closely it is linked with its neighbors. Therefore, first a short description will be given of Bosnia before the beginning of the war, when it was still part of Yugoslavia. This is followed by an account of the end of Yugoslavia and how the war in Bosnia began. After that, the peace talks will be discussed, as well as the creation of the Dayton Accord. It will be demonstrated here why the accord is a form of consociationalism, explaining also how Lijphart's (1979) four consociational principles were institutionalized in Bosnia. Finally, it will be discussed why Schneckenner (2002) predicted that this consociationalism will ultimately fail. Whether his predictions have been correct, will become clear in Chapter 5.

3.1 Historical overview of Bosnia prior to the war

3.1.1 Bosnia: a miniature Yugoslavia

Bosnia has not always been an independent country. Before independence in 1992, Bosnia was part of Yugoslavia as one of its six constituent republics.⁶ Yugoslavia, literally 'Land of the South Slavs', came into being at the end of the First World War, where the South Slavic remnants of the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian empires merged into one multiethnic political entity. Yugoslavia's multiethnicity at that time was reflected in infinite linguistic dialects, Latin and Cyrillic orthographs, various cultural traditions, and multiple religions, with Islam, Orthodox Christianity and Roman Catholicism as the major ones (Malcolm, 1996).

During the Second World War, however, the region was plagued by an accumulation of bloody wars. Without going into too much detail, it is important to mention that the wars can be roughly divided into five different ones. The first was the initial war that Germany and Italy waged against Yugoslavia. The second was the ongoing Axis war effort against the Allies, in which Yugoslavia was important for the supply of labor and raw materials. Then there was also

⁶ The other five republics were Slovenia, Croatia, Montenegro, Macedonia, and Serbia (and its two 'autonomous' provinces of Vojvodina and Kosovo) (Malcolm, 1996).

the war of the Axis occupiers against the Yugoslav resistance movements. The last two wars that were conducted can be described as civil wars. One was a war waged by the Croat extremist 'Ustaše' against the Serb population of Croatia and Bosnia. The other was one fought between the two main resistant organizations: the communist-led Yugoslav Partisans and the royalist, mostly Serb, Četniks (Malcolm, 1996). According to Malcolm:

it is not possible to disentangle all these strands when looking at the total number of deaths in Yugoslavia during those terrible four years. But it is clear that at least one million people died, and it is probable that the majority of them were Yugoslavs killed by Yugoslavs (Malcolm, 1996, p. 174).

After World War II ended in 1945, the country was reborn into the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY). Under the leadership of the Partisan Josip Broz Tito, internal peace and reconciliation of the country was restored (Malcolm, 1996). Tito implemented a regime based on the idea of 'Yugoslavism', which aimed to create a Yugoslavia where class identity and pan-Slavism would exceed the traditional forms of identity that existed in the territory, such as regional, religious and ethnic ones, so that people could live in harmony with each other. Each constituent republic was thus seen as a piece of the Yugoslav whole, and its mixture of identities was what made it so unique. 'Brotherhood and Unity' became the motto for this pan-Slavism vision (Volčič, 2006). According to Bringa (2002), Bosnia was the country where the pan-Slavism vision was most strongly internalized, due to its traditions of multiculturalism and pluralistic communities. It was even nicknamed 'Yugoslavia u malom' (Yugoslavia in miniature) and was thus seen as an example for the other republics in Yugoslavia (Bringa, 2002).

Despite the more or less peaceful ethnic relations in Yugoslavia under Tito, "it became increasingly apparent to the leadership that the former ethnic attachments to national cultures, traditions, and interests were not to be easily dissolved" (Bertsch, 1977, p. 90). To some groups, especially Croats and Serbs, the Yugoslavism policy was considered threatening and repressive to their own identities and cultures (Bertsch, 1977). As a consequence of this, some uprisings occurred, one of which was a Croat nationalist movement in 1971. In order to prevent further uprisings, Tito took a number of far-reaching federalization initiatives that restructured the political realm of each republic and gave them greater control over their own affairs, as well as more cultural freedom. As a result, in 1974, each republic had its own central bank, media system, education system, and greater autonomy over its own political and economic matters, making Yugoslavia more a confederation than a unitary state (Cohen, 2018).

3.1.2 Yugoslavia exhaling its last breath

Following the death of Tito in 1980, Yugoslavia slowly started to disintegrate. The country's economy rapidly declined, resulting in rising inflation and unemployment and, in turn, leading to growing public dissatisfaction with the political communist system. The void left by Tito and the prevailing discontent gave a new generation of ethnic nationalist politicians the opportunity to take over power from the old communist generation (Malcolm, 1996).

One of the politicians that came to power was Slobodan Milošević. By successfully using the organization and authority of the Serbian Communist Party and the rising Serbian nationalism during the 1980s, he was elected Serbia's president in May 1989. One month later, he visited the site of the Battle of Kosovo, a battle in which the Ottoman Empire defeated the Serbs in 1389, where he gave his famous Gazimestan speech (Wintz, 2010). Here, Milošević told the crowd, "after six centuries we are again engaged in battles and quarrels. They are not armed battles, but this cannot be excluded yet" (Glenny, 1996, p. 35). In his speech, he also called for a 'Greater Serbia' that is derived from Serbian nationalism (Wintz, 2010). According to Petrović (2000, p. 170), Milošević intended to combine "history, memory and continuity" in his speech, promoting "the illusion that the Serbs who fought against the Turks in Kosovo in 1389 are somehow the same as the Serbs fighting for Serbian national survival today".

The Gazimestan speech proved to be a symbolic turning-point. Not long after, first Slovenia and then Croatia openly opposed Milošević's objectives, calling for secession (Malcolm, 1996). While this was happening, the collapse of communism throughout Eastern Europe was "filling the television screens night after night" (Malcolm, 1996, p. 214). New political parties were created *en masse*, which was not only a trend in Slovenia and Croatia, but in the entire Yugoslavia. During spring of 1990, multi-party elections were held in both Slovenia and Croatia. In Slovenia these were won by a liberal-nationalist coalition, and in Croatia by the 'Croatian Democratic Union' (HDZ), a new Croatian nationalist party led by Franjo Tuđman (Malcolm, 1996).

Both countries declared their independence on the 25th of June 1991 (Wintz, 2010). According to Wintz (2010, p. 34), this was "the final spark that ignited the powder keg of Yugoslavia". Two days later, war broke out between Slovenia and the Serb-dominated Yugoslav Army and quickly spread to Croatia. Since there was no significant number of Serbs living in Slovenia, it was not a country of great importance to Milošević. The war there was short and lasted only ten days until the Brioni Peace Accord was reached. The Yugoslav Army

pulled out of now independent Slovenia. In Croatia, however, it did not go as easily. Croats and Serbs fought for control of Krajina, a predominantly Serb territory. It finally came to a ceasefire on 2 January 1992 under pressure from the UN. Three years later, during General Ante Gotovina's military 'Operation Storm', Krajina returned to Croatian rule (Wintz, 2010).

3.2 War in Bosnia

3.2.1 Independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Since both Slovenia and Croatia had achieved independence, Alija Izetbegović, the elected Bosnian president in 1990, desired this as well. Independence was, however, a bigger challenge for Bosnia, mainly due its unique mix of ethnic and religious groups (Wintz, 2010). At that time, approximately 45 percent of the Bosnian population was Muslim Bosniak, 33 percent was Serbian Orthodox Christian, and 18 percent was Croatian Roman Catholic Christian (Young & Kent, 2004). The map of the Balkan region (Figure 1) shows the spread of these different group across Bosnia. The Muslim Bosniaks, to which president Izetbegović also belonged, had no interest to be under Serb control in a rump Yugoslavia⁷ and desired Bosnian independence as a completely intact sovereign country. The Bosnian Croats and Serbs, however, preserved strong ties to Croatia and Serbia and did not have any interest in living in a newly formed state under Bosniak domination (Wintz, 2010). Their argument, according to Wintz, "was essentially if Bosnia has a right of self-determination and is justified in seceding from Yugoslavia, then why did they, in turn, not have a right of self-determination and right to secede from Bosnia?" (Wintz 2010, p. 48).

As the government of Izetbegović was moving more and more towards the direction of a declaration of independence, the Bosnian Croatian minority, supported by Tuđman, created its own autonomous communities at the end of 1991, declaring an independent Bosnian Croat state 'Herceg-Bosnia'. The Bosnian Serbs, led by the Serb Democratic Party together with the nationalist Serb political party, soon followed with their own 'Republika Srpska' (Young & Kent, 2004).

⁷ Consisting of only Serbia and Montenegro, because (North) Macedonia also declared its independence on September 8, 1991 (Britannica, n.d.).



Figure 1: Distribution of ethnic groups in the Balkans, based on the 1991 census (CIA, 2002)

A referendum was held in Bosnia between the 29th of February and the 1st of March in 1992. Out of the 63 percent of Bosnians that voted, 99 percent favored complete independence. The referendum was, however, boycotted by a majority of Bosnian Serbs (Rigby, 1994). “We are not going to accept an independent Bosnia-Herzegovina”, warned Radovan Karadžić, head of the Serb Democratic Party in Bosnia with a strong allegiance to Milošević (Rigby, 1994, p. 6). Ignoring the warning of Karadžić, Izetbegović formally proclaimed Bosnia independent from Yugoslavia on the 3rd of March 1992. Immediately afterwards, fighting broke out and rapidly escalated (Wintz, 2010).

3.2.2 A bloody and bitter war

The Bosnian War was one of the bloodiest wars since World War II. The war lasted for 3.5 years until the end of 1995 and is estimated to have resulted in the death of 100,000 people, the genocidal rape of 10,000 women and the displacement of two million people, either within Bosnia or as refugees abroad (Mojzes, 2011). The exact events and timeline of this war will be

left aside. It is only that which one needs to know in order to understand the Dayton Accord that I shall briefly touch upon.

Broadly speaking, the war was fought between the Bosnian Serbs, Bosnian Croats, and the Bosniak-dominated Bosnian government. However, each of the three groups received external support. The Bosnian Serbs were supported by Serbia and received a great deal of equipment and resources from the Serb-dominated Yugoslav army. The Bosnian Croats received clandestine support from Croatia and were even provided with military units (Harland, 2018). The Bosnian government's armed forces were mainly composed of Bosniaks, but were also ethnically diverse (Harland, 2018; Perry, 2018), "as Croats, Serbs, and others fought with Bosniaks—all as Bosnians—for a concept of a country and society in which ethno-religious affiliation would not be the primary marker" (Perry, 2018, p. 110). In addition, the Bosnian government forces received some support from the Islamic world, including Iran, Saudi Arabia and jihadist networks. Due to the fact that so many actors outside Bosnia were involved in the war, it cannot simply be called a civil war (Harland, 2018).

In the course of the war, Bosnia was besieged by bitter fighting, random shelling of towns and cities, systematic mass rape, and ethnic cleansing committed mainly by Serb forces and, to a lesser degree, Croat and Bosniak forces (Wood, 2013). The Bosnian Serbs were initially militarily superior, because of the weapons and resources available to them from the Yugoslav Army. This allowed them to seize large Bosnian territories. But they finally lost strength when, in March 1994, the Bosniaks and Bosnian Croats united against them with the formation of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina following the Washington Agreement. Known as 'Operation Storm', the Serbs experienced their first defeat when Bosniak and Croat forces recaptured previously Serb held Bosnian territories (Benková, 2016).

In the summer of 1995, the Serbian armed forces, under the lead of Ratko Mladić, started firing on the Bosnian town of Srebrenica, a UN safe area (Benková, 2016). On 11 July, the Serbians invaded the town and, under the nose of the UN troops, deported and killed more than 8,000 Bosniak men in a matter of days (ICMP, 2012, 11 July). This shocked the world. One month later, on 28 August, a Serb mortar attack on a Sarajevo market killed 37 people and wounded 88. The Srebrenica genocide and the attack on the market were the straw that broke the camel's back. It persuaded UN and NATO, under great pressure from the United States, to intervene by bombing military positions of the Bosnian Serbs (Malcolm, 1996). "Over eleven days, more than thirty-five hundred sorties were flown by NATO warplanes and nearly four hundred [Bosnian Serb] targets were attacked" (Annan & Mousavizadeh, 2012, p. 72). This

weakened them successfully and proved to be the decisive factor in bringing the war to an end (Malcolm, 1996).

A ceasefire proposal between the belligerent parties was signed on 5 October. This led to the peace talks in Dayton, Ohio, which began a month later in November (Malcolm, 1996).

3.3 The Dayton Peace Accord

3.3.1 Peace talks in an ‘uncomfortable zone’

The Dayton peace talks were held from 1 to 21 November 1995. The key participants were Alija Izetbegović, Franjo Tuđman (representing the interests of the Bosnian Croats), Slobodan Milošević (representing the interests of the Bosnian Serbs) and Bosnian Foreign Minister Muhamed Šaćirbeg. The peace talks were led by Warren Christopher, United States Secretary of State, and Richard Holbrooke, an American diplomat. It was chaired by Igor Ivanov, First Deputy Foreign Minister of Russia, and Carl Bildt, Special Representative of the European Union. The secure site of Dayton, Ohio, was selected for the negotiations in order to pull all parties out of their ‘comfort zone’ (Hartwell, 2019).

On 21 November 1995, the parties came to an agreement and ‘the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina’ was formally signed in Paris one month later on 14 December (Harland, 2017). It comprised eleven annexes, which covered the following:

Annexes 1A and 1B deal with the military issues and regional stabilization in Bosnia. In summary, it states that the cease-fire that began on October 5 will continue, and armed forces and heavy weapons are to be withdrawn within an agreed deadline. Also, a NATO-led Implementation Force (IFOR) will be deployed, which will have the right to assist with and to oversee the implementation of the accord, acting under Chapter VII of the UN Charter.

Annex 2 refers to the agreement reached on the ‘Inter-Entity Boundary line’, separating Republika Srpska from the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Figure 2). Sarajevo will be reunited as part of the Federation and will be accessible to all inhabitants of the country. The status of Brčko will be decided upon by arbitration within a year.

Annex 3 speaks of free and fair elections. The parties are to establish the conditions for holding such elections by means of the right to vote in secret and the freedom of the press and expression.

Annex 4 contains the full text of the new Bosnian constitution. Among other things, it states that Bosnia and Herzegovina will remain a sovereign state, consisting of two entities, in which people, goods, capital and services can move freely and in which internationally recognized human rights are protected. There will be a central bank and monetary system, and the central government will also be responsible for law enforcement, foreign policy, communications, air traffic management and other matters to be decided. No one serving a sentence imposed by, or being indicted by, the International Tribunal shall stand as a candidate or hold an elected, appointed or other public office in Bosnia (The Office of the Spokesman, 1995; Harland, 2017). Furthermore, the constitution recognizes “Bosniacs, Croats, and Serbs, as constituent peoples (along with Others), and citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina” (Dayton Peace Accord, Annex IV). These three groups will share the Presidency and will therefore consist of three members: one Serb directly elected from the entity of Republika Srpska and one Croat and one Bosniak, each directly elected from the entity of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Annex 5 relates to the arbitration of disputes between the two entities: they agree to enter into mutual commitments and to create and implement an arbitration system.

Annex 6 concerns the human rights and fundamental freedoms for all inhabitants of Bosnia, which the State of Bosnia must protect. To oversee this, a Commission on Human Rights is being set up, consisting of a Human Rights Chamber (court) and a Human Rights Ombudsman.

Annex 7 relates to refugees and displaced persons. It gives refugees and displaced persons the right to return home safely and recover lost property, or to receive fair compensation for it. A Commission for Displaced Persons and Refugees will decide on this, with the power to take final decisions.

Annex 8 deals with National Monuments, which states that the entities will do their utmost to take proper legal, financial, technical and other actions to protect and conserve a National Monument and avoid any deliberate action that could cause damage to it. A Commission to Preserve National Monuments will be established.

Annex 9 speaks of public undertakings. In short, a Bosnian Transportation Corporation will be created to organize and manage transport facilities, such as roads, ports and railways.

Annex 10 contains the civilian implementation and the High Representative. A High Representative will facilitate and coordinate the civilian aspects of the Dayton Accord. For example, the economic reconstruction, humanitarian aid, the holding of free and fair elections, and the protection of human rights. The High Representative will be appointed by the Peace Implementation Council (PIC), in accordance with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

Annex 11 deals with the international police taskforce. The UN is invited to set up a UN International Police Task Force (IPTF) to undertake a range of tasks, such as advising, training and inspecting the local law enforcement (The Office of the Spokesman, 1995; Harland, 2017).

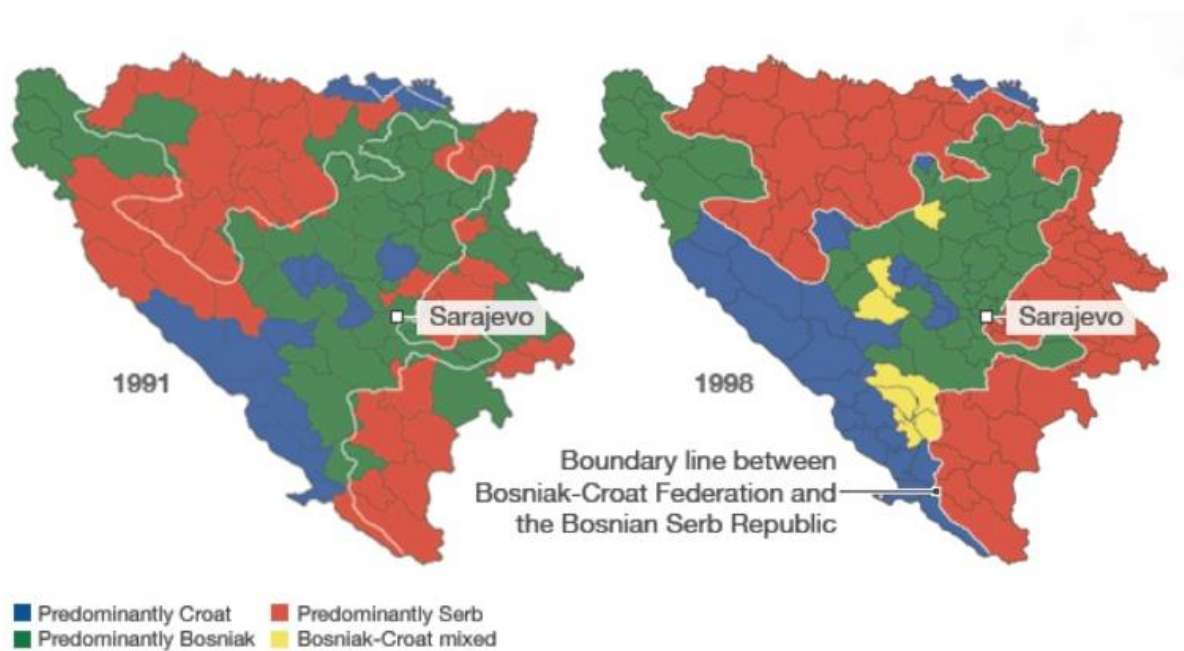


Figure 2: Ethnic make-up of Bosnia, before and after the war (Harland, 2017)

3.3.2 Consociational elements of the Dayton Accord

What did the Dayton annexes mean for Bosnia? If one examines them carefully, one can clearly see that forging peace by ending the war between the three parties was not the sole aim of the Dayton Accord. It also laid down the legal framework for Bosnia's future development as a single, multi-ethnic, democratic, and tolerant state (Chollet, 2007). There is a broad consensus among academics that this framework was based on the notion of consociationalism. For example, Belloni (2004, p. 336) views post-Dayton Bosnia as "a classical example of consociational settlement", while Bogaards (2006, p. 123) sees it as "a fully fledged system of consociational democracy under international tutelage". O'Leary (2005, pp. 33-36) calls it "corporate consociationalism", as well as "complex consociationalism", whereas Petersen (2011, p. 243) views it as "a bifurcated consociational political system". Below I summarize what the Dayton annexes altered in Bosnia and how all four principles of consociationalism – grand coalition, mutual veto, proportionality, and segmental autonomy – are reflected in them.

First of all, the Dayton Accord gave the country's three main ethnic groups – Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats – the mutual share of power. These three ethnic groups were now seen as the constituent peoples (along with Others) and equal citizens of the country. The category 'Others' are the Bosnian inhabitants who do not recognize themselves as one of the three constituent peoples, such as Roma, Jews, Albanians, and Yugoslavs (Džankić, 2015). The Dayton Accord ensured that the three ethnic groups would rule together through a grand coalition in Bosnia's central government, which is formed by a three-member presidency and the Council of Ministers (Merdzanovic, 2017; Cooley, 2020). Each of the groups was given the ability to veto legislation if it is perceived as undermining the vital interests of their own group (Benková, 2016). Proportionality was adopted in Bosnia's national institutions in the form of ethnic quotas in order to avoid any group from dominating the others. In the Council of Ministers, for example, the Minister and the Deputy Minister must belong to different ethnic groups, and in the House of Peoples the groups are represented through parity (McColloch, 2009). How the proportionality is further adopted is shown in Figure 3. According to Cooley (2020, p. 3), these ethnic quotas also "extend beyond political representation, applying for example to the civil service, where the structure of the workforce should reflect the ethnic makeup of the population".

Second, the annexes preserved Bosnia as a united state with its prewar borders but divided the country into two mainly ethnically homogenous entities: the Bosnian Serbian Republika Srpska (49%) and the Bosniak-Croatian Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (51%). The latter entity was further divided into ten cantons to meet the Croatian demand for autonomy, eight of which are dominated by either Bosniaks or Croats. Sarajevo remained the capital city of Bosnia (Merdzanovic, 2017; Cooley, 2020). Figure 3 illustrates how these levels of Bosnia are structured. The entities were given the right of segmental autonomy: to govern themselves almost autonomously, each with the permission to have their own administrative,

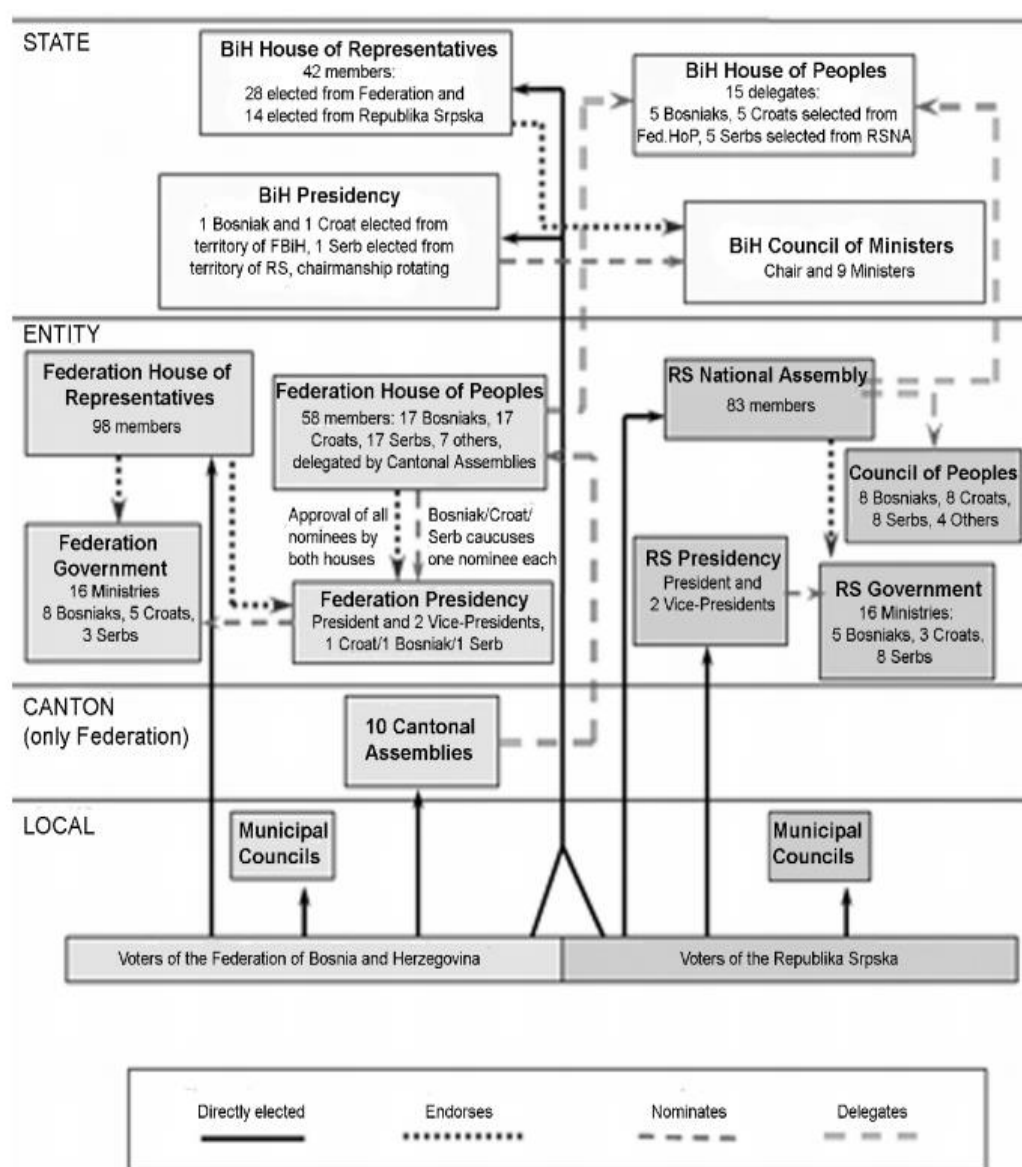


Figure 3: Legislative and executive bodies of Bosnia (Ó Tuathail, O'Loughlin & Djipa, 2006).

legislative, executive and judicial units, as well as their own capital and academic and economic institutions (Benková, 2016). A few years later, in 1999, a smaller third entity, the self-governing district of Brčko, was added to the Bosnian construction (McMahon & Western, 2009).

Lastly, by signing the Dayton accord and its eleven annexes, the parties agreed to fully respect the sovereign equality of one another, as well as to respect the human rights and the rights of refugees. Disputes between the parties are to be settled by peaceful means (Benková, 2016). Moreover, all parties agreed to cooperate fully with the United Nations Security Council in implementing the peace settlement and investigating and prosecuting war crimes and other violations in The International Criminal Tribunal of The Hague (Benková, 2016). In addition to this, it was also agreed that an international body would be established to oversee and ensure proper implementation: the Office of the High Representative. This body was later given a firmer role in 1997, when it was granted so-called Bonn powers, by which it was authorized to impose laws and to remove people from political positions if they violated any of the terms of the Dayton Accord (Merdzanovic, 2017).

From an empirical point of view, the Dayton Accord has made Bosnia the perfect consociation, since all four consociational elements are clearly present and institutionalized (Merdzanovic 2017; Cooley, 2020). At the national level, it institutionalized consociational democracy by regulating relations between the Bosniaks, the Serbs and the Croats. At the level of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, it regulated relations between the Bosniaks and the Croats (Kasapović, 2016). However, the Bosnian case also differs somewhat from ‘classical consociationalism’ (Bose, 2005). As Bose states, there are two major international dimensions that can be noted. First, the consociational model in Bosnia is the result of an internationally, under American supervision, brokered peace treaty, not a pact negotiated at the domestic level. This meant that the role of the international community in the implementation of the model would be of the utmost importance. Second, it is also international in the sense that it is the product of a regional treaty, since the Dayton Accord was signed by the then presidents of Croatia and Serbia, along with the then Bosnian president (Bose, 2005). Moreover, according to Bose, “the Dayton settlement authorized both BiH entities to establish and develop special relationships with neighbouring states – effectively Serbia, Montenegro and Croatia – and permitted Bosnian citizens to hold concurrent citizenship of those neighbouring states” (Bose, 2005, p. 327). Thus, the consociational element of the Dayton Accord transcends Bosnia’s

borders: “it is a supra-state, regional settlement based on porous internal and external borders” (Bose, 2005, p. 327).

3.3.3 Favorable conditions

Although Bosnia was now set up by the Dayton Accord as the perfect consociation with all four principles in place, this did not automatically mean that security or stability had been restored to Bosnia. As was discussed in the theoretical framework by Schneckener (2002), other important conditions also had to exist for this model to function sufficiently. Schneckener roughly divided these into structure-oriented and actor-oriented conditions, of which his analysis showed that actor-oriented conditions appear more relevant than the structural ones. Therefore, he claimed, the way group elites behave plays a major role in the success of a consociational democracy. The question now is how much of these conditions Bosnia possessed when consociationalism was introduced. Coincidental or not, Schneckener used the case of Bosnia in his analysis, in which he came to the conclusions set out below (Schneckener, 2002). A schematic overview of these results can be seen in Figure 4.

Structure-oriented factors in Bosnia:

- 1) Relative equilibrium: this condition is present in Bosnia, since none of the ethno-national groups is dominant over the others.
- 2) No significant socio-economic differences: this condition is present in Bosnia, since none of the ethno-national groups are particularly disadvantaged, each of them struggling with the challenges of the post-war period.
- 3) Territorial segmentation: this condition is present. Bosnia’s ethno-national groups live territorially apart from each other, since the Dayton Accord divided the country into two entities (later three) and ten cantons.
- 4) Overarching loyalty: according to Schneckener, this condition is hardly met. Before the war, there existed a common Bosnian identity for all the three ethno-national groups, however this was destroyed in the course of the war. Now ethno-nationalism dominates on each side.

- 5) Cross-cutting cleavages: this condition is hardly met, since there are no political mechanisms in Bosnia that cut across ethno-national lines. Political mechanisms are needed to create overlapping memberships and to avoid the formation of several smaller homogenous groups. Instead, political and ethnic cleavages correspond closely in Bosnia. Ethno-national political parties are elected almost exclusively by their ethno-national group, giving existing multinational parties a clear minority position.
- 6) Moderate pluralism vs. national fronts: this condition is hardly met. When Schneckener published the article there were no various political parties for one group, they were only represented by one. But he did indicate that this could change over the years (Schneckener, 2002). Years later, this has indeed changed somewhat as more ethnic parties and even multi-national ones have entered the scene (Touquet, 2011).

Actor-oriented factors in Bosnia:

- 7) Dominant elites: this condition is not met, as political leaders of each group refuse “to make any compromises whatsoever, either because they were themselves not prepared to do so, or because they feared to lose power within their own segment” (Schneckener, 2002, p. 215).
- 8) Respecting the status quo: this condition is not met, since not all parties in Bosnia are interested in keeping the agreed status quo. The consociational solution is questioned by political leaders from time to time.
- 9) Traditions of compromise and mutual understanding: this condition is hardly met, as the war and the ethnic cleansing are making it very difficult to restore peaceful inter-ethnic cooperation, which did exist during the Yugoslav period.
- 10) Comprehensive participation: this condition is not met, since not all the significant groups living in Bosnia, such as Roma and Jewish people, are represented at the negotiation table and included in the institutionalized power-sharing system.
- 10) Internal compromise vs. external pressure: this condition is not met, as the consociational constitution was coerced on Bosnia by international mediators, and therefore not created by the Bosnian people themselves. In addition, the proposals were mainly discussed with the patron states, Serbia and Croatia, and to a much lesser extent with the parties actually involved (Schneckener, 2002).

	<i>Structure-oriented</i>						<i>Actor-oriented</i>					<i>Sum</i>	<i>Success</i>
	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>11</i>		
Belgium	+	+/-	+	+	+/-	+	+	+	+	+	+	11	yes
South Tyrol	+	-/+	+	-/+	-/+	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	8	yes
Cyprus	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	no
Northern Ireland 1973	-/+	-	-	-/+	-/+	-/+	-	-	-	-	-/+	0	no
Northern Ireland 1998	+/-	-/+	-	-/+	-/+	+/-	+/-	-/+	-/+	+/-	+/-	5	?
Bosnia 1995	+	+	+	-/+	-/+	-/+	-	-	-/+	-	-	3	?

Notes: + condition met, +/- condition met to a large extent, -/+ condition hardly met, - condition not met

Figure 4: Schneckener's (2002) schematic overview of the favorable conditions in a number of studied countries

As these results show, there is a decent amount of favorable structural conditions in Bosnia. However, actor-oriented conditions have hardly been met. If Schneckener's (2002) theory is to be believed, Bosnia's consociational democracy will ultimately not succeed unless at least some of these actor-orientated conditions are met in the post-war period. He does not seem to be positive about this, as he also argues that the Bosnian framework shows some important similarities with the failed Cypriot constitution, notably the presidential system based on absolute veto rights and popular voting (Schneckener, 2002).

Did consociationalism indeed not succeed in Bosnia as Schneckener predicted? Was this model in the first place a good solution to stop the Bosnian war and rebuild the country? Did the international community act well in this regard? These are all questions that can be answered now, 26 years later. To arrive at the answers, an analysis of documents by academics was carried out, as well as interviews with employees of Bosnian NGOs. The latter was done because the NGOs were very closely involved in the reconstruction process in Bosnia, but their views on the issue are not reflected in the existing documents. Chapter 5 present the results that emerged from the two methods, but before going into further detail, it is necessary to consider how these methods were applied to ensure the reliability and validity of this study.

4. Methodology

It is generally claimed that qualitative research methodology ensures an understanding of social phenomena that goes deeper than what would be produced from purely quantitative methods (Silverman, 2015). According to Given (2008, p. 700), the qualitative research methodology “is a composite of philosophy, concepts, data-gathering procedures, and statistical methods that provides perhaps the most thoroughly elaborated basis for the systematic examination of human subjectivity”. This is because it centralizes the participants’ perspective in which their knowledge and practices are analyzed. Herein, account is taken of the fact that the perspectives may differ greatly from one another because of the different people being investigated and the backgrounds from which they come (Flick, 2009).

For these reasons, this study has been carried out in a qualitative manner, since its main goal is to identify the human subjectivity of Bosnian NGOs towards the Dayton Peace Accord. In order to do this, two different qualitative data collection methods were used. The first being a documentary analysis in which publications and articles by academics relating to the Dayton Accord were studied. This was chosen in order for the researcher to get an idea of what had already been written about the Dayton Accord, but also in order to be able to make a comparison later on with the data from the second method, namely the semi-structured, in-depth interviews with actors from Bosnian NGOs. The combination of these two methods seemed the valid choice, as both enable an in-depth examination of selected issues with careful attention to context, detail and nuance (Flick, 2009).

The data collected from both methods have been analyzed by means of content analysis, which is a commonly used method to mitigate data, to make sense of them and to derive meaning from them. This has been carried out inductively, meaning that the findings have been derived directly from the data (Given, 2008). The reason for choosing this is that not many studies have been carried out on the perspectives of stakeholders, or even on a specific stakeholder such as NGOs, on the Dayton Accord. However, as a researcher, I did not conduct the content analysis completely openly, as the theoretical framework discussed earlier was applied as a “lens [...] to study phenomena” (Given, 2008, p. 871). For example, when a respondent talked about the pros or cons of vetoing during an interview, I was immediately aware that this also meant that they had an opinion about the consociational form of democracy. By using the theory in this way, I was able to maintain some focus in the overwhelming data,

to position the research in an academic setting, and to frame and better comprehend findings (Silverman, 2015; Given, 2008).

This chapter explains the processes of how the data was collected. First, it will be discussed what a content analysis is and how one can conduct it. This is done because the data from both methods have been analyzed in this way. This will be followed by an explanation of how the documents were selected and analyzed. Finally, the way in which the interviews were conducted will be discussed, covering such aspects as the search for respondents, the ethics that were maintained and the process of analysis.

4.1 Content analysis

The content analysis, according to Given (2008, p. 121), “is the intellectual process of categorizing qualitative textual data into clusters of similar entities, or conceptual categories, to identify consistent patterns and relationships between variables or themes”. It originated as a quantitative method, but no longer resembles it: where quantitative content analysis can be used to answer ‘what’ questions, qualitative content analysis is useful in answering the ‘why’ questions and analyzing perceptions (Given, 2008). There are wide variations in the level at which content analysis is carried out, from similar responses to a particular issue to deeper inductive insights. For example, the degree of enthusiasm expressed about something can also be open to content analysis. “Thus, content analysis is useful for identifying both conscious and unconscious messages communicated by text” (Given, 2008, p. 121).

When examining a text by means of a content analysis, categories are identified from certain phrases that are made or not made. Here, a certain statement may be relevant to several categories. Moreover, a text is not looked at once but is analyzed over and over, with categories being reviewed, combined with others or further divided into sub-categories. A content analysis is therefore not only an interpretive but also an iterative process (Given, 2008).

According to Elo and Kyngäs (2008), the content analysis consists of three main phases: preparation, organizing and reporting. The first phase, the preparation phase, begins with selecting the unit of analysis, which can for example be a specific word, one or several sentence(s), or a letter. The researcher tries then to understand the data and to learn ‘what is going on’ (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). This can be done by asking oneself the following questions:

who is telling?

what is happening?

when did it happen?

where is this happening?

why?

(Elo & Kyngäs, 2008)

The goal is to become immersed in the text data. Therefore, it is important that the text is read through multiple times (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008).

The second phase of the content analysis is to organize the data, which has been carried out inductively in this research, since there are not many previous studies dealing with the question of what has been written about the Dayton Accord. The inductive organizing phase includes open coding, forming categories and abstraction. Open coding entails that while reading the text, notes and headings are added (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Then, “the written material is read through again, and as many headings as necessary are written down in the margins to describe all aspects of the content” (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008, p. 109). After the text is coded, the notes and headings which are similar are grouped into broader categories. The aim of forming these categories is to provide a tool of describing the phenomenon, increasing understanding and producing knowledge. The categories are then abstracted, with the categories with similar events and incidents grouped together as main categories (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008).

The last phase of the content analysis is reporting the process of the analysis and the results. Reliability is very important here. In order to strengthen the reliability of the research, a link must be demonstrated between the data and the results. For this reason, the researcher must describe the process of analysis in as much detail as possible when the results are reported and be mindful of their own perspectives they bring into the process. Tables and appendices, but also authentic citations can be a good means of achieving this. The link between the data and the results must be shown in such a way that someone else can follow the process and procedures of the research (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008).

Although Elo and Kyngäs (2008, p. 113) define the above three phases as the phases of the content analysis, they do state that a well-executed research does not have to have gone

through these phases precisely, as “each inquiry is distinctive, and the results depend on the skills, insights, analytic abilities and style of the investigator”. One of the challenges of the content analysis is that there is no ‘right’ way of doing it. It is a very flexible method in which researchers must judge for themselves what variations are best suited for their particular problems (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008).

To demonstrate the choices I made and to strengthen the validity and reliability of this research, the research process of both methods is explained below.

4.2 Analysis of documents

The first part of the data has been obtained through a document analysis of publications about the Dayton Accord and Bosnia from academics. A document analysis involves the study of a wide range of documents, both soft and hard copy, such as official governmental reports and publications, written material from organizations, and letters (Patton, 2002). The focus here is on the content within these documents, which can be texts, maps and/or photographs. These are analyzed through an interpretative approach that not only looks at the language that is used, but also at the context in which the documents emerged (Given, 2008). According to Given (2008, p. 231), “in this frame, documents are viewed as conduits of communication between, say, a writer and a reader – conduits that contain meaningful messages”.

To obtain these ‘meaningful messages’ regarding the Dayton Accord, I first conducted an extensive search for publications and articles of academics by using different search terms in Google and the online library of the Radboud University, but also by looking at which literature a certain publication referred to. All these documents were then read and analyzed in detail through a content analysis, following the steps of Elo and Kyngäs (2008). This was done by first reading all the documents, highlighting various statements made by the authors, and drawing up the first open codes from these statements. This step was gone through several times. Subsequently, these different open codes were grouped into broader categories, which allowed me to recognize the different connections in the data. From this, it became clear that the data could be divided into four main categories, namely strengths, weaknesses, threats and solutions. This has led to Figure 5. The results of the document analysis have been written down in this thesis according to these four categories, which can be read in Chapter 5. The content analysis of documents has proved to be a good method of gaining knowledge of what has been written about the Dayton Accord.

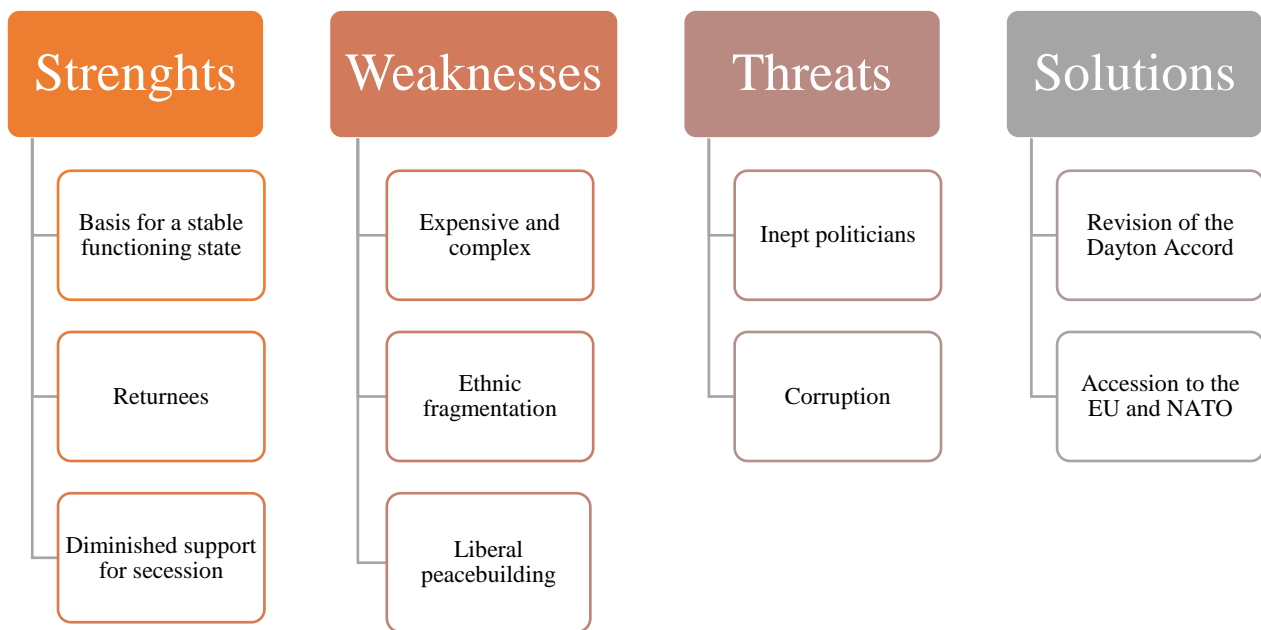


Figure 5: Codes extracted from the document analysis data.

4.3 Analysis of interviews

The second part of the data has been obtained by means of semi-structured, in-depth interviews with actors from Bosnian NGOs. During these interviews, respondents were encouraged to elaborate on what they believe the Dayton Accord did and did not do for Bosnia. The choice was made to conduct interviews, not only because it is the most widely used and best-known form of qualitative method (Given, 2008), but also because it makes it possible to explore the views of respondents in order to comprehend their understanding of ‘reality’. This is important for a study such as this one that examines the respondent’s perceptions of a particular phenomenon (Miller and Glassner, 1997). The choice was made to conduct the interviews semi-structured rather than structured or open interviews, since it is generally considered to be a flexible method that allows the interviewer to retain some control over the direction and content discussed, while still giving the interviewee the possibility to introduce new but related topics.

For this purpose, an interview guide was drawn up which was used for all interviews. The guide is included in Appendix 1. The guide contains topics that had to be examined and some predetermined but open-ended questions, which allowed me, as a researcher, to gauge the perceptions of the respondents and further elaborate on them (Given, 2008). The goal was to avoid the interview from remaining at the level of general statements and go more in-depth by

bringing out specific elements that have determined the impact or meaning of an issue for the respondents. This is called the criterion of specificity. However, in an attempt to increase specificity, I remained careful as an interviewer not to steer the respondents in any particular direction, i.e., to influence their answers (Flick, 2009).

Apart from the fact that account needed to be taken of increasing specificity during the interviews, ethics also had to be followed. According to Murphy and Dingwall's (2001, p. 339) ethical theory, this is linked to four issues:

1. Non-maleficence - researchers should avoid harming respondents.
2. Beneficence - research on human subjects should produce some positive and identifiable benefit rather than simply be carried out for its own sake.
3. Autonomy or self-determination - research respondent's values and decisions should be respected.
4. Justice - all people should be treated equally.

Something that is also related to this, in my particular case, is my personal background. Both my parents have predominantly Bosniak backgrounds and together they fled the Bosnian war in the 1990s. Because of this, I was closer to the research than most other researchers would have. This is something I have kept in mind throughout the research, trying to look at things as objectively as possible and keeping the aforementioned ethics in mind.

A total of eleven interviews were carried out. They were all conducted with employees of Bosnian NGOs from different cities in the country, with the exception of one Bosnian Dutch woman who is involved in a Bosnian platform based in the Netherlands. These respondents were all sought through purposeful sampling: they were selected based on the organization in which they work, their profession and knowledge of the field (Bailey, 2007). The NGOs they work for were found through Google or through the contacts of PAX for Peace, the organization for which I did a year-long internship. I contacted these NGOs through my PAX email, hoping that the PAX name attached to the email would attract more interest in this research. I can't say whether this actually helped. In the email, respondents were invited for an interview via a Zoom meeting or WhatsApp/Viber call. Herein, it was emphasized that respondents could remain anonymous if they wished to. Even though the email was in English, I received many responses back in Bosnian, with some asking if the interview could also be done in Bosnian. Unfortunately, my knowledge of the Bosnian language is not that advanced to be able to have a good conversation about the administrative system of Bosnia. The use of an interpreter during

the interviews did not seem suitable to me either, because with an interpreter there is no guarantee that the translation will be complete. This is why, sadly, a number of potential respondents dropped out.

Interviews were conducted with the eleven interested respondents in January and February 2021. Each interview lasted about 75 minutes and they were all recorded, of course with the consent of the respondents. Because this research was conducted in the middle of the COVID-19 crisis, all interviews were conducted online. Other than the fact that at times there were some internet malfunctions, I do not feel that this has interfered with the research. Online interviewing has proven to be beneficial in these extraordinary times we find ourselves in while writing this thesis.

Four respondents indicated after the interview that they would like to remain anonymous. For this reason, I have chosen not to mention any respondents by name or for which NGO they work for in this study. Partly also because of the politically sensitive subjects which were discussed during the interviews. This prevents respondents from getting into any trouble because of particular statements they made during the interviews, which is also consistent with Murphy and Dingwall's (2001) first ethic consideration of non-maleficence. A list of the respondents and the subject matter their NGO is primarily concerned with can be found in Appendix 2.

After the interviews were carried out, they were transcribed and a content analysis was performed. As with the document analysis, the steps of Elo and Kyngäs (2008) were also followed. The difference here, however, was that for the analysis of the data from the interviews, Atlas.ti was used, a Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) package that allows qualitative research data to be managed, displayed, and coded in a systematic way (Given, 2008). Following these steps, I feel, led me down the right path of the research process. One problem, though, was that after the data was open coded, I ended up with over 300 codes. There is apparently a name for such researchers whose codes are very descriptive, namely 'splinters' (Bernard & Ryan, 2010). It ended up taking me a long time to get this list of codes smaller.

Because the interviews were conducted online or over the phone, I chose to focus only on the manifest content, which means that while transcribing and analyzing, I did not take into account the sighs, silence, laughter and so on of the respondents. Only what the respondents

actually said was included in the analysis. This is because I believe that online interviewing is not reliable enough to draw conclusions about the latent content as well.

The first step in analyzing the data consisted of a detailed reading of the transcripts of the interviews, reading relevant notes made during and after each interview and listening to the recordings. After this initial phase, the collected data were coded by adding open codes to respondents' statements and key themes that recurred using the coding function in Atlas.ti. After creating an initial open coding scheme, all transcripts were re-read and analyzed to combine codes and add new ones where necessary. This refining process of the codes was quite important, because, as I had stated earlier, at one moment I was working with more than 300 codes. During this process, the open codes were also grouped together into broader categories. This has resulted in Figure 6. After the data had gone through the inductive organizing phase, the final stage of the content analysis was reached, namely the reporting of the analysis process and the results (Elo & Kyngäs 2008). The aim here was to present a total picture of the analysis, which includes a selection of illustrative quotes and the search for descriptions and explanations. The results of the interview content analysis have been written down in this thesis according to the same four categories which emerged from the document analysis, because I felt that this way the data could also be presented in an orderly fashion. In doing so, I tried to stay as close as possible to the words of the respondents. After writing down the data, it was linked to the theory from Chapter 2. The results of the content analysis of the interviews can also be read in Chapter 5.

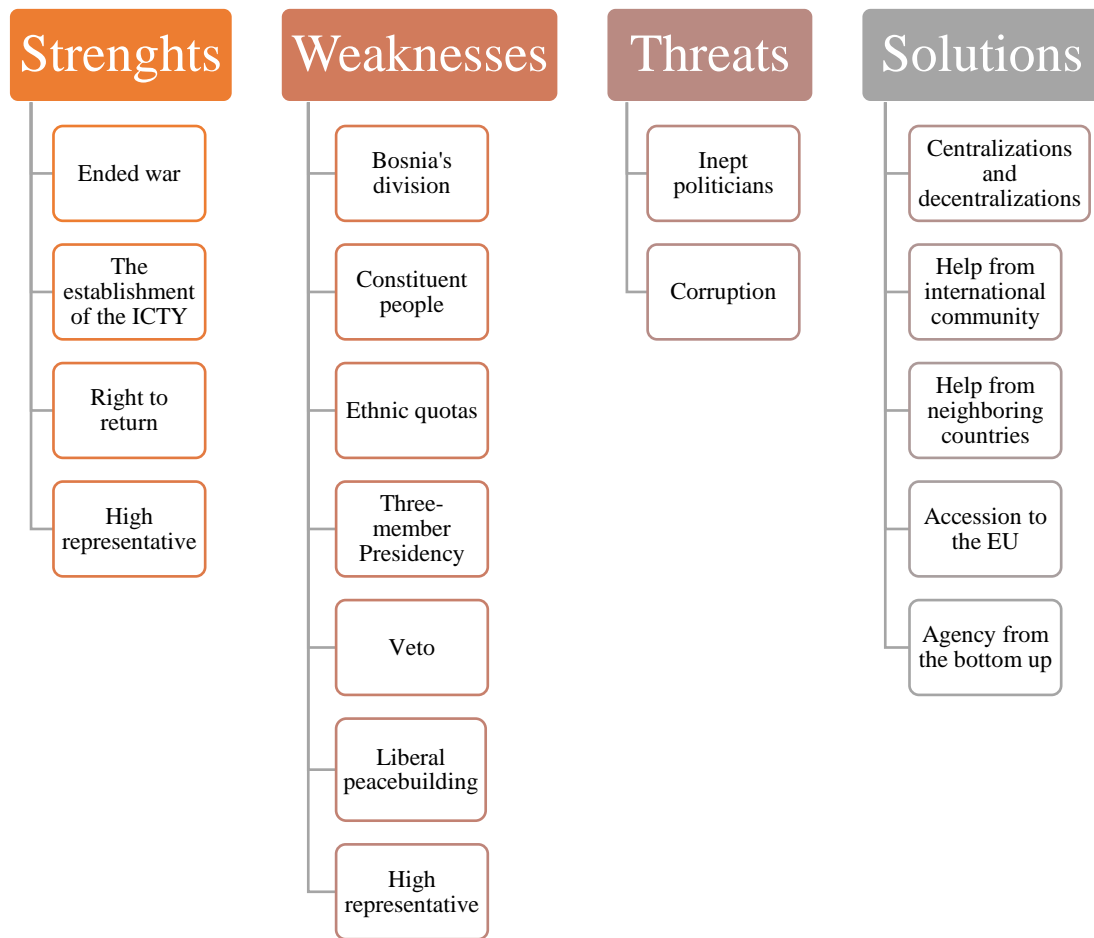


Figure 6: Codes extracted from the interview content analysis.

5. Dayton in perspective

After the war ended and the Dayton Accord was signed, Bosnia was overloaded with attention from the international community. To reconstruct and reconcile the country into the consociational democracy it was meant to become, a broad multi-institutional mission was set up. As a result, by the end of 1996, 18 UN agencies, 17 foreign governments, 27 intergovernmental organizations, and approximately 200 nongovernmental organizations were involved in the reconstruction efforts of Bosnia. Tens of thousands of troops from different parts of the world were deployed to maintain the peace in the country. Over 14 billion dollars in aid flooded into Bosnia from 1996 till 2007, which was about 300 dollars per inhabitant per year in a country with a population of less than four million (McMahon & Western, 2009). All of these efforts made Bosnia into “a laboratory for what was arguably the most extensive and innovative democratization experiment in history” (McMahon & Western, 2009, p. 69). A successful experiment if one would ask American and European leaders at the time, since they routinely touted Bosnia “as proof that under the right conditions the international community could successfully rebuild conflict-ridden countries” (McMahon & Western, 2009, p. 69).

For Bill Clinton, US President during the Bosnian War, this still seems to be the case fifteen years later. In a 2009 article he reflected on the following,

peace has endured since the signing of the Dayton Accords. Annex 4 of the General Framework Agreement still stands as the constitution for Bosnia and Herzegovina and continues to be the basis for the present political divisions of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its structure of government (Clinton, 2009, para. 8).

Furthermore, he writes that it did not only bring stability to Bosnia, but it also had other positive effects, such as that it created the opportunity to arrest and convict war criminals. Another example he mentions is the way in which it laid the foundations for NATO’s military action in Kosovo in 1999. Although it may not be perfect, Clinton states, the Dayton Accord has been a genuine achievement (Clinton, 2009).

However, not everyone agrees that the Dayton Accord has been a successful experiment for Bosnia. In fact, some academics do not have much good to say about the accord and the way the international community has tried to implement it (Kesić, 2007). According to Pejanović (2014), two dominant views have been expressed in academic and other work on the

question of what the Dayton Accord has achieved for Bosnia. On the one hand, it is argued that the accord not only stopped the war, but also resolved the issue of the war by laying the foundations on which Bosnia can strengthen peace, build democratic institutions, restore internal integration, and enter the Euro-Atlantic integrations. On the other hand, it is claimed that the accord actually divided Bosnia on the basis of ethnic lines, as ethnicity became dominant in the country's functioning and organization (Pejanović, 2014).

Whether Pejanović is right or whether there are more views from academics on what the Dayton Accord has done for Bosnia will become clear in this chapter. These results are the outcome of an extensive document analysis of works related to the Dayton Accord. However, many of these academics are not those who have experienced the Bosnian system at close quarters on a daily basis. For this reason, this study has also examined the opinions of Bosnians themselves, in particular of actors working in Bosnian NGOs. The choice to focus specifically on these actors is largely due to the fact that, as mentioned above, NGOs have been widely active in Bosnia since 1995 and have therefore experienced the whole process that the country has gone through since the war and the signing of the Dayton Accord. Semi-structured interviews were conducted in order to find out what they believe the Dayton Accord has meant for Bosnia. A total of eleven staff members from different NGOs were interviewed.

The results of both methods are categorized in this chapter into strengths, weaknesses, threats and solutions. Between the first three and the last categories, there is a separate section linking the results to the literature.

5.1 Strengths

5.1.1 Ending war

A positive aspect of the Dayton Accord that emerged from both the academic debate and the interviews with respondents was that it brought an end to the Bosnian war. In fact, it was seen by all respondents and some academics as the accord's greatest strength. During the interviews, all respondents emphasized that the accord ended destruction and brought stability to Bosnia, which was the "biggest achievement of the Dayton Accord" (R11), as Respondent 11 pointed out. Similarly, McMahon and Western (2009), Benková (2016) and Pasic (2016) highlighted ending bloodshed, preserving stability and establishing conditions for life to return to normal as the greatest benefits of the accord for Bosnia. According to Pasic, for example, the accord

brought peace and stability to a war-torn country, mainly during the first post-conflict years, through agreements on the withdrawal of the military, disarmament and peacekeeping (Pasic, 2016). “At the time, there was a general sense of progress; people were relieved that the war was over, and that life could somehow resume to normality” (Pasic, 2016, para. 1).

In this regard, some of the respondents also stressed during their interviews that the accord has worked and still seems to work, simply because peace has been maintained since 1995. Respondent 1 was one of them. Although, in his view, the accord has many flaws, it successfully ended the war, for which “it was designed” (R1). Respondent 1 thinks the accord was successful in this because it was a kind of compromise. All three sides were not completely happy with what they got, but they all got something. The main goal of the Bosniaks was fulfilled, namely an independent Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Serbs were given the Republika Srpska and the Croats were given their own cantons, granting both some kind of autonomy.

A similar argument also emerged from the academic debate. A study by Bieber (2006) shows that support for secession among the Croat and Serb population groups in Bosnia has decreased considerably. In 2000, 68 percent of the Bosnian Serbs believed that secession from Bosnia or unification with Serbia would be the best solution for their community. Among the Bosnian Croats, 22 percent supported either unification with Croatia or secession from Bosnia. By 2003, these percentages had declined to 43 percent among the Bosnian Serbian population and to only 3.5 percent among the Bosnian Croat population (Bieber, 2006). Another research by the National Democratic Institution from 2010 found that support among the Bosnian Serbs for secession had dropped even further to only 6 percent. In addition, 46 percent of them indicated that the regulation of the state should remain unchanged (National Democratic Institution, 2010). The reason behind this decreasing support for secession among the two communities seems to be that both communities have acquired a kind of autonomy through the division of Bosnia into entities and cantons, as also stated by Respondent 1. How this is reflected in the Serb community is demonstrated in the study by Ó Tuathail, O’Loughlin and Djipa (2006). They claim that the establishment of the Republika Srpska has given the Serbian population a source of security and safety to govern themselves to a certain extent and to express their ethnic identity (Ó Tuathail, O’Loughlin & Djipa, 2006). They complement this assertion with one of the results of the 2005 Prism public opinion poll, in which 66.2 percent of the Bosnian Serbs agreed with the statement that ‘the sustainability of Republika Srpska is the only

guarantee for the sustainability of Serbs in BiH' (Ó Tuathail, O'Loughlin & Djipa, 2006). So, as long as the Bosnian Serbs can govern themselves, they do not feel threatened.

5.1.2 The basis for a stable functioning state

Another strength often cited by respondents and academics is that the framework established by the Dayton Accord laid the foundations for a stable and functioning Bosnian state that continues to function today, simply because no new war has returned. According to Pasic (2016), the Dayton Accord made it possible a few years later to introduce a common currency, form a unified army, accept common passports and identity documents and establish state-level institutions with the goal of creating a multi-ethnic and professional public sector. In Pasic's view, these positive changes cannot be disputed or underrated (Pasic, 2016). Similarly, McMahon and Western (2009) and Benková (2016) emphasized that the accord resulted in the introduction of a single Bosnian currency and the formation of a unified army and intelligence services, but also stressed that it laid a basis for modest economic growth and enabled Bosnia to hold several national and municipal elections, the first of which were already held in 1996 (McMahon & Western, 2009; Benková, 2016).

Also, Lampe (2007) stated that the Dayton Accord has laid the foundations for a well-functioning Bosnian state when it comes to the economy. He stressed that it has been successful in creating a single market economy, one that links the different entities with each other by guaranteeing free movement of capital and labor. According to Lampe, this is an essential move in the process of state building and on the road to integration into the European Union (Lampe, 2007).

These above assertions from the academic debate were also echoed by some respondents. For example, Respondent 9 stated that we can discuss why the war was not stopped earlier or why not later and why this administrative division was chosen, but the main value was that the war was stopped and Bosnia was given the foundations to create a functional state. Respondent 7 shared this opinion, adding that the accord was never meant to be a 'final agreement': it was meant as a transitional instrument "to help stop the war and make a transition towards a functioning country" (R7). But the respondents were not as thorough as the academics mentioned above, as they could not go into details of what the Dayton Accord did to lay the foundations for a functioning country.

5.1.3 More than one million returnees?

A specific element of the Dayton Accord that respondents and academics praised was the right of return that was included, which allowed for the large-scale return of displaced persons and refugees. According to Toal (2007, p. 35), of the 4.4 million Bosnian citizens before the war, “over one million were made refugees by the Bosnian war and another million internally displaced within the country”. In 2004, both the Bosnian Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees and the UN Refugee Agency declared that more than one million Bosnians had returned to their pre-war homes, which, according to Toal, is a real milestone for the Bosnian state and the international community (Toal, 2007). Similarly, Bose (2005, p. 331) considered the large number of returnees to be a positive and rare example and called it “the most notable achievement of international engagement” in Bosnia.

Like Toal (2007) and Bose (2005), all respondents were very positive about the fact that the right to return was included in the Dayton Accord. As Respondent 2 said during her interview, “the right to return, to come back to your own country, to your own land and house, is a human right” (R2). To have this opportunity is very important. The family of Respondent 5 was among those who made use of the right to return. They returned from Sweden to Bosnia. According to her, the Swedish government ‘supported’ them a lot in this process. They, for instance, paid her mother’s salary for the first year they returned, which was “a huge help” (R5). They also made contact a few times with her family to see how they were doing. However, Respondent 5 did not dare to say whether other countries have helped returning families as well as the Swedish government has done.

The majority of the respondents, though, indicated that the right to return had not been properly implemented. In contrast to the abovementioned academics, they stated that many people did not come back because they would not be able to live a normal life if they had. This is also argued by Pasic (2016), who states that many of the returnees were fictional and instead “returned to the areas inhabited by their ethnic majority” (Pasic, 2016, para. 2). The reason why many returnees were fictional was explained by Respondent 3. According to him, many people whose houses had been rebuilt by the international community sold their houses and returned to the place they had fled to. “The problem is that when you come back, you can have a new home, but you don’t have a job, or your kids cannot go to school because they only teach Serbian history or Bosnian history” (R3). As a result, Respondent 3 believes the right to return was only implemented for 10 to 15%. It was, however, not only blockages like unemployment

that prevented people from coming back. According to some respondents, many people have also not returned because they do not consider it safe there. As an example, Respondent 8 mentioned a colleague who is from Banja Luka and still has a house there. “She doesn’t feel safe to live in Banja Luka, because of what has happened there during the war. She feels more safe in Sarajevo” (R8).

Respondents believe that this poor implementation of the ‘right to return’ could have been partially prevented if the international community and the Bosnian government had somewhat broadened their focus. The focus should not only have been on ensuring that refugees and displaced persons could get their homes back, but also that they could get a job, go to school, and receive psychosocial help if they needed it. In other words: that people can actually start a new life in their own pre-war homes. In that case, more people might have returned.

5.1.4 War crimes

Another element of the Dayton Accord that respondents generally viewed as positive is the establishment of The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY). Clinton (2009), who was mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, and Chollet (2007), who will be mentioned later, also touched on this briefly. The respondents of this study, however, were much more thorough in explaining why they consider the ICTY to be something positive. The main reason they gave for this was that the war cases in Bosnia could not have been handled properly. If it had been done in Bosnia, the war criminals would never have been prosecuted or would have received an inadequate sentence. One of the respondents who claimed this was Respondent 11. If the cases had been dealt with in Bosnia, he stated, “it would not have resulted in justice, because war criminals then, and unfortunately still today, would have been presented as national heroes” (R11). It was therefore a good choice to try the major war criminals by the international tribunal, as it is a body which, according to Respondent 11, can be neutral and objective, and can try people by the same standard. For the same reason, some respondents even expressed that they would have preferred all war crime cases to be processed in the Hague.

A number of respondents did, however, indicate that the international tribunal has acted rather slowly in processing cases. Respondent 4 cited, for instance, the case of Milošević who died before his trial was finished. The same could happen with the case of Mladić which is still not concluded after a decade. According to Respondent 4, setting up this tribunal has been a

‘fantastic solution’, but the trials should have been speeded up, especially for the victims’ families, such as the women of Srebrenica, who are still waiting for justice.

Another point raised by some respondents was that the verdicts of the international tribunal are considered by many Bosnians to be too biased and are therefore not accepted. One of the respondents who brought this up was Respondent 7. The origin of this, she indicated, lies in the fact that this war and the Dayton Accord did not determine who the winner or loser was. Instead, “the Hague decided [this] through individual verdicts”, talking about the roles of specific countries or ethnicities, “which can be questioned a lot” (R7). In doing so, this tribunal not only took on a judicial role, but also a political one. Respondent 7 and other like-minded respondents think that it would have been better if more effort had been made to really bring to justice the crimes committed by all sides of the war. Respondent 8, on the other hand, believes that this was already done by the international tribunal. However, to dispel the notion of some Bosnians that the international tribunal was too biased, the tribunal should have reported more who it was prosecuting.

Now that the international tribunal has formally ceased to exist and the Bosnian court is to take over, many respondents expressed that there really should be more change to processing and concluding cases, since cases are becoming outdated. One of the consequences of this is that nowadays very low sentences are given. According to Respondent 8, someone recently received only a one year’s sentence for rape and torture in the concentration camps. “That is very hurtful for the victims” (R8).

5.2 Weaknesses

5.2.1 Bosnia’s division of entities and cantons

However, the Dayton Accord has not only been praised by respondents and academics, it was also the subject of several criticisms. These were mainly directed at the way in which the Bosnian state came into being as a result of the accord. It has been stated that the accord has in fact laid the foundations for a complex, dysfunctional, expensive, ethnically fragmented and discriminatory Bosnian administrative system. Below will be explained why this has been claimed.

Dysfunctional system

Many respondents and academics have pointed at the dysfunctional nature of the Bosnian administrative system established by the Dayton Accord. During her interview, Respondent 6, for example, mentioned that today one needs “to go through hundreds of steps” (R6) to change or create a law in Bosnia. This is mainly the case in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with its numerous cantons, parliaments, mayors, et cetera. The Republika Srpska, according to Respondent 6, is somewhat less complicated as it is a centralized entity, but still it is not easy to achieve one’s goals there. For these reasons, she argued that the Bosnian administrative system is highly dysfunctional. It is slowing down the processes which are very much needed. Respondent 8 also shares this view. As she stated, “we have the most complicated and the most dysfunctional administrative system in the world, and I think the whole world is making fun of our political system” (R8). The system, she said, is ‘ridiculous’, it has prevented Bosnia from developing. “I think we didn’t move from 1995, as a matter of fact we went backwards” (R8).

Chollet (2007) and McMahon and Western (2009) have made similar claims. Due to the fact that the Dayton Accord allowed each level of government to be divided on the basis of ethnicity, such as the possibility for each entity to have their own government, educational system and police force, Bosnia was given a very weak and decentralized government (Chollet, 2007; McMahon & Western, 2009). The Dayton Accord has therefore created an ‘dysfunctional institutional structure’, which has “sowed the seeds of instability” in Bosnia (McMahon & Western, 2009, p. 70).

Complex system

Apart from the fact that the Bosnian administrative system is seen as dysfunctional, it is also seen as something complex, as Respondent 8 briefly touched upon above. To illustrate how complex the system is, many respondents emphasized the different rules and regulations that apply in each entity and canton. One of them was Respondent 5, who cited the 11 different Ministries of Education in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina as an example, which means that each canton has its own ministry that has the right to decide on its own school curricula. “We have 2.2 million people who live here. That’s absolutely crazy” (R5). According to Respondent 5, the Ministries of Education and the rest of the various ministries and institutions cannot be funded for many more years, as a lot of people are leaving Bosnia and

the population is ageing. “So, this division of Bosnia and Herzegovina is not sustainable. It will never be” (R5).

The same was claimed by Pasic (2016). According to her, almost everything in Bosnia lacks uniform standards. Besides the different Ministries of Education, which she also mentioned as an example, she cited the different pension systems of the two entities, with pensioners receiving different compensation for the same past work, and the medical and social services that differ greatly in quality and standards depending on the canton. As a result, a Bosnian citizen, for example, cannot receive medical care in another canton than his or her own, let alone in the other entity (Pasic, 2016).

Expensive system

Since the system is so complex with multiple levels of government, it is also a very expensive system. According to many respondents and academics, this is because it takes so many people to run these government sectors. In his article, Belloni (2009), for example, stated that Bosnia has the world’s largest number of presidents, prime ministers, and ministers per capita. Due to this, the state budget has to set aside enormous amounts of money, over 50 percent of the state budget, to keep the system going (Belloni, 2009). According to Respondent 3, it is actually almost 70% of the state budget that is needed. This makes the system “absolutely non-functional” (R3), and he considers it a “very, very stupid thing” (R3) that the country was divided in this way. Respondent 5 described the Bosnian system as “a bureaucracy that is eating up all our GDP” (R5). Like the others, she believes that the system is way too expensive.

In addition to the fact that a large part of the Bosnian state budget goes to the system, Borger (2015) claimed that Bosnia’s political elites earn six times the average Bosnian wage and also enjoy a wide range of perks, which makes them, relatively speaking, one of the richest politicians in Europe. Therefore, he claims that the Dayton Accord spawns a “cash cow” political system for politicians that is “both self-serving and self-perpetuating” (Borger, 2015, para. 7).

An ethnic system

However, complexity, non-functionality and high costs were not the only aspects why the vast majority of the respondents and academics expressed negative opinions about the Bosnian

administrative system. They also indicated that it further divided people in the country by institutionalizing ethnic division. As Respondent 1 explained, the Bosnian system created a situation with three completely divided societies in which each has its own media, school education system, curriculum, et cetera. Here, hate speech and fears of the ‘other’ are very present. It is not only the older generations that have experienced the war who are strongly affected by this, but also the new generations, he claimed, as the narratives of war have been transmitted throughout their entire lives through schools, through families, and through the media. So, “they are acting very similar as their parents acted” (R1). Respondent 3 said the same during his interview. As he stated, if you are a young person who was born at the end of the 1990s, “in your family, in your school, on your television, on your radio, on Facebook, on everywhere, you heard that narrative; narratives about the war, nationalism, hate speech, and all kinds of other stupid things” (R3).

According to Respondent 7, the problem lies primarily in the fact that the entities and cantons can decide for themselves on matters such as health care and education. This has put Bosnia in a situation where even theatres no longer represent the country itself. Although the audience is mixed, politically they represent a specific ethnic group. She finds this ‘nonsense’. This strong institutionalization of ethnic divisions has, for example, led Serbs in the Republika Srpska to believe that they are a state of their own. But also the Croats say the following according to Respondent 7: “we don’t have to have a territory, we already have our third entity by making a network of institutions and finding different ways to support them” (R7).

The same assertions also emerged from the academic debate. Here McMahon and Western (2009, p. 73) added that the ethnic division of the Bosnian administrative system is “tailor-made for those who wish to stoke ethnic antagonisms for political gain”. This is evidenced by the fact that many politicians preach to their own constituencies, claiming to ‘protect’ them, in order to gain political power, which weakens those few politicians who plead for national unity and citizenship. As a result, the system has not stopped the ethnic-nationalist rhetoric of the political elites but has maintained and even intensified it over the years (McMahon & Western, 2009).

Weller and Wolf (2006), Belloni (2009), and Kartsonaki (2016) have claimed the same as McMahon and Western. Although they all recognized that the Dayton Accord can be seen as some kind of success, given that the violence has stopped and peace is still being maintained after all these years, they argued that the peace that has come from the accord is not a positive but a negative one. By institutionalizing ethnic politics, the accord actually allowed belligerent

parties to carry on with their war-time agenda by other means. The conflict, therefore, just shifted from the military to the political level (Weller & Wolf, 2006; Belloni, 2009; Kartsonaki, 2016).

This shift, according to Weller and Wolf (2006) and Kartsonaki (2016), is partly caused by the unfulfilled war aspirations of Bosnia's belligerent groups. The accord seemed to reject what all parties had tried to obtain during the war. The Bosniaks had been forced to stand down when they were finally seizing military territory. The Bosnian Serbs, on the contrary, were kept from incorporation into Serbia. They nonetheless largely retained the territories they had conquered during the war, which became Republika Srpska. The Bosnian Croats, on the other hand, were denied both unification with Croatia and the creation of their own entity in Bosnia. Instead, they were bound to an 'awkward' political settlement with Bosniaks, forming the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Weller & Wolf, 2006; Kartsonaki, 2016). According to Kartsonaki (2016, p. 498), "by leaving all sides dissatisfied with the arrangements [...] the state has been held hostage of unfulfilled war time ethnic aspirations for more than twenty years". This assertion by Weller and Wolf (2006) and Kartsonaki (2016) seems to deviate from what was previously stated by Respondent 1, namely that maintaining peace in Bosnia has been successful for 26 years because in the Bosnian administrative system each group has some form of autonomy. However, Respondent 1 would probably have agreed with these academics that it has been a negative peace, as he believes that this system produces divided societies in which hatred and fear of the 'other' are strongly evident.

Only one of the respondents, Respondent 10, appeared to be not as negative about Bosnia's administrative system as the others. As she stated, "I don't have any problem with the entities. Maybe the cantons are a problem, because I think we are a too small country for such a huge administration" (R10). According to her, the people of Bosnia do not want to be one country or nation, they don't share interests and goals with each other. "Maybe because of that, we are not one nation" (R10). In this, she seems to align herself with Hayden (2007), referred to later in this chapter, who argued that a central Bosnian state will not work because Bosnian residents do not see themselves as one community. The Bosnian people do not share interests and goals and therefore Respondent 10 does not have a problem with Bosnia having entities and if that division continues in the future.

Contentious, and discriminatory system

As was made clear in the previous section, the Bosnian administrative system places much emphasis on ethnicity. According to most respondents, as well as some academics, the concept of constituent people contributes greatly to this. As Respondent 7 stated, this concept has ensured that “we are primarily Croats, Serbs, and Bosniaks and maybe later we are also technically just citizens of this country” (R7). In the opinion of the respondents, this should be the other way around; the emphasis should be on citizenship. It is wrong that there is so much emphasis on ethnicity now, as it is only a social construct, i.e., something you can choose. As Respondent 8 explained, “it’s not genetic, it’s just cultural and if I would change my religion, I would belong to a different ethnicity. Or I can be a Croat Muslim” (R8). Thus, in the opinion of Respondent 8, the concept of constituent people is a ‘ridiculous’ concept.

Moreover, Respondent 7 also emphasized that the concept of constituent people creates a lot of ‘illogical things’. To explain this, she took the city she lives in, Mostar, as an example. The city is located in the Neretva Canton, one of the two cantons that doesn’t belong to any majority but is power shared between Bosniaks and Croats. Before the war, she mentioned, a significant number of Serbs also lived in Mostar. However, Serbs are not a constituent people in this canton. Therefore, she states, Serbs “cannot have their proper political representation and they have to look for their political representatives through one of the existing national or nationalist parties of Bosniaks and Croats” (R7). What is illogical here, according to Respondent 7, is that the High Representative with his Bonn powers has prescribed that every citizen of Bosnia is equal in every part of the country. But this decision is clearly circumvented by the constitution of the Neretva Canton, since Serbs cannot have their political representatives and are therefore not equal to Bosniaks and Croats.

Some of the respondents even stated during their interviews that the concept of constituent people is a form of discrimination or that it has given room for discrimination. According to them, the discrimination in Bosnia manifests itself in various ways. It depends on where you live in Bosnia and to which group you belong, how much you are affected by it. For instance, as Respondent 1 stated:

As a Bosniak, I’m not discriminated here in Sarajevo, but if I move to Banja Luka, probably I will be discriminated, even if I am a constituent people. [...] And it is the same for the Serb people of course (R1).

By the latter, he means if a Bosnian Serb will move to some part in the Federation of Bosnia, he or she is likely to face discrimination. So, he states, even as a constituent people, you can be discriminated in your own country. The husband of Respondent 6 had actually experienced this. During her interview, Respondent 6 cited that her husband, who is a Bosniak, moved to Banja Luka where she lives and works. “Everyone was asking him ‘what the hell are you doing here?’” (R6). According to her, that is wrong, since he is a citizen of Bosnia. He has a passport of Bosnia and Herzegovina. “[It] shouldn’t be a question why someone from another ethnicity is here” (R6).

But the constituent people are not the ones that suffer the most from discrimination, the respondents stated. As Respondent 1 explained: “we have a lot of people who are not one of the three constituent people, and are actually discriminated in general, in every part of Bosnia and Herzegovina” (R1). The same was asserted by Džankić (2015) and Benková, (2016), who argued that these people are discriminated against because citizenship rights are granted only to the three constituent people of Bosnia – Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats – and not to all citizens. Examples of these people are those who belong to minority groups, such as Jews, Roma and children from mixed marriages. They are excluded from a range of political activities (Džankić, 2015; Benková, 2016).

The most obvious example of discrimination against these ‘other’ groups, which emerged from the academic debate and the interviews with the respondents, is Bosnia’s three-member presidency, where each member represents one of the three constituent people. Those who refuse to identify themselves ethnically as one of these three groups cannot have their representative in the presidency. According to the respondents and academics, this is discrimination and a violation of human rights. The same has been stated in some court cases. The most well-known is the Sejdic-Finci case of 2009 in which the European Court of Human Rights ruled that Bosnia’s constitution discriminates against the Jewish and Roma people, because it explicitly prohibits them from running for the House of Peoples and the Presidency (Benková, 2016). Although several other cases made the same statements, according to Benková, Bosnian politicians have been unwilling to resolve the issue (Benková, 2016).

The concept of constituent people thus presents many limitations. As Respondent 10 explained, “if you are a minority you don’t have a chance to be equal, but if you are a constituent group you have only partial rights” (R10). This is not only reflected in Bosnia’s presidential system, but also in the ethnic quotas that can be seen all over the country; schools, universities, public companies, parties, assemblies, et cetera. According to most respondents, the ethnic

quotas do not bring much good for Bosnia, because it maintains the ethnic division. As Respondent 10 stated, “if you are not in the ethnic group which an institute needs, you can’t find a job. Your skills or abilities are not important” (R10). She doesn’t think this is fair, “it’s just discrimination” (R10). Because of that, she stated, Bosnia does not have a stable system.

In contrast to the majority of respondents, some others regarded the ethnic quotas as something positive and needed in Bosnia. In the opinion of Respondent 1, for example, it is a form of positive discrimination:

I have a lot of friends who are living in the Republika Srpska, Bosniak friends, where they are a minority [...] and for them that kind of system is really important. They are represented in the community, just thanks to these quotas (R1).

Also, according to Respondent 2, ethnic quotas are ‘okay’ in general, “because when you have an undeveloped democracy, you must have some constitutional mechanisms to prevent discrimination” (R2).

Respondent 7 personally considers ethnic quotas as something bad, but “objectively you cannot take that out of the picture” (R7). This is because in the Bosnian society, especially among Croats who constitute a low percentage, there exists a justified fear of being dominated by others. “To be honest, the Bosniak politics does not even hide this aspiration to be the leading people of the country” (R7), that it will be organized according to their ideas of how the country should look like. She understands that the other two groups, meaning Croats and Serbs, are frightened by this.

5.2.2 Three-member presidency

The three-member presidency has already been briefly touched upon in the previous section, where it was clear that a number of respondents see it as a form of discrimination against the ‘other’ groups living in Bosnia. Only constituent people can run for office; others, such as children from mixed marriages, Roma, and Jews, are excluded. However, this was not the only criticism levelled at this presidential model. In this respect, the respondents were much more comprehensive than the academics (Džankić, 2015; Benková, 2016), who only emphasized its discriminatory feature.

The majority of the respondents opposed Bosnia’s presidential model because, for one, it was perceived as something dysfunctional. Like Respondent 3 stated, “they cannot agree

about anything. They agree if the international community presses them to agree” (R3). The reason behind this, according to those interviewed, is that the presidents only represent their own ethnic groups, propagating nationalism, and not the interests of Bosnia as a whole. In the opinion of Respondent 10, this “sends a bad picture” (R10) to the rest of the world. Instead of three presidents, she stated, Bosnia needs only one who will fight for the common interests of the Bosnian people, for instance in the areas of economy and community.

Another argument put forward by the respondents was the paradoxical nature of the three-member presidency. Paradoxical, because Milorad Dodik, who is currently serving as the Serbian member of the Presidency, politically always denies the existence of Bosnia and Herzegovina. As Respondent 3 puts it: “Dodik is always denying Bosnia, but when he won the Presidency of Bosnia, he didn’t refuse” (R3). He is a “president who does not love the country” (R4), as Respondent 4 stated.

Although most respondents considered a model of multiple presidents to be nonsense, there were two respondents who were positive about it, namely Respondents 1 and 11. Both believe it can be a good model for Bosnia. Respondent 1 agreed that three presidents might not be a good choice, since “it’s clear that they will be Serb, Croat and Bosniak, but if we have a five-member presidency, it would solve all these issues which we have currently” (R1). Respondent 11, too, claimed this. During his interview, he referred to the former Yugoslav presidential system which consisted of 9 members, one from each republic and autonomous province, and the president of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia. In his view, it “would be an ideal solution” (R11) for Bosnia to have a Presidency with at least one Bosniak, one Croat, one Serb, and one belonging to a minority group or someone who is ethnically undeclared. “This would strengthen the parliamentary democracy in BiH” (R11). Unlike the other respondents, both think that one president would not work for Bosnia. Respondent 1 based this on looking at Bosnia’s neighbor Serbia, which “is a country where one man has huge power in his hands and still it is not in a much better position than Bosnia” (R1).

5.2.3 Veto

With regard to the right of veto, it became clear from the interviews with respondents and the academic debate that it is a good concept in theory, but that it is overused in practice. According to Cholley (2007), the right of veto is used as a blocking mechanism in everything and by every group, preventing Bosnia from moving forward, as it is hindering necessary reforms and

legislation. Respondent 10 even referred to veto as ‘a weapon for conflict’. “It is not something for the vital national interest” as politicians want to portray it, “it is something for their personal interest, or for profit, corruption, criminal. They abuse it, I am really sure in that” (R10). Also, Respondent 7 emphasized that veto “is involved in places where it shouldn’t be” (R7). It is a ‘toy’ in the hands of the politicians to stop processes that are often unrelated to collective rights. It should be “clearly defined who can use it and why and where” (R7). Recently, according to Respondent 1, the construction of a new highway was vetoed for political reasons. Although he thinks that “we should have a sort of veto for some really, really sensitive issues like language, culture, identity or something like that” (R1), he does not see the use of it if it is also used for something like a new highway. Therefore, he thinks that a good solution might be that when a veto is issued, the institutional court decides whether the national right of a certain ethnic group is indeed endangered.

5.2.4 Liberal Peacebuilding in Bosnia

This study not only looked at what the Dayton Accord has done for Bosnia according to respondents and academics, but also looked at their views on the influence that the international community has exerted during the Bosnian war, as well as in the period since then. The responses were very mixed and many different related sub-themes emerged. In order to present these results as clearly as possible, this section is divided into the influence during the war and the post-war influence. Two other sub-themes are attached to the first section, namely the timing of the Dayton Peace Talks and the actors involved. The second section has two sub-themes associated with it as well, namely the High Representative and a false image of Bosnia.

The involvement of the international community during the war

Looking at the views on the influence of the international community during the Bosnian war and shortly thereafter, many of them are highly critical. Among the respondents, these critical views were mainly focused on the actions of the European Union and the United Nations, given that they “failed in many aspects” (R1), as Respondent 1 stated. The European Union, they stressed, failed Bosnia by not taking a ‘unified approach’. The United Nations, in turn, made the wrong decision to remain neutral in the war; to only watch and observe. Respondents emphasized that this decision of the United Nations had a major impact on Srebrenica and other

areas in Bosnia. They could have done more, for instance, according to Respondent 3, by stopping the war much earlier. Respondent 1, however, admitted that the United Nations has helped Bosnia a great deal in terms of humanitarian aid.

According to most respondents, the US administration was the international actor that had the greatest influence in Bosnia during the 1990s. It was the one who brought the war in Bosnia to an end and it used all the power at its disposal to do so. As Respondent 2 said to me, “it was all about United States” (R2). Russia and China were both very weak at the time, Europe was undecided about Bosnia, “so who else could have had influence?” (R2). However, the influence of the United States was not always seen as positive either. Criticism of the United States was mainly directed at its conduct during the Dayton Peace Talks. This criticism came, among others, from Respondent 4, who stated that the United States had too much influence and exerted too much pressure on the actors involved in the peace talks. Respondent 7, on the other hand, criticized the kind of pressure exerted by them. “I saw this documentary about how the agreement was brokered, what kind of pressure was put by different negotiators” (R7). An example of one of the tactics was to get the war leaders drunk and try to get them to sign something at three o’clock in the morning. “I don’t think these are the proper tools for anyone to broker an agreement which will affect lives of millions of people for decades to come” (R7). According to Respondent 1, jokes are still being made today about the US administration’s methods when the accord was being negotiated: “the parents here in Bosnia have an approach like Holbrooke had [...], first they advise you, ‘you should do that’, and if you refuse they use force” (R1).

Another point raised by a number of respondents was that the United States, along with the rest of the international community, rewarded ethnic cleansing by dividing Bosnia along ethnic lines through the Dayton Accord. The Republika Srpska is the living reminder of this. Respondent 9 stated that the international community should never have accepted that the entity would get 49% of the Bosnian territory. He does not understand how they could have recognized and legalized a territory where genocide, mass rapes, mass murder, and forcible deportation of people took place. Respondent 5 also claimed this, arguing that by recognizing the Republika Srpska, they “actually rewarded the side that committed for instance [the] Srebrenica genocide” (R5). The victims of war atrocities will never be able to come to terms with this.

The same was stated by Toal (2007) and Asimovic (2015). According to Toal, acknowledging the Republika Srpska legitimated “a wartime political entity with state

aspirations that was cleared of non-Serbs through murder, forced displacement and war crimes” (Toal, 2007, p. 33). By giving in to Milošević’s conditions for the creation of the Republika Srpska, the architects of the accord blurred the line between victims and aggressors. The conductors of genocidal politics received no punishments, but were rewarded (Asimovic, 2015). Moreover, Asimovic states that this has also perpetuated the denial of genocide, which has “all but wiped away war crimes, and the false mythologizing of war criminals as heroes lingers” (Asimovic, 2015, para. 6). For these reasons, Asimovic calls the Dayton Accord an unjust peace for Bosnia (Asimovic, 2015). Toal even goes so far as to claim that a little more war could have given Bosnia a much more just peace (Toal, 2007).

Another point worth mentioning regarding the international influence during the Bosnian war was raised by Respondent 8. During her interview, she stated that she sees war as a ‘big business’ in which there are different kinds of interests. “It is a huge mechanism, lots of people earn money from peacekeeping or negotiations” (R8). Non-governmental organizations are also included in this. To explain this, she told that at one point, during the siege of Sarajevo, she and her family no longer had windows in their house because they had been destroyed by shells. The UN was to supply film for the windows, but sent the entire shipment back because there was no UNHCR logo on the film. They therefore had to wait for a few months until they received them. She finds it “ridiculous that people are suffering because of marketing, we’re talking about human lives” (R8). Another example she cited was that they were given food in the form of biscuits dating back to 1970. According to Respondent 8, this was because most of the humanitarian aid came from the countries’ reserves that they must have in case of emergency. This allowed them to replenish the reserves with fresh ones. “As much as I know, that is profiting as well from somebody’s misery” (R8).

Although almost all respondents were highly critical of the way the international community works, most of them did say that they needed to intervene, because, as Respondent 2 indicated, “without them there would have been no peace” (R2). With this, respondents referred in particular to the influence exerted by the US administration during the time. If the US administration had not pushed for the Dayton Peace Talks, the war leaders would have never sat down and agreed on peace themselves. Respondent 9 was one of the respondents who asserted this. “To be clear, without that engagement of the international community, no matter how we define it, who knows how this war would have ended. That’s a fact” (R9). According to Respondent 9, we can talk about their actions, why they did not do more or less, but “things are not black and white, it is not easy to have one strict opinion” (R9). The one thing that is

clear to Respondent 9 is that “without [the] international community the outcome would have been definitely worse” (R9).

Respondent 1 also claimed something similar and made an interesting comparison with Yemen and Syria, where conflicts have been raging for years because the international community is not interested in stopping them. He believes that it was quite important for the international community, i.e., the European Union and the US administration, to end the Bosnian war because of Bosnia’s geographical position. As he said, “maybe we are a sort of Eastern Europe/South-Eastern Europe, but we are still Europe, [...] it is the backyard” (R1). He was afraid to imagine what could have happened if Bosnia was positioned in Africa or in Asia. “So, from that perspective we were lucky that we had that support from international community” (R1).

Timing of the Dayton Peace Talks

One event that is strongly linked to the international community’s involvement in Bosnia is the Dayton Peace Talks. Relatively little could be found in the works of academics on whether the timing of the peace talks, when they were initiated in the autumn of 1995, was the right timing. Therefore, respondents were questioned about this during their interviews. The reactions varied widely.

Some respondents indicated that it was the right time, since “every moment to stop a war is the perfect moment” (R10), as Respondent 10 explained. Of course, they felt it would have been better if it had been done earlier, but there was simply no opportunity for it. Like Respondent 1 said, “if you ask me ‘should it have happened two years before?’, of course that would have been much, much better [...] but it happened when there was an opportunity to happen” (R1). Three-and-a-half years is a long time if you have a war, but not if you compare it with the wars that are now going on in Syria or in Yemen for more than a decade. Here, he also quoted a friend of his who used to say, “it is bad because we had a war, but we had a war in the best international circumstances” (R1).

However, the majority of the respondents felt that the timing of the Dayton Peace Talks was not the right one. Some of them emphasized that it actually came too soon, as was also claimed by Toal (2007) in the previous section. During the time, the Bosnian army was approaching Banja Luka and the international community put a stop to it. This pressure from

the international community to stop the war by initiating peace talks ensured that there was no winner and, as Respondent 5 stated, “every war needs to have a winner” (R5). According to these respondents, this has been problematic for the reconstruction of the country and the reconciliation between the Bosnian people. Respondent 5 asserted that “when every war finishes, the winning side writes the history” (R5) and by preventing this possibility, Bosnia now has three interpretations of what happened during the war. It is something that made Bosnia stagnate for many years, since dealing with the past is not possible. According to these respondents, if the international community had allowed the war to continue for another two months or so, Bosnia would not have been stuck with its administrative system of entities and cantons.

In contrast, some other respondents expressed that the Dayton Peace Talks came too late, because of all the consequences and casualties the war brought. As Respondent 2 stated, “we would have suffered much less” (R2). Respondent 9 was among those who claimed this, highlighting the hundreds of thousands of people who lost their homes, became refugees, were internally displaced or got killed. “It was about time to do something and stop the war” (R9). He does not agree with those people who claim that the war was stopped too early. While he understands where this view is coming from and agrees to some extent that the administrative system, such as the Republika Srpska, would probably not have existed if the war had lasted longer, the price would likely have been too high; more deaths, more displaced people, more crimes, and so on. “One lost life is in my opinion more valuable than anything else” (R9).

Actors involved in the peace talks

Another issue that emerged from both the academic debate and respondents’ interviews when it came to international influence during the Bosnian War was the choice of actors involved in the peace negotiations. This mainly refers to the decision to include the presidents of Serbia and Croatia in the talks. Almost all respondents found the selection of the actors a logical one, with some even stating that it was necessary. The most common reason given by the respondents was that both Serbia and Croatia were actively engaged in the Bosnian war. This is why, during her interview, Respondent 6 said that the signatures of their presidents under the peace agreement were needed “as one of the guarantees of the peace in Bosnia” (R6). Moreover, Respondent 4 stated, the involvement of the Croatian and Serbian presidents made it clear to the outside world that their countries were heavily involved in the war.

Some of the respondents even stated that Serbia and Croatia were the ones who started the war in Bosnia. Therefore, Respondent 9 told me, “if you start a mess, it’s up to you to clean it” (R9). He also added that these political leaders did not enter the scene by force, they were the first democratically elected people. He could not think of anyone else who could represent the countries other than their presidents, especially in a peace agreement like this.

The above assertions of the respondents are in contrast with what Chollet (2007) and Kartsonaki (2016) have claimed. They are critical on the way in which the international community negotiated for peace and worked together with those responsible for Bosnia’s nightmare (Chollet, 2007; Kartsonaki, 2016). Chollet even called this one of the accord’s greatest tragedies. American and European diplomats, aware that the hands of individuals like Milošević were dirty, had to deal with the moral dilemma of using “evil to end evil” (Chollet, 2007, p. 28). They decided to put an end to the bloodshed, empowering the perpetrators of the war. As a result, the same persons who committed the worst atrocities during the war, who profited greatly from black market war economies, and who were the main opponents of the idea of a multi-ethnic, democratic Bosnian state, were in charge of bringing peace to Bosnia (Chollet, 2007). According to Kartsonaki (2016), this has done nothing but create a vicious circle of political leaders who are using ethnic nationalistic rhetoric to maintain their power and a population whose members feel hostile and insecure towards each other, who therefore vote for these political leaders (Kartsonaki, 2016).

However, Chollet (2007) has admitted that the hard truth is that the negotiators had no other choice than to work together with these war perpetrators. Moreover, the Dayton Accord did set a precedent for justice, leading to the conviction by the Hague Tribunal of a number of war criminals, such as Milošević (Chollet, 2007).

The only respondent who echoed Chollet (2007) and Kartsonaki (2016) and therefore had a different opinion than the other respondents was Respondent 7. Before joining the NGO she now works for, she thought it was ‘complete nonsense’ to involve the guilty and entrust them with keeping the peace, since you expect the ‘bad guys’ to respect what they have signed. “For me that is a recipe for failure” (R7). But after Respondent 7 had followed a training in peace mediation, she understood this better. As she explains, “basically it is almost [a] prerequisite that you have to involve, let’s say, the bad guys” (R7). Nevertheless, she still does not really believe in this approach. Other forces should have been involved in the Dayton Peace Talks, “because relying on the same people to do the opposite thing after they fought a war, for

war gain, that was a bit stupid” (R7). However, she admitted that she would not know which other forces should have been included.

Interference of the international community after the war

On the interference of the international community in post-war Bosnia, no clear opinion emerged from the academic debate and interviews with respondents. Merdzanovic (2017), for example, stated that in the first years after the war, the international community played too large a role in the reconstruction of Bosnia, which has had bad consequences for the country decades later. As Merdzanovic claimed, the international community “intervened rather heavily in order to establish the institutions deemed necessary for the functioning of a consociational political regime” (Merdzanovic, 2017, p. 23). It did establish these institutions quite successfully. Merdzanovic cited examples such as the unification of the three armies into one army, the common border patrol regime that was introduced, and the entry of Bosnia into the Council of Europe. These and other achievements were partly realized due to the role assumed by the High Representative (Merdzanovic, 2017).

But because the international community had assumed such direct intervention powers in the Bosnian system, Merdzanovic (2017) argued, this created an unhealthy structure for Bosnia’s domestic elites, hindering the emergence of true domestic agency. As a result, political discussions have not been about the content, such as what Bosnia needs in order to move forward, but rather about structure. Merdzanovic explained this as follows:

in general, the Bosnian Serbs clung to the far-reaching autonomy that Dayton had granted them and even contemplated revoking certain changes made since 1995. The Croats kept advocating systemic changes to the Dayton structures as to prevent the acquisition of Croat positions by allegedly illegitimate representatives, and sometimes even contemplated the creation of a third entity with a Croat majority. The Bosniaks fought to strengthen the central state while keeping their group-based privileges (Merdzanovic, 2017, p. 33).

Politicians therefore magnify these objectives to the extreme, as they are the only reason why they remain in their position. There is no need to focus on the content, since the international community would solve those problems (Merdzanovic, 2017).

This began to show itself somewhere between 2006 and 2008: “conscious of the problems of constant intervention and encouraged by the progress made so far, the international community decided to take a step back and let the domestic political elites take ‘ownership’ of the political process” (Merdzanovic, 2017, p. 23). Almost immediately afterwards, Bosnia started to experience an increase in populist and secessionist political demands, frequent political deadlocks, greater challenges to the rule of law, higher levels of cronyism and political patronage, and major delays in Euro-Atlantic integration. The politicians had no idea how to look to the future, i.e., what Bosnia needs to move forward, but only looked to the past. This shows how the international community, by being the main driver of political change for nearly ten years and then withdrawing, has “affected the system’s internal and long-term dynamics” (Merdzanovic, 2017, p. 24).

However, McMahon and Western (2009) seemed to view this differently than Merdzanovic, claiming that the international community has achieved little in Bosnia and has made many missteps:

For more than a decade after Dayton, Bosnia was a hotspot for international do-gooders intent on making a difference. But good intentions and deep pockets were often accompanied by little historical knowledge and incoherent plans (McMahon & Western, 2009, p. 75).

Even the international organizations that were successful in the activities they carried out, were often unsuccessful to coordinate their activities and actions with others or to conduct thorough evaluations in order to hold themselves accountable. The lack of success of the international community as a whole has progressively eroded their credibility with the Bosnian people (McMahon & Western, 2009).

Looking at the opinions of the respondents on the issue, some were very positive about the involvement of the international community in the first years after the war, but much less so about its involvement thereafter. A few of these respondents attributed this to the decreased influence of the international community over time, as it had lost interest. This had made Bosnia stuck ever since. Respondent 7, however, attributed it to something else, namely to the changed approach of the international community towards Bosnia. In her view, the international community first ‘imposed’ decisions and laws, but after a while they got the new idea of relying more on local ownership, “which actually made things go downhill” (R7). She does not understand why the international community thought this was a good idea and thinks it was a

'big mistake' to interfere less, "because now everything else will be hard" (R7). To explain this, she compares it with raising a child, in whom you don't participate in the upbringing for 12 years and then again participate when the child is 18, but by then it is actually too late. This critique of the international community's diminished influence, whether due to a changed approach or diminished interest, is similar to that of Merdzanovic (2017). However, they differ with Merdzanovic in that they would have liked the international community to have remained involved in Bosnia, while Merdzanovic believes that the international community should not have intervened so heavily in Bosnia at the beginning, as this has affected the agency of the politicians (Merdzanovic, 2017).

In contrast to these respondents, Respondent 6 stated that the influence of the international community overall was huge. She did, however, admit that it was a 'guarantee of peace'. "I think one of the reasons why we didn't have a war since 1995 is because of the international community that is monitoring the peace process" (R6). Nevertheless, she does believe that the international community should be aware that their approach needs to be moderated. It must include more citizens of Bosnia in the peace process instead of always involving legally elected politicians.

Respondent 2, on the other hand, felt that there was too little interference from the international community during the first few years after the war, whereas this was the "perfect time to impose a lot of things" (R2) since they had 50,000 soldiers on the ground. So, "the international community missed the opportunity to settle down certain important issues" (R2) as it does not have a strong influence in Bosnia nowadays.

While opinions on international influence vary, several respondents did note that we must remember that the international community is not one entity. It therefore has different interests and multiple agendas. In the opinion of Respondent 8, for example, this was particularly evident in the period when they were trying to implement the Dayton Accord. Although during that period there were "really good people who tried to do something, most of the international community was taking care of their own agenda in Bosnia and Herzegovina, they didn't observe the culture here at all" (R8). One part of this agenda, according to Respondent 8, was to use Bosnia as a 'social experiment'. As an example, she mentioned Bosnia's convertible mark, which was used as an experiment for the euro before it was introduced. The convertible mark was given different images on the coin, sometimes Serbian, sometimes Croatian and sometimes Bosniak, to see if something similar would work for the euro. Another example she mentioned was the 'two schools under one roof' school system in

which they separate Bosniak and Croat children, they are not allowed to go to the same class. According to her, it is the ‘worst possible’ school system in Bosnia, which “was not our invention” (R8). The same applies to the administrative division of Bosnia. She even called these experiments of the international community in Bosnia colonialism, as happened in Africa.

Respondent 10, in turn, does not consider the interference of the international community to be an issue at all. As she stated during her interview:

I don’t have a problem with involvement [...] because we don’t have the skills for democracy. We came from a communism system and we need someone who can teach us how to have a democracy and how to be a stable democracy system (R10).

Because of that, she believes that the international community is not an enemy of Bosnia. They want to help Bosnia and “we need to listen to their advice” (R10). Moreover, Bosnia is not the only country that needs help and wants to join the European Union. Other countries also need attention of the international community. So, “I think they give enough” (R10).

High Representative

The Office of the High Representative (OHR) is seen by almost all respondents and a number of academics as an important institution for post-war reconstruction in Bosnia. This argument was also briefly made in the previous section by Merdzanovic (2017). Respondent 10, for example, thinks that without the High Representative, there would not have been peace in Bosnia and the country would not be functioning properly today. “Thanks to him, I want to believe that we have a regular election and a democracy without corruption” (R10).

The same respondents also stated that the OHR is still important for Bosnia and should not be disbanded. As Respondent 9 said during his interview, “it should be a big mistake to remove it [...] we still need him” (R9). Bosnia does not have many institutions that are truly independent, and it is important that someone continues to monitor them. Respondent 2 also still sees the benefit of having a High Representative. During her interview, she did call it ‘a form of colonialism’, but in her view, it is a necessary colonialism, since “the political leaders did not prove, and they still do not prove, that we are politically mature to be without a High Representative” (R2).

However, the majority of the respondents also harshly criticized the OHR as, in their view, it nowadays only observes and does not act. For instance, Respondent 6 stated that the

current High Representative in particular has not used his Bonn powers at all, and it is ‘useless’ to have such a High Representative. “I think Bonn powers are great for limiting politicians from doing what they want, but having a High Representative not using his Bonn powers is useless for our country” (R6). Instead, she argued, he merely points the finger at who has done something wrong, but actions no longer have any consequences. Respondent 4 also believes that the current High Representative only observes and does nothing more. “He takes no actions to make Bosnia better” (R4). He can remove Dodik from the presidency or impose more sanctions against those politicians who ignore the Srebrenica genocide, but he is not doing so.

These criticisms are in line with those voiced in the academic debate. According to McMahon and Western (2009, p. 76), for example, the OHR “was unable and often unwilling to demand the necessary reforms to develop a functional central governing system”. Pasic (2016), on the other hand, claimed the OHR has acted without a uniform standard over the years. At times, she argued, it acted despotic, while at other it simply acted as an observer. The way in which the role is adopted depends on the person who has taken on the role: their leadership style, their personality traits and the positions their country has over certain issues (Pasic, 2016). Over the years, the role and presence of this ‘international observer’ has “allowed elected representatives in Bosnia and Herzegovina to escape the political accountability inherent in democratic societies, which comes with holding a public office” (Pasic, 2016, para. 10).

Related to this criticism of Pasic, many respondents expressed that they found the choice of some High Representatives to be a bad one, especially the last few. According to Respondent 3, all the High Representatives following Paddy Ashdown (2002-2006) were merely ‘figures’ who received a big fat salary, including the current High Representative Valentin Inzko. “He does not care. He is waiting for the pension” (R3). Respondent 8, one of the few respondents who had little positive to say about the OHR, also strongly criticized the current High Representative. During her interview, she expressed the following:

In the last four years, I have heard him five times say about any situation ‘I’m concerned’ and that was it. So, somebody who is receiving 20,000 euros per month is just saying one sentence, ‘I’m concerned’ and that is humanitarian aid to BiH (R8).

Ten years ago, she knew what the OHR was doing, but now she does not see their role at all. Therefore, she no longer sees the point of it: “if he doesn’t do anything, I don’t know why we need him. We don’t need the foreign one” (R8).

Contrary to the majority of respondents and the academics mentioned above, Respondent 5 does not think that the problem lies with the High Representative himself as to why he is less involved today. She believes that the European Commission is telling him what to do, so if they want “to get involved more, I think they will tell the High Representative to sanction more, and so on” (R5). She therefore finds it unfair to blame the High Representative for not interfering in Bosnia’s affairs. “I think a lot of the times they are not able to say what they think [...] and they don’t have their hands free to do what they would like to do” (R5). When it comes to Valentin Inzko, for example, she strongly believes that he knows the country very well and that he would have liked to do something to improve it, but he has to be authorized to do so.

False image of Bosnia

In a previous section, McMahon and Western (2009) indicated that the international community has very little knowledge about Bosnia’s history. Respondent 8 expressed something similar when she argued that the international community did not observe the culture here at all during the period when they were trying to implement the Dayton Accord. The same is also stated by Hayden (2007). However, his argument takes a different direction, claiming that the international community, due to this lack of historical knowledge, holds a false image of Bosnia, which they are trying to push through time and time again (Hayden, 2007). His argument is very interesting to include in this study. Hence, a separate sub-section is devoted to it.

During the war and the peace talks, neither the Croats nor the Serbs were willing to agree to live in a Bosnian state that would have authority over them (Hayden, 2007). This is due to the fact that most of them do not view Bosnia as their homeland, which, according to Hayden, has not been taken seriously by the international community. Instead, in journalistic and official accounts, especially in American ones, a mythology of Bosnia as a place of peaceful multiculturalism and tolerance is prominently projected. According to Hayden, this does not give an accurate picture of Bosnia’s population, as roughly half of it is not committed to these ideals (Hayden, 2007).

This can be deduced from the fact that since the end of the 19th century, whenever a large state comprising Bosnia disintegrated, massive violence broke out between Bosnia’s three major groups: 1875-1878 as the result of the withdrawal of the Ottoman Empire, 1914-1918 as

the result of the collapse of Austro-Hungarian empire, and 1941-1945 as the result of the collapse of the first Yugoslavia (Hayden, 2007). Furthermore, Hayden also stresses the political elections which since 1910 has produced the same results: voters who divide themselves and vote for separate and separatist Bosniak, Croat and Serb nationalist parties. Thus, he claims, “to buy the idea of “Bosnia the Good””, one needs to believe that the previous violence and wars and the way the elections went before, “were somehow unfortunate coincidences that all just happened to develop along similar trajectories, rather than manifestations of structural tensions in Bosnia’s pluralisms” (Hayden, 2007, p. 54). According to Hayden, it is simply not possible to believe this when one looks at Bosnia’s past (Hayden, 2007).

In Hayden’s (2007) opinion the international community has pressured Bosnia too much to form a centralized state. This has only created more opposition from the Croats and Serbs to Bosnia, who are meant to become its willing citizens. As an example, he cites one pro-Western Serbian politician who told him that “the pressure to accept a centralized Bosnian state has achieved the impossible: unity among Bosnian Serb politicians, against it” (Hayden, 2007, p. 52). According to Hayden, the international community should instead accept that the Bosnian peoples see themselves as separate communities who may be connected with each other in various ways, but who will not accept the other to dominate them (Hayden, 2007).

5.3 Threats

5.3.1 It is not all Dayton’s fault

It is clear that the respondents and the academics included in this study have a great deal to say about the way in which the Dayton Accord came about and the effects it has had, being not only positive but also rather negative in several respects. However, this should not be taken to mean, in the view of the majority, that all the problems currently facing Bosnia should be blamed on the accord. Pasic (2016) is among them. According to her, the accord achieved what it wanted to achieve: it stopped the Bosnian war and opened the way for negotiations and cooperation. Although the accord may have imposed some administrative and institutional restrictions, and although it may be far from perfect, it has too frequently been used as a scapegoat for the problems and failures the country has undergone since the war stopped (Pasic, 2016). Instead, Pasic claims:

the root causes of the failures to do so over the last 10 years can be found in the continuous politicization and ethnicization of all aspects of life, fear-mongering, a relative absence of independent media, corruption, personal gain and self-interest – none of which are a result of the agreement. (Pasic, 2016, para. 2.)

Similarly, Tensley (2015) argued that the accord is not entirely to blame for Bosnia's situation. It has done much to broker peace and stability and has brought many positive things, such as the property return to returnees. However, with this argument, Tensley does not mean that the Dayton Accord "doesn't deserve any criticism for cementing Bosnia [...] but one peace settlement wasn't ever going to be the silver bullet that ends decades' worth of deeper national tensions" (Tensley, 2015, para. 1).

Bose (2005) and Clarke (2007), like Pasic (2016), argued that the problems of governance that Bosnia faces are not primarily due to defects in the constitutional structure. The ethnic nationalist politicians, who since the war have complete control of the Bosnian state, are mostly to blame (Bose, 2005; Clarke, 2007). Although the Bosnian citizens generally share common concerns, such as distrust of politicians, corruption, unemployment, and the desire to become more involved with Europe, the politicians and parties do not usually tackle these concerns, let alone take the lead (Clarke, 2007). They have an extremely low caliber when it comes to governing (Bose, 2005). According to Clarke (2007, p. 64), "the parties' real objectives are generally to place supporters into key positions in the public sector, and to obtain financial advantages for their specific group, while blocking other parties' attempts to do the same thing". They are not encouraged to compromise or to form multicultural coalitions to solve the problems and concerns of the Bosnian citizens. Instead, they have largely left these responsibilities to the international community (Bose, 2005; Clarke, 2007). Because for Bose it is mainly the politicians who are the cause of Bosnia's current problems, such as unemployment, emigration, and corruption, he does not agree with those academics who consider the consociational model on which Bosnia is structured to be unquestionably bad. In his view, consociationalism "does provide, in the rather daunting circumstances that prevail, the most feasible and most democratic form of government for Bosnia's precarious existence as a multi-national state" (Bose, 2005, p. 323).

Respondents also agreed that politicians have a large stake in Bosnia's problems. According to most of them, politicians are the ones guilty of corruption, organized crime, nepotism, economic destruction, violation of human and civil rights, and social injustice. They

are only “interested in their personal agenda” (R8), as Respondent 8 stated. To achieve their personal agenda, respondents argued, politicians are abusing the Dayton Accord to the hilt, trying to avoid making compromises and are spreading fears among the population. With regard to the latter, Respondent 3 stated that, for example, during the elections there are no programs that address the progress and changes that Bosnia needs; politicians only sow the fear that if the political party in question loses, a new war will break out, the Republika Srpska will secede from Bosnia, the Croats will have their own entity, and so on. The same rhetoric is used when a corruption scandal comes to light. This is one of the ways in which politicians try to get people on their side. Another way, some respondents indicated, is by threatening people with losing their jobs. According to Respondent 2, this is effective because if your job or any position in society depends on a certain political party, you are willing to agree to anything that that leader says, and in this way politicians have completely ‘captured’ the state.

For this reason, Respondent 2 even went so far as to claim that “the constitution is not the obstacle” (R2). When you read it as someone who has no relationship with Bosnia, you think this is a great concept. The problem, however, are the bad guys, i.e., the politicians, who misuse the constitution. Because of this, she stated that “Bosnia does not have real politicians” (R2). Like Bose (2005), she claimed that Bosnian politicians have an extremely low caliber when it comes to governing. Not one of them has the potential to be a statesman, since being a statesman means having a vision for your country and being able to negotiate. “If you cannot negotiate, if you cannot compromise, you cannot lead anything” (R2). Respondent 2 compares it to going on holiday with your friends, then you also have to be able to make compromises, such as where you are going to eat or where you are going afterwards. But Bosnian politicians cannot do this; instead, they are ‘thieves’, “they are all corrupted” (R2).

As long as Bosnia is ruled by this political establishment, most respondents believe that change will not come quickly. As Respondent 11 explained, “the current situation suits them, gives them the space to act as they wish” (R11). In this way, they can “attempt to realize some war time goals during this time of peace” (R11). Politicians are well aware that changes would remove them from the political stage. The same was also said by some other respondents, as well as a number of academics (Weller & Wolf, 2006; Belloni, 2009; Kartsonaki, 2016) who previously stated that the conflict has simply shifted from the military to the political level, as politicians pursue their war agenda through other means.

5.3.2 Corruption

In the previous section it was already made clear that corruption is a big problem in Bosnia. Transparency International, an NGO that ranks countries in terms of corruption, placed Bosnia 101st among 180 countries in 2019. In a regional setting, the country was behind Serbia (91st), Montenegro (66th), Croatia (63rd) and Slovenia (35th), but still ahead of Macedonia (106th) (Transparency International, 2019). This high level of corruption in Bosnia is seen by all respondents, as well as many academics, as one of the main issues preventing Bosnia from moving forward. However, the respondents were not very detailed in how exactly this corruption works. That is why a separate section is devoted to what a number of academics have written on the subject.

Although corruption is something that affects all transitional societies, it is particularly damaging for Bosnia (McMahon & Western, 2009). As an example, McMahon and Western mention a 1999 high profile study which found that more than \$1 billion of aid, almost a fifth of the total aid distributed between 1996 and 1999, had disappeared (McMahon & Western, 2009). The scope of corruption in Bosnia has played an essential role in discouraging companies from investing in the country: most foreign companies have been unwilling to startup businesses after officials requested to pay bribes and to only conduct business with officials from local parties (Kartsonaki, 2016). In 2009, for example, a Czech energy group withdrew a €1.4 million contract due to pervasive corruption in the Republika Srpska (McMahon & Western, 2009). This aversion of foreign companies has had long-term consequences for Bosnia's economic development, such as a stalled economy (Kartsonaki, 2016). This is partly reflected in the unemployment rate, which stands at 18.4%. Among the younger generations it is even as high as 40.2% (O'Neill, 2021).

In general, the political parties, the governments of both entities, the police, the construction industries, and the health-care sector are seen as the most corrupt and nepotistic sectors in Bosnia (McMahon & Western, 2009). It is normal to pay bribes for basic services in these sectors, for example for minor traffic offenses (Søberg, 2008). According to Søberg, this has a big impact on the poor, since they are unable to pay those bribes, resulting only into further inequalities (Søberg, 2008). Moreover, clientelist networks are deeply rooted in Bosnia's public sectors. With limited job opportunities in the private sector, Bosnian citizens have no choice but to turn to the massive public sector in order to find work, entering those clientelist networks. This was also stated in the previous section by Respondent 2. As the Bosnian political parties

are dominated by ethno-nationalists, this provides an additional way for these politicians to profile themselves as the providers and protectors of their constituents (McMahon & Western 2009).

5.4 Consociationalism the right model or not?

So far in this chapter, various perspectives on the Dayton Accord that have emerged from the academic debate and from the interviews with the respondents have been thoroughly discussed, uncovering numerous similarities and differences between these perspectives. This has included a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the accord as well as the extent to which it is responsible for Bosnia's current problems. However, the big question to be asked here is whether it was a good choice to rebuild Bosnia after the war according to consociationalism – or would another model have been better? Here, the liberal peacebuilding of the international community is also considered.

The academic debate and interviews with respondents showed that the consociational model is partly supported by the recognition that it has brought stability to Bosnia; it brought the devastating war to an end, and it has not returned since. This is considered by all respondents and a number of academics as the greatest achievement of the Dayton Accord. Moreover, similarly to Lijphart (1975), they have claimed that the consociational model has allowed a 'fragmented political culture' such as Bosnia to live in relative peace and security, since it has created the conditions for life to return to normal and formed the basis of a functioning multi-ethnic state. This is reflected both politically and economically. The fact that there has been no new war to date proves that the system is working to a certain extent.

The reason why no new war did occur was partly explained by Respondent 1, being that the three fighting groups were each given some autonomy in the form of entities and cantons. Each group has its own government that is able to make decisions on specific matters. A similar argument also emerged from the academic debate, where it was stated that the desire for secession among the Croatian and Serb population has reduced, thanks to the segmental autonomy the groups have been granted. Academics explained this by the fact that they no longer feel threatened in the country they live in. Segmental autonomy has given them a source of security and safety to govern themselves to some extent and to express their ethnic identity. This is in line with what Lijphart (1975) has claimed, that by allowing each group to make individual decisions on matters that are not of common interest, stability in a country can be

created in the form of democracy, the avoidance of clashes and the reduction of tensions (Lijphart, 1975).

However, among the respondents and academics there was also a lot of criticism towards the consociational model. Many expressed the view, first of all, that this model has created a very weak and decentralized Bosnian administrative system that does not function at all, since one has “to go through hundreds of steps” (R6) to change or create a law in Bosnia. Furthermore, it was also claimed that consociationalism formed a far too complex system, which is slowing down the processes needed for development. To emphasize the complexity of the system, many pointed to the different rules and regulations that apply in each entity and canton, which have arisen as a result of segmental autonomy. Consequently, there is a lack of uniform standards almost everywhere in Bosnia. Because consociationalism has created such a complex decentralized system, it is also, according to many respondents and academics, a very expensive system. It takes a lot of manpower to keep the system running, which in turn requires large amounts of money. As a result, the system is “eating up all our GDP” (R5), as Respondent 5 stated. Therefore, many believe it is not a sustainable system.

However, the academic debate and interviews with respondents revealed not only the dysfunctionality, complexity and high costs that a consociational model can entail, but also how it can divide a population ethnically. This is in line with Horowitz’s (1985) main criticism of consociationalism; that consociationalism is likely to deepen and widen ethnic divisions. The majority of respondents and academics associated this most with the consociational principle of segmental autonomy, which they said has caused everything to be divided on the basis of ethnicity. From media and schools to even theatres, it all represents a particular ethnic constituent group. Here, hate speech and fears prevail. Some of the respondents indicated that not only the older generations are influenced by this, but also the younger ones, since they are constantly confronted with hatred and fears in their daily lives. Thus, through segmental autonomy, ethnic divisions are strongly institutionalized in Bosnia, creating three completely segregated societies. This has also perpetuated what Kaufmann (1998) calls the security dilemma between different groups in society, since many displaced persons and refugees, for example, have not returned to their pre-war homes because they fear the consequences of being a minority there.

Something that, according to the majority of respondents as well as some academics, contributes significantly to this is the concept of constituent people, as this concept places too much emphasis on ethnicity rather than citizenship. Being Bosnian is not an identity for most

of the country's inhabitants. The concept is even considered as discrimination which manifests itself in different ways. On the one hand, respondents and academics argued that it is discrimination towards other groups who are not among the constituents, since they are not granted citizenship rights. The most obvious example of this is the three-member presidency. On the other hand, respondents also mentioned that a constituent can face discrimination if he or she is somewhere where his or her constituent group is not the majority, or if he or she applies for a job but does not fit into the ethnic quota. Ethnic quotas, a form of proportionality in Bosnia, has thus ensured that someone's qualities are not important, only his or her ethnicity matters. The fact that Bosnian residents are not treated equally, as each resident enjoys different rights or even no rights at all, has, according to respondents and academics, in line with Horowitz (1985), reinforced ethnic divisions.

The academic debate and interviews with respondents have also revealed that consociationalism – by reinforcing and institutionalizing ethnic divisions – has allowed politicians to continue their ethnic rhetoric. They, for example, do this by preaching to their own constituencies, pitting the constituencies against each other, and carrying out their former war agendas. In this way, they try to stay in power. Thus, as Horowitz (1985) argued, consociationalism has fostered intra-ethnic competition between political elites. This is particularly evident in the three-member presidency, which is part of Bosnia's grand coalition. Respondents have claimed that the presidents only represent their own constituencies and propagate nationalism. They do not serve the interests of the entire Bosnian population. To pursue their own interests, mutual veto is used as a weapon. Instead of only using it when their collective interests are at stake, as Lijphart (1979) intended it to be, it is used as a blocking mechanism in everything, according to respondents and academics. As a result, "they cannot agree about anything" (R3), as Respondent 3 stated. For this reason, the majority of the respondents considered the presidency as highly dysfunctional. The Bosnian situation thus demonstrates that mutual veto leads to policy immobility, one of the risks Lijphart (1979) pointed out, but which he thought would not occur.

Although both the academic debate and the interviews with respondents have revealed much criticism of Bosnia's consociational model, it was also indicated that not all of Bosnia's problems can be attributed to this model. It has too often been used as a scapegoat for all that is bad. Blame must also be given to the politicians, who have an extremely low caliber when it comes to governing. As stated above, they do not take the lead in solving Bosnia's problems and are not interested in cooperating with others, thinking only of their own position and

personal agendas. For this, politicians abuse the Dayton Accord to the hilt and sow fear among the community. Therefore, respondents stated, it is not Bosnia's administrative system that is guilty of organized crime, corruption, social injustice, nepotism, economic destruction and violation of human rights; the people involved in politics are.

However, several respondents and academics also indicated that the above-mentioned problems in Bosnia were partly due to the reduced influence of the international community, whether in terms of a loss of interest or a changed approach. Merdzanovic (2017), for example, argued that the international community should never have intervened so much from the start, since it has led to domestic dependency. By following an agenda predetermined by the international community, Bosnia's politicians had no need to compromise with each other. The result of this soon became clear when, years later, the international incentive was removed. Politicians did not know, and still don't know now, how to govern their country and to compromise with each other, making further progress very difficult. The system which is created out of this is not simply consociationalism, according to Merdzanovic, since its 'positive incentive structure' is reversed. It is a new kind of consociational system, which he classifies as 'imposed consociation'. This has made Bosnia stuck ever since (Merdzanovic, 2017). Respondents, in contrast, claimed that it would have been better if the international community had remained involved in Bosnia, imposing decisions and laws. Then perhaps the problems would not have existed. In their opinion, it was a mistake to interfere less.

A similar train of thought among the respondents was evident in the findings on the Office of the High Representative. Almost all respondents saw the OHR as an institution that has done much for Bosnia. Without it, there would have been no peace in Bosnia and the country would not have functioned. Even today, the country still needs the OHR to monitor everything and intervene when necessary. Therefore, it is still important for Bosnia and should not be disbanded. However, the majority of respondents as well as some academics also claimed that nowadays it only watches from the sidelines and undertakes no action whatsoever. Actions do not longer have any consequences. These respondents and academics would rather see the OHR use its Bonn powers more and tackle politicians who do things wrong.

In contrast to the academics, the findings of this research seem to have shown that the respondents are more in favor of liberal peacebuilding. They would have liked the international community's hard line to be maintained. In claiming this, they reject the main criticism of liberal peacebuilding, namely that it is a top-down mechanism that imposes Western values and norms and that this is a wrong approach (Mac Ginty, 2008; Selby, 2013; Zaum, 2012; Wai,

2014). Bosnia rather needs such an approach, the respondents claimed. The OHR, for example, must adopt a robust approach. Although it is a form of colonialism, as Respondent 2 argued, it is a necessary form of ‘colonialism’.

The academic debate and the interviews with respondents not only revealed criticism of the way in which the international community acted, or rather failed to act, after the war in Bosnia, but also of the way it acted during the war. One criticism made by the respondents was that the different actors belonging to the international community – the United States, the European Union and the United Nations – acted very differently. The EU and the UN did too little, while the US, on the other hand, exerted too much pressure. Thus, contrary to the critique that liberal peacebuilding is too one-dimensional (Mac Ginty, 2008; Newman, Paris & Richmond, 2009; Selby, 2013; Zaum, 2012), the respondents believe that there was a lack of uniformity regarding Bosnia. However, most respondents did state that the influence of the international community was necessary, because “without them there would have been no peace” (R2), in the words of Respondent 2.

Another criticism that was voiced by a number of respondents and academics concerned the fact that the international community has acted according to its own agenda and has not put the interests of Bosnia first. For one thing, with their proposal to set up Bosnia in a consociational manner, they have given in to an unjust peace for Bosnia. After all, this model has rewarded ethnic cleansing and has perpetuated the denial of genocide. This is something the victims will never come to terms with, according to Respondent 5. Moreover, some academics have voiced criticisms about the international community’s mistaken perception of Bosnia. Similar to the classic critiques on liberal peacebuilding, they claim that the international community had little historical knowledge about the country. Due to this, they are trying to push through a false image of Bosnia. Lastly, Respondent 8 claimed that Bosnia has been used as a social experiment by the international community. This also includes setting up administrative systems based on consociationalism. However, with these critiques, respondents and academics are not trying to say that the international community has only brought negative things to Bosnia. For example, the establishment of the ICTY and the ‘right to return’ are considered by many of them as positive international initiatives.

In conclusion, according to the academic debate and the interviews with respondents, four different lessons can be drawn from the Bosnian case with regard to consociationalism. First, consociationalism has helped Bosnia to end a brutal war and to establish a level of stability in a deeply divided country, which is the greatest achievement. There has been no war so far

and it does not seem that one is going to break out soon. The support for secession among the population has been reduced and they have been given the tools to make the country function to some extent. Thus, the accord achieved what it wanted to achieve.

However, in line with the classic critiques of consociationalism, the second lesson that can be taken from the Bosnian case is that it has led to the division of everything on the basis of ethnicity, thereby exacerbating ethnic divisions. The focus is too much on ethnicity, which has made citizenship irrelevant. This is also exploited by the politicians, who are not encouraged to cooperate and compromise but only think of themselves and their own communities. This leaves little room for the emergence of interethnic or non-ethnic politics. As a result of this deepening ethnic divide, generations grow up in a society where fear, hatred and discrimination prevail. Thus, in line with Kaufmann (1998), consociationalism has perpetuated the security dilemma in the Bosnian society.

A third lesson that has not been raised by critics from the theoretical framework is that consociationalism has created a very complex and expensive system for Bosnia, making it highly dysfunctional and unsustainable. Politicians exploit this and any changes that are proposed are blocked by them using their veto power. Consociationalism in Bosnia has thus led to policy immobility, one of the risks noted by Lijphart (1979).

The last lesson that can be drawn is that liberal peacebuilding has been both positive and negative for Bosnia, with respondents being more positive about it than academics. Without the influence of the international community, the war might not have ended and things like the creation of the ICTY and the right of return probably would not have been set up. Although things like these were imposed, according to the respondents, such an approach was and still is necessary for Bosnia. A number of respondents therefore have claimed that the problems of Bosnia came when the international community deviated from this approach, which is in contrast to Merdzanovic (2017) who has argued that this approach made Bosnia dependent of the international community.

Other negative criticisms of liberal peacebuilding that emerged were that there was a lack of uniformity in relation to Bosnia; that the international community has used Bosnia as a social experiment of which consociationalism is a clear example; and that by proposing to set up Bosnia in a consociational manner, ethnic cleansing was rewarded. These issues have shown that the international community clearly holds a false view of Bosnia and is only acting according to its own devised agenda for the country.

5.5 The solution for Bosnia?

So, what should Bosnia do to solve its problems and move on, according to respondents and academics? They all agree that the Dayton Accord needs some updating. One of the necessary changes in the accord that has already been discussed at length is that the administrative system should place less emphasis on ethnicity and more on citizenship. But a revision of the state structure, Bosnia's accession to the European Union, help from the international community and neighboring countries, and changes from below were also put forward. What is meant by these necessary changes is explained below.

5.5.1 Revision of the state structure

The academic debate and interviews with respondents revealed strong support for the view that centralization could be a solution to the current problems in Bosnia which should be enshrined in a revised Dayton Accord. For instance, according to Benková (2016, p. 3), "ethnic pluralism which supports the territorialisation of powers among the ethnic parties" is the most important issue that must disappear. In order to do this, the power of national parties must be weakened, ethnic democracy must be dismantled, and a centralized leadership must be created. Thus, Benková actually stated that consociationalism should be abolished. This will be, however, hard to change, as ethnic parties have been monopolizing the media and the economy and are backed by the Bosnian religious communities. But it is not entirely impossible, Benková claimed, "as under different circumstances a substantial reform to the Dayton constitution could be accepted if the right incentives and pressure were put on political actors" (Benková, 2016, p. 3).

Muhic (2015) has made similar claims. In his view, the main reason for the stagnation in Bosnia is the fractured consociational government structure together with the veto right that any ethnic political party can exercise over new laws. Bosnia instead needs a unified central government with one president, which can be achieved by revising the Dayton Accord through renewed diplomatic pressure on the ethnic political parties. Muhic believes that this will open doors to EU and NATO membership (Muhic, 2015).

This argument that centralization is necessary in Bosnia to move forward also emerged in most interviews with respondents. For the respondents, however, centralization should be accompanied by decentralization, i.e., giving more power to the municipalities. One of them was Respondent 5, who stated that the current administrative system of entities and cantons

should never have been devised. She thinks that a central state is a better option. By this, she does not mean that all the power should be in Sarajevo, also the municipalities should be given some power for decision-making. But that is all, so there are no more multiple ministries and so on. Respondent 9 also thinks this. As he envisions it himself:

In my opinion, there should only be a central government, a local government and just in between them a judicial branch, courts. Courts should be established at three levels: local, central and state. Everything else should be centralized. All these borders between entities, cantons, and the Brčko district should be deleted, we should have a central government of Bosnia and Herzegovina and transfer as many things as possible to local units (R9).

By organizing it this way, you cut, among other things, public expenses. Unfortunately, according to Respondent 9, “there is no political will to do this” (R9).

However, a few respondents had a different opinion than the others. Respondent 1, for instance, stated that the “Serbian and Croatian people will never accept something which will not grant them a sort of autonomy” (R1). The Serbs and Croats are afraid that centralization would lead to the Bosniaks taking over all power, since they are the majority. Other respondents raised this issue as well. They understand this fear and believe that everyone should begin to accept that Bosnia is a multinational state and that therefore such an administrative system is needed. As Respondent 10 argued, “we need to learn how to live with entities and that is a fact” (R10). However, they all did state that the system needs some updating. According to Respondent 10, for example, there should be more emphasis on human rights and economic growth. “I really believe that’s the solution” (R10).

Hayden (2007) would have agreed with these respondents. While he, like the aforementioned academics and respondents, believed that the Dayton Accord should be amended, he did not share the view that a more centralized government and leadership will solve Bosnia’s problems. As discussed earlier, Hayden claimed that the Bosnian people see the main threat to both their own well-being and that of their collective lying in other Bosnians. “This being so, it seems highly dubious to insist on the creation of a unitary state to govern a highly disunited population” (Hayden, 2007, p. 55). A new Bosnian constitution that will be acceptable to all Bosnians would need to give them reassurances that not one group will dominate the other groups. According to Hayden, a pious reference to different human rights principles and treaties will certainly not accomplish this. Instead, he stated, the most suitable

solution will be a constitution which links the different Bosnian groups, as they are connected in various ways, but at the same time does not pretend that the differences between them do not exist. For these reasons, Hayden claimed, the basic models for a Bosnian state should not be models such as those of the United Kingdom, India or the United States, but rather those of Belgium, Canada or Switzerland. In all of these latter countries, “there is no question which group rules in specific territories, which are marked as constituent parts of federal structures” (Hayden, 2007, p. 53).

5.5.2 Help from the international community

According to most respondents and a number of academics, intervention by the international community can help bring about the necessary changes in Bosnia. This was already stated by Benková (2016) and Muhic (2015) in the previous section. In the opinion of the respondents, international influence is mainly needed to initiate Dayton reforms, but it can also help to stop certain politicians. According to Respondent 5, for example, both the European Union and the United States can impose sanctions on and prosecute corrupt politicians who block progress. “It is the only way to get rid of them” (R5). Thus, in the respondents’ view, the international community can help Bosnia to move in the right direction. As Respondent 10 stated, Bosnia needs someone “that shows how democracy can be excellent, how we can be a democratic state” (R10).

Like the above-mentioned respondents and academics, McMahon and Western (2009) argued that intervention by the international community, in particular strong commitment and leadership from the United States, can help Bosnia to move forward. According to them, the United States can tackle the negative outcomes of the Dayton Accord, such as weak central governance, rising ethnic nationalism, and corruption. The reason for this, they stated, is that the current policy of the European Union is reflecting a too varied range of interests and motivations. “U.S. leadership is needed to refocus the international community’s effort, starting with the appointment of a U.S. special envoy for the Balkans to spearhead a new initiative on Bosnia and the region as a whole” (McMahon & Western, 2009, p. 80).

For Pasic (2016), however, more pressure from the international community is not the solution for the problems Bosnia is facing. Progress cannot be imported from the outside but must come from within. Therefore, change can only be accomplished if the Bosnian political representatives, civil society and citizens all decide that they want to build a better present and

future for everyone. For revising the Dayton Accord, political will to compromise is needed to find a viable solution and to respond as best as possible to the citizens' needs (Pasic, 2016).

Clarke (2007) also seems to agree with Pasic. To solve problems, the Bosnian political parties must somehow feel encouraged to compromise or form multicultural coalitions and not leave these essential tasks in the hands of the international community. The working model of the Brčko District can be a viable solution for this. Unlike anywhere else in Bosnia, the Brčko District has completely integrated all public institutions, from the schools to the police. Furthermore, not one group holds a controlling majority. According to Clarke, in most cases "the result has been greater transparency, greater efficiency and greater public service than elsewhere in BiH" (Clarke, 2007, p. 64). Therefore, Brčko can be used as a good example to build a society based on multiculturalism and not on segregation (Clarke, 2007).

5.5.3 Accession to the European Union and NATO

Accession to the European Union was another issue that emerged in the academic debate and interviews with the respondents, sometimes in conjunction with NATO membership, as something that could provide a solution to Bosnia's problems by putting the country on the right track. According to Respondent 9, joining the EU can bring many important benefits, such as market involvement in goods, money flows and EU projects, road building, and freedom of travel. Moreover, it is "probably the safest way to prevent further war conflicts here" (R9). Therefore, "they should do it as soon as possible, being members of the EU" (R9), Respondent 9 stated. This was also asserted by the rest of the respondents. But it will be difficult for Bosnia to become an EU member, Respondent 9 claimed, since many politicians are afraid that they will lose their political power or even end up in prison as a result of it.

Also, according to Benková (2016), the perspective of EU membership could get Bosnia on the right track and encourage its leaders to carry out needed reforms. Until now, the previously mentioned Sejdić-Finci case has hampered the quest to enter the European Union. Benková believes that the promise of EU membership would trigger a revised Dayton Accord, changes to Bosnia's constitution, the creation of economic regions, and the transfer of powers from the entities to Bosnia's central bodies in the areas of security, jurisdiction and defense (Benková, 2016).

Tensley (2015) also thinks that EU membership could bring Bosnia on the right course. According to him:

postwar transitions rarely, if ever, play out in the same way, but the political payoffs of gaining EU membership are often similar: joining the EU is about binding one's country to a strong and proven system of values that can underpin a fragile democracy (Tensley, 2015, para. 9).

Or to put in in simpler terms: joining the European Union may pressure Bosnian elites to “steal less and govern better” (Tensley, 2015, para. 10). Tensley does, however, state that the promise of EU membership is not a perfect tool and will therefore not be the answer to Bosnia's problems. “But two decades after an ugly civil war, it could inch Bosnia past Dayton” (Tensley, 2015, para. 10).

McMahon and Western (2009), however, take a more critical look at this. In their opinion, the European Union is not strict and specific enough in its requests for membership. They need to demand basic transparency, functionality, and accountability in the state institutions of Bosnia. As they state:

the Bosnian government needs to be given specific prescriptions on privatization, on the necessary cuts to bloated and inefficient public-sector spending, on the needed reform of government hiring practices, on creating a more equitable distribution of state property, and on the adoption of formal rules on budgeting and accounting (McMahon & Western, 2009, p. 81).

According to the academics, the European Union must involve Serbia and Croatia closely in this process. After all, their active support is required for any solution for Bosnia, as was the case with the Dayton Accord, and they could keep their ethnic brethren in line (McMahon & Western, 2009).

5.5.4 Help from neighboring countries

When asked if neighboring countries, i.e., Serbia and Croatia, could help Bosnia, almost all respondents indicated that they could. It was only the way in which they could help that the respondents differed on. Some respondents believed, like McMahon and Western (2009) in the previous section, that both Serbia and Croatia could be a good partner to the international community to monitor and evaluate the processes in Bosnia. However, they did indicate that at

the moment, both countries are only hindering progress by manipulating processes in Bosnia. They do this, for example, by giving direct support to the ethnic leaders in Bosnia, such as Dodik, to strengthen the position of these leaders. So, the respondents stated, with the people who are leading Serbia and Croatia today, with their nationalistic aspirations, these countries will not be a good help to Bosnia. They can, however, according to Respondent 7, “have a very good role on different levels, because there is a lot of cooperation which is not political” (R7). As examples she mentioned cooperation between NGOs, ordinary people, research centers, and initiatives on the truth about what happened during the war.

Other respondents stated that both Croatia and Serbia could help by ceasing to interfere in Bosnia’s affairs. Then, as Respondent 5 argued, “we will have less problems” (R5). Bosnia, Croatia and Serbia are all separate countries. Serbs and Croats living in Bosnia do have dual citizenship, allowing them to vote in Serbia or Croatia, but that does not give Croatia and Serbia the right to interfere in Bosnia. Bosnia is not interfering in their affairs according to Respondent 5, “why should they interfere in our affairs?” (R5). Respondent 9 argued that both Croatia and Serbia should primarily stop supporting destructive forces in Bosnia, by which he means that they should no longer support those Bosnian political leaders who claim that Bosnia “will become a Sharia law state when we have a situation with one citizen, one vote, no ethnical quotas, and no three presidents” (R9). Moreover, Respondent 9 argued, they need to stop lobbying against Bosnia to the rest of the world. According to him, the previous Croatian president said that several thousands of Islamic terrorists from ISIS were hiding in Bosnia. Such statements do not help. Instead, Respondent 9 stated that “maybe the best help is no help at all” (R9). They can help Bosnia best by doing nothing.

5.5.5 People must take control themselves

Although both the academic debate and the interviews with the respondents clearly indicated that assistance from the international community and/or Bosnia’s neighbors can be important in helping Bosnia to move forward, almost all of the respondents stated that this is not enough. The drive for change must come from the bottom up; from the people themselves. The same was already said in a previous section by Pasic (2016), who argued that progress cannot be imported from the outside but must come from within. According to the respondents, it has been 25 years of peace in Bosnia, so citizens should be brave and strong enough to change things. One of the respondents who claimed this was Respondent 6. As she stated, “we know

what will happen if the changes come from above, Dayton came from the above” (R6). Citizens are “always counting on someone else to deal with their problems” (R6) and point to others as the culprits of their problems. According to Respondent 6, this has to change. Citizens must be more involved in the process by, for example, being ‘watchdogs’ to politicians who have been legally elected to represent the population. But, unfortunately, “many people don’t know how to use themselves as a resource to start the change” (R6). In addition, they are afraid of the police, of being arrested, or of losing their jobs.

This was also argued by Respondent 3. To explain this, he referred to his own organization, to which young people used to be very committed when he was just starting out. These young people did a lot because they hoped that there would be changes. But nowadays it is very difficult to get young people to join an organization or get them involved in anything at all. They just sit on the terrace drinking coffee or go to Germany when they have the chance, “because they lost all hope” (R3). This must change, according to Respondent 3, people must finally realize that they are the ones who can make changes.

Respondent 9 also holds this view and added that citizens should stop blindly believing politicians, “they have to start using their brain and try to see some other perspective” (R9). There are millions of things that need to be changed in Bosnia, but this, in his opinion, is the most important one; that people take matters into their own hands and change their perspectives. If this happens, maybe all the other problems will be solved too.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

In this research, I studied the perspectives of Bosnian NGO actors and academics on the Dayton Peace Accord, based on the following research question:

To what extent do actors of Bosnian non-governmental organizations, in the light of the academic debate, consider the consociational way in which Bosnia and Herzegovina was structured after the 1992-1995 war through the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina as the right solution to the Bosnian war?

In order to explore this, this thesis was composed of six chapters. Chapter 1 introduced the subject of this research, highlighting its social and scientific relevance. Chapter 2 provided a theoretical framework, in which the key concepts of consociationalism and liberal peacebuilding were defined. Chapter 3 delved into the context of the Dayton Accord, showing why a peace agreement was needed and how interconnected the region is. Then, in Chapter 4, attention was paid to the methodologies used in this research to ensure its reliability and validity. Chapter 5 contained an analysis of the data collected during this research. By combining all this information, this concluding chapter provides a systematic reading of the results and a well-founded conclusion in relation to the research questions. This will be outlined in the next paragraph. Following this, some recommendations for future research will be made.

6.1 Conclusions

Consociationalism has been used as a solution for pluralistic societies, such as in Bosnia, to transform them into stable democracies. The central idea of consociationalism is that leaders of different groups in a society rule jointly over a common polity and make decisions by consensus, thereby alleviating the unfortunate consequences of majority decision-making (Lijphart, 1975). There are a number of conditions that are conducive to the success of a consociational structure, which are mainly related to existing or non-existent structures in a society and to the behavior, perceptions, and limitations of its leading actors. The more of these conditions are met, the more likely it is that consociationalism will succeed (Schneckener, 2002).

Structuring a pluralistic society where conflict has taken place in a consociational manner is seen by many as a good way of allowing such societies to coexist. It has even been argued that it is the only feasible short-term goal that is compatible with long-term democratization (Ottoway, 1995). But many others have also voiced their criticisms of such a structure, claiming that it might actually worsen the prospects for peace by deepening and widening ethnic divisions (Horowitz, 1985) or by failing to resolve the security dilemma that exists between different groups (Kaufmann, 1998).

Despite the criticisms of consociationalism, since the end of the Cold War it has been an often-used instrument by the international community to resolve conflicts in a pluralistic society, to establish peaceful coexistence between its groups and to transform it into a stable democracy (Merdzanovic, 2017). Consociationalism is therefore intertwined with the concept of liberal peacebuilding, which is defined as “the promotion of democracy, market-based economic reforms and a range of other institutions associated with modern states as a driving force for building peace” (Newman, Paris & Richmond, 2009, p. 3). This liberal way of making peace in war-torn countries has been widely criticized in recent decades (Paris, 2010; Zaum, 2012); it produces mixed results, it is a one-dimensional linear approach, it is top-down Western hegemonic peacebuilding, and it produces a hybrid peace. However, it is still considered by some academics to be the best solution to conflicts, despite its limitations (Paris, 2010).

The Bosnian war, too, was a war that the international community tried to solve by means of consociationalism. This was put into practice through the 1995 Dayton Accord, which stipulated that the country’s three main ethnic groups – Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats – would share the power. These groups would govern together in Bosnia’s central government that is formed by a three-member presidency and the Council of Ministers. The country would be further divided into two entities and ten cantons, each with their own authorities. At each of these levels of government, ethnic quotas and a mix of minimum representation requirements were set and veto rights were interwoven to prevent any one ethnic group from dominating (Merdzanovic, 2017; Perry, 2018). Today, this division is still maintained, making the Dayton Accord the longest-standing experiment in power-sharing (Roeder & Rothchild, 2005).

This research looked at whether consociationalism in Bosnia has delivered what it promised, namely peaceful coexistence and a stable democracy. In order to investigate this, two different qualitative data collection methods were used. The first method was a documentary analysis in which the works of academics in relation to the Dayton Accord were studied. The

purpose of this was to give the researcher an idea of what had already been written about the Dayton Accord, but also to be able to make a comparison with the data from the second method, namely the semi-structured, in-depth interviews with actors from Bosnian NGOs. Interviewing these actors was crucial to finding out whether consociationalism in Bosnia has delivered what it promised, as NGOs have played a major role in building up war-torn Bosnia. In addition, there was almost nothing in the literature about their opinions on the matter.

The data provided by these two methods has been written down in Chapter 5. Here, a detailed discussion of what respondents and academics believe the Dayton Accord has done for Bosnia has been presented, revealing numerous similarities and differences. The extensive knowledge that has been generated has simultaneously answered the sub-questions of this study which were the following:

1. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina according to actors of Bosnian non-governmental organizations, in light of the academic debate?
2. What have been the threats to the implementation of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina according to actors from Bosnian non-governmental organizations, in light of the academic debate?
3. How do actors of Bosnian non-governmental organizations perceive the liberal peacebuilding of the international community during and after the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in light of the academic debate?
4. Do actors from Bosnian non-governmental organizations, in light of the academic debate, see possibilities for improving the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina and, if so, how?

A positive contribution of the Dayton Accord, generally considered to be its main strength, is that it ended the war and brought peace and stability to the country. There has not been a war since the accord was signed, which proves that the consociational structure is working to a certain extent. In addition, it formed the basis of a functioning multi-ethnic state, reflected both politically and economically, and established conditions for life to return to normal. It has also ensured that the desire for secession among the Croatian and Serb population has reduced. Due to the segmental autonomy of the entities and cantons, they no longer feel threatened in the country they live in. The right to return that the accord included, was generally seen as a positive contribution as well. Unfortunately, it was not properly implemented, as many people did not

return to their pre-war homes because they could not resume their normal lives due to fear and/or lack of work. The last positive aspect of the Dayton Accord that has widely been mentioned was the establishment of the ICTY. However, the tribunal could have been quicker in concluding war cases and should have been less partisan.

The weaknesses of the Dayton Accord were mainly related to the way consociationalism created a complex, dysfunctional, expensive, ethnically fragmented and discriminatory Bosnian administrative system. The focus of this system is too much on ethnicity rather than citizenship, which has allowed politicians to garner political support by using ethnic-nationalist rhetoric and further antagonizing the Bosnian population. Proposals for change are blocked, with politicians using their veto power. The consociational system has thus given them other means to pursue their unfulfilled war agendas. As a result, Bosnia cannot move forward, but only backwards.

However, these politicians are also seen as the greatest threat to why the consociational system created by the Dayton Accord has not been able to function in its entirety. By constantly spreading fear and antagonism among the Bosnian population, combined with a high level of corruption, extensive patronage networks, and the constant politicization and ethnicization of all aspects of life, they have contributed to a fragmented Bosnia. The current situation suits them well and they try to benefit from it as much as possible.

The international community's liberal peacebuilding was seen as both positive and negative, with respondents being more positive about it than academics. Bosnia very much needed this international influence. Without their push for the Dayton Peace Talks, the war leaders might never have sat down and agreed on peace themselves. Also, things like the creation of the ICTY and the right of return might not have come about. However, the timing of these peace talks and the actors involved have been questioned, as well as the international community's proposal to set up Bosnia in a consociational manner, as it has rewarded ethnic cleansing. Moreover, it has been claimed that there was no uniform standard and little knowledge of Bosnia's history among the international community on how to deal with things, both during and after the war. This has led to a loss of credibility of the international community amongst the Bosnian people in general. Finally, it has followed its own agenda for the country, using the country as an experiment by introducing consociationalism in Bosnia.

What can be concluded based on all these results is that, since the end of the war, Bosnia has moved into a negative hybrid peace situation. Consociationalism has brought about peace, but one in which international and local interests, values and norms rub shoulders. As Belloni

(2009) and Richmond (2015) have argued, in Bosnia a situation has arisen in which the interests of elites and the status quo are maintained rather than resources being created and used for emancipation and local empowerment. This has hampered progress in Bosnia and Herzegovina for 26 years and must be reversed.

One way of doing this, which was particularly suggested, is that there should be more centralization in the Bosnian administrative system, giving the central government more say again, but also more decentralization, giving the cities some power for decision-making. This should be done in such a way that one group does not dominate the others. The international community can help to achieve this by putting more pressure on politicians. Bosnia's neighbors can also play a role in this by ceasing to interfere in Bosnia's affairs. Moreover, membership of the EU, but also of NATO, is generally seen as a good incentive for the Bosnian authorities to take steps in the right direction. But there must be clear guidelines regarding the standards and changes expected from Bosnia. Help from the international community and accession to the EU and NATO will not, however, be the ultimate solution to all Bosnia's problems. The drive for change must come from below. Bosnia's citizens should be brave and strong enough to demand change and to become more involved in the processes of change.

In this context, I would like to end this conclusion with a quote from the current High Representative Valentin Inzko (2020, 15 October), whom I heard speak at an Expert Meeting on the Dayton Peace Accord:

Peace is a priceless commodity that should not be taken for granted. It is a foundation for building a stable and prosperous state. It is a beginning, not the end.

6.2 Recommendations

Looking back at the proposed changes of the actors studied, I can only agree with them. In particular, I would recommend that Bosnia be admitted to the European Union and NATO. The conditions that a country must fulfil in order to join the European Union could put Bosnia on the right track. In addition, the benefits that EU membership brings, such as road building and market flows, are indisputable. Personally, I believe that is the only way to stop the brain drain, by giving the population a perspective. However, the European Union must help the country to meet the necessary conditions. They can do this by urging the OHR to use the Bonn powers

against those politicians who want to stand in the way of the process. After all, politicians need to be aware that actions against this process have certain consequences for them.

Furthermore, I would like to recommend that the entire international community turn its attention back to Bosnia. Peacebuilding in the country is still not complete and the international community must solve the problems that it has helped to create. The Bosnian citizens should be involved in these processes. Give them hope again that change can come and show them how they can contribute to change, as the Bosnian NGOs have been trying to do for a long time. This is the only way Bosnia can move forward and stand on its own feet again.

The international community can learn from the Bosnian case, to which this research was a step. One way of doing this is to do more research into the impact that the Dayton Accord has had on the country, as the scope and time for this research was limited. To get the full picture, I recommend looking at multiple perspectives and not just the views of academics and Bosnian NGOs. After all, there are other stakeholders involved, such as Bosnian citizens, policymakers and politicians. To obtain a multidimensional view, group panels with different stakeholders can be a good idea as they can lead to interesting and relevant discussions.

Finally, I recommend looking at other countries where a consociationalist system has been in place for a while. The resulting findings can be compared to the Bosnian case. By comparing the different countries with each other it can be shown where such a system fails and where it succeeds, but it could also answer the question whether consociationalism should be offered as a solution to conflicts at all.

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Appendix 1: Interview Guide

1. Can you tell me something about yourself and the organisation in which you work?
2. The Dayton Peace Talks
 - a. What do you think of the timing of the accord?
 - b. What do you think of the choice of people involved in the peace talks?
 - c. How do you view the degree of influence exerted by the international community during the peace talks?
3. The Dayton Accord and its influence
 - a. Before I go into details about specific elements of the accord, I would like to hear what you and/or your organisation thinks about it in general.
 - b. How do you see the decision that Bosnia has remained an independent state, but that it has been made up of two (and later three) entities and ten different cantons?
 - c. What do you think of the fact that the entities were given the right to govern themselves almost autonomously?
 - d. The constitution recognizes “Bosniacs, Croats, and Serbs, as constituent peoples (along with Others), and citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina.” What do you think of this sentence?
 - e. How do you view the three-member presidency that Bosnia has now?
 - f. What do you think of the ability of veto legislation that was created because of the Dayton Accord?
 - g. How do you view the quotas that were adopted to avoid any one group from dominating over the others?
 - h. What do you think of the creation of the High Representative who have since facilitated and coordinated the civilian aspects of the Dayton Accord, for example the protection of human rights and the holding of free and fair elections?
 - i. What do you think about the choice to investigate and prosecute some of the war crimes and other violations committed in The International Criminal Tribunal of The Hague?
 - j. What do you think of the right of return that refugees and displaced persons were given?

- k. How do you view the influence exerted by the international community in Bosnia to implement the accord?
4. Good solution?
- a. You have more or less talked about it already, but if you had to say that the agreement was a good thing or a bad thing for Bosnia, what is your answer?
 - b. Do you think that the stagnating problems Bosnia is facing today is the result of the Dayton Accord or something else?
 - c. Some people say that the consequences of the Dayton Accord are worth it, because the Dayton Accord has stopped the war. Do you agree with that?
 - d. Do you think that another better solution was possible back when it was negotiated in 1995?
 - e. Do you think that the European Union can help in this matter?
 - i. And the international community in general?
 - ii. And Serbia and Croatia as countries?
5. Those were the questions from my side. Is there something I forgot to ask you or do you have any further questions for me?
6. Last question then, I have to ask you if you want to stay anonymous or is it ok to mention your organization and name?

Appendix 2: List of characteristics of respondents

Respondent	Gender	Main focus of NGO
Respondent 1	Male	Building sustainable peace in the Balkans
Respondent 2	Female	Promoting civic engagement in Bosnia
Respondent 3	Male	Supporting youth organizations with their community work
Respondent 4	Female	Diaspora of Bosnia
Respondent 5	Female	Offering a different perspective to young Bosnians
Respondent 6	Female	Protecting and empowering marginalized groups
Respondent 7	Female	Mediation and dialogue
Respondent 8	Female	Mental health and dealing with the past
Respondent 9	Male	Empowering of youth and marginalized groups
Respondent 10	Female	Building peace and trust in local communities
Respondent 11	Male	Promoting individual and collective human and civil rights