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Story of a Conflict: The Impact of the Education System on Post-Conflict Ethnic Identities in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Rwanda

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Abstract

This study explores how education is used as a nation-building tool in two post-ethnic cleansing states: Bosnia-Herzegovina and Rwanda. Specifically, this study contrasts how ethnicity is accommodated in the school system to foster social cohesion and how the teaching of the recent episodes of ethnic violence impacts the individual experience of ethnicity. It draws primarily upon secondary literature and on official government reports, complemented by informal interviews, to develop its arguments. A literature review on the role of education as a tool for nation-building is provided, before analysing the way ethnicity is accommodated in the school system and the way that national history is discussed in schools. The study argues that the design of ethnic accommodation implemented at the state level is reproduced in the education system, leading to a system of mono-ethnic schools in BiH and of integrated schools in Rwanda. It also demonstrates that a mono-national focus in history teaching in BiH politicizes ethnic identities at the individual level, while in Rwanda individual experiences of ethnicity are inconsistent with the state's attempts to transcend ethnicity through a moratorium on history teaching and an official narrative that focuses on pre-colonial unity.

Keywords: ethnic identity, nation-building, education, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Rwanda

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Introduction

Societies that suffered from an episode of ethnic violence need to undertake an important process of post-violence reconciliation. Reconciliation after ethnic cleansing can however be challenging since state institutions often played a role in politicizing these conflictual identities. This is especially true for a specific state institution, the education system, since it is used by the state as a tool for nation-building. Since the role of education in post-conflict societies is under-studied in the academic literature, it can be argued that more attention should be given to this topic in order to understand the dynamic of nation-building and social cohesion in a context of reconciliation. This dissertation will thus explore the impact that the education system has on ethnic identities in post-conflict societies and argue that the education system is an important social location where the younger generations are being socialized into a specific culture and national/ethnic identity. This reproduction of the state culture can, however, be problematic in a context of reconciliation where the story one tells of the conflict can shape the development of divergent, and sometimes conflictual, identities.

This raises several key issues that will be addressed in this dissertation. For instance, how does the state accommodate ethnic identities in the school system in order to foster social cohesion? Is this ethnic accommodation also reproduced in the school curriculum? If so, how does the school curriculum influence individual experiences of ethnicity? This dissertation will address these issues by analysing the cases of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Rwanda. First, a literature review will be provided in order to place

these cases within larger theoretical debates. Second, the subsequent chapters will demonstrate that in both places, the education system is used by the state to socialize the younger generations into a specific identity, meaning that the education system has a strong impact on post-conflict ethnic identities at the individual level. To do so, Chapter 2 will argue that the form of ethnic accommodation implemented at the state level is reproduced in the school system, creating a system of mono-ethnic schools in BiH and a system of integrated schools in Rwanda. This results in the state creating a sense of social cohesion that is fragmented and limited to each ethnic group in BiH, as opposed to one that is inclusive in Rwanda. Finally, Chapter 3 will analyse the impact that history teaching, and educational treatment of the recent ethnic violence, have on ethnic identification. It will argue that in the case of BiH, ethnic identities are being reinforced by the teaching of the national history, meaning that the individual experiences of ethnicity correspond to the state's efforts to foster a sense of social cohesion that is fragmented and exclusive. This is contrasted by Rwanda, where due to the exclusive nature of the official discourse taught in schools and the silent alienation it creates, ethnic identities are still extremely relevant at the individual level despite the state's efforts to foster social cohesion.

Defining Ethnicity

Before proceeding to the analysis, it is important to define the key concepts used in this dissertation. Within the study of nationalism, there is no consensus on the definition of certain terms, such as ethnicity. Many theorists have proposed their own definition, such as Anthony Smith, who defines the concept of *ethnie* as the following: "a named

human community connected to a homeland, possessing common myths of ancestry, shared memories, one or more elements of shared culture, and a measure of solidarity, at least among the elites"[1]. This cultural focus is however criticized by Frederick Barth, who suggests that ethnic groups are not based on shared cultural traits, but as a result of interactions with other groups. For him,

> The identification of another person as a fellow member of an ethnic group implies a sharing of criteria for evaluation and judgement. It thus entails the assumption that the two are fundamentally 'playing the same game'. (...) On the other hand, a dichotomization of others as strangers, as members of another ethnic group, implies a recognition of limitations on shared understandings, differences in criteria for judgement of value and performance, and a restriction of interaction to sectors of assumed common understanding and mutual interest.[2]

This quote suggests that ethnic groups define themselves in opposition to "others", and are relevant only when interacting with "strangers". This argument of subjectivity is similar to the one made by Max Weber, who argues that believing in a common descent, whether it exists or not, is enough to develop a sense of belonging to an ethnic group. For Weber, ethnic groups are defined as "those human groups that entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or of customs or both, or because of memories of colonization and migration; this belief must be important for group formation; furthermore it does not matter whether an objective blood relationship exists"[3].

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[1] Smith A. *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology, History*. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001), p. 13.
[2] Barth, F. Ethnic Groups and Boundaries :The Social Organization of Culture Difference. (Bergen : Univertsitetsforlaget, 1969), p. 15.
[3] Weber, M. *Economy and Society*, Vol. 2 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), p. 389.

For the purpose of this research, the definitions of ethnicity as provided by Barth and Weber will be favoured. These definitions are preferred due to the importance they give to subjectivity and group interactions, factors that were crucial in distinguishing between the diverse ethnic groups in BiH and Rwanda.

Furthermore, Greenfeld argues that being a part of an ethnic group is not enough to develop a strong sense of ethnic identity. Indeed, the view that one individual has of himself is crucial in mobilizing one's identity. [4] This self-perception can then be influenced or manipulated by different events in the society, such as ethnic violence. Ethnic identities are indeed mobilized during ethnic violence, and can be difficult to modify in post-conflict reconciliation. This dissertation will explore this issue by analysing how the school system in BiH and Rwanda influences one's identity in post-conflict reconstruction.

Method and Case Rationale

The main data used in this dissertation come primarily from secondary sources based on primary research in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Rwanda, and on government reports. Since the focus of this research is to analyse the impact of the school system on ethnic identities in both countries, secondary sources provide a good insight into this topic. However, it is worth noting that due to this subject being under-studied in the academic literature, the secondary sources available remain quite limited. This is especially true for Rwanda, where the data found does not provide a clear explanation of the current

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[4] Greenfeld, L. *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity*. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1992), p. 12-13.

situation in the country, which is why informal interviews were undertaken (see Appendix 1) to complement the secondary sources. The respondents were contacted either by phone or by e-mail, from mid-June 2012 to mid-July 2012. All of them are Rwandans and were chosen due to their personal knowledge on this topic (family in Rwanda, PhD on Rwanda) or because of their geographical location (living in Rwanda), which allow them to have access to local information. It is worth noting that the anonymity of some respondents was respected for ethnical reasons.

As for the case rationale, the cases of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Rwanda are plausible units of comparison for many specific reasons. First, both cases suffered from ethnic violence in the 1990s (Rwandan genocide in 1994 and 1992-95 war in BiH) where victims were targeted based on their ethnic identity. At the end of the conflict, both states engaged in post-conflict reconciliation where ethnicity had to be accommodated. Their shared experience of ethnic violence and post-conflict reconstruction thus provides a basis for comparison between these two cases.

Second, whilst they both suffered from ethnic violence and engaged in post-conflict reconstruction, their experiences are clearly distinct. For instance, in BiH, the armed conflict involved numerous national states and armies, while in Rwanda this domestic conflict created a dichotomy within the society (Tutsi v Hutu). These contextual differences led to opposite ethnic accommodation: the institutionalisation of ethnicity in BiH and the suppression of ethnic identities in Rwanda.

The cases of Rwanda and Bosnia-Herzegovina are indeed extremely interesting to compare because of their opposing views on ethnic accommodation. In BiH, ethnic identities are institutionalised within the government through a system of consociationalism. This system was promoted by the international community in order to accommodate the demands of minority groups through power-sharing. The Dayton Accords thus implemented a system of power-sharing between Serbs, Bosniacs and Croats. This structure is opposed by Rwanda, where ethnic identities have been suppressed from the political scene. It is indeed forbidden by the Constitution for political parties to mobilize around a specific identity (ethnicity, tribe, etc.).[5]

These contrasting experiences of ethnic accommodation enable a strong comparison between these two cases in terms of the way ethnicity is discussed in diverse state-run institutions. In this case, it is interesting to analyse if the contrasting experiences of ethnic accommodation at the state level are reflected in a specific state institution: the school system. Since the education system is used by the state to foster social cohesion, it becomes relevant to compare how ethnicity is accommodated and discussed in the education system, and its impacts on individual experiences of ethnicity. This dissertation will demonstrate that BiH and Rwanda adopted contrasting designs of ethnic accommodation in their education system, which has different impacts on the way ethnicity is experienced at the individual level.

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[5] *Constitution of Rwanda.* http://democratie.francophonie.org/IMG/pdf/Rwanda.pdf, (accessed May 7, 2012).

Finally, since the role of education in post-conflict societies is under-studied in the academic literature, and the cases of BiH and Rwanda have never been compared on this specific topic, this dissertation aims to fill up a gap in the academic literature.

Chapter 1. Literature Review

Whilst other state institutions could have been chosen to analyse the reproduction of ethnic identities in post-conflict Bosnia-Herzegovina and Rwanda, the education system was preferred due to its importance in nationalism studies. Indeed, within the study of nationalism, the education system, especially in terms of history teaching, has been theorized for its role in identity building.

1.1. History and Identity Building

First, many theorists of nationalism studies provide broad theories on the impact of history on identity building. This is the case for Ernest Renan, who puts great emphasis on the importance of a national past in forging a sense of national belonging. As he mentions,

> A nation is a soul, a spiritual principle. Two things, which in truth are but one, constitute this soul or spiritual principle. One lies in the past, one in the present. One is the possession in common of a rich legacy of memories; the other is present-day consent, the desire to live together, the will to perpetuate the value of the heritage that one has received in an undivided form. A heroic

past, great men, glory, this is the social capital upon which one bases a national idea.[6]

The sharing of a common experience in the past and in the present are thus essential conditions for the emergence of a feeling of belonging to a specific collective.[7]

This idea is supported by Eric Hobsbawm who argues in *The Invention of Tradition* that establishing continuity with the past is crucial for the emergence of national cohesion. He gives the example of symbols and practices that have been invented (Scottish tartan, etc.) in order to symbolize historical continuity in real or artificial communities.[8] In *On History*, he provides a similar argument, stipulating that, "the standard example of an identity culture which anchors itself to the past by means of myths dressed up as history is nationalism"[9]. This statement implies that the manipulation of history in order to create continuity between the past and present communities is essential to foster group cohesion and identity building. The creation of a shared collective memory is thus needed for the establishment of a sense of belonging between the different individuals forming one community.[10] This shared experience in the past helps strengthen in the present what Anderson calls an 'imagined community'.[11]

Furthermore, Hobsbawm argues that with the disintegration of oral tradition and family memories in modern societies, the teaching of the collective past is now under the responsibility of state governments. In modern societies, the teaching of the national past is thus occurring in the school system. This means that the government, through the

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[6] Renan, E. "Qu'est-ce qu'une nation", in Hutchinson, J. and A. D. Smith. *Nationalism.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 17.
[7] Renan, E. "Qu'est-ce"., p. 17-18.
[8] Hobsbawm, E. and T. Ranger. *The Invention of Tradition.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 1-12.
[9] Hobsbawm, E. *On History.* (Abacus: London, 1997), p. 357.
[10] Hobsbawm, E. *On History*, p. 357-361.
[11] Anderson, B. *Imagined Communities.* (London: Verso, 1983), p. 6.

school system, remains in control of the teaching of the national history, a very important tool in the creation of identity building and group cohesion.[12]

1.2. Education and Identity Building

Within the field of education and nationalism studies, education is often theorized as an important tool for identity building. In *Nations and Nationalism*, Gellner argues that a national education system is crucial to the reproduction of modern industrial societies. He argues that with the advent of the modern industrial society, a universal culture that allowed mobility and universal training was a necessary element of this new division of labour. Because of the mass population involved, only a national education system could provide this socialization. This created the need for a modern state that would possess the monopoly over education. A state institution that would be able to provide this national education system (primary and secondary schools, as well as universities) became the minimum size of any political unit. Smaller communities of the previous agrarian societies therefore regrouped in order to respond to the needs of the industrial society. This new political unit, composed of different smaller communities, had to chose a high culture that would be taught in the school system to foster social cohesion. Smaller communities of the agrarian societies were thus faced with two choices: either assimilate to the high culture of another group, or form their own state. Nationalism thus emerged during the transition from an agrarian to an industrial society, and its teaching in the school system was necessary for nation-building.[13] As Gellner says, "a

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[12] Hobsbawm, E. *On History*, p. 363-364.
[13] Gellner, E. *Nations and Nationalism*. (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), p. 27-51.

man's education is by far his most precious investment, and in effect confers his identity on him"[14].

Moreover, the role of education in nation-building is also theorized by Anthony Smith. In *National Identity*, Smith provides a similar argument to Gellner – that the education system is a tool used by the state to socialize individuals as members of the nation. He argues that modern societies use the school system to educate the population about their national past, myths and values, and to socialize them into citizens of the nation. National devotion is thus a result of a standardized, mass education system that teaches a homogeneous national culture.[15]

Weber illustrates these arguments in his book *Peasants into Frenchmen.* Weber indeed shares the similar argument that a national education system provides a high culture necessary to nation-building. He gives the example of France, which remained in the 19th century divided along regional and linguistic realms. In order to remove these boundaries, a compulsory universal school system was created. This education system had the mandate to socialize the population into a French culture and language, and to persuade it that this culture was its own. An emphasis was made on a common French history and geography to foster patriotic sentiments towards the French nation.[16] As Weber specifies, "the symbolism of images learned at school created a whole new language and provided common points of reference that straddled regional boundaries exactly as national patriotism was meant to do"[17]. Finally, whilst Weber focuses on the

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[14] Gellner, E. *Nations.,* p. 35.
[15] Smith, A. D. *National Identity.* (London: Penguin Books, 1991), p. 16, 61-69.
[16] Weber, E. *Peasants into Frenchmen.* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1977), p. 303, 330-338.
[17] Weber, E. *Peasants.,* p. 337.

case of the French nation in the 19th century, his argument that education is socializing the individuals into one national identity is relevant and can be applied to other cases.

Moreover, a few scholars in the field of education have explained the importance of history teaching in identity building. This is the case of Ann Low-Beer, who explains that school history is often under more direct government control, through state examinations, than other school curricula. She argues that the state has a strong interest in deciding what is taught in history classes since they tend to focus on national history, or to explain the world history from the state's perspective. The national history taught in schools also tends to be perceived as the official history, which is very influential in strengthening a sense of national belonging.[18] Finally, in *History Teaching, Nationhood and the State*, Phillips explains how history teaching is part of a larger debate over cultural heritage. He argues that history curricula often have the implicit mandate of fostering nationalist sentiments through the creation of a collective memory. The state thus has a strong incentive to control what is taught in history classes since the history curriculum has a direct impact on the imagined community.[19]

To summarize, it appears that there is a consensus in the academic literature that education is a tool used by the state to foster patriotic and nationalist sentiments towards the nation, but also to strengthen or weaken one's specific identity. In the case of divided societies, education can thus be a very powerful tool for social inclusion or exclusion, because it can be used to marginalize minority groups or to include them in the process of nation-building.

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[18] Low-Beer, A. "School History, National History and the Issue of National Identity". *International Journal of Historical Teaching, Learning and Research*. Vol. 3, No. 1, (2003), pp. 9-11.
[19] Phillips, R. *History Teaching, Nationhood and the State : A Study in Educational Politics*. (London : Cassell, 1998), p. 2.

1.3 Education and Identity Building in Divided Societies

The impact of education on identity building can become extremely positive, or problematic, in societies which are culturally divided. Education can indeed become a tool for social inclusion or exclusion, especially in times of post-conflict reconstruction, since the elements included or excluded from the historical narrative taught in schools will have a strong impact on the identity that the state desires to build.

First, many scholars argue that in order to be inclusive a school system in divided societies should recognize the presence of different cultures and different interpretations of the past. This is the case of Ahonen, who argues that since education is used as a tool for identity building, it tends to promote one universal identity. This universal identity may sometimes be adopted by the different communities, but can also be rejected if the communities possess their own alternative identity and understanding of the past. This promotion of a uniform identity in the school system can then be very problematic because it tends to exclude the experiences and perceptions of the minority groups, especially in terms of collective memory. Ahonen thus believes that education can only foster social cohesion in divided societies if the alternative narratives of the minority groups are recognized.[20]

This idea is supported by Spinner-Halev in "Education, Reconciliation and Nested Identities", who argues that the desire to create a civic nation "gives the majority group in divided societies the rationale they need to try to erase the history and narrative of minority groups, as the majority argues the importance of a unitary history, which of

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[20] Ahonen, S. "Politics of Identity through History Curriculum: Narratives of the Past for Social Exclusion – or Inclusion?", *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 2, (2001), p. 180,190.

course mirrors the history of the majority"[21]. The danger with this practice is that instead of strengthening attachment to the civic nation, it may create resentment within minority groups. This is especially true in post-conflict societies, where previous resentment against the state or the majority group lead to violent confrontations. Spinner-Halev is thus not only critical of school systems that promote a single narrative, but is also sceptical of school curricula that focus on the alternative experiences of the different communities. Whilst it may be argued that through physical contact in the school and through learning about each other, negative stereotypes about others will tend to diminish, Spinner-Halev insists that a single education system cannot accommodate the needs of different minority groups. He argues that whilst education remains a tool for identity building, it cannot build a single identity when most symbols of the nation remain disputed, and it cannot build multiple identities at once. Minority groups will indeed reject participation in this single education system if it is perceived as an assimilation tool. Spinner-Halev thus proposes that in post-conflict societies, some control over the education system should be given to the minority groups. In doing so, these groups would feel a sense of belonging to the state, and divisions within society would become more accepted. Of course, Spinner-Halev specifies that the state should remain in partial control over what is taught in schools in order to prevent further divisions within the society.[22]

Preventing further divisions as a result of the education system is an issue analysed by other scholars such as Lynn Davies. In *Education and Conflict: Complexity and Chaos*, Davies explains that it is important to reform the school curriculum after an episode of

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[21] Spinner-Halev, J. "Education, Reconciliation and Nested Identities", *Theory and Research in Education*, Vol. 1, No. 1, (2003), p. 52.
[22] Spinner-Halev, J. "Education", p. 56-66.

ethnic violence. However, it can be very difficult to do so since every little aspect of the school system, such as the choice of the compulsory subjects and the content of the curriculum, can be controversial. She gives the example of the history curriculum, which when discussing the previous episode of ethnic violence tends to construct two distinct groups: the oppressors and the victims. History textbooks can thus perpetuate essentialist identities, as well as ideas of revenge and fear of others. Teaching about a recent situation of ethnic conflict can thus be very problematic in a time of reconciliation.[23] Davies argues that "the decision in textbooks may therefore be whether to 'sanitise or sensitise'- whether simply to erase biased material or to use it to enable young people to analyse discourse and to see the point of view of the other- and how it is portrayed"[24]. Finally, she proposes solutions to the problem of maintaining essentialist identities about the other groups in the school system, by valorising multiple identities and reforming the social sciences curricula in order to enable critical discussion.[25]

Cole and Barsalou provide a similar argument to Davies about the influence of the education system on the maintenance of divisive identities. They agree that in post-conflict societies, teaching about the recent conflict remains extremely problematic because it involves memories of destruction and violence that affected a large portion of the population. They also argue that political leaders and citizens can be highly resistant to a portrayal of the conflict that includes the different points of view. Each community tends to focus on their own sufferings, which makes it even more difficult to reach a consensus on what happened during that episode of mass violence. Cole and Barsalou emphasise that this tends to be even harder in societies also divided along linguistic

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[23] Davies, L. *Education and Conflict: Complexity and Chaos.* (London: Routledge, 2004), p. 81, 173-174.
[24] Davies, L. *Education.,* p. 176.
[25] Davies, L. *Education.,* p. 214-215.

lines, since the debate is not only centred around what needs to be taught in the history curriculum, but also in which language it should be taught.[26]

Educational reforms in post-conflict societies are such an important element of conflict reconciliation that even the World Bank provides its own theory on this issue. The World Bank indeed suggests that educational reforms are crucial in countries where the school system was used to politicize divisive identities. Whilst these reforms can involve issues of supplies and equipment, the main concern remains a reform of the school curriculum. The new curriculum should build social cohesion through the teaching of human rights, citizenship and respect for diversity. This also includes reforming school textbooks in order to remove any prejudice, biases or distortions of the past.[27]

Finally, Alan Smith describes how the impact of education on the reconciliation process in post-conflict societies still remains an understudied topic. Nevertheless, he argues that the education system can never be truly objective and that it will always promote a certain ideology or identity. This is the case because education is used by the modern states to transmit cultural and social values to the following generations. For him, the school curriculum will always be used to promote a certain perception of the nation, its culture, values and its past. The control over the content of the school

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[26] Barsalou, J. and E. A. Cole. "Unite or Divide? The Challenges of Teaching History in Societies Emerging from Violent Conflict", *United States Institute of Peace*, www.usip.org, (accessed May 26, 2012), p. 3-6.
[27] The World Bank. *Reshaping the Future: Education and Postconflict Reconstruction*. (The World Bank: Washington, 2005), p. 16, 26-32, 52.

curriculum in divided societies can thus become a serious issue, and itself in turn a source of conflict.[28]

1.4 Conclusion

To conclude, the academic literature demonstrates how education is used in modern societies to foster social cohesion by providing a universal culture and promoting a national identity. The promotion of a single narrative can, however, be very problematic in post-conflict societies if diversity is not taken into account. In post-conflict societies, the education system, and especially the way history is taught, can indeed become either a tool for reconciliation or one that allows the maintenance of divisions within the society. In the next two chapters, these theories will be used to analyse the two cases studies. Theories on education and identity building will mostly be used in Chapter 2 to explore the type of social cohesion created by the education system, while the theories on history and identity building, as well as education and identity building in divided societies will mainly be used in Chapter 3 to analyse the way the history curriculum influences individual experiences of ethnicity.

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[28] Smith, A. "Education in the Twenty-First Century: Conflict, Reconstruction and Reconciliation", *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, Vol, 35, No. 4, (2005), p. 376-386.

Chapter 2. From State to Schools: Reproduction of State Ethnic Accommodation in the Education System

This chapter analyses the way ethnicity is accommodated in the education system in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Rwanda in order to foster social cohesion. Drawing mainly on the academic literature on education and identity building (Gellner, Weber, etc.), this chapter will demonstrate that the design of ethnic accommodation implemented at the state level is reproduced in another state institution, the school system. This results in a system of mono-ethnic schools in BiH where the education system is used by the state to foster a sense of social cohesion that is exclusive and limited to the boundaries of each ethnic group. This is contrasted by the case of Rwanda, where a system of integrated schooling is used as a tool to foster unity under a larger Rwandan identity that leaves no official room for ethnic identities.

2.1. Ethnicised Schooling in Bosnia-Herzegovina

The education system in Bosnia-Herzegovina is fairly complex and fragmented, a result of an attempt to reproduce the design of ethnic accommodation implemented at the state level into the education system. This decentralized system is facilitated by the Dayton Accords of 1995 that divided BiH both geographically and politically. Dayton implemented a federal system and separated BiH into two entities: the Federation of BiH and the Republika Srpska. In addition, the Federation of BiH was also divided into ten cantons. These divisions were made along ethnic lines, with the Bosniacs or Croats forming the majority group in each canton, and the Serbs being the majority group in the Republic Srpska. Following the Dayton Accords, divisions within BiH ensured little

intermixing between the three ethnic groups, and the Accords legitimized this separation.[29]

Figure 1: Ethnic Map of Bosnia-Herzegovina after 1998.

Source: Kreso, A. P. "The War and Post-War Impact on the Educational System of Bosnia and Herzegovina", *International Review of Education*, Vol. 54, (2008), p. 358.

Whilst the Dayton Accords prioritized the creation of a state, they did not focus on post-conflict reconstruction, which is why the education system is only mentioned in one Annex relating to human rights. This lack of focus given to education as a tool for peacebuilding by the international community permitted the state of BiH to implement its own education system. The system chosen was highly decentralized and allowed every

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[29] Hromadzic, A. "Bathroom Mixing: Youth Negotiate Democratization in Postconflict Bosnia and Herzegovina", *Political and Legal Anthropology Review,* Vol. 34, No. 2, (2011), p. 270, 283.

canton to establish its own education system (own ministry, curricula and textbooks).[30] This means that for a population of around four million people, there are 13 different Ministries of Education.[31] In theory, since 2002 the Ministry of Civil Affairs at the federal level remains the supreme authority over educational policies, but in practice its power over the different Ministries of Education is very limited. The education system is thus extremely decentralized and decisions are mostly taken at the cantonal level.[32]

Figure 2. Structure of the Education System in Bosnia-Herzegovina
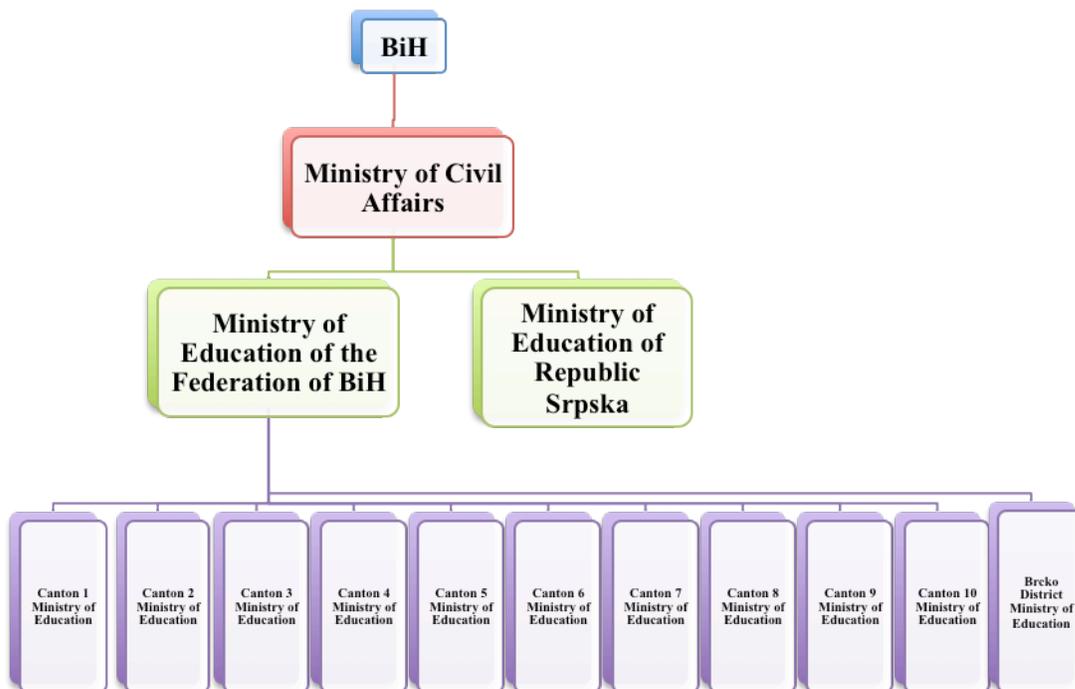
Source: Kreso, A. P. "The War", p. 360.

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[30] Torsti, P. *Divergent Stories, Convergent Attitudes*. (Helsinki: Kustannus Oy Taifuuni, 2003), p. 154.
[31] Clark, J. N. "Education in Bosnia-Hercegovina: The Case for Root-and-Branch Reform", *Journal of Human Rights*, Vol. 9, (2010), p. 346.
[32] Swimelar, S. "Education in Post-war Bosnia: The Nexus of Societal Security, Identity and Nationalism", *Ethnopolitics*, DOI:10.1080/17449057.2012.656839, (2012), p. 3.

What is particular to the case of BiH is that by reproducing the design of ethnic accommodation implemented at the state level into the education system, each ethnic group became in charge of providing education to its own members, having the ability to choose its curriculum and textbooks. Furthermore, the ethnicisation of this institution was not made for pedagogical reasons, but primarily for political motives.[33] The main justification for the adoption of this system is the democratic right of each individual to attend school according to his own mother tongue and cultural beliefs.[34]

In terms of language rights, Cole and Barsalou have theorized on this situation when explaining that in societies divided along linguistic lines, the choice of the language of education can be quite problematic.[35] The case of BiH clearly illustrates this statement. For instance, a Bosniac student interviewed in the documentary "Two Schools Under One Roof" explains that if the schools were united and he would have a Croatian teacher, he would be able to understand her but the question is would he want to?[36] However, when taking into account that linguistics have measured the difference between the Croatian, Bosnian and Serbian language as less than 5% (less different than American English and British English), it seems that the rationale behind the right to be schooled in one's mother tongue results from a fear of diluting ethnic purity through contact. Each group indeed fears that if their younger generations attend integrated schools, they

[33] Pingel, F. "From Ownership to Intervention – or Vice Versa? Textbook Revision in BiH", in Dimou, A. *Transition and the Politics of History Education in Southeast Europe*. (Göttingen: V&R unipress, 2009), p. 268.
[34] Kreso, A. P. "The War", p. 360.
[35] Barsalou, J. and E. A. Cole. "Unite", p. 3.
[36] Foundation SHL. *Two Schools Under One Roof*, TV Documentary, 2010.

would lose the purity of their ethnic identity, purity that was central to the project of ethnic cleansing.[37]

This refusal to adopt elements of another high culture illustrates Gellner's theory. Gellner indeed argues that in order to modernize, smaller agrarian communities needed to regroup to form a new political unit large enough to provide public education. Small communities had either the choice of assimilating to a high culture to foster social cohesion, or to create their own state.[38] In the case of BiH, the three ethnic groups are refusing a centralized education system because they fear that if another group controls the education system, they would consequently lose their culture and national memory.[39] Furthermore, the Dayton Accords made it extremely difficult for each ethnic group to consider creating their own state. By decentralizing the education system, each ethnic group thus has the ability to teach its own culture as the high culture without having their own independent state.

Furthermore, the case of BiH can be seen as a counter-example to Weber's analysis in *Peasants into Frenchmen*. Whilst in the 19th century France successfully unified regional groups into a French nation, BiH failed in creating a unified national identity that would render ethnic identities irrelevant. This failure, resulting from the fear to dilute ethnic purity, means that almost all current students in BiH attend mono-ethnic schools that use a mono-ethnic curriculum.[40]

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[37] Swimelar, S. "Education", p. 7-8.
[38] Gellner, E. *Nations.,* p. 27-51.
[39] Swimelar, S. "Education", p. 13.
[40] Swimelar, S. "Education", p. 13.

Mono-ethnic schools were easily implemented in cantons dominated by one ethnic group (Republic Srpska, etc.), and in mixed regions the authority over education has been decentralized even further as to maintain mono-ethnic schools. As for those who represent a minority group that is too small to form its own schools in the canton, they are presented two choices. They can either travel to other parts of the country to be schooled in their own language and culture, or register to a school of the dominant ethnic group. In the latter option, if they are more than 20 students of the same ethnicity, they will still be able to have their own class with the appropriate curriculum.[41] In some very rare cases, since 2004 a system of "two schools under one roof" was adopted where Croat and Bosniac students attend the same school. However, even in these schools (around 54 of them), the teaching remains divided and only the administration of the school is unified. This means that students of different ethnicity have their own class and separate entrances. The school calendar is also organized differently due to the different national and religious holidays.[42] These schools are however only present in three specific cantons (Central Bosnia, Hercegovina-Neretva and Zenica-Doboj), and are completely absent from the Republic Srpska. Finally, the only schools where students mix in classes are in the Brcko District, and even then they are taught separately the national subjects (literature, history, etc.).[43]

In theory, this system of divided schooling has some advantages. As explained in the first chapter, Spinner-Halev argues that in post-conflict societies, a single education system that promotes a single national identity cannot accommodate the needs of every ethnic group. He then proposes that some control over the education system should be

[41] Swimelar, S. "Education", p. 11-13.
[42] Hromadzic, A. "Bathroom", p. 274-286.
[43] Clark, J. N. "Education", p. 347- 355.

given to the minority groups.[44] However, in the case of BiH the central state possesses only limited power over the education system, meaning that no general guidelines are being followed. Each ethnic group thus has its own, sometimes opposing, policy on education and any cooperation or coordination between them is inexistent.[45] Education in BiH is thus a highly politicized and exclusive system that maintains the segregation between the ethnic groups that resulted from the war, and that fosters a sense of social cohesion that is fragmented along ethnic lines.[46] This suggests that unity under a larger Bosnian identity is almost impossible to achieve.

2.2 Education for Unity in Rwanda

As in Bosnia-Herzegovina where consociationalism at the state level legitimized ethnic segregation at the school level, the form of ethnic accommodation implemented in Rwanda is also reproduced in its education system. Since the end of the genocide in 1994, the Tutsi-led government has implemented a policy of national unity that makes ethnic identification illegal. This policy is part of the country's constitution, where the article 9.2 specifies that the government should work towards eradicating any divisions within the society (mostly ethnic) in order to promote national unity. Any form of discrimination is thus punishable by law.[47] This policy was also extended to the education system, where ethnic identification has been removed from schools. As Hodgkin specifies in "Reconciliation in Rwanda: Education, History and the State", this measure was implemented in order

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[44] Spinner-Halev, J. "Education", p. 59.
[45] Kreso, A. P. "The War", p. 362.
[46] Torsti, P. "Segregated Education and Texts : A Challenge to Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina", *International Journal on World Peace*, Vol. XXVI, No. 2, (2009), p. 69-70.
[47] *Constitution of Rwanda*.

to address the legacies of an educational system that had been based on racial and ethnic inequality and discrimination since its inception. From the introduction of widespread formal schooling in Rwanda by the Belgian colonialists in the 1920s, the ruling elites- first the minority Tutsis under indirect colonial rule and then the Hutus following independence in 1962- privileged their ethnicity in terms of access to education and employment opportunity.[48]

After decades of discrimination in an education system that played a part in the genocide, the government was aware of the necessity to reform the system. As a step towards national unity, but also as a result of the specific demographic and cultural context of the country, integrated schools based on merit and ethnic equality were established.[49]

Moreover, in order to firmly implement this policy of national unity in the education system, concrete steps have been undertaken since 1994 to eradicate ethnic inequality. The fight against discrimination in schools was first integrated in the Organic Law N.20 of 2003 where it is specified that education has the mission of transforming the students into citizens free from any type of discrimination.[50] Furthermore, ethnicity was removed from the student cards.[51] Ethnic quotas were also eradicated, meaning that admission to secondary schools are no longer based on political or ethnic affiliation and now follow strict guidelines.[52] Finally, an institution in charge of the organization of the national examinations for primary and secondary schools (Rwanda National Examinations Council) was created in 1997, putting a stop to the practice of corruption and favouritism

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[48] Hodgkin, M. "Reconciliation in Rwanda: Education, History and the State", *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 60, No. 1, (Fall/Winter 2006), p. 201.
[49] Hodgkin, M. "Reconciliation", p. 200.
[50] UNESCO, "World Data on Education". http://www.ibe.unesco.org/2010/11. (accessed 8 June 2012), p.2.
[51] Mutabazi, E. "Suppression des Manuels Scolaires d'Histoire au Rwanda: Erreur ou Cohérence ?", Université de Montpellier, 16 February 2011, p. 11.
[52] Freedman, S.W. et al. "Confronting the Past in Rwandan Schools" in Stover, E. and H.M. Weinstein. *My Neighbor, My Enemy: Justice and Community in the Aftermath of Mass Atrocity.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 255.

found in the education system until 1994.[53] Since the end of the genocide, important steps have thus been made by the government to ensure that education would remain free from ethnic discrimination and would promote integration and social cohesion.[54] The logic behind this practice is well summarized by a Rwandan school director, who argues that "the problem of ethnicity will be solved by a good education- education that doesn't separate people, which doesn't favour one group or disfavour another"[55]. However, this policy was only possible due to the specific demographic and cultural context of Rwanda.

First, unlike Bosnia-Herzegovina where each ethnic group possesses its own motherland and national memory, the groups in Rwanda share the same language (Kinyarwanda), culture, religion and ancestral belief. [56] Choosing the high culture (Gellner) that will be taught in schools is thus not as controversial as it is in BiH, since all groups share the same high culture. There is no need for any ethnic groups to assimilate to another culture, which allows integration under a centralized education system. Furthermore, the demographic distribution of the ethnic groups in Rwanda (2012) shows a clear domination in numbers of the group characterized as Hutu (84%) (see footnote)[57]. Since the Tutsi represent only 15% of the population and the Twa only 1%[58], it seems quite doubtful that these groups could create their own political unit large

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[53] Ministry of Education of Rwanda, "Le Développement de l'Éducation: Rapport National du Rwanda", http://www.ibe.unesco.org/National_Reports/ICE_2008/rwanda_NR08_fr.pdf, (accessed 20 June 2012),p.16.
[54] Mutabazi, E. "Les Enjeux des Nouvelles Valeurs dans l'Enseignement de l'Histoire du Rwanda après le Génocide", Actes du congrès de l'Actualité de la recherche en éducation et en formation (AREF), Université de Genève, septembre 2010, p. 7.
[55] Freedman, S.W. et al. "Confronting", p. 253.
[56] Hodgkin, M. "Reconciliation", p. 199.
[57] It is worth noting that since ethnic identification is now illegal in Rwanda, it is impossible to have a clear account of the demographic distribution of the ethnic groups. These numbers are thus only estimation.
[58] "Country Profile: Rwanda", CIA- The World Factbook. https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/rw.html, (accessed July 9 2012).

enough to provide mass education. Attending integrated schools for every student is thus made possible because of the specific cultural and demographic context of Rwanda, where the high culture taught in schools does not necessitate assimilation on the part of any groups and where a decentralized system such as in BiH would not be feasible due to the demographic situation.

Furthermore, by having integrated classes and a national curriculum, the Rwandan government ensures that a homogenous national culture is taught to the younger generations, as an attempt to foster social cohesion and national devotion (see Smith) exempt from ethnic identities. The homogenous culture taught in schools will be further explained in the following chapter, but it is worth noting at this point that it is presented as the culture of all Rwandans, regardless of their ethnic heritage.

However, despite the government's efforts to eradicate ethnic divisions in the education system, there are still inconsistencies between these policies of unity and the experience of everyday life for students of different ethnic background.[59] For instance, it was reported in 2008 that some schools were still making their students wear different uniforms based on their ethnicity.[60] Furthermore, the language of education also remains a controversial decision that highlights ethnic divisions. As discussed by Cole and Barsalou, the choice of the language of education can be problematic in societies dividing along linguistic lines.[61] Not only does BiH clearly illustrate this statement, but the same can also be said to the case of Rwanda. Despite the fact that the Hutu, Tutsi and Twa all share the same language (Kinyarwanda), the language of education has

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[59] Freedman, S.W. et al. "Confronting", p. 257.
[60] "Rwanda still teaching genocide", *BBC News*, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/7194827.stm, 17 January 2008.
[61] Barsalou, J. and E. A. Cole. "Unite", p. 3.

always been French, as a result of the Belgian colonial rule. However, in 2008 the government decided that English would become the new language of education.[62] This removal of French as the teaching language can be seen as a political stance against the French state by the Rwandan government, but also as a way to favour the Tutsi elite. The current Tutsi-led government includes many individuals, including the President Paul Kagame, who were in exile in English-speaking neighbour countries during the genocide. Back in Rwanda, these individuals (Tutsi) are often more fluent in English than in French. Whilst the official reason for adopting English in schools is that it is the language of business and technology, the population still fears that it will eventually favour the ruling Tutsi elite.[63]

To summarize, the education system in Rwanda reproduces the design of ethnic accommodation implemented at the state level, which is to remove any reference to ethnic identity. By having integrated classes that teach a homogenous national culture, the Rwandan government is trying to foster social cohesion and eradicate the relevance of wartime ethnic identities. The efforts spent to ensure that the younger generations do not need to identify as members of a specific ethnic group to attend schools are thus part of a process by the state to foster unity under a larger Rwandan identity that includes every group within the society.

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[62] "Rwanda Opts for English Teaching", *BBC News*, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/7663298.stm, 10 October 2008.
[63] "English to Become Official Language in Rwanda", *NPR Radio Station*, http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=97245421, 20 November 2008.

2.3 Conclusion

The findings of this chapter are that both Bosnia-Herzegovina and Rwanda have reproduced the design of ethnic accommodation implemented at the state level into their education system. In BiH, not only has consociationalism legitimized ethnic divisions within the government, but it also institutionalized them into the education system. Students need to be aware of their own ethnic identity in order to attend schools, and these schools in return reinforce these identities by maintaining the divisions created by the war. This is contrasted by the case of Rwanda, where ethnic affiliation has been illegitimised and removed from the political discourse and from the school system. Progress has been made to have an education system that is integrative and solely based on the merit and competence of each student. Concrete steps to remove ethnic discrimination and favouritism were adopted in order to foster national devotion exempt from any ethnic divisions. The school system in Rwanda is thus trying to forge a national identity that transcends the categorizations of Hutu, Tutsi or Twa, but its success remains quite limited.

This suggests that the school system in these two post-conflict societies is used by the state as a social location where the younger generations are being socialized into a specific identity by fostering a sense of social cohesion to the state culture. In the case of BiH, the social cohesion created by the school system is exclusive and fragmented, meaning that it becomes impossible to develop a sense of belonging to the idea of Bosnian-hood. In Rwanda, the education system is used by the state as a tool for reconciliation by fostering a sense of social cohesion under a larger Rwandan identity that is inclusive and transcends ethnicity. Both cases thus illustrate the arguments

provided by the academic literature on the role of education in fostering a sense of belonging to a specific national/ethnic identity.

Chapter 3. Story of a Conflict: History Teaching and Identity Building

This chapter explores the individual experiences of ethnicity by analysing the impact that history teaching, in particular the teaching of the period of ethnic cleansing, has on ethnic identification. This chapter draws upon the academic literature on history and identity building (Renan, Hobsbawm) and on education in divided societies (Davies, Cole and Barsalou, etc.) to analyse the two case studies. It will argue that in BiH, ethnic identities politicized by the 1992-95 conflict are being reinforced by an history teaching that interprets the past events from a nationalist and ethnic perspective. This means that the individual experience of ethnicity corresponds to the state's efforts to foster a sense of social cohesion that is fragmented and limited to the boundaries of each ethnic group. This is contrasted by Rwanda, where a single narrative about the national past, and the genocide, is being promoted in order to unite all Rwandans under the same national identity that transcends ethnicity. However, by excluding the alternative perspectives of the past in the official narrative, it alienates the individuals who share a different understanding of the past. This silent alienation leads to a passive resistance to the official discourse that in turn reinforces a sense of belonging to each specific ethnic group.

3.1 History Teaching Fuelling Ethnic Identities in Bosnia-Herzegovina

As explained in the previous chapter, since the beginning of the Bosnian war the education system in Bosnia-Herzegovina is fragmented along ethnic lines. Each ethnic group has authority over its own education system, which means that students attend mono-ethnic schools that use mono-ethnic curricula. This system maintains ethnic segregation politicized by the war, but also fuels divisions by reinforcing the negative portrayals of the other groups while discussing the national past. This ethnic interpretation of the past is only made possible through the use of separate textbooks.

During the war and until 2002, each ethnic group used textbooks that were being published in their motherland. For instance, the Serbian schools in the Republic Srpska were using the same history textbooks as Serbia. Following the Dayton Accords, there was a consensus in the international community that these highly nationalist textbooks remained an obstacle to the process of reconciliation. Under international pressure, an Education Working Group was created in 1998 and made several suggestions to remove sensitive and biased material from the textbooks. This first attempt of reforms was however a failure, due to the hostile response from the population who accused the international community of denying them access to their national history.[64]

However, in 1999, Bosnia-Herzegovina applied for membership to the EU and in return the removal of any biased or sensitive material from the history textbooks was made as an entry requirement. A panel of international experts decided which material was considered offensive, and it either had to be blackened or annotated with the following sentence: "The following passage contains material of which the truth has not

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[64] Murgescu, M-L. "Rewriting school textbooks as a tool of understanding and stability", *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 1, (2002), p. 94.

been established, or that may be offensive or misleading. The material is currently under review".[65] This measure was highly contested in BiH since it was perceived as censorship, which is why it was aimed only as a temporary measure until new textbooks were published. It was indeed decided that after 2002, all textbooks should be published in BiH and should exclude the recent history. It was also argued that it should include the history and literature of the other ethnic groups and a common core curriculum, policy aimed to put a stop to the importation of nationalist textbooks from Croatia or Serbia.[66] However, elections in Bosnia-Herzegovina in 2002 returned to power the nationalist parties, who resisted these reforms. By 2003, old textbooks were still being used and some schools had still not removed or blackened any biased material.[67]

Despite the resistance, some reforms were still adopted over the last few years. For instance, the history textbooks are now solely published in Bosnia-Herzegovina. It can however be argued that they are merely copies of the ones used in Serbia or Croatia.[68] Moreover, a compulsory Common Core curriculum was adopted in 2003, meaning that every student learns the same material in some subjects (mathematics, science, etc.), regardless of their ethnicity. This is however far from a civic curriculum since the ethnic curricula are maintained for the national subjects (history, literature, geography and language).[69] Regardless of this, reforms of the education system in BiH (especially in terms of history teaching) were, and still are, extremely complicated due to the

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[65] Low-Beer, A. "Politics, School Textbooks and Cultural Identity: The Struggle in Bosnia and Hercegovina", Paradigm, Vol 2, No. 3, (2001), p. 3.
[66] Murgescu, M-L. "Rewriting", p. 95.
[67] Torsti, P. *Divergent.,* p. 156-8.
[68] Torsti, P. "Segregated", p. 67-8.
[69] Pingel, F. "From Ownership", p. 289.

persistence of nationalist politics in the country.[70] As Low-Beer explains, the state has a strong interest in deciding what is being taught in schools, especially in terms of the national history. The national history taught in schools is indeed perceived as the official narrative, which tends to reinforce a sense of national belonging.[71] In BiH, reforms in history teaching has always been difficult to implement because the absence of a universal Bosnian identity means that each group tries to foster national belonging to their own ethnic group. There is thus a strong incentive on the part of each group to maintain a segregated history curriculum.

Furthermore, Phillips provides a similar argument when saying that history teaching has a direct impact on the imagined community.[72] This statement explains why reforms have been difficult in BiH, because "each ethnonational group seeks socializing experiences or a curriculum that would reproduce the group's culture and define identity in part by what it is, and what it is not"[73]. Despite the reforms adopted in the last 10-15 years, history textbooks in BiH are thus still being used to foster national devotion to each ethnic group, which maintains the ethnic divisions politicized by the war. This is especially witnessed when discussing the episode of ethnic violence in the 1990s.

3.1.1 Serbian Textbooks

Today, Bosnian Serb students learn about the recent episode of ethnic violence in the 8th year of elementary school. Two history textbooks are being used as part of the Bosnian Serb curriculum: Istorija, the main history textbook, and Dodatak, the

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[70] Sivac-Bryant, S. "Kozarac School: A Window on Transitional Justice for Returnees", *The International Journal of Transitional Justice*, Vol. 2, (2008), p. 112-4.
[71] Low-Beer, A. "School", p. 10.
[72] Phillips, R. *History.*, p. 2.
[73] Swimelar, S. "Education", p. 12.

additional booklet for history teaching. Both textbooks are being published in the Federation of BiH, but are very similar to the ones used in Serbia. Because of the reforms adopted over the last decade, some material had to be modified, especially in the additional booklet, where all the chapters discussing the 1992-95 war had to be removed. Today, even if the ethnic violence of the 1990s are included in both textbooks, the reforms prevent it from being explained in depth, which is why the account of this event does not take more than one page and excludes some events.[74]

Written in Serbian, the history textbooks used explain the 1992-95 war from a Serbian perspective and focus on the actions and sufferings of the Serbian nation.[75] Under the chapter "Civil War in BiH and the formation of the Serb Republic", it traces the causes of the conflict back to the elections of 1990 in BiH, where both the Bosniacs and the Bosnian Croats formed a coalition without the involvement of the Bosnian Serbs. According to the textbooks, both groups took decisions without the consent of the Serbian members of Parliament and decided to hold a referendum on the region's independence from Yugoslavia. Croats and Bosniacs voted for secession, leading to the declaration of independence from Yugoslavia in 1992 and to civil war.[76]

The 1992-95 war in BiH is perceived as a civil war caused by violent separatism. According to these textbooks, the war erupted between the three ethnic groups because they could not reach any consensus about the future of the country. After the Slovenians and the Croats, the Bosniacs declared independence from the central state, therefore

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[74] Torsti, P. *Divergent.,* p. 187.
[75] OSCE, "Primary School Curricula in Bosnia and Herzegovina: A Thematic Review of the National Subjects", http://www.osce.org/, December 2009, p. 3,47,51.
[76] Bartulovic, A. "Nationalism in the Classroom : Narratives of the War in Bosnia-Herzegovina (1992-1995) in the History Textbooks of the Republic of Srpska", *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism*, Vol. 6, No. 3, (2006), p. 57-58.

engaging in an unjustifiable mission to destroy the unity of Yugoslavia.[77] The Croats and the Muslims were however unprepared to acknowledge the desires of the Serbian population, which forced the Serbs to engage in violence in order to defend their right and the unity of Yugoslavia. Since this conflict is described as a civil war, there is no mention of the role that the states of Croatia or Serbia played in it.[78]

Moreover, whilst these textbooks distribute the guilt of this war over the three ethnic groups, it is still insinuated that the Serbs were the victims who had to defend themselves against the aggression of the other groups. In order to avoid these passages to be blackened, the blame on the Croats and Muslims is made by emphasising the negative role that these groups played in the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian empires, and then connecting the civil war to these periods of time.[79] For instance, these textbooks will mention episodes where the Serbs were attacked by others in the Ottoman Empire, and then state that this situation was again reproduced in the Bosnian war.[80] There is thus a strong dichotomy between "us", the Bosnian Serbs, and "them", the Croats, and sometimes the Muslims. This dichotomy helps maintain ethnic divisions since it is used to prove the absence of a Bosnian nation.[81]

3.1.2 Croatian Textbooks

The history textbook (Povijest) for Bosnian Croats is probably the most ethnically coloured one since it focuses more on Croatia than on the history of Bosnia-Herzegovina and provides a clear Croatian analysis of the recent ethnic conflict. Written exclusively in

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[77] Pingel, F. "From Ownership", p. 262.
[78] Bartulovic, A. "Nationalism", p. 59-63
[79] Bartulovic, A. "Nationalism", p. 59-63.
[80] McGlynn, C. Peace Education in Conflict and Post-Conflict Societies: Comparative Perspectives. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p. 218.
[81] Torsti, P. *Divergent.,* p. 225-240.

Croatian, this textbook is almost identical to the one used in Croatia, except for some specific events relating to BiH.[82]

First, the war in BiH is openly discussed in the sections entitled "The war of Great-Serbian power against Croatia" and "The Rise and Development of an Independent Croatia", but is only described as a continuation of the Croatian war. The war in Croatia is thus the main event connecting to the disintegration of Yugoslavia that is taught in schools, with the Bosnian war being neglected. According to this textbook, the Croatian war was initiated by the Serbs, who through their project of a Greater Serbia, threatened the security and peace of the neighbouring regions. The Croats were thus forced to defend the sovereignty of Croatia through armed force.[83] In this narrative, there is a consensus that the aggressors are the Serbs while the Croats are the victims. Furthermore, while "us" clearly refers to the Croats, it is also very clear that "them" refers to the Serbs. Serbia is indeed described negatively throughout the national history of Croatia, and the Serbian hatred against the Croats is described as the main motive for war on many occasions.[84] As included in the section dealing with the 1990s, "in their hatred towards everything which is Croatian, the Great Serbs tried to kill as many people and destroy as many material goods as possible"[85]. The Bosnian Croats are thus making a clear dichotomy between "us" (Croats, victims) and "them" (Serbs, aggressors), with the Bosniacs remaining neglected from this narrative.[86]

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[82] Low-Beer, A. "Politics", p. 2.
[83] Torsti, P. *Divergent.,* p. 179-80.
[84] Torsti, P. "How to Deal with a Difficult Past ? History Textbooks Supporting Enemy Images in Post-War Bosnia-Herzegovina", *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, Vol. 39, No. 1, (2007), p. 81-85..
[85] Torsti, P. "How"., p. 84.
[86] OSCE, "Primary", p. 41-3.

Finally, the course of the war is also openly discussed, mentioning that the Serbs massacred Croats, destroyed villages and developed concentration camps in order to kill as many Croats as possible. In sum, the history textbook used for the Bosnian Croats neglects the Bosnian war in favour of the war in Croatia, and interprets this event from a patriotic and mono-national perspective. The Serbs are consistently mentioned as the aggressor, whilst no recordings of sufferings from any other group except the Croats are included in the narrative. Any references to Bosnia or to the Bosniacs are neglected, meaning that national devotion to Croatia remains natural for these students.[87]

3.1.3 Bosnian Textbooks

Finally, the history textbook used for the Muslim Bosniacs (Historija) is undoubtedly the most integrative and unbiased textbook used in BiH, but still remains ethnically coloured.[88] It interprets the 1992-95 war from a Bosnian point of view, suggesting that following the declarations of independence of Croatia, Slovenia, etc., it was now the turn of BiH to secede. According to this textbook, the independence of BiH was acknowledged by the international community, but the Serbian nationalists decided otherwise. The war was thus an act of aggression against the sovereignty of BiH, and the main perpetuator was the Yugoslavian National Army, assisted by the Serb Democratic Party. There is however a clear distinction between the Bosnian Serbs and the war aggressors. The only individuals blamed for the war are indeed those who were part of the SDS party and the soldiers of the national army. Instead of blaming one group, this textbook mentions the

[87] OSCE, "Primary", p. 41-3.
[88] Baranovic, B. "History Textbooks in Post-war Bosnia and Herzegovina", *Intercultural Education*, Vol. 12, No.1, (2001), p. 24.

historical unity of BiH and the equality of each national group under the larger concept of Bosnian-hood.[89]

Finally, the course of the war is deliberately absent from the textbook, except when mentioning that during the 1992-5 war the Serbs attempted genocide against the Muslims. The Muslims are thus described as the victims, with the Serbs being historically the main aggressor.[90] To conclude, whilst this textbook is more silent than the others on the war and tries to remain inclusive by focusing on the historical unity of BiH, there is still a dichotomy between "us" (Muslims, victims), and "them" (Serbs, aggressors) that tends to exclude the Bosnian Croats from the narrative.[91]

3.1.4. Analysis

The narrative included in the history textbooks of each group raises many issues for identity building in a context of reconciliation. First, these textbooks tend to reinforce the ethnic identities politicized by the war instead of fostering a sense of national belonging to the state of Bosnia. The Bosnian Croat and Bosnian Serbs are indeed not socialized into citizens of BiH, and instead learn that BiH is a foreign state. This suggests that the younger generations still identify as members of a specific ethnic group rather than members of a Bosnian nation, which corresponds to the state's efforts to foster a sense of social cohesion that is fragmented and limited to the boundaries of each ethnic group.[92] Moreover, all textbooks provide a mono-national account of the ethnic cleansing

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[89] Torsti, P. *Divergent.,* p. 174-5, 198-211.
[90] Low-Beer, A. "Politics", p. 2.
[91] Torsti, P. "How"., p. 87.
[92] Swimelar, S. "Education", p. 12.

and exclude the sufferings of the other groups, which stresses more their dissimilarities than their similarities in experiencing the war.[93]

Furthermore, all of the textbooks present a clear dichotomy between "us"/ "victims" and "them"/ "aggressors". This is especially witnessed when the heroes of one group are in fact the war criminals of the others, making it even more difficult to transcend this dichotomy. This does not only prevent a single national identity to be built, but also justifies and reinforces the stereotypes against the other groups. These stereotypes can in turn lead to hostile images about the others, which remains an important obstacle to national unity and post-ethnic cleansing reconciliation.[94] As Claude Kieffer, OSCE Education Director mentions in 2007, "if we continue to have three separate education systems teaching different histories, narratives, literatures, cultures and traditions, without ever allowing the children to meet and interact, then we will end up with three countries in one"[95].

Finally, the case of BiH is a strong example of Alan Smith's argument that since education is always used to promote a certain identity, its control remains a source of conflict in post-conflict societies.[96] The case of BiH perfectly illustrates this statement. Since the history textbooks serve the purpose of strengthening a sense of ethnic belonging at the individual level, it seems almost impossible that a universal history curriculum could be developed without provoking more ethnic tensions.

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[93] Murgescu, M-L. "Rewriting", p. 96.
[94] Torsti, P. "How", p. 90.
[95] Swimelar, S. "Education", p.12.
[96] Smith, A. "Education", p. 376-386.

3.2 Official Historical Narrative and Ethnicity in Rwanda

It is worth noting that the Rwandan case is fairly complex in terms of data, which is why the following points regarding the situation in 2012 should be understood as serious hypotheses that will however need to be confirmed through extended fieldwork.

3.2.1 Removal of National History from Schools

Since the end of the genocide in 1994, efforts have been undertaken by the government to create a centralized education system that is exempt from ethnic identities. This policy was implemented in order to reform a school system that played a part in reproducing the genocide ideology. However, unlike BiH where mono-ethnic curricula were adopted, a centralized education system necessitates a national curriculum on every subject, including history. As the World Bank argues, in cases where the school curriculum was used to politicize divisive identities, educational reforms become crucial.[97] This rationale was followed by the Rwandan government, whose response was to ban formal teaching of the national history from schools.[98]

In 1994, the Ministry of Education indeed recognized the role that the history curriculum had on politicizing ethnic divisions and decided that a moratorium on the teaching the national history should be adopted. This measure was intended to remain implemented until a consensus on the events leading up and surrounding the genocide, and the way they should be taught in schools, was reached.[99] Both the history curriculum

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[97] The World Bank. *Reshaping.,* p.16.
[98] Hodgkin, M. "Reconciliation", p. 199.
[99] Freedman, S.W. et al. "Confronting", p. 248.

and the history textbooks were removed from schools and sources indicate that this was still the case in 2011.[100]

The complexity of developing a national history curriculum in Rwanda clearly illustrates Davies' theory. For Davies, history textbooks that explain previous episodes of mass violence can perpetuate essentialist identities and ideas of revenge.[101] Since the history textbooks used in Rwanda until 1994 politicized ethnic identities, there is a dilemma on how the genocide can be explained in schools without repeating the previous mistakes. Since the ethnic relations between the Hutu and Tutsi were at the core of the conflict, it seems impossible to analyse the events leading up to it without reference to ethnicity.[102] However, since ethnic identification is now illegal in the country, it becomes increasingly difficult to discuss the genocide when ethnicity remains taboo in the society.[103]

Furthermore, Cole and Barsalou argue that in post-conflict societies, teaching about the previous conflict is extremely difficult because it refers to episodes of violence that affected a large proportion of individuals. Each group therefore has its own interpretation of the past, and reaching a consensus that will include the suffering of every group becomes hazardous.[104] This is the case in Rwanda, where government officials and citizens do not necessarily share the same interpretation of the genocide.

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[100] Mutabazi, E. "Suppression", p. 1.
[101] Davies, L. *Education.,* p. 174.
[102] Buckley-Zistel, S. "Transitional Justice, National Memory and History Teaching in Rwanda", http://www.nai.uu.se/ecas-4/panels/21-40/panel-36/Susanne-Buckley-Zistel-Full-paper.pdf. (2011), p. 2.
[103] Freedman, S.W. H.M. Weinstein, K. Murphy and T. Longman. "Teaching History after Identity-Based Conflicts : The Rwanda Experience", *Comparative Education Review*, Vol. 52, No. 4, (2008), p. 679.
[104] Barsalou, J. and E. A. Cole. "Unite", p. 3.

Despite these challenges, some concrete steps towards developing an official national history curriculum were undertaken over the last few years.[105]

First, the History Resources Development Project, whose aim was to develop a national history curriculum, successfully published a new history resource book in 2008, named "The teaching of history of Rwanda: a participatory approach" (the details of this curriculum will be explained in the subsequent section). However, although the book was distributed to some schools, there are no clear indications that it is being used.[106]

It is indeed difficult to confirm what is currently happening in Rwanda in terms of history teaching. Scholarly articles up to 2011 argue that the moratorium on history teaching is still imposed, but other evidence might suggest that the Rwandan history is informally taught in schools. For instance, in addition to the resource book for teachers, the Ministry of Education publishes on its website the "Social Studies Curriculum" that also mentions the national history, and the genocide. In this curriculum, there is a section on the different knowledge that students in grade four to six should possess. The sixth point on that list is the following: "Explain the causes and consequences of the 1994 genocide and massacres in Rwanda"[107]. Based on both documents, it seems that the national history is discussed in schools. Furthermore, the "World Data on Education" published by the UNESCO in 2011 shows that history is a compulsory subject in grades

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[105] Freedman, S.W. et al. "Confronting", p. 248.
[106] Hilker, L. M. "The Role of Education in Driving Conflict and Building Peace- The Case of Rwanda", *UNESCO*, http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0019/001913/191301e.pdf, 2010, p. 13.
[107] Ministry of Education of Rwanda, "Social Studies Curriculum". www.ncdc.gov.rw/SOCIAL_STUDIES_English_P_1-6.pd, (accessed 8 June 2012), p.14.

4, 5 and 6 in Rwandan primary schools.[108] All of this data therefore suggest that the national history is taught in the schools.

Further research was thus necessary in order to clarify the current situation in Rwanda. Following informal interviews, it seems that no clear arguments can be made about the teaching of national history in Rwanda. First, Respondent 1, a Rwandese women identifying as Hutu now living in Montreal, Canada, explained how her nephews and nieces (now in high school) still living in Rwanda were having compulsory history classes in primary school. However, what is interesting about Rwanda is that these classes did not teach the national history. Instead, Respondent 1 mentioned that her nephews and nieces were learning the general history of the World (European History, World Wars, etc.). This demonstrates that whilst the UNESCO suggests that history is a compulsory subject in Rwanda, it does not mean that the history taught is the national history. However, Respondent 1 mentioned that her nephews and nieces learned very informally about the Rwandan history in the Kinyarwanda language class.

Furthermore, whilst they were in primary school around four years ago, Respondent 1 remains sceptical that the situation changed since then. She argues that discourses about ethnicity and genocide still remain taboo in the society. This is especially true in a context where revisionism of the genocide is punishable by law.[109] She thus suggests that it would be quite surprising that the recent national history, especially the genocide, is freely spoken about in the schools since the teachers might fear to be accused of revisionism or of spreading the genocide ideology. This argument is supported by some

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[108] UNESCO, "World Data"., p. 10.
[109] "Article 13. "Le révisionnisme, le négationnisme et la banalisation du génocide sont punis par la loi", *Constitution of Rwanda.*

scholars such as Freedman et al who explain in "Teaching History after Identity-Based Conflicts: The Rwanda Experience" that teachers risk losing their position in the school, or even imprisonment, when expressing any type of disagreement with the official narrative.[110]

This discussion with Respondent 1 raised two issues. First, it brings the whole political climate into context and demonstrates that even if there is a resource book for teachers, they might be unwilling to adopt it for the reasons outlined above. Second, whilst the first statement might be true, the history of Rwanda was still discussed in the Kinyarwanda classes. This suggests that even if the resource book is not nationally adopted, some teachers are still teaching the national history. This question was discussed with Respondent 2, a NGO worker currently living in Rwanda. According to him, the national history is undoubtedly taught in schools, but the situation remains complex. Finally, Respondent 3, Dr. Éric Mutabazi, professor at the Université Catholique de l'Ouest d'Angers, brings additional information to the debate. Dr. Mutabazi was indeed in contact with a Rwandan secondary school teacher who admitted last month that the history of Rwanda was being reinstated into the school curriculum. However, this information remains to be confirmed and Dr. Mutabazi suggests that it would be misleading to affirm that the national history is taught in every school.

However, what we do know about the current situation is that the national history is discussed through other mediums, such as political discourses, the media, and the Ingando camps. For example, the Ingando camps were reinstated at the end of the genocide and are compulsory for the ex-combatants returning from exile and the

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[110] Freedman, S.W. H.M. Weinstein, K. Murphy and T. Longman. "Teaching"., p. 665.

released *génocidaires*. Every year student groups however join the summer program and learn about patriotism and the genocide. The lessons taught in these camps are following the official narrative of the government, which is the same as the one included in the resource book for teachers.[111]

To conclude, the following hypothesis about the situation in Rwanda can be made: in theory, it seems that the moratorium on teaching the national history has been removed, but in practice it remains very difficult to adopt the history curriculum suggested by the government. Rwandan history, including the genocide, is thus discussed in schools, but in a very informal way, which means that no new history textbooks have been published and that not all schools are teaching it. Instead, the students learn about the national past in alternative medium, such as the Ingando camps. The question of why the national history is not actively taught in schools when it is discussed in other medium remains, especially when taking into consideration the important progress in Rwanda today. For instance, Rwanda is now one of the least corrupt countries in Africa, and possesses an extensive health care coverage.[112] All of these progresses suggest that the country has the means to organize an education system that teaches the Rwandan history, instead of allowing alternative medium to do so. However, what remains clear is that in any circumstances, the Rwandan history discussed in the schools or in the other mediums all follow the official narrative of the past.

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[111] Melvin, J. "Reconstructing Rwanda: Balancing Human Rights and the Promotion of National Reconciliation", *The International Journal of Human Rights*, Vol. 14, No. 6, (2010), p. 940.
[112] Rosenberg, T. "In Rwanda, Health Care Coverage that Eludes the US", *The New York Times*, http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/07/03/rwandas-health-care-miracle/. 3 June 2012.

3.2.2 The Impact of a Single Narrative on Individual Experiences of Ethnicity

Unlike Bosnia-Herzegovina where many narratives of the past are being spread within the boundaries of each ethnic group, in Rwanda there is an official historical narrative. This official narrative was developed by the ruling government and is the only version of the national history that is allowed. Any revision or disagreement with this narrative is punishable by law. The creation of a single national history can be perceived as a top-down attempt to transcend ethnic divisions and create a single national identity.[113]

First, in order to favour the emergence of a national identity that transcends ethnicity, the historical narrative stresses a common past and future for all Rwandans. According to this narrative, prior to the European colonization of the 19th century, there was peace and harmony between the Hutu, Tutsi and Twa. These three categories were not ethnic groups, but social statues, and social mobility through marriage or economic change was possible. Conflicts between these groups were quasi inexistent and when they arose they involved clan rivalries, but not ethnic hatred.[114] Instead, all groups identified as part of the same nation (Rwandan) since they were united under the same language, culture, religion, and King. The only form of inequality noticeable at that period of time was the relationship between the royal courtiers and the peasants. However, Hutu, Tutsi and Twa were all victims of this unequal relationship.[115]

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[113] Hodgkin, M. "Reconciliation", p. 205.
[114] Longman, T. and T. Rutagengwa. "Memory, Identity and Community in Rwanda", in Stover, E. and H.M. Weinstein. *My Neighbor,.,* p. 164.
[115] Buckley-Zistel, S. "Nation, narration, unification? The politics of history teaching after the Rwandan genocide", *Journal of Genocide Research*, Vol. 11, No. 1, (2009), p. 32-35.

This romanticized historical account is not approved by all historians but remains the reference point that a common future should return to. Using Ernst Renan's definition of a nation, it seems that the pre-colonial past is perceived as the glorious age of Rwanda upon which the government wishes to base the Rwandan national identity. This peace and harmony in a common past thus becomes the heritage that Rwandans today should perpetuate. This focus on a shared collective memory that did not involve ethnic divisions, and which becomes a heritage to perpetuate, is a deliberate attempt by the government to encourage the population to abandon ethnic categories in favour of a national identity. Moreover, Hobsbawm argues that establishing continuity between the past and present is crucial in fostering any feeling of national cohesion.[116] In the case of Rwanda, the pre-colonial period represents a golden past whose legacy includes Rwandans of every ethnicity. Establishing continuity between a past that included peace and unity and the present thus serves the purpose of fostering a sense of national identity that transcends ethnicity, and to present the society with a model of peaceful coexistence.[117]

However, this official narrative also suggests that this peaceful past was destroyed by European colonization. According to this discourse, the Germans, followed by the Belgians, adopted a strategy of divide-and-rule and created ethnic categories where they did not previously exist. To do so, the colonizers spread false teachings about ethnicity and migration in order to secure their authority over a divided population.[118] The combination of many strategies (the rewriting of history, ethnicity added to the identification cards, etc.) by the European colonizers had a pervasive influence on the

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[116] Hobsbawm, E. *On History*, p. 357.
[117] Freedman, S.W. H.M. Weinstein, K. Murphy and T. Longman. "Teaching"., p. 675-6.
[118] Freedman, S.W. H.M. Weinstein, K. Murphy and T. Longman. "Teaching"., p. 675.

society, which led to the inter-ethnic violence of 1959. According to the narrative, the events of 1959 were the sole responsibility of the European powers who manipulated the Rwandans for their own interests. Hutu, Tutsi and Twa were thus all equally victims of the colonial practice that created ethnic categories and inter-ethnic violence when they did not previously exist.[119]

Moreover, the official narrative also discusses the genocide, saying that the ethnic divisions falsely created by the colonizers remain the root cause of the 1994 genocide. It is said that the post-colonial governments maintained ethnic divisions and encouraged obedience from the population to secure their position. This ideology, which directly comes from the colonial period, fostered ethnic hatred and led to the genocide.[120] The causes of the 1994 genocide are thus bad governance, bad leadership and the colonial legacy.[121] The official narrative thus blames the previous radical Hutu governments, accusing them of spreading the ideology that the Tutsi did not deserve to live in Rwanda, or even to live at all. However, the main blame is put upon the European powers, who were the ones to falsely create ethnic categorizations and encourage ethnic divisions.[122]

Finally, this historical narrative has an important influence on post-conflict ethnic identities. First, unlike BiH, the blame for the genocide is not put upon a specific group in the society, but rather on a specific government and an outside actor. As Buckley-Zistel mentions in "Transitional Justice, National Memory and History Teaching in Rwanda", "the colonial powers are blamed for ethnic hatred, absolving all Hutu and Tutsi from responsibility. The narrative has a cohesive function since it binds Hutu and

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[119] Buckley-Zistel, S. "Nation", p. 35-37.
[120] Longman, T. and T. Rutagengwa. "Memory", p. 165.
[121] "Social Studies Curriculum", p. 81.
[122] Freedman, S.W. H.M. Weinstein, K. Murphy and T. Longman. "Teaching"., p. 675

Tutsi together under the guise of victimhood (...). It hence serves the purpose of uniting the nation"[123]. In theory, this single narrative should create a national identity that transcends ethnicity because the younger generations are being taught national devotion to their country and to all of its inhabitants since everyone, regardless of their ethnicity, share the same collective memory. However, in practice this uncontested single narrative only fosters new dynamics for social exclusion.[124]

Ahonen indeed theorizes that since education promotes a single identity, minority groups will reject the story of the nation if it excludes their alternative interpretations.[125] This is exactly what is happening in Rwanda when teaching a narrative that does not account for the different experiences of the ethnic groups. The version of the Rwandan history that is currently discussed in schools was developed by the government, which primarily consists of Tutsi who lived in exile until 1994, when their army put a stop to the genocide. The interpretation that these individuals have of the Rwandan past can thus be quite different to what the majority Hutu experienced.[126] This is however the only version approved by the government, and the only narrative taught in schools to the younger generations. It therefore has the consequences of suppressing the memories of the Hutu and Twa, and excluding their sufferings from the national history.[127] Moreover, by removing the alternative interpretations of the past from the official narrative, the government ensures that these stories will continue to spread in the private sphere. Groups that are being denied a voice in the narrative are indeed discussing their own

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[123] Buckley-Zistel, S. "Transitional", p. 6.
[124] Hodgkin, M. "Reconciliation", p. 200.
[125] Ahonen, S. "Politics", p. 180.
[126] Freedman, S.W. H.M. Weinstein, K. Murphy and T. Longman. "Teaching"., p. 665.
[127] Longman, T. and T. Rutagengwa. "Memory", p. 176.

interpretations of the past in the private sphere, which limits the success of the policy of unity under a single narrative.[128]

Furthermore, individuals who share the same experiences of the past that are excluded from the official discourse tend to regroup, stressing their similarities or dissimilarities from others.[129] This phenomenon is witnessed in schools, where students tend to be friends with individuals from the same ethnic background. It seems that even if the single narrative stresses unity and national devotion that transcends ethnicity, people continue to identify as Hutu, Tutsi or Twa because they all had a different experience of the past, and the genocide.[130] As said by a student who was eight years old in 1994, "I cannot forget that I am a Tutsi because it explains who I am"[131].

To summarize, a moratorium on teaching the national history was imposed following the genocide, but it is unclear whether or not this moratorium has been removed. However, the historical narrative that is probably discussed in schools stresses a national identity that transcends ethnicity by establishing continuity between the present and the pre-colonial past. This glorious past, free form ethnic divisions, represents the heritage that the Rwandans should perpetuate. In theory, this single narrative creates a national identity free from ethnic divisions. However, when discussing the genocide, the sufferings of the other groups and the alternative interpretations of this event are excluded from the official narrative, which alienates the individuals who share a different understanding of the past. This silent alienation lead to a passive resistance

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[128] Hilker, L. M. "The Role", p. 14-15.
[129] Buckley-Zistel, S. "Transitional", p. 11.
[130] Hodgkin, M. "Reconciliation", p. 208.
[131] *Ingando- When Enemies Return*, Film Directed by Martin Buch Larsen, (2007).

where the official narrative is not openly rejected by the population, but is instead criticized in the private sphere. The communication of alternative versions of the past in the private sphere in return tends to reinforce social identification between individuals of the same ethnic group. This suggests that despite the state's efforts to foster social cohesion, ethnic identities remain extremely relevant at the individual level since some groups within the society remain alienated by the official historical narrative.

3.3 Conclusion

The findings of this chapter are that the approaches used in teaching the national history, and the recent episode of ethnic conflict, have an important influence on post-conflict ethnic identities at the individual level in BiH and Rwanda. First, the history curricula in BiH are an obstacle to unity and reconciliation since they tend to interpret the national history from a mono-national perspective and exclude the alternative interpretations of the other groups. The history textbooks thus reproduce an exclusive ethnic identity, which makes it almost impossible to develop a universal Bosnian national identity since individuals still primarily identify as members of a specific ethnic group.

This is contrasted by the case of Rwanda, where it remains unclear whether or not the moratorium on history teaching has been removed. Some evidence suggests that national history might be informally taught in schools, and when it is discussed it tends to focus on a pre-colonial unity and the role of colonization in creating false ethnic categories. Ethnicity is indeed excluded from the official narrative and when it is discussed it is to argue that ethnicity did not exist prior to European colonization. There

is thus an attempt by the government to foster a sense of national belonging that transcends ethnicity, but its success remains quite limited. Indeed, by excluding the alternative experiences of the past in the official narrative, individuals excluded from it tend to reject this discourse, and in turn reject this national identity. Ethnicity is still extremely relevant at the individual level in Rwanda, despite the efforts to unify the population.

Conclusion and Analysis

In conclusion, this dissertation has explored the impact that the education system has on ethnic identities in post-conflict societies. The main argument is that the education system is an important social location where the younger generations are being socialized into a specific culture and national/ethnic identity. Through an analysis of the cases of BiH and Rwanda, Chapter 2 argued that the design of ethnic accommodation adopted at the state level was reproduced in the education system. This lead to a system of mono-ethnic schools in Bosnia-Herzegovina where in order to attend school every student needs to be aware of their own ethnicity. The education system is thus used by the Bosnian state to foster a sense of social cohesion divided along ethnic lines, which makes it almost impossible to unify the population under a Bosnian identity. This is contrasted by the case of Rwanda, where any mention of ethnicity has been removed from the education system in favour of integrated schools that are solely based on merit. In this case, the education system is used as a tool to foster unity and social cohesion under a larger Rwandan identity that includes every group within the society.

Furthermore, Chapter 3 showed that the design of ethnic accommodation at the state level is also reproduced in the school curriculum, which in turn has a strong impact on how ethnicity is experienced at the individual level. Ethnic identification at the individual level, as influenced by the teaching of the national history, does not, however, always correspond to the state's efforts to foster a certain type of social cohesion. In the case of BiH, a system of mono-ethnic schools means that every ethnic group has their own curricula. The teaching of the national history, especially of the Bosnian war of

1992-95, is thus discussed from a mono-national perspective that perpetuates stereotypes and hateful images of others. History teaching is then used as a tool for identity building, but instead of socializing the students into citizens of BiH, it strengthens the ethnic identification politicized by the war. Individuals' experiences of ethnicity thus correspond to the state's efforts at fostering a sense of social cohesion that is fragmented and limited to the boundaries of each ethnic group.

In Rwanda, a national school curriculum was implemented to unify all Rwandans. However, the teaching of national history was removed from this curriculum after the genocide and evidence suggests that this was still imposed in 2011 but that it is slowly being reinstated into schools. More research still needs to be undertaken since the data available does not provide a clear account of the current situation in Rwanda. Nevertheless, it remains clear that the national history, including the story of the genocide, is discussed in the society through alternative medium and quite possibly in the schools. Unlike BiH, there is however only one narrative of the national history that is approved by the government. By excluding the alternative interpretations of the genocide in the official discourse, individuals who share a different understanding of the past are being silenced and passively resist this narrative by communicating their own interpretation of the past in the private sphere. Individuals of the same ethnicity (and who inevitable shared the same experience of the genocide) thus tend to regroup together, stressing their dissimilarities with the other group, and in return reinforcing their sense of ethnic belonging. In this case, the history curriculum influences ethnic identification at the individual level in a way that is inconsistent with the state's efforts to foster a sense of belonging to a larger Rwandan identity exempt from ethnicity.

Finally, the cases of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Rwanda can be placed within larger debates about the role of education on nation-building in post-conflict societies. For instance, Chapter 2 mostly drew upon theories on education and identity building (Gellner, Smith, Weber) and demonstrated that concepts of high culture, fear of assimilation and homogenous culture as theorized by these scholars could indeed be applied to the two cases to analyse their education system. Moreover, Chapter 3 mostly drew upon theories of history and identity building (Hobsbawm, Renan), and education and identity building in divided societies (Davies, World Bank, etc.) to analyse the way education influences individual experiences of ethnicity. The fact that these theories were successfully applied to these two cases suggests that despite their differences they still share some generalities that can be explained by theories of education and post-conflict reconciliation.

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Appendix 1

Informal Interviews

Respondent 1.
Rwandese (Hutu) woman living in Montreal.
Contacted by phone. Montreal, Canada.
June 2012.

Respondent 2.
NGO worker living in Kigali, Rwanda.
Contacted by e-mail.
June 2012.

Respondent 3.
Dr. Éric Mutabazi. Professor at the Université Catholique de l'Ouest d'Angers.
Contacted by e-mail.
July 2012.