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Preface

This master's thesis is an end product of six months intensive empirical research on the role of the local newspaper media in the current reconciliation and reintegration process of the Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Due to my background as a BSc of History and a coming M.Sc. of Development and International Relations I have during my time of study mainly focused my research projects on issues related to causes of national and international conflicts, internationally-driven interventions and nation-building – with a particular focus on various conflict-ridden states on the Western Balkans. However, in this master's thesis I decided, after spending six months in Bosnia-Herzegovina due to my internship at the Royal Danish Embassy in Sarajevo, to do a research with a very different point of departure by examining some of the results on ground caused by conflict and subsequent international intervention. As a coming M.Sc. of Development and International Relations, predominantly occupied with research projects dealing with international relations and top-down policy issues, I decided that this final research should be focused upon development aspects and bottom-up approaches by the virtue of analysing some of the main actors in the Bosnian newspaper market and their contribution to the reconciliation process of the ethnically divided country on the Western Balkans.

The compilation of this project has taken place with skilled supervision and guidance from my supervisor Ms. Corrie S. McDougall. In this connection I would like to say my sincere thanks to Corrie for being a source of inspiration for me and for providing me with constructive and very useful response and criticism. Moreover, I owe a special debt of gratitude to people who did assist me at the beginning stage of this project. I would especially like to thank Ms. Selma Zulic from Mediacentar Sarajevo, who helped me in my search for Bosnian newspaper articles. I also want to thank Ms. Natasa Zoric from Aalborg University who assisted me in translating and categorising the Bosnian newspaper articles, and finally I would like to express my gratitude to the translator of a great part of the Bosnian articles, Mr. Sebastjan Markelj, Aalborg University. Without your skilled assistance this research would have been impossible conduct.

Last, but not least, I want to thank my girlfriend, Pernille, who has been a massive and indispensable support for me during this writing process.

Jesper Lindholm Christensen, December 2011.

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CRA	Communication Regulatory Agency
DPA	Dayton Peace Agreement/Dayton Peace Accords
EC	European Council
EU	European Union
EUFOR	European Union Force
EUSR	European Union Special Representative
FBiH	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FMH	Free Media Helpline
HDZ	Croat Democratic Union BiH (Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica BiH)
HDZ 1990	Croat Democratic Union 1990 (Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica 1990)
HR	High Representative
HSP BiH	Party of Croat Rights (Hrvatska Stranka Prava Bosne i Hercegovine)
IMC	International Monitoring Council
IWPR	Institute for War and Peace Reporting
OHR	Office of High Representative
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PBS	Public Broadcasting Service
PIC	Peace Implementation Council
PM	Prime Minister
RS	Republika Srpska
SAA	Stabilisation and Association Agreement
SBB	Party for a Better Bosnian Future (Stranka za Bolju Buducnost BiH)
SBiH	Party for BiH (Stranka za Bosnu I Hercegovinu)
SDA	Party for Democratic Action (Stranka Demokraske Akcije)
SDP	Social Democratic Party (Socijaldemokratska Partija BiH)
SDS	Serbian Democratic Party (Srpska Demokratska Stranka)
SNSD	Alliance of Independent Social Democrats (Savez Nezavisnih Socijaldemokrata)
UN	United Nations
WB	World Bank

Credits

Jennings Bryant: A Professor and holder of the Ronald R. Reagan endowed Chair of Broadcasting in the College of Communication at the University of Alabama. He is the founding co-editor of the Media Psychology journal, and serves on the editorial boards of 11 scholarly journals. His primary research interests are in entertainment theory, media effects, advanced communications technologies and systems, and media education.

Mary Beth Oliver: A Professor and Co-Director of the Media Effects Research laboratory in the College of Communications at Penn State University. She is specialised in media and psychology, with a focus on both the psychological effects of media and viewers' attraction to or enjoyment of media content. Her research includes studies pertaining to media violence, reality-based television programs, gender differences in enjoyment of media entertainment, viewers' responses to melodramas, and the effect of media portrayals of racial groups on viewers' racial attitudes.

Gadi Wolfsfeld: An associate Professor of Political Science and Communication at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

Boro Kontic: Director of Mediacentar Sarajevo. Formerly Editor-in-Chief of Radio Sarajevo Youth Program and Radio Sarajevo Second program. Member of RTV B-H Supervisory Board in 1992-93. Kontic has worked in journalism for more than 25 years and at Mediacentar from its founding in 1995. Lecturer on training programs for journalists and School of Strategic Communication.

Marek Mracka: Slovakian Media Analyst for the OSCE mission to BiH.

Borka Rudic: Secretary General of the independent union of professional journalists, Association "BH Novinari" ("BH Journalists").

Kurt Bassuener: An independent policy analyst in Sarajevo, BiH. Bassuener is co-founder and Senior Associate of the Democratization Policy Council, a global initiative for accountability on democracy promotion.

David Chandler: Professor of International Relations at the Centre for the Study of Democracy, University of Westminster. He is a regular media commentator, editor of the Journal of Intervention and State building and the editor of the Routledge book series *Studies in Intervention on State building*.

Martina Fischer: Deputy Director of Berghof Conflict Research. She is a co-editor of the Berghof Handbook for Conflict Transformation and is responsible for the Peacebuilding in Post-War Regions research programme area. Her research interests include: Peacebuilding in the Balkans; European peace and security policy etc.

Mark Thompson: A British Historian and journalist, currently serving as Director-General of the BBC.

Srecko Latal: A political analyst from International Crisis Group in Sarajevo. Latal covered BiH and the rest of the Balkans during and after the conflicts in the 1990's Associated Press correspondent and editor. After 2000 he has also worked as political advisor for the EU and the WB and wrote for several regional or international media and thin-tank organisations.

Definition of Key Terms

Bonn Powers: The authority of the OHR to oversee the civilian implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement. Furthermore, the OHR has the right to sack local pointed and elected officials in cases where the Dayton Peace Accords is being opposed. Finally, the OHR has a mandate to role back decisions or rulings carried out in BiH, both on state, entity, cantonal or municipality levels.

Bosniaks: Citizens of Muslim origin or persons who profess Islam as their religion residing in the current Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Bosniaks make up one of the three constituent peoples of the country.

Bosnians: A blanket term for all citizens in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The expression covers Bosniaks, Bosnian Serbs, Bosnian Croats and other ethnic minority groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Bosnian Croats: Citizens of Croat origin or persons who profess Catholicism as their religion residing in the current Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Bosnian Croats make up one of the three constituent peoples in the country. In this project also referred to as Croats.

Bosnia and Herzegovina: Bosna i Hercegovina. Throughout this project Bosnia and Herzegovina will be referred to as BiH.

Bosnian Serbs: Citizens of Serb origin or persons who profess Christian Orthodoxy as their religion residing in the current Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Bosnian Serbs make up one third of constituent groups in the country. In this project also referred to as Serbs.

Dragan Covic: A Croat politician from the dominant Croat party HDZ BiH in FBiH. Covic' party represents the nationalistic segment of the Bosnian Croats and he is a strong advocate for a further decentralisation of BiH by the virtue of a third entity in which the Croat hold majority. Covic has previously served as the Croat member in the BiH Presidency, but was later removed from office by the previous HR, Paddy Ashdown, after Covic was indicted by the State Court of BiH for financial malfeasance and misuse of office.

Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina: In this project referred to as FBiH. FBiH is one of Bosnia and Herzegovina's two entities. It is mainly inhabited by Bosniaks and Bosnian Croats. FBiH makes up 51% of BiH's territory.

Haris Silajdžić: A Bosniak politician from the SBiH party in the FBiH. Silajdžić is an experienced actor within Bosnian politics. As Foreign Minister of BiH, he was part of the Bosnian delegation that negotiated the US brokered Dayton Peace Agreement in 1995. Silajdžić is known for his uncompromising political struggle for a united BiH and an abolishment of the Serb entity, RS, which he regards as a result of ethnic cleansing and genocide. Critics of Silajdžić claim that he is an Islamic radical who solely pursue a policy in the interest of the Bosnian Muslims, the Bosniaks. During Silajdžić' career he has served both as Prime Minister of BiH and as the Bosniak member of the tripartite rotational BiH Presidency.

HDZ BiH: The Croat Democratic Union BiH. It is the biggest Bosnian Croat party in BiH. Furthermore, it is the leading Bosnian Croat nationalist party in the country. The leader of the party is Dragan Covic. HDZ BiH's leading issue pursued in their policy is a new entity within BiH dominated by the Croats.

HDZ 1990: The Croat Democratic Union 1990 is the second largest Croat party in BiH. The President of HDZ 1990 is Bozo Ljubic. The HDZ 1990 policy is very similar to the former party colleagues from HDZ BiH, from who they broke away from in 2006 due to dissatisfaction against the HDZ BiH leader, Dragan Covic.

HR: The High Representative. In connection to the Dayton Peace Agreement, the United Nations established a position which serves as the highest political authority of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The current HR is the Austrian diplomat Valentin Inzko.

Milorad Dodik: A Serbian politician from the SNSD party in the RS. Dodik is currently serving a President of RS, he has previously served as Prime Minister of RS. Dodik is by many Serbs regarded as a true patriot and a defender of Serbian interests. Dodik is known for his rather negative orientation toward Sarajevo and the Bosniak-Croat dominated FBiH, the second of BiH two constituent entities. On several occasions Dodik has proclaimed that RS will eventually hold a referendum on RS independence. Like many top Serb politicians, Dodik has denied that the Srebrenica killings in 1995, in which around 8000 Muslim men and boys were killed in the civil war, was a genocide, and on several occasions Dodik has questioned the proportions of the killings perpetrated by Serb paramilitary forces.

Office of the High Representative (OHR): An ad hoc international institution responsible for overseeing the implementation of civilian aspects of the accord ending the war in BiH. The High Representative is working with the people and institutions of BiH and the international community to ensure that the country evolves into a peaceful and viable democracy on course for integration into Euro-Atlantic institutions. Another task of the OHR is to block any local attempts to oppose the provisions of the peace agreement through the High Representative's empowerment of the so called *Bonn Powers*. The OHR is guided by the Steering Board of the UN-established Peace and Implementation Council (PIC).

Other ethnic groups or opposite ethnic groups or ethnic counterparts are terms, which are being used in this project when dealing with ethno-affiliated newspapers or political parties. For instance, when speaking of the Bosniak newspaper Dnevni Avaz and its presentations of other ethnic groups, it means how the newspaper presents news articles involving the Bosnian Serbs and the Bosnian Croats. The same goes for the Bosnian Serb newspaper and the Bosnian Croat newspaper and their news coverage of the other constituent groups of BiH, which are not among the newspapers' own target audience.

Republika Srpska: In this project referred to as RS. RS is one of Bosnia and Herzegovina's two entities. It is mainly inhabited by Bosnian Serbs. RS makes up 49% of BiH's territory.

SBiH: Party for BiH. A Bosniak dominated party. The party supports the idea of unity of the state of BiH. Moreover, SBiH advocates for the abolishment of the Serbian entity in BiH, Republika Srpska. SBiH have been a part of the state government in BiH since the first general election in the independent BiH in 1996. The President of the party is the former Bosniak member of the BiH Presidency, Haris Silajdžić.

SDA: Party for Democratic Action. SDA is a Bosniak political party, previously led by the first President of the independent BiH, Alija Izetbegovic. SDA has been the leading Bosniak nationalistic party after the disintegration of former Yugoslavia. Eventually, SDA has become a more moderate party, however, SDA still believe they have the right to exclusively to represent the interests of the Bosniak people. The current President of SDA is Sulejman Tihić. Additionally, Bakir Izetbegovic, the son of former President Alija Izetbegovic, has since the general elections in 2010 been the Bosniak member of the tripartite BiH Presidency.

SDP: Social Democrat Party in BiH. The party claims to be multiethnic, but is predominantly supported and dominated by Bosniaks. The leader of the party is the Bosniak, Zlatko Lagumdžija.

SDS: Serbian Democratic Party. SDS is a Serbian ethno-nationalistic party which was established in 1990. During the Bosnian war in the 1990's, SDS was in charge of the Bosnian Serb government in RS led by Radovan Karadžić. The leader of SDS is today, is Mladen Bošić.

SNSD: Alliance of Independent Social Democrats. The largest Bosnian Serb party in BiH and the ruling nationalist party in RS. SNSD is led by the RS President Milorad Dodik.

CHAPTER 1 - Introduction

There are several examples globally that the news media generally have played a negative role in various conflicts and subsequent peace processes.¹ At the time of writing much has already been written about the role of the mass media in conflict and war, but very little about the media's role in peace and reconciliation procedures. Some of the few examples in the academic literature which have researched the role of news media in on-going peace and reconciliation processes, have predominantly been focused upon some of the major cases in modern history; The Oslo Peace Process between Israel and the Palestinians, the peace process between Israel and Jordan and the process surrounding the Good Friday Agreement in Northern Ireland. The overall conclusion in these negotiations was that the press's role varies with time and political circumstances, thus there were significant differences on how the media behaved in the three abovementioned peace processes. For instance, the media did mainly play a destructive role in the Oslo Peace Process, but were more constructive and contributed positively during the Israel-Jordan and Northern Ireland processes.²

In post-conflict Bosnia-Herzegovina (henceforth BiH) the development of the media sector has, since the intervention by the international community, been a key strategy to address a range of political and societal issues.³ The rationale was and still is that the media sector should be able to serve as an important mediator in the Bosnian society and thereby contribute to reconciliation and reintegration in the country. This is considered as a first step in the internationally driven nation-building procedure in the war-torn Balkan state. So far, according to a report published by Mediacentar Sarajevo in 2008, the broadcasting media have not yet had the desired effect in terms of contributing positively to the reconciliation and generating national and social cohesion among the three constituencies in BiH. In fact, the report concludes, the broadcasting sector is characterised by representing the complete ethnic segregation of BiH as regards to staffing, content and audience.⁴ For that reason it seems relevant to examine the state of the print media, and see if the Bosnian audience are subjects of biased and ethnocentric news reporting in both the broadcasting *and* the print media, which unquestionably are the most significant sources of information on the Bosnian media market. Internet news portals are still on a developing stage in BiH and will not be included in this study.

¹ Wolfsfeld, 2004, page 11.

² Ibid.

³ Rhodes, 2007.

⁴ Bašić, Jusić and Thompson, 2008.

Prior to presenting the problem field of this study, there is a need for sketching out the complexities attached to the post-conflict state of BiH in order to comprehend the grave political and social challenges bedeviling the country.

BiH is, in its present form, a relatively young multiethnic state on the Western Balkans, which takes the form of a consociational confederation. The country is extremely complex, i.e. ethnically and culturally as well as politically and historically. BiH is a post-war country, which is still heavily plagued by the repercussions from the cruel and bloody civil war that ended almost 15 years ago, when Serbs, Croats and Bosniaks finally signed the Dayton Peace Agreement (henceforth DPA) in 1995. The DPA fixed the geographical boundaries of the country, thus two entities were established; a region for Bosniaks and Croats, called the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina (FBiH), and a constituency for the Serbs, Republika Srpska (RS).⁵ The two federal governments are de facto the dominant layer of government in BiH, which is one of the explanations why many Balkan analysts hardly would characterise BiH as a state.⁶

Despite the fact that the peace agreement was signed more than 15 years ago, the reconciliation process in the country has been at a standstill during the recent years. BiH still suffers from a highly poisoned political climate mainly dominated by ethno-nationalistic political elites by the virtue of SBiH, SNSD and HDZ BiH inter alia. In addition to this, an exceedingly weak civil society sector is conspicuous by its absence and seems unable to mitigate polarities in the ethno-political disputes.

As the international actors involved in BiH realised at an early stage in their intervention, the function of the news media is a key strategic objective of development as the media sector can be a significant contributor to the much-needed reintegration of the country and the process of reconciliation. Naturally, media development is only one of the elements in bringing a positive and reconciled change in the heavy divided country. The international community has put a lot of efforts in finding partners in BiH to put pressure on the local authorities, since the political development has reached a deadlock despite the presence of the OHR plus the use of carrot and stick by the EU in order to bring about necessary reforms, which can tie the country closer together and avoid BiH to become a completely failed state in the heart of Europe.

Additionally, the international management of civil society support to hasten the process of peace and reconciliation has not had the desired effect, and has in many ways been counterproductive. I will elaborate on

⁵ Royal Danish Embassy, Sarajevo.

⁶ Chandler, 2006, page 20.

the Bosnian civil society development in chapter 2, as the lack of progress within the civil society sphere, is one of the main reasons why various international organisations believe a reinforced focus on the media sector is urgently needed in BiH.

At the time of writing, there are not many examples of the news media playing a decisive role in national reintegration and reconciliation processes.⁷ However, due to the fact that the Bosnian media outlets had a huge responsibility for stirring up ethno-nationalistic feelings and fuel the hostilities between the ethnic groups before and during the war in the 1990's, it appears to be a valid argument that the exact same media should now be able to play a more positive role if they are willing. On the contrary, a biased and ethno-nationalistic media environment could seriously halt the reconciliation process in BiH, given the givens, that a media sector which generates further distrust and ethnic and political intolerance in a post-conflict country, in which more than 100,000 people died on that foundation during the Bosnian war, seriously affect citizens' perception of ability to make compromises that are vital for multiethnic countries in general, and for a state as BiH in particular.⁸

The news media in BiH are the most developed and rooted segments in the Bosnian community compared to other CBO actors. Thereby the news media possesses a great opportunity to play a central role in the promotion of peace and national reconciliation. The media have an immense possibility for accentuating the benefits that a positive peace process can bring by raising the legitimacy of groups or leaders who advocate for reconciliation.⁹ As the main inspirational source of this project, Associate Professor Gadi Wolfsfeld, puts it, the media are vital in terms of contributing positively to peace and reconciliation in conflict-ridden societies. Wolfsfeld compares a constructive role of the media in reconciliation processes and its influence on audiences with financial investments: *"While most people realize that any investment entails a certain amount of risk, the financial climate can have a critical influence on perceptions about the extent of the risk involved. People are much less likely to invest in the stock market when everyone is talking about recession. A general mood of economic optimism, on the other hand, inevitably leads to increased investment. The same can be said about investing in peace".*¹⁰

⁷ Wolfsfeld, 2004, page 8.

⁸ Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung and Media Institute Plan, 2010, page 7.

⁹ Wolfsfeld, 2004, page 1.

¹⁰ Ibid., page 11.

In BiH today, there are 12 daily newspapers, 97 weekly newspapers, 147 radio stations and 46 TV stations.¹¹ Undoubtedly, an extremely high number of media outlets considering the relatively small size of the population of BiH. Their responsibility as social glue and advocates of reconciliation is extraordinarily important of BiH today, since the citizens, besides the religious communities, mostly are interested in information sent out from the media.¹² This fact is supported by a survey from Wien International, which illustrates that 74% of the males and 63% of the females in BiH read daily newspapers.¹³

The media outlets have a golden opportunity for offering a vision and perspective which is undetermined by ethnicity or nationality in order to contribute to the reintegration and reconciliation of BiH. This is due to the fact that media in general, through priming, have a huge influence on later judgments and behaviour among the audience related to the content that has been processed. It means that news media have the power to prime positive or negative thoughts and feelings among citizens – at least according to the theory.¹⁴ The power of the news media in the modern society is unquestionable. The media are exceptionally influential in terms of creating an understanding of the society that citizens are a part of and moreover to picture the self-perception of people and their fellow human beings. Moreover, the news media are a central arena for political debates and determinants of who gets to speak.¹⁵ Due to the aforementioned statistics published by Wien International regarding readerships, the fact that so many citizens and stakeholders in general monitor the debates and information in the Bosnian newspapers, just increases the legitimacy of the role of the print news media in the Bosnian reconciliation process.

Bearing in mind that BiH is a truly divided society, in which almost all spheres of life are ethnically separated and politicised, the news media are crucial instruments for portraying other ethnic groups objectively and thereby push forward the idea of mutual understanding and respect. As mentioned earlier, one way to do this is by focusing on the common interests of the country by looking forward. However, during the first post-war years the tendency did show that most media outlets predominantly paid more attention to the past and the ethnic conflict in BiH and the media coverage was characterised by inflammatory rhetoric.

¹¹ Rudic, 2011.

¹² Kontic, 2011.

¹³ Wien International, 2010.

¹⁴ Bryant and Oliver, 2009, pp. 75 and 79.

¹⁵ Wolfsfeld, 2004, page 12.

There is a growing universal convergent that mass media are important actors in the socialisation of people, but also in the construction of identity and self-perception.¹⁶ In the case of BiH the re-socialisation and the end of mutual distrust and demonising in spite of ethnic diversities is a prerequisite for nation building, stable peace and harmony. Within this field the media play a significant role if they act responsibly and adhere to professional journalistic standards.

Within this subject a huge industry of literature is continually churned out about the role of the media in wartimes and conflict, but very little about the role of the media in peace and reconciliation, including the media in BiH. Several attempts have been made in order to make the reconciliation and reintegration process of BiH move forward for the last 15 years, but this has only had a feeble effect on the ground.^{17 18}

In BiH, the respective ethnic-dominated regions practically do not have a shared media, which obviously would play a more constructive and effective role in peace and reconciliation, since the political elites in BiH, mostly ethno-nationalists who communicate with their own people, would in most cases emphasise sectarian loyalty in order to maintain their powerbase.¹⁹ For the media to contribute to the national reintegration of the country it is vital that they are completely editorially independent from political parties also religious lobbies, since otherwise this could lead to media self-censorship and so called patriotic journalism which includes “our” and “their” media.²⁰

In most cases the news media are often ethnocentric and able to influence later judgments and behaviour among their audience.²¹ Just as well as media can promote reconciliation and shed positive or neutral light on other ethnic groups, the news media can also serve as destructive instruments in the process by raising the legitimacy of those opposed to concessions, but more importantly they can reinforce negative stereotypes of the counterparts.²² As it is stated by Bryant Jennings and Mary Beth Oliver: *“The content of news stories is a primary determinant of agenda setting. Rather than solely relying on what is accessible in memory, people pay attention to the content of news stories”*.²³ Considering this statement, one could argue that the representation of ethnic groups in the news media in a divided state such as BiH is of great significance in the perception

¹⁶ Gripsrud, 2005, pp. 14-17.

¹⁷ Nansen Dialogue Centre Sarajevo, 2010.

¹⁸ International Crisis Group, 2010.

¹⁹ Wolfsfeld, 2004, page 43.

²⁰ Rudic, 2011.

²¹ Bryant and Oliver, 2009, page 79.

²² Wolfsfeld, 2004, pp. 1-2.

²³ Bryant and Oliver, 2009, page 8.

from opposing ethnicities, especially since the country is almost separated into fully heterogenic regions, where interethnic relations hardly ever occur.

Purpose of the Research

The role of the news media in national reconciliation and reintegration processes is the overall frame of this research, by using BiH as the case study. The methodology consists of two various dimensions. The first objective is to establish how the most prominent ethno-affiliated newspapers covered news stories involving ethnic counterparts during the 2010 election campaign and how much attention the media gave to specific parties and figures from opposite ethnic groups. This examination is to be carried out through a quantitative content analysis. Secondly, the main tendencies which have been exposed in the quantitative analysis are to be analysed within the frame of a qualitative content analysis. By combining those two methodological frameworks, the ambition is to make a comprehensive analysis and evaluation of the Bosnian print media landscape to gain a better understanding of it and what impact Bosnian media is having on the ethnic and ethno-political divisions of the country. An interesting question in this context is, whether it is even possible for the news media to change before the surrounding society does?

Problem Formulation

The focal point of this thesis is to analyse the impact the media, i.e. Bosniak, Bosnian Serb and Bosnian Croat news media, are currently having in resolving or increasing the ethnic tensions of BiH. This is to be examined from various parameters – both quantitatively and qualitatively. First of all, it is of great importance whether ethno-affiliated news media even bring news stories involving ethnic counterparts. Next, it is relevant to analyse *how* the news media present opposite ethnic groups in their news coverage. From such analyses it should be possible to evaluate if the media trend in BiH is constructive for the purpose of national reconciliation, or if the media, as in the war time period, still attempt to fuel hostilities among the ethnic groups of BiH by undertaking a destructive role. This reasoning leads to the following problem formulation:

“In light of the fact that the media sector in BiH has been highly supported by the international community as a source for building peace and reconciliation for over a decade, how can we understand the role of the newspaper media in post-conflict BiH?”

The intention is to identify what images, stories and conceptions one gets as a daily reader through the presentations of other ethnic groups in BiH during one of the most politicised events in any society – the

general election campaign. The research examines whether these representations and the role of the Bosnian media in general, form the basis for rebuilding trust and reconciliation between the various ethnic groups of BiH.

In this connection, the aim is to analyse if the newspaper media in BiH are undertaking their professional responsibility as non-biased informants who work in the interest of the country as a whole. This will be examined by analysing if and how the dissemination of news promotes reintegration, reconciliation and encourages acceptance of ethnic, religious and cultural diversity during the election campaign. On the contrary, the news media could also be a vehicle for creating a social distance between majority and minority in the various ethno-dominated regions of BiH via the so called "positive self" and "negative others" presentations in ethnocentric reporting.

In chapter 2, useful background information is presented in order to fully comprehend the complexities of post-conflict BiH and the political setting that the news media operate within.

CHAPTER 2 – The Situation in BiH

Background

This chapter is intended to provide the reader with valuable background information of the complexities that are present in BiH. From this information it should clearly appear which kind of political climate the Bosnian news media are manoeuvring within.

As there are almost no previous studies focusing on the role of the news media in peace and reconciliation processes, there is a need for presenting arguments and perspectives, why the role of the news media sector in conflict-ridden multiethnic states is crucial to dig into. Correspondingly, this subject appears even more relevant due to the fact that the international community lately has argued that the development of the news media sector in BiH is a key strategic objective since the foreign donors do see the positive prospects that the major news media outlets can bring the Bosnian society if the media sector is disposed to do so and supported appropriately by the international stakeholders.

However, prior to taking a closer look at the Bosnian media sector, there is a need to touch upon the ethnic divisions of BiH, which were caused by the civil war in the 1990's. This background information should underscore and justify, why a reinforced focus on the Bosnian media sector is highly relevant and important for the purpose of reconciliation.

Institutionalised Ethnic Divisions

The DPA institutionalised a complex mechanism of consociational federalism in BiH.²⁴ The peace agreement has often been referred to as 'the compromise of compromises', fixing the entities' boundaries almost equal to the frontlines at the end of the war. The DPA, in terms of Annex 4, also became the constitution of the post-war BiH, a provision which has served the purpose of keeping the entities tied together in a loose federalist system with the OHR as the highest political authority of the country. This international organ is still present in the country. Considering the high level of political authority that OHR possesses, BiH de facto takes the form of an international protectorate.

The political structure of BiH is characterised by an institutionalisation of ethnic divisions and has left the entities with a high degree of autonomy. One could claim that the Bosnian case represent what Foucault characterised as "*politics as a continuation of war by other means*".²⁵ The highly complicated and

²⁴ Chandler, 2006, page 10.

²⁵ Ibid., page 7.

decentralised political structure of BiH implies an enormous and expensive political and public administration, including five presidents, three prime ministers and hundreds of various ministers spread out on different political stages of the country ranging from state to cantonal level. On the state-level there is a tripartite rotational Presidency, which is shared among a Bosniak, a Croat and a Serb during a four year term with shifting leadership every eight month. The rationale of the DPA provisions and thereby also the ethnic institutionalisation in the enclosed constitution of BiH was only intended to be a transitory solution, and eventually the former warring parties should seek a political and social rapprochement by transferring entity powers to the state-level in order to build a sustainable democratic state of citizens and thus an Europe-oriented state with strong attendance and guidance from the international community, i.e. OHR and subsequently the EU. According to a UN survey from 2003 the idea of a state of citizens only had limited support among the three constituent groups.²⁶ However, until the 2006 general election there were several indications that a positive post-war development and democratic transitory process were taking place in BiH.²⁷ Ever since then, due to growing mistrust and increased nationalistic rhetoric by the political elites among all three of the constituent groups of BiH, the political, social and economic conditions have deteriorated gradually, but significantly. The ethno-nationalist tendency has also increased among the citizens, resulting in a remarkable raise in inter-ethnic incidents during the last couple of years.²⁸

Even 15 years after the end of the war, the general picture is that ethnic groups do not trust each other. The mutual distrust is highly evident in case of people's attitudes and ethnic makeup of communities.²⁹ Although BiH today is not currently warring, the present situation seems to reflect the flip side of the DPA, meaning that the provisions in the peace agreement legitimise the ethnic divisions of BiH and therefore leads to a negative peace, which hampers the national reconciliation process in BiH. Some Balkan experts even estimate that BiH has not been this close to the edge of collapse since the breakout of the civil war in 1992.³⁰ The reason why is multifarious, but a striking factor is the ethno-nationalist radicalisation during the recent years within the major political parties, who have been able to maintain their positions of power through scare campaigns in the recent elections. In these campaigns the main aim has seemed to be putting other ethnic groups in an unfavourable light by constantly presenting bogeys and ethno-nationalistic rhetoric. Simply put, "if you do not vote for us, the other side will come and get you"-rhetoric has so far worked out successfully for the main ethno-nationalistic parties.

²⁶ Chandler, 2006, page 19.

²⁷ Bassuener, 2010.

²⁸ Nansen Dialogue Center, 2010.

²⁹ Institute for War and Peace Reporting, 2007.

³⁰ International Crisis Group, 2010.

Severe economic problems and subsequent social unrest have been on the rise the recent years. This has been deeply politicised by the ruling political elites and have been another excuse to point out the flaws and threats of the opposing ethnic groups. Most Balkan experts conclude that one of the biggest flaws by the international community in the DPA was to allow the political elites of the warring parties to keep their political positions. Therefore, rapprochements between the ethno-political based parties have been almost doomed to fail even before the signatories signed the peace agreement. This fact combined with the fact that there is hardly an influential political party in BiH with cross-national base of support³¹, and you have the prescription for a truly diseased and hostile political environment.

Consequently, but not surprisingly, the latest general election in October 2010 did not indicate that the political situation is facing significant changes that will make BiH progress on the path of prosperity and settlement. At the time of writing there has not been formed a government at the state-level due to deeply rooted disagreements between the major political parties representing the three ethnic groups of the country. The ruling political elite in RS are strongly advocating for a further decentralisation of BiH, at best a peaceful dissolution of the country. The major Bosniak parties, on the contrary, promote a strengthening of the state-level and eventually an abolition of the RS entity which, in the view of the Bosniaks, is founded as a result of genocide and ethnic cleansing. Finally, the dominating Croat parties seem to struggle for a new Croat unity, or even their own entity within the country, as they argue that the Croats have been kept in an unequal position compared to the other constituent groups in BiH since the signing of the DPA.³²

On the surface it seems that the only point of resemblance between the political parties is the ambition of BiH getting closer to the Euro-Atlantic cooperation. However, there is a great dispute in terms of how BiH should approach the European path. Judging from the 2010 Progress Report authored by the EU Commission, it was heavily underscored that BiH still has a long way before the country is to be considered as an official candidate for EU membership.³³ In order to make BiH progress, comprehensive reforms and constitutional amendments are required to settle the long lasting dysfunctional structures of the multiethnic state, which has made BiH fall behind its Balkan neighbours in terms of democratisation, reconciliation and Euro-Atlantic integration.

Even more importantly, the political and consequently economic crisis of BiH has worsened the living standards drastically for the long-suffering Bosnian people. Figures illustrate that more than 25% of the citizens are, according to a 2007 World Bank report, estimated to live in severe poverty. Additionally, as a

³¹ Chandler, 2006, page 23.

³² International Crisis Group, 2010.

³³ European Commission Progress Report, 2010.

consequence of the lack of necessary political and economic reforms, which have kept BiH on a rather unstable stage, the level of FDI has decreased significantly in recent years. This is primarily due to the fact that BiH suffers from a highly complex and expensive administration with unclear fields of responsibility, lack of transparency and dreadfully weak state institutions. The complexity of administration in BiH results in a bulky bureaucracy, where various parts are in competition or in open conflict with one-another and furthermore, a confusing and often contradictory legislation and regulation stifle investments and degrades services. Despite the fact that the Bosnian people have experienced a gradual deterioration in the political, economic and social spheres for several years, i.e. an unemployment rate amounting to almost 43% nationwide, it does not seem that the citizens are willing to support political actors that seem ready for consensus-based policy making that can bring about the necessary political changes - at least when judging from the last two general elections, where the same ethno-nationalistic parties came out as clear winners. The lack of political change in BiH has resulted in accusations from Western Balkan analysts, who claim that Bosnian people are primordial.³⁴

The democratic climate of BiH appears to be stagnating and political apathy among the people is increasing, which obviously was highlighted in the general election in 2010 where only 56% of the eligible voters casted their ballots.³⁵ One of the explanations why should originate from the fact that Bosnian citizens have only experienced democracy and democratic values for a relatively short period of time, since BiH has been under foreign rule for a long time before the country became a part of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.³⁶ The light election turnout might also illustrate that people do not really believe that positive change is possible after 15 years in almost stagnation.

Even though citizens in both entities are suffering from the same daily life problems and are plagued by social unrest, it appears that most of the Bosnian voters turn to the same parties on the election day, which implies that the nationalistic agendas set up by the ruling parties in both the RS and FBiH, who play on people's fears, are successful, as they rely to the trauma symptoms that still affect a vast part of the Bosnian citizens.³⁷ The latest tendency shows that for the majority of the Bosnian voters, ethnocentric security concerns seem to be of top political priority in general elections. This highly polarised atmosphere, which the political elites have been able to establish, makes the reconciliation of the country almost impossible despite a number of attempts from the international community to promote and support a conciliatory process in BiH. What seems to be the main

³⁴ Pugh, 2006, page 144.

³⁵ Konrad-Adenauer -Stiftung and Media Institute Plan, 2010.

³⁶ Chandler, 2000, pp. 147-148.

³⁷ Ibid., pp. 148-150.

problem for the political situation in BiH is the lack of downward accountability from local politicians to citizens. Since the signing of the DPA it has been a well-known fact that what characterises BiH is an upward accountability between the local political elite and OHR plus subsequently the EU. From a local perspective nobody seems to be interested in working for the public good across ethnic lines, even though it could be a crucial vehicle for removing focus to the similarities between the ethnic groups instead of the differences that has been the trendsetting issue for a long period of time. Generally, in democratic countries an important component by the virtue of the civil society manoeuvres between people and the state to bring about necessary changes in society, which does have an element of local ownership. However, in this sphere of the Bosnian society a discouraging trend is also evident.

A Weak Civil Society

Due to the fact that BiH for more than a decade has been governed by a political elite, who has been more preoccupied with inter-ethnic rivalry and promoting own self-interest rather than working for the common good of the Bosnian people, there is a strong need for new stakeholders to affect the political agenda positively in BiH.

The political instability in BiH, which the Bosnian political elites truly are accountable for, makes the role of a functional civil society a vital component for bringing BiH on the path of reconciliation, reintegration and prosperity. It is a well-known point of view among scholars that civil society is essential for peace-building and democratisation, but also to take part in the healing wounds process after ethnic conflicts³⁸ in order to mitigate polarities of political disputes, especially in a post-conflict society as BiH.³⁹

A variety of international donors have contributed significantly, with the EU as the largest donor⁴⁰, in supporting local Bosnian civil society building since the end of the Bosnian war in 1995. The main objective has been to empower Bosnian CBO's to act as essential social glue in the highly divided Bosnian state⁴¹ in the endeavours to strengthen the cross-entity relations and furthermore act as mediators between the political and societal spheres.⁴² In the DPA civil society building was articulated as a key strategic objective, but still the role of local CBO's is remarkably weak and does not seem ready yet to take up its tasks in a BiH that faces a lot of serious challenges; transitions from war to peace, from socialism to parliamentary and from planning to market

³⁸ Fagan, 2006, page 100.

³⁹ Chandler, 2000, page 135.

⁴⁰ Fagan, 2006, page 107.

⁴¹ Chandler, 2000, page 136.

⁴² Bieber, 2002, page 28.

economy.⁴³ The assumption was that a developed civil society sector would result in a successful state- and nation building process in BiH.⁴⁴ However, there are still some major obstacles that are weakening the civil society functionality in BiH. First of all, the ethnic divisions of the country appear to be so deeply-rooted in the BiH society thus it makes cross-entity collaboration for local civil society organisations extremely difficult. This fact is also due to heavy suspicion from local politicians and local citizens who are not used to grant civil society groups scope for action, since BiH does not have a long democratic tradition.⁴⁵ In the view of the political elite, non-governmental organisations are most often regarded as opposition.⁴⁶ Consequently, multiethnic programmes run by civil society organisations are almost often incompatible with mono-dimensional ethno-politics pursued by state actors and institutions.

Another part of the problem in BiH when it comes to civil society is the international support of local CBOs, especially from the EU side, who sets up the overall national objectives in BiH, often without the understanding of the lack of local capacity to develop projects that the EU wishes to support.⁴⁷ The confused efforts provided by the international donors are quite contradictory as the rationale for supporting local CBO's is to build up organisations that can bring about a new culture of interaction and political engagement based on tolerance, compromise and participation.⁴⁸ This approach should serve as a counterbalance to the top-down influence by the international community in general and as previously mentioned, to present alternative solutions and strategies to the ruling ethno-national political elites in both entities.

To sum it up, civil society groups in BiH have not been able to fulfil the ambitions set by international donors, which is, *inter alia*, to free citizens from ethno-nationalist politics and push on the democratisation progression of BiH.⁴⁹ The weak conditions for CBO's in BiH today can be measured by the fact that only some NGO's are actually operating in the country, but most of their work relates to practical assistance and as service-providers for the citizens. Critics would say that the confused efforts piloted by the international community has weakened the local CBO's and have occurred almost at the expense of the public sector.⁵⁰

As it was highlighted in the introduction chapter, BiH can be characterised as a nation state in severe crisis, some scholars even claim it a failed state in the heart of Europe. This is caused by several factors; a

⁴³ Lyon, 2006, pp. 125-126.

⁴⁴ Fagan, 2006, page 100.

⁴⁵ Lyon, 2006, pp. 67 and 132.

⁴⁶ Fagan, 2006, page 106.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 107-108.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, page 101.

⁴⁹ Lyon, 2006, page 137

⁵⁰ Fagan, 2006, pp. 100 and 103.

traumatised past, a highly fragmented society, a diseased political climate, an erroneous intervention by the international community in several spheres and a remarkably weak civil society. None of the abovementioned actors have contributed successfully to a positive peace and reconciliation process in BiH in spite of the fact that the DPA was signed more than 15 years ago. Ranging from the international stakeholders to the local political elite and CBO's in BiH, it seems that they are all facing the same fundamental problem; the inability to reach compromises in their endeavours for BiH to make progress. On local ground the political environment has predisposed people to perceive divisions rather than synergies, leaving BiH as a nation on eroding ground.

CHAPTER 3 – Theoretical Framework

A. A Review of the Role of the Media in Nation Building

The inspiration for this project derives from already existing knowledge and theoretical deliberations within the field of the role of news media in post-conflict countries in general, and in BiH in particular. As it has been mentioned previously, a lot of research concerning the role of news media during conflicts and wars has already been done, but remarkably little on the media's role in peace and reconciliation processes.

In the case of BiH, there has recently been published some few reports on media development in general, and moreover on the role of the news media during the election campaign in 2010. What distinguishes this master's thesis from those aforementioned research projects is the fact that this study is also focused on the newspapers' media coverage of the opposite ethnic groups, who most likely are not a great part of the ethno-affiliated newspapers' own daily readers. The main aim is to analyse how we can understand the role of the news media in BiH today for the particular purpose of reconciliation.

In this section I touch upon existing theoretical deliberations on news media and how the role and the effects of the media in the modern society have been theorised. From existing academic researches and theories it is quite clear how powerful mass media are in modern times, especially in conflict-ridden and multiethnic societies who are at a beginning stage of a reconciliation process. Finally, in the end of this chapter the theoretical tools for the analysis of this project are presented and elaborated.

Media in Conflicts

Mark Thompson's *Forging War: The Media in Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina* is an important source of background information for this master's thesis. The most obvious findings in Thompson's report are reflected in the title. As hostilities broke out in former Yugoslavia the media adopted a patriotic stance and took great part in inflaming hostilities among the ethnic groups of the Balkan countries. According to Thompson the media forged war by intervening, distorting and suppressing. Thompson documents that in the various republics, the political elites deployed every intimidatory device in the book to bring to heel or marginalise those media or individuals reluctant to come into line. Thompson generally documents the oppression, venality and prejudice on every side comprehensively and clinically. One of the weaknesses in his report is in explaining why substantial elements in the media led the march to breakdown and the war to erupt. However,

the report does not only enhance our understanding of the Yugoslav war, it also contributes significantly to the reflection on media behaviour in conflicts, whether in former Yugoslavia, or globally.

The Media in Post-Conflict BiH

Various research projects have been published concerning the role of the media in post-war BiH, and in the following I present the main conclusions from the most important publications within this field.

Maureen Taylor's research from 2001, *Media relations in Bosnia: a role for public relations in building civil society*, examines the major issues facing organisations that seek to build relations with publics plus the challenges that bedevilled the media in the early stage of economic development. In Taylor's analysis she concludes that the news media are facing severe political harassment if they criticise the various ruling governments of BiH, which calls for a reinforced focus by the international community to support alternative media that offer alternative perspectives in contrast to the ethno-affiliated media outlets. However, Taylor criticises the fact that the alternative media have not been able or willing to grant NGO's scope for action, since most local NGO's have to pay for their publicity. At the end of the day it clearly seems to be a vicious circle for both media and NGO's, which is a huge lack of economic sustainability. According to Taylor the alternative news media that are supported by foreign donors are results of short-term engagements by the international actors, since there is no exit strategy formulated by the foreign donors. This could result in an alternative media sector, which inevitably close down when economic subsidies from abroad are terminated. In Taylor's point of view the international donors should put more efforts in bringing NGO's and free independent media closer together, due to the fact that these actors hold a golden opportunity to shed some light on more positive and forward-looking news stories, which are not constrained by ethnicity or nationality like in the government-affiliated media outlets. Finally, Taylor's research shows that the international community has spent a lot of efforts and money in building up an alternative media sphere to act as independent mediators of the divided Bosnian society.

In addition, Maureen Taylor and Philip M. Napoli in 2003 published their report *Media Development in Bosnia – A Longitudinal Analysis of Citizens' Perceptions of News Media Realism, Importance and Credibility*. This research can be seen as a follow-up version of the report from 2001. In Taylor and Napoli's study the authors examine the news and information sector in early post-war BiH. Taylor and Napoli concludes that self-sustaining media sector in BiH is almost impossible to imagine, especially for independent media companies since the Bosnians feel more comfortable with politically motivated media.⁵¹ That means a lack of support for

⁵¹ Napoli and Taylor, 2003, page 475.

free and impartial news media, resulting in poor sales figures. However, the report concludes that due to the comprehensive economic support from the international community eventually by mentoring in reporting and higher professional journalistic standards, an independent news sector can emerge to help moderate nationalistic voices that were all-important at the media scene in the first pre-war years in BiH.

Aaron Rhodes' report from 2007, *Ten Years of Media Support to the Balkans – an Assessment*, provides the reader with a comprehensive thorough examination of the results on ground after ten years of substantial media support from international donors. The assessment is an analysis of 37 media assistance projects carried out in BiH during the first 10 years after the signing of the DPA. Rhodes concludes that the international community has invested enormous amounts of money to the Bosnian media sector, and for the first time in history media became a key strategy for the international community to address a range of political and societal issues. Despite strong economic support hovering at almost 88 million Euros, the results of the so called media intervention in 2005 were still far from successful. Rhodes questions whether the intervention was aimed at media development or media *for* development. Throughout the report there is criticism towards the international donors that there has been a huge lack of coordination between the interested parties, and as a logical consequence huge sums of money have been wasted.

The Role of News Media in Election Campaigns in BiH

In 2010 the Media Institute Plan and the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung published the research project *How the Media covered the Election Campaign 2010*. The report takes the form of content analysis research and has been an important source of inspiration for this thesis in terms methodological considerations and project design. Similar to this thesis, the Election report focuses on the period from September 3rd to October 3rd 2010, in which various kinds of media outlets were monitored closely. Through the content analysis the report concludes that many media outlets in BiH reflect deep political divisions.

A striking point in the findings of the report is that the ethno-affiliated newspapers primarily brought news stories involving political parties or state officials from their own respective parts of BiH. All the major newspapers in BiH did have their own favourites when it comes to political parties and officials. Another interesting finding in the Media Institute Plan's report is the fact that in 80% of the articles only one source was used. In articles involving multiple sources in 76% of the cases the sources were uniform, i.e. the statements of the sources were completely identical.

Finally, one of the key findings in the report was that the journalistic standard was extremely low.

B. Understanding the Effects of the Media in Peace and Reconciliation

Enormous amounts of literature on media effects and media theories have been churned out, and in this section the theories applied to this project are to be presented. The rationale is to apply two sets of theories as analytical tools in order to answer the problem formulation. The first theory explains the role of media in peace processes. However, prior to this presentation of this selected theory, the concept of reconciliation is unpacked.

Reconciliation

This is defined as a multileveled process alongside conflict transformation, which is a prerequisite for lasting peace. The concept covers a process through which a society moves from a divided past to a shared future, where individuals and groups can look at the past in a way that allows them to see it in terms of shared suffering and collective responsibility. Most authors agree that reconciliation describes a process rather than an end state or outcome, aiming at *building relationships between individuals, groups or societies*. It is generally recognised that the process of reconciliation needs both the arrangement of *top-down and bottom-up procedures*, and to be most effective these should progress simultaneously.⁵² Reconciliation is a complex process, which often can be seen as a disjuncture and uneven procedure, with manifold moral claims often in competition with one another.⁵³ The process of reconciliation refers to a condition of *mutual respect among former warring-parties*, which requires reciprocal recognition of the moral worth and dignity of others.

The role of the media in the peace and reconciliation process in BiH is in accordance with the criteria set up by international donors involved in the development of the Bosnian media sector. Thus reconciliation in the context of the media can be defined as the aim to create media outlets capable of moderating the nationalist voices that brought conflict to the country in the first place.⁵⁴ Secondly, to create and support news media outlets who promote community cohesion and citizens' participation plus highlight positive developments in the Bosnian society.⁵⁵ In short, this implicitly means that the international community is funding media that operate according to acceptable professional and ethical standards that will enable the reconciliation process. The idea is that the more professional the media sector is, the greater is the possibility that the ethno-affiliated news

⁵² Fischer, 2011.

⁵³ Verdeja, 2009, page 3.

⁵⁴ Napoli and Taylor, 2003, page 473.

⁵⁵ OSCE.

media will refrain from inflammatory reporting and thereby abstain from affecting the reconciliation process negatively.⁵⁶

Having introduced the concept of reconciliation, the next step is to outline the theoretical assumptions necessary for analysing the problem field of this study.

Media as an Implementer of Peace

Gadi Wolfsfeld's *Media and the Path to Peace* (2004) is one of the few publications dealing with the role of the media in on-going peace processes. Wolfsfeld argues that news media generally play a negative role in peace processes, using three concrete peace negotiations to highlight his points. According to Wolfsfeld's analysis it is a lot easier to promote conflict rather than peace through the media since the media mostly deal with simple events, which is contrary to peace building issues that are exceedingly complex. Especially in countries where political leaders exert fully control over the political environment, it is easier to promote their policies to the news media, and in conflict-ridden societies where the political elite is promoting conflict and nationalistic views the media often end up in the so called politics-media-politics cycle, which makes it extremely difficult for the media to promote peace and reconciliation.

Wolfsfeld concludes that news media can have four major types of impact on any peace and reconciliation process:

- 1.) Media can define the political atmosphere, in which the peace and reconciliation take place,
- 2.) Influence the nature of the debate about the process,
- 3.) Have an impact on antagonists' strategy and behaviour,
- 4.) The media can raise and lower the public standing and legitimacy of antagonists involved in the process and their positions.⁵⁷

According to Wolfsfeld, the media can either be constructive or destructive in a reconciliation process. It is of great significance if the media are to contribute in pushing forward settlement and reintegration that they show a least a minimal understanding of 'the other side'. One way of doing this is to include spokespersons from the antagonists' camp thus professional journalistic norms and routines are important, otherwise the media coverage could easily end up in ethnocentric biased reporting.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ OSCE, 2010.

⁵⁷ Wolfsfeld, 2004, pp. 11-15.

⁵⁸ Ibid., page 1.

Wolfsfeld's theories presented in *Media and the Path to Peace* are to be applied as analytical tools for this thesis in order to examine whether the Bosnian print media contribute to a national reconciliation process.

Jennings Bryant and Mary Beth Oliver's publication, *Media effects: advances in theory and research* (2009), is dealing with the general role of mass media in the modern society. The publication is predominantly focussed on the power the mass media possess by having an agenda-setting role in the public debate. The authors argue that in general very few issues are successful in capturing public attention and therefore the news media exerts significant influence on our perceptions of what are the most salient issues of the day. But more importantly, according to Bryant and Oliver, in many cases there are external stakeholders influencing how the media operates. In the final part of the qualitative analysis this theoretical contribution is going to be included in order to understand some underlying causes of the results registered in the quantitative content analysis.

In Bryant and Oliver's words, there are five crucial factors in news coverage that could potentially influence how journalists frame a given issue, and these factors are going to be the applied in the final part of the qualitative analysis of this research:

- 1.) The larger societal norms and values,
- 2.) Organisational pressures and constraints,
- 3.) External pressures from interest groups and
- 4.) Other policy makers
- 5.) The ideological or political orientations of the journalists.

The theoretical framework of this study combines the works of Wolfsfeld, Bryant and Oliver. The two sets of theories presented by the aforementioned scholars make up the theoretic foundation for the quantitative and qualitative content analyses of this study.

A Combined Framework of Understanding

In the analysis the concept of reconciliation is embedded in Wolfsfeld and Bryant/Oliver's theories. The notion of reconciliation is entrenched into the aforementioned sets of theoretical parameters by several ways. First of all, due to the fact the reconciliation is seen as process of moving from a divided past to a shared future, the assumptions of Wolfsfeld are suitable in order to analyse how the Bosnian print media defines the political

atmosphere of the country, how the media tries to influence the nature of the political debate and finally how the media raises or lowers the legitimacy of the antagonists who are involved in the public debate.

The five factors of media influence that arose by Bryant and Oliver are theoretical assumptions are all included in the final part of the analytical section in order to discuss the quantitative and qualitative findings in this research. Bryant and Oliver's theoretical notion should in this project be regarded as a guideline to analyse *why* the role of the present news media in the reconciliation and reintegration process in post-conflict BiH is as it is.

CHAPTER 4 – Methodological Frame

In this section there is going to be a presentation of the methodological considerations which form the basis for analysing the problem field of this thesis. At this juncture, I will go through the methodological deliberations which are linked to the quantitative and qualitative analyses respectively in order to explain how this project is designed and how to answer the problem formulation. Finally, there is going to be a delimitation and clarification of the newspaper media field, which is to be analysed throughout this research.

Theory of Knowledge

Before elaborating on the methodological framework, I shortly touch upon the theory of science foundation of this study. The theory of knowledge has a great significance as regards to how to aim and analyse a problem formulation, since the theory of science is placing concepts as actors, relations, objects and subjects *inter alia* within a frame in which it is possible to understand a given subject and science in general. Regarding the problem field of this research, it is the notion that news media does play an important role in creating the reality, and for that reason the theory of knowledge's point of departure in this study is social constructivism. Social constructivism is not about representing reality, but constructing reality, which is a result of human actions. As it has been previously described in this project, the news media do possess a great power as they are informants and interpreters to their audience, and in that way the news media can have a huge effect on people's perceptions and judgments due to the media's role as contributors to the construction of reality.

Approach

This thesis takes the form of a case study, focusing on an in-depth research of the role of the news print media and its role in the reconciliation process of BiH. The ambition of this project is to examine if and how the news media make contributions to resolve the ethnic tensions and thereby take part in the reconciliation and reintegration process of BiH by acting as mediators between the various ethnic groups of BiH. This is to be analysed by going through various newspaper articles in order to shed some light on-to what extent news media are presenting opposite ethnic groups of the country and more importantly, how these presentations can be characterised in relation to exacerbating or improving the conditions for reconciliation and reintegration between the constituent peoples of BiH.

The method chosen for this research takes the form of an inductive approach. Strictly inductive research projects hardly exist, and due to the fact that the problem field of a study is often inspired by existing theories

or knowledge from previous research projects, so consequently this thesis does include an element of deductive research strategy as well. However, given the givens that this project is mainly empirically oriented, the inductive approach is the dominant method of this research. The knowledge gained through the inductive research should hopefully add new perspectives to already existing knowledge and theories via the empirical analyses of this research.

A further argument for applying an inductive research strategy is that currently there is only a very limited quantity of literature and research projects focusing on the role of the news media in peace and reconciliation procedures in general and on the role of the news media in post-war BiH in particular. Therefore, it seems relevant to widen the understanding of this problem field. Through existing literature and theories on the role of media in peace and reconciliation processes, it has been shown that the news media most often play a negative role in such situations. I intend to see whether these conclusions are valid in the Bosnian case.

A. Quantitative Content Analysis

In order to answer the problem formulation two main dimensions will be included. First of all, the intention is to analyse the newspaper media field of BiH by making a quantitative content analysis of media articles from three Bosnian newspapers during the general election campaign in September 2010. The three selected newspapers are a Bosniak, a Bosnian Serb and a Bosnian Croat news media. Quantitatively, the idea is to examine the frequency, that is to say how often do newspapers present other ethnic groups, i.e. how often does a Bosniak-based newspaper cover news stories involving the Bosnian Serbs and so forth.

Moreover the quantitative content analysis is intended to illustrate the proportions of in which thematic contexts other ethnic groups are presented, thus it should be possible to see if particular subjects are given higher priority than others in articles involving ethnic counterparts. In short, this kind of analysis serves the purpose of ascertaining whether there is any reason to problematise the representations of ethnic counterparts or minorities in the ethno-affiliated news print media in BiH. The method is to highlight the frequency of the presentations of other ethnic groups, in which journalistic form they are presented, e.g. through a news article, an editorial article or an interview. By a combined analysis of these media-related variables and applying the models of Wolfsfeld/Bryant and Oliver, the aim is to understand how the Bosnian media take part in the reconciliation process.

From the collected empirical data four different types of journalistic forms that involve ethnic counterparts in the three selected newspapers have been identified. In the following the various types of articles are presented:

Editorial article: is the editorial possibility to voice its own opinion. Moreover, the editorial article serves the purpose of bringing into focus specific news stories and persons and thereby set the scene for new perspectives and debate topics.

Readers' letters: despite the fact that readers' letters are not explicitly an expression of the editorial stance, I have chosen to include it. As I found out in my search for empirical material, the Bosnian newspapers do only publish one or two readers' letters in the dailies. This could imply that the readers' letters have been through an editorial selection process. Therefore, it seems relevant to include these, due to the fact that the dispersion of readers' letters could express a particular pattern in terms of subjects, political stance and the view on other ethnic groups. Within the category of readers' letters, newspaper columnists are also included.

Interview: an article that involves ethnic counterparts in one way or another, or interviewees who state something about other ethnic groups or persons. It is not a prerequisite for the selection that ethnic counterparts are the key theme or the main spokesmen of the article. Additionally, portrayals are also included in the category 'interviews'. A portrayal is a journalistic form which is focussed on particular persons or groups. Generally, a portrayal is supposed to present the life story, background, attitudes and accomplishments of a person or a group etc. A portrayal is often a way to focus upon a specific theme.

News article: a fact-based article, which involves news stories of political or social character. In this study, the news articles should somehow include people from opposite ethnic groups. News items are most often characterised by presenting statements or press releases from certain groups or individuals. In a news article there is an editorial possibility for attaching comments to the presented facts or quotations, but there is no standard procedure for publishing news articles.

Additionally, it is relevant to examine which subjects are connected to the story and which news angles on ethnic counterparts, meaning positive, negative or objective, take up most of the space in the ethno-affiliated newspapers. Such observation is in accordance with Wolfsfeld's assumptions that the media define the political atmosphere in which the reconciliation process takes place and thereby influence the nature of the debate about the course.

The analysis is based on three selected Bosnian newspapers, and five research questions have been formulated that serve as parameters. The quantitative results from this analysis also give an indication on whether the media are acting in the interest of the nation and the reintegration, or solely put emphasise on political, ethnical and religious intolerance that divides the country even further:

- A.) How often are ethnic counterparts presented in the newspapers?

- B.) What kind of journalistic forms are the opposite ethnic groups part of?
- C.) Who is making the statements in articles involving ethnic counterparts?
- D.) Which thematic classifications or contexts are related to the articles that involve opposite ethnic groups?
- E.) What is the coverage of ethnic counterparts?

By answering the abovementioned questions it is possible to state something representative about the presentations of ethnic counterparts in the ethno-affiliated Bosnian newspapers – both in terms of journalistic standards and the actual content. In relation to question A, it is highly relevant to see how often newspapers report on members of other ethnic groups in their news coverage. The intention is to examine if the daily readers get any information at all about their ethnic counterparts from the other regions of the country?

Question B addresses what kind of journalistic forms the other ethnic groups are part of. For instance, there is a great difference on editorial articles written by journalist from the newspaper or interviews where ethnic compatriots state something about the other constituent groups compared to interviews where ethnic counterparts actually get a chance to speak for themselves. Moreover, the types of articles should also reflect the type of portrayal of the ethnic counterparts.

Regarding question C, it is highly relevant to see if the ethnic counterparts, e.g. state officials or political parties, get a chance to speak in articles involving them. The interesting aspect in this context is whether ethnic counterparts are passive or active elements in the articles as this could have a great effect on the content of the articles concerning them.

Question D, concerns the themes that are related to the articles involving ethnic counterparts, it is relevant for multiple reasons. First of all, it is important to see if particular themes are preferred more than others when dealing with ethnic counterparts. In accordance to the Wolfsfeld theory, the media do have a great power in terms of defining the atmosphere in which the reconciliation process takes place. The point is that the media, by promoting reconciliation and acting critical toward those who oppose reconciliation, could influence the nature of the debate about the process in a positive way in the best interest of the nation and the citizens.

Concerning question E, the rationale is to examine the position of the journalists, but also the positions of the various spokesmen in the articles. For instance, it is of great significance if the bulk of the content in articles

involving ethnic counterparts are seen and interpreted through the perception of spokesmen or the journalist who are part of the same segment, which the ethno-affiliated newspaper mainly communicate with. The rationale is, according to Wolfsfeld's theoretical assumptions that media can advocate for specific antagonists and stakeholders during a reconciliation process. Through the dispersion of attention to specific state officials, political parties etc. the media do possess a great power in terms of priming. Thereby, the media can, either explicitly or implicitly, define the political atmosphere, influence the nature of the debate and finally raise or lower the public standing and legitimacy of actors implicated in the reconciliation and reintegration course.

When categorising the content about ethnic counterparts as neutral, positive or negative, the usage of sources, the thematic context will be included simultaneously along with the stance of the journalists as well as the various spokesmen in the articles

Categorising an article as negative or positive is a challenging task. When assessing if an observed content is positive, negative or neutral towards the various ethnic communities, I take into account the generally accepted perceptions of attitude to the social reality.⁵⁹ Under the category 'neutral' content, items in which neither positive nor negative statements are clearly pointed out, such as short news items, or articles where particular benefit or damage to certain ethnic groups or individuals is not expressed explicitly, will be included. Of course, when dealing with reconciliation and conflict resolution it is difficult to be completely objective. Later in this methodical section I will shortly touch upon the reliability of this work and the biases that can threaten the integrity of this research project.

In order to measure whether an article is positive, negative or neutral towards a specific ethnic group, individuals or the reconciliation process in general several variables should be taken into account. This is to be analysed by looking at the dispersion of attention for various spokesmen in the articles, the positions of the spokesmen toward ethnic counterparts and the use of sources. According to general journalistic logic, the more sources there are present in an article, the stand of the reporter should be more neutral, and thereby the content should be more objective.⁶⁰ Therefore, in the quantitative content analysis the aspect of sources will be included. Sources can be paraphrased statements or directly presented. Even though it is not always the

⁵⁹ By the generally accepted perceptions of attitude to the social reality I take into account the overall frame lay down in the provisions of the DPA. More precisely, this means that any statements or actions resistant to the DPA should be regarded as negative or damaging to the reconciliation process and for inter-ethnic relations. For example, this could be proclamations of secessionism, ethnic hate speech, abolitions of entities, or any other attempts to break the agreement, which Bosniak, Serb and Croat signatories signed in 1995 in Dayton, USA. Finally, I also define articles with negative statements toward other ethnic groups as negative in cases where there are no opposing sources or questioning from the journalist in question.

⁶⁰ Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung and Media Institute Plan, 2010, page 12.

rule, different views of the sources give the reader a greater opportunity to examine the content of the article. Uniform sources are sources who more or less share the same views and opposing sources have contrasting views or offer information whose content is opposing. Consequently, opposing sources, at least to some extent, leaves it to the audience's judgement how the so called news frame of the article should be perceived.⁶¹

Finally, in the endeavours for categorising the content of an article as positive, negative or neutral towards particular ethnic groups, the position of the journalist is exceptionally significant. This variable is a value judgment of the positions toward other ethnic groups or events that are related to specific ethnic segments of the Bosnian society. Naturally, a journalist's stand in a commentary is a legitimate journalistic drill, however, in several ways the commentary can be an expression of journalistic non-professionalism or political intent.⁶²

The quantitative content analysis serves the purpose of being advantageous in pointing out a possible problem and moreover to subsequently elaborate on the proportions via a qualitative content study. The quantitative analysis should serve as a method for structuring incoherent data like newspaper articles plus it is valuable as regards to examine countable information.

B. Qualitative Content Analysis

The qualitative content analysis is applied to exemplify some of the most frequent findings and patterns from the quantitative content analysis. Wolfsfeld's theory on understanding the role of the media in reconciliation processes and the effects of the modern media will be used as a guide for analysing the empirical material. The qualitative content analysis is primarily to be focused on the most frequent tendencies explored in the quantitative content analysis. Besides using the theoretical foundation of Wolfsfeld information gained through formal meetings and interviews with, Boro Kontić, Director of Mediacentar Sarajevo and Marek Mracka, Media Analyst from the OSCE mission to BiH, will be included in the qualitative part of the analysis. The two media experts are mainly included in order to shed some light on aspects, which I personally have not been able to examine due to logistics – i.e. lack of access and lack of transparency within some particular fields. In this context I intend to include the five influential factors by Bryant and Oliver, which have been presented previously. The Bryant/Oliver theory is going to be applied and combined with the interviews in a final discussion in the qualitative analysis.

⁶¹ Bryant and Oliver, 2009, pp. 19-20.

⁶² Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung and Media Plan Institute, 2010, page 13.

Reliability

Bearing in mind the problem field of this study, I feel it is appropriate to state my political views. Researchers dealing with peace and reconciliation processes, almost as journalists, must admit that it is practically impossible to express an objective stand toward these issues. Analysing the field of reconciliation already indicates implicitly that the final objective is reconciliation and harmony. Of course, such kinds of bias might threaten the integrity of this project. In cases where the ethno-affiliated news media appears to be omitting the promotion of reintegration and reconciliation, this will be considered as a problem, which is supposed to be solved. However, those opposed to reconciliation would most probably claim that such kind of media demonstrate their independence and protect ethno-national interests.

There is no obvious solution to this problem, but by stating my biases I give the readers an opportunity to look for any faults that are rooted in my own bias by supporting the reconciliation process of BiH. I do support the generally accepted perception of social reality, which in this project, is the overall frame lay down in the provisions of the DPA, which pose the first step toward reconciliation and reintegration of BiH. I also believe that news media do have an ethical responsibility to encourage reconciliation between antagonists. As I see it, media that operate in conflict-ridden societies must provide as much information as possible about the roots of the problem and facilitate and promote a rational public debate.

Delimitation and Specification

To answer the problem formulation, there is a need for delimitating and specifying the selection of empirical material, sources of data, the choice of respondents and the time frame which this project operates within.

The time framework is 2010, more precisely the general election campaign. Naturally, it would be preferable to include the period from 2006 until 2010, which appears to be the period where the social, political and economic deterioration of BiH has been most significant in the post-war years

However, for practical reasons a four year period, even a one year period, seems to be a too comprehensive task for collecting data, especially bearing in mind that the data material is in a foreign language that has to be translated into English. Therefore, I have chosen to focus on 2010 as the time frame of this study with a main focus on the election campaign running from September 1st until October 3rd 2010, which was the Election Day. The reason why the overall time frame is 2010 and not for instance 2008 is due to the fact that 2010 was

a remarkably eventful year in BiH for multiple reasons, and the rationale for my choice is now to be elaborated. First of all, 2010 is within the abovementioned so called four years of crisis in BiH.

Secondly, 2010 was a general election year - an event that most often hardens the rhetoric used both among politicians, but also in the news media.⁶³ 2010 was also the year where the Prime Minister of RS at that time and the current RS President, Milorad Dodik, from the largest Bosnian Serb party SNSD, denied the massacre on thousands of Muslim men and boys in Srebrenica in 1995. In 2010, a ceremony in commemoration of the Srebrenica massacre was marked and caused a lot of mutual accusations and nationalistic rhetoric across the entity borders.

Moreover, in this year the SNSD also launched the Bosnian Serb policy for holding a referendum on RS secession from BiH, an act which is inconsistent to the provisions laid down in the DPA. This statement provoked strong reactions in the Bosniak part of the country. Subsequently, the nationalist party of the Bosnian Croats, HDZ, also presented the idea that their people could break away from the Bosnian state. These proclamations were met with hard line rhetoric from the leader of SDP, the Bosniak Zlatko Lagumdžija, who in a very bombastic way publicly stated that any attempts of disintegrating the Bosnian state would be responded by physical force in terms of the evolvement of a new war.⁶⁴

The abovementioned actions made 2010 an eventful year in BiH. Moreover, as 2010 also was the year I personally worked in BiH and followed the Bosnian general elections closely due to my internship at the Royal Danish Embassy in Sarajevo, 2010 appears to be a natural time-delimitating choice.

Sources of Data

Bosnian Newspapers

Due to the enormous media market in BiH, there certainly is a need for narrowing down the selection of empirical material. As stated previously, the number of media outlets in BiH is incredibly high considering the small size of the country and its population. For this reason it is a prerequisite to make a selection process of particular media outlets which are to be analysed.

The empirical focal point of this study is the newspaper media. The newspapers I have selected to include are the Bosniak *Dnevni Avaz* (Daily Voice), the Bosnian Serb *Nezavisne Novine* (Independent Newspaper) and the Bosnian Croat *Dnevni List* (Daily News). The explanation for including *Dnevni Avaz*, *Dnevni List* and

⁶³ Kontić, 2011.

⁶⁴ International Crisis Group, 2010.

Nezavisne Novine in the analysis is multifarious. First of all, they are daily newspapers and each of them is representing different ethnic affiliations plus they are based in three different ethnic regions of the country. This means that they primarily try to address their newspapers to readers of the same ethnic origin.

A recently published countrywide print media survey shows that among the daily newspaper consumers around 36% of the Bosnians read Dnevni Avaz, 2% read Nezavisne Novine and 1% read Dnevni List. These three newspapers have the highest number of daily circulations among the ethnic affiliated newspaper media (Dnevni Avaz: 50.000 issues, Nezavisne Novine: 22.800 and Dnevni List: 10.000 issues). However, among the Bosnian Serbs the most popular local newspaper is Glas Srpske, which is read by 4% of the newspaper consumers in BiH, although the newspaper does not publish any circulation data. Due to practical reasons Glas Srpske is left out in this project, as the newspaper is not available in online data archives.⁶⁵

The three newspapers are, at least officially, considered as editorially independent media outlets. Nezavisne Novine is considered as a Bosnian Serb opposition newspaper, and is seen as a counterbalance to the dominant newspaper in RS, Glas Srpske, which is owned by the RS entity government.⁶⁶

The aforementioned survey also indicated that readerships are ethnically divided. This was highlighted by the fact that 70% of the Dnevni Avaz readers live in areas with Bosniak majority, while Nezavisne Novine is hardly read in areas where the Bosnian Serbs are not in majority. The same goes for the Bosnian Croat newspaper Dnevni List, which has most daily circulations in zones dominated by the Croats.⁶⁷

The rationale for choosing these three newspapers is to get a broad spectre of articles from all three sides of the ethnic groups in BiH and their representations of their ethnic counterparts. The idea is not to analyse the differences of the three newspapers' presentations of ethnic counterparts, but to give a nuanced and holistic picture of how opposite ethnic groups are presented in the ethno-affiliated newspapers. This approach is preferred in the endeavours for concluding how the Bosnian media contribute to the on-going reconciliation process in the country.

In order to delimitate and specify my data material various criteria for the selection of types of articles has been determined. The types of articles are: editorial articles, news articles, readers' letters/columns and interviews. The common denominator for these articles is that ethnic counterparts are somehow given

⁶⁵ Wien International, 2009.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

attention in the articles – directly or indirectly. All of the articles should be within the frame of social, political, cultural or economic news and serve the purpose of stating something about opposite ethnic groups in general or specifically - i.e. politicians, common people, ethnic dominated regions etc. However, the articles do not have to include ethnic counterparts as the main actors or subject of the news article.

By focusing on the newspaper media means that television and radio media and internet news portals will not be included in this study. An argument for not dealing with the radio and television media is due to the reason that a research on this field has recently been carried out by Mediacentar Sarajevo. In 2008 this media research institution published a comprehensive analysis of the broadcasting sector in multiethnic states in general and in BiH in particular.⁶⁸ Also, due to practical reasons the print media is advantageous field to analyse because of online archive accessibility.

In Mediacentar's report the concluding remarks were that the framework of public broadcasting service system (PBS) in BiH has not led public television to act as a factor of social reintegration and cohesion. Instead, the broadcasting sector represents the complete ethnic segregation of the country as in almost any other spheres of life in BiH. Moreover, the report points out that the overall organisation of PBS similarly reflects the complex ethnic, political and territorial realities of the country, which is primarily due to heavy pressure from the ruling political elites, who do often oppose the PBS law, even though it is required that all three PBS channels fully reflect the ethnic and cultural diversity of BiH in their programming and staffing.⁶⁹ A final important remark in Mediacentar's analysis is that the two entity PBS channels, one in RS and one in FBiH, do not attract other ethnicities as a result of the ethnocentric style of reporting. The third PBS channel in BiH, BHRT, which is the only national PBS channel in BiH, is mostly viewed by Bosniaks and is more or less deselected by the Bosnian Serb and Bosnian Croat audience.⁷⁰

The collection of empirical data is assisted by the Bosnian article database Infobiro, which is an online digital database. Infobiro is in possession of newspaper articles, research reports and statistical data on BiH and the region. Mediacentar Sarajevo has its own library on mass media as well as a print media archive containing the most important newspaper issues from BiH, thus this database is also to be used in my search for empirical material. In my search for articles in Infobiro's database I was assisted by a local archive research expert, who guided me through the selection process by translating and helping me out with Bosnian search

⁶⁸ In 2008 Mediacentar Sarajevo published the report: "Divided They Fall – Public service broadcasting in multiethnic states".

⁶⁹ Bašić, Jusić and Thompson, 2008, page 82.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

keywords in order to get the broadest coverage of the articles as possible. At an early stage in my writing process we did make a comprehensive test of search keywords. This had to be done very systematically to streamline the searching process in all three newspapers. It means that we searched for political leaders from the various ethnic groups of BiH, the names of the constituent groups and the names of the main political parties.

Finally, we ended up with seven keywords to search for in the three newspapers and for all the ethnic groups. At the initial stage we did search for various kinds of political parties and party and state officials. Early in the process it became quite clear to us that smaller parties and their political candidates seemed to be almost omitted from the overall media coverage. A multiethnic party as Nasa Stranka (Our Party) was hardly found in the articles, and the same goes for the smaller political parties rooted in all three ethnic segments of the country.

The search test was used in order to get as many articles as we possibly could. This was due to making the quantitative analysis as valid and reliable as possible. Due to that argument we ended up searching for the biggest political parties and their party officials.

Regarding Bosniak representation in the Croatian newspaper Dnevni List and the Serbian Nezavisne Novine the following keywords were applied in the searching process: bosnjaci* (Bosniak), SBB*, SDA*, Haris Silajdžić *, Bakir Izetbegović*, Sulejman Tihić* and muslimani* (Muslims). Concerning Serb representation in articles in Bosniak Dnevni Avaz and Croatian Dnevni List we found a broad range of articles by using the keywords as follows: SNSD*, Milorad Dodik*. SDS*, Republika Srpska*, Srbi* (Serbian), Dragan Cović* and Bosanski Srbi* (Bosnian Serbs). As regards to the Croat representation in Nezavisne Novine and Dnevni Avaz we searched for: HDZ BiH*, HDZ 1990, Hrvati* (Croats), Dragan Cović*, Borjana Kristo*, Katolici* (Catholic) and Božo Ljubić*.

Supplementary Empirical Material

Also, due to my internship in Sarajevo from August 2010 until February 2011, I include background information ranging from first-hand meetings and conferences to reports, which undersigned either has been a part of conducting or received due to the daily work at the Danish Embassy. During the internship, I met with several local state officials, political parties and representatives from various organisations. For instance, I attended formal and informal meetings with the newly elected President of RS, Milorad Dodik, the newly elected

Bosniak member of the BiH Presidency, Bakir Izetbegovic, the EU Delegation to BiH, the HR/EUSR Valentin Inzko, the OSCE, International Crisis Group, Transparency International, Mediacentar Sarajevo, and Association “BH Novinari” (“BH Journalists”) etc. The bulk of these interlocutors did provide me with interesting and highly relevant sorts of information, which has been useful for this thesis in one way or another.

Besides formal and informal meetings with various stakeholders in BiH, material collected from the local media and analyses from other relevant representations and think-tanks are part of the background basis for the analysis of this project. Naturally, such kind of data has to be viewed critically and one should not disregard that the senders obviously have certain purposes and motives for their statements.

CHAPTER 5 – Presentation of the Case

The first part of the analytical framework is a presentation of the responsibility of the media in BiH during the Bosnian war and the early post-conflict period. This is followed by a quantitative content analysis of the newspaper articles from the previously mentioned Bosnian newspapers, Dnevni Avaz, Dnevni List and Nezavisne Novine. The focus in this part of the analysis is to examine the frequency of the ethno-affiliated newspapers' distribution of news articles involving ethnic counterparts and in which way. Whereas, the latter qualitative content analysis primarily examines the journalistic norms and routines, since these implicitly illustrate if ethnic counterparts are presented in a way that is in accordance with professional journalistic standards and ethics, which have an impact on how the media contributes to the reconciliation process in BiH.

By using the variables of Wolfsfeld, Bryant and Oliver, it is possible to conclude how to comprehend the current role of the news media of BiH in the process of reconciliation and reintegration in the ethnically divided country.

Responsibility of the News Media

This section there is going to be a presentation and sub-analysis of the role that the news media in BiH had during the Bosnian war and in the early post-conflict years. This presentation is highly relevant, thus it should be regarded as guidance in order to understand, if the current media sector in BiH have undertaken a role to contribute positively to the reconciliation of BiH, or the news media are still affecting the conflict resolution process negatively, despite the enormous efforts provided by the international community to make the media sector in BiH a vehicle for a positive and conciliatory development.

As regards to the media field there has been a comprehensive international driven process to establish a functional mass media sector that should operate as mediators in the Bosnian society and effectively contribute to the shared consciousness and identity of the Bosnian people plus highlight the prospects of real coherence of the community as a whole.⁷¹ Before elaborating on the international community's handling of the news media development in BiH, there is a need to give a short historical retrospect of the media sector from the war period in former Yugoslavia in the mid 1990's until present day in order to get an understanding of the legacy of the news media in BiH in the year of 2011. A historical retrospect also serves a purpose later in this

⁷¹ Hodžić, 2010.

project as a benchmark to assess whether there has been any progress within the media field 15 years after the warring parties, the media sector included, laid down their arms.

During the 1990's when BiH was still a part of Yugoslavia, there was a free press by the standards of most Communist countries of that time. Just as the republican bodies, the media in various republics of Yugoslavia were controlled by each republic's League of Communists. Long before the break out of the civil war in BiH, the political elites of the republic quickly realised that the control of public opinions, especially among own ethnic groups, was just as important as controlling the battlefield.⁷² As it is claimed by Christopher Bennet the war was: "[...] *not a tale of ancient hatreds, centuries of ethnic strife and inevitable conflict, but of very modern nationalist hysteria which was deliberately generated by the media*".⁷³ Controlled media were a superb asset for defining values and agendas and created the illusion among the audience that the particular interests of the warmongers were similarly the interest of the people and nation. Consequently, this resulted in all warring sides tried to mobilise and manipulate public opinions, which implied that news media were not just to comment on the war, but became a part it. As Balkan media expert Mark Thompson states, the war was conducted with as much an eye on the media as on purely military objectives. According to Thompson; " [...] *the conflict was created, nurtured and encouraged by competing political forces and the media played a major role in manufacturing the conflict – just as it did in Rwanda*".⁷⁴

As the war broke out, the various ethno-political parties on all three sides set up parallel news media outlets within their own autonomous territories.

Similar to other spheres of the country, the news media were also subject to fragmentation and were rapidly abused to justify war, and for the political elites the war had also justified the abuse of media.⁷⁵ As Thompson puts it; "*The media space in BiH was scattered by force before the territorial space was shattered by much greater force in order to create exclusive national zones*".⁷⁶ From that point a vicious circle was created, where verbal violence engendered physical violence and vice versa.⁷⁷ At the edge of and during the war, only a few news media were acting politically independent. A good example is the daily newspaper, *Oslobodjenje*, probably the best-known and most praised newspaper of South-Eastern Europe. *Oslobodjenje* became the

⁷² Institute for War and Peace Reporting, 2010.

⁷³ Thompson, 1999, page 298.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.* page xi.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, page 305.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, page 241.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, page 1.

only striking symbol of resistance to the madness of ethnic politics and served as one of the few editorially independent media outlets during the war.^{78 79}

Once the war ended, the fragmented news media in BiH continued to fuel hostilities among the former enemies by biased and non-objective reporting. This strongly contributed to increase the insecurity in an already fragile state. The main focus of most of the media was solely on negative stories about the opposite ethnic groups. Additionally, the media encouraged denial of war crimes and created an atmosphere in which it was highly acceptable to blame other ethnic groups for everything that stalled the implementation of the peace process. Naturally, this had a very negative effect in the earliest post-war years in BiH, thus slowing down the reconciliation process significantly.⁸⁰ This was a huge problem in BiH after the war since almost all newspapers, radio and broadcasting media represented exclusively the interest of a specific ethno-political party. Simultaneously, the small numbers of editorially independent media outlets were facing severe and systematic harassment.⁸¹

In the DPA the media is hardly mentioned. The OHR had to invent a new mandate as it went along, but did not receive the expected and needed support to realise it. The DPA only contained a small number of declarations about freedom of information and media, but the focus was primarily on the media involvement in general elections.⁸² Not surprisingly, in the wake of the war the level of cooperation between the media in both entities was very limited and only due to international support, the intensity of collaboration was able to develop marginally.⁸³ As a result of a legal and regulatory vacuum, which existed in BiH after the war, and the lack of attention on the media field, absurd figures of media quantity were evident in the war-torn country, since the unreformed media laws simplified the registration of new media outlets. The new regimes in BiH became even more hostile to free and independent media after the war, and apparently the respective political leaders succeeded to pressure the most influential media to continue their addressing of mono-ethnic audiences and reflect the agendas of the various regimes of the post-war BiH. Only because of international efforts to assist local media, conditions were created to erode the political and psychological grip of media controlled by governments.⁸⁴ In addition, in 1998 the High Representative established an international body, International Media Commission (IMC), which had a wide mandate to promote and regulate free, fair and impartial media.

⁷⁸ Thompson, 1999, page 241.

⁷⁹ Wien International, 2009.

⁸⁰ Institute for War and Peace Reporting, 2010.

⁸¹ Institute for War and Peace Reporting, 2000.

⁸² Thompson, 1999, page 282.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, page 284.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 261-262.

The IMC was in charge of licensing all broadcasters, formulate codes of practice for both the print and electronic media and also sanction violations in order to curb nationalist media.^{85 86} However, in the following years after the signing of DPA the international intervention in the media sphere did not have any real power of penetration.

Since the end of the Bosnian civil war, the international community has attempted to develop independent local media and legal institutional framework. On the contrary to the IMC, locally based bodies were established by the virtue of the Communication Regulatory Agency (CRA) and the Press Council.⁸⁷ These bodies were and still are responsible for, respectively, licensing and regulating the broadcasting sector and dealing with complaints within the field of the print press. Through a legal framework for the protection of freedom of expression largely in place and laws against defamation and libel in force in both entities since 2002, BiH progressed gradually, but markedly on the annual list of Press Freedom Index⁸⁸ the following years. Notably, BiH moved from a 43rd place in 2002 to a 19th place on the index in 2006, indications that a positive trend was developing in the country as regards to independence of media. However, from 2006 until present BiH has gradually declined on the press freedom list and is now placed on a 47th position.⁸⁹ During the same period, the Free Media Helpline has registered an increasing number of physical and verbal attacks on reporters and media. Already during the first eight months of 2010, 23 attacks were recorded.^{90 91} Similarly, the EU Commission's Progress Report from 2010 on BiH clearly indicated that the freedom of expression is under severe pressure in BiH. The report states:

*“Political pressure on the media increased and the independence of the CRA continued to be undermined. In certain cases, public bodies continued to deny access to information even after the Ombudsman issued a recommendation to provide access. An increasing number of complaints about news reporting and Press Code violations have been filled with the Press Council”.*⁹²

As mentioned previously, the OSCE and the EU are currently the main international stakeholders in the development of the media field in BiH. The OSCE is currently running its Media and Communication

⁸⁵ Thompson, 1999, page 285.

⁸⁶ Institute for War and Peace Reporting, 2000.

⁸⁷ OSCE, 2007, page 3.

⁸⁸ Press Freedom Index has since 2002 been a yearly publication authored by Reporters without Borders. The Press Freedom Index serves the purpose to measure the level of press freedom worldwide by asking journalists, researchers and legal experts.

⁸⁹ Reporters without Borders, 2010.

⁹⁰ Rudic, 2010.

⁹¹ European Commission Progress Report, 2010.

⁹² Ibid., page 18.

programme in BiH, which main aim is to develop the capacity of municipalities to use the media effectively as part of an integrated strategy to communicate with citizens.⁹³ In general, the international community has donated millions of dollars to foster free and fair media, which hundreds of Bosnian media outlets have profited from. One of the largest donors, the OSCE, has primarily focused on supporting community-based journalism in order to promote community cohesion, raise the citizens' participation and highlight positive developments in local communities.⁹⁴ The donors have aimed at solely to support independent minded media outlets and due to this a huge quantity of new media outlets has occurred. Obviously, the enormous financial support from international donors have been dependence-producing for the local Bosnian media, since the independent minded news media rely heavily on international donations, and the idea of a self-sustaining media sector seems almost impossible.⁹⁵

From an international donors' perspective, the rationale is that the restoration of news credibility is an important foundation for rebuilding trust in BiH between both the public and politicians and moreover among the three constituent groups of the country.

⁹³ OSCE.

⁹⁴ OSCE.

⁹⁵ Napoli and Taylor, 2003.

Quantitative Content Analysis

As mentioned in the Methodology chapter, five research questions were formulated that serve as parameters.

They are:

- A.) How often are ethnic counterparts presented in the newspapers?
- B.) What kind of journalistic forms are the opposite ethnic groups part of?
- C.) Who is making the statements involving ethnic counterparts?
- D.) Which thematic classifications or contexts are related to the articles that involve opposite ethnic groups?
- E.) What is the coverage of ethnic counterparts?

From the empirical findings seven thematic categories have been identified:

- Nation building
- Election campaign
- Attitude to the past
- Secession
- Political skirmishes
- Religion and Culture
- Other

Nation building issues refer to general political debate concerning issues as constitutional reform, power-sharing in the Bosnian consociational confederation and debates related to how BiH should make political and economic progress in general.

The *Election campaign* theme involves issues as the election process, reports on pre-election gatherings, and articles primarily focusing on state officials and candidates plus parties' presentation of their election manifestos. *Attitude to the past* category comprises news coverage of events from the Bosnian war, and the following repercussions from the war, such as displaced persons or war criminals etc. *The Secession* category consists of articles focusing on officials and parties who oppose the DPA and advocate for a dissolution of BiH. *Political skirmishes* involve articles in which political parties present mutual accusations that are not related to

nation building issues or policy issues in general. *Religion and Culture* are articles solely focussed on religious and cultural events or problems.

The thematic category *Other* encompasses various smaller themes like e.g. crime and corruption, personal related stories and other thematic issues that fall outside the previously mentioned categories.

Presentation of Results

The quantitative analysis is designed in the following way. First, various tables illustrate the results of the data presented. Subsequently, the respective results are analysed through the previously through the applied assumptions originating from Wolfsfeld.

The first question is concerning frequency. And by using the term ethnic counterpart, articles involving political leaders, parties and the ethnic groups in general, were collected.

A. How often are ethnic counterparts presented or mentioned in the newspapers?

TABLE A – No. of articles	Newspaper	Bosnian Serbs	Bosnian Croats	Bosniaks	Total
	Dnevni Avaz	41	31	-	72
	Dnevni List	31	-	38	69
	Nezavisne Novine	-	25	51	76
	Total	72	56	89	217

During the Bosnian election campaign a total of 217 articles were collected from the three ethno-affiliated newspapers. The bulk of the articles involved the Bosniaks (89 items), then the Serbs (72 items) and finally the Croats (56 items). The overall quantity of articles involving ethnic counterparts is relatively low considering the fact that they are collected within a period of 33 days. On average this means that there were only 2.2 articles per day in the ethno-affiliated dailies that dealt with each of the two ethnic counterparts during the general election campaign.

B.) Which kinds of journalistic forms are the opposite ethnic groups part of?

TABLE B1	Dnevni Avaz	Bosnian Serbs
	Editorial articles	5
	News articles	34
	Readers' letters	1
	Interviews	1
	Total	41

TABLE B2	Dnevni Avaz	Bosnian Croats
	Editorial articles	0
	News articles	25
	Readers' letters	2
	Interviews	4
	Total	31

TABLE B3	Dnevni List	Bosniaks
	Editorial articles	1
	News articles	28
	Readers' letters	1
	Interviews	8
	Total	38

TABLE B4	Dnevni List	Bosnian Serbs
	Editorial articles	1
	News articles	25
	Readers' letters	2
	Interviews	3
	Total	31

TABLE B5	Nezavisne Novine	Bosnian Croats
	Editorial articles	0
	News articles	21
	Readers' letters	1
	Interviews	3
	Total	25

TABLE B6	Nezavisne Novine	Bosniaks
	Editorial articles	0
	News articles	41
	Readers' letters	6
	Interviews	4
	Total	51

Regarding journalistic forms a striking tendency was discovered. From among the total of 217 articles involving ethnic counterparts in the three newspapers, 174 of the items, corresponding to 80.2%, were relatively short news articles, which could be characterised as shorthand reporting. In comparison there were only seven editorial articles (3.2%), 13 reader's letters/columns (6%) and 23 interviews (10.6%) with or about ethnic counterparts.

Another issue that is particularly interesting is that among the seven editorial articles, only four were specifically focused on ethnic counterparts. In the remaining three articles the main attention was on BiH, i.e. political candidates and parties from all three constituent groups. Two of the articles had a negative position toward ethnic counterparts, and in both cases Bosnian Serbs. One editorial article had a negative standpoint on so called 'others'. From these findings it remarkable that only 57.1% of the editorial articles were actually predominantly focused on ethnic counterparts, in which 67.7% of these had a negative editorial stand toward ethnic counterparts.

Concerning interviews, a total of 23 items involving ethnic counterparts were collected during the election period. Only nine of the interviews were conducted with spokesmen representing opposite ethnic groups in which the editorial position was neutral in all of them. However in 14 of the interviews, or 60%, the ethnic counterparts were passive elements in the articles, and thereby not spoken with, but spoken about. In 11 of these interviews the interviewees represented the same ethnic group, which dominates the target audience of the newspaper and in three of the items the spokesmen represented 'others'. Among the 11 interviews with people representing the same ethnicity as the target group of the newspaper, the position of the spokesperson was in three cases negatively disposed toward ethnic counterparts. In the remaining eight interviews, the position of the interviewees was neutral toward ethnic counterparts in six of the items. In three articles negative statements were addressed the Bosnian political system in general.

Within the journalistic form - categorised as readers' letters and columns - 13 items were discovered in the empirical material. Not surprisingly, the bulk of the readers' letters and columnists were representatives of the audience target groups. Only one column had a negative position towards the joint political elite of BiH – a column written by a spokesman representing others. In eight of the 13 readers' letters and columns (61.5%), the content was marked by negativity toward ethnic counterparts. In three items (23.1%) there were negative positions toward the Bosnian political elite as a whole. Finally in one reader's letter (7.7%) the writer was heavily criticising political parties representing the same ethnic segment as the writer himself. Bearing in mind that all of the ethno-affiliated newspapers bring very few readers' letters and columns, it is remarkable that all of these are written by authors belonging to the same ethnic group as the respective newspapers. Also, considering the low number of readers' letters and columns that are published in the newspapers, one should assume that readers' contributions have been through a close inspection from the editorial sides before they are published. In this connection it is striking that among the 13 readers' letters/columns in 61.5% of these the content can be characterised as negative toward ethnic counterparts.

From such countable information it is possible to conclude that regarding the dispersion of articles and moreover the generally low level of attention on other ethnic groups, the three ethno-affiliated newspapers evidently seem to be ethnocentric in their style of reporting, as the dailies reported much more on candidates, political parties and state officials etc. from the ethnic groups that dominate the respective newspapers' target audience.

C.) Who are the spokesmen in articles involving ethnic counterparts?

TABLE C: Dispersion of spokesmen	Spokesmen	Dnevni Avaz	Dnevni List	Nezavisne Novine	Total
	Bosniaks	8	16	24	48
	Serbs	16	11	23	50
	Croats	13	18	20	51
	Journalists	28	18	6	52
	Others	8	6	7	21
	Total	73	69	80	222*

*In total there are 12 articles out of the total of 217 articles involving multiple spokesmen of different ethnic origin, thus the whole quantity of spokesmen (222) exceeds the total amount of articles involving ethnic counterparts (217). 11 of the 12 articles having multiple sources the positions were uniform. In only one article the sources had opposing views. The bulk of the articles having uniform sources involved two spokesmen of same ethnic origin expressing views toward one or several ethnic groups or actors. In such cases, spokesmen representing same ethnicity and views have been registered as 'one spokesperson' in the table above.

D.) Which thematic classifications or contexts are related to the articles that involve opposite ethnic groups?

TABLE D1: Bosniaks	Thematic classification	Dnevni List	Nezavisne Novine	Total
	Nation building	9	18	27
	Election campaign	16	12	28
	Attitude to the past	0	3	3
	Secession	0	2	2
	Political skirmishes	2	1	3
	Religion and culture	4	7	11
	Other	7	8	15
	Total	38	51	89

TABLE D2: Croats	Thematic classification	Dnevni Avaz	Nezavisne Novine	Total
	Nation building	3	6	9
	Election campaign	22	10	32
	Attitude to the past	1	2	3
	Secession	1	2	3
	Political skirmishes	0	1	1
	Religion and culture	1	0	1

Other	3	4	7
Total	31	25	56

TABLE D3: Serbs	Thematic classification	Dnevni Avaz	Dnevni List	Total
	Nation building	9	10	19
	Election campaign	9	12	21
	Attitude to the past	5	1	6
	Secession	3	3	6
	Political skirmishes	2	0	2
	Religion and culture	1	1	2
	Other	12	4	16
	Total	41	31	72

The dominant theme from among the 217 articles was related to the on-going *election campaign* (81 items). In almost 37.3% of the articles the content was about the general election. *Nation building* was the second largest category constituting 55 items (25.3%). The category *other* comprises 38 articles (17.5%). The prevailing subjects within this broad classification were corruption, foreign policy issues and personal related stories on state officials and candidates from political parties. Thematic categories as *secessionism*, *religion and culture*, *political skirmishes* and *attitude to the past* altogether made up 43 of the 217 news items (19.8%). These figures show that the media did cover the election campaign comprehensively. More importantly, for the purpose of reconciliation sensitive issues as *secession*, *attitude to the past* and *political skirmishes* did not pose a great part of the articles. Also, the thematic context *nation building*, which is the theme that is mostly related to the debates on reconciliation, did take up a lot of the space in the overall news coverage. At first glance, at least from a Wolfsfeld point of view, this appears to be a positive tendency due to the fact that the media did seem to be occupied with this issue. However, judging from the content, there were no clear indications that the media did attempt to act as agenda-setting actors in this debate. Instead, the bulk of the selected sources within this thematic category were representatives of ethno-nationalistic parties, whose attitudes toward reconciliation and ethnic counterparts were already well-known. In this context the media undertook a rather passive advocacy role with no attempts on influencing the nature of the hostile political debate, and almost completely neglected the representations of smaller and more consensus-based political parties, who advocate for reconciliation within the frame of the DPA.

E.) What is the coverage of ethnic counterparts?

TABLE E1: Bosniaks	Editorial position	Dnevni List	Nezavisne Novine	Total
	Positive	1	0	1
	Negative	1	0	1
	Neutral	36*	51**	87
	Total	38	51	89

*1 column included.

** 6 readers' letters included.

TABLE E2: Serbs	Editorial position	Dnevni Avaz	Dnevni List	Total
	Positive	0	0	0
	Negative	6	0	6
	Neutral	35*	31**	66
	Total	41	31	72

*1 column included.

**1 reader's letter and 1 column included.

TABLE E3: Croats	Editorial position	Dnevni Avaz	Nezavisne Novine	Total
	Positive	0	0	0
	Negative	2	0	2
	Neutral	29*	25**	54
	Total	31	25	56

*1 reader's letter and 1 column included. ** 1 reader's letter included.

An assumedly more important element in the quantitative content analysis is the editorial position toward ethnic counterparts. Additionally, the distribution of attention to various spokesmen and their views on other ethnic groups are highly relevant, as these could, be an implicit expression of the editorial stance or biased reporting toward ethnic counterparts. According to the Wolfsfeld, the attention given to specific spokesmen and their views are quite significant in terms of influencing the nature of the debate on the reconciliation process. Moreover, this distribution and the way the articles are presented indicates whether the media attempts to raise or lower the legitimacy of particular antagonists and actors⁹⁶ involved for the purpose of reconciliation.

⁹⁶ By 'actors' I refer to spokespersons, i.e. state officials, political candidates and other stakeholders who belong to the same ethnic segment as the audience of the various ethno-affiliated newspapers.

From a total number of 217 articles only nine articles had a negative editorial position toward ethnic counterparts. That corresponds to just approximately 4% of the collected articles. This is quite a surprising result bearing in mind that election campaigns traditionally have inflamed the rhetoric used by the Bosnian media.

However in the Bosniak daily, Dnevni Avaz, there were six articles in which the content was biased by a negative editorial stance toward the Bosnian Serbs and two items involving the Bosnian Croats. In Dnevni List only a single article with a negative position toward the Bosniaks was spotted.

A noticeable tendency in the editorially biased reporting on ethnic counterparts was that 66% of the articles only contained one source. The remaining three articles had two or multiple sources, yet, in two of these articles the sources were uniform and expressed the same views on ethnic counterparts.

Among the editorially skewed articles the dominant thematic context was *other* (four items), meaning crime and foreign policy. Two of the articles referred to *attitude to the past*. Besides two editorial articles and one interview with a negative journalistic position, the common denominator for the articles was that most of these were *very short news articles with few editorially biased comments*. Only a single article had a positive journalistic attitude; an article including the Bosniaks in Dnevni List. Strikingly, none of the ethno-associated newspapers did publish any articles with an editorially negative biased content toward their own ethnic representatives.

The bulk of the articles, analogous to 208 items (95.9%), were, at least explicitly, editorially neutral in content toward ethnic counterparts. However, the subject referred to as 'BiH', which in this project either refers to the political system and functionality of BiH or the overall political elite of BiH, i.e. the Bosniaks, the Serbs and the Croats, was also subject of negative biased reporting in the ethno-affiliated newspapers. Reporting on the state of BiH and the various political parties in charge, 22 articles were classified as having a clear negative editorial stance toward all the ethno-based political parties.

In the following tables E4-E15 the positions of the various sources toward ethnic counterparts are registered.

TABLE E4:	Subjects	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Total
Bosniak spokesmen in					
Dnevni List	Bosniaks	0	0	4	4
	Serbs	0	1	0	1

Croats	0	0	0	0
Others	0	0	0	0
BiH	1	1	9	11
Total	1	2	13	16

TABLE E5: Bosniak spokesmen in		Positive	Negative	Neutral	Total
Dnevni Avaz	Bosniaks	0	0	2	2
	Serbs	0	3	0	3
	Croats	0	1	0	1
	Others	0	0	0	0
	BiH	0	2	0	2
	Total	0	6	2	8

TABLE E6: Bosniak spokesmen in		Positive	Negative	Neutral	Total
Nezavisne Novine	Bosniaks	0	1	12	13
	Serbs	2	0	0	2
	Croats	0	0	0	0
	Others	0	0	0	0
	BiH	5	1	3	9
	Total	7	2	15	24

TABLE E7: Serb spokesmen in		Positive	Negative	Neutral	Total
Dnevni List	Bosniaks	0	6	1	7
	Serbs	0	1	1	2
	Croats	0	0	0	0
	Others	0	1	0	1
	BiH	0	0	2	2
	Total	0	8	4	12

TABLE E8: Serb spokesmen in		Positive	Negative	Neutral	Total
Dnevni Avaz	Bosniaks	0	3	0	3
	Serbs	0	1	4	5
	Croats	0	0	0	0
	Others	0	2	0	2
	BiH	0	3	3	6
	Total	0	9	7	16

TABLE E9: Serb spokesmen in		Positive	Negative	Neutral	Total
Nezavisne Novine	Bosniaks	1	12	1	14
	Serbs	0	1	2	3

Croats	0	1	0	1
Others	0	2	0	2
BiH	0	4	1	5
Total	1	20	4	25

TABLE E10:	Subjects	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Total
Croat spokesmen in					
Dnevni List	Bosniaks	0	3	1	4
	Serbs	0	3	1	4
	Croats	0	0	8	8
	Others	0	0	0	0
	BiH	0	2	1	3
	Total	0	8	11	19

TABLE E11:	Subjects	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Total
Croat spokesmen in					
Dnevni Avaz	Bosniaks	0	1	0	1
	Serbs	0	1	0	1
	Croats	0	4	4	8
	Others	0	0	0	0
	BiH	1	2	0	3
	Total	1	8	4	13

TABLE E12:	Subjects	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Total
Croat spokesmen in					
Nezavisne Novine	Bosniaks	0	1	1	2
	Serbs	0	2	0	2
	Croats	0	2	9	11
	Others	0	0	0	0
	BiH	1	4	1	6
	Total	1	9	11	21

TABLE E13:	Subjects	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Total
Other spokesmen in					
Dnevni List	Bosniaks	0	1	0	1
	Serbs	0	0	0	0
	Croats	0	0	0	0
	Others	0	0	0	0
	BiH	0	3	2	5
	Total	0	4	2	6

TABLE E14:	Subjects	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Total
Other spokesmen in					
Dnevni Avaz	Bosniaks	0	0	0	0

Serbs	0	3	1	4
Croats	0	0	1	1
Others	0	0	0	0
BiH	0	0	4	4
Total	0	3	6	9

TABLE E15:	Subjects	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Total
Other spokesmen in					
Nezavisne Novine	Bosniaks	0	2	0	2
	Serbs	1	1	0	2
	Croats	0	0	1	1
	Others	0	0	0	0
	BiH	0	0	2	2
	Total	1	3	3	7

Concerning the newspapers' dispersion of attention to various spokesmen the embedded biased reporting becomes exceedingly evident in the three Bosnian dailies. In the Bosniak newspaper, Dnevni Avaz, there is a total of 72 articles somehow encompassing Serbs and Croats. The overall number of sources is 73. Among these 73 spokesmen 38% are journalists. Bosniaks spokesmen only constitute almost 11%. Serbs and Croats around 22% and 18%, respectively. In the Croat newspaper Dnevni List journalists and Croats act as spokesmen in 52% of the articles. Serbs and Bosniaks combined only have spokespersons represented in overall 38% of the articles involving them.

The Bosnian Serb paper Nezavisne Novine is the daily among the examined ones that published most articles in which ethnic counterparts appeared as spokesmen. In 30% of the items Bosniaks appear as sources of the articles involving them. In regards to the Croats, they constitute 25% of the spokesmen among the 80 various spokespersons in Nezavisne Novine's articles. The Serb narrators are also to a large extent represented in articles dealing with opposite ethnic groups. In nothing less than 30% of the articles involving ethnic counterparts, the Serbs perform as spokesmen.

Generally, after examining 217 articles a salient tendency is evident. From 222 different spokesmen in articles dealing with ethnic counterparts, there are only 100 spokespersons representing opposite ethnic groups in the three ethno-associated dailies. In 45% of the articles dealing with ethnic counterparts in the ethno-affiliated newspapers, representatives of other ethnic groups actually have a chance to speak or be quoted in a statement. In more than half of the articles, more precisely 55%, ethnic counterparts, i.e. political parties, party candidates, state officials etc. are spoken about and not with. This means that in the greater part of the articles opposite ethnic groups are mentioned, discussed and portrayed either through the eyes of the journalists

(23.4%), third party speakers (9.5%), or representatives with the same ethnic affiliations as the newspaper (22.1%).

Besides the fact that the newspapers' distribution of articles on ethnic counterparts and the dispersion of spokesmen clearly indicate ethnocentric media coverage divided along ethnic lines, it appears even more interesting and relevant to take a look at the positions of the spokespersons who in one way or another articulate antagonists' and ethnic compatriots. With three of Wolfsfeld's four assumptions on the role of the media in reconciliation processes as guidelines the abovementioned aspects are now to be examined for the purpose of reconciliation. The quantitative results will be examined more closely in the qualitative content analysis, in which also the model of Bryant and Oliver will be applied.

From the data results presented in tables E4-E15 a clear picture emerges in regards to the media's selection of sources. Moreover, it appears to be a prevailing tendency in terms of which spokesmen, antagonists and compatriots, the media are dealing with in the various articles concerning ethnic counterparts. As it has been mentioned, the bulk of the political elite in BiH can be characterised as ethno-nationalists. There are only few, moderate and conciliatory seeking parties present on the Bosnian political stage. By almost omitting those parties in the political debate, the media is not attempting to take part in defining or redefining the political atmosphere in which the reconciliation and nation building processes take place. An alternative approach adherent to universal professional and ethical standard of journalism would be to expose the audience for a wide and representative set of voices, which implicitly would raise the legitimacy of rapprochement seeking parties who promote reconciliation and consensus-based policy making within the frame of the DPA provisions. By including these parties the Bosnian media would also influence the nature of the debate, either implicitly or explicitly. Finally, those abovementioned impacts combined indicate if and how the media act in order to raise or lower the public standing and legitimacy of various stakeholders involved, and thereby also how the media take part in the reconciliation process.

Bearing in mind Wolfsfeld's explanation model, it is not solely overt editorially biased reporting on ethnic counterparts that may influence the process of reconciliation through the news media. As in the Bosnian example, inter-ethnic relations are almost non-existent in all spheres of society, thus it is a logical consequence that people are predominantly preoccupied with political messages deriving from their own ethno-political elites. Due to that, it is highly relevant to see if particular spokespersons are given higher priority than others by the media regarding ethnic compatriots and representatives of other ethnic groups. In terms of

priming⁹⁷ and frames⁹⁸, it makes a great difference to the audience on whether they only get information on ethnic counterparts through the eyes of ethno-nationalists from the same ethnic groups as themselves, or if they are informed directly from spokesmen from the opposite ethnic groups. Similarly, in the Wolfsfeld theory, it is of great significance whether the media mainly publish news stories encompassing ethno-nationalists from the antagonists' camp, who oppose reconciliation or if representatives from rather moderate parties, who promote rapprochement, also make way into the news coverage. Of course, in a democratic society, readers should be exposed to a wide and representative set of voices, i.e. there should be an equal distribution of attention to the various representatives.

The ethno-affiliated print media predominantly use ethnic compatriots as spokespersons or interviewees in their articles, even though the content somehow involves ethnic counterparts. Within this context it is evident that the three newspapers did pay much more attention to the ethno-nationalist parties from their respective parts of BiH. Besides the Bosniak party SBB, the Bosniak Dnevni Avaz primarily includes sources representing the Bosniak nationalist parties, SBiH and SDA, in articles involving Serbs and Croats. Similarly, in the Croatian Dnevni List, the Croatian nationalist parties, HDZ and HDZ 1990, are the dominant spokespersons in articles containing Serbs and Bosniaks. Finally, in the Serbian Nezavisne Novine SNSD and its candidate for the RS Presidency, Milorad Dodik, clearly is preferred as the Serbian spokesman in articles dealing with Bosniaks and Croats. This appears to be striking indication of ethnocentric news reporting by the three ethno-affiliated newspapers. It is a logical to assume that the biggest parties dominate the media agenda in election campaigns. But the fact that the smaller, non-nationalistic parties are almost completely left out of the media's spotlight, does underscore an imbalanced style of reporting by the three ethno-associated newspapers. This is also highly visible in the quantitative results regarding the position of spokesmen toward ethnic counterparts in the three newspapers.

In sum, the spokesmen sharing same ethnic affiliations as the newspapers have a negative stand toward ethnic counterparts in 23 articles, equivalent to 10.6% of the total amount of 217 articles. Considering the fact that there are in sum 49 articles with sources sharing the same ethnic affiliations as the respective newspapers, it is remarkable that in 46.9% of these articles the spokesmen voice negative views toward ethnic counterparts – indications of a very biased and one-sided selection of particular spokesmen who obviously oppose reconciliation within the frame of the generally accepted perception of social reality.

⁹⁷ Priming: the effects of the content of the media on people's later behavior or judgments related to the content that was processed.

⁹⁸ Frame: a frame is what unifies information into a package that can influence audiences.

Especially in the Serb *Nezavisne Novine*, which grants a lot of scope for SNSD and Milorad Dodik, there are 13 articles in which Serb sources do voice extremely negative statements targeted on other ethnic groups, in particular the Bosniaks. Among the remaining articles 14 of these 23 articles are relatively short news items. Additionally, there are two interviews, five readers' letters and one column. The most striking fact within those findings is the fact that 91% of the articles in which spokesmen express a negative stance on ethnic counterparts, only one source is used for each article. Two articles have two or more sources, one uniform and one with opposing views, respectively. In the qualitative content analysis I will highlight some examples of the aforementioned articles.

Concerning the themes linked to these negative positions from various spokesmen, a clear tendency emerges. Themes such as *nation building*, *secession*, *attitude to the past and religion* are all extremely sensitive issues in the Bosnian political debate. These issues are the main themes in overall 17 of the 23 previously mentioned articles. Naturally, nation building- and secession-related topics are very relevant in general and during election campaigns in particular. However, it is evident that the media deliberately favors representatives from specific political parties with the same ethnic affiliations as the newspapers'. In most cases their views are already well-known, and not exactly for promoting reconciliation and reintegration. The usage of sources underscores that all the newspapers do, to a lesser or higher extent, practise biased news reporting when dealing with fellow countrymen and their views on ethnic counterparts. By not presenting opposing or critical comments toward the statements by the main spokesmen of the articles, the selective news coverage does in several cases cross the line of political propaganda. Somehow, one might say that the media outlets do consider shorthand journalism as objective reporting.

Regarding the ethno-affiliated newspapers' selection of spokesmen representing other ethnic groups and third party spokespersons a striking pattern has also been registered. First of all, in articles having third party speakers or others among the 21 articles, i.e. almost 29%, of these sources have a negative attitude toward ethnic counterparts who were not part of the region of the ethno-affiliated newspaper. In one article, the third party speaker has a positive stance - toward the Bosnian Serbs in the Serbian newspaper *Nezavisne Novine*. In eight of the articles the spokesmen have a neutral position toward the Bosnian political elite as a whole. The remaining articles are primarily neutral in content on ethnic counterparts (three items) and only a single third party speaker express a negative stance against an ethnic group belonging to the same region as the newspaper that published the article.

Among 217 articles collected, only 100 spokesmen representing ethnic counterparts are listed in the three newspapers. As previously mentioned this is a very low number considering the fact that the articles somehow are related to ethnic counterparts. What is almost equally striking in this empirical data is that in articles where ethnic counterparts actually have a chance to speak for themselves, 15% of the spokespersons voice negative views against representatives or parties from the two other constituent groups. What characterises those articles is that the spokespersons, in most cases, represent ethno-nationalistic political parties. Moreover, in 80% of the articles the journalistic form is by the virtue of relatively short news articles with few rather bombastic accusations against ethnic counterparts. Concerning the use of sources, the tendency continues thus 86% of the short news articles only involve one source. This means no critical comments are attached or opposing views presented. Consequently, as a daily reader one is primarily presented by negative statements and accusations by representatives from other ethnic groups via shorthand reporting. Few statements from ethnic counterparts which can be characterised as positive for the purpose of reconciliation are published, however such proclamations are predominantly registered within the same newspaper, *Nezavisne Novine*.

Partial Conclusion

From a quantitative perspective, it is by now appropriate to establish that there is an apparent reason to problematise the role of the Bosnian print media in the reintegration and reconciliation process of post-conflict BiH and this certainly merits carrying out a qualitative analysis in order to go deeper into the understanding of the underlying causes.

Judging from Wolfsfeld's theory, there is very little quantitative evidence that the media have put any efforts in redefining the ethno-nationalist dominated political atmosphere in which the reconciliation process takes place. In addition to this, the newspaper media avoid performing investigative journalism in which political subjects are to provide answers to concrete questions. Despite the fact that the generally accepted perception of social reality for the Bosnian society is founded in the provisions laid down by the DPA, i.e. that the state through reconciliation and compromises shall evolve into a functioning multiethnic nation determined to make progress on the path to the Euro-Atlantic integration, the media is not keen on providing the readers with information in the best interest of the country, but instead they act as ethnocentric mouthpieces favoring ethnic peers with ethno-nationalistic views, which undoubtedly do not contribute to the process of reconciliation in BiH.

As it has been highlighted in this part of the analysis in most cases the newspapers allow ethno-nationalistic spokesmen to proclaim views that are considered damaging for the reconciliation process and for readers' perception of ethnic counterparts. In the bulk of the articles there were very few examples that the newspapers

endeavored to put into question the diseased political atmosphere in BiH and presented alternative viewpoints or included stakeholders with visions that could create a more positive picture of the BiH future with information in the best interest of the country and its citizens. Instead the media's style of reporting could be characterised as ethnocentric and truly reflecting a divided society.

By using only one source of information in 94% of the 217 articles related to other ethnic groups, dealing with ethnic counterparts primarily via shorthand reporting by virtue of short news articles with almost no critical journalism toward representatives that obviously oppose a reconciliation and reintegration process, and finally by virtually neglecting representatives from other ethnic segments in the news coverage, a very gloomy picture is painted as regards to the newspapers' contribution to the reconciliation process of BiH. Additionally, only 6% of the collected articles contain two or multiple sources, however just in one single article on ethnic counterparts, opposing sources are included.

Due to the rather passive approach from the various newspaper media, their role in terms of influencing the debate positively is practically non-existent. The newspapers' golden opportunity as agenda-setting actors and vehicles for transformations in the political debate seems to be completely neglected and rather the three ethno-affiliated newspapers contributed negatively to the already diseased political environment and debate in BiH by the virtue of reporting that serves political subjects rather than the reporting that serves citizens. Moreover, by almost omitting ethnic counterparts from their news coverage and instead predominantly paying attention to nationalist segments from the respective newspapers' own ethnic peers, the media implicitly raised the public standing and legitimacy of actors involved in the reconciliation and nation building process of BiH. Also, a clear quantitative pattern is drawn of the role of the media by lowering the public standing of political parties and candidates who advocate for compromises and promote reintegration.

From Quantitative to Qualitative Analysis

In the following analytical section some of the most frequent results in the quantitative analysis are to be highlighted. The intention is to include examples of the most significant articles that were problematised in the quantitative investigation. More specifically, the idea is to bring into focus extracts of articles that exemplify which role the newspapers play in the reconciliation process of BiH.

Methodically, the qualitative point of departure is a combination of the works of Wolfsfeld and Bryant and Oliver. The assumptions of Wolfsfeld that media can have four major impacts on any reconciliation process are the analytical variables which help us to understand which role the Bosnian media play in the reconciliation

process of the country. Also, in this context the idea is to include the aspect of journalistic norms and routines. This is due to the fact the news media dictates the selection of sources and the construction of storylines, which can have significant effects on which interpretation appears to make most sense.⁹⁹

To finish I put the results into a bigger perspective by discussing, through the factors presented by Bryant and Oliver (see the Methodology chapter), why the Bosnian media frame their news items the way they do. By including the abovementioned analytical tools it is possible to conclude how to comprehend the current role of the local media in the reintegration and reconciliation process in BiH.

⁹⁹ Wolfsfeld, 2004, page 12.

Qualitative Content Analysis

In this part of the analysis I will elaborate on some of the types of articles (in terms of journalistic norms and routines, dispersion and positions of spokesmen, number of sources, articulation of ethnic counterparts and content.) that represent the majority of news items which you as a Bosnian daily reader come across in the ethno-affiliated newspapers. I have included articles from all three newspapers dealt with in the quantitative analysis. From among the 217 articles which have been collected, there is no need for including a huge amount within this analytical frame since the bulk of the articles considered as 'problematic' for reconciliation and inter-ethnic relations in the quantitative analysis, are very comparable in terms of journalistic form, selection of spokesmen, position of spokesperson and content inter alia.

The selected articles are the following:

Dnevni List (Serbs):

- *Silajzić undermines BiH, but contributes to the development an independent RS* – 25 September, 2010.

Dnevni List (Bosniaks):

- *This is our land. Go out on Election Day and vote for Martin Raguz* – 21 September, 2010.

Nezavisne Novine (Bosniaks):

- *RS has never been in such strong position* – 11 September, 2010.

Dnevni Avaz (Serbs):

- *It is forgotten that Srebrenica survived three massacres* – 18 September, 2010.

As highlighted in the quantitative content analysis there are numerous examples on articles involving ethnic counterparts, in which the spokesmen had a negative position toward members of opposite ethnic groups. During the quantitative analysis it became quite clear that the ethno-affiliated newspapers in their articles containing negative statements toward ethnic counterparts primarily involved spokespersons from their own ethnic segment, but also representatives from one of the two other constituent peoples who express destructive opinions against the third ethnic group in BiH.

The concept of shorthand reporting and the most frequent journalistic form by the virtue of news articles did dominate the general picture outlined in the quantitative analysis. From an article in the Croatian Dnevni List which is very much to the point for most articles in the Bosnian newspapers, I now elaborate on a very general style of reporting on ethnic counterparts. In a very short news article titled "*Silajzić undermines BiH, but*

contributes to the development of an independent RS”, the at that time, but now former RS President, Nikola Spiric from the Serb nationalist party, SNSD, presents a harsh rhetoric against the former Bosniak member of the BiH Presidency, Haris Silajdžić. The content is about Spiric’s dissatisfaction on how Silajdžić behaved at the international scene during a meeting in UN General Assembly. In the article some of the destructive statements by Spiric against the Bosniak Silajdžić are:

“Silajdžić is really helping us, and the big price is paid by BiH. The more mistakes he makes, the more I am confident in the fact that RS is becoming independent. Silajdžić’ acts are not good for the country as a whole, but that is not our problem.”

At the end of the short news article, the journalist refers to a Spiric statement about Silajdžić that *“he [Silajdžić] is dealing with gossips and furthermore the international union sees him as a washed-out politician”*.

A second, but somehow very similar example is found in an article from the Serbian newspaper Nezavisne Novine. It is a relatively short news article involving a third party speaker or expert, Obrad Kesic, who evaluates the current development of RS. This article was found in the search for Bosniak representation in the Serbian newspaper, and is just another striking example of how ethnic counterparts are parts of the bulk of the articles. The headline of the article is: *“RS has never been in such strong position”*. One of the few times Bosniaks are mentioned in this article, which either is written via direct quotations from the third party speaker or a summary of the journalist, they are articulated in a rather negative and biased way:

“[...] as far the High Representative, who has always represented the interests of the Bosniak politicians, which meant it was impossible to reach an agreement. Kesic says that one of the key objectives for the Bosniaks is to make the OHR and the international community to remain as long as possible in BiH, because they (the Bosniaks) think that there is a possibility for realizing their maximalist dream, the desire to abolish the Republic of Serbians.”

The extract above is a very typical way of dealing with ethnic counterparts in the ethno-affiliated newspapers’ style of reporting. Again, here we see how ethnic counterparts are passive elements in the articles. The journalist does not question or comment on the statements, which obviously are very negative toward ethnic counterparts, in this case the Bosniaks. Neither, there is a representative of ‘the other side’ to present alternative views. In the theoretical perspective of Wolfsfeld this article in Nezavisne Novine is a clear example on how the media do have a negative impact on the reconciliation process. By only involving one source and no critical comments or questions from the editorial side, there is absolutely no intention to influence or redefine the relatively hostile political environment of BiH. More importantly, by such passive approach from

the journalist, the effort put into influencing the nature of the political debate is non-existent. Instead the newspaper in this case rather acts as a passive mouthpiece of stakeholders undertaking a role as victims by referring to 'us' and 'them' and the threat that 'they' (the Bosniaks) pose.

Finally, I will now highlight some of the abovementioned tendencies from an article in the Bosniak Dnevni Avaz. The headline is: *"It is forgotten that Srebrenica survived three massacres"* The spokesman of the article is a Bosniak by the virtue of a university professor, Dr. Jusuf Mulic. The article was registered in the search for Serbian representation in articles in Dnevni Avaz. During the news article, which is relatively comprehensive compared to news articles in which ethnic counterparts get to speak, Jusuf Mulic explains thoroughly how Srebrenica has survived multiple attacks from Serbs, in the article articulated as *"Chetniks"*, which can be characterised as a rather vulgar expression referring to Serbian nationalists. Swiftly, Jusuf Mulic turns to the latest massacre by claiming: *"After all that, in the 90's when, says Dr. Mulic, Chetniks did raise the "quality" of evilness, because when they were not able to slaughter all, then they did shoot massively on the civilians, Muslims."* At the end of the article the journalist removes the focus completely by summarising a proclamation by Jusuf Mulic: *"He warns that the RS is continuing its policy of "greater Serbia". His thoughts are that BiH will not exist as long RS exists in its current form. The author of the book "Big Serbia, Muslims and BiH" considers that it is necessary from the Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, to ask for the change of the name Republic of Serbians, because "people's (nationality) cannot be equally constitutional, while the name is only named after one people (nationality)"*.

The common denominator for the examples of articles listed above is that just one source was used in each articles. Additionally, the three articles also apposite examples of the most frequent journalistic forms in the three ethno-affiliated newspapers when publishing articles dealing with ethnic counterparts. Even though none of the abovementioned articles did explicitly express any biased views on ethnic counterparts from the editorial side, there is clearly, judging from Wolfsfeld's theory, a striking implicit biased way of reporting on ethnic counterparts. It does seem that Bosnian newspapers do see shorthand reporting including only one source and no editorial comments or questions attached as objective reporting. However, this passive and advocating style of reporting does not contribute to reconciliation, reintegration or national cohesion at all. Clearly, the journalistic norms and professional routines are beneath contempt. News media are intended to act as a central arena for political debate in democratic countries, and thereby they determine who gets to speak and what is considered as an appropriate form of argument. By dictating the selection of sources and the construction of storylines, which can have significant effects on which interpretation that appears to make most

sense for the readers, the main Bosnian newspaper media have clearly demonstrated that they are miles away from what is universally recognised as an ethic and professional style of journalism.

As regards to Wolfsfeld's suppositions that media can have a positive or negative impact on actors and antagonists' strategy in reconciliation processes plus the media can raise or lower legitimacy of specific stakeholders involved, some examples from the Bosnian newspapers are now to be presented. The first example that should be highlighted in this context is an article in the Croatian Dnevni List. As it was emphasized in the quantitative content analysis most columns and readers' letters did in most cases express a negative stand toward ethnic counterparts. This article is an example of those kinds of columns, but also one of the many articles in which there clearly is an attempt to raise the public standing and legitimacy of members sharing the same ethnic affiliations as the newspaper. The title of the column is eloquent and surely indicates a clear favoring of a particular political view: *"This is our land. Go out on Election Day and vote for Martin Raguz* (Croat politician from HDZ 1990, candidate for the Croat seat in the BiH Presidency). The columnist is a former member of the Croatian party HDZ 1990. This item is one among several examples of articles which were found in the searching process for representation of ethnic counterparts, in this case the Bosniaks. Unlike an obvious attempt of lowering the legitimacy of antagonists from other ethnic groups (Serbs and Bosniaks) there is a strong argumentation in the endeavors for raising the public standing of ethnic compatriots by the virtue of a politician who oppose the generally accepted perception of social reality, i.e. a Bosnian society which should make common progress within the frame of the provisions lay down in the provisions of the DPA. In the following I highlight some of the most salient quotations from the abovementioned article in published by Dnevni List:

"If the Croats do not come out in masses to the elections and if it they don't give their votes regardless of party affiliation, to Martin Raguz, a candidate who has moral, technical, human and programmatic assumptions to fight for equality of Croats, then there will be what happened four years ago. Of the vote of the "Red ones" (SDP), Bosniaks and Serbs and a small number of "red ones" as Croats, they will again elect Bosnian citizen Željko

Komsic, which is far from Croatian heart, whose most popular politician villain is Marshal Tito, the greatest villain of Croatian President Franjo Tudjman"

And the columnist continues:

"I had the opportunity to listen to Martina Raguz, read his program, his interviews, his views, and I know his work for the last 20 years, so I can in good conscience with full conviction declare that the Croatian people do make a big mistake if they go to the polls, but the mass doesn't vote for Martin Raguz."

This article is one among several examples on news items trying to raise the legitimacy of particular political stakeholders, in this case a politician who belongs to the same ethnic segment as the audience of the Croatian

Dnevni List. In the same connection, there is an attempt to lower the public standing of SDP, the biggest official multiethnic party in BiH, which, objectively, but also from an international perspective, is regarded as the only actor among the major Bosnian political parties, who actually fully respect the provisions of the DPA in their political program, and who do not pursue a policy based on ethnicity.

The last article I intend to analyse through the Wolfsfeld theory is an interview with a Croat party official conducted by the Croatian Dnevni List. This article came up in my search for Serb representation in the Croat-affiliated newspaper. In this article we see all the 'ingredients' of an unprofessional, ethnocentric and implicit biased style of reporting. Again, the article does only include one spokesperson, and moreover the spokesman, similar to a huge amount of the other articles collected, voice an extremely negative view toward ethnic counterparts - statements that should be considered as damaging for reconciliation, inter-ethnic trust and mutual respect. In a comprehensive interview with the headline: *"I do not believe that there are 130.000 Croats who would prefer a Greater Serbia"* we see one of many examples on interviews in which ethnic counterparts are spoken about and not with. What appears evident in this interview is the lack of critical journalism and even a biased approach, which implicitly lower the legitimacy of other Croat parties and provides no critical comments or questions to rather hostile accusations toward the Bosnian Serbs raised by the interviewee. An example of such inflammatory statements is presented in the following quotation:

"To make it clear, the representatives of Republic of Serbians are not interested in constitutional changes, because they want to keep the RS which was built by a war villain Radovan Karadzic, and it was built on genocide and ethnic cleansing of Croats and Bosniaks. In other words what they wanted, they got it with the Dayton Peace Agreement. They made the first step towards creating a greater Serbia, they have made a prerequisite for something like that, and we can tell child bed time stories to each other as much as we want, but we all know the true background of Serbian politics, even in Serbia, but also in Republic of Serbians".

Influential Factors on Bosnian Print Media

As it has been demonstrated through out both the quantitative and qualitative content analyses, the dominant Bosnian print media outlets did not play an agenda-setting role during the general election campaign in 2010, and thereby, via a very passive and reactive style of reporting, they did not contribute positively to the on-going reconciliation and reintegration process of BiH. By now this should be crystal-clear. So far, I have not elaborated on *why* the print media acted as they did during the general election campaign. To come up with explanations for this, it is not possible to point at already existing literature. Therefore, I have conducted interviews with local Bosnian media experts and attended formal and informal meetings with independent media analysts operating in BiH. My rationale for including these actors is due to the realisation that the

underlying causes of the role of the print media have not previously been researched thoroughly, and due to the lack of access and non-transparency in terms of information on media funding, political affiliations and external pressures on media outlets, I recognised that there was a certain need for involving other independent researchers within this field. The answers I got from those researchers, which more or less were uniform, despite they were stated independently, are to be examined through the factors by Bryant and Oliver that were presented in the Methodology chapter. Below, I will just shortly revive these five influential factors that can affect how journalists and news media in general operate:

- 1.) The larger societal norms and values,
- 2.) Organisational pressures and constraints,
- 3.) External pressures from interest groups and
- 4.) Other policy makers
- 5.) The ideological or political orientations of the journalists.

As it was highlighted in the quantitative analysis and within the analytical frame of Wolfsfeld's theory, the Bosnian print media did not put a lot of efforts into redefining or questioning the hostile and diseased political atmosphere in which the reconciliation process takes place. Neither were there any appreciable attempts by the media to influence the nature of the political debate in BiH during the election campaign for the purpose of putting the concept of reconciliation and national cohesion on the media agenda. Instead the media coverage was characterised by a reactive¹⁰⁰, ethnocentric and selective style of reporting by the Bosnian newspapers that did not serve as positive contributions to the reconciliation process of BiH. But, how come did the media act as they did during the election campaign? Bearing in mind the huge amount of efforts, in terms of financial subsidies and skills-training etc. to the Bosnian news media sector, provided by the international stakeholders involved in BiH, one should expect more positive results on ground. By including the five influential factors presented before, it should be possible to get a deeper understanding of the underlying causes and challenges that bedevil the Bosnian print media sector, which also are damaging for the reconciliation process of BiH.

As regards to the larger societal norms and values which surround the Bosnian news media, it becomes evident what kinds of challenges they face currently. Despite the fact that media have been a subject of huge sums of financial support and skills-training by the international interveners, one must not neglect the fact that it is hard to expect a news media sector to provide upbeat news stories and contributions to reconciliation when the surrounding political environment does not encourage to. Most would argue that reconciliation is

¹⁰⁰ Mracka, 2011.

most likely to concede in an environment that is conducive to compromises and rapprochement.¹⁰¹ However, as highlighted multiple times through out this project, the media does seem to undertake a selective role in terms of who gets to speak and what is considered as an appropriate form of argument. From the empirical research it is highly evident that the ethno-affiliated media deliberately have focused on the respective dominant ethno-nationalistic parties in the three ethnic regions of BiH.

Concerning organisational pressures and constraints, external pressures from interest groups and other policy makers and finally the ideological and political orientations of the media are to be discussed within the same frame. What was raised in the analytical parts, the fact that the news reporting of the three newspapers clearly did indicate an ethnocentric style of reporting can be explained by the influential factors presented above. In the following I present some key statements by local Bosnian media experts, which should contribute to our understanding of why the print media sector in BiH is not contributing to the reconciliation process of the country. According to Marek Mracka, Media Analyst from the OSCE mission to BiH and Boro Kontic, Director of Mediacentar Sarajevo, there are several underlying causes of why the Bosnian newspaper media seems underdeveloped in terms of journalistic ethics, routines and norms and therefore miss their chance to contribute to the much-needed reconciliation and reintegration of the country. Marek Mracka's response when I asked him on newspapers' political affiliations and favouring of particular parties, he did highlight Nezavisne Novine as an example:

"SNSD and RS Government got significant portion of coverage in NN (Nezavisne Novine, Ed.) but also in Glas Srpske. The lack of critical coverage of the activities of RS government and governing party indicate that RS based newspapers failed to act as watchdogs during the campaign period".¹⁰²

To the same question Boro Kontic replies:

"Unfortunately, because of our recent past here in BiH, people are very selective when it comes to news information. After decades of Communist rule and subsequent a civil war between three ethnic groups, in which the media outlets all had political positions, the average Bosnian citizen is a media literate. They don't realise that most media, not just print media, in BiH more or less visibly act as mouthpieces of different political parties. In my view, almost all media outlets in BiH do undertake a political position. I even find it hard to blame them. It is evident that in BiH the media cannot live solely on the audience, thus there is not enough money to sustain an independent media. So, you might ask yourself, where does the money come from? Mostly from political parties, even though there are very few concrete figures to prove my point. An overview of Bosnia's media market shows there is a lot of non-transparency when it comes to media ownership and financial support. It is hard, and in most cases impossible, to get information on who owns what. As I see it, that is the main reason why we clearly see the ethnic divisions of the country reflected in our (Bosnian) media today"¹⁰³.

¹⁰¹ Wolfsfeld, 2004, page 10.

¹⁰² Mracka, 2011.

¹⁰³ Kontic, 2011.

Kontic claims, when he is asked to assess why the news media miss their chance to positively contribute to the reconciliation process in BiH and why certain, in particular, ethno-nationalistic parties are given preferential treatment in the respective ethno-affiliated media outlets:

*“When it comes to media freedom and influences on media, one of the mistakes made in the very first years of media development was to assume that once the media was liberated from state influence, the problem of media freedom would be solved. That, of course, has not been the case. Political and economic elites became very much interested in influencing the media, and lately one of the problems of the media has been the manifestation of control through the model of ownership. From the point of view of owners, the media are primarily a tool for gaining as much profit as possible. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, the most profitable business is politics, so the political influences on media are just as well economically motivated”.*¹⁰⁴

Kontic continues:

*“Media owners and editors often enter into close relationships with political elites who give them money through advertising or by buying shares in media companies. (...) Pressures on the media are often latent, the three newspapers included (Dnevni List, Dnevni Avaz and Nezavisne Novine, Ed.). Those few completely independent media we have on the Bosnian media market that are critical of their local political elites do not get advertisements, are not invited to attend key events and do not get government grants”.*¹⁰⁵

Within this context related to media support and political affiliations the OSCE mission to BiH in 2010 also voiced their concerns on the symbiotic relationship between media and political elites and pointed to a scenario in RS, in which the RS government allocated funds to 14 local TV, radio and print media, despite the deadline for applications was not even reached. In the same breath the OSCE criticised the Bosnian Serb media in particular, since the OSCE claimed to have *“identified a growing uniformity of views in the media sector in RS”*¹⁰⁶

The statements by Boro Kontic regarding newspapers' affiliations are supported by other independent media researchers in BiH. Concerning the Bosniak newspaper Dnevni Avaz, several indications point to the fact that the Bosniak party SBB obviously was given preferential treatment during the election campaign. According to Marek Mracka:

“Dnevni Avaz, being a leader on the newspaper market, turning into a mouthpiece of a political party would be an example of ambition driven decision of an owner of newspaper who prioritize short-sighted political gain over long-term sustainable development of his media outlet”.

¹⁰⁴ Kontic, 2011.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 2011.

¹⁰⁶ OSCE, 2010.

Additionally, the Media Institute Plan's research on the Bosnian media in the election campaign they reach the conclusion as regards to Dnevni Avaz:

"The analyzed daily newspapers, each in its own way and for their own reasons, favored or smeared specific political options and candidates, with lesser or greater intensity. The favoring was reflected in a very positive stand on specific political subjects (Milorad Dodik and the SNSD in "Euroblic", "Nezavisne Novine" and "Glas Srpske"; Martin Raguz and the coalition of HDZ 1990 – HSP and People's Party Work for Betterment in "Dnevni List"; Dragan Covic, Borjana Kristo and HDZ BiH in "Vecernji List"; Fahrudin Radoncic and the SBB in "Dnevni Avaz"”¹⁰⁷.

According to Boro Kontic, the international donors have expected too much in short time from the Bosnian media sector. However, he does recognise that the media situation in BiH would have been much worse if it was not for the assistance by the international community, and the international engagement was especially successful in the beginning of their intervention, because then *"instruments were imposed"*.¹⁰⁸ In Kontic's view it is the surrounding society, implicitly the diseased political environment, which hampers the media development:

"Here at Mediacentar Sarajevo we do provide a lot of young journalist students with skills-training and supplementary seminars in order to improve their level of investigative journalism. But what obviously seems to be the problem, and I hear that often from my former students, is that when they apply for jobs, they are most often experiencing that to get a foot inside a media company, professional competences do not matter at all".¹⁰⁹

As highlighted throughout this final section of the analysis, there truly are several indications that the Bosnian print media do face some severe and challenging constraints, which unavoidably do have a great effect on why the Bosnian newspapers do not undertake a constructive role in the Bosnian reconciliation and reintegration process and make no significant contributions to promote national cohesion, but instead carry out an ethnocentric style of reporting more or less leaned toward specific ethno-nationalistic parties from the same respective regions of the country as the newspapers. An undeveloped news media sector without financial sustainability and lack of capacity in terms of news reporting from all over BiH combined with external pressures by the virtue of ethno-political elites, do not provide a basis for a media sector which can serve as an impartial arena for political debate and promoter of reconciliation mutual trust among the three constituent groups of BiH.

¹⁰⁷ Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung and Media Institute Plan, 2010, page 53.

¹⁰⁸ Kontic, 2011.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

Conclusion

After a thorough empirical examination of the three main ethno-affiliated Bosnian newspapers during the election campaign in 2010, there is now, both quantitatively and qualitatively, evidence to conclude how we can understand the role of the newspaper media in post-conflict BiH. The conclusions are not heartening, bearing in mind that the international community has donated millions of Euros and various kinds of resources in order to develop a news media sector that could be a source for building peace and reconciliation in the ethnically divided BiH. However, the media situation anno 2010 has improved significantly compared to the early post-war years, as the main ethno-affiliated newspapers do not, at least explicitly, advocate ethnic hate speech and use inflammatory rhetoric to raise inter-ethnic tensions. This appears to be the only positive aspect to point at. Having this said, the newspapers do still carry out a biased style of reporting due to their selective presentation of sources and ethnocentric style of reporting. The main Bosnian newspapers did undertake a considerably passive approach during the general election campaign in 2010, meaning that there were not any obvious attempts by the media to influence the hostile nature of the political debate, no thematic reporting in order to promote peace and reconciliation in the best interest of the country, but rather an advocating style of reporting, in which the ethno-nationalistic political parties, in particular, were allowed to set the agenda by presenting very negative statements toward ethnic counterparts. Naturally, in all societies, election campaigns are most often characterised by a harsh tone between political stakeholders who struggle for the same seats at the political stage. However, in BiH, considering the fact that the ethnically divided country, which is still extremely fragile due to the repercussions from the civil war less than 16 years ago, the media do hold an even greater responsibility for not letting the nationalistic political elites threatening the peace and reconciliation process of the country. This could have been done by giving more attention to other political parties with a more consensus-based policy, which is not based on ethnicity, but these parties were almost completely omitted from media coverage during the 2010 election campaign. Also, the media could have acted much more professionally toward those stakeholders opposed to reconciliation and political rapprochement, by carrying out investigative and critical journalism. Instead, the media coverage of the three ethno-affiliated newspapers could rather be characterised as serving the interests of the respective ethno-nationalistic elites, since the content in the bulk of the articles involving ethnic counterparts, almost crossed the line of political propaganda in the interest of the political stakeholders from the same regions as the respective ethno-affiliated newspapers.

As it was highlighted in the final part of the analysis, it does seem clear that the Bosnian print media sector is just as diseased as the political climate of the country. Political and organisational pressures on a media sector,

which is not financially sustainable and thereby very dependent on economic support is a problematic combination, if the newspaper media should be able to contribute positively to the reconciliation process of post-conflict BiH. Judging from the Bosnian example, it is highly questionable if the Bosnian media sector is able to change significantly before the surrounding society does.

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Borka Rudic, BH Novinari, Sarajevo. (Association BH Journalist). Meeting at the BH Novinari premises together with Ambassador of Denmark to BiH, H.E. Kirsten Geelan. [26 January, 2011]

Srecko Latal, International Crisis Group, Sarajevo. Meeting at the Royal Danish Embassy. [29 November, 2010]

Appendix

Newspaper articles

Please see the enclosed CD for the list of articles, translated articles and the original files from the Bosnian newspapers.

Interview with Marek Mracka, OSCE mission to BiH:

- ***It does seem like that opposition parties, especially those based in other ethnic territories, were almost omitted from media coverage in ethno-affiliated newspapers – e.g. SDA, SBiH, SBB are not very visible in Dnevni List and Nezavisne Novine, HDZ, HDZ 1990 etc. not granted much space in Dnevni Avaz and Nezavisne Novine etc. Do you share this view?***

As for the most parties you listed, indeed they did not receive significant portions of space in the listed newspapers, however for instance HDZ got about 6 per cent of the coverage of political issues in NN, which is not an insignificant portion. Coverage of parties also quite depends on the issues the parties are presenting or presented with in the campaign.

- ***Several experts have claimed that the media coverage in the election campaign 2010 underscored the very low journalistic standard in BiH's printed media. Besides a high number of articles involving only one source and the fact that articles with multiple sources primarily use uniform sources, what else would you highlight as being evident of the generally poor standard in Bosnian printed media?***

Dnevni Avaz, being a leader on the newspaper market, turning into a mouthpiece of a political party would be an example of ambition driven decision of an owner of newspaper who prioritize short-sighted political gain over long-term sustainable development of his media outlet.

- ***Would you say that the media coverage of the 2010 General Elections generated further distrust and ethnic and political intolerance? If, yes, are there any differences in the media coverage compared to previous general elections?***

I do not have information to be able to make a conclusion about the media coverage generating ethnic or political intolerance or to compare with the previous elections. Clearly the media could be more active in promoting the inter-ethnic accord and tolerance, but this has much to do also with the activities of politicians, NGOs etc. In the campaign the media were not proactive in setting the agenda, but rather reactive, and I wonder if this approach is common also outside of the campaign period.

- ***Which political party would you say got the most preferential treatment during the election campaign?***

SNSD and RS Government got significant portion of coverage in NN but also in Glas Srpske. The lack of critical coverage of the activities of RS government and governing party indicate that RS based newspapers failed to act as watchdogs during the campaign period.

- ***Besides the unequal dispersion of articles, meaning that NN primarily covered stories involving Serb parties and candidates etc., how would you describe the media division along ethnic lines being visible in the printed media during the election campaign?***

Divisions along the ethnic lines clearly exist in BiH and newspapers overall tend to focus on the issues of importance for their majority readers from a particular ethnic group. BTW, if I recall well NN proclaimed ambition to be perceived as a newspaper focusing on all constituent peoples of BiH, and it would be interesting to see if they managed to achieve some results if they really tried that at all.

- ***In general, how would you describe the approach of the newspapers during the election campaign – proactive or reactive?***

Reactive

- ***Would you say that there is a direct correlation between paid advertisements from political parties and the newspapers publishing articles with positive content about the exact same parties?***

The issue of positive coverage is much more complex one relating to ties between parties and media and it is usually not limited to the amount of paid advertising in the newspaper by the political parties in the particular campaign period.

- ***During my research I found very few articles and interviews where ethnic counterparts were the spokesmen. Instead, interviews or articles in general involving ethnic counterparts, the tendency was that ethnic counterparts were most often spoken about and not with. Do you think this journalistic approach is due to editorial policy, or is it simply because e.g. people in FBiH are not interested in parties and candidates from Republika Srpska and vice versa?***

This is interesting. I would ask particular journalists and editors whether they are aware of this, and what is their explanation. Expect of your options, I would also consider their capacity - what is access of a newspaper which is based for instance in RS and has only limited presence in Sarajevo, or Mostar to actors based there?

- ***If the media are making the inter-ethnic relations worse, do you think it is even possible for the media to change positively before the surrounding society does?***

I believe yes, but in the tough situations, like these days on the market, when many of the media in particular newspapers strive to survive, I would not leave this effort only on their shoulders. Of course the media play an important role, but as I wrote above, collective effort of political activists, politicians, third sector and the media is required.

Abstract

In post-conflict Bosnia-Herzegovina the development of the media sector has, since the intervention by the international community, been a key strategy to address a range of political and societal issues. The rationale was and still is that the media sector should be able to serve as an important mediator in the Bosnian society and thereby contribute to reconciliation and reintegration in the country. This is considered as a first step in the internationally driven nation-building procedure in the war-torn Balkan state. The media outlets have a golden opportunity for offering a vision and perspective which is undetermined by ethnicity or nationality in order to contribute to the reintegration and reconciliation of BiH. This is due to the fact that media in general, through priming, have a huge influence on later judgments and behaviour among the audience related to the content that has been processed. It means that news media have the power to prime positive or negative thoughts and feelings among citizens. The power of the news media in the modern society is unquestionable. The media are exceptionally influential in terms of creating an understanding of the society that citizens are a part of and moreover to picture the self-perception of people and their fellow human beings. Moreover, the news media are a central arena for political debates and determinants of who gets to speak.

This aim of this research is to analyse how we can understand the role of the Bosnian newspaper media in the reconciliation process of the country 15 years after the DPA was signed. The method chosen is an inductive research strategy. There are two main dimensions in the analytical framework. First, a quantitative content analysis of articles collected from the Bosniak newspaper Dnevni Avaz, the Croatian Dnevni List and the Serbian Nezavisne Novine during the general election campaign in BiH in 2010. The aim in this context is to see how ethnic counterparts are presented in the three ethno-affiliated newspapers, and moreover, to see if there is any reason to problematise the role of the Bosnian newspaper media in the reconciliation process of the country. Subsequently, the most frequent findings in the quantitative content analysis are to be elaborated in a qualitative content analysis. By applying the theoretical tools of Gadi Wolfsfeld it is possible to analyse which role the Bosnian newspaper media play in the reconciliation process of the country anno 2010. The final part of the analysis is focused upon exploring *why* the media acted as they did during the 2010 general election campaign. By including five influential factors of effects of the media provided by Jennings Bryant and Mary Beth Oliver, combined with contributions from Bosnian media experts, this thesis elaborates on why the main Bosnian newspaper media did not contribute positively to the reconciliation and reintegration process of BiH and presents explanations to which problems and challenges the Bosnian print media is facing and why these ethno-affiliated newspapers currently reflect the ethnic divisions of the country.