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Return after violence : rationality and emotions in the aftermath of violent conflict

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Abstract: El desplazamiento forzoso a causa de conflictos violentos es un fenómeno tan antiguo como la historia de la humanidad. Desde el siglo pasado, la dimensión política y humanitaria alcanzada por este fenómeno ha adquirido no obstante un enorme calado. A día de hoy, sin embargo, el análisis de estos movimientos poblacionales, así como de su compleja relación con los conflictos, la violencia y la resolución de ambos sufre aún de lagunas fundamentales y sesgos sustanciales. Esta tesis intenta ser una contribución en la mejora del entendimiento y la atención que prestamos a este fenómeno, tanto desde la academia como desde el terreno y la práctica. La tesis está dedicada al análisis del retorno al lugar de origen de los desplazados a causa de la violencia. ¿Por qué retornar? ¿Bajo qué condiciones? Interrogarse sobre los motivos y condicionantes del retorno es un primer paso que rompe con la imagen del retorno como una opción natural y esperable. El objetivo de esta tesis es proporcionar un marco de análisis que permita hacerlo de manera sistemática, aun teniendo en cuenta la enorme complejidad y heterogeneidad del fenómeno. Se identifican dos componentes fundamentales de la decisión. Por un lado, factores que inhiben o no la decisión de retornar, que son aquéllos relacionados con la amenaza de la violencia. Y por otro, factores que motivan la decisión de retornar o no: sostenibilidad económica, búsqueda de un "hogar" y búsqueda de justicia o reparación. La conclusión fundamental es, por un lado, que el retorno constituye una opción más, sin mayor ni menor prevalencia a priori sobre el no retorno. Y por otro lado, que los factores que inhiben y motivan esa decisión están fuertemente mediados por las características del conflicto violento. Para atender este interrogante, la tesis desarrolla, por un lado, un acercamiento a las emociones desde el punto de vista teórico y metodológico que permite su inclusión en el análisis de manera rigurosa. Por otro lado, documenta y utiliza los resultados de una investigación etnográfica de dos años en Bosnia-Herzegovina en la que la autora convivió con la población de dos pequeñas localidades y llevó a cabo entrevistas en profundidad. El análisis empírico (tanto cuantitativo como cualitativo) de estas entrevistas y de las observaciones resultantes subraya el poder explicativo de la búsqueda racional de ciertos horizontes de bienestar y seguridad. Sin embargo, el análisis permite concluir también que emociones como el miedo o la rabia (entendida como búsqueda de justicia, especialmente a nivel colectivo) o el apego a lugares y personas pueden jugar, y de hecho juegan en muchos casos, un papel importante de manera directa en la

toma de la decisión.

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Instituto Juan March de Estudios e Investigaciones

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**RETURN AFTER VIOLENCE.
RATIONALITY AND EMOTIONS IN THE
AFTERMATH OF VIOLENT CONFLICT**

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Inmaculada Serrano Sanguilinda es licenciada en Sociología por la Universidad de Salamanca. Formó parte de la decimoquinta promoción de estudiantes del Centro de Estudios Avanzados en Ciencias Sociales del Instituto Juan March, donde obtuvo el título de Máster en 2004. Realizó su tesis doctoral en el Centro bajo la supervisión de la Prof. Yasemin Soysal.

Para las familias de Cerska y Križevíci que me abrieron sus hogares. Esta tesis es enteramente de ellos.

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Glossary

Amica	International NGO
Cap Anamur	International NGO
<i>Dullum</i>	Unit of area measurement equivalent to 0'1 hectare or 0'247 acres
Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina	One of the two main entities conforming BiH following the GFAP, together with the Republika Srpska
Fondacija Tuzlanske Zajednice	Bosnian NGO (Tuzla)
<i>Komšilik</i>	'Neighbourhood'. Designation of this basic social unit with a strong connotation of 'community' that goes beyond the mere physical implications. It implies the existence of important social and affective ties
Mercy Corps	International NGO
<i>Mjesna Zajednica (MZ)</i>	'Local community'. The smallest administrative unit in BiH representing an urban neighbourhood, a large village or a few small villages
Priroda	Bosnian NGO (Bratunac)
Republika Srpska	One of the two main entities conforming BiH following the GFAP, together with the Federation of BiH
<i>Šehidska Snaga Žene</i>	Pension for family members of fallen soldiers
Udruženje Podrinja	Bosnian NGO (Bratunac)
UHD Prijateljice	Bosnian NGO (Tuzla)
Vaša Prava	Bosnian NGO for legal counseling (supported by UNHCR)
Vesta	Bosnian local NGO and radio station (Tuzla)
Viva Žene	Bosnian NGO (Tuzla)

Abbreviations

AA	‘Alternative accommodation’ provided to IDPs by local authorities other than collective centers and occupied houses. These were frequently housing units built by NGOs or contracted private houses.
AECI	Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional (Spanish Development Agency)
BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
CISP	Comitato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo dei Popoli (international NGO)
CRPC	Commission for Real Property Claims of Displaced Persons and Refugees (established under Annex VII of the GFAP)
ESI	European Stability Initiative
EUFOR	European Force in charge of overseeing the implementation of the GFAP (since 2004, successor to IFOR and SFOR)
FemHH	Female-headed household
GFAP	General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Dayton Peace Accords)
GTZ	Gesellschaft für technische Zusammenarbeit (German Development Agency)
HCHR	Helsinki Committee for Human Rights
HDZ	Croatian Democratic Union (political party)
HH	Head of household
ICG	International Crisis Group
ICMP	International Commission on Missing Persons in the Former Yugoslavia
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICTY	International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia
IDPs	Internally displaced persons
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (from the Norwegian Refugee Council’s)
IEBL	Inter-Entity Boundary Line separating the RS from the Federation
IFOR	Implementation Force (NATO) in charge of overseeing the implementation of the GFAP (1995-1996)
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPAK	Local youth NGO
IPTF	International Police Task Force
IRC	International Rescue Committee (international NGO)
JNA	Yugoslav National Army
KFOR	Kosovo Force (NATO peacekeeping force in Kosovo)
Min HRR BiH	State level Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees
MPDL	Movimiento por la Paz, el Desarme y la Libertad

	(international NGO)
MZ	'Local community'. The smallest administrative unit in BiH representing an urban neighbourhood, a large village or a few small villages
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OHR	Office of the High Representative (international body supervising the implementation of the civilian aspects of the GFPA)
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PIC	Peace Implementation Council (international body charged with implementing the GFAP)
PLIP	Property Law Implementation Plan (international strategy for accelerating the implementation of property laws and the resolution of real property claims)
RDC	Research and Documentation Centre Sarajevo
RRTF	Reconstruction and Return Task Force (co-chaired by UNHCR and the Office of the High Representative)
RS	Republika Srpska (one of the two main entities conforming BiH following the GFAP, together with the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina)
SBiH	Party for Bosnia and Herzegovina
SDA	Party for Democratic Action
SDS	Serb Democratic Party
SFOR	Stabilization Force (NATO) in charge of overseeing the implementation of the GFAP (1996-2004)
SFRY	Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia
SNSD	Alliance of Independent Social Democrats (political party)
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees
UNMIBH	United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina
UNPA	United Nations Protected Areas
UNPROFOR	United Nations Protection Force (peacekeeping force, 1992-1995)
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East
UNRISD	United Nations Research Institute for Social Development
USCRI	US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants

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Tuzla, Diciembre 2010

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Displacement in contexts of violent conflict

The object of research of this dissertation is constituted by populations displaced as a result of violent conflict. These have become one of the most pressing humanitarian concerns in the last decades and a very salient political issue.

The saliency of these aspects has nonetheless detracted attention from the analysis of the interactions between relocation processes and violent conflict. This analysis is also absent in the literature on violent conflict, where relocation processes are considered as mere reaction movements determined by structural conditions. This dissertation takes the view that individual agency is retained during such processes, and that it is consequential.

Among the several instances contained in relocation processes, the present study is specifically concerned with the conditionings and determinants of return movements. Return is most relevant for the outcomes (and dynamics) of violent conflict: it determines whether the unintended, instrumentalized or targeted displacement of the population taking place as a result of violence is reversed or not, to what extent, and in what manner, thus reshaping the initial demographic distribution drawn by violent conflict.

This initial distribution, determined by displacement, and the corrected one, determined by return and relocation patterns, interact in producing, among others, a new (or not) geography of loyalties; they also shape a new (or not) distribution of resource control; and, most generally, they condition deep socio-

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demographic changes in the socio-economic maps of the affected territories.

The empirical research question is straightforward: why do some individuals return to their home origin at a given time while others do not under similar circumstances? And why do some areas register relatively high levels of return at a given time while others do not?

1.1.1. Scope conditions and some definitions

Displacement is the abandonment of the place of habitual residence due to violent life-threatening conditions¹ of either natural (i.e. natural disasters) or human origin. Displacement is thus defined without reference to the destination or any other characteristic of the ensuing trajectories, but based simply on the outward move. The presence of *violent life-threatening conditions* as core causation, i.e. as a factor likely to play a fundamental role in whichever combination of causal mechanisms leading to displacement, is the basic defining feature. Still, the combination of causal mechanisms producing the abandonment of the place encompasses wide variation and it remains a matter of analysis.

Based on this simple definition, the realities of displacement are complex, heterogeneous, and very fuzzy. The scope of causes considered is important in a field still in search of its most appropriate parameters (Van Hear 1998: 348; Polzer and Hammond 2008: 419).² This dissertation is interested in and deals

¹ Different understandings of 'violence' would expand or restrict the scope of this definition. Definitions of 'structural violence', for instance, would include forms of economic oppression and economic hardship, such as droughts and famines. This issue belongs to the broader and long-standing debate about the differentiation between 'refugees' and 'economic migrants'. By 'violent' I refer here to actions or developments that directly impair in an individual's physical integrity.

² Van Hear proposes to divide the field into: 'refugee studies' on the one hand, circumscribed to political persecution and political violence;

with displacement as a result of violent conflict. It leaves out displacement provoked by natural causes and by other human-made conditions, such as political imposition (e.g. development programs involving mass relocations) or individual persecution.

The populations of interest in this work would hardly fit then into the narrow legal definition of ‘refugee’ contained in the 1951 UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (and its 1976 Protocol), primarily centred around the notion of individual persecution.³ This is not the only legal definition of ‘refugee’ though. The 1969 OAU Convention or the 1984 Cartagena Declaration for the Central American region, for instance, broadened the definition to include those who fled ‘external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order’ (OAU Convention) and ‘generalised violence, foreign aggression, internal conflicts, massive violation of human rights or other circumstances which have seriously disturbed public order’ (Cartagena Declaration).

The legal definitions of ‘refugee’ are thus heterogeneous and vary from one context to another; and their practical applications vary, also across time, subject to the (controversial) use of either broader or stricter interpretations. The denomination of ‘refugee’ is furthermore frequently extended to asylum seekers (i.e.

and ‘forced migration literature’ on the other, encompassing also imposed relocation movements, such as those induced by development programs (1998). This division leaves out disaster-induced displacement, which could be subsumed instead in a broader body of ‘displacement literature’. But this scheme would be contested by authors like Hathaway (2007) who prefer to limit ‘refugee studies’ to cases and issues related to the legal status of refugee, and to speak of ‘forced migration’ when researching outside those strict limits.

³ Article 1 of the Convention as amended by the 1967 Protocol defines a refugee as: “A person who owing to a *well-founded fear of being persecuted* for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country” (emphasis added).

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individuals who have applied for the refugee status but are still awaiting the decision), or who have received some similar temporary status.

Not too infrequently, the term is applied in a broader manner, detached from legal connotations, to refer to individuals who do not fall into any of these situations, and who might not effectively fit into any of the legal definitions, but who find themselves in 'refugee-like' situations, facing protection risks and having crossed an international border as a result of it. The term is also used sometimes when the individual has not crossed an international border, although in such case the appropriate term is 'internally displaced person' (IDP).

The lack of consistency and clarity in the use of these labels, both at the policy level and among scholars is a serious flaw in the field and it calls for an increased attention in clarifying what is meant by each of them every time they are used. The fact is that, even if a consensus were reached that would allow to use these labels in a more consistent way, the realities to which they refer are extremely fuzzy and fluid, they can change rather quickly and even arbitrarily;⁴ and they are frequently inextricably linked and mixed (Van Hear 1998: 348).

In this dissertation I am interested in displaced populations regardless of their legal status and regardless of their fitting into legal definitions. In order to avoid confusion and to be the most consistent with this interest, I will primarily use the terms '*displacement*' and '*displaced persons*' (DPs). These terms denote the simple fact that the individual has got displaced. In a more strict sense, they will also designate the initial uprooting move, in order to differentiate them from other ensuing moves. The term '*return*' will stand for the move back to the home origin (at the village level) and '*relocation*' will designate any move after displacement which is not return, or the very fact that the

⁴ For instance, the differentiation between being an IDP or a refugee could emerge from a sudden border change, as during the break-up of the former Yugoslavia or the demise of the former Soviet-Union.

individual has not returned (and has no medium-term prospects of returning). The term '*relocation process*' will refer to the whole phenomenon encompassing from the initial displacement move to all subsequent ones.⁵

I will refer to '*refugees*' and '*internally displaced people*' (IDPs) only when needing to differentiate between displaced people who have crossed an international border or not, regardless of their legally defined status. And '*returnees*' will be the ones returning to their home origin, while '*repatriates*' will be the ones returning from abroad. If repatriates further return to their home origin, then they are counted also as '*returnees*'. Somewhat less frequent terms are those of '*remainees*', referring to those people who did not flee and stayed in the home origin, and '*domiciles*', referring to the native population of an area receiving displaced people.

1.1.2. Background

Displacement as a result of mass violent conflict is not a new phenomenon. This type of uprooting is as old as violent conflict itself (Marrus 1985:3-7; Zolberg, Suhrke, and Aguayo 1989:5-16; Skran 1995:13). The two world wars brought about a qualitative jump with the development of destructive military technologies enshrining the concept of total war: numbers passed from hundreds of thousands to millions of displaced people (Zolberg, Suhrke, and Aguayo 1989; Skran 1995: 13).

⁵ Note that these designations envisage no end for 'displacement' other than return. If there is no return, relocation and the relocation process as a whole continue. This is a conceptual framework emphasizing the very initial uprooting move, and whether it is reversed or not, fitting the main interest of this work. The issue of when do relocation processes end (if not ending up in return) is a matter eliciting thorough debate (e.g. the specialized journal *Forced Migration Review* devoted a whole issue to it, vol. 17, focused on internal displacement) for which there is no place here.

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The sufferings of this period paved the way to the establishment (between 1948 and 1951) of three core contemporary bodies of public international law relating to *human rights*, *humanitarian rules* in warfare and *refugees*. The refugee regime was inaugurated by the 1951 UN Convention in a favourable political and economic context: embedded in the geopolitical strategies of the Cold War (Chimni 1998: 350; Tanner and Stedman 2003: 5) and accompanied by guest labour immigration policies actively encouraging cross-border migration (Widgren 1990: 749-50).

The 1990s marked a historical record of 20 million international refugees, with an added one of 28 million people displaced within their own countries.⁶ The latest UNHCR estimates place the number of international refugees nowadays in 16 million and the number of internally displaced people in at least 26 million (see IDMC 2009). Together, they total over 42 million displaced persons as a result of political turmoil and political persecution.

But the recent political and economic international context has been quite different from the post-1951 one. The end of the Cold War and the *non-entrée* migration regime dominant since the economic recession after the 1973 oil crisis, have radically altered the costs and benefits of the refugee regime. Refugee flows are nowadays perceived as an economic and security burden on the shoulders of the international system (Marrus 1985: 3; Widgren 1990: 749; Weiner 1992: 91-93; 1996a: 8; Skran 1995: 13; Dowty and Loescher 1996: 44-7).

This has produced a shift from the original exilic bias of the 1951 regime to a new 'containment' paradigm, built around the idea of prevention and containment of refugee flows within their countries and regions of origin (Thorburn 1996; Chimni 1998; Loescher 2005). The number of refugees crossing international borders has actually maintained a sustained decrease after the

⁶ The latter have been counted only since 1982 (Polzer and Hammond 2008: 420; Cohen 2009: np).

1990s, in stark opposition with the dramatic increase in the number of people displaced within their own countries since the end of that decade.

The shift in the regime includes also the active encouragement of return, under the specific formula of ‘voluntary repatriation’, as the desirable and ultimate solution for the ‘refugee problem’, which includes not only refugee flows but also protracted refugee situations (Crisp 1984: 1; 2004: 4; Chimni 1998: 363; Haider 2009: np).⁷ The 1980s witnessed large numbers of such ‘voluntary repatriations’, namely in the African continent with the end of anti-colonial wars (Rogge and Akol 1989: 187-191), and since the 1990s UNHCR has registered steadily increasing numbers (Long and Oxfeld 2004: 1).

1.1.3. Displacement as a fundamental component of violent conflict

The humanitarian dimension and the political implications of displacement at the international level have put it under the focus of political action, policy design and humanitarian practice (Turton 2003; Bakewell 2008). However, they have detracted attention from the aspect critically defining these population movements: their embeddedness in the violent conflict producing them. On the other hand, the literature on violent conflict and conflict resolution has largely ignored the issue of displaced populations (Tanner and Stedman 2003: 6) where they generally emerge as *ad hoc* or marginal components in the analyses.⁸

No empirical or analytical efforts have been undertaken, for instance, to establish the empirical prominence of different

⁷ There are three usually considered durable solutions: return to the home/country of origin, local integration in the location/country of displacement, and resettlement to a third location/country (Rogge and Akol 1989: 186; Chimni 1998).

⁸ In very few cases they have been paid specific attention. Some exceptions are Newland (1993) and Adelman (2002).

initiating scenarios where displacement may amount to a side-product of violence, to a strategic component, or to a goal in itself.⁹ Neither there have been attempts to analyze the mechanisms and intervening factors linking goals, strategies and outcomes in each of these scenarios. This lack of attention is hard to reconcile with the fact that relocation processes are a fundamental part of the consequences and results of violent conflict (Weiner 1996a).

Moreover, relocation processes also *influence* the dynamics of violent conflict. For instance, the displacement of populations alters the capacities of the sides in conflict to extract resources or strategic advantages from those populations (Tanner and Stedman 2003). Displacement also alters the distribution of resources in the conflict scenario since displaced people frequently leave behind possessions and livelihoods, and the control of natural and location-specific resources frequently change hands as a result of population shifts (Deininger, Ibáñez, and Querubin 2004: 4; Justino 2008: 6). Furthermore, those shifts frequently alter the geographical distribution of political allegiances (Kalyvas 2006: 182).

Relocation processes also provide new opportunities, for instance, by attracting humanitarian assistance and, sometimes, international attention (Tanner and Stedman 2003: 3; Wessells 2008: 9). They frequently pose important demographic, economic and environmental challenges to receiving areas (Cohen and Deng 1998: 29; Loescher 2009). For instance: by altering a given ethnic balance, by provoking economic grievances with the receiving population, or by producing a confrontation with the originating country (Weiner 1992, 1996a; Kibreab 2000; Tanner and Stedman 2003; Salehyan and Gleditsch 2006; Salehyan 2008).

⁹ Claims and narratives of demographic re-engineering (i.e. relocation as a pursued goal) are frequent, especially in ethnic-related conflicts (e.g. Ogata 1998 in Adelman 2002: 287), but they have produced little analytical output and systematic empirical evidence.

But despite conspicuous awareness of such instances in which relocation processes have a role in the dynamics of violence,¹⁰ there has been no systematic research on the way such interaction unfolds.¹¹ The result is that the relationship between relocation processes and violent conflicts remains seriously under researched.¹² This dissertation attempts to contribute to the understanding of the interconnections between violent conflict and relocation processes by looking at the decision of return, which is expected to be highly conditioned by conflict and violence patterns, and which may condition patterns of (ongoing or future) violence, as well as the processes of conflict settlement and conflict resolution.

1.1.4. Agency in displacement

One of the reasons explaining the scarce attention dedicated to the conditionings and complexities of displacement (Lubkemann 2008a: 5; Lindley 2009: 5) is that displacement is generally taken as a given at the aggregate level. Relocation flows are thought of as mere reaction movements determined by contextual factors, namely by violence (Lindley 2009: 6).

Such understanding logically follows from the definition of relocation processes as ‘forceful’ migration movements. The concept of ‘forceful’ migration is built in opposition to the one of

¹⁰ See for instance Zolberg *et al.* (1989), Weiner (1996a, 1992), Tanner and Stedman (2003), Lischer (2005), Loescher (2005), Salehyan and Gleditsch (2006), Salehyan (2008).

¹¹ The exception is constituted by existing studies on the risks of conflict spread and regional destabilization posed by mass displacements (e.g. Weiner 1996a; Lischer 2005; Salehyan and Gleditsch 2006; Salehyan 2008). But these fall short of going to the heart of the relationship between displacement and the originating conflict.

¹² This has begun to change recently with works such as Lubkeman (2005, 2008a), Czaika and Kis-Katos (2009b), Lindley (2009) or Steele (2009).

‘voluntary’ migration, based on a hypothetical continuum in the degree of choice and agency exerted in the decision to move (e.g. Kunz 1973). This definition has been usually taken to its extreme value, that is, it has been taken to entail an absolute absence of choice and agency (Turton 2003).

Under this perspective, displacement simply ‘happens’ to the people involved: displaced people are mere victims rather than actors. This representation oversimplifies the realities of displacement.¹³ Basically, only individuals which are deprived of freedom at some point in an absolute manner (i.e. who are retained or driven by force) can be assumed not to be making any choices.¹⁴ But the image of displaced people being physically driven out of their homes by force represents only a tiny minority of cases.

More common is the situation of individuals being pushed out by a sudden and immediate threat of extreme violence either at the personal or at the local level. In other many cases the threat does not arrive suddenly or unexpectedly and the individual usually has the opportunity to foresee its occurrence. The threat may also go in crescendo, and the individual may have some room for deciding the time and modus of departure, taking decisions and making arrangements in advance (Lindley 2009: 41-2; Kalyvas 2006).

Individual decisions, including migratory decisions in general, occur under different degrees and kinds of external constraints. The questions to be made are what are the constraints, what specific decision structure emerges from them and in which

¹³ Although at the phenomenological (and more humanistic) level, the idea of forceful displacement may convey a good appraisal of the experiences involved, at the analytical level it poses an *aprioristic* limitation likely to handicap the actual understanding of these phenomena (Davenport, Moore, and Poe 2003; Kunz 1973: 131-6; Turton 2003: 12).

¹⁴ And, as Turton points out, “we know from studies [...] of, for example, the behaviour of people in concentration [...] camps, that even in the most constrained of circumstances, human beings struggle to maintain some area of individual decision making” (Turton 2003: 10).

manner individuals confront them. Displacement moves are thus best to be described as specific contexts involving very particular constraints and highly restricted choices.

The particularity of these moves can be summarized in the idea that the individual would not have departed (or not in the moment and manner in which she did) had not some form of violence been an immediate threat to her survival. At the end of the day, the individual has the option to decide to stay and to face the risk and the consequences of the threat, which is not an extremely rare occurrence in some contexts (Skran 1995; Deininger *et al.* Deininger, Ibáñez, and Querubin 2004; Steele 2009).

The assumption of radical determination and hence powerlessness tends to be made extensive to the full range of movements and decisions involved in relocation processes. Undoubtedly, after the initial move, still the fierce politics being played ‘by other means’ (taking Clausewitz’s classical definition of war), the violent environment, and the tight international migration system and refugee regime, continue to importantly condition and restrict the choices available to the individual (Lindley 2009: 10-1; Turton 2003: 11).

Macro factors restrict to different degrees and in different manners the alternatives available to the individual. However, in most cases there are some areas of choice and some room for individual manoeuvring involving whether, when, how and towards where to move at different points; and whether, when, for how long and how to accommodate to different stages and locations in the relocation process. All of them may have important consequences at the individual and at the aggregate level (Davenport, Moore, and Poe 2003: 31; Turton 2003: 10-1; Wood 2008: 540; Lubkemann 2008a: 5; Steele 2008: 24).¹⁵

¹⁵ It is not too rare either that displaced people play an active role in the resolution of their situation and in the conflict settlement more broadly. They can organise themselves and push forward particular claims, as it was saliently the case in Guatemala (e.g. North and Simmons 1999); their presence and their influence can shape negotiation

A fundamental claim in the present study is that, despite the obvious relevance of macro factors, relocation processes are not fully determined by them: individuals escape or are forced to move, but they retain agency of their actions, even if their alternatives are scarce and very restricted. There is a need then to draw attention to the way displaced people are not only affected by these developments, but also react to it and cope with their situation (Malkki in Van Hear 1998: 343). In doing so, they become – and should be considered as – relevant actors determining some of their life options and, most importantly here, some of the dynamics and outcomes characterizing the violent conflict that made them flee (Lubkemann 2008a; Wood 2008; García del Soto 2008).

A micro-level understanding of individuals' constraints and incentives in relocation processes is necessary in order to understand the actual determinants of such processes and their role in violent conflict. Such micro-level approach has been conspicuously missing in forced migration literature until very recently.¹⁶

1.2. Literature on relocation processes

The literature on refugee issues and forced migration took form in the 1980s following the 'refugee crisis' of the 1970s-1980s. It has been characterized mostly by its idiographic character, with a dominance of advocacy works and case-driven studies with little theorizing and no systematic empirical evidence (Schmeidl 1997: 285; Moore and Shellman 2004: 724-5; García

agendas, as in Bosnia or Mozambique (e.g. Koser 2008); or they could even seat at the negotiation tables (e.g. Lanz 2008). There is extended research, for instance, on the way conflict-generated diasporas can influence and shape armed conflict and settlement scenarios (e.g. Collier and Hoeffler 2004; Hall and Kostic 2009; Koinova 2009).

¹⁶ For recent exceptions see Deininger *et al.* (2004), Edwards (2007), Engel and Ibáñez (2007), Shewfelt (2007), Lindley (2009), Steele (2009).

del Soto 2008: 3). The last two decades have registered important advances at the analytical and methodological levels.¹⁷ There is still, nonetheless, a lack of theoretical refinement, as well as important biases in the research agenda and data problems that remain unaddressed.

1.2.1. Literature review

The issue of displacement lies somewhat uneasily between two well-established areas of academic research: migration and violent conflict. Scholarly approaches to displacement have been frequently located in the fringes of these two, most especially in the literature on so-called ‘voluntary migration’ or ‘economic migration’ (Schmeidl 1997: 285).

A differentiated body of ‘refugee studies’ and ‘forced migration’ did not properly develop until the 1980s (Chimni 1998: vi).¹⁸ The ‘root causes’ approach dominated the field for both policy makers and scholars. The approach focused on the underlying structural factors which were deemed to set the ground for displacement moves; and it was flawed in the same basic way as its twin in violent conflict literature. Analytically, the structural factors identified were too wide to actually account for violence/displacement variations. At the more practical level, intervention in and transformation of root causes, even if necessary and most convenient, present daunting challenges and defy even long-term time horizons (Thorburn 1996: 123, 127).

¹⁷ Some indicators are the increasing use of the comparative approach (e.g. Zolberg, Suhrke, and Aguayo 1989; Adelman 2002), the incorporation of a tradition of large-N econometric studies (e.g. Morrison 1993; Schmeidl 1997; Davenport, Moore, and Poe 2003; Moore and Shellman 2004; Czaika and Kis-Katos 2009b) or the use of rigorous economic modelling (e.g. Deininger, Ibáñez, and Querubin 2004; Stark 2004; Czaika 2009a).

¹⁸ E.g. Stein and Tomasi (1981); Loescher and Scanlan (1983), Marrus (1985), Gordenker (1987), Clark (1989), Zolberg *et al.* (1989).

The obvious limitations of the approach led in the late 1990s to an increasing focus on the proximate and immediate causes producing displacement. This put the focus back in the way different types of violence impacted the production, size and destinations of displacement moves.¹⁹ The main findings in this literature underscore that violence is an important determinant of flight (e.g. Davenport, Moore, and Poe 2003: 27); that the larger the threat of violence, the larger the probabilities and size of displacement (e.g. Morrison and May 1994; Weiner 1996a; Moore and Shellman 2004); and that generalized violence (centrally civil war and human rights abuses by the state), rather than small-scale, localized or specific violence, produce larger amounts of displacement (e.g. Newland 1993; Schmeidl 1997; Apodaca 1998). Another robust finding in econometric studies is the minor or insignificant role of economic variables at this level of aggregation (e.g. Schmeidl 1997; Moore and Shellman 2004).

These works approach displacement as the outcome of aggregate-level contextual conditions (namely the presence, intensity or nature of violent conflict). A fundamental shortcoming in these aggregate-level studies is the lack of attention towards the mechanisms explaining displacement, basically as a result of assuming a simplistic relationship between violence and displacement (Edwards 2007: 4).

The works by Moore and his colleagues (Davenport, Moore, and Poe 2003; Moore and Shellman 2004, 2006, 2007) corrected this tendency by bringing attention to the importance of micro-foundations in order to understand the way the studied outcomes were produced and as a means to generate testable hypotheses. Basically, they pose that individuals calculate the risks involved in the threat of violence and flee accordingly, following a rationalist logic. Still, their empirical analyses rely on the country level, in which all individuals' calculations are homogenised and only

¹⁹ E.g. Jenkins and Schmeidl (1995), Schmeidl (1997, 1995), Gibney *et al.* (1996), Weiner (1996a), Apodaca (1998), Davenport *et al.* (2003), Moore and Shellman (2004, 2006, 2007).

country-level variables play a role, thus effectively replicating a structural approach.

Using the country as the unit of explanation ignores important heterogeneity issues and internal variation, likely to play a role in the dynamics producing displacement (Moore and Shellman 2004: 724-5; Melander and Öberg 2006). From individual characteristics such as gender, age, wealth, ideology, ethnicity or social networks (Turton 2003: 11; Lubkemann 2008a); to variation at different group levels and group boundaries; and, not less importantly, local-level variation, and location in general, which have been documented to be fundamental for the fragmented local dynamics of civil wars and the peculiar patterns and magnitudes of displacement (Kalyvas 2006; Melander and Öberg 2007).

Country-level (and other studies using regional and global aggregated levels) are then likely to be flawed by an overaggregation bias, missing in a systematic manner the fundamental dimensions shaping the dynamics under research.²⁰ Working at more disaggregated levels is also necessary in order to explain empirical outcomes unanswered by the national-level approach.²¹

In recent years, a new turn in the literature is taking place with the production of works introducing important and necessary refinements, all of them derived from a systematic consideration of individual and local level variations in the way both violence and economic factors impact the decision to flee and ensuing

²⁰ Overaggregation might be the reason, for instance, why economic factors are found to play no significant role in aggregate-level large-N studies, whereas their relevance at the household level robustly emerges in existing micro-level studies.

²¹ For instance, whereas the type of violent conflict has been found to importantly predict the tendency to cross a border once in the move (Moore and Shellman 2006), there is no answer at this level as to why some individuals from the same originating conflict abandon the country and others remain displaced within its borders. One example is Rwanda in 1994, where the corresponding proportions were roughly half and half.

decisions (e.g. Melander and Öberg 2006, 2007; Edwards 2007; Czaika 2009a; Lindley 2009; Steele 2009).

The findings in this part of the literature are still somewhat fragmentary, but they basically reaffirm the fundamental importance of violence as the main conditioning of displacement. However, general levels of violence and types of conflict are discarded as central explaining variables *per se* (see for instance Melander and Öberg 2006, 2007), emphasizing instead the importance of the individual's position *vis-à-vis* the strategic considerations of the actors producing the violence. Thus, which actors produce the violence, and the geography and timing of violence are found to importantly matter, both at the individual and at the aggregate level (e.g. Melander and Öberg 2006, 2007; Lindley 2009; Steele 2009).

Another important finding emerging from these works is that, despite the centrality of violence, violence patterns are fundamentally interwoven with the economic dimension, and that socio-economic factors (at the individual/household level) on their own can also contribute to displacement moves (Deininger, Ibáñez, and Querubin 2004; Engel and Ibáñez 2007; Czaika and Kis-Katos 2009b; Lindley 2009).

These works have come to emphasize the heterogeneity of relocation processes across (and within) originating conflicts, as well as across individuals. They also underscore the need for developing more refined conceptualizations of violence (e.g. Shewfelt 2007: 5-7; Steele 2009: 421) based on these considerations. This would not only help producing appropriate indicators and fine-grained insights, but it would also help articulating and connecting existing findings into a more elaborate research program and understanding of relocation processes.

All these identified shortcomings arise from a more general lack of theoretical elaboration. Although the field has importantly evolved in these last two decades at the methodological and empirical level, this evolution has not been matched with the development of appropriate theoretical frameworks. As a result, most of the existing works suffer from a lack of conceptual

refinement (which affects methodological and data issues) and a lack of consideration of scope conditions and appropriate research designs.

This dissertation attempts to contribute to the production of theory-driven, systematic and generalizable knowledge on the realities of displacement, through the use of a detailed theoretical framework modelling the decision to return which takes into account these considerations.

1.2.2. Biases in the research agenda

The research agenda on displacement suffers from two fundamental biases, both of them derived from the international perspective dominating the perception of the phenomenon (Lindley 2009) at the policy level and through its humanitarian dimension. This dissertation constitutes a contribution into balancing them.

Bias #1. Focus on international displacement Vs internal displacement

The phenomenon of internal displacement is a ghostly phenomenon in historical terms, since IDPs began to be counted only in 1982 (Cohen 2009: np). From the 1.2 million originally counted, they surged to 20 to 25 million by the mid-1990s, when they firstly outnumbered international refugees (*Ibid*). Nowadays, they outnumber refugees 26 million to 16 million (UNHCR 2008b; IDMC 2009).

The first studies devoted to internal displacement emerged in the 1990s, and important initiatives to monitor and analyze the phenomenon have been established since then, such as the Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement and the Global IDP Project of the Norwegian Refugee Council, nowadays the International Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC).

Still, an overwhelming majority of the core literature on displacement is devoted to the analysis of relocation movements which have crossed an international border (i.e. refugee flows).²² However, internal displacement has an enormous socio-economic (Blattman and Miguel 2009: 63) and political impact, bearing important implications for the processes of conflict settlement, conflict resolution and ongoing or renewed violence (Steele 2008: 26; 2009). Most saliently, internal displacement is likely to produce patterns of segregation and homogenization of certain areas in conflicts fought along socio-demographic lines, such as ethnic conflicts.²³

Above all, a systematic and encompassing perspective of the phenomenon of displacement is missing that would provide a better understanding of the determinants and implications of crossing an international border. This dissertation attempts to take such a perspective. Acknowledging the different parameters of the decision to return for people displaced abroad and people displaced within the country of origin, and having into account the still precarious state of the art in the field, a methodological decision has been taken to focus by now on IDPs. This decision is intended to keep the model as simple and basic as possible, as well as to make the extensive and intensive fieldwork realized more

²² This smaller literature on internal displacement also reproduces many of the previous shortcomings of the refugee literature: a dominance of idiographic and case-studies (Brun and Birkeland 2003: ii; Shewfelt 2007: 2-3), and an overwhelming focus on the humanitarian and policy responses to the phenomenon (Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement 2007).

²³ This could constitute, for instance, either the result or the starting point of a political strategy for breaking apart from the larger state unit or for controlling certain areas. Displacement within the boundaries of the country in conflict can thus be both an instrument of population escape and an instrument of population control.

manageable.²⁴ However, the theoretical framework developed here has the potential to be made extensive to international refugees.

Bias #2. Focus on displacement Vs return

Return has been central at the policy level as the most desirable solution to the refugee problem since the 1980s. However, the scholarly interest dedicated to return has been much lesser than the one dedicated to the issues of displacement and relocation. This is partly the result of the international and humanitarian perspectives dominating the field, which emphasize the humanitarian emergency of displacement and relocation processes, combined with the tendency at the policy level to consider return as an unproblematic and natural movement (Hammond 1999: 288; Ghanem 2003: 4).

Although important research and documentation on return issues have been carried out,²⁵ this literature is not only smaller in size (Rogge 1994: 15), but it is overwhelmingly constituted by descriptive accounts based on case studies and anecdotic evidence, with little theorizing and/or with an almost total lack of systematic empirical research (Harrell-Bond 1989: 42; Rogge and Akol 1989: 186; Takahashi 1997: 593; Chimni 1998: 364; Ghanem 2003: 13).

Research on return has been overwhelmingly focused on repatriation from abroad, leaving aside the return of IDPs. But the return of IDPs bears a significant political relevance, especially in conflicts fought along socio-demographic lines (Long and Oxfeld 2004: 3) where internal displacement may produce patterns of segregation and homogenization of certain areas in conflicts.

²⁴ The rationale and implications of this decision are detailed in Chapter 3.

²⁵ Some major contributions are, for instance, the edited volumes by Allen and Morsink (1994), Black and Koser (1999), North and Simmons (1999) and Long and Oxfeld (2004). Special volumes have been dedicated also in various specialized journals, such as *Forced Migration Review* (Issue 21, September 2004; Issue 11, October 2001; Issue 7, April 2000) or *Refuge* (vol. 19, no 3, 2001).

The importance of return in such cases is well certified and established in cases such as Rwanda or Bosnia (Adelman 2002: 287). In Bosnia, for instance, most of the efforts by the international community in the post-war period have been directed towards promoting and encouraging return to pre-war homes (Mooney 2008: 5). This dissertation addresses concretely the issue of IDP return in such cases, and thus contributes into balancing this double bias in the research agenda.

1.2.3. Data problems

One of the main drawbacks faced by the literature on displacement is the complexity of the data problems it encounters. Many of these are common to any body of research dealing with data from/on violent conflict or similarly unstable scenarios (Kalyvas 2006: 48; Blattman and Miguel 2009) where data tend to be scarce, inconsistent and unreliable.²⁶ These problems are compounded in the case of relocation data by the definitional complexities and theoretical weaknesses in the displacement literature, as well as from the overwhelming influence of the humanitarian and policy dimensions in the field.

The literature on displacement suffers above all from a striking lack of consideration of such problems (Crisp 2000) and from a tendency to use the available data in an unchecked and acontextual manner which is likely to lead to misinterpretations (see Kalyvas 2006: 75-6). It is striking for instance that differences in the counting method of the three leading agencies in the production of refugee data – UNHCR, USCRI and IDMC – usually go unnoticed or without warning in the literature, as well as the reliability issues acknowledged and warned by those very same agencies (Crisp 2000: 39).

²⁶ In Lyall's words "conflict data is the product of strategic interaction rather than experimental design" (2008: 1).

This is a fundamental problem, given that most of the distortions and deficiencies characterizing the available data are likely not to be independent from the patterns of violence and displacement under research. Thus, works uncritically relying on these data cannot only lose ground on reality but they also risk incurring into substantial biases. This challenge needs to be met with careful documentation, contextualization and cross-checking of the data.

In this research I have opted for the production of primary data at the micro-level which did not exist at the level of detail and disaggregation required for this work. I have focused for it on a particular case, Bosnia-Herzegovina. I resort also nonetheless to other available data on the country, notably from UNHCR. These data are of great value on their own, despite some of the problems pointed out above.²⁷ And very importantly, these data can be used as a baseline for putting on perspective the data produced.

I have attempted to circumvent some of the difficulties and limitations involved in the production of individual level data in these contexts with a twofold strategy. On the one hand, I rely primarily in a detailed and rigorous theoretical model and a careful research design. On the other hand, I rely on an ethnographic approach for the collection of the data. The theoretical framework and the research design are intended to unveil and to grasp important dynamics at the individual and at the community level influencing the decision to return, through the production of hypotheses and the identification of the relevant variation to be observed and to be controlled for. The ethnographic approach is intended to provide valid and reliable data with which to document the plausibility of the theoretical claims, and to reshape them when deemed appropriate.

²⁷ The specific problems in the available data for the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina will be discussed in Chapters 3 and 4.

1.3. Return through the combined lenses of rational choice and emotions

This dissertation looks for the mechanisms and micro-foundations underlying the decision of return within a rational choice framework. This means I assume individuals are rational. By rational I mean that individuals have an ordered set of preferences which are complete and transitive. And that they act rationally, doing what they consider is best based on that set of preferences, and given existing constraints. That is, they pursue maximizing the utility derived from their actions by efficient means.

The reason to resort to such type of framework lies on the recognition of its unabated potential for producing insights into human behaviour in a systematic, rigorous and parsimonious way. As already discussed, refugee and forced migration literature are in great measure lacking systematic theoretical backing. Although rationalist frameworks are widely embraced in this literature (Edwards 2007) their application has suffered from the biases and shortcomings pointed out in the previous sections. Above all, the micro-level processes and dynamics of relocation processes, and most specially the ones involved in the return decision, have not been analysed through these rationalist lenses, with very few exceptions.

On the basis of this framework, a broader than usual approach has been taken to contemplate the possible role played by emotions. This involves an important element of theoretical interest, but also quite a contested one (see for instance Petersen 2002: xi). In consideration of these issues, I present here some arguments on the decision to make emotions a part of the analysis.

1.3.1. Motivation

The motivation to include emotions in the analysis arises from the widespread and pervasive recognition of the saliency and

ubiquity of intense deep emotions in contexts of violence and violent uprooting.²⁸

In social psychology there is a growing tradition emphasizing the role of emotions in the cognitive and behavioural processes involved in inter-group relations and conflict (Smith 1993; Brewer 1999, 2001; Fiske 1998, 2004; Mackie and Smith 2003). In political science and sociology, most of the literature dealing with violent conflict reports the salience and ubiquity of emotions in a more or less explicit manner (Horowitz 1998; Petersen 2002; Long and Brecke 2003), with emotions frequently playing a most relevant or even central role in their accounts (Kalyvas 2006: 24-25).

In micro-level accounts of violence, particularly, participation in violence is usually explained by a combination of strategic and emotional motivations, mostly focused on the emotional gamut of hatred, fear and resentment.²⁹ But also macro level models of violent conflict leave room for a prominent role of emotions (Fearon 1995b: 379; Lake and Rothchild 1996: 42; Kalyvas 2006: 13).

Most saliently, grievance models of civil wars³⁰ are built along a motivational axis, 'justice-seeking', which is most frequently, and then most consequentially (Kemper 1993), emotionally charged (Blattman and Miguel 2009: 22). And the same goes for rationalist models: the security dilemma model for ethnic and civil war onset,³¹ for instance, critically revolves around the emotion of fear (Horowitz 1998: 10; Petersen 2002: 68-75). However, few of

²⁸ This recognition comes from psychologists and anthropologists, practitioners in the field of humanitarian interventions and conflict management, historians and journalists, and political scientists and sociologists.

²⁹ E.g. Scott (1976), Wintrobe (1995), Horowitz (2001), Petersen (2002), Wood (2003), Kalyvas (2006, 2008), Balcells (2007), Collins (2008).

³⁰ E.g. Gurr (1972), Collier and Hoeffler (1999, 2004).

³¹ E.g. Jervis (1976), Fearon (1995a), Hechter (1995), Lake and Rothchild (1996), De Figueiredo and Weingast (1999).

these works take emotions seriously, in the sense that their presence and influence are reckoned, but not specified at all (Petersen 2002: xi, 1, 17, 73).

In some cases, the presence and likely effects of emotions are implicitly assumed to be modelled through the usual components of a rational choice framework. It is assumed that emotions do not constitute a particular component of the decision structure producing any specific effect that needs to be modelled differently or considered separately.³² But again, the actual functioning and role of emotions goes unspecified and unexamined.

Thus, there is little attention towards what is understood by emotion and what is understood by a given emotion more concretely; in most cases, emotions appear simply as (motivational) black boxes. Those black boxes are summoned in a natural way, as a given, and without further considerations as to why or how, or in which way do they have a differential impact, if any. In Wintrobe's account of ethnic conflict (1995), for instance, fear, envy and hatred lay at the basis of ethnic conflict. They are all argued to arise essentially as a result of distributive shortfalls, without further specification of the repertoire of emotions, their triggers, or the behavioural expectations emerging from them (Horowitz 1998: 23).

The lack of specification in accounts involving emotions is not only conducive to non-rigorous approaches, but it also hampers the evaluation of the assumptions made about their role in decision-making. This is crucial especially for assessing the possible independent explanatory effect of emotions.³³ With this question in mind, my claim is that, even if aiming at disentangling the decision of return within the parameters of rational choice, it is necessary to take into consideration whether emotions play a role

³² See Petersen (2002: 68-75) for a review of De Figueiredo and Weingast (1999), Posen (1993), and Hardin (1995) in this regard.

³³ Such need is emphasized in Horowitz's assertion that the strength and pervasiveness of emotional drives "stubbornly presses in on us and demands explanation" (Horowitz 1998: 13). He is referring specifically to the emotive power of ethnic affiliations.

of their own which is required to understand the decision process and its final result.

A serious approach to this issue requires making explicit the assumptions made about emotions and about the way they enter the proposed explanation, thus providing a baseline against which to assess whether emotions do play a distinguishable role of their own, at least in the specific decision problem at hand.³⁴

1.3.2. Counter-motivation. The traditional dismissal of emotions

Passions and emotions have traditionally been confronted in a dichotomy with reason. The dominance of the latter over the former is the defining characteristic of virtuous men in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*,³⁵ and it followed from Darwin's *The Descent of Man* and *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* that such dominance is the only actual difference between humans and lower animals.³⁶ From such dichotomy emerges the

³⁴ In this sense, Petersen's (2002) analysis of the determinants of the participation in violence constitutes a path-breaking work in the treatment of emotions in conflict literature and a key reference to this work. His micro level analysis of ethnic violence is based on a careful specification of accounts of emotions that pervasively underlie hypotheses in the literature, although unspecified and unexamined. Petersen names each of those accounts with the emotions that each of them suggests to be at work: *fear*, *hatred*, *rage* and *resentment*. He makes broadly accepted assumptions about these emotions explicit – concerning the triggers and the behavioural expectations for each of them. In turn, he derives empirical and testable implications which are put to test in different historical contexts involving longitudinal and cross-sectional variation in the occurrence of violence.

³⁵ "If appetites are strong and violent they even expel the power of calculation. Hence they should be moderate and few, and should in no way oppose the rational principle" (1119b 1).

³⁶ "With mankind some (emotional) expressions [...] can hardly be understood, except on the belief that man once existed in a much lower and animal-like condition" (1872: 12).

traditional and dominant view of emotions as the epitome of irrationality.

The rationalist tradition has thus in many instances dismissed emotions, both from a prescriptive and from a descriptive point of view (Gigerenzer and Selten 2001) promoting their marginalization in the scientific realm. Basically, emotions are considered as a separate phenomenon from the process of rational calculation, in the form of uncontrollable interferences non-labile to systematic research.

The notion of interference arises from the perception that the nature of emotions is radically distinct to that of the logic of rational choice, neither purposive nor reflexive (Frank 1988; Elster 1999b; Barbalet 2002). They are then expected to frequently collide (and thus be incompatible) with rational calculations, both from the subjective and the objective perspective of utility maximization. As a result, emotions are seen as something that escapes (and flaws) the rationalistic approach and its explanatory scope.

For instance, the defence of passion versus interest, and vice versa, stands out as one central pillar in the core debates about ethnic identity and ethnic conflict which (bitterly) divide the discipline between 'hard' and 'soft' approaches (Horowitz 1998: 3). Whereas constructionist accounts are well grounded on empirical evidence of ethnic identity variation and changeability, and rationalist accounts offer an advanced grasp of the ethnic conflict, they both come short as to explain and deal with the strength of ethnic emotions.³⁷ Evolutionary conceptions of hard-wired functionalism have the upper-hand in the attempt to deal with those issues, by providing some basis to understand "the *passionate* attachment of individuals to ethnic groups" (Horowitz 1998:11-12, emphasis added).

³⁷ "It seems futile to gainsay the emotive power of ethnic affiliations, and a good explanation will have to come to grips with [it]" (Horowitz 1998: 5).

The latter conceptions are closer to the latter extreme of the constructionist-primordialist continuum, and the consideration of emotions has come to be associated with those positions. But, as suggested by Horowitz, emotions do not belong to any of these positions, but rather to the phenomenon they study (1985, 1998, 2001).

Significant authors across different disciplines, also within the rational choice paradigm, have come to defy this traditional notion of emotions (Simon 1956; de Sousa 1987; Damasio 1994; Slovic *et al.* 2002, 2004). For many of these authors, whether emotions are radically distinct from the logic of rational choice does not necessarily preclude the possibility for them to be contained within the framework of rational choice theory.³⁸ The aim common to all these authors is to provide a more realistic and comprehensive understanding of human behaviour and decision making that incorporates such a basic feature of human nature as emotions. This is also the attempt of this study, focusing on contexts of violent conflict and violent uprooting.

The specific consideration of the relation existing between emotions and rationality varies among these authors. They are considered by some as pure instances of irrationality that flaw rational decision making, suspend it or mediate it.³⁹ They are also considered as a useful complement where pure rationality fails to produce an optimal result. For instance, the strength of emotional attachments makes them likely foundations for the provision of individual benefits and collective action.⁴⁰ Emotions can enhance,

³⁸ E.g. Schelling (1960), Becker (1976), Elster (1984, 1999a, 1999b), Frank (1988, 1993), Lovin-Smith (1993), Hirshleifer (1993), Fessler (2001), Petersen (2002), Barbalet (2002), Ovejero (2003), Muramatsu and Hachoch (2005).

³⁹ E.g. Elster (1999a, 1999b), Petersen (2002).

⁴⁰ E.g. Becker (1976), Horowitz (1985, 1998), Muller and Opp (1986), Frank (1988, 1993), Connor (1993, 1994), Eller and Coughlin (1993), Hirshleifer (1993), Hardin (1995), Wintrobe (1995), Brewer (1999), Wilkinson (2004).

for instance, the ability to make credible commitments.⁴¹ Also the relevance of emotions in strategic games has long been recognised, as player's strategies are largely based on assumptions about the rationality of other players.

Some authors go further by considering emotions as instruments of a kind of covered or extended rationality necessary to fill gaps where the stringent requirements of conventional rationality fail to produce adequate decisions or decisions at all, as a result of individual limitations or contextual conditionings ('bounded rationality').⁴² Some authors go even further by suggesting a kind of emotional rationality, deemed superior in advancing the individual's interest, at least in some situations, which would be the product of evolutionary selection.⁴³ This debate simply underscores Schelling's assertion that taking seriously the assumption of rational behaviour forces us to think more thoroughly about the meaning of 'irrationality' (Schelling 1960: 16).

Aside from any specific consideration about the rationality or irrationality of emotions, there is a growing body of literature pointing out that these simply cannot be separated from the process of rational calculation. And that they are rather a necessary component of the very process of decision making, including rational decision making (Collins 1993; Damasio 1994). This erodes the age-old division line between emotions and rational decision-making as two distinct processes of decision making, pushing research on human behaviour in a totally new direction, in the line of Herbert Simon's claim that an explanatory *account of human rationality* needs to identify the role of emotions (Simon 1983: 29).

⁴¹ E.g. Schelling (1978, 1960), Becker (1976), Frank (1988, 1993).

⁴² For instance, in decision contexts which require fast and frugal decision-making (e.g. Muramatsu and Hanoch 2005) or which involve too complex calculations (e.g. Gigerenzer and Selten 2001).

⁴³ E.g. LeDoux (1996), Frank (1988, 1993).

1.3.3. Methodological challenges

It is my conclusion that the main reason why emotions have a marginal (and undefined) place in rationalist accounts of violent conflict is not a denial or downplaying of their relevance, but rather methodological considerations (Petersen 2002: xi, 254). Emotions have not reached a more prominent place in many research programs due in great part to the methodological difficulties that they present, rather than to substantial claims about their irrelevance or non-rational nature. These difficulties arise from emotions roughly being an *unobservable, unpredictable and heterogeneous* phenomenon.⁴⁴

Emotions thus epitomize the problematic issue of motivations and attribution of preferences in rational choice theory, which is precisely rational choice theory's Achilles heel. Briefly, motivations are internal and thus difficult to observe and easy to attribute, which makes theory production based on such attributions a 'cheap' enterprise. This is so because multiple motivations run parallel, both across and within individuals, and behavioural correlates cannot usually be safely attributed to one or the other.⁴⁵ Also, the presence and relevance of certain emotions varies enormously across individuals; and behavioural correlates are also heterogeneous, besides not having been yet well established for most emotions (Elster 1999a, 1999b).

Rational choice theory needs to stick to motivations which can be considered roughly homogeneous (across and within individuals) and which have as direct and well established

⁴⁴ This is a blunt characterisation of emotions, which will be nuanced and refined in Chapter 2.

⁴⁵ "Where some analysts see love and hatred, others see straightforward calculation. Where some see expressiveness, others see instrumental action. Where some see perceptual distortion driven by affect, others see appropriate response resulting from the situation." (Horowitz 1998: 3).

behavioural correlates as possible.⁴⁶ This is a simplifying mechanism which nonetheless enhances the explanatory capacity of the theory (i.e. the capacity to explain the most with the least, improving both parsimony and robustness); it introduces rigour in the production of theory; and it maintains workable the principle of falsifiability. The inclusion of motivations such as moral satisfaction, feelings of shame and fear, or feelings of love, for instance, even though compelling from a realistic point of view, pose a considerable strain over theory leverage.

The problem gets compounded by the common practice to resort to emotions whenever a rational account did not completely fit, as an *ad hoc* solution to explain empirical ‘abnormalities’, rather than as the result of serious consideration of emotions as an intervening factor.⁴⁷ A serious consideration of emotions needs to identify *a priori* and to justify properly the expected presence of a given emotion for a given decision-problem. And it needs then to provide a justified account of the way it is expected to affect the structure of decision.

The fundamental basis for attaining rigour and reducing the problems of heterogeneity and behavioural uncertainty around emotions is provided by the existing empirical evidence on the functioning of emotions, in general, and of concrete emotions in particular. Although there is not a coherent and cumulative body of knowledge on emotions, there are nonetheless some sound empirical bases on which to build (Ekman and Davidson 1994;

⁴⁶ Thus, political elite’s behaviour is explained in terms of calculations to maximize power and territorial control; the establishment and maintenance of social ties is explained in terms of expected returns; conformity to social norms and political orders are modelled as the result of calculations about material costs and benefits; and so on.

⁴⁷ This is Becker’s criticism of his colleagues’ (dismissive) consideration of emotionally-driven behaviours: “Economists cannot resist the temptation to hide their own *lack of understanding* behind allegations of irrational behaviour, unnecessary ignorance, folly, *ad hoc* shifts in values, and the like, which is simply acknowledging *defeat* in the guise of considered judgement” (Becker 1976: 11, emphasis added).

Elster 1999b). These come fundamentally from experimental and clinical evidence in psychology and neurobiology about the functioning of emotions and the behavioural and cognitive correlates of some of them.⁴⁸

Research on emotions in these disciplines, which has experienced a rapid growth since the end of 1980s, can help to understand and delimit the very concept of emotion, which has become a fuzzy one due to widespread and imprecise use across multiple disciplines and in natural language. It can also help to sort out basic emotions which have a higher explanatory potential (keeping an eye on the methodological goals of parsimony and robustness of the model) and sounder theoretical and empirical ground. Finally, it can help to connect certain emotions with certain decision problems, and to stylize the relevant accounts in the literature to the very bones of what we *know* about emotions.

1.4. Plan of the study

Chapter 2 is the central chapter of this dissertation. It develops the proposed theoretical model of the decision to return. The chapter begins by discussing the rationalist puzzle underlying the decision to return, which has tended to pass broadly overlooked and which makes this decision especially intriguing from a rationalist point of view. The chapter continues describing the presence of two types of factors as key for understanding the decision to return: enabling factors (which are security-related factors) and motivational factors (economic and non-economic ones).

Detailed discussion about these factors makes it evident that conventional rational choice models fall short of explaining (and remain ill-equipped to deal with) some of the motivations and mechanisms underlying the decision to return. The last part of the

⁴⁸ E.g. Isen *et al.* (1987), Damasio (1994), LeDoux (1996), Panksepp (1998), Scherer *et al.*, Davidson (1998), Lang and Bradley (2008).

chapter reviews the relevant literature on emotions and discusses a systematic framework for characterizing the role that they may play within a rationalist framework. It identifies the most important empirical and methodological problems presented by emotions and some bases for dealing with them.

Chapter 3 discusses the research design and the methodological approach used for the collection and analysis of the data, delineating its strengths and weaknesses. A specific emphasis is given to the particular methodology applied during the fieldwork research, and to the difficulties and decisions that characterized it, in Annex 3.1 to that chapter. Chapter 4 provides an account of the context case study, Bosnia-Herzegovina. It later on discusses the plausibility of the proposed model based on existing data on the return process in the country.

Chapters 5 and 6 present and discuss the empirical findings from in-depth research in two local areas in rural north-eastern Bosnia. The analysis focuses on a sample of 62 interviewed households, both returnees and non-returnees from those two areas. Chapter 5 analyzes the empirical implications of the more conventional utilitarian model, and it finds that such model has a highly predictive power.

Chapter 6 evaluates the added explanatory power provided by the inclusion of emotions in the model. It finds that most of the cases that cannot be explained at all or in a convincing manner by the utilitarian model can be explained in terms of emotional mechanisms. This evidence suggests that the role of emotions is likely to be present also in other cases in which it is not directly observable. And it confirms that emotions do contribute added explanatory power to the rationalist framework of decision-making. Chapter 7 concludes by summarizing the findings and contributions of the study and by suggesting directions of future research.

CHAPTER 2. RATIONALITY AND EMOTIONS IN THE RETURN PROCESS

2.1. The puzzle of return

There is a pervasive tendency to assume return to the place of origin, from which people were forced to leave, as a natural move (Coles 1985, 1989). This tendency has been further enhanced under the paradigm shift in the international refugee regime (Ghanem 2003: 3) but it actually resonates deeply with the documented experiences of many displaced people across the world and across an array of cultures and backgrounds: “Return to the place one has been violently uprooted from is an overriding preoccupation, bordering obsession, of most refugee populations” concludes Kibreab (1999: 405).

Under this perception, return stands out as a non-problematic and as the likely preferred option for displaced individuals, just conditioned to structural obstacles on its way. Among such obstacles, the most obvious is the one provoking the flight in the first place, violence. Thus, if return is perceived to be the ‘natural’ solution to displacement (the ‘end of the refugee cycle’), the threat of violence which made individuals flee is the ‘natural’ barrier blocking such option.

Once such barrier is removed, return would be naturally expected to occur, provided that other basic conditions are met, such as authorities’ allowance. In other words, safety upon return is considered as a *necessary* and as a *sufficient* condition for returning.

2.1.1. *The fallacy of return as a natural option, and of safety as a sufficient condition*

The notion of return as a natural move is problematic because it is based on assumptions rather than on analytical or empirical foundations (Rogge 1994: 29-30; Chimni 1998: 364; Ghanem 2003: 14-15). Furthermore, those assumptions remain largely unspecified: it is unclear for instance whether they are founded on rationalist arguments, on purely emotional phenomena, or in a mixture of both; not to speak of the exact motivations and mechanisms considered to be at work in either case. Proceeding with these assumptions has furthermore left largely unexamined the considerations that would falsify them: namely the motivations, mechanisms and tendencies not to return.

The centrality given to safety as a *sufficient condition* for the decision to return is rooted in another (misleading) representation: the conception of the return scenario as a replication of the displacement scenario. Let us assume a displacement scenario in which, as already stated, the individual would not have departed had not some form of violence been an immediate threat to her survival. The underlying logic goes as follows: had there not been a threat to survival, the individual would not have moved; *ergo*, if there is no threat of survival, the individual will 'undo' that unwanted move. Considering safety as a sufficient condition to return is the result of assuming that the scenario of displacement remains unchanged.

This overlooks two important facts. First, violence and displacement are likely to change things (Rogge 1994: 19-39; Lubkemann, Minear, and Weiss 2000: 9; Ghanem 2003: 4; Justino 2008: 5-6; Haider 2009: np). Once they occur, they open up a whole new decision-making scenario. The disruptions and transformations at the individual and at the aggregate level cannot simply be 'undone', except if turning time (and circumstances) back to their original state through a time machine.

Timing is a most illustrative example of this. Displacement lasts in most cases years and decades.¹ In the meantime, elders die, adults get older, youngsters grow up and marry, and kids get born and go to school. Even without further disruption than that, nothing is the same when the moment to return arrives.

And second, return constitutes a decision to move, rather than to simply ‘undo’ a previous move, and as any other migratory decision is a costly one² that requires a strong push-pull motivating component. As already pointed, those motivations and determinants remain largely unspecified and unexamined. But, even assuming the simplest case as a baseline – namely when the individual has fled to a safe location (Deininger, Ibáñez, and Querubin 2004: 7) – safety issues cannot provide such motivation; they can only (negatively) condition the decision to return, acting as a barrier to it, rather than be central to it.³

Moreover, assuming safety as a sufficient condition to return raises an important puzzle: the decision *not* to return despite safety conditions. This puzzle is assumingly answered by the pervasive assumption in large part of the literature (and above all at the policy level) that individuals in such cases are driven by conventional ‘economic migration’ motives, namely the search of more economically advanced environments.

¹ In the year 2008 nearly two-thirds of refugees in the world (over 6 million people) were in an extended exile (of more than 5 years), not counting Palestinian refugees and internally displaced people (Loescher 2009: 4-5). The average length of stay in these virtual states of limbo is now approaching 20 years, up from an average of 9 years in the early 1990s (*Ibid.*: 6).

² Security considerations indeed make return more costly than usual.

³ Considering only security factors and holding everything else equal, no decision to return could be expected at all (in rational terms). That is, even in the most favourable case, when the threat has ceased to exist or it has radically diminished, since the decision to return *per se* is a costly one and no gain is possible in those terms (under the assumption of safe displacement).

This assumption is not backed with systematic empirical evidence, neither by sufficient analytical ground. It further leaves unchecked (and unexplained) the existence of other cases puzzling to such argument: the decision not to return despite similar or more advantageous economic opportunities in the place of origin (e.g. individuals with land, house or available humanitarian assistance in the place of origin and no possessions or employment perspectives in displacement); and the decision to return despite important economic advantages in displacement (e.g. individuals returning from more advanced countries or regions who are still in a position to work and in need of providing for their households).

Basically, the notions of return as a natural option, and of safety as a sufficient condition, obscure the fact that return is simply *one more* option. The decision to return deserves and requires a better understanding of the motivations and determinants that move a (rational) individual to return after violence and displacement, and under conditions of uncertainty.

2.1.2. The puzzling rationality of return. Safety as a necessary condition

The notion of safety as a *necessary* condition to return is far better grounded in a basic and hardly controversial assumption: the assumption that individuals are rational *and* survival-oriented. However, the very same notion of safety upon return, i.e. what is considered 'safe' and how is it to be evaluated, also remains seriously underspecified (Shewfelt 2007: 5), disregarding the fact that return is likely to confront important uncertainties concerning its security assessment, and that the threat of violence can take complex and diverse forms.

Besides, the assumption of safety as a necessary condition to return still raises another important puzzle: return under conditions of violence, or under conditions of radical uncertainty (i.e. given that the assessment of the threat of violence is uncertain). To make

this puzzle clearer, it is useful to use as a baseline the decision to flee.

Under the assumptions of survival-oriented individuals and of safe location of displacement, it is difficult to question the rationality of the decision to flee in a context of mass violent conflict. In such a context the individual's survival and physical integrity are likely to be substantially threatened, and information on such regard is massive and readily available to the individual.

The intriguing question is under what circumstances does it make sense that individuals decide to stay rather than to flee. In answering such question, the degree and quality of information available to the individual at different time points is likely to play a fundamental role, since imperfect information may lead to miscalculations and misperceptions ending up with the individual trapped by violence. It cannot be ruled out though that the decision to stay might also be an informed one, based on a reliance on alternative strategies and sources of security (e.g. fight instead of flight) and on considerations other than security.⁴

Under the same assumptions, namely that the individual is survival-oriented and that she has reached a safe location, the decision to return turns out a puzzling one since, unlike displacement, which is intended at *avoiding* violence, return rather *confronts* it. Sometimes this is literally the case, when people return under conditions of violence. But even when violence may have significantly diminished, there exist fundamental uncertainties surrounding the assessment of the threat which make it a risky decision.

The assessment (and the decision to return or not) are made in location D at time point t_1 , whereas the pay-off will occur in location R at time points t_2 and subsequent. To begin with, since the individual is not in the location whose safety conditions are

⁴ Steele (2009) for instance argues that the decision to stay can constitute a safer alternative in some cases (i.e. when the individual can avail herself of effective protection, relative to the more uncertain flight option).

being evaluated, there will be likely problems of imperfect and mediated information (Rogge 1994: 32).⁵ But even more importantly, there is a radical uncertainty (unavoidable even if the individual manages the best possible information) surrounding the assessment in t_1 of whether there will be a *substantial* threat to security upon return in t_2 and subsequent periods or not. This is so because, even though subject to strong dependencies, the relationship between the degree and nature of violence (or its absence) at different time points is uncertain, even for experts.⁶

This is saliently the case for transitions from peaceful to violent states of the world, especially if preceded by recent violence. In other words, it is hard to assess and to assert the end of violence in a definite way. Thus, even when peace may seem stable, still there are chances in most scenarios that instability may regain momentum and violence may recur,⁷ compounded by uncertainties about the surge and upsurge of violence which “erupts so suddenly, often in full force in a very short period” (Figueiredo and Weingast 1999: 262-263). On top of that, the renewal of violent conflict may always linger in the medium and long-term.

Such uncertainties are particularly relevant from the point of view of the individual, who actually faces the risk of encountering violence. If wrongly predicting the non-occurrence of violence the individual would be confronting an immediate and substantial threat to her survival and physical integrity, with little room for

⁵ Cases vary in the possibility, frequency and intensity of visits and stays in the area.

⁶ Policy makers (and intelligence services) or area experts struggle with such uncertainties, together with an array of early warning endeavours and think tanks scanning conflict areas, side by side with a large body of scholars dealing with conflict and post-conflict dynamics.

⁷ This is precisely one of the major focuses of post-conflict literature (see for instance Licklider 1995; Doyle and Sambanis 2000; Stedman, Rothchild, and Cousens 2002; Walter 2002; Collier 2003; Long and Brecke 2003).

further reaction in many cases.⁸ Also, at the micro level, even when violent conflict may have come to an end, violent outbreaks can be a very immediate threat; for instance, in the form of reprisals, personal revenge, or vandalism (Boyle 2006; Eidelson and Horn 2008).

Moreover, in a context of uncertainty beliefs are likely to play a fundamental role in the evaluation of the threat. This makes the decision even more puzzling since the individual's experience of violence is likely to have (negatively) altered⁹ her beliefs regarding peace as a dominant state of the world or non-violence as other actors' preferred strategy. Actually, "[b]eing a refugee also means having a *keen awareness* of the unpredictability of political events" (McSpadden 2004: 45; emphasis added).

Addressing this puzzle from a rational choice point of view requires answering two questions. First, how is safety measured in such uncertainty contexts? (Shewfelt 2007: 5). Which implies an even more interesting one: how do persons who have undergone the experience of violence evaluate safety in such uncertainty contexts? And second, what is to be considered 'safe enough' in such contexts in order to make (rational) sense of the decision? This second question forces us to confront a deeper one: what is rational for a rational survival-oriented individual in such a

⁸ Take the following consideration: "The UN has proven itself unable to anticipate conflict and provide the credible security guarantees (...). Once there is politically salient trouble in an area, the UN may try to intervene to 'keep the peace'. However, the conditions under which peacekeeping is attempted are favourable to the party that has had the most military success. As a general rule, the UN does not make peace: it negotiates cease-fires." (Posen 1993: 33).

⁹ In this account I am emphasizing those cases where violence and displacement erupt at some point of people's lives, whereas for many displaced populations in the world both violent conflict and displacement amount to an almost permanent and structural 'social condition' that might cover the whole life-span (Lubkemann 2008a). In that case, beliefs induced by such social condition do not come to 'alter' existing beliefs but rather constitute them.

context? Whatever the motives of return are, they enter a necessary trade-off with security concerns. Any degree of threat can be met with more or less pressing needs or incentives to return (or to abandon displacement). But what are the bases for such trade-off? How do other motives relate to security concerns?

Summing up, return is an intriguing decision from the motivational point of view, and a puzzling one considering that it is a costly and risky decision, likely to confront either violence or the shadow of violence. And we need yet to make (rational) sense of it. For that, much more refinement and analysis are needed than it can be currently found in the literature.

Here I have argued that security factors are crucial in *enabling* a decision to return (i.e. as a necessary condition) but not in *producing* it. In the next sub-section, I discuss the likely *motivating* factors of the decision to return, and to not return. I take into consideration the three big sources of motivation which consistently appear at the forefront (or at the background) of the existing literature and testimonies: economic sustainability, the drive for 'home', and restoration or justice issues.

I argue for the centrality of these motivations but underlining the need for refinement in their analysis and observation, as well as the fact that they may act as motivating forces for both returning and not returning. In subsection 2.3 I propose a framework for approaching the perception of the threat. The final subsection (2.4) makes both components interact and puts them together into the proposed model of the decision to return.

2.2. A motivational account

The analysis of the causes and motivations to return has not been properly addressed yet, especially at the individual level. Usually motivations are little (or even not at all) specified, and their analysis is mostly based on anecdotic evidence or on assumptions with little theoretical or empirical justification. Profuse anecdotic evidence exists, though, and most of the

motivations thus documented are encompassed by three motivational families: economic sustainability, the drive for home or attachment to the roots, and restoration issues. These are largely used as motivational black boxes, with the actual mechanisms and dynamics not delineated, much less empirically tested, thus providing little analytical insight or empirical evaluation.

Here I attempt to provide a systematic review of existing insights and fragmented evidence on all three motivating factors, intended to produce an analytical framework from which to approach them at the theoretical and at the empirical level.

2.2.1. Economic sustainability

When fleeing, in most cases the individual leaves behind assets, investments and livelihoods in which her welfare was sustained, including house, land and businesses (Davenport, Moore, and Poe 2003: 28; Justino 2008: 5-6). Both violence and uprooting often entail material and human transformations of the household which further impinge on the members' ability to sustain themselves (Justino 2008: 5). All of this occurs against a background of violence usually accompanied by high levels of material destruction and economic shrinking.

In general, the result is that the scenario of displacement is often a scenario of impoverishment, especially when whatever the individual has left (e.g. her skills) is poorly suited to her new environment (see for instance Abdi 2005). As a result, the repossession of assets and investments,¹⁰ or return to a more favourable local environment (e.g. one better suiting the individual's or household members' skills or where they are better connected) may be crucial for many in terms of economic sustainability.

¹⁰ In many cases repossession makes no economic sense if not moving back. For instance, due to difficulties to sell the property or to get an appropriate revenue from it.

But it cannot be taken for granted that economic sustainability will point in the direction of return. Assets, investments and general endowments may have been negligible before the uprooting, or they may have been liquidated before leaving; they may no longer exist, either destroyed by the violence or taken away during the conflict; or there may be obstacles in the way to repossession, of either legal or practical nature (e.g. Mooney 2008: 3-4). In some cases economic advantages may be provided by the promise of substantial return and reconstruction assistance. But very often such assistance is unavailable, non-accessible for the individual or insufficient to offer a comparative advantage.

Furthermore, return in itself usually involves considerable initial investments, which detracts from its economic attractiveness. Indeed, such investments may exceed the household's budgetary constraints.¹¹ In the case of rural returns sustained upon agriculture, the "time-lag between the heavy inputs needed in rehabilitating basic infrastructure, [...] reclearing land and [...] making it usable again, and the production of any meaningful output and/or profit from the land may be [...] of several seasons" (Rogge 1994: 36).

In parallel, the individual may have developed opportunities, obtained assets or realised investments in displacement, which furthermore might be non-movable, specific to the location or difficult to sell (at a worthy price). Furthermore, not only individual endowments but the very structure of opportunities, context-embedded resources and public goods may be far more advantageous than those in the return scenario, offering better economic opportunities and improved material well-being. For instance, by providing a wider and more accessible network of services, such as health care or education (Mooney 2008: 4). This

¹¹ As an illustration, during fieldwork in Bosnia some core expenses observed as unavoidable in the return process were: costs of transportation, administrative fees, expenses associated to cleaning and rebuilding tasks, reconnection to basic services fees, start-up investments for economic activities, such as tools and materials for agricultural activities and livestock for farm production, and bribes.

case is not uncommon since the majority of displaced populations around the world fled rural habitats and end up in urban ones (Rogge 1994: 38; UNHCR 2009a: 2).

Also, the heavy unbalance in economic opportunities at the structural level for cases originating in developing countries and ending up in developed ones is likely to weigh importantly in the decision to return or not.

2.2.2. The drive for home

The existence of a particular intimate link with the place of origin or, more generally, with the place considered to be 'home' (Long and Oxfeld 2004: 1-2), as well the existence of a drive for a sense of belonging (Kushner and Knox 1999: 411), is undoubtedly the most recurrent issue in the literature of forced migration,¹² and it has been extensively researched in psychology and anthropology.¹³ Although individual and cultural variance exists, it is widely accepted that human beings tend to have the need and the tendency to feel uniquely and intimately related to a place that they consider 'home' (Fullilove 1996).¹⁴

In the case of violently displaced people, it is assumed that they considered (and keep considering) 'home' the place they were forced to leave (Black and Koser 1999: 6). Refugees are found to "often dream of someday returning, in part because, despite the events that may have precipitated their flight, feeling 'at home' is viewed as a comfort that only their homeland can provide" (Eidelson and Horn 2008: 15).

¹² See e.g. Coles (1985, 1989), Allen and Morsink (1994), Skran (1995), Black and Koser (1999), Kibreab (1999), Kushner and Knox (1999), Ghanem (2003), Abdi (2005), Haider (2009).

¹³ See e.g. Fullilove (1996), Al-Rasheed (1999), Ghanem (2003), Malkki (1995), Keyes and Kane (2004), Eidelson and Horn (2008).

¹⁴ This notion of home as rooted in a given place has been much contested in the last decade though. I deal with some of these criticisms below.

The attachment to the roots or drive for home can be as strong as to override economic calculations. Ghanem cites for instance studies with Kosovo Albanian refugees in Scotland, Guatemalan repatriates from Mexico and Argentinean former émigrés which find that, awareness about daunting conditions in the countries or areas of return, especially in relation to the standards of living in the countries of displacement, did not stop them from returning or did not detract from their desire to return, based mostly on their longing to “return to their homeland”, on the “emotional gratification” from being back in their home country or on the need to “rediscover the country and their own identities” (Ghanem 2003: 35-6).¹⁵

Yet, what is actually meant by the drive for home, or simply by ‘home’, is still poorly understood, and it has been used largely as a recurrent black-box. There is little specification about the characteristics and the nature of that link, except for the consideration that it is very pervasive and persistent. But above all there is little specification as to what is the object of such link.

Research certifies that ‘home’ tends to have a geographical demarcation but that it is actually composed of many layers and dimensions (see e.g. Malkki 1995; Fullilove 1996; Long and Oxfeld 2004; Haider 2009). It is hard to establish which ones (including place) are predominant, necessary or sufficient conditions for ‘home’,¹⁶ or even to establish which geographical unit is the most relevant.¹⁷

¹⁵ Economic approaches in migration literature, in fact, often consider this link an important component in their models by including a preference for consumption at home as a proxy for the ‘loyalty’ to home (e.g. Czaika 2009a: 3).

¹⁶ This issue is furthermore likely to vary from case to case, and especially from culture to culture.

¹⁷ Malkki (1995), for instance, has powerfully contested the sedentary bias of the westerner concept of ‘home’. Her criticism focuses on the perception of a necessary correspondence between place, history and culture as defined by *national* borders. In studies of psychological

A useful approach is provided by the psychology of place. From that approach, psychiatrist Fullilove specifies that 'home' fundamentally consists of a sense of belonging which arises from three psychological processes: familiarity, attachment, and identity (Fullilove 1996: 1518). The link with whatever the object of 'home' is, it is based on the advantages for adaptation and survival provided by knowledge and (mutual) familiarity (e.g. Janzen 2004: 32), on the drive for closeness and contact generated by attachment (e.g. Skran 1995: 269; Ghanem 2003: 35), and on the relational and even political implications emerging from identity (Kunz 1981; Al-Rasheed 1999; Rogge 1994).¹⁸

Based on different conceptions of place, Fullilove also summarizes the multiple objects with which such link can exist, thus constituting 'home': "First, place connotes the *geographic* center, site, situation, or location for events. [...] Second, place can be understood as standing for the *human interactions* occurring in a given location [...]. A third definition [...] suggests that place represents the nodes of the *life biography*" (Fullilove 1996: 1517; emphasis added).

From these three conceptions, it follows that the object constituting 'home' often encompasses (but not all of them necessarily) a geographical space, the physical objects contained in it, and the social networks and interactions which participate of it; the latter includes from personal ties (e.g. kinship, friendship) to cultural modes and shared common experiences (Malkki 1995; Haider 2009). Home can refer to all, some or only one of these components.

These are all pervasive in accounts of return or about the wish to return: the wish to see and to enjoy certain objects or parts of the landscape and nature (e.g. Long and Oxfeld 2004: 1); the wish

and social health, place consists rather of the "*immediate and intimate* portion of the environment" (Fullilove 1996: 1517).

¹⁸ Identity is defined here as all the multiple labels or characteristics by which one same individual may define her sense of 'self', including from personal values and characteristics to belongingness and membership into different groups and categories.

to reunite or to reconnect with family and friends (e.g. Long 2004: 72; Oxfeld 2004: 102-3), to trace relatives and to bury or re-bury them (e.g. Ghanem 2003: 35; Long 2004: 72), or just to stand by their graves (e.g. Zetter quoted in Ghanem 2003), or to reclaim the properties to whom ancestors devoted their lives (fieldwork interviews in Bosnia-Herzegovina, 2006-2007); or the wish to revive some forms of sociality (e.g. Stefansson 2004: 170).

However, the existence *of the drive* for home does not guarantee the actual presence of such a link, especially not a necessarily or particularly strong one, with the place of origin (Rogge 1994; Malkki 1995; Kibreab 1999, 2000; Long and Oxfeld 2004). The link may have been originally weak or non-existent (Al-Rasheed 1999). Or, more saliently, it may have been severed by the experience of violence and ensuing transformations of the place, which may have estranged it from the individual (Ghanem 2003: 4; Haider 2009: np).

The physical landscape and everything contained in it, from physical objects to social networks and interactions, they may all have been transformed or ceased to exist or to be in place. Thus, the place may no longer be the one the individual was familiar with, it may provoke contradictory emotions that contest attachment, and it may provoke identity conflicts (e.g. Ghanem 2003; Hammond 2004; Long 2004), thus putting the notion of 'home' under strain.

Furthermore, during displacement, as time passes by, the individual may have developed a connection with her new environment that she might feel as 'home' (Smit 2006: 80; Long and Oxfeld 2004: 5). The individual is actually likely to become familiar with the environment, and there are chances that she could also develop an attachment to either the place or the objects and persons contained in it (e.g. UNHCR 2002: np; Smit 2006: 79); the incorporation of the place to the individual's identity is likely to be a harder process, although there is wide documentation of individuals developing complex, multiple and even

contradictory identities in relocation processes (Long and Oxfeld 2004: 6).¹⁹

All three processes (familiarity, attachment and incorporation to identity) could be expected to occur more likely in cases of long-term displacement (Rogge 1994: 32), and, from a rationalist point of view, also in those cases of entrenched conflict which leave few expectations for return. However, there are plenty of cases which clearly challenge these hypotheses (Long and Oxfeld 2004: 1-2, 7), at least in the sense that 'home' keeps being overwhelmingly considered to be the place of origin.²⁰

Another expectation more supported by existing evidence is that those processes are more likely to occur when displaced people live under normalized (and more favourable for self-sustainability) circumstances, conducive to a higher level of integration (Rogge 1994: 32), as opposed to displaced people circumscribed to a highly restrictive environment, such as refugee camps and collective centres, or by restrictive asylum regimes.²¹ In any case, nothing about the drive for home seems to necessarily exclude the existence of multiple homes (Stefansson 2004: 172), although it remains unclear how they would relate to each other.

¹⁹ See e.g. Malkki (1995), Al-Rasheed (1999), Long (2004), Stefansson (2004).

²⁰ The obvious case is that of protracted refugee situations where displaced populations have lived most of their lives (even since birth) away from the considered place of origin and still long for the lost home. See for instance Malkki (1995) on Burundian refugees in Tanzania, McSpadden on Eritrean refugees in Canada (2004), Eastmond on Chilean exilées (1997) or Bisharat on Palestinian refugees in the West Bank (1997).

²¹ On the devastating effects of refugee warehousing, see for instance Loescher (2009) and *Refugee*, vol. 22, no.2 (2005). A remarkable work in this area is that of Malkki (1995) comparing the conditions and processes undergone by urban and camp refugees from Burundi in Tanzania.

2.2.3. *The drive for restoration*

The suffering and the displacement of civilians during armed conflict and violent clashes are universally accepted as a humanitarian tragedy. But human agency behind the violence producing it adds one dimension of responsibility to that humanitarian tragedy.²² Indeed, displacement flows are most frequently provoked (and accompanied) by gross violations of human rights, breakups of humanitarian laws and other fundamental injustices and illegitimate acts, such as unlawful expropriations (Gordenker 1987: 171; Apodaca 1998: 80). Losses and damages reach well beyond the pecuniary dimension, encompassing anything that the individual might have had in her life until that moment, from material possessions to employment, social position, family life or the mere assumption of physical safety (Cullinan 2001).

Restorative justice is based on the principle of repairing (as far as possible) the damage and harm caused (Wright 1996: 59).²³ Return is perceived as a natural way of restoring the situation, i.e. what was provoked by/with displacement is to be undone by/with return (Ghanem 2003: 3) and, in that sense, return is perceived as a matter of justice (Smit 2006; Haider 2009).

Reparation confers a fundamental socio-political interpretation to return, as long as it is based on the consideration of the wrongful nature of the circumstances leading to displacement; and, even more fundamentally, as long as it is based on the

²² This establishes the fundamental difference between displacement as a result of mass violent conflict (and other forms of political violence) and displacement due to natural disasters.

²³ This is attained by “removing or redressing to the extent possible the consequences of the wrongful acts” (van Boven 1993: para. 137). The moral basis for reparation lies in the fact that the wrongdoer has infringed the rights of the victim, “thereby creating both a moral imbalance between them and a moral claim to redress. Although it may not be possible, the aim is to restore equality between the parties” (Cullinan 2001: 11-12).

demand to address and *undo the outcomes* of such circumstances. Thus, although restoration as an individual drive has to do fundamentally with a moral satisfaction, it requires intervention and involves interaction at various external levels (economic, social and political), thus establishing a necessary interplay with material well-being.

For instance, restoration of economic assets is restorative insofar it meets the moral claim behind it, but it also facilitates economic adaptation at the same time; conversely, economic discrimination deepens injustices, as well as it hinders economic sustainability. In the same way, socio-political restoration involving apologies and sanctions to perpetrators of war crimes is a way of addressing the imbalance created by the offense, from either an individual or a collective point of view (Cullinan 2001). But it is also crucial in improving the prospects of safety upon return (I will deal with these in section 2.3).

Restoration claims may also have a fundamental collective dimension, with perceived injustices committed against groups (e.g. group expulsion and land expropriation) giving rise to collective grievances. In cases of violence targeting groups, restoring the imbalance of what is perceived as group expulsion is often a central motive ('political return'), both in individual and in collective terms. In these cases simply the physical move of return may be felt as restorative by conveying the message that "here I am (we are), despite efforts to the contrary". Referring to reparation after torture, a survivor put it in these words: "We need to prove that they did *not succeed* [...]" (in Cullinan 2001: np; emphasis added).²⁴

But, even if some restoration claims are in place, it cannot be taken for granted that the individual will think they will be more likely served (or served at all) by returning. This will vary with

²⁴ The complete quote is: "We need to prove that they did not succeed *in destroying us as human beings*", referring to the devastating psychological effects which seem to be one of the outcomes (and objectives in certain cases) of torture.

perceptions about the adequacy and efficiency of different means to attain it, but also with the specific restorative claims involved, and most importantly, with structural constraints towards its attainment.

Undoing some of the conflict outcomes – which involve, for instance, occupation of land and properties, education programs, existing electoral pools or the determination of criminal responsibilities – will most frequently collide with socio-economic and political interests vested in the newly emerged distribution of resources and power relations.²⁵ This is most likely to be translated into outright mistreatment at the individual level and further grievances at the collective level, including in some cases a recurrence of violence.

This will be particularly likely where violence was targeted along socio-demographic lines. In these cases return and restorative claims go to the very heart of violent conflict, eliciting not only resistance but an encroachment of the conflict dynamics. The defense of the *statu quo* is then more likely to be accompanied by the rejection of the moral claim upholding restorative demands,²⁶ that is, the claim about the wrongfulness of

²⁵ It must be emphasized that this is not necessarily the case. Actually, return can also be a source of potential benefits and resources by attracting international assistance (see for instance Hovey 2000) or by helping refloat consumption, services and generally economic exchange (fieldwork interviews in Bosnia-Herzegovina, 2006-2007). On the other hand, resistance to return and other restorative claims may rather arise from individuals and institutions on the same side of the conflict which see their interests somehow threatened by concrete restorative claims (see for instance Cohen and Deng 1998: 28; Long and Oxfeld 2004: 13; Kalyvas 2006: 182), including possible collisions between individual and collective level restoration claims.

²⁶ Besides the political background against which such judgments are usually shaped, another source of such non-recognition is the fact that mass violent conflict is almost never a “dichotomous world populated only by victims and perpetrators” (Kalyvas 2006: 21), but there are rather grey and mixed areas of guilt and victimhood. One more source of non-recognition can also emerge from individuals and institutions,

the circumstances of displacement, endorsing instead that they were just or justifiable in some way. In those cases, return will not only be deprived of social and political rehabilitation, but it will also encounter social and political rejection.

This is most likely to be translated into outright mistreatment at the individual level and further grievances at the collective level, including in some cases a recurrence of violence. In these cases, not only there will be a lack of restoration but rather a new round of confrontation and grievances. The restoration drive would then point out right in the opposite direction of return.

A clear case in order in many internal conflicts, especially if involving ethnic cleavages, is that of education (Mooney 2008: 4). Education is expected to be biased toward the hegemonic political positions (and/or culture) dominating in the area or country of return.²⁷ Parents may be concerned not only about the actual content of the textbooks that their children are going to be taught, but also about the interactions with class mates and teachers, or in the way to school.

But grievances, mistreatment and general rejection may take subtler forms. For instance, adding to the likely resistance to economic restitution and compensation, returnees may find increased and otherwise unjustified costs imposed upon return, such as raised fees for the reconnection of basic services such as water or electricity; or complex requirements and bureaucratic procedures involving a large investment of time and resources.²⁸

particularly in the same side of conflict, when departure (or no return) are considered as an expression of weak loyalty, or as detracting from what an individual deserves *vis-à-vis* those others who stayed behind (or returned) and fought or suffered in a larger measure.

²⁷ Educational concerns which do not follow conflict cleavages but simply respond to a wish to educate children in a given culture or values (Ghanem 2003: 35) belong rather to the 'attachment to the roots' motivation.

²⁸ These imposed costs can be read, from the lens of those considering displacement rightful or justified, as a kind of compensation measure for a move (return) which undoes an outcome deemed

Furthermore, the individual may sometimes encounter some level of restoration in displacement instead. For instance, when receiving some measure of compensation, either directly or through some type of assistance or specific benefits. Displaced people may also find some social recognition and rehabilitation, including for instance politically favorable positions in the search and allocation of responsibilities, or through the existing educational curricula. This is not always the case though, since IDPs as well as refugees are likely to encounter some restrictions in their access to certain rights or services and they are frequently resented by the local population (Cohen and Deng 1998).

In conclusion, the three identified sources of motivation may act as both push and pull factors for *both* returning and not returning. Their centrality as core motivations in contexts of violent uprooting is out of doubt. But whether they will act as motivations to return or rather the opposite is a matter needing more refined analysis. No overarching assumptions can be made for all individuals about the expected directions of the motivations just considered. Individual variation must be allowed in order to understand which ones prevail and which ones have an actual role in the decision to return or not.²⁹

The assumption that what was provoked by war and displacement can be straightforwardly undone by return is obviously an oversimplifying one. Both violence and uprooting alter the relevant contexts and the individual's constraints and incentives in fundamental manners. Many of the possible reasons either pulling or pushing to return or not have a direct bearing with

legitimate or even just. It also amounts to a deterrence measure, making return less attractive and less affordable.

²⁹ For instance, the composition of the household and the specific skills and characteristics of the head of the household will likely condition the structure of economic calculations. Very likely also, the 'home' link and the restoration drive will vary along important socio-demographic and biographical characteristics (e.g. Al-Rasheed 1999; Phillips 2004), although a large part of the variation can be expected to be rooted at a more idiosyncratic level.

the ongoing or past violent conflict, and in all cases they are essentially rooted in it, by means of the transformations exerted by violence and displacement upon the return scenario *relative to* the displacement scenario. In other words, the reasons for returning and for not returning are strongly mediated by the ongoing or past violent conflict.

Finally, one more important consideration is that the type of conflict and the type of violence (and displacement) will make vary the salience of each of these motivations, as well as the particular ways in which each of them are likely to play a role in the decision to return (Wood 2008: 540). For instance, different types of conflict and violence can lead to different degrees and modes of destruction, and engender different patterns of dispossession. This will also influence the type and saliency of restoration issues, as well as their implications. Also, return after violent conflicts generating displacement as a by-product are likely not to be as politically sensitive and resented or rejected, and then less thorny in the search for responsibilities).

2.3. The threat of violence

Safety is expected to play a crucial role in the decision to return. And, assuming that individuals are survival-oriented (and that they have fled to a safe location) return is a puzzling decision insofar it confronts the risk of encountering violence again. However, as Shewfelt notes “exactly what is meant by security remains somewhat of a black box in many [discussions on displacement] and exactly how anyone can know when it has been addressed or realized, is rarely examined in any detail” (Shewfelt 2007: 5).

My claim is that any definition, conceptualization and understanding of the violent threat should be made taking into account the individuals’ point of view. From a rationalist standpoint, a basic assumption is that individuals are concerned

about their *personal safety*³⁰ (although this can be importantly expanded to encompass units of concern larger than the individual, such as the household or the family unit) and that they are consequently concerned about the occurrence of violence insofar it impinges on it (Davenport, Moore, and Poe 2003; Moore and Shellman 2004; Lindley 2009).

Based on this, I define the evaluation of the threat as the individual's estimation of the *probability of being hit by violence*. This idea is not new or foreign in the literature (e.g. Davenport, Moore, and Poe 2003; Wood 2003; Moore and Shellman 2004), but in most cases the specification of how is that probability estimated and what are the relevant variations in making such estimation remain unaddressed.

I proceed first of all to define what is understood by violence and what kind of violence will be considered here as relevant. Then I discuss some important drawbacks in existing approaches to the issue of the evaluation of the threat. In the last subsection, I present a general framework for approaching this issue.

2.3.1. *Violence*

By violence I understand any action or development that directly impairs in an individual's physical integrity. All types and degrees of violence are likely to be consequential, to different extents, for individual's considerations. Morrison (1993) identifies the underlying reason to flee as 'fear to death', and describes its effect as non-linear: violence affects migration at all nonzero levels, but such effect intensifies as the level of violence escalates.

Building on Morrison's assumption, I will make the simplifying assumption that the kind of violence that the

³⁰ This can be referred narrowly to physical integrity, or it can be more broadly understood as to include also material safety (i.e. encompassing properties and means of livelihood). Concern for *both* types of impact has an economic dimension associated to the losses and damages caused to economic sustainability.

individual is *centrally* concerned about when taking the decisions to flee or to return is violence which invokes a survival concern; which amounts crucially to lethal violence. This is a strong assumption³¹ used for the sake of simplicity, since this will allow systematizing and homogenizing the variable of violence in order to make it manageable within the theoretical account.

If we assume that lethal violence is central in individual concerns and that death is the maximum possible cost produced by violence,³² then the seriousness of other forms of aggressive behaviour which do not necessarily involve death is expected to be somewhat lesser. The relationship between lethal and other types of violence could be 'calibrated' then by attributing a weight of 1 to lethal violence, and lesser weights to other types.

For instance, in a purely hypothetical attribution of weights, other forms of physical violence could be weighted by 0.5 and verbal harassment by 0.0005. These weights can be interpreted as the size of the costs involved relative to those involved in death, especially if having into account the economic impact of violence. Alternatively, the weights can be interpreted as the probability of those forms of aggressive behaviour leading to death.

As a part of the nebula of violence, non-lethal forms of violence, and even verbal harassment, 'anticipate' to different extents the possibility of lethal violence occurring; at the minimum, they signal the existence of an opportunity and incentive structure conducive to it, as well as the presence of potential agency. But also, most importantly, non-lethal violence

³¹ Cases and testimonies abound of people preferring to die (or actually committing suicide) rather than being (badly) wounded or tortured. It could be argued though that many of those cases actually anticipate violent death in addition to such sufferings, or that they are rather intended to prevent larger losses, such as those which could be provoked by relying information under torture, for instance.

³² The costs of violence are multi-dimensional and complex to calibrate: they can be understood in a narrower or broader manner as encompassing from physical and psychological costs to social and economic ones, for instance.

actually increases the risk of death, given that it puts the individual into a physically and socially risky situation.³³ In any case, when there is some violence going on, 'fear to death' can be considered to be always underlying. My assumption is then that, when evaluating the probability of being hit by violence, the individual will be centrally concerned by lethal violence, but she will also take into account other forms of violence and other aggressive behaviours, such as verbal harassment (*at least* as relevant indicators).

If assigning *observed* probabilities (based on their frequency) to each kind of violence, weighting those probabilities by their seriousness, and adding them up, we obtain a 'weighted' probability of violence in general, centred on the occurrence of lethal violence.³⁴ Figure 2.1 represents a simulation exercise using discrete hypothetical probabilities – 'almost certain occurrence' (0.7), 'usual occurrence' (0.1), 'occasional occurrence' (0.02) and 'rare occurrence' (0.002). The figure displays in an orderly manner all the possible combinations of three types of episodes – lethal violence (weight=1), physical violence (weight=0.5) and verbal harassment (0.0005) – with the different probabilities.

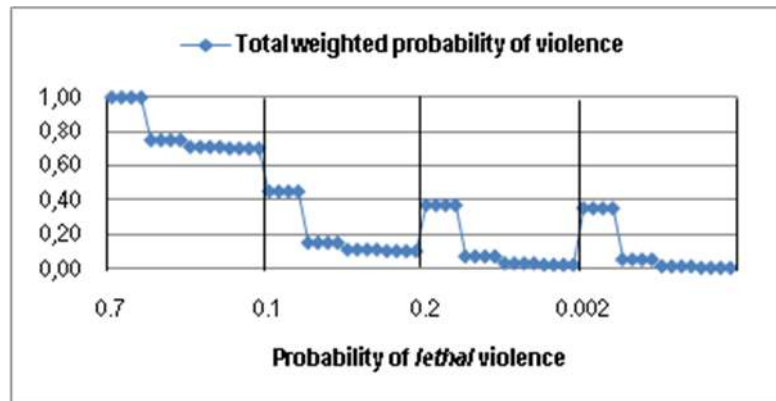
The first *section* of the graphic contains all cases in which the probability of lethal violence is almost certain (0.7). The other three sections diminish this probability, as shown in the x-axis. Within each section, each dot represents one possible combination. The first (upper-left) point in the graphic shows the extreme case where *all* types (lethal, non-lethal and verbal) have a 0.7 probability. The following dots diminish progressively the

³³ This is especially so if these forms of violence are extremely intrusive either physically or psychologically, such as sexual violence or different forms of torture and physical mistreatment.

³⁴ For instance, if violence occurs with a frequency of 10 deaths per year ($10/365=0.027$), 100 physical attacks per year ($100/365=0.27$) and 10000 episodes of verbal harassment also per year ($10000/365 > 1$, which gets truncated down to 1), the total weighted probability of violence occurring any given day would be: $[(0.027)*(1)] + [(0.27)*(0.5)] + [(1)*(0.0005)] = 0.162$.

probability of verbal harassment (next three points) and the probability of non-lethal violence (next three rounds of four points).

Figure 2.1. Simulation of the (weighted) probability of being hit by violence. Centered around the probability of lethal violence



Note:

- The attributed weights are 1 for lethal violence, 0.5 for non-lethal violence and 0.0005 for verbal harassment.
- The probabilities used for all types are: 0.7, 0.10, 0.2, and 0.002.
- Each point corresponds to one-moment simulation, beginning with a probability of 0.7 for all three types of violence and ending with a probability of 0.002 for all of them.

The main conclusion to be drawn from this exercise comes from the comparison between the first section, where the probability of lethal violence is very high (0.7) and the other three sections, where the probability of lethal violence is lesser. From the second section onwards the weighted probability of violence gets dramatically reduced. The decrease is so marked that it warrants characterizing the remainder of the graphic as a

qualitatively different scenario – for instance, a non-war or a truce scenario³⁵.

But with one salient exception: instances where non-lethal violence is perceived to be almost certain (0.7). These instances correspond to the three peaks in the remainder of the graphic. In such cases, the weighted probability of violence is kept saliently high (between 0.35 and 0.45 in this particular simulation)³⁶, *regardless of the low or almost inexistent the probability of lethal violence is*. The fundamental implication that follows from here is that there is no need to resort to lethal violence in order to pose a substantial threat. Lesser forms of non-lethal violence are sufficient to pose a threat heavily weighing in the individuals' perception of security when considering return.

2.3.2. *General approach. Taking the individual's perspective*

Existing approaches to the analysis of the threat of violence in the displacement literature generally stop at the country-level, assuming a simplistic and homogenizing relationship between violence at the aggregate level and displacement. These approaches take into consideration basically the type and intensity of the conflict and they deal with the assessment of the risk at the

³⁵ In the first section, the first plateau at the top of the graphic represents scenarios where the probability of lethal *and* non-lethal violence is very high. This evokes the height of mass violent conflicts, as in the middle of an all-out offensive against a given location. The lower plateau in this first section corresponds to scenarios where the probability of lethal violence is still extremely high, but non-lethal violence registers lower probabilities, with varying probabilities of verbal harassment. This lower plateau evokes situations, such as bombings, where there is a high risk of death but other types of abuses are somewhat less likely.

³⁶ Different weights and different probabilities can generate different distributions of weighted probability, but they tend to display roughly similar patterns.

overall level.³⁷ Obviously, the general level and type of violent conflict has a pre-eminent role in the level of threat, but it is far from being the whole of the story.

The probability of being hit by violence varies with the individual's position within the context and dynamics of violence: her local position in the geography of violent conflict (Kalyvas 2006; Justino 2008), the extent to which she is targeted following the conflict dynamics (Czaika and Kis-Katos 2009b; Lindley 2009; Steele 2009) and her degree of vulnerability and attractiveness for attacks (Lindley 2009). The level of threat to personal security does very imperfectly correlate with the general level of violence, even if it weighs heavily in it (Shewfelt 2007).³⁸

Further, existing approaches rely on *a priori* defined categories and typologies of conflict, largely borrowed from the conflict literature, thus effectively equating type of conflict and threat (e.g. Zolberg, Suhrke, and Aguayo 1989; Posen 1996; Weiner 1996a; Schmeidl 1997; Moore and Shellman 2004). Although the relevance of some of these categories (and, especially, of some of the dimensions and variables that they point out) is undeniable, the general procedure has elicited various serious flaws.

On the one hand, these tend to be coarse distinctions and indicators, with little elaboration and refinement (Davenport, Moore, and Poe 2003: 29). More crucially, there is little rationale or evidence for justifying that those categories are coherent or

³⁷ For instance, the works by Moore and his colleagues (Davenport, Moore, and Poe 2003; Moore and Shellman 2004) while contending that people monitor violent behaviours and “assess the threat such behaviour poses to their lives, physical person, and liberty” (Moore and Shellman 2004: 723) limit their analyses to the general level of threat engendered by the conflict.

³⁸ Shewfelt (*Ibid.*) addresses this gap by introducing two more levels to be considered in the evaluation of the threat: the individual and the local level; Deininger *et al.* (2004) focus only on these two levels and leave aside the macro level. A vivid account of the complexities and intertwining of all three levels is offered by Lindley (2009).

efficient for understanding specifically the phenomenon of displacement (and return), and the heterogeneity of displacement scenarios.

The weaknesses at the conceptual and theoretical level in the field have thus precluded the delineation of what might be the relevant dimensions configuring displacement scenarios, be it in the context of a civil war, insurgency warfare or genocide attempts.³⁹ The consideration of those dimensions would facilitate a meaningful (and much needed) disaggregation of the phenomenon of displacement, uncovering some relevant internal boundaries. This would help avoiding theoretical overclaiming (Horowitz 1998). It would also provide a useful framework for the selection of cases from the universe of conflicts, making the criteria and the implications of case selection explicit and subject to argumentation.

One more drawback of existing (macro-level) approaches to the evaluation of the threat is that they are based on well-informed comparative perspectives based on a wide universe of cases, whereas individuals within particular contexts are likely to lack such comparative perspective. Instead, individuals are likely to find relevant indicators in their specific contexts, and to use local-specific indicators and cues when monitoring both the general level and risk of violence, on the one hand, and the threat engendered to her personal safety on the other.⁴⁰

³⁹ This is not to say that these conflict types have no relevance in shaping displacement, but rather that the dimensions that make them specific from the point of view of displacement have yet to be specified.

⁴⁰ History and culture may provide focal points as well as particular repertoires of actors and behaviours that individuals may use as indicators (Hardin 1995; Horowitz 2001; Petersen 2001, 2002). Folk knowledge, especially in contexts of relatively recent and recurrent violence, such as the Balkans, can play a crucial role. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, for instance, the belief that the area is bound to repeat war every fifty years was very widespread among the elders in the countryside before the early 1990s, and it made some people take the first signs of confrontation very seriously (fieldwork interviews 2006-

Thus, although I propose below a general framework for approaching the issue of the evaluation of the threat, it is important to bring to the forefront local contexts when considering the application of this or any other similar framework, most especially when considering what are the appropriate indicators and particular cues likely to be followed by individuals.

2.3.3. A framework for characterizing the evaluation of the threat

In this subsection I identify the dimensions likely to influence the individual's evaluation of the threat. Building on the identified dimensions I will provide a classification of different types of threat (from the point of view of the individual's evaluation of the threat). For identifying the relevant dimensions I have used an inductive approach, similar to the one employed by Weiner (1996a). In this case, I have observed the universe of cases producing (or maintaining) internally displaced persons *by the year 2002*, for which I have relied on the narrative assessments provided in the Global IDP Project (2002).⁴¹

The preferential attention to IDPs is due to the fact that the model and its application have been focused on this segment of the population (more details are given in Chapter 4). I nonetheless consider this a very comprehensive sample of the conflicts and types of conflict provoking displacement (in the last two decades), since most conflicts producing refugees do also produce IDPs. Still, some specific threats do primarily produce refugee flows and little internal displacement, namely threats arising from the state,

2007) in comparison to a majority who remained sceptical until the conflict was fully blown. This belief has become now widespread, what could condition attitudes towards return.

⁴¹ I also draw from other published accounts such as ICG country reports and the *World Refugee Survey 2002*.

such as political repression or widespread human rights abuses⁴² (Moore and Shellman 2004).

Unlike Weiner (1996a), who focuses in the type of conflict, I have assessed for every single case the particular way in which the civilian population was hit by violence and the variables and characteristics making more likely that one given individual would be hit by it. Comparing the data, the most relevant characteristics determining this probability across different conflicts were identified, along with the apparent dimensions underlying them. All the identified dimensions are organised along two main axes: source of the threat and target of violence.⁴³

A note is in order here. Since all the identified characteristics and dimensions are based on pure empirical observation, there is no claim for them and their resulting categories to be epistemologically exhaustive. There is room for expansion by broadening the universe of cases employed: either longitudinally, geographically, by considering also displaced people who crossed an international border, or by considering other alternative sources of conflict data and displacement.⁴⁴

A. Source of the threat

Regarding the source of the threat, two nested dimensions (entity of the sources and actors involved) and one cross-cutting (intensity of conflict) have been identified as most relevant determining the probabilities of the individual being hit by violence.

⁴² It must be noted though that this category of cases does not fall within the research interest of this study, i.e. displaced populations as a result of *violent conflict*.

⁴³ 'Target' in this case does not imply purposefulness but just the actual range of objects being hit by violence.

⁴⁴ Expansion can also be done shifting to a deductive approach and defining (and refining) the categories at the conceptual level, which could mean that some of the resulting cells might be empirically empty.

Table 2.1. Relevant dimensions and characteristics of the threat making civilians flee or blocking their return by the year 2002

Observed dimensions		Observed values
Source of the threat	Entity of the source	a) Organised actors b) Non-organised (scattered) actors
	Actors involved	* Foreign power * Government * Armed groups * Common individuals
	Intensity of conflict	* Cross-fire (2 or more organized actors) * Only one or none organized actor involved
Target of the threat	Target boundaries	a) (Ethnic) Group b) General population
	Personal saliency	Socio-economic and demographic characteristics: - threat/visibility - vulnerability/attractiveness

1. Entity of the source

The first dimension is whether the threat arises *primarily* from organised actors, i.e. actors organised around the violent conflict, or whether the threat is *predominantly* a scattered one arising from non-organised actors, i.e. violent confrontation occurs at a grassroots level ('communal violence'). There are three types of organised actors considered: governments, armed groups and foreign powers. These three are precisely the sources of the threats singled out in the literature as most determinant for displacement moves⁴⁵ and to which the most attention has been devoted.⁴⁶

Meanwhile, scattered sources of threat have had a minor consideration, since massive displacement flows are produced

⁴⁵ E.g. Posen (1996), Weiner (1996a), Schmeidl (1997), Davenport *et al.* (2003), Moore and Shellman (2004).

⁴⁶ E.g. Fein (1993), Schmeidl (1997), Davenport *et al.* (2003), Moore and Shellman (2004), Steele (2009).

largely by organised-source types of threat, such as civil wars or foreign intervention (Schmeidl 1997). The presence and role of scattered sources is basically subsumed in the literature under general categories of civil and ethnic conflict, despite the fact that their specificity as a threat is widely acknowledged (e.g. Zolberg, Suhrke, and Aguayo 1989; Posen 1993; Kaufman 1996; De Figueiredo and Weingast 1999; Horowitz 2001; Petersen 2002; Varshney 2002).

Obviously, the differentiation between threats arising from organised or from scattered actors is a porous one: in cases of organised threat there may also be a risk of a significant scattered threat from non-organised actors; conversely, in cases of scattered threat some organised actors, such as armed groups, may still have a relevant role. In this grey area we can locate, for instance, 'dirty' civil wars. It is a popular view that civil wars (or internal strife more generally) tend to be 'dirtier' in comparison with other kinds of violent conflicts, in the sense that they tend to involve the whole population as participants and as victims of violence to a larger extent (Kalyvas 2006: 11). Whether this statement is accurate or not, it helps define the notion of 'war dirtiness' as a matter of civilian involvement in war, reflecting the idea of conflicts in which, although the role of organised warring factions is central, violence permeates society and it very frequently arises from (and hits) common individuals at the grassroots level.⁴⁷

Whether the main source of the threat is an organized rather than a scattered one has important implications for the individual's evaluation and monitoring of the threat. On the one hand, a threat arising from organised actors has assumingly a larger potential to be more efficient (Kalyvas 2006: 73, 154) and more destructive

⁴⁷ Another example of mixed cases is that of riots. In riots communal violence is obviously the central component, but still the participation of armed groups or governmental security forces may play an important role (e.g. Wilkinson 2004). Here though I attempt to focus on the main component of the threat (Weiner 1996a: 18).

than a scattered threat.⁴⁸ This entails that threats emerging from organised actors have, *ceteris paribus* and on average, a larger potential to produce relocation processes and to refrain their return, which is an implication actually supported by existing analyses of displacement at the aggregate level, as pointed above.

On the other hand, a threat arising from scattered sources, as opposed to organised 'discrete' ones, is assumingly harder to monitor and it involves higher uncertainty when assessing the likelihood of violence. Organised threats tend to have relatively identifiable rationales, strategies, capacities and frequently clear-cut geographical demarcations (Kalyvas 2006; Steele 2009). They thus tend to be relatively visible and individuals have (more or less) readily available cues helping to monitor them.⁴⁹

Also, a relative 'removal' of the threat can occur through the defeat, disappearance or settlement of the actors in conflict: rebels may have been annihilated or jailed, or they may have disarmed and reintegrated. For instance, thousands of UNITA soldiers and their families disarmed in Angola in 2002, of which 5,000 were accepted into the government army ranks. Similarly, governments may also be deposed or they may undergo reforms and political agreements, as in Burundi or Macedonia in 2001.⁵⁰

Contrarily, when the source of the threat is scattered there is a need to monitor complete segments of the population, these having heterogeneous rationales, strategies and capacities. Even though there may be criteria in place for identifying the most likely sources of threat, and even though some salient rationales

⁴⁸ For instance, by owning military technology with potential for extreme destruction (Zolberg, Suhrke, and Aguayo 1989; Skran 1995; Weiner 1996a: 26).

⁴⁹ For instance, when Chechen fighters were reported to have withdrawn from the lowlands to consolidate in the mountains in April 2000, return movements followed (Global IDP Survey 2002).

⁵⁰ For an analysis of the credibility and effectiveness of peace agreements and the conditions under which they fail see for instance Licklider (1995), Stedman, Rothchild and Cousens (2002), Walter (2002) or Long and Brecke (2003).

and strategies can be usually singled out and thus reduce uncertainties, such a massive monitoring is bound to be less efficient and effective (Kalyvas 2006).

Besides the impossibility of monitoring every single possible source, cues will be scarcer in relative terms and less visible (Moore and Shellman 2004: 727). The situation of uncertainty will be more acute when the members of the population posing a potential threat are geographically dispersed and/or around the individual (Posen 1993; Kaufman 1996). In that case, the individual is easily reachable by sudden minor moves which do not require much preparation or capacity.

Furthermore, the removal of scattered threats is not straightforward as in the case of organised threats, except at the cost of huge and radical human upheaval. Rather than removal, the alternative is deactivation of the source of threat. That involves either the resolution of the conflict or a shift in the opportunity and incentives structure which is large enough as to guarantee that violence will not pay for any of the potential sources of threat. The attainment and assessment of the latter is obviously slippery. And resolution at the individual level requires much more than the actual settlement of conflict, involving rather reconciliation, which is a clearly complex issue to assess (especially at a massive individual level).

Summarizing, violence and the assessment of the end of violence are more liable to monitoring for organised threats. Thus, whereas more displacement and little return should be expected from ongoing organised-source threats, it is more likely that, once some positive development occurs and higher levels of stability are reached, *ceteris paribus*, more (and more immediate) return will occur. In contrast, in many such cases where there is *also* a grassroots scattered threat involved, this process will not be so straightforward. Given the higher and persistent uncertainty involving its assessment, this type of threat is expected to produce a stickier barrier to return. In other words, scattered sources are likely to prolong their shadow well beyond actual violence (or

‘objective’ threat) stops being in place to a larger extent and in a more systematic manner than organised sources.

2. Combination of actors involved

A second and nested dimension identified for the source of violence is the specific combination of actors involved. The nature of the actors involved determines the basic parameters that the individual has to monitor: the different capacities of the involved actors, their rationale and the implications for the individual’s safety and the geography of violent conflict. At the empirical level, the combinations observed for the main threat were: (1) foreign powers; (2) armed groups; (3) armed groups and governments; and (4) common individuals.⁵¹

3. Intensity of conflict

The third (cross-cutting) dimension of the source of the threat emerges when conflict involves clashes between at least two organised actors. When there is a cross-fire, a qualitative jump occurs in the probabilities of collateral damage, and of violence spiralling into generalized violence (Skran 1995; Davenport, Moore, and Poe 2003; Howard 2004; Moore and Shellman 2004; Kalyvas 2006). The unfolding of the political-military strategies and confrontations significantly raises the chances that the warring factions will expand their fire line beyond the originally delineated targets, either by chance or purposefully. The intensity of conflict then stands out on its own as a relevant component of the threat.

⁵¹ Leaving aside the category of common individuals, largely ignored in the literature on displacement, the other three main combinations are exactly those considered also by Moore and Shellman (2004). And they bring together those considered by authors such as Posen (1996), Weiner (1996a), Schmeidl (1997) or Davenport *et al.* (2003).

B. Target of the threat

Regarding the target of the threat, two dimensions have been identified as the most relevant for the probabilities of the individual being hit in the observed cases.

4. Boundaries of the target

The first dimension is whether a specific group of the population is targeted or not.⁵² Again, this is a porous dimension. Violent conflicts which are not defined along group divisions but which are embedded in contexts containing such cleavages may drag them into the equation of violence. Similarly, violence directed towards a specific group may as such also affect parts of the population outside the initially targeted group (as in the case of ‘collateral damage’ or individuals deemed to be ‘collaborators’ or traitors).

This dimension is relevant for the individual’s assessment of the threat in various possible ways. The most basic one is the fact that a bounded and thus limited target (usually) means shrinking the size of the population liable to violent attacks relative to the total population. The smaller that size, the larger the probabilities of being hit for any individual within that bounded target, *ceteris paribus*. If membership into that group is hard to conceal (i.e. visible) and hard to remove (e.g. ascriptive identities), the character of ‘target’ cannot be eluded as long as the source of the threat remains present.

Moreover, such logic enters a feedback dynamic in which individuals find themselves in need of protection and likely to turn to their own group ranks, paving the way for armed groups recruitment and for encroachment of conflict dynamics (Kaufman

⁵² In this case ‘target’ does imply purposefulness. In the observed cases targeted groups happen to be exclusively ethnically defined groups. The targeting of groups based on ideology or some other characteristic is not part of this universe, although it constitutes an obvious potential expansion of the categorisation of targets.

1996; De Figueiredo and Weingast 1999; Kalyvas 2006). This underscores one of the frequently emphasized peculiarities of ethnic conflicts (e.g. Kaufman 1996), where it is difficult that anyone can escape being who he/she is, and thus being a target and being considered a potential source of threat.⁵³

On the other hand, the very fact of being 'targeted' (as a member of a given group) rather than simply being caught or affected by violence (i.e. randomly, as the product of generalized or collateral violence) may have some implications for the individual's evaluation of the threat upon return, and for the decision to return more generally. If a group is targeted, even when violent conflict is 'over' still returnees (as members of such group) may not be 'wanted' back and (the renewal of) conflict may be raised by their mere presence. If no group is targeted, return does not bear any direct relationship with the conflict cleavage and thus when violent conflict is 'over' return poses no specific strain in this regard.

This means that if no group is targeted, the evaluation of the threat is directly observable: if there is no violence going on, the occurrence (and increase) of returns will probably not change that. Conversely, if violence is targeted at the group level rather than generalized, then the observed levels of violence and the assessed risks of future violence are partly dependent on the presence (and numbers) of members of the targeted group.

If there is no violence but group members have not returned, the absence of violence is non-informative about objective conditions upon return. The absence or degree of violence may depend also on whether group members have returned in smaller or in larger numbers, and the individual would have to predict the effect of her return (and maybe others' return) upon violence in t_2 .

⁵³ This peculiarity is fuzzy though, since the fixed and unchangeable character of ethnic identities (as well as their visibility) is arguable. And so it is the changeability of other non-ascriptive characteristics such as political ideology.

5. *Personal saliency*

The individual's personal saliency within the violent conflict context raises the probability of being hit by violence by singling out the individual among other potential targets. This dimension cuts across all other dimensions, thus being present in almost all the resulting categories. But the characteristics which raise the saliency of the individual as a target depend on the specific context and dynamics of violence. They usually range from social, professional or ideological visibility (e.g. local leaders, journalists) to personal characteristics which render the individual either more vulnerable, more attractive as a target (e.g. women, children used as soldiers, wealthy persons abducted) or more threatening (e.g. young males, educated and resourceful people) (e.g. Kaufman 1996; Justino 2008; Lindley 2009).

Upon return, the saliency of an individual will be given by similar reasons. For instance, in terms of threat, young males are more of a security threat; previous land owners likely to reclaim their properties are more of an economic threat; and young households with children are more of a political threat where their group was targeted for expulsion, destruction or marginalization. Also female households will be more vulnerable, and wealthy persons will be more attractive for attacks with a view to possible looting.

Finally, visibility is likely to play a crucial role: first returnees and local leaders or activists are more likely to be targeted, also because of the indirect threat they represent in terms of opening the way for further return. One added and peculiar source of visibility should be considered: the individual's (attributed) role in war. For instance, the individual (and her household) will be more liable to revenge attacks if she is associated with war crimes, either based on specific information or on certain characteristics (e.g. age and gender, location of origin).

Out of the multiple possible combinations of dimensions 1, 2 and 4, only six broad types of threat were observed in the particular universe of cases considered. The first three are the

result of organised threats in which no particular group is targeted, i.e. the general population is subject to the threat of violence to a generally similar extent. The combinations are: (1) foreign power; (2) armed groups; (3) armed groups and governments. Cases of foreign power threats sometimes include also communal violence (e.g. Armenia-Azerbaijan), and cases of armed groups alone or with governments frequently drag in ethnic cleavages into the equation of violence (e.g. north and west Uganda, Congo-Brazzaville).

Two other types are the result also of organised threats, (4) armed groups or (5) armed groups and governments, but targeting specific (ethnic) groups. These happen to be all cases involving separatist conflicts. The two types are nested in the same cases, only different scenarios of threat arise for the individual depending on whether she belongs to a minority in the area (majority in the broader context of conflict) or not (including both mixed areas and homogeneous ones). The former face a threat arising from armed groups (formed by the majority in the area), while the latter face a threat arising from both the government and armed groups (formed by their own group and sometimes by the minority in the area). Finally, there is one unique type resulting from (6) scattered threats and it targets specific segments of the population (ethnic groups).

All observed cases have been classified along this typology, in a preliminary test for its adequacy for sensible classification from the point of view of displacement and return moves (Table 2.2 displays all the most salient cases).⁵⁴ It must be noted that threats (sources and targets) are likely to evolve over time, since the dynamics of violence are fluid. Types of threat that were secondary or marginal can become central, and vice versa, and new threats may emerge and substitute the old ones. And they may change from the time of displacement to the time (and scenario) of return.

⁵⁴ The proposed classification of cases is actually very arguable and open to interpretation.

Table 2.2. Classification of threats generating or maintaining IDPs in 2002

TARGET	General population indiscriminately			Specific (ethnic) group		
SOURCE	Organised actors					Scattered (Communal violence)
	Foreign power	Armed groups	Gov + armed groups	Armed groups	Gov + armed groups	
Type	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Case	Eritrea- Ethiopia Israel Lebanon Syria (Golan Heights)	G-Conakry Uganda (east) Iraqi Kurdistan	Algeria Angola DR Congo* Liberia S Leone G-Bissau Colombia Peru	<u>Majority group</u> <u>(minority in mixed area)</u> Senegal-Casamance India-Kashmir Indonesia - Aceh Russia - Chechnya Moldova - Transdniestrian <u>Communal violence present</u> Bangladesh-CHT Solomon Islands Georgia Abkhazia	<u>Minority group</u> <u>(majority in a mixed area)</u> Senegal-Casamance India-Kashmir Indonesia - Aceh Russia - Chechnya Moldova - Transdniestrian Georgia Abkhazia <u>Communal violence present</u> Bangladesh-CHT Solomon Islands <u>Homogeneous area</u> Burma Sri Lanka Turkey-Kurdistan Philippines-Mindanao	Kenya Nigeria India-Gujarati Indonesia-(Malukus, Kalimantan) Russia - North Ossetia <u>Armed groups significant</u> India (north-east) Indonesia-Sulawesi Bosnia Croatia Serbia-Kosovo Georgia-South Ossetia
	<u>Communal violence present</u> Armenia-Azerbaijan Cyprus	<u>Ethnicity underlying</u> Uganda (north, west) Rwanda Somalia	<u>Ethnicity underlying</u> Burundi RCongo Sudan Guatemala Mexico Afghanistan Serbia South Macedonia			

Note: Based on assessments by *Global IDP Project* (2002), and complemented by assessments in ICG country reports and the *World Refugee Survey 2002*.

* Also displacement for ethnic-violence in the central and eastern regions.

In Annex 2.1 I present a brief narrative and formal characterization of what is likely to be the evaluation of the threat for the six types identified. This characterization provides a map of some likely relevant internal boundaries (and commonalities) in relocation phenomena, thus providing a useful framework for the selection of cases. This proposed characterization of the evaluation of the threat can be summed up through a basic calculation procedure underlying all of them: the individual's estimated probability of being hit by violence is the product of the probability of a certain type of attack or violent incident occurring and the probability of being reached once such attack occurs.

$$P(\textit{hit}) = P(\textit{attack}) * P(\textit{reached} | \textit{attack}) \quad \text{eq.1}$$

The probability of a given attack or violent incident occurring is basically a function of the source of the threat, although mediated by the presence of the targeted population in cases targeting groups.

$$P(\textit{attack}) = F(\textit{Intensity}, \textit{AbuseGOV}, \textit{AbuseAG}, \textit{ComViol})^{55} \quad \text{eq.2}$$

The probability of the individual being reached by such attack or violent incident once it occurs is basically a function of the target of the threat (although mediated by the size of the attack).

$$P(\textit{reached} | \textit{attack}) = F(N, G, PS, ETH)^{56} \quad \text{eq.3}$$

Thus, for instance, the probability of being hit by violence in type (6) is given by:

⁵⁵ *ComViol* = communal violence, *AbuseGov* = abuses by the government, *AbuseAG* = abuses by armed groups, *Intensity* = intensity of the conflict between two organised actors.

⁵⁶ *PS* = personal saliency, *ETH* = ethnic group, *N* = inhabitants of the area of relevance, *G* = inhabitants of the area of relevance belonging to the (targeted) group.

$$P(\text{attack}) = F(\text{ComViol})$$

$$P(\text{reached} | \text{attack}) = F(G, PS) = \frac{PS}{G}$$

$$P(\text{hit}) = F\left(\frac{\text{ComViol} * PS}{G}\right)$$

This type of formal characterization can help producing specific hypotheses and testable implications. However, it remains a purely abstract and theoretical tool for guiding further analysis. The specific components and the appropriate indicators entering into those functions must still be specified. And they need to be adjusted when applied to concrete cases.

Regarding the source of the threat, the basic elements to specify and operationalize through indicators, and to consider in the research design, are: the configuration of the capacities, strategies and rationales of organised actors; and the most prominent rationales or cues for identifying scattered sources of threat, as well as their geographic disposition. In both cases, the geography of violence and the geographical disposition of the sources of the threat must be specified to have into account the relevant areas of reference for the individual.

Regarding the target of the threat, the key elements to specify are the concrete criteria by which personal saliency and vulnerability are defined in each particular context; the definition of group boundaries; their porosity and visibility; and their geographical distribution. Again, this geographical distribution must be specified to have into account the relevant areas of reference for the individual.

Since here I am dealing only with the components which have been identified as most relevant along the source and target axes, room must be left for intervening factors not considered here but relevant for particular cases. For instance, the presence of land mines; the lack of exit options (i.e. favourable border); the presence of international forces or the protection (or not) provided

by the state in those cases (types 1, 2, 4, 6) where the state is not part of the threat. Finally, it must be had into account that violent conflicts are not static but rather evolve across time. Characterizations of the threat should then have into account particular time periods and possible evolving dynamics.

2.4. Making sense of the puzzle

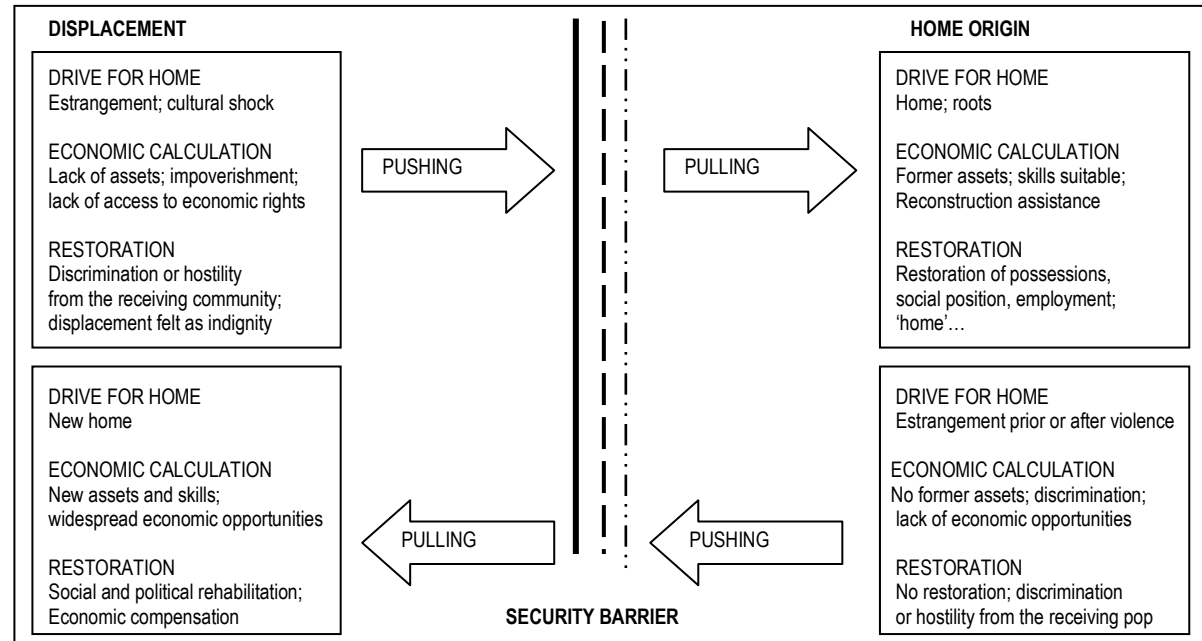
Figure 2.2 depicts graphically the model of return which has just been drafted. Two components are proposed to give shape to the decision of return: enabling (security-related) factors on the one hand, and motivating factors on the other hand. In some cases a slight level of security will suffice to expect a decision to return, but this can be based on the predominance of either push or pull factors.⁵⁷ In other cases security will not make an observable difference, provided that the (either pushing or pulling) arrows pointing to displacement are strong enough. Figure 2.2 shows the way such an approach improves existing ‘push-pull’ models by having into account the two effects in both directions.

It is important to note that, by paying attention to the push-pull potential of both the return and the relocation, the interest of the model lays not simply on its capacity to explain quantitative patterns of return (i.e. the production of such decision), but most particularly on its capacity to identify the nature of the reasons for returning or for staying in displacement. For instance:

- ‘*Happy dilemmas*’ will be those cases in which the pulling factors dominate for both return and relocation. These are people who have found a new promising life in displacement, but still have plenty of reasons (and emotional drive) for longing their home origin.

⁵⁷ A pull factor provides a reason to stay in one place (or to move into it). A push factor provides a reason to move out (or not to move in).

Figure 2.2. A model of return. Enabling factors and motivating factors



- 'No-Place Dilemmas' are those cases where the pushing factors dominate, that is, where people seem to have no place to stay and no place to go back.
- 'Return Cases' are those in which a decision to return is clearly expectable, given that they have both arrows pointing to return. This is frequently the case of elderly people: they cannot adapt easily or find a place for themselves in the new reality, and they have a whole life of investments (both material and emotional ones) back in their place of origin.
- 'Non-Return Cases' are the opposite cases, with both arrows pointing towards not returning. Youngsters tend to present such a case, especially when they have moved from a rural to an urban area, exemplifying.

Thus, the model has the capacity to specify and systematize many of the mechanisms which are usually considered and identified in direct interventions with displaced people and returnees. I proceed now to specify the components of the model and the relationships between them.

2.4.1. Motivating factors

Subject to security issues considerations, but keeping this aside by now, a decision to return is expected when the expected utility from returning ($y=1$) is larger than the expected utility of not returning ($y=0$). The three candidates to enter in these utilitarian functions are: economic calculations, the drive for home, and the drive for restoration.

$$EU (y=1) = U(\text{econ}_{\text{ret}}, \text{home}_{\text{ret}}, \text{restor}_{\text{ret}}) \quad \text{eq.4}$$

$$EU (y=0) = U(\text{econ}_{\text{stay}}, \text{home}_{\text{stay}}, \text{restor}_{\text{stay}}) \quad \text{eq.5}$$

The consideration of non-economic factors deviates from the most conventional utilitarian models in rational choice and it poses considerable methodological challenges. Their inclusion in the model is derived from the careful consideration of the individual's

point of view and the likely micro-foundations underlying the process. A serious attempt to understand the conditionings of return must confront such a challenge (Czaika 2009a) given the obvious saliency of those issues.⁵⁸

In traditional rationalist models, only economic calculations or the impact of other factors which can be read in those terms are considered. This is so because we can assume certain homogeneity in the individuals' preferences for economic calculations or concerns expressed in those terms. Thus, given certain individual and structural characteristics and constraints, it is possible to assume which alternatives provide the most utility to the individual.

However, in the case of the drive for home and restoration, there is likely to be wide variation in their presence, salience, direction and intensity. With one exception, though. The familiarity component of 'home' can be more or less safely assumed to be similarly salient (and preferred) for all individuals, given its underlying utilitarian dimension: familiarity usually facilitates adaptation and survival. So it is not too a strong assumption to consider that individuals will prefer familiarity to non-familiarity in a given environment, *ceteris paribus*,⁵⁹ and that it may be a similarly important part of considerations regarding return for a vast majority of individuals.

The remaining components of home, namely attachment and identity, and the drive for restoration are not only likely to importantly vary, but they are also rooted in deep and complex psychological processes that have no direct or apparent

⁵⁸ Modelling roots attachment and restoration issues will allow, for instance, to account for those remarkable cases in which return seems to go against the person's benefit as defined by 'common sense'. These cases are considered to be a minority, though most salient and visible among those involved in the process of return. They are usually referred to as 'the idealists'.

⁵⁹ Even though there may be individuals (considered outliers here) who actually prefer non-familiarity and the sense of adventure, for instance.

relationship with utilitarian calculations. Thus their measurement and observation are complex and slippery issues. These components are rather connected with the realm of emotions. I will leave them aside by now and I will return to them in the next section.

I proceed now to specify the components of the utilitarian function in the conventional way and I will resume the consideration of attachment and identity issues, and the drive for restoration, once I discuss the way to incorporate emotions into the model in the next section.

1. *Economic calculations.* The first assumption made is that the individual does not maximize her personal utility, but that of the household, with two alternative time horizons: short term and long term. I will focus here only in the short term horizon. The individual will consider the gains to be made from returning net of the costs involved in that decision, weighting them against the gains to be made from not returning (net of any costs involved, if any).

Gains will be given by possible sources of income (x_{hh}) and existing assets (z_{hh}) of the members of the household; public goods (PG) and opportunities at the aggregate level (c) in the specific location; and the interaction of this opportunity structure with the household skills (ed_{hh}). The lack of any of these sources of utility, or uncertainty about it, would enter the equation with a negative sign, thus accounting for potential push factors for both the return and the no return option.

$$U(\text{econ}_{\text{ret}}) = (x_{hh}, z_{hh}, PG, c \mid ed_{hh}) - (C_i) \quad \text{eq.6}$$

$$U(\text{econ}_{\text{stay}}) = (x'_{hh}, z'_{hh}, PG', c' \mid ed_{hh}) \quad \text{eq.7}$$

2. *Drive for home.* A familiar (and mutual) knowledge of the environment (f_{hh}) provides utility to the individual in terms of facilitating her adaptation and her survival and livelihood strategies. Unfamiliarity (including estrangement and cultural

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distance) will produce proportional disutility, thus accounting for potential push factors for both options.

$$U(\text{home}_{\text{ret}}) = (f_{\text{hh}}) \quad \text{eq.8}$$

$$U(\text{home}_{\text{stay}}) = (f'_{\text{hh}}) \quad \text{eq.9}$$

The expected utilities of returning and non-returning in the short term are then given by:

$$EU(y=0) = U(\text{econ}_{\text{ret}}, \text{home}_{\text{ret}}) \quad \text{eq.10}$$

$$EU(y=1) = U(\text{econ}_{\text{stay}}, \text{home}_{\text{ret}}) \quad \text{eq.11}$$

And any of the components of both equations might be actually carrying a negative sign.

2.4.2. Enabling factors. Utilitarian vs. Survival-utilitarian modelling

The cornerstone assumption of the model is that individuals are rational actors who value their physical security and who are survival-oriented. As a result, contexts of mass violent conflict impose high unbearable costs to certain decisions, thus restricting the (rational) choices available to the individual. I also assume, for the sake of simplicity, that individuals flee to a safe location. By safe location I understand an area where violence is not a pervasive threat for the individual. Unfortunately, this is frequently not the case (Edwards 2007; Lindley 2009)⁶⁰ and such cases constitute a different scenario and structure of decision.

⁶⁰ This is especially the case for IDPs or people displaced into neighbouring countries, who often find themselves in a situation of vulnerability and exposure. In the 1990s, for example, between a third and a half of African refugees sought asylum in neighbouring countries that were suffering from civil war (Tanner and Stedman 2003: 8). And IDP camps and 'protected villages' in Uganda's Ruwenzori Mountains,

I am focusing here on cases fulfilling the condition of safe displacement for the sake of simplicity, in order to keep the puzzle of return as neat as possible, keeping the number of intervening factors as reduced as possible. This means that the ensuing analysis is adequate particularly for cases meeting such condition. A broader scenario relaxing such assumption and paying particular attention to the implications of unsafe displacement is a more than desirable future direction of research.

Since people are survival-oriented and value their physical security, the avoidance of violence is expected to be a major conditioning for return. In section 2.1 it was raised the question of how the concern for security relates to other individual motivations and what kind of trade-off, if any, is established between them. This will require specifying what is understood as rational in such a context.

Most economists would argue that (violent) death and attacks to physical integrity are readily equivalent to a commensurable economic loss.⁶¹ This loss is simply assumed to be (unbearably) large in the case of death, the maximum cost possible. The event of being hit by violence would enter the calculation of payoffs as a cost, subject to its probability of occurring.⁶² The expected utility from returning is then:

for instance, constituted for years the most regular targets for the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) (Global IDP Survey 2002).

⁶¹ Following this logic, the more a person has to lose, the more careful she will be regarding her security; and the less she has to lose, the more risks she will be willing to take. Also, the more is to be won for undertaking certain risks, the more willing will be an individual to take them *ceteris paribus*. It is possible to think of extreme cases (i.e. outliers) both supporting and rejecting this understanding.

⁶² It must be noted that violence has also an impact at the aggregate level likely to impinge on the individual's welfare regardless of whether it does hit her personally or not. This impact is assumed to enter in the individual's calculations through the economic component of the motivating factors (which will be seen below).

$$EU (y=1) = p*U(\text{ret} - \text{viol}) + (1-p)*U(\text{ret}) \quad \text{eq. 12}$$

Where *ret* stands for the utility derived from returning; *viol* stands for the losses undergone when hit by violence; and *p* stands for the probability of being hit.⁶³ The magnitude of the losses engendered by violent events, and the probability of these occurring, qualify the payoffs to be expected from return, which in turn are compared to the payoffs expected from not returning.⁶⁴

Let us now define death as the loss of everything that the individual has (*x*) or thinks she might have one day (*y*). Let us consider that a most satisfactory life is any lineal combination of these two that maximizes the attainment of everything that is valuable for the individual, that is, that maximizes her life utility. Returning and not returning provide different of these combinations (and probably different maximization points). If the individual chooses to return and she is hit by lethal violence, she will lose everything that life, after returning, promised to her. That is, the utility of *ret*.

$$EU (y=1)' = p*U(\text{ret} - \text{lethal}) + (1-p)*U(\text{ret}) \quad \text{eq.13}$$

Where *lethal* stands for lethal violence and equals the value of *ret*. Therefore, the expected utility of return when considering lethal violence can be expressed as:

$$EU (y=1)' = (1-p)*U(\text{ret}) \quad \text{eq.14}$$

⁶³ Previous similar utilitarian models of displacement, return and security considerations are Moore and Shellman (2004), Deininger *et al.* (2004) or Czaika and Kis-Katos (2009b); and other rationalist models dealing with security issues and risk courses of action are Kuran (1987b, 1989) and Petersen (2001).

⁶⁴ I will simply assume the option of staying in the location of displacement, rather than assuming further options of relocation.

As a rational actor, the individual will return when the expected utility from returning is larger than the expected utility from not returning. The latter is defined as:

$$EU(y=0) = U(\text{stay}) \quad \text{eq.15}$$

A decision to return would then be expected when:

$$(1-p)*U(\text{ret}) > U(\text{stay}) \quad \text{eq.16}$$

There are two ways of solving by p in equation 9, and both of them are informative (I drop the utilities notation for the sake of clarity of exposition).

$$\text{a) } p < (\text{ret} - \text{stay})/(\text{ret}) \quad \text{eq.17a}$$

$$\text{b) } p < 1 - (\text{stay}/\text{ret}) \quad \text{eq.17b}$$

Equation 17b provides the insight that, the larger the utility from returning (independent of security constraints) relative to the one of not returning, the higher the probability of being hit which is ‘rationally acceptable’ upon return. Equation 17a is even more informative, and it reveals that the probability of being hit by (lethal) violence that renders return a rational option depends on the utility from not returning. The larger it is, the smaller the probability of being hit by violence which is ‘tolerable’ upon return. Only if no utility can be expected from staying in displacement (and if there is some utility to be derived from returning) return is guaranteed (any probability of being hit below 1 will suffice).

If the utility of not returning is larger or the same than the utility of returning, no return can be expected (the required probability of being hit by violence that makes it a rational option is < 0). This is logical since the decision to return involves migration costs, and thus, staying (i.e. not returning) should be the preferred option, *ceteris paribus*. Thus, while in the case of displacement finding a substantial threat to personal security is expected to (rationally) determine a decision to flee, in the case of

return a decision *not* to return can be determined by a *lesser* threat.⁶⁵

This consideration of the role of violence in the return decision follows a utilitarian scheme, in which the impact of violence is considered as a disutility detracting from other possible payoffs. It simply takes into consideration the size of the costs or losses produced by (different types of) violence, as well as the probability of being hit by it. But it should not be overlooked the fact that the costs of violence are multiple and complex, and thus difficult to measure or even conceptualize.

For instance, in most of the literature it is assumed that a substantial threat to survival is enough, from a rational point of view, to justify a decision to flee or not to return, *regardless* of other considerations, and actually overriding them in many cases, as a matter of survival. But how do we define such a substantial threat? That is, where do we put the border between a substantial and a non-substantial threat? When are the costs of violence large enough, relative to other concerns, and how are they to be measured? This is a slippery issue, which cannot be answered without falling into tautological considerations of behaviorally revealed preferences.

If a measure of 'large enough' cannot be established, the problem arises of how to reconcile this idea (of a 'substantial threat' enough to override any other consideration) with the essential trade-off underlying the utilitarian approach. In the model presented above these issues have been solved by focusing on lethal violence and assuming its costs equal the maximum possible payoffs of a given individual. The size of the costs of violence thus disappears from the equation, centered only on its probability.

⁶⁵ This is consistent with the hypothesis proposed above stating that scattered threats, which have been assumed to be less substantial on average than organised threats, can become a sticky barrier to return due to the uncertainties surrounding the security assessment (which is translated into a lottery here).

But the underlying issue remains: the lack of a baseline for comparison between security concerns invoking a fear to death and other more conventional considerations and payoffs. Without that baseline, we cannot define (from a rational point of view) what constitutes a substantial threat enough to override other considerations. This is a basic issue if taking seriously the assumption of individuals as rational *and* survival oriented actors.⁶⁶

My intuition is that the value attached to safety and survival is incommensurable with other utilitarian considerations, and that such concern usually runs upfront any other consideration *whenever the individual is facing an obvious threat to immediate survival.*⁶⁷ My contention is that in such cases security and utilitarian calculations cannot be conflated in the decision equation. Security is not commensurable just on those terms, as a simple cost detracting from possible payoffs.

A seemingly reasonable way to put it is assuming that there exists some level of threat (i.e. a security threshold) above which other considerations become secondary. There are powerful arguments for supporting this standpoint from various disciplines ranging from anthropology, to psychology or neuroscience.

Survival is known to be hard-wired into the human (and other animals) brain. It belongs to a realm of primary concerns rooted in evolutionary selection, such as pair matching and reproductive functions or group protection (Damasio 1994; Lazarus 1991; Panksepp 1998).⁶⁸ Security-related events actually elicit

⁶⁶ If rational actors are taken to be purposive actors which have stable, complete, transitive and consistent preferences.

⁶⁷ It must be noted that factors other than violent threat may also rise to the point of posing a threat to immediate survival. Economic factors may for instance push the individual to situations (or anticipation) of extreme hunger and thirst. Little is known about the interactions of such acute concerns, but it might be the case that those other concerns come to the forefront overriding (or lowering) security concerns.

⁶⁸ All these primary concerns are basically connected to the realm of emotions, to which I will turn in the next section.

immediate autonomous and compelling responses which lay beyond the individual's will and conscience (LeDoux 1996). This is not to argue that individuals are necessarily overridden in their decision-making by primary instincts, but it underscores the immediacy and the compelling nature of security concerns, singling them out from an array of other human motivations.

Thus, I expect the individual's security threshold to be given by her concern for security and survival, which can be defined as the degree of perceived threat (i.e. perceived probability of being hit by violence) that she is willing to tolerate (max_i). In other words, what the individual *feels* as an intolerable threat. There are various grounds for expecting individual variation in such concern. Firstly, factors other than violent threat may also rise to the point of posing a threat to immediate survival, thus becoming salient and with the potential to override (or lower) security concerns. Secondly, immediate survival is not the only primary concern hard-wired in the human brain, with other important adaptive goals such as reproduction or group protection also having a potential to balance the saliency of security concerns. Finally, all these concerns are connected to the realm of emotions, in which much variation can be found within and across individuals. I will deal with these issues in the next section.

Given the saliency of the security concern in contexts of mass violent conflict, and the uncertainty surrounding the return option, it is reasonable to assume that concerns about immediate survival will arise, coming to the fore. The consideration of the motivating factors would then be conditioned to the break-up of the barrier of insecurity (i.e. the cessation or decrease of a 'substantial' threat). Return would be expected when the utility of returning outweighs the utility of not returning (net of the impact of violence) provided that the individual perceives that a minimum requirement of security is met.⁶⁹ If immediate survival is not reasonably

⁶⁹ Thus, although it may be true that the more is to be won from undertaking certain risks, the more likely individuals are to be willing to

guaranteed, other considerations will tend to become secondary. Above such immediate survival threshold, return would not be expected. This can be formally expressed in the following way:

$$EU'(y=1) = SEC(p_i, \max) * EU(\text{ret}) \quad \text{eq.18}$$

Where,

If $p_i > \max$, $SEC = 0$

If $p_i \leq \max$, $SEC = 1$

In the expression above p_i stands for the individual's assessment of the threat of violence, entailing both its probability⁷⁰ and its seriousness,⁷¹ that is, it amounts to a weighted probability. And \max stands for the maximum degree of threat tolerated. Whenever the perceived threat is larger than that ($p_i > \max$) the security component of the function (SEC) equals 0, thus invalidating all other considerations. Thus, when the perceived threat is higher than that tolerated amount, no return is expected. Return *may* occur when the threat is lower or equals such tolerated amount.⁷² In other words, the fact that security concerns enter the decision-making as an enabling factor means that:

a) If the individual's security requirements are not met, she will not consider returning, even if that option maximizes the utility derived from all other components.

b) The security component will be non-observable if the preference derived from the rest of components is not to return. In that case, even if the minimum requirement of security is attained, the return option will not be considered.

undertake them, it is quite reasonable to expect that this will be so, *in a majority of cases*, only to a certain extent of risk.

⁷⁰ $p(\text{hit}) = p(\text{attack}) * p(\text{reached}|\text{attack})$.

⁷¹ Lethal violence has a weight of 1 whereas other forms of physical violence and aggressive behaviour have smaller weights.

⁷² Note that return does not imply the disappearance of the concern for violence, neither a perception of no threat.

The problem is how do we determine such threshold (*max*)? These thresholds are largely unobservable. In order to illustrate this, Table 2.3 offers a summary of the four possible observations that we could find in the population and the problems they present for inferring the individual's security threshold. First, we can observe return. In that case we would expect that the utilitarian function points towards return, but it might not be the case. And the same goes for cases where we observe no return.

Table 2.3. *Classification of problems for the observation of the security threshold*

Utilitarian function points toward	Observed decision	
	<i>No Return</i>	<i>Return</i>
<i>No Return</i>	Barrier unobservable	"Barrier broken" - Misprediction or irrationality
<i>Return</i>	"Barrier unbroken" - Right-truncation	"Barrier broken" - Left-truncation

The four possible observations and their related problems are the following:

- *No return coherent with utilitarian function.* The observed behaviour does not reveal anything about the security barrier, since, whether it has been broken or not, the decision not to return would always prevail.
- *No return contrary to utilitarian function.* The observed behaviour 'reveals' that the barrier has not yet been broken. But we cannot determine the point at which it would be broken. That is, we have a right-truncation problem.
- *Return coherent with utilitarian function.* The observed behaviour 'reveals' that the security barrier has been broken. But we cannot determine at which point was actually broken, since a lag may have existed between that point and the move of return – due to travel preparations, to

external constraints, or to a mismatch with the utility function. We have then a left-truncation problem, with a higher-bound estimate of the security barrier (i.e. of the degree of threat that the individual is willing to tolerate).

- *Return contrary to utilitarian function.* The observed behaviour might be interpreted as a misprediction of the model (due to misspecification or to some omitted variable or component), or as an outright moment of irrationality. We would assume that the barrier of security is broken in any case, but, considering the risk of misspecification and/or omitted variables, we would be being tautological.

Although no actual determination of the threshold can be derived from these behavioural observations, still they give important benchmarks against which to calibrate other possible proxies. The concern for security and immediate survival can be proxied through a number of items and observations, especially having into account that fear is likely to play a fundamental role in its determination (to this issue I will turn in the next section, making it more obvious how it can help to the identification of adequate proxies). The adequacy of these proxies can be initially assessed with the baseline provided by these behavioural observations.⁷³

⁷³ An alternative is to ask directly individuals how much of a threat (in terms of probability or in terms of the factors conditioning such probability) she would never accept or she would be willing to undertake, similarly to what is done in threshold models for neighbourhood segregation. But (even if eliminating all the likely “it depends on...”), the answer is irremediably embedded in the individual’s realities (who furthermore is assumed to be a rational individual), and thus conditioned by all utilitarian and exogenous considerations.

2.5. Emotions applied to return

As already pointed in the Introduction, there is abundant reason to consider the methodological challenge of incorporating emotions into a rational choice framework. It has become furthermore obvious in the previous sections of this chapter the need or at least the convenience of such incorporation for the decision to return.⁷⁴

At first glance, simple common wisdom would say that, out of the four enabling and motivating factors presented, three (security issues, the drive for home and the drive for restoration) seem to be strongly intertwined with emotional processes. This might seem not the case for the fourth factor, which is by definition purely economic-based. However, emotions may also permeate economic calculations,⁷⁵ and decisions involving restoration issues, the drive for home or security considerations may well follow a pattern of rational calculations, even if shaped and influenced by particular emotions. The proposed operationalization of emotions should put rigour into these common wisdom insights and facilitate some bases for assessing them.

At a more analytical level, it has been discussed in these previous sections the way in which conventional rational choice models fall short of explaining and remain ill-equipped to deal with phenomena such as the security threshold, the components of attachment and identity in the drive for home, or the restoration drive, all of them likely to be rooted in or related to emotional processes. The proposed operationalization and incorporation of

⁷⁴ One more consideration to be made now that the nature of the decision to return has been detailed in section 2.1 is the fact that research suggests that *risky* decision-making especially can be profoundly influenced by emotional experiences (Lerner and Keltner 2001; Fessler, Pillsworth, and Flanson 2004; Slovic *et al.* 2003; Gambetti and Giusberti 2009).

⁷⁵ As illustrated by the basic idea of two parents trying to secure their children's future at the cost of sacrificing their own personal (self-centred) preferences.

emotions should provide tools for dealing with these issues in a systematic and rigorous manner.

In the following subsection (2.5.1) I review the relevant knowledge we have on emotions from empirical evidence and research in psychology and neurobiology. In subsection 2.5.2 I specify the empirical challenges involved in dealing with emotions on those bases. Subsection 2.5.3 discusses the way emotions can be incorporated into a rational choice framework. Finally, subsection 2.5.4 identifies and operationalizes the relevant emotions of return and I incorporate them into the model.

2.5.1. On giants' shoulders

Cultural anthropologist and psychologist Richard Shweder asserts: "The phrase 'essentially contested concept' was not coined with the 'emotions' in mind, but it might have been. Everything from their substance to their distribution to their logical form is a subject of debate" (Shweder 1994: 61). Despite this, a fundamental layer of empirical evidence exists on emotions, constituting a sound base for characterizing them.

Delimiting emotions and the bases for their observation

Emotions arise from an automatic (unconscious) evaluation of some perceived stimuli (LeDoux 1994d: 291). The stimulus is appraised as relevant, and as either positive or negative, in turn eliciting a positively or negatively valenced emotion, i.e. pleasant or painful (Frijda 1994a: 61). In other words, emotions amount to 'relevance detectors' (Scherer 2005). The appraisal of the stimulus elicits immediate and involuntary physiological reactions.⁷⁶ The

⁷⁶ These include reactions elicited by the autonomic nervous system, ranging from respiratory and circulatory changes (provoking, for instance, sensations of warmth or cold) to changes in glands (provoking, for instance, sweat or tears) and in the functioning of the endocrine system (releasing hormones such as adrenaline). But also facial

basic defining feature of this phenomenon is that it is *ontologically in the moment* (Berezin 2002: 35).

I take this ‘occurrence’ as the basic unit of the broad domain of mental states called *affect* or *affective states* (Frijda 1994a: 61; Sabini and Silver 2005: 709) and I will refer to it as an ‘*occurrent emotion*’.⁷⁷ Occurrent emotions can be more or less sustained, but they are *usually* quite short-lived (Ekman 1994a, 1994b). Affective states that get extended in time are broadly denoted in emotion research as distinct affective phenomena.

Thus, there is evidence that individuals, when exemplifying a given emotion (e.g. anger, fear, joy) recall ‘*emotion episodes*’ of a longer duration, lasting from hours to days. These prototypical episodes are experienced “as wholes, as unbroken engagements with the emotion-arousing event” although they are not homogeneously experienced: they involve various occurrent emotions, either continuously or intermittently, with varying intensities (Frijda 1994a; Averill 1994b; Ekman 1994b).⁷⁸

Still, these episodes are experienced as prototypical examples of concrete occurrent emotions (e.g. anger). In turn, it is expectable that that is the emotion predominant in the episode and the one the most consistent with the trigger and with the main cognitive and behavioural correlates of the emotion. So in observing such emotion, consistency could be expected between self-report, the trigger and behavioural and cognitive correlates (Larsen and Fredrickson 1999; Robinson and Clore 2002).

expressions and body postures, as well as action readiness, i.e. “action tendencies or impulses to establish or disrupt relationships to the environment, and to states of activation in doing so” (Frijda 1994a: 61).

⁷⁷ The term is taken from Elster (1999b: 19). Occurrent emotions as defined here are labelled by other authors as an ‘emotion event’, ‘emotion state’ or ‘emotion episode’. None of these have this exclusive meaning. Frijda, for instance, uses ‘emotion episode’ with a divergent meaning (see below).

⁷⁸ For instance “annoyance [was] followed by anger, followed by disgust, followed by upset and indignation [...] or the various emotions may have been present at the same time” (Frijda 1994a: 62).

A different and more usual conceptual distinction is that between occurrent emotions and '*moods*'. Moods are constituted by the same constellation of factors, but they are longer and less intense (Davidson 1994; Ekman 1994b), and they are not object-focused (Scherer 2005). Moods and occurrent emotions interact: "Emotions can lead to particular moods and moods can alter the probability that particular emotions will be triggered" (Davidson 1994: 53). Indeed, there are authors claiming that emotions actually *tend to* prolong themselves in a mood (Frijda 1994a).

Another relevant phenomenon is that of '*sentiments*', which are individual dispositions to respond affectively (either positively or negatively) to particular objects or kinds of object (Frijda 1994a: 64). Sentiments are more or less permanent states, unlike occurrent emotions or moods. As with moods, there is also interaction between them: sentiments are the bases for occurrent emotions (when an event involving the object occurs) and occurrent emotions are a fundamental component for sentiments to be in place (Frijda 1994a: 64). Love and hate are the most prominent sentiments (and occurrent emotions) which exemplify not only the category, but also the recurrent confusion between love/hate as a sentiment and love/hate as an emotion.⁷⁹

For instance, being in love, a more or less permanent attachment which involves the emotion of love, is a different thing from actually feeling the emotion of love, which is experienced in particular moments (Frijda 1994a: 64-65; 1994b: 16). Provided that the individual is in love, such emotion will be recurrent, frequent and easily aroused (Lazarus 1991; Shaver, Morgan, and Wu 1996). However, besides the occurrent emotion of love (e.g. when seeing or hearing about the object) other occurrent emotions

⁷⁹ Love is indeed one of the most controversial 'emotions' in the literature, usually disregarded as such and rather considered as a 'syndrome' or as an 'affective commitment' (Frijda 1994a; Shaver, Morgan, and Wu 1996). Still it is constantly named in the lists of emotions both by authors and by respondents in empirical research (Fehr and Russell, 1984, and Van Goozen & Frijda, 1992, quoted in Frijda 1994a; Shaver *et al.* 1996).

can be elicited when an event involving the object takes place (e.g. fear that something bad happens to it, grief for getting apart, pride for an achievement).

Although occurrent emotions are ontologically in the moment and relatively short-lived, they are then likely to be recurrent, if not sustained, as embedded in emotion episodes, moods and sentiments. That is, there is basis for assuming that emotions can have a relatively sustained presence and role in common individuals, without resorting to outliers in the intensity or nature of their emotional traits. In this work I take occurrent emotions as the basic unit of the so-called 'affective states' and I use them to delineate the role of emotions, more loosely speaking, in decision-making, bearing in mind that such role can be sustained in time and relatively consistent through the working of all these affective states.

Identifying the role of emotions in decision making

The very origin of an emotion is an unconscious *information processing* evaluating the relevance and valence of some stimulus. When an emotion arises the stimulus is evaluated "in light of external situations and contexts, episodic and semantic memories *and emotional signals* within the brain and body" (LeDoux 2007: 402). The neural system computing emotional significance is different from the ones performing conscious cognitive computations, what is usually referred to as 'cognition' (LeDoux 1994d: 291). The latter, higher cognitive processes, take place in the prefrontal cortex, whereas emotional appraisal is primarily based in the amygdala, at the subcortical level.⁸⁰ In other words, emotions amount to a cognitive input following different neural paths.

⁸⁰ In emotional appraisal, the amygdala receives sensory information *directly* from the thalamus, without being first relayed through cortical systems (although it does also receive it, in an alternative path, from cortical sensory-processing areas) (LeDoux 1994d, 2007).

They are also a cognitive input of a different kind. Emotional appraisal is automatic and biologically pre-programmed (i.e. 'reflexive') while the higher cognitive processes are reflective (Loewenstein 2007: 406). In differentiating motivations and emotions, which are intimately linked to action, from reasons and interests, which are intimately linked to cognitive computation, Loewenstein points out: "The critical feature of reasons or interests is that they involve an extremely flexible, far-sighted weighting of costs and benefits. Emotions, as the evolutionary definition suggests, involve more rigid programming of specific responses to generic situations" (Loewenstein 2007: 406).

But while motivations mobilize resources for actions, emotions serve largely as 'commentators' to these, as evaluators of the situation (Bower 1994: 305). The role of emotions in reasoning and decision-making seems to be that of a 'regulator' for paths of action and decision-making. As *a transmission chain between motivation and reason* and vice versa (Petersen 2002: 20).

An important piece of knowledge about the significance of this input is that the connections from the amygdala to the cortex are *considerably stronger* than the ones from the cortex to the amygdala (LeDoux 1994d; Brockman 1997). That is, the pathways from emotion to cognitive systems are more consolidated than the other way around. This is actually consistent with the phenomenological observation that emotions are hard to (consciously) control or appease once in place (LeDoux n.d.; Ledoux in Brockman 1997).⁸¹

Emotions are typically the product of cognition rather than the other way around. They can be the product of *learned* stimuli shaped through life experiences, as well as through cultural and

⁸¹ "The evolution of the brain is at a point where we do not have the connectivity that would be necessary for cognitive systems to more efficiently *control our emotions*. But it is not clear to me that that would necessarily be a good thing, because Mr. Spock is not necessarily an ideal kind of human that we would like to become." (Ledoux in Brockman 1997).

social frameworks.⁸² And the very stimulus triggering an emotion can be purely cognitive (e.g. an idea, a memory) (Lang and Bradley: 55). However, cognition is likely to be most important in initiating emotions than in modulating them, given those asymmetries in the connections between the subcortical systems mediating the emotion process and the cortex.

Furthermore, emotions also produce important cognitive outputs (Petersen 2002: 21). To begin with, emotion itself is *informing* the individual of an emotionally relevant issue (Oatley 2000; Shweder 1994). An event that becomes emotionally marked (i.e. cue) can recurrently evoke the emotion, thus enhancing the likelihood of ‘learning’ and incorporating the appraisal value. For instance: that a given actor or behaviour is threatening; or that having a specific person close by is comforting; or that a given idea or ideology is conducive to injustice.

Moreover, once an emotion takes hold of consciousness “it is difficult to direct awareness to less pressing matters or to future events, regardless of how pressing the future events are expected to be” (LeDoux 1994f: 393-394). The emotional item captures priority of processing in working memory “at the expense of peripheral details not perceived as relevant” (Bower 1994: 304). In other words, “emotions soak up processing resources” (*Ibid.*). This influence on attention focus is a major influence of emotion on the perception and cognitive processing of the situation and on (conscious) memory storage (Simon 1983: 21; Damasio 1994; Muramatsu and Hanoch 2004; Petersen 2002).

On top of it all, the emotional paths for memory imprint have preferential processing over cognitive paths for both storage and retrieval, which means that emotionally marked memories are more likely to be stored and retrieved (LeDoux 1996, n.d.; Keyes and Kane 2004).⁸³ If we add up the effect of selective attention to

⁸² See e.g. Ellsworth (1994), Frijda (1994b), LeDoux (1994c), Panksepp (1994c), Scherer (1994b), Elster (1999b), Cain and LeDoux (2008), Lang and Bradley (2008).

⁸³ “The advantage appears not only in laboratory experiments that manipulate the emotional quality of material but *even more strongly in*

those of selective memory and preferential retrieval, it becomes obvious that emotional appraisal has not only a potential for marking some events (cues) as relevant but also to strengthen the cognitive resources (perception and memory) that sustain such appraisal.

The effects of emotions on attention and memory storage and retrieval are likely to have an *indirect* consequence: the adjustment of the individual's beliefs (Petersen 2002).⁸⁴ Beliefs are sources of emotions (i.e. bases for appraisal) and the possibility of emotions directly influencing beliefs is controversial and discarded by many as an instance of pure irrationality (Elster 1985, 1999a, 1999b; de Sousa 1987; Petersen 2002). But in any case, beliefs and emotions are likely to be highly correlated and they are also likely to change in parallel.

Identifying and observing specific emotions

At the biological level, there is abundant evidence in neurobiology suggesting the existence of specific and differentiated emotional systems in the brain⁸⁵ and that the number of these particular systems is likely to be rather small (Gray 1994: 244). Evolutionary arguments state that *different* emotional mechanisms evolved to meet *different* adaptation and survival goals.⁸⁶ And animal studies suggest that different circuits exist for

studies of autobiographical memory. When people record and rate the emotional intensity of events in a daily diary, their later recall of an event is greater the more emotionally intense it had been rated originally” (Bower 1994: 304; see also Keyes and Kane 2004; emphasis added).

⁸⁴ There is some empirical evidence for such instances. Depression, for instance, is empirically linked to a realistic adjustment of beliefs, what is known as the ‘sadder but wiser’ hypothesis.

⁸⁵ See e.g. Damasio (1994), Gray (1994), Panksepp (1994b, 1994c), LeDoux (1996), Cain and LeDoux (2008), Panksepp and Moskal (2008).

⁸⁶ For instance, “[detecting] and responding to danger requires different kinds of sensory and cognitive processes, [...] motor outputs, [...] feedback networks, and so on, than finding a mate or finding food”

distinct survival and related functions, such as predatory defense, sexual reproduction, nutrition, attachment and affiliation (LeDoux 2007: 397).

But disagreement persists as to the delimitation and characterization of these systems (Gray 1994; Scherer 2005; LeDoux 2007). The approach gathering the largest consensus in the search for discrete emotions is the one turning towards the appraisal pattern of the stimulus (Frijda 1994b; Ellsworth 1994; Scherer 1994b; Lerner and Keltner 2001; Blanco 2008). These are patterns of “context features that are relevant for designing coping actions, *as perceived by the subject* on the basis of actual cues or expectations” (Frijda 1994b: 160; emphasis added).

In simpler words, the nature of the challenge posed to the individual by the stimulus, as perceived by the individual, is the main foundation to track down specific emotions, posing a strong expected link between stimulus/appraisal and emotions. This is a strong assumption, since it has been widely observed that “the same situation does not necessarily provoke the same emotional expression nor the use of the same label in two individuals (or even in the same individual on two different occasions)” (Scherer 1994: 27).

The assumption cannot then be one of “standardized, invariant overall patterns for a few basic or fundamental emotions” but rather an assumption that certain patterns of emotional response occur “more frequently than others in response to certain types of structurally equivalent (in terms of underlying appraisal) situations” (Scherer 1994: 27). Thus, there is no expectation of universality in antecedents but rather of a *propensity* to respond emotionally, and with a particular emotion, to them.⁸⁷ This propensity is based on the argument that emotions reflect patterns

(Ledoux in Brockman 1997). See also Levenson (1994), Watson and Clark (1994), Cosmides and Tooby (2000), Loewenstein (2007).

⁸⁷ Propensity can be “readily overridden [for instance] by incompatible emotions (such as anger being easily overridden by fear of retaliation or of loss of love), or by cultural taboos. This does not render the propensity any less universal” (Frijda 1994b: 156).

of reaction that have been “perfected through evolutionary experience of the species [and which] are expressed *largely* the same from individual to individual within a species” (LeDoux 1994c: 269-270). These premises serve as foundations for the specific models of the specific emotions considered here, which I will discuss below.

What stimuli are evaluated as relevant, thus eliciting the emotion, and on what bases, are still open questions (Panksepp 1994c: 397), since we still remain ignorant about the “central affective states that code intrinsic [...] values” and without which “there can be no appropriate guidance of behaviour” (Panksepp 1994c: 397).⁸⁸ The main proposal across the various disciplines and perspectives on emotions is that they evolved as adaptive mechanisms helping in meeting goals *important for adaptation and survival*, like finding food and mates or self-defending against danger.⁸⁹ Thus, emotions amount to biologically evolved mechanisms and thus to primarily universal phenomena.

However, cultural and social learning shape the way that such biological processes have an incidence and the way they are translated into conscious awareness (LeDoux 1994c; Panksepp 1994c). Also the relevance of the *specific stimuli* is in many cases learned (Cain and LeDoux 2008: 18; Panksepp 1994c: 397), which also opens the door to important variation across social and cultural contexts.⁹⁰ But it is precisely in the translation from

⁸⁸ The point being made here refers to a wide array of close neighbours: preferences, tastes, attitudes, motives, wants, desires, cravings, even simply sensations, as much as to emotions (Sabini and Silver 2005; Scherer 2005).

⁸⁹ Emotional systems would share this origin with motivational systems involving bodily needs (e.g. hunger, thirst, cold). However their neuronal principles seem to be different, with bodily needs governed by the status of the pertinent homeostatic regulators (Panksepp 1994c: 398-399).

⁹⁰ Anthropologists and psychologists have profusely documented the existence of cultural variations in the notion and use of ‘emotion’ in different cultures (Shweder 1994; Leavitt 1996); differences in the

biological mechanisms to context-specific emotional manifestations where the *regularities* (rather than *universals*) can be found.

Since appraisal occurs at the confluence of a given environment and the goals and beliefs of the individual, appraisal (and emotions) can be tracked down from the most abstract level of this confluence to the most specific one (Averill 1994a; Ellsworth 1994). At the most abstract level we find 'core themes' (conditions present in the environment related to personal goals, beliefs, and adaptive resources) such as harm, threat, gratification, injustice (Lazarus 1991; Ellsworth 1994). At this level, a considerable generality is expected to exist and some evidence exists for it (Scherer *et al.* 1988; Scherer 1994a, 1994b).

Then we find those emotion-arousing 'themes' as distinguished and labelled within a given culture. Scherer *et al.* (1988) conclude from their empirical research on cross-cultural emotion antecedents that "[one] could assume that some basic eliciting themes are very similar, especially for simple emotions like disgust, anger, sadness, and fear. As soon as norms, values, and cultural practices become important, especially for complex emotions such as shame and guilt, the eliciting situations and their meaning become vastly more complicated and culture will obviously play a much bigger role with respect to the nature of the eliciting situations." (Scherer 1994b: 175).

These findings and insights provide some foundations for dealing with the issue of cultural variability in this project. On the one hand, they allow assuming certain 'universality' of emotions as biologically hard-wired mechanisms and thus a certain likelihood that emotions will find some form of manifestation in most societies and individuals (Frijda 1994b: 156). Secondly, they mark the need to pay attention to cultural differences likely to condition emotional appraisal and thus the incidence of specific

emotions repertoire and their verbal labelling (Ekman 1994c; Shweder 1994); and differences in antecedents and behavioural correlates (Scherer *et al.* 1988; Scherer 1994a, 1994b).

emotions. But they also suggest that, when looking at decision problems involving basic concerns ('basic themes' or 'basic emotions') the assumption made about the presence and role of certain emotion is less strong. Sensibility to context-specific elements is also fundamental for characterizing coping actions and behavioural correlates as filtered by cultural values and beliefs, context or structural conditionings and individual's resources.

In the case of study here, Bosnia, it has been assumed that (1) emotions are in place and are likely to have a significant presence; (2) the Western concept of emotion and the findings on particular ones in (Western) mainstream emotion research broadly apply. On the other hand, the salience of certain emotions and some peculiarities emerging from the particular social and historical context have also been documented through the literature on war, post-conflict and displacement in Bosnia and taken into consideration. Finally, the cultural adequacy and the adjustment to local realities of the definitions and instruments of research employed were carefully scrutinized in the initial phase of the field work through various methods: observant participation and cultural immersion, intensive consultation with locals, cross-translation of the questionnaire, and training of interpreters and, finally, pilot interviews. All these will be commented in more detail in Chapter 3 and its Annex 3.1.

2.5.2. Dealing with the empirical challenge of emotions

Any attempt to rigorously contemplate the role of emotions in human behaviour needs to assume that there is a certain systematic component in them, capable of relaying certain regularities within and across individuals. As for any other social and psychological reality, much random and non-random noise interacts with this systematic component, raising complex variations at various levels. This is most salient in the case of emotions, where psychologists have thoroughly documented that, even within one

same culture, there is much variation in the way individuals or one same individual can respond to a similar event.

However, the empirical evidence on emotions shows that there are bases to consider that such systematic component exists: certain appraisal patterns are expected to produce given emotional reactions more often than not, based on biologically rooted mechanisms; affective phenomena beyond the proper occurrence of emotions (emotional episodes, moods, sentiments, personality traits, affective disorders) are likely to produce regularities in that occurrence; and these regularities seem to be further tightened together by their correlations with beliefs and memories.

For an emotion to be relevant in the decision to return, which is a decision unlikely to be taken in one single moment of arousal, the emotion needs to be a durable or recurrent one.⁹¹ Such durable emotions are likely to give rise or to be the product of affective phenomena other than occurrent emotions, such as emotion episodes, moods, sentiments or personality traits. Recurrence of emotions can be expected also from the emotional imprint left in memories and beliefs and from the evocation or meeting of the stimulus/appraisal pattern. And if recurrence of an emotion is/has been in place, it is likely that it will be observed in various ways and moments, as indicated above.

For the observation of emotions (which gets furthermore compounded in the case of past emotions) I resort to a combination of instruments including both direct and indirect measures.⁹² Firstly, I rely on *self-report measures*, which are generally considered to be a valid technique to measure (past) emotions (Larsen and Fredrickson 1999; Robinson and Clore 2002; Ryff and Singer 2003; Takahashi *et al.* 2004; Miettinen and Suetens 2008). Psychological studies have actually found

⁹¹ This characteristic of the decision problem at hand poses one important difference with Petersen's work, whose decision of interest is participation in ethnic violence. Thus, he considers, for instance, the role of rage as a momentary drive to lash out (Petersen 2002).

⁹² I discard observable correlates of emotions because, besides problems of reliability, they cannot be observed for past emotions.

individuals capable of identifying and recalling past emotions, characterizing them and relying detailed information about the eliciting situation (Shaver *et al.* 1987; Johnson-Laird and Oatley 1989; Scherer 1994b, 2005).⁹³

These self-reports reflect nevertheless reconstructions rather than the actual experience of the emotion (Ellsworth and Scherer 2003: 587). Another important drawback of self-report is that it may encounter individual (and cultural) variation in the way different emotional labels are used and understood, and in the extent to which individuals are willing or capable to express and define their emotional experiences. It is convenient then to use also other alternative measures.

I also resort to *appraisal patterns* emerging from narrative accounts. There is wide consensus in the literature that appraisal patterns are the closest predictor for the propensity to experience an emotion. These appraisal patterns are likely to emerge from the narrative account of an emotional event and its context features. Obviously, these accounts amount also to reconstructions of past experiences. However, the preferential storage and retrieval of emotional memories (and the phenomenon of congruent retrieval) makes it likely that those reconstructions emphasize precisely those aspects more emotionally relevant and salient. Those accounts can also be supplemented with objective indicators which help to contextualize the stimuli within the individual's reality, thus identifying *likely* appraisal patterns.

Thirdly, I resort to indirect measures based on individuals' *beliefs*, based on the empirical evidence suggesting a two-way-determined correlation between emotions and beliefs. None of these three types of measures are perfect measures at all, especially of past emotions, given the likely interaction with emotions, beliefs and memories that the individual may have

⁹³ This is not surprising since events emotionally marked are, firstly, preferentially stored and easily retrieved, and secondly, more likely to be retrieved when related memories or similar emotions take grasp of the individual (e.g. possibly when queried about the events producing it).

experienced in the intermediate period up to the interview. The use of qualitative research techniques and ethnographic approaches is of enormous advantage and importance for qualifying this kind of measurements, maximizing their reliability and minimizing the error margin. The use of these techniques will be discussed in detail in Chapter 3 and its Annex 3.1.

Finally, in order to upkeep the principles of rigour, parsimony and falsifiability, it is important to establish clear *a priori* criteria for the selection of relevant emotions for the decision under research. Firstly, there must be some robustness in the relationship between relevant circumstances in the decision-problem and the proposed emotions, which would allow expecting that the emotion is salient and widespread in the given context. This is crucial in improving the robustness of the emotions selected and of the model in general.

Two procedures are employed: on the one hand, scanning the presence and salience of specific emotions in the subject literature (i.e. conflict, post-conflict and refugee literature); and on the other hand, picking up those which have been identified in the emotions literature as the most robust for relevant stimuli/appraisal patterns. Such emotions have been identified to be basic emotions related to basic concerns with clear evolutionary roots, such as self-defence or finding and maintaining mates, and not so much with social regulations and concerns.

Secondly, an expected pattern of behaviour (or favoured courses of action) must be specified *a priori* for each emotion. A well-founded specification requires dealing with emotions for which such patterns have been well documented and considered robust. At the minimum, it should be possible to assume an approach or withdrawal tendency without making too strong an assumption. Again, the substantive literature on conflict, post-conflict and refugee literature can complement the evidence provided by the literature on emotions.

Thirdly, in order to increase the likelihood that the inclusion of a given emotion will expand the explanatory power of the model, it is necessary to consider emotions for which a strong action

tendency can be assumed overall, that is, emotions which are argued to be compelling and likely to be translated into some behavioural effect. Basic emotions related to basic concerns offer again the most reliable candidacy, especially if considering the possibility of a cross-cultural application of the model.

Summarizing, the basic requirement for meeting the empirical challenges posed by emotions is to deal with emotions that, besides being relevant for the decision-problem at hand, are also likely to be durable, compelling, and robust in relation to their trigger and to well-established behavioural correlates, and thus likely to have a salient role for a majority of individuals with a shared cultural background and facing a similar decision context. These are emotions which have a higher explanatory potential and sounder theoretical and empirical grounds.⁹⁴

2.5.3. Emotions and rational decision-making

The body of empirical knowledge on emotions outlined in the previous subsection provides us with invaluable insights for understanding the way emotions enter decision making and for incorporating them into a rational choice framework. A different and contrasting reference in this regard is the very salient and controversial contribution by economist Gary Becker (1976).

Becker stayed behind the conviction of the possibility of explaining all kinds of human behaviours through the economic approach, which defines human behaviour in terms of behaviour that maximizes utility over a set of stable preferences. He found himself then in the difficulty of explaining emotionally-driven behaviour without accounting for emotions, which, as discussed above, have a radically distinct essence from that of economic calculations (i.e. reflexive versus reflective).

⁹⁴ The present model and work can indeed be criticized and might even be invalidated in the future on the basis of the absence of some key emotion (to be identified as such).

Becker's solution to this gap is to take into consideration emotions as one more parameter in the cost-benefit analysis, thus subsuming them into the regular structure of economic decision making. Under this view emotions constitute a cost or a benefit by themselves, providing effective reasons to act. This view misses two fundamental points about the nature of emotions and about the role they play in decision-making.

First of all, by considering emotions as ends on their own, this approach shifts the focus away from the context of events and choices in which emotions take place and which is the actual object of interest of any decision model.⁹⁵ Considering fear, for instance, as the thing we flee from is taking the effect as the cause, the messenger as the sender. The literature on emotions reviewed in the previous section, actually differentiates between emotions and motivations, considering the former regulators of the confluence between motivations and action, as signals *guiding* the behaviour rather than *provoking* it (Bower 1994; Scherer 2005). Emotions are more of an intervening than a motivating factor *per se*.

Second, conceptualizing emotions as mere costs and benefits overlooks the fact that the nature and functioning of emotions have nothing to do with any trade-off or calculative logic. As it has been discussed, the defining nature of emotions is that they are non-reflective and non-purposive. I would slightly refine this view by further posing that emotions are non-calculative, in the sense that they establish no relationships of comparison. Unlike preferences, which are relative (e.g. they are ordinal in character

⁹⁵ For instance, if an unpleasant emotion arises due to some external stimulus (and by definition the individual dislikes such an emotion), it can be argued that the individual is compelled to act in order to *stop or decrease that emotion*, or that she is compelled to act in order to *change the external situation that raises that emotion*. There is no way to disentangle both in many cases, but the latter leads us directly to the important thing to us (when dealing with emotions in the context of decision problems): the reason why the individual feels in such unpleasant manner, and the action tendency that it elicits.

and produce indifference curves and marginal utilities), emotions are *absolute* measures: *something matters*, regardless of any other consideration. Naturally, when emotions occur in an individual with ordered preferences, the absolutist emotion does not happen in a vacuum, so in effective terms it is establishing that something matters *and not other things*.⁹⁶

Besides the fact that emotions do not seem to follow the logic of ordered preferences, emotions are also unbidden occurrences that register important variation *within* individuals. In rational choice theory, individuals are assumed to have multiple motivations among which some complex trade-off occurs that produces a *stable order of preferences*. Those preferences are assumed to be *complete and transitive*, that is, they are assumed to encompass all possible outcomes and decisions, so that the individual is always able to rank her preferred outcomes and, in turn, to establish the action choice which maximizes her expected utility. Emotions pose then the challenge of being somehow 'reconciled' with the assumption of a stable order of preferences and its maximization process.

Following the empirical evidence outlined in the previous section, emotions are a distinct input into the decision framework that somehow alters the basic pattern of decision traditionally considered in the economic approach, and that needs to be taken into consideration as such.⁹⁷ I propose here a stylized

⁹⁶ As an absolute, and then absolutist concern, it demands the individual's attention and resources (information, action) in addressing certain task or goal, and it even monopolizes her memories. When the emotion is acute and all-consuming (see e.g. Petersen 2002; Elster 1999b), it takes the individual's absolute attention, most of her resources and most of her brain records. And even when the emotion is not that acute and its command is ignored to some extent, it still remains there, 'bothering' the individual to demand her attention, until it is not 'totally' served (or more accurately, until the emotion disappears).

⁹⁷ An important body of literature actually considers emotions as a causal force shaping the individual's assessment of her alternatives, altering the normal process of rational calculation by affecting its

characterization of the nature and role of this input, based on the empirical evidence described above, which furthermore does not enter into conflict with the assumption of a stable order of preferences. This characterization basically consists of two assumptions:

1) *Emotions are considered an exogenous input that the individual receives as a given with the decision structure.* Emotions are triggered by some (external)⁹⁸ stimulus and the individual receives it as a given of the decision structure, in the same way that she receives cognitive information inputs. This view is congruent with the characterization of emotions as unbidden occurrences non liable to the individual's control, and it is close to phenomenological insights on emotions: "we often experience emotions as happening to us, not as chosen by us" (Ekman 1994: 17; see also Elster 1999b: 29).

2) *Emotions are internal signals rendering information.* The signal itself consists of the constellation of factors identified as constituting (occurrent) emotions. When one of these internal signals arises, the individual is receiving an *informational input about the situation* and her stakes on it (Frijda 1994a: 64).⁹⁹ The

different components (Elster 1984, 1985, 1999a, 1999b; de Sousa 1987, 2007; Petersen 2002; Hanoch 2003). This view fully reflects the empirical evidence on emotions which has just been reviewed. But it remains poorly stylized and problematic for accommodation within rational choice frameworks.

⁹⁸ This is a convenient simplification. As already seen, emotions may be triggered by internal stimuli. Such stimuli are though difficult to observe and widely heterogeneous. I will be focusing then on emotions triggered by external stimuli.

⁹⁹ The consideration of emotions as informative devices is not new. Some of the most significant approaches to emotions treat them as such: Frank's account of emotions as *observable* signals delivering valuable information *for other* actors (Frank 1988) or, closer to what I propose, Damasio's treatment of emotions as cognitive (internal) signals *about*

signal informs that some particular concern is salient and relevant in that specific context.

As it has been discussed above, neurobiologists blur the division line between purely cognitive information and emotionally relayed information, posing that the only difference lies in the neural systems providing those inputs; in a very simplified manner, the difference lies in whether those inputs have been mediated by the amygdala or not (LeDoux 1994f: 395).

Let us take for instance the situation where a security dilemma arises, as described in De Figueiredo and Weingast (1999). Before the dilemma arises, citizens have many different and particular priorities. When the circumstances change in the direction of a security dilemma, security is likely to become (rationally) a paramount concern, based on external events of which the individual is aware and on which she receives information. In this case, fear is also likely to arise, confirming the non-emotionally relayed information that the individual is receiving (and that actually provokes the fear itself).

The situation is so evaluated (based on the individual's ordered preferences) in light of purely cognitive information about the context, episodic and semantic memories, *and* emotional signals (LeDoux 2007: 402). Decision-making is subject to a different structure of decision that includes an added informative and exogenous input. The individual can ignore the information provided by an emotion, in the same way that she might ignore other cognitive information that she might consider non-reliable or non-relevant.

The degree to which emotional information is compelling (to which I will refer as 'intensity' of the emotion) can be expressed similarly to the parameters of a lottery, in which the parameter α

future consequences (1994). Another example is Hanoch's (2003) conceptualization of emotions as an information process system which provides a search rule, a stop rule and a decision rule (altering goal prioritization and the salience and timing of tasks).

sets the probability of following the emotion, and $(1 - \alpha)$ the probability of not following it. For instance, a parameter $\alpha = 1$ would mean that the individual will blindly follow the emotion, disregarding other considerations. The inverse parameters ($\alpha = 0$) would mean that no emotion is present or that the individual will not follow it in any case, following always purely cognitive-based considerations. A parameter $\alpha = 0.5$ and a corresponding one of $(1 - \alpha) = 0.5$ would mean that the individual is neither prone to follow the emotion or to ignore it. Table 2.4 displays all the possible cases.

Table 2.4. An operationalization of the 'compellingness' of emotions

Emotional information		Cognitive information	
$\alpha = 1$	The individual will blindly follow the emotion...	$1 - \alpha = 0$... disregarding other considerations
$0 < \alpha < 1$	Room left for the individual to follow the emotion...	$0 < (1 - \alpha) < 1$..or/and other considerations
$\alpha = 0$	a) There is no emotion present... b) The individual will not follow it...	$1 - \alpha = 1$... so she will follow other considerations

Most cases are expected to be in the central row of Table 2.4. Cases in the upper row are cases of extreme emotions. And cases in the lower row, in which the specified emotion is not present or in which it has no behavioural impact, are expected to be reduced to the minimum based on the criteria followed here to select compelling emotions which are robustly linked to the given decision structure.

The central row is basically the equivalent to a mixed strategy, where the parameters can be considered either as weights or as probabilities. The parameters can then be interpreted as the likelihood with which the individual will endorse the information provided by that occurrent emotion when it arises. But, since we

are dealing with a decision unlikely to be taken in one single shot, and rather likely to be the product of repeated and sustained reflection, the parameter can be interpreted in turn as the proportion of instances in which that emotion is endorsed along the process, and then as the weight of that emotion in the decision.

This allows for the more realistic interpretation that both absolute concerns (raised by emotions) and broader considerations (which stay stable all along the process) have a role in the decision, breaking with the dichotomist pattern bluntly separating between emotional-dominated decision making and cold rationality. It also allows tackling with the issue of internal variation within individuals, provided that the attributed parameter amounts to a measure of central tendency (which is robust and unbiased) of the individual's propensity to experience and to follow a given emotion (under the considered circumstances and decision-making problem).

This operationalization also provides a better ground for the simplifying assumption of certain homogeneity and regularity across individuals. Firstly, still different individuals may display different parameters. But most importantly for the assumption made here (namely, that a given emotion adds explanatory power for a given decision problem) the parameters at the aggregate can be interpreted as a measure of the likelihood that a given emotion will have a salient role in a given context and decision problem at the overall level.

The survival-utilitarian model presented in section 2.4 can then be expanded to take into account this emotionally delivered information. A decision to return can be expected when the weighted sum of the decision predicted by the survival-utilitarian model (albeit subject to the cognitive consequences of emotional processes) and the decision predicted by emotional concerns points in that direction. This is equivalent to a comparison of the weighted sum of the expected utility of return (no return) and the 'compellingness' and direction of the relevant emotional concerns, which can be expressed in the following manner:

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$$EU'E(\text{ret}) = (1-\alpha)[y_i | \text{SEC}', EU(\text{ret})'] + \alpha*(\text{emo concerns}_{\text{ret}}) \quad \text{eq.19}$$

$$EU'E(\text{stay}) = (1-\alpha)[y_i | U(\text{stay})'] + \alpha*(\text{emo concerns}_{\text{stay}}) \quad \text{eq.20}$$

EU'E stands for a weighted combination of conventional expected utility (EU) and emotionally-based considerations (E). And SEC', EU(ret)' and U(stay)' stand for the components of the survival-utilitarian model albeit subject to the relevant cognitive outputs from emotional processes. A decision to return can be expected when eq.19 > eq.20.

The parameter α denotes overall emotional information *vis-à-vis* conventional calculations based on cognitive information. The parameter can be in turn decomposed into the specific pieces of information delivered by each particular emotion and concern:

$$\alpha = \alpha_{\text{emo1}} + \alpha_{\text{emo2}} + \dots + \alpha_{\text{emok}}$$
$$\alpha(\text{emo concerns}) = \alpha_{\text{emo1}}(\cdot) + \alpha_{\text{emo2}}(\cdot) + \dots + \alpha_{\text{emok}}(\cdot)$$

2.5.4. The emotions of return: fear, love and anger

The consideration of specific emotions for any particular decision-making model should meet three fundamental criteria, discussed above. First, there must be some robustness in the relationship between relevant circumstances in the decision-problem and the proposed emotions. Second, a clear and well-documented pattern of behaviour must be specified *a priori* for each emotion considered. And third, it is necessary that a strong action tendency (i.e. 'compellingness') can be assumed for each emotion. Thus, besides being relevant for the decision-problem at hand, the considered emotions should be basic emotions likely to be durable, compelling, and robust in relation to their trigger and in relation to well-established behavioural correlates, and thus likely to have a salient role for a majority of individuals with a shared cultural background and facing a similar decision context.

The starting point for finding these emotions is the literature on violent conflict and displacement. Out of the four motivations identified in section 2.2 as robustly appearing in the literature,

three seem to be clearly connected with particular emotions: security concerns with *fear*, which is likely to underpin the mechanics of the security threshold; the drive for home with sentiments of *love* (i.e. affective ties), which are likely to intertwine with the psychological processes of attachment and identity; and the drive for restoration with *anger*, which is the emotion likely to emerge with the perception of injustices, calling for corrective action.¹⁰⁰

An expanded review of the literature suggests the likely presence of emotions such as rage or envy¹⁰¹ which do not seem to be relevant or salient for the decision to return. Others do not have a clear and robust behavioural link with the decision structure. Sadness, for instance focuses the individual attention on some loss or helpless situation, so it can inhibit action (and return) by soaking up cognitive resources and by reinforcing helplessness beliefs (Keltner, Ellsworth, and Edwards 1993), as in the ‘sadder-but-wiser’ hypothesis. But it might also call for action (and return) if marking the motivation to undo or correct the loss and the situation (Kagee and Garcia del Soto 2003). In both cases, sadness, as well as pain, sorrow or grief, is likely to connect with affective ties and love, and in the latter case also with other relevant emotions such as anger.

Shame and guilt could be important factors for either returning or staying in displacement, depending on individual cases and

¹⁰⁰ I have also suggested that the fourth motivation, namely economic calculations, may be also importantly mediated by affective ties, at least underpinning a shift from self-interest to more altruistic preferences.

¹⁰¹ Rage, as considered by Petersen (2002), is connected to frustration as a trigger (which directly connects it to anger) but only to aggression as a behavioural correlate, which is relevant for explanations of violence, but not of return. The same goes for envy, connected to the destruction of the envied good or to undoing the relative advantage or relation which is envied (Parrott and Smith 1993). Although this might have some implications for the decision to return in some cases, such connection is too indirect and mediated by other factors.

contextual situations. These social emotions are complex though in their relationship to possible antecedents and behavioural correlates,¹⁰² and they register, as discussed above, wider cultural, contextual and individual variability. From the expanded list we are finally left with hatred and disgust, which have an aversive component (Ekman 1994a; Fessler *et al.* 2004; Fox and Reeb 2008) that might weight in the decision not to return.

I will now discuss whether the candidate emotions (fear, love, anger and hatred) are likely to add significantly explanatory power without posing too much strain to the theoretical and empirical leverage of the model. I will also detail the way in which each of the candidate emotions are expected to have a role in the decision of return, allowing in turn the derivation of some observable implications.

*** *Fear***

Fear is the only emotion which is present in all lists of basic emotions (to the best of my knowledge) and which is not questioned or contested as such. It is also the one which has produced the most and best established empirical evidence, partly due to the fact that fear “is a relatively tractable emotion, [as it involves] *clearly defined stimuli and responses*” (Ledoux in Brockman 1997; emphasis added).

Considering emotions as evolved mechanisms for adaptation and *survival*, it is obvious that fear, as a mechanism for detecting and avoiding threats, is bound to be the most salient and primary

¹⁰² Antecedents of shame and guilt (and their behavioural correlates) actually multiply in these contexts: shame of being a refugee (due to losses in social status and increased dependency), shame of having ‘failed’ to stay and self-defend, guilt for not returning (in cases where groups are targeted particularly), guilt for war events (at the personal or at the group level), shame for other misbehaviours during or after war. A most salient presence is also that of the ‘survivor guilt’. On the complexity of these emotions in contexts of violence and on their multiple antecedents see for instance Lira and Becker (1989).

among these. Fear is actually deeply-ingrained in the human brain¹⁰³ by means of two alternative paths (LeDoux 1996), one of which is automatic and extremely compelling, as commanded by the amygdala.

In contexts of extreme threat, this type of acute fear is likely to emerge, provoking automatic behavioural answers: fleeing, fighting or freezing (Elster 1999b: 28). The second path of fear is initiated by the neocortex, involving a reflective component. Still, the amygdala is involved in the process (Ledoux in Brockman 1997) and it will keep the individual, at the minimum, alert and focused on the evaluation of the threat. If the threat (or cues of the threat) is sustained, pervasive or recurrent, then the emotion is likely to become frequently aroused and to have an important weight in individuals' decisions.

This second path is the most relevant for the decision to return as delineated at the beginning of this chapter. Freezing and fleeing reactions are equivalent in this decision structure to an avoidance of the source of the threat, i.e. not returning. The fighting reaction, intended to self-defend from the threat when it cannot be avoided, would not neatly apply for this specific decision.

Fear would then be expected to enter decision making through a parameter α_{fear} proxying its 'compellingness'. The concern that fear signals as paramount is avoiding possible threats ('*threat*'). Whereas the parameter α determines the extent to which such concern *weighs* in the individual's decision, the concern itself takes an absolute value of either 1 or 0, indicating whether it does apply or not in the case of the individual.

¹⁰³ The fear system permeates human decision-making and wellbeing to a larger extent than any other emotion or psychological condition: "Many of the most common psychiatric disorders that afflict humans are emotional disorders, and many of these are related to brain's fear system... about 50% of mental problems reported in the U.S. (other than those related to substance abuse) are accounted for by the anxiety disorders, including phobias, panic attacks, post-traumatic stress disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder, and generalized anxiety" (LeDoux n.d.).

In the case of fear, the parameter will be the same when considering the options to return and to not return. But the concern varies. I will assume that the concern to avoid possible threats does not apply for the non-return option (given that it has been assumed that the location of displacement is safe) whereas it does always apply for return, where it will take a constant absolute value of 1. And since such concern has a purely pushing nature, it will have a negative value (-1).

$$\text{Fear component (ret)} = \alpha_{\text{fear}} (\text{threat})$$

Thus, the more compelling is the emotion of fear, the less likely is an individual to return. I also expect a direct relationship with the amount of threat which will be felt tolerable by the individual (i.e. security threshold), since compelling and recurrent fear is likely to be a main indicator or regulator of such value, in the absence of more appropriate baselines.¹⁰⁴

* *Love*

As already said, love goes frequently contested as an emotion, due to the confusion between love as a sentiment and love as an emotion (Frijda 1994a: 64). But, if paying attention to the emotion of love and to its embeddedness in love sentiments, from an evolutionary point of view such affective ties are recognized as paramount in meeting the most fundamental goals of reproduction and protection of the offspring (Bretherton 1992; Sabini and Silver 2005).

Survival of the genes is as important in evolutionary and adaptive accounts, or even more, than the immediate survival of the individual, and the development of altruistic behaviours better prepare groups and species to survive and develop (Brewer 1999).

¹⁰⁴ As already argued, utilitarian considerations do not properly capture the survival concern in-grained in the human brain, whereas fear is built out of it.

Love, in the loose sense used here, is actually the only emotional system that could compete with fear as the most defining and essential feature of the human emotional structure (Miró 2008).¹⁰⁵

The development of attachment theory (see Ainsworth 1969; Bowlby 1969) actually helped making apparent that both emotions, love and fear, are intimately connected in the human emotional structure through the basic utilities of *comfort and safety* (Oatley 2000). Attachment was defined by Bowlby and Ainsworth primarily in behavioural terms, as a pattern of relationship between a caregiver and a child.¹⁰⁶

The caregiver amounts to a *safe base* from which the child can explore the world. The *quality* (and thus the essence) of the attachment is given by the extent to which it provides comfort and safety to the child as she develops her relation to the outer world. Faulty patterns of relationship (i.e. faulty attachments) will deprive the child of such comfort and safety, making her insecure in her relationship with the outer unfamiliar world.

Although the theory does not directly deal with the emotion of love, it is reasonable to assume that sentiments of love, and hence the emotion of love, have an important role in ties of attachment (Shaver *et al.* 1996: 86-8; Oatley 2000: 416). Bowlby was actually

¹⁰⁵ “Many of the most intense emotions arise during the formation, the maintenance, the disruption, and the renewal of attachment relationships... [Hence] the psychology and psychopathology of emotion is found to be in large part the psychology and psychopathology of affectional bonds” (Bowlby 1979: 69; quoted in Shaver, Morgan, and Wu 1996: 92).

¹⁰⁶ Although the theory focuses in describing the development of attachment between caregivers (usually the mother) and infants, it has important (although not deterministic) implications for the development of attachment in adulthood (Bretherton 1992: 12-3). And posterior studies have made use of the theory for explaining attachments of different types, at different stages of life, and with different objects (*Ibid.*: 16, 27-9). Building on this, and in order to simplify as much as possible, I rely on the original theory albeit with a more encompassing perspective.

very explicit in emphasizing that the bond between the mother and the child was not dependent on the satisfaction of needs, but that attachment “has its own motivation” (Bretherton 1992: 20) and that “to have a deep attachment for a person (or a place or thing) is to have taken them as the terminating object of our instinctual responses” (Bowlby 1959 quoted in Bretherton 1992: 11).

Thus, “[p]roximity and *affectionate* interchange are appraised and felt as pleasurable [...] whereas distance and expressions of rejection are appraised as disagreeable or painful” (Bowlby 1969: 242; emphasis added). In other words, it is affection what provides the comfort and safety involved in attachment relationships. Supportive of this view is the evidence produced in the classic experiment by Harry Harlow, an experiment which was explicitly motivated by Bowlby’s proposition.¹⁰⁷ Harlow insisted in referring to the documented bond as ‘love’ rather than simply ‘attachment’ and he entitled his reporting article as ‘The Nature of Love’ (1958).

The concept of safe base and the comfort it provides are powerfully connected to the concept of home which was described in section 2.2. The link of home was described there as composed of three basic processes: familiarity, attachment and identity. These processes tie to the object of home, or better now, to the

¹⁰⁷ Harlow observed young monkeys which were separated from their mothers and which were provided with artificial surrogate mothers. One surrogate mother was made of wire and another one of (comfortable and warm) terrycloth. The result was that the young monkeys clung to the ‘cloth mother’, *even when* it was the ‘wire mother’ the one providing them with milk. Also, when a frightening stimulus was produced, the monkeys would run to the ‘cloth mother’ for protection and comfort, regardless of which one provided them with food. And when placed in an unfamiliar room, they would cling to the ‘cloth mother’ until they felt secure to explore, returning to the mother occasionally for comfort. If placed in such situation without a surrogate mother, *or with the ‘wire mother’* instead, they froze in fear and crouched down, or they run crying and screaming from object to object, arguably in search of the cloth mother.

object of love or safe base. Familiarity is important for adaptation and survival, and it gives the *comfort* of what is known, which eliminates uncertainties and the necessity of trial-error or other exploratory methods. But the tie to the safe base is particularly given by the comfort and safety that the object provides to the individual *per se*, as a loved object, as an object evoking the emotion of love.

This schema sheds an important light into the issue of identity, since ties of attachment (behavioral and emotional) develop on the bases of what is familiar, comfortable and safe for the child (and what provokes the emotion of love) *vis-à-vis what is unknown and defined as the 'outer' (other) world* (Allport 1954; Brewer 1999). Thus, the 'inner circle' of an individual, the one she is likely to identify with, is largely given by such attachment processes (Brewer 1999: 432; Horowitz 1998: 17).

Furthermore, in the review of the literature on emotions it has been pointed that, although we do not know much yet about the intrinsic values encoded in individual preferences, the role of emotions as 'relevance detectors' is fundamental in pinpointing them. Most authors in the emotion literature nowadays are inclined to think that emotions have in this way a primary role in processes of self-consciousness, and hence in identity issues (Smith 1993; Averill 1994b; Damasio 1994; Panksepp 1994c: 397). In other words, emotional attachments are expected to be fundamental building blocks of the individual's identities.

Focusing back in attachment theory, the theory (and the large amount of evidence that validates it) helps delineating the concern that the emotion of love signals, namely the search of the comfort provided by the loved object and the love tie. The theory also depicts in detail its behavioural correlates: provision of care and proximity with the loved object. Although this scheme refers particularly to parental and filial love in the early stages of a child's life, it amounts to a plausible basic draft of the main correlates of affective ties in general: (mutual) care and proximity.

Care provision lies actually at the core of conceptions of family and households as socio-economic units in the broader

literature and as decision units in this particular analysis. The drive for proximity should be specifically addressed though. For that, I will consider not only the family unit, but also geographical place and friends. All of them are considered to provide some sort of 'home' link through familiarity, attachment and identity.

Love is then expected to enter the decision through a parameter α_{love1} marking a concern for proximity with family (*fam*); a parameter α_{love2} marking the same concern for friends (*friend*); and a third parameter α_{love3} marking such concern for a loved place (*place*). The concern for proximity with family and friends may point towards returning (1) if that would involve reuniting with them or towards not returning (-1) if that would mean separating from them; the same goes for the option whether to stay in displacement (1) or not (-1). If none of these consequences follow from the course of action considered the value would be 0.

For instance, if the individual has no family or if family members live in a third location with no relationship with the option to return or not. It is possible as well that a given course of action means at the same time reuniting with some family members or friends (1) and separating from others (-1). In this case, the negative and positive concern cancel out each other and the value would also be 0, denoting an emotionally conflicting situation.

Regarding love for the geographical place, I will assume that this concern always applies for both the option of return (1) due to the widespread assumption of the existence of such a link. Still, the parameter α_{love3} will determine the actual strength of the tie, which can importantly vary, and it will likely differ for the place of origin and the displacement location.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Love component (ret)} &= \alpha_{love1}(\text{fam}_{ret}) + \alpha_{love2}(\text{friend}_{ret}) + \alpha_{love3} \\ \text{Love component (stay)} &= \alpha_{love1}(\text{fam}_{stay}) + \alpha_{love2}(\text{friend}_{stay}) + \alpha_{love3} \end{aligned}$$

Thus, the more compelling is the concern for proximity with family and friends, the more likely is the individual to return if

family members and friends return; and the more likely is *not* to return if they rather stay in displacement. If family and friends are divided between return and displacement, no significant effect is expected even if concern for proximity is compelling.

The more compelling is the concern for proximity with the location of return, the more likely is the individual to return. If there is a competing similar concern for the location of displacement, no significant effect is expected. I furthermore expect that love for family members will be more compelling than that for place and for friends, and that its impact on return is then likely to be larger:

$$\alpha_{\text{love1}} > \alpha_{\text{love3}}, \alpha_{\text{love2}}$$

*** Anger**

Anger belongs to the core group of emotions most frequently considered as basic emotions (see Ortony and Turner 1990; Shaver *et al.* 1996). Its adaptive character and evolutionary roots also go unquestioned and unchallenged (see e.g. Frank 1988; Sabini and Silver 2005). Anger is the emotion that signals the need to correct a situation which breaks some normative parameter valuable for the individual and thus found irritating, frustrating or annoying (Gambetti and Giusberti 2009). This can occur at a very general level (moral outrage) or as more connected to the individual's situation, such as her or her group being subject to a treatment or situation considered unjust, inappropriate or outrageous.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁸ Social psychology on group identity and group conflict centrally revolves around the issue of group comparison (Tajfel 1971; Horowitz 1998; Brewer 1999; Petersen 2002; Eidelson and Eidelson 2003). Resentment usually arises when a given order or comparison is perceived as unjust or inappropriate (usually, a disadvantaged comparison for the individual and her group). Thus, anger and resentment are somehow connected to love ties (group ties in this case), and especially to the transit from in-group love to out-group hate (I will discuss this issue in more detail below).

Anger has an important automatic response, similar to fear, which makes it very compelling (Elster 1999b; Halperin *et al.* 2009) and all consuming (Gambetti and Giusberti 2009; see also Elster 1999b and Kalyvas 2006). However, the cognitive antecedents of anger are in many cases complex, as it was already pointed when discussing the drive for restoration in section 2.2, involving the consideration of different norms and cognitive processes of attribution (i.e. agency, causality, potential for change, adequacy of means). Thus, higher variability and less robustness are initially expected for this emotion. The specific behavioural correlates depend very much on the specific situation, but it is well-established that it involves an approach reaction intended to correct the situation provoking outrage (Fox and Reeb 2008; Halperin *et al.* 2009).

Anger is then expected to enter the decision through a parameter α_{rest1} marking a concern for correcting injustices at the individual level (*indiv*) and through a parameter α_{rest2} marking a concern for correcting injustices at the collective level (*group*). Anger will point towards return (1) if such course of action is considered to be an appropriate and valid way to address these goals, but it will point in the opposite direction (-1) if return is thought to be counterproductive. For the same reason, anger may point towards staying in displacement (1) if restoration and correction are deemed to be likely attainable in that way, or just the opposite (-1). If the individual does not perceive any injustice to be corrected then the value will be 0.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Anger component (ret)} &= \alpha_{ang1}(\text{indiv}_{ret}) + \alpha_{ang2}(\text{group}_{ret}) \\ \text{Anger component (stay)} &= \alpha_{ang1}(\text{indiv}_{stay}) + \alpha_{ang2}(\text{group}_{stay}) \end{aligned}$$

Thus, the more compelling is the concern for the correction of injustices, the more likely is the individual to return if that is perceived to be an effective means for its attainment; and the more likely is *not* to return if this is not the case, and if displacement is alternatively perceived as an effective means.

* *Hatred*

Hatred is rarely part of any list of basic emotions (see Ortony and Turner 1990; Shaver, Morgan, and Wu 1996). This is partly due to the fact that hatred, as love, is more commonly considered a sentiment than an occurrent emotion (Frijda 1994a: 64).¹⁰⁹ Hatred is then defined as a negative disposition of dislike (i.e. antipathy) towards a given object or kin, which has a sustained character. From an evolutionary perspective, hatred does not seem to be *central* in serving core adaptive goals, and although antipathies seem to be an important component of the sociality of the human being, in fact there is no empirical evidence that it is a necessary one (Horowitz 1998: 12).

For instance, whereas love is considered adaptive as a foundation for altruistic behaviours, it has been frequently presumed that hatred is adaptive in the sense of cementing the sense of belonging and group cohesion (Allport 1954: 42) and as a *necessary* flipside of in-group love. However, there is no necessary or even nearly universal relationship between in-group love and out-group hatred (*Ibid.*; Fiske 1998, 2004; Brewer 1999, 2001). This link tends to emerge nonetheless when the circumstances of group interaction provide fertile ground for conflict (Horowitz 1998: 14; Brewer 1999: 435). And when concern for loved objects, from persons to places, culture or identities, is combined with the perception of threat or injustice, in turn raising fear and anger (see e.g. Halperin *et al.* 2009: 95).

On these bases we could expect a prominent presence of hatred, but conditional to the presence and role of love, fear and anger. So, rather than as a primary emotion for return, hatred enters the decision as an extension of love concerns: if an individual is concerned about proximity and cares for loved

¹⁰⁹ As in the case of love, hate is also among the most frequently mentioned words when subjects are asked to name as many emotions as they can (Fehr and Russell, 1984, and Van Goozen & Frijda, 1992, quoted in Frijda 1994a; Shaver *et al.*, 1987, and Shaver *et al.*, 1992, quoted in Shaver, Morgan, and Wu 1996).

objects, she may be expected to be similarly concerned about attaining distance from or destruction of any objects that threaten or mistreat loved ones. Thus, hatred bears a withdrawal action tendency, leading to separation from the hated object (as an aversive emotion). But hatred also involves animosity (connected to anger), signalling a concern or preference for destroying or seeing destroyed the hated object (Halperin *et al.* 2009). This core concern is not expected though to play a central role in the decision to return.

Hatred can then be subsumed into the love component. This can be done by expanding the concern about geographical place to encompass both geographical place and the people contained in it other than family and friends, as possible objects of hatred. Under this consideration, the concern signalled by love may point either towards returning (or staying) if love dominates (1) or it may point towards not returning (or not staying) if hate or antipathy dominate (-1), that is, if the place is characterized predominantly as a hateful one. For the location of displacement the concern may also be 0.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Love/hatred (ret)} &= \alpha_{\text{love1}}(\text{fam}) + \alpha_{\text{love2}}(\text{friend}) + \alpha_{\text{love3}}(\text{place}) \\ \text{Love/hatred (stay)} &= \alpha_{\text{love1}}(\text{fam}) + \alpha_{\text{love2}}(\text{friend}) + \alpha_{\text{love3}'}(\text{place}) \end{aligned}$$

This means that, depending on the sign of the concern for the place of origin, the more compelling it is, the more (or less) likely is the individual to return. Parallel concerns for the location of displacement will cancel this effect out, whereas opposite ones will reinforce it. Having into account the proposed bases for the negative concern involved in geographical place, I expect such specific concern will be more compelling than the concern for friends' proximity:

$$\alpha_{\text{love1}} > \alpha_{\text{love3}} > \alpha_{\text{love2}}$$

In conclusion, the proposed components, namely fear, love/hatred and anger seem to offer sufficient empirical and

theoretical grounds to expect that they are robustly and consequentially included in the decision to return. The emotionally-signalled concerns which will be included in the extended survival-utilitarian model are then:

$$\alpha = \alpha_{\text{fear}} + \alpha_{\text{love1}} + \alpha_{\text{love2}} + \alpha_{\text{love3}} + \alpha_{\text{ang1}} + \alpha_{\text{ang2}}$$

CHAPTER 3. FIELD RESEARCH GUIDED BY THEORY AND SHAPED BY REALITIES

3.1. Research design

3.1.1. Empirical universe of study and empirical approach

The empirical research of this dissertation is focused on a context-case study, Bosnia-Herzegovina. It is important to note that, while focused on a particular case-study, this research is not a case-driven study, but rather a theory-driven one. Theory has preceded the selection and analysis of the case, rather than being developed inductively from the particular case. The fitting between the theory and the case increases the confidence in the adequacy of the model and in the possibility of applying it to other cases.

The search for regular patterns, especially when taking an individual's perspective, can find both insight and ground for testing in particular contexts (King, Keohane, and Verba 1994). Moreover, the particular goal of this dissertation, namely unveiling the micro level determinants of the decision to return, is facilitated by holding constant political and economic macro conditions that also affect in important manners the decision to return. Bounding the empirical domain is furthermore an acceptable trade-off given the lack of theorizing and systematic evidence in this subject area (Kalyvas 2006: 248). An informed context-based observation of the adequacy of the model is a convenient step at this stage of the research.

By focusing on a particular case-study the intent is also to bring this theory-driven effort closer to the particular realities of the terrain – that is, that both the data and the analysis become field-grounded and context-sensitive, which was discussed as an important step in Chapter 2. This dialogue is fruitful in a variety of manners. Grounded and contextualized understanding of the data permits not only to calibrate data limitations (e.g. biases and likely error measures) but also to reformulate the relevant levels and types of variation to be considered, the most adequate indicators, or even the framing of research questions (see e.g. Steele 2008).

But relying on a research design with one single case makes it particularly important to maximize the relevance of this case for tackling with the targeted puzzle and for unveiling the relevant micro foundations and dynamics. One critical previous step has been the categorisation of the universe of cases (discussed in Chapter 2). This categorisation has allowed making a justified choice of the case of study and singling out its particularities, laying the ground for comparison with other cases, and for delineating paths towards generalization.

The selected case of study is Bosnia-Herzegovina. Bosnia meets all the characteristics pointed out in Chapter 2 as making more intense the puzzle of return.¹ The case furthermore tackles with the thorny issue of ethnic conflict and ethnic identities, a most relevant type of conflict in itself given its empirical saliency and the debate about its peculiarities. The case also has the added interest of tackling with a source of the threat that has been much less researched in displacement studies, namely scattered sources of threat, as opposed to organised ones.

¹ The details of the case will be discussed at length in Chapter 4. In short (minority) returns in Bosnia face a scattered source of threat, which is associated with more resilient and hard-to-tackle uncertainty levels. And it is compounded by geographical dispersion and spatial proximity of the source of the threat. Second, (minority) return in Bosnia faces a group-targeted threat, which poses higher levels of risk and uncertainty. And it is compounded by the ascriptive (i.e. hard to conceal and hard to remove) nature of group boundaries.

At the methodological level, Bosnia displays significant internal variation at the local level regarding displacement and return patterns. At the time the field research began (2006), ten years had already passed since the end of the war, which is a reasonable time elapse for observing return outcomes and avoiding right-truncation problems – that is, there is reasonable ground for extracting significant insights. Finally, Bosnia stands out as one of the most monitored and well-documented cases of violent conflict and return, which facilitates the availability of data not only for building and supporting the empirical research, but also for contrasting it.

Bosnia-Herzegovina contains enormous internal variation in a myriad of dimensions possibly relevant for the return process. Much of this variation is kept out of the analysis by descending to the sub-national level and focusing on one particular case study: the rural Bosniak population from the north-eastern region of the country. This particular region holds all the characteristics that have been defined for the context case of Bosnia, and it stands out as one of the regions most hardly hit by violence during and after the war, thus making more intense the puzzle of return. The region registered huge amounts of displacement, with all of its Bosniak population leaving, and it presents also significant variation regarding return.

The choice of rural settlements and of Bosniak population was based on empirical relevance. The Bosniak population constitutes the immense majority of displacements in the area, and a large share of the total displaced population in the war. And war and displacement were particularly intense in the countryside.² Return has also been largely a rural process, as it will be discussed in Chapter 4. At the same time, the countryside tends to be more invisible both in terms of the attention received and as a harder to

² Return has also been largely a rural process, as it will be discussed in Chapter 4. At the same time, the countryside tends to be more invisible both in terms of attention received and as a harder to monitor environment, despite frequently being the main locus of violence and the main pool of recruits and human losses (Kalyvas 2006: 38, 42).

monitor environment, despite frequently being the main locus of violence and the main pool of recruits and human losses (Kalyvas 2006: 38, 42).

This selection means holding constant important sources of variation, such as habitat –leaving out urban displacement –, ethnic group –leaving out Serb and Croat displaced populations –, and regional variation –leaving out different economic, political and socio-demographic backgrounds, including different war patterns. These are all relevant sources of variation which might shed important light on the way some of the proposed mechanisms and dynamics interact, and they should be considered in future research. I have opted to keep them outside the analysis by now, not only to avoid added complexity in the model, but also because they cross-cut most factors already considered and interact in important manners, thus making it difficult to disentangle multiple effects and interactions.³

The particular research strategy has been to focus on two specific local cases with prototypical characteristics from the region (at the political, economic and socio-demographic level). The two locations are Cerska (in the municipalities of Milići and Vlasenica) and Križevići (in the municipality of Zvornik). Important variation exists between them in the patterns of violence undergone during the war and, in displacement patterns and in the return process, also representing prototypical cases within the region.

The local context in rural Bosnia is composed of different layers which might be used as the unit of analysis. The purely administrative units are the following:

(a) The *municipality* (*opština*) is the basic local administration unit. It is composed of multiple residential

³ For instance, the non-existence of the security barrier or group-based discrimination for the Serb (non-minority) population in the north-eastern region interacts with the particularities of the group: political identities, patterns and locations of displacement, geo-strategic position in the conflict (for instance, availability of a motherland), etc.

nucleuses, typically including one central town and multiple villages and hamlets.

(b) The *local community* ('*mjesna zajednica*' or MZ) is the smallest administrative unit. It divides the municipality, encompassing and representing an urban neighbourhood, a large village or a few small villages (in which case MZs are further divided into sectors or '*podružnice*' corresponding to each village).⁴

(c) The *village* ('*selo*'), which is a nominal territorial unit. It encompasses various hamlets or an extensive cluster of houses. It is the smallest census unit.

(d) The *hamlet* ('*zaseok*'), composed of a small cluster of houses (around 10-30).

Many of the pre-war municipalities and MZs were divided during or after the war. The unit of analysis in this research is the pre-war MZ. The MZ unit is both small enough and big enough as to capture the relevant variation for this research.

The hamlet or the village are too small in the sense that they do not cover relevant spheres of social, economic and political interactions such as schooling, income opportunities or political structures. The municipality is too large since they tend to cover heterogeneous local realities (i.e. urban and rural settlements, different topographies, different degrees of availability and distance to basic social services, level of infrastructures, and war experience). By picking up MZs in different municipalities relevant variation at this level (local political and administrative structures) is nonetheless maintained.

In sum, having the MZ as the unit of analysis at the local level allows focusing on the primary sphere of individual's daily life, through which most of social and political life were articulated before displacement and upon return.⁵

⁴ MZs cover between 500 and 4,000 inhabitants (World Bank 2002).

⁵ MZ boards (elected by residents) were responsible before the war for local infrastructures and public services, and for organizing collective works. They were the smallest territorial unit of Yugoslav federalism and self-management (World Bank 2002). During the war they organized

But the strict administrative definition of the unit of analysis is an imperfect reflection of the 'effective' territorial units dominating people's worldviews, interactions and daily life, especially in rural areas.⁶ In rural settings, characterized by scattered housing patterns, 'effective' territorial units are particularly porous and fuzzy (Bringa 1995: 54-55). And in mountainous areas administrative boundaries do not frequently coincide with broader (or narrower) geographical and social boundaries.⁷ Usually these fuzzier areas comprise various hamlets and villages sharing some common feature (e.g. geographical, historical) and with particularly strong ties (e.g. family ties, economic relations).

Besides political and administrative considerations, which are obviously crucial, 'effective' units designated by the blurred limits of daily life are most relevant in defining the realities of displacement and return. A decision was taken in turn to use the administrative unit of the pre-war MZ as the main criterion, while

civil protection and distributed humanitarian aid. After the war they have lost administrative autonomy but in many municipalities they are still in charge of formulating infrastructure demands and they keep organizing collective works ('*akcije*') partly financed by the members of the MZ, both returnees and non-returnees.

⁶ This can also reach the institutional and political level, as it will be seen in the case of Cerska, where the post-war division into two municipalities and MZs has been translated into much confusion around territorial competencies, and where the municipality with the more resources has frequently taken up competencies that the second one was not in a position to cover.

⁷ Thus, what is designated as *zaseok* or *selo* (based on residential patterns) is much more fluid and fuzzy than as defined in administrative terms (Bringa 1995: 54-7). Even more frequently, the boundaries of the MZ (based on purely administrative distinctions) can play less of a role than those of larger definitions of *selo* (but smaller than the MZ) or than larger definitions of 'areas' or '*područje*' (including territories falling outside the administrative MZ).

allowing flexibility for including cases outside those administrative limits when it made sense in this regard.⁸

The empirical universe of study is thus restricted to the pre-war populations of these two locations - from this initial universe, deceased persons must be discounted. Cases are classified as 'belonging' to one research location provided that they had their most stable residence there before the war. Some cases were residing abroad before the war in a more or less stable manner. But as long as they kept a house or a place to stay, strong family links and frequent regular visits (of short and medium duration), they are considered to have been living in a commuting mode, i.e. as migrants which kept a stable residence in their place of origin. This is the procedure employed in the 1991 Bosnian census, which documents this migratory pattern (Tabeau *et al.* 2009 [2003]).

There is significant variation in the decisions to return or not among the selected population, both in terms of whether they have returned or not, and in the timing of the decision to return among returnees. The reduced local-level strategy has allowed reconstructing in detail the process of displacement and return of the populations in both locations, contacting both returnees and non-returnees currently living in other locations.

Finally, a methodological decision has been taken to exclude international refugees from this empirical universe. The parameters of the decision to return for international refugees are fundamentally mediated by the legal boundaries marked by international borders and asylum and immigration regimes.⁹ The

⁸ From now on, 'Križeviči' and 'Cerska' will stand for the respective MZs. I will refer to the villages which give their names to the MZs specifically as 'Cerska village' and 'Križeviči village'. I will use the terms 'Cerska/Križeviči proper' to distinguish MZ locations from non-MZ locations, and 'Cerska/Križeviči area' when dealing with the widened unit of analysis.

⁹ For instance, if a refugee decides to repatriate she would not easily be accepted back in the asylum country, whereas a displaced person may usually undo her decision of return or even establish commuting patterns. These asylum and migration regimes also establish important filters and

range of destinations has potential for much more heterogeneity. And, in cases where refugees end up in wealthy developed countries, the overwhelming economic advantages of those countries relative to that of the countries of origin may more easily overcome other consideration, thus obscuring other factors at work and worth considering. Similarly, geographical distances have the potential to be particularly large, as well as cultural distance.¹⁰

By leaving all these peculiarities aside I can focus on the more basic underlying mechanisms and the puzzle of return can be observed more neatly. Given the present state of knowledge, with low levels of theorization and unclear empirical boundaries of the object of research, this strategy has been considered a necessary trade-off. But it also sets the ground for future extensions of the analysis to more complex and varied realities, including those involved in the crossing of an international border. The final goal of the model and analysis presented here is to facilitate a systematic grasp of the broader phenomenon of displacement and return.

The decision to focus by now on internal displacement is supported by considerations of practical and theoretical relevance. On the other hand, internal displacement contains all the relevant forms of variation identified in the proposed model, thus making unnecessary the inclusion of further complexity by now. On the other hand, the number of internally displaced people in the world is significantly larger than the number of refugees, making it a more empirically relevant issue in this very blunt sense.¹¹ More

self-selection mechanisms. Most saliently, repatriation movements are frequently more or less forced, thus reducing the room for individual decision.

¹⁰ Obviously, this is not necessarily the case, and both geographical and cultural distances may also be present in internal displacement. But, overall, there is much more potential for large distances among international refugees than among IDPs.

¹¹ The latest UNHCR estimates place the number of international refugees nowadays in 16 million and the number of internally displaced

importantly, despite such empirical relevance, internal displacement continues to be largely under-researched, as it was pointed out in Chapter 1, and this dissertation is one more contribution into filling this gap.

The universe of study is thus finally defined as the pre-war population of the two research location residing in the country at the time of the research.

3.1.2. Dependent variable and units of analysis

The dependent variable is household return, that is, whether the household has returned to their home of origin or not by the time of the interview.¹² This seemingly dichotomic variable is nevertheless a fuzzy one.

First, there are cases in which the household gets divided and some members return and others do not. As long as the head of the household returns and takes permanent residence, this case is considered as returned. The boundaries of the household are reviewed if necessary. Second, a commuting pattern may be in place, with household members shifting between the location of return and the location of displacement, for instance, in a seasonal basis. In this case, the place where the largest part of the year is spent decides the coding.

Return is frequently a gradual process extended in time, which may include all of the above circumstances at some point, and it

people – likely to be importantly underestimated – in *at least* 26 million (see IDMC 2009).

¹² Households created after the war are coded as having an origin in the area of research if the head of the household originates from it and had his stable residence there. The same coding is applied to female headed households headed by war or post-war widows in which the husband originated from the research location. This is due to the patriarchal system dominating in rural Bosnia, by which wives (and widows) become primarily integrated in the husband's family (see Bringa 1995).

gets more stabilized later on. Return can also be reversed, with the process stopping at some point. In such case, as long as the household took up residence in return in a permanent way at some point, it would be considered a returned household, even if that circumstance is later on reversed. But all cases found in similar circumstances were not actually returned, but simply in the process of returning.

The fuzziness and fluidity of the process make it hard to establish a particular time point for return in the case of returnees. Among the various items available for establishing such date, a decision was taken that the most reasonable and robust of all of them is 'permanent return'. Interviewees were asked in two consecutive questions about the date of their return and about the date in which they returned permanently. The latter is used as the dependent variable.

Although the dependent variable is analysed at the level of the household¹³ the unit of observation is specifically defined at the level of the decision-maker. The agency of decision-making may vary from one society to another and from one context to another, not only in terms of who takes the decision, but also in terms of who can influence it, and in which way. The decision could be, for instance, consensual, hierarchical or unilateral. And the locus of decision can rest in different social units, from nuclear or extended family to clans or organised groups.

Bosniak rural communities in Bosnia are characterized by a hierarchical and patriarchal family structure (see Bringa 1995) in which decision power corresponds to the head of the household, generally a male, whose decisions are usually followed by all the other members. Heads of the household (HH) are then the units of

¹³ A household is composed of all individuals, typically linked by family ties, who share their main living accommodation and incomes. The main living accommodation is defined as the basic living unit(s) where meals are usually shared. The plural is used, given that it is not uncommon in the Bosnian case that household members share various living units under one roof or under various adjacent roofs (Bringa 1995).

observation,¹⁴ and consequently the target subjects of interviews. Two significant demographic biases are expected to occur as a consequence of this HH strategy: gender bias and age bias.

(1) *Gender bias.* Taking the HH as the interview subjects meant that women were to be interviewed only in cases of female-headed households (FemHH), namely widows and separated women. These households constitute a relatively small part of the population and their presence in the sample was expected then to be also relatively small. Although such reduced visibility of female voices is a realistic reflection of the process of decision-making being analysed, it opens an important gender-based gap when trying to understand the impact of violence and the whole process of return. The field strategy (detailed in Annex 3.1 to this chapter) allowed, nonetheless, having a grasp not only of women's voices, but also of their interaction with the heads of the household (seeing Annex 3.1).

(2) *Age bias.* Targeting HH as the subjects of interviews meant also excluding youngsters from the sample. Such gap is problematic when assessing the process of return, in as much the younger generations will determine how enduring the return and attached trends will be in the future, thus being a key part in characterizing some of the outmost results of violent conflict. Their lack of voice in the research is a realistic reflection of the reality of return, as they do not have, in general, a voice of their own on the current decision whether to return or not. Still, assessing their views and opinions against those expressed by their predecessors was of great interest for the general objectives of this research. This was partly achieved through my engagement with various youth projects and my participation in social events that

¹⁴ This status refers to the return period (i.e. the moment of return for returnees, the moment of the interview for non-returnees). These HH and their households may have been integrated in different households before the war, and they may have had a different status at that time.

gave me opportunity and a better ground to interact with the youth (see Annex 3.1).

3.2. Data

3.2.1. Data production

The micro perspective taken here and the nature of the components of the model, giving centrality to individuals' perceptions and emotions, required the use of detailed and rich data at the individual level. Such detailed and systematic data are rare and hard to obtain in conflict and post-conflict scenarios due to the difficulties attached to the context of research.¹⁵

Above all, individual-level data in contexts of recent violent conflict tend to be very sensitive and subject to important distortions. Very saliently, this type of information may engender important risks or compromise the interests of the individuals involved. Even when this is not the case, the sensitivity of the issues at hand and the uncertainties and vulnerabilities affecting the populations under research are likely to produce important silences and/or distortions, rooted as much in the psychological as in the socio-political sphere. The production of this type of data requires a very careful preparation and dedication.

The concentration of efforts in only two (neighbouring) locations and in one single region facilitated to a great extent this task. First, a high investment of time and resources was possible in order to gain in-depth knowledge both of the broader Bosnian context, and of the particular locations under research.

The fieldwork was carried out during two years of continued residence in the north-eastern region of Bosnia-Herzegovina, with full dedication. Around one year time was dedicated to each of

¹⁵ Salient (but insufficient) exceptions are psychiatric and psychosocial evaluations realized mostly among refugees resettled in Western countries or warehoused in refugee camps.

two locations under study. Almost one fourth of the two-year time was devoted to observation and to the preparation of the actual research activities. In this way, fieldwork strategies were more efficiently adapted not only the research design but also the requirements and particularities of the field. This in-depth knowledge is highly valuable not only for its intrinsic value, but also in order to tap on all the possible distortions and ethical dilemmas on which the fieldwork might step on.

I have aimed at producing data capable of providing firm and fine-grained insights, both at the local level (e.g. distinguishing between 'real' permanent return and other forms of return) and, most saliently at the individual and household level. I have paid particular attention to the condition of interviewees (and their surroundings) as survivors of a violent conflict, as well as to cultural sensitivity issues. Sensitivity towards what these conditions entail is not only of enormous ethical importance but also necessary and convenient for research goals.

Particular issues of concern are the power unbalance in the relationship between the interviewees and the researcher, increased in these contexts by the researcher's double status as an 'international'¹⁶ and as a scholar. This double status had the potential to distort the process of data production in very important manners.

For instance: "Often informants, and especially victims, have a stake in making researchers adopt their truths, especially since they perceive them to be curators of history who will retell their stories and provide them with the halo of objectivity brought by

¹⁶ This label is used for encompassing members of the UN-system, other international agencies and NGOs, international diplomats, journalists and researchers, and in general all international personnel (from outside the region) who were deployed in Bosnia during and after the war as part of the peace enforcement, peace-keeping and peace-building efforts at the international level. 'Internationals' are thus members of a category with wide powers within Bosnia-Herzegovina, and most importantly directly managing most of the international assistance flowing into the country.

academic status” (Kalyvas 2006: 51). Furthermore, academic researchers tend to be invariably perceived as members of the humanitarian community, or as potential intermediaries with it.

In order to tackle with these issues, I resorted to psychosocial approaches of intervention with survivors of violence (see Annex 3.1 for further detail) and on ethnographic methods of research, basically encompassing participant observation, systematic gathering of field notes and interviewing methods, but also shaping in a broad manner the way in which field research was conducted (see Annex 3.1 for further detail).

The data production consists fundamentally of 62 in-depth interviews based on a semi-structured questionnaire, realized with pre-war residents of the two designated locations, both returned and not returned individuals. The interviewing method was very flexible, encouraging off-the-questionnaire contributions and informal discussion. The duration of the interviews ranged from one hour to eight hours. They were in most cases preceded and/or followed by extensive and repeated interaction with the interviewee subjects, with their households and with their immediate surroundings.

Data production was completed with informal non-structured interviews – these include interviews with key informants and with potential interview subjects who finally declined or were not able to undertake the semi-structured in-depth interview – as well as off-the-sample in-depth interviews conducted with subjects from different regions and local areas, and from different ethnic groups. Data production includes also profuse field notes and secondary data sources at the national, regional and local levels.

The selection of the two research locations took place during an initial period of preparation of various months, in which I visited and assessed different areas in the north-east region across the two political entities dividing the country. Once selected, the areas were revisited and key informants were contacted or re-contacted in order to gain further information and to make inroads into the communities. Finally, the preparation phase was finished with informal interviews with returnees where they would be

asked to draw maps of the area and of the village, pointing out the number and location of houses and households, and pilot interviews were conducted.

The universe for the sampling of the in-depth interviews consisted of the pre-war population of the two research location residing in the country at the time of the research, including those who had returned at the time of the research ('returnees') and those who had not ('non-returnees'). These are the positive and negative cases, respectively, of the main dependent variable.

The method used was a snow-ball sampling procedure. The only target was maximizing the number of households interviewed. Thus, any member of a household belonging to the universe of study which was reached (directly or indirectly) received a proposal to take the interview. The sampling strategy consisted of maximizing the number and heterogeneity of the initial contacts or entry points into the communities, in order to increase the representativeness achieved.

This also helped ensuring that categories suspect of having a reduced likelihood of being sampled through the snow-ball method were not excluded *a priori*. For instance, by including collective centres in the sampling, where the most vulnerable are known to have been left behind (UNHCR 2009c). On the other hand, key actors and some of the initial contacts got spontaneously concerned, when asked to suggest further contacts, that some of these particular types (such as female headed households or elders living alone) could be left out of the sample, in turn suggesting some of them for contact.

Female headed households (FemHH) are a good example of the way in which the snow-ball sampling and its adjustments to the field may have worked in the desired decision, by avoiding under (over) representation of certain categories. FemHH are *a priori* a clear candidate to be underrepresented in this sample, for various reasons. Firstly, FemHH have a lower visibility and they have less access to the public sphere, including, for instance, relations with NGOs and other organisations running

reconstruction projects, which were a key agent for the entry in the communities.

Secondly, the units of observation (HH), and thus the main contacts in the community, were likely to be men, which would possibly diminish the likelihood of suggestions for female contacts in the snow-ball process, as men are more likely to relate among themselves due to social and cultural issues. And thirdly, FemHH are expected to return in lesser proportions, which would make them less likely to be interviewed due to the difficulties to reach and get interviews from non-returnees (for reasons discussed in detail in Annex 3.1). All those difficulties apply and get compounded in the case of FemHH.

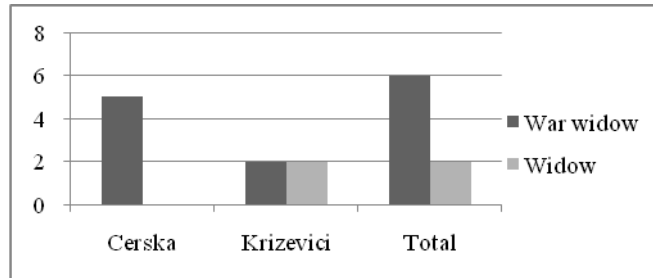
However, and although NGOs played a crucial role in facilitating our entry in the communities, a significant part of the initial contacts (also among non-returnees) were women. Both NGOs and some interviewees were especially keen in emphasizing the existence of such cases, and in trying to put the researcher in contact with them when suggesting new contacts, as they perceived that these cases were more in need of attention and yet they had fewer opportunities to be heard and listened to than others.

In the end, it is hard to ascertain whether FemHH are actually underrepresented (they might even be overrepresented) or not, without population data to contrast the sample data with. But the proportion of cases seems reasonably well adjusted to the reality having into account that these are definitely a minority of cases (9 out of 62 in the sample) but still noticeable (14 percent in the sample).

Furthermore, FemHH have a slightly larger presence in Cerska sample than in Križeviči's (17% versus 12%), they are younger (40% young adults and 60% adults, as opposed to 50% adults and 50% elders), and they are all war widows, whereas in Križeviči there are as many 'natural' widows as war widows (see Figure 3.1). These differences are consistent with the fact that the war death toll, highly skewed towards males, was much higher in Cerska. Unfortunately, the low absolute number of FemHH in the

sample (n=9) precludes any analysis of this sub-sample and little insight can be drawn on the realities of return for this very salient type of household.¹⁷

Figure 3.1. FemHH in the sample by location



Given the size of the communities, the different snow-ball processes initiated at the different entry points soon converged into a common pool of contacts that frequently referred to each other or to common further ones. Interestingly, it took more or less the same time in both locations to exhaust the pool of direct contacts done in the field and of new (non-redundant) indirect contacts suggested by each contact and interviewee.

Research was initiated in the origin location, which meant contacting returnees in the first place. As returnees are concentrated in the designated location of research, they were easier to locate, and they were expected to contribute to locate non-returnees. Given that concentration, field work was intensive

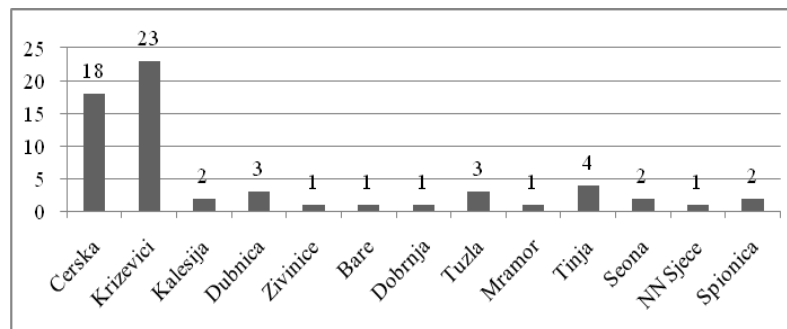
¹⁷ The number and significance of FemHH increases in post-conflict scenarios due to war widowhood. In conservative rural societies like the Bosnian case, these households face special difficulties and vulnerabilities, especially upon return, due to their uneasy position in a strongly patriarchal society. Their peculiarity within such society also represents a source of variation which might provide some insight into the mechanisms of return.

and extensive in the areas of return, which provided more ground for interaction and contact with a higher number of potential interviewees, which in turn favoured importantly acceptance to undertake the in-depth interview.

Non-returnees, on the other hand, were scattered in not *a priori* designated areas, which made them not only more difficult to locate, but also less subject to intensive and extensive field work activities, thus reducing the ground for interaction and the rate of acceptance to undertake the in-depth interview. The sampling and interviewing period took around four months in the area of return and around six months in the areas of displacement of each location.

Figure 3.2 illustrates the scattered nature of non-returnees' residences. The figure displays the residences of all interviewees, both returnees and non-returnees, at the time of the interview. After the two MZs of return, Cerska and Križeviči, the non-returnees' MZs of residence are shown (in increasing order relative to their distance to the return areas).

Figure 3.2. MZ of residence at the time of the interview



Finally, the snow-ball sampling method also helped determining the 'effective' local unit of research. In this process, each new contact or interviewee was asked to suggest other people

'from Cerska' or 'from Križevići' for us to contact. The terms 'MZ', 'village' or 'area' were not used, but rather the simple proper names of 'Cerska' and 'Križevići'. This allowed people to freely interpret the boundaries of the suggested unit. In total, 11 cases from 5 villages which do not properly belong to the administrative designation of the MZs of Cerska and Križevići are included in the sample.

The final result is a small sample of households (n=62) whose interviewees have provided in-depth and detailed information about their lives and families, their displacement and return trajectories, their related perceptions and attitudes, and their emotional processing of all of these (see details about the structure and contents of the questionnaire, as well as about interviewing techniques in Annex 3.1). The trade-off here has been one in which the low number of cases and observations, and the non-random sampling method, preclude any claim of statistical representativity. The positive side of the trade-off is that the produced data offer a high degree of internal validity and reliability.

The research design and sampling strategy did not only favour the production of quality data, but also their cross-checking through multiple interactions with households' members and with the broader community at large, as well as with key informants and in general through participant observation. The cross-checking was completed with the more conventional secondary data sources available. On the other hand, the extent to which the sample is a reasonable one, that is, the extent to which it is representative or (externally) valid, in a more general sense, can be assessed by checking its consistency with other existing data, thus assessing its external robustness and consistency.

3.2.2. Other available data

Population figures for Bosnia are based on fragmented, non-exhaustive register data (registered IDPs, registered returnees, and

registered voters) with some important limitations. These are complemented by survey data collected mostly by government and intergovernmental agencies, third sector organizations and academic researchers. The most obvious gap is the absence of a post-war census, with the last one having been elaborated in 1991, one year before the war started.¹⁸

In the next chapter, describing the background of the Bosnian case, I will draw on these existing data to characterize the return process for the whole country, paying particular attention to the north-east region. As it will be seen in Chapter 5, the sample produced here is quite consistent with the trends identified in much of these register and survey data, always having into account the differences in the nature and methodology of all of them, and their limitations and problems. I proceed now to detail very briefly the main characteristics of these other existing data.

A. Pre-war population and post-war population

The obvious reference for pre-war population is the 1991 census, which has data down to the village level on a variety of issues: genre, age, household size or ethnic group. This is the last population data available in Bosnia-Herzegovina. There are no comprehensive data sources for the radical population upheavals during the war, including direct and indirect war deaths, disappearances and war-related migration.

The most comprehensive and reliable data refer to direct war deaths. Two robust datasets have been put together with all documented cases (RDC 2007; Tabeau and Zwierzchowski 2010) which allow making estimations on the total number and on the characteristics of these deaths. But there are no systematic data yet on indirect war deaths. The same goes for displacement moves within and outside the country between 1992 and 1997-1998.¹⁹

¹⁸ A new census is projected for 2011.

¹⁹ There have been some recent attempts (partly in preparation for the new census) to document population trends, largely at the national

It is important to note that the most common measure of the success of the return process, besides absolute numbers, is the 'rate of return'. This corresponds to the percentage of return relative to the 1991 population as counted in the 1991 census. This measure does not have into account other intervening population dynamics, such as war-related deaths (which are a particularly important factor in areas hardly hit by violence), natural growth of the population (i.e. natural deaths and births) and out-migration unrelated to war, including undocumented migration.

B. Displacement

The total number of displaced people is unknown and hard to estimate (ICG 1997).²⁰ Data do not exist either on their characteristics (e.g. areas of origin, habitat, ethnic group) or on their living conditions and whereabouts in the years of the war and for the years following immediately after the war (Tabeau *et al.* 2009 [2003]: 663-4). The first systematic and all-encompassing data refer to two or three years after the end of the war, when many return movements had already occurred. These are the OSCE registers of voters for the 1997 and 1998 elections and the Database on Displaced People and Refugees (DDPR).

level. The most important of them has been the Expanded Master Sample of the Bosnian Statistics Agency, which updated the information for 1,456 census areas in the period of January/February 2006. This Master Sample is a key instrument for the design of random samples, given the inexistence of reliable population or housing registers. The UNDP Early Warning System public opinion surveys based their sampling of minorities on the snowball sampling method, for instance (UNDP 2006). The 2007 survey by UNDP on return, displacement and political attitudes is one of the outcomes based on that Expanded Master Sample.

²⁰ And "[obtaining] the true figures [of IDPs and refugees] is in our view an impossible task due to limited existing sources of information and fragmentary information contained in these sources" (Tabeau *et al.* 2009 [2003]: 666).

(1) Database on Displaced People and Refugees (DDPR)

The DDPR is the government register (coordinated with UNHCR) for internally displaced people applying for assistance and for official IDP status. It was not put together until 2000.²¹ It encompasses only a sub-group of the total displaced persons in Bosnia-Herzegovina, amounting to 560,000 persons, that is, roughly one third of the estimated total displaced population (2.2 million) and around 40 percent of those estimated to be within the country at the time, including repatriates (Min. HRR BiH 2005). This sub-group is strongly selected due to administrative criteria²² and to the selective incentives provided by the IDP status, which may also produce validity problems.

Registered IDPs may have been a more or less adequate proxy for displacement in early periods, but data were quite fragmented and little reliable at the time. As time went on, and after the two re-registration processes making the data more systematic (in 2000 and 2005) registered IDPs have become an increasingly inaccurate and unreliable proxy for the category of ‘non-returnees’ considered here (i.e. those people who got displaced during the war and have not returned to their homes of origin).

This is so because the requirements for maintaining the IDP status and the voluntary application process eliminated from the

²¹ Data were gathered already during the war, but in a fragmented and unsystematic manner. A first database was put together in 1998, but with deficiencies. The 2000 database systematized and cleaned the data through a re-registration process to which the existing internally displaced people had to apply. The database thus only contains information on the number of people who applied for it (*Ibid.*: 663, 703).

²² The requirements involved *demonstrating* that the individual was not “able to return in safety and dignity to his former habitual residence nor has voluntarily decided to take up permanent residence elsewhere” (quoted in Council of Europe 2008) which usually entailed demonstrating that her property had been destroyed or occupied, that she *had applied* for reconstruction or repossession, and that she had no other real property available whatsoever.

register many households who had not returned yet. These were cases who had locally integrated (i.e. they had taken up permanent residence and had decided not to return) or who simply found their status revoked on different administrative grounds.

The 2000 data also had salient reliability problems, since many of the households maintaining their IDP status had actually returned or were in the process of returning but kept their IDP status in order to maintain certain entitlements, as it will be discussed in Chapter 4. This mismatch between registered displacement and actual displacement has somewhat diminished in the latest years, as returnees have begun to increasingly register as such, and especially since the last 2005 re-registration process.

But, when discussing about 'registered IDPs', it must be born in mind that this population leaves out a significant part of the displaced (or non-returnee) population considered here. It must be also born in mind that, in the absence of census data, non-registered or de-registered IDPs which have not returned, or, to be more precise, who have not been registered as returnees, are not counted *in any* of the available register data at all.

(2) OSCE voter registers of the 1997 and 1998 elections

The OSCE data consists of the registered voters for the local Bosnian elections of 1997 (and 1998). These data amount to a self-selected sample of the Bosnian population born before 1980 and residing within and outside Bosnia one year and a half after the war. It amounts to 1.3 million people, out of which 440,000 persons count as displaced following strictly residential patterns, i.e. they do not live in their pre-war residence (Tabeau *et al.* 2009 [2003]). We cannot extract conclusions about the size of displacement, since these data and criterion do not account for war deaths, natural deaths and births, neither migration patterns other than displacement. But it is a valid sample for inferring the distribution of origin and ethnicity of displacement (*Ibid.*: 665).

These datasets are the best instrument for approximating the characteristics and whereabouts of these populations. DDPR data and OSCE-based data display similar geographic and ethnic distributions of the displaced population, which increases confidence in their results. But in any case the hard figures from both sources are “much lower than actual 1992-5 true figures” (Tabeau *et al.* 2009 [2003]).

C. Return

The only hard figures on the process of return in Bosnia are the ones provided by UNHCR. These include two types of data, registered IDP returns and returns from repatriated refugees.

(1) Registered returns of IDPs

Since 2000 these data are largely produced by the municipalities through the Return Application Database System. This database is built upon applications for return and reconstruction or repossession and their subsequent monitoring (UNHCR 2000a). Return data for previous years are largely based on returns that got registered in UNHCR field offices (ICG 2000a: 5). The number of these registered returns is likely to suffer from a *downward bias*, especially in the initial years, when the registration of returns was not centralized and the incentives to keep IDP registration were the highest (ICG 2000a: 5; 2002b: 4; IDMC 2008: 163-5, 244) as it will be discussed in Chapter 4.

On the other hand, the figure is acknowledged to suffer from an *upward bias*, especially since 2000, due to the fact that repossession of houses and the attainment of reconstruction assistance were automatically counted (through the Return Application Database) as returns. However, neither repossession nor reconstruction necessarily implied that return took place (UNHCR 2007d). Inflation is likely to affect the most minority returns (i.e. displaced people returning to a municipality in which

their group is a minority), who are the most likely to sell or exchange the property once repossessed (*Ibid.*).

(2) Returns of repatriated refugees from abroad

This figure is problematic inasmuch it is being assumed that these repatriated refugees have returned to their homes of origin. This is a strong assumption, especially for those who would be returning as a minority, for whom there is evidence to suggest that many have stayed in other parts of the country (Black and Koser 1999: 8; HCHR 2006).

Although this registry data cannot be taken at their face value, they are the most comprehensive data available and they provide most valuable information on return trends.

The overall expectation is that these data are somewhat inflated between 2000 and 2003 (in the peak years of the housing repossession process, which will be discussed in Chapter 4) given the massive nature of occupation, the amount of repossessions in those years, and their automatic counting as returns (all of it will be discussed in Chapter 4). An upwardly bias could also be expected in the earlier years due to the large number of repatriations at that time (which constituted almost 70 and 80 percent of all registered returns in 1997 and 1998). But in these early years it is also expected that many returns went unregistered. So the direction of the bias, if any, is unknown.

Besides these register data, Bosnia is a thoroughly researched case and a myriad of survey data are also available. The combination of these two types of data has built up a large body of well-documented and well-established patterns and trends of return at the national and at various regional levels. This provides an initial insight into the general return process in Bosnia, and a baseline against which to contrast the sample data produced here.

3.3. Methodological caveats

3.3.1. Time variation

The cross-sectional and backward looking character of the research poses some important problems. All the observations are based on the interviewee's recalling of past events, perceptions, attitudes and emotions. This recalling may be affected by imperfect and distorted memories, altered perceptions as a result of later events or circumstances, projection of the present into the past, and very saliently rationalization of past attitudes and behaviours. Some of these cannot be avoided and constitute the token paid in the trade-off for other advantages gained.

Some of these gained advantages actually help tackling with backward-looking issues. For instance, the in-depth knowledge of the context and its recent history, acquired from multiple sources, allowed cross-checking the robustness and accuracy of perceptions related to events and objective indicators, and to correct distortions where necessary. This was frequently the case among elders regarding salient dates, such as first visits to the return area after the war, dates of reconstruction and even dates of return. Cross-checking their narratives with those of neighbours and key actors involved in the process, such as the organizations providing reconstruction assistance, all these dates were conveniently corrected with a high level of confidence.

Intensive and repeated interaction with the interviewees and with other household members also allowed cross-checking the validity of the more personal data provided, and the robustness and consistency of the perceptions, attitudes and memories related.²³ Similarly, since the interviewing method was very

²³ For instance, the assessment provided during the interviews of Serb neighbours' attitudes were in most cases corroborated during daily interaction through spontaneous remarks and attitudes, either positive, negative or neutral. In very few cases those assessments were partially qualified, but always in very marginal ways (i.e. making positive or negative exceptions for particular individuals or circumstances).

flexible and encouraged spontaneous contributions from the interviewees, these tended to give a large amount of collateral information, comments and insights initially unrelated to the questions contained in the questionnaire, which provided important internal validity and consistency checks. It was thus possible to identify noticeable distortions, and possible symptoms of distortion, and to put them in perspective within the known past recent history of the interviewee, his present circumstances (including the circumstances of the interview itself) and all the considered backward-looking effects.

Confidence in the interviewees' ability to recall events and especially perceptions was raised by their capacity to spontaneously support their narratives and memories with details about other people's attitudes and behaviours, and to compare them to their own. They were also able to compare them with their present and evolved circumstances, perceptions and attitudes, and with others they had experienced along the way. Much of the questionnaire structure and of the interviewing techniques were intended precisely at improving memory recalling, including the recalling and evocation of a gamut of past emotions as rich as possible (see Annex 3.1 for further detail).

The majority of cases were capable of remembering details very sharply, which in turn elicited vivid accounts and memories, including frequently some tiny objective feature of the situation that they connected with strong emotional reactions at the time. This confirms the expectations about emotions discussed in Chapter 2, but it also offers some ground to expect that the recalling process elicited during the interviews, even though probably objectively distorted and narrowed by the influence of emotionally marked events, functioned in a most pertinent manner

Interactions with children and youngsters were most revealing in this regard, as they talked very openly and honestly of the kind of remarks and opinions they had heard at their homes along the process of return. All of this raises confidence on the information provided by the interviewees.

for this research: underscoring the most relevant of the individual's past perceptions.

Many of the interviewees frequently expressed surprise on these reflections that, most of them said, they had never done before. A recurrent topic was precisely the lack of time, opportunity or will they had had since the beginning of the war to reflect about their lives and the events surrounding them. If this was the case, a lower level of memory 'corruption' (through emotional and cognitive feedback effects) could be expected.

3.3.2. *Endogeneity issues*

The most important problem derived from the cross-sectional backward-looking character of the research is the endogeneity problems emerging. Any variation found between returnees and non-returnees, especially regarding past attitudes and perceptions, could be at least partially explained by their condition of returnees and non-returnees rather than the other way around.²⁴

This can take place through various mechanisms. First, independently of any previous differences, returnees may go through different experiences during their return process which are not present in the case of non-returnees and which could alter their perceptions. Second, returnee experiences may also condition and filter past perceptions in a different manner from those of non-returnees. For instance, by comparing against their current experiences with the local police, returnees can measure previous

²⁴ For instance, based on 2007 survey data, being a non-returnee significantly raises the probability of holding a exclusive identity –i.e. holding an ethnic identity and rejecting the Bosnian citizenship identity – whereas being a returnee significantly raises the probability of holding a dual identity –i.e. holding both an ethnic and a Bosnian citizenship identity (UNDP 2007a:50). This could be a characteristic of returnees and non-returnees that helps explaining their decisions to return and to not return, or it could rather be the product of those decisions and the ensuing different experiences of each category.

past experiences with them against a different scale from that of non-returnees. Finally, both returnees and non-returnees may tend to rationalize their past decisions (in this case, the decision to return or not) and thus to shape their memories, narratives and accounted perceptions and attitudes in different manners.

Although this endogeneity problem is intrinsic to the research design employed, the in-depth knowledge acquired of the local context and of the personal circumstances of interviewees, and the multiple cross-checking possibilities offered by the research design, allow to tackle to some extent with this issue and to gauge the likely relevance of the two possible causal directions (at a qualitative rather than quantitative level of analysis).

CHAPTER 4. WAR, DAYTON, AND THE PEOPLE IN BETWEEN

4.1. Bosnia: Roots of peace, war and displacement

In this chapter I discuss the background of the Bosnian conflict and the Bosnian return process, paying particular attention to those features more relevant for understanding the peculiarities of both the conflict and the return process in the north-eastern region of the country, the main focus of the empirical part of this study. In the last section of the chapter I discuss some of the expectations derived from the model proposed in Chapter 2. I assess the extent to which these expectations are supported by the Bosnian evidence as an initial plausibility test for the model.

4.1.1. The heart of Yugoslavia: Half a century of 'Brotherhood and Unity'

The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFR Yugoslavia) emerged from World War II constituted by six republics –Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia – with strong historical and cultural commonalities, as well as rivalries and historical grievances (Malcolm 1994). The six republics housed a conglomerate of ethnic groups heterogeneously defined in terms of language, religion and national identity.

The victory of the socialist Partisans over the nationalist factions fighting in the region gave its hallmark to the emerging state (Malcolm 1994: 177-183) summarized in the Partisans' motto of '*Brotherhood and Unity*' (*Bratsvo i Jedinstvo*). This motto was the expression of an ideological program which was not involved with any concrete nationality. As such, it was not exclusionary or explicitly threatening to any population group.¹

Five of these groups held the titular nationality of five of the republics (Croats, Macedonians, Montenegrins, Serbs and Slovenes). Bosnia was a unique republic within SFR due to its lack of a defining nationality and to its multi-ethnic character. The Bosnian population was composed of three large groups: the Muslims² (constituting 37 percent of the population on average in the period from 1961 to 1991),³ the Serbs (36 percent)⁴ and the Croats (19 percent).⁵

Bosnia also presented a high degree of intermixing of these groups across its territory. In other republics large minorities tended to be more neatly and homogeneously concentrated in some particular regions of the country, usually bordering a 'motherland' area. In Bosnia the pattern was more scattered and intermixed: the three major groups were to be found in multiple areas all over the territory, to different degrees and with different

¹ The regime was actually tough in terms of repression and social and political control, especially in the initial years. It has been estimated that 250,000 people were killed by Tito's regime between 1945-1946 (Malcolm 1994: 193). But such toughness affected all groups, on the bases of alleged anti-Communist loyalties and not on ethnic grounds, entailing for instance, religious repression – although the latter was somewhat more intense for Muslims (Malcolm 1994).

² I use the term 'Muslim' here denoting the ethnic group, in opposition to religious affiliation. The former does not necessarily imply the latter (Dimitrovova 2001).

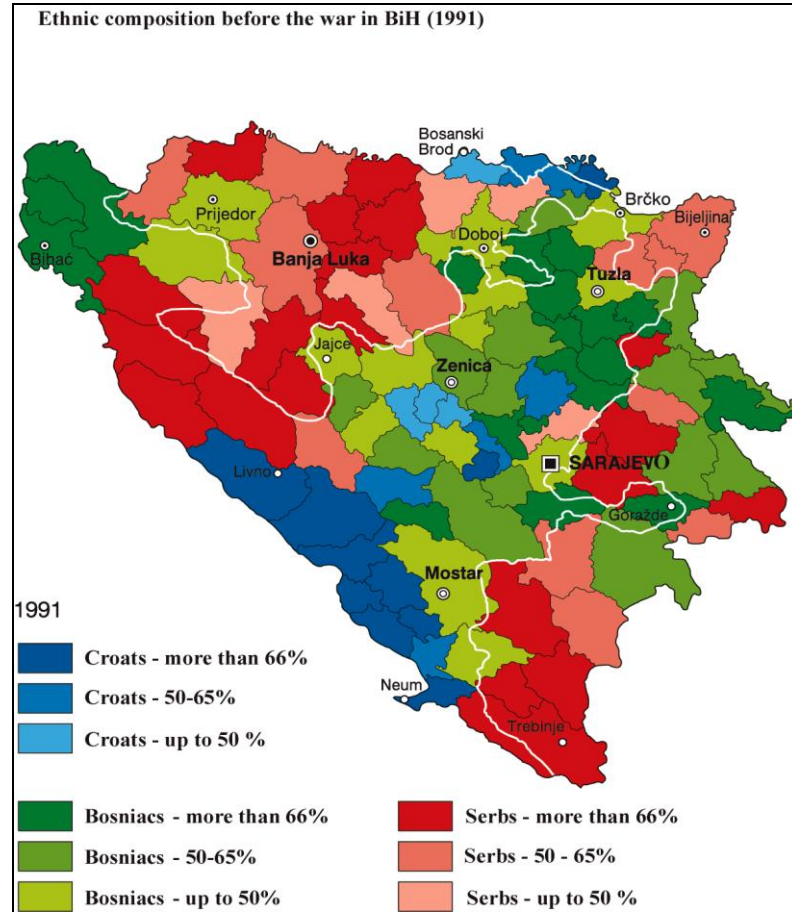
³ From 26 in 1961 to 44 percent in 1991 (reported in Kalyvas and Sambanis 2005).

⁴ From 43 in 1961 to 31 percent in 1991 (*Ibid.*).

⁵ From 22 in 1961 to 17 percent in 1991 (*Ibid.*).

combinations of demographic majorities, large minorities and small minorities (see map 4.1).

Map 4.1. Geographic distribution of the three main ethnic groups in 1991



Source: OHR (available at <http://www.ohr.int/ohr-info/maps/>, accessed 19 November 2009).

At the grass-root level there was variation in the manner in which people from different ethnic backgrounds would live together and side by side. This can be summarized in the notion of *komšilik* ('neighbourhood') which had a central role in daily life and deep roots as a basis for fundamental social interaction (Bringa 1995: 54-55; Albert 1997: 4).

Towns were completely intermixed, and ethnic identities were downplayed and did not have a noticeable role in daily life (Corkalo *et al.* 2004: 145). Towns were also more laicist and religious holidays were shared by members of different groups as an instance of social celebration (Corkalo *et al.* 2004). As a result, for instance, ethnic identities became unknown or unfamiliar for many urban children educated under the communist system (Bringa 1995; Ajdukovic and Corkalo 2004; interviews in Sarajevo and Tuzla, 2004-2007). Partly as a result of it, in towns there were also higher intermarriage rates – in total, 27 percent of marriages in pre-war Bosnia are thought to have been mixed marriages (Bringa 1995: 151).

On the contrary, the countryside was mostly characterized by small-scale residential segregation. Most villages ('*sela*') were either ethnically homogeneous or composed of more or less ethnically homogeneous areas and hamlets ('*zaseoci*'), although some were also quite intermixed (Bringa 1995; Stefansson 2006).⁶ Religion was also more salient in rural habitats, which helped making visible the borders and differences between the groups.⁷ As a result, in the countryside there was much more awareness of ethnic identities (understood as 'nationality' or '*nacija*'). But in general interaction patterns varied "from one village to the next, from neighbourhood to neighbourhood" (Bringa 1995: 4).

⁶ See 1991 census providing data on ethnic origin ('national identity') at the village level. Data available at: <http://www.fzs.ba/Podaci/nacion%20po%20mjesnim.pdf>.

⁷ Muslims (in the ethnic sense) are identified with Muslims (in the religious sense), Serbs with Orthodox religion and Croats with Catholic religion.

All this made of Bosnia the utter exemplification of the *Brotherhood and Unity* motto, and it made it more dependent on such idea than any other republic. For all of it, and for its central geographical position, Bosnia was frequently considered the 'heart of Yugoslavia'.

4.1.2. A bullet in the heart: Four years of 'dirty' war

Tito's death in 1980 was followed by an impervious economic crisis, the demise of the Communist bloc, the transition to a market economy and the disappearance of the single-party regime, which effectively occurred in 1990. Nationalist platforms centred in the defence of each republic's interests and, in most cases, in the defence of the titular ethnic group, obtained clear majorities in the newly elected multi-party parliaments. Unlike other republics, Bosnia's newly elected multi-party parliament was divided among three major ethnically representative parties: the Muslim party SDA (35% of the seats), the Serb SDS (29%) and the Croat HDZ (18%) and a coalition government was established.

Successive declarations of independence followed suit in Slovenia, Croatia and Macedonia in 1991, followed lastly by Bosnia in 1992. Independence from Slovenia and Macedonia found no major resistance from the Federal government and the Yugoslavian People's Army (JNA). But the independence of Bosnia and Croatia were fiercely opposed. Unlike Slovenia or Macedonia, both countries shared a border with Serbia and they housed a large Serb population, with important concentrations in bordering areas.

These Serb populations had organised to resist the break-up and they had proclaimed the autonomous areas of Krajina and Slavonia in Croatia (in the Bosnian and Serbian borders of Croatia) and the Serbian Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Bosnia (in northern and eastern Bosnia) in an attempt to stay unite with the republics remaining in Yugoslavia, namely Serbia and Montenegro (see Map 4.2). Serbs in Bosnia boycotted the

referendum of independence and the Serb members of the government and parliament stepped out, proclaiming a parallel Assembly. War broke out in April 1992.

The two warring sides are usually identified, if focusing only on the internal actors to the conflict, with the 'Bosnian Serbs' (or simply 'Serbs') on the one hand, as the ones opposing independence from Yugoslavia, and the 'Bosnian Croats' (or simply 'Croats') and 'Muslims' (or 'Bosniaks')⁸ as the ones in favour of that independence.⁹ This designation is actually an imperfect reflection of the complexities of the Bosnian conflict, as it occurs in many other conflicts, since the warring sides were not ethnically monolithic (Malcolm 1994; Kalyvas and Sambanis 2005; Lucarevic 2000), and ethnic lines across the population were also in many cases blurred or intermixed.

Nevertheless, this designation is coherent with the political lines of the conflict and it approximates well the degree of ethnic alignment reached, especially or at least, during and after the war (Malcolm 1994: 234-52; Bringa 1995: xvi, 3-5; Biro *et al.* 2004: 188; Kalyvas and Sambanis 2005). Thus, although the conflict was fought along a political cleavage, it bore an obvious ethnic component, and ethnic labels became (yet not perfectly) an

⁸ Bosniak ('*bošnjak*') became the official name in 1993. The change was not insubstantial since it amounted to a re-affirmation of the status of the group as a nationality rather than as a group or category loosely identified by a religious denomination. I will use the term Bosniak from now on in order to avoid further confusion with religious affiliation (Dimitrovova 2001: 97) and in order to be consistent with the historical use of the terms.

⁹ One second axis of conflict was added in 1993-1994 dividing the supporters of independence, as Bosnian Croats in central Bosnia organized to proclaim the independent republic of Herzeg-Bosna, in an attempt to secede from Bosnia and to join the newly independent Croatia. Here I will be focusing on the main axis of the conflict for the sake of simplicity of exposition, given that the empirical focus of this dissertation is placed on the north-eastern region, unaffected by this added axis of conflict.

immediate instrument for identifying or marking each individual's arguable side in the conflict. In other words, the threat became centrally targeted along (ethnic) group boundaries, which were the most visible and marked in the countryside.

Map 4.2. Areas of military control in April 1995



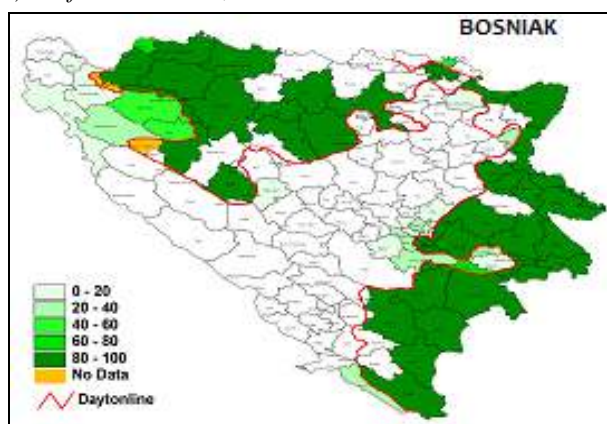
Source: UNHCR Mapping Unit, available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/3ae6bb0bc.html>

The population got displaced following a shifting pattern: Bosniaks and Croats fled from the Serb-controlled part into the Bosniak and Croat-controlled part, and Serbs fled in the opposite

direction.¹⁰ Actually, ‘ethnic cleansing’ or the massive relocation of population based on their ethnicity is a salient and defining characteristic of the Bosnian conflict, in itself not a necessary component of ethnic conflict in general (Kalyvas and Sambanis 2005).

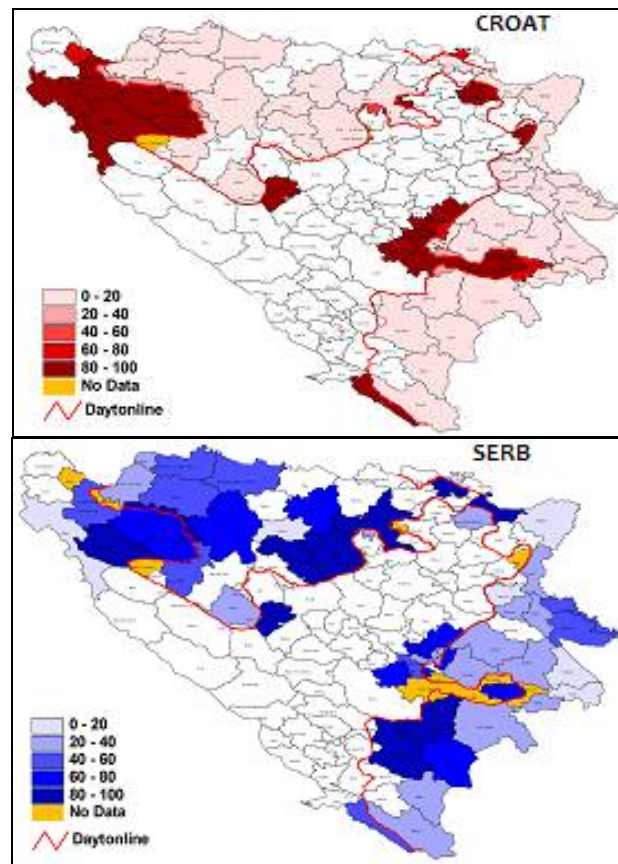
Maps 4.3-4.5 make it clear that the most intense displacements of Croats and especially of Bosniaks took place in the Serb controlled areas, where practically all Bosniaks left from all municipalities.¹¹ Similarly, the most intense displacements of Serbs took place in the non-Serb controlled areas.

Maps 4.3.-4.5. Fraction of displaced people among the Bosniak, Serb and Croat population from areas disputed under the Serb vs Bosniak-Croat axis of conflict (corresponding to the Milošević Case in the ICTY, IT-02-54). As for 1997-1998, based on 1991 census



¹⁰ People also moved within their own safety areas from places more exposed to violence to others relatively calmer or with a more stable situation.

¹¹ These data correspond to the years 1997-1998, two years after the end of the war, when some returns had already taken place, most of them majority returns (meaning returns to an area controlled by the returnee's ethnic group). They also include post-Dayton displacement, which occurred mainly in the Sarajevo suburbs (IDMC 2008: 20-1).



Source: Tabeau *et al.* (2009 [2003]). Data are based on the comparison between 1991 census data and 1997-1998 voter registers. Elaborated by the Demographic Unit of the Office of the Prosecutor of the ICTY as part of the documentation for the Milošević case. Only data for the municipalities contained in that case are reported, corresponding to the colored areas.

War was fought by regular army units (including reservists and forcibly conscripted men) and by irregular paramilitary

formations constituted by 'volunteers'¹² (Romeva 2003; Malcolm 1994). Local militias corresponding to the local territorial defences played an important role especially at the beginning of the war, when there was still an important decentralization and lack of organisation of the warring factions. In other words, the main sources of the threat were organized group forces and armed groups.

The privileged position and control of the JNA by the Serbs offered them a substantial military comparative advantage (Kalyvas and Sambanis 2005). It took long for the Croat and more particularly the Bosniak sides to get sufficiently organized due to their disadvantaged military and strategic position (UN Security Council 1994a, 1994c). Basically, the major offensives by the Serb side took place in the spring and summer of 1992.¹³ After that point, the frontline became relatively stable,¹⁴ with only major offensives and gains by the Bosniak-Croat side in the spring of 1994, and in the fall of 1995.

Massive exoduses occurred mostly during that spring and summer of 1992 (IDMC 2008: 17),¹⁵ which is in line with the expectation that organised sources of threat have a larger potential to provoke massive displacement moves in a short period of time. The operations usually ended up with the population fleeing, and with captured Bosniaks and Croats transferred to detention centres (UN Security Council 1994d) which were usually run by the

¹² Many of these came from Serbia, Croatia and Muslim countries ('mujahedeen').

¹³ The common pattern was to shell villages, followed with infantry attacks and, as a rule, very little resistance was offered (UN Security Council 1994c), ranging from a few days to a few weeks (UNHCR 2000b: 218). In some particular cases successful resistance did take place and entire towns or rural settlements became under siege, as in Sarajevo or Goražde.

¹⁴ Here I am ignoring the 1993-1994 Bosniak-Croat conflict.

¹⁵ Almost half of the war-related direct deaths documented in the Bosnian Book of the Dead occurred in that period too (RDC 2007).

police (BalkanInsight 2009b).¹⁶ In cases where there was no resistance, the population would be subject to the attack of paramilitary formations or arbitrary rounding ups, and they would be allowed or forced to leave (Amnesty International 1997a). These operations were usually carried out by outsiders but with the cooperation of some locals (Malcolm 1994; Kalyvas and Sambanis 2005).

Houses and infrastructures in countryside areas were massively and systematically destroyed, if not immediately, then later on (see e.g. Bringa 1995; De Andrade and Delaney 2001; Ito 2001).¹⁷ This was an enormously consequential and highly symbolic action if having into account the peculiarities of the housing system in these rural habitats. Unlike urban habitats, where socially owned properties were the norm, in rural habitats the majority of people did not only privately own their houses, but they also built them themselves, with their own work and their neighbours' help, little by little in periods lasting years or even decades (Bringa 1995: 70-1, 85-6).¹⁸

Urban properties were occupied instead, mostly by the inflow of displaced persons from the majority group. Thus countryside areas with only Bosniak or Croat population were emptied, and towns became roughly homogeneous (Tabeau *et al.* 2009 [2003]).

¹⁶ There is substantial evidence of torture, systematic rape and summary executions in those detention centers (UN Security Council 1994d; Amnesty International 1997a). The evidence on the Bosnian case (UN Security Council 1994e, 1994f) has been crucial in the declaration of rape as a war crime (Amnesty International 1997b).

¹⁷ An estimated 14,000 houses were destroyed following the signing of Dayton (Mooney 2008: 2).

¹⁸ Those households and individuals more able and resourceful would build those houses in advance before sons got married, in order for them to have their own place when the moment arrived. In less resourceful households, the newly married sons and their new family would stay at the parental house until the new house got some minimum habitability conditions, and then move in and continue working on it (Bringa 1995: 43).

At the end of the war, an estimated 104,000 persons had got killed (Tabeau and Zwierzchowski 2010)¹⁹ and at least 22,000 went missing (ICRC 2009).²⁰ Based on the cases documented in the Bosnian Book of the Dead (RDC 2007) 41 percent of the victims were civilians. The immense majority were men between 18 and 55 year old (90 and 72 percent). Bosniaks were overrepresented among the total victims and especially among the civilian victims (66 and 83 percent as compared to their 43 percent in the total 1991 population).

Table 4.1. Direct victims of war documented in the Bosnian Book of the Dead

	Direct victims of war (killed and missing)	Direct victims of war (killed and missing) in Podrinje (eastern region)
	97,207	29,752
Men	90%	
18-55	72%	67%
Bosniaks*	66%	81%
Civilian	41%	60%
Bosniak/Civilian	83%	95%
Missing	17%	35%

Source: RDC (2007).

*Bosniaks were 43% of the population in the 1991 census.

¹⁹ Estimates vary from 329,000 to a minimum range of 25,000 – 60,000 (RDC 2007). The two most reliable databases documenting human losses in the Bosnian war, namely the Bosnian Book of the Dead of the Research and Documentation Centre from Sarajevo and the database from the Demographic Unit of the Prosecutor Office in the ICTY, reach a similar number of minimum (documented) deaths: 97,000 and 102,000, respectively (RDC 2007; Tabeau and Zwierzchowski 2010). And the most recent and reliable estimations place the final number in around 104,000 (Tabeau and Zwierzchowski 2010).

²⁰ Of these, around 11,000 were still unaccounted for by the end of 2009 (ICRC 2009) and some 17,500 were still missing (ICMP 2009).

War and violence registered different patterns in different parts of the territory, depending largely on geo-strategic positions and on the population structure (Malcolm 1994; Romeva 2003). Some areas even got spared of the violence (Kalyvas and Sambanis 2005). At the other extreme was the northern part of country, especially the north-west and the north-east, two areas of primary strategic importance that came rapidly under Serb control. These two areas, bordering with the Serb self-declared autonomous regions in Croatia and with Serbia proper, figure prominently as the two regions most hardly hit by violence (see Kalyvas and Sambanis 2005) and they became scenario of violent campaigns hitting particularly hard the civilian population.

In this study I focus on the north-east area, within the region of Podrinje (*'by the Drina'*) that comprises the border of Bosnia with Serbia along the Drina River. This area was the first one targeted by paramilitary units and following regular army operations, and the earliest to be emptied of its Bosniak population (UNHCR 2000b: 218), which amounted to 49 percent of its population.²¹

The death toll in this north-east area was particularly high: documented victims amount to 21 percent of all documented cases across the country – the 1991 population was only 7 percent of the total population.²² Civilians were also more hardly hit in this area, comprising 45 percent of all civilian deaths documented in the war. The ratio of civilian *versus* soldier victims is the inverse of the overall distribution, reaching a 60 to 40 as compared to 41 to

²¹ The presence of Croats in this area was very marginal (0.2 percent in the 1991 census). These are data from the 1991 census referring to the eight municipalities in the northern part of the eastern region of Podrinje: Bijeljina, Bratunac, Han Pijesak, Šekovići, Srebrenica, Ugljevik, Vlasenica and Zvornik.

²² These figures are a personal elaboration based on RDC data referring to the eight municipalities in the northern part of Podrinje (see footnote above), and on data from the 1991 census for those municipalities, available at: <http://www.fzs.ba/Podaci/nacion%20po%20mjesnim.pdf>.

59 in the whole country (RDC 2007).²³ The proportion of Bosniaks among these civilian casualties is 95 percent.

The large extent of fatal violence, involving mostly civilians, is striking specially if having into account that the area was rapidly controlled²⁴ and that it remained largely uncontested throughout the war. Furthermore, it did not incorporate the Bosniak-Croat conflict in 1993 neither any other secondary axis of conflict, as it was the case in the north-west.

The massacre of Srebrenica²⁵ in July 1995, where between 7,000 and 8,000 civilians got killed and went missing (Commission for Investigation of the Events in and Around Srebrenica, 2004: 17) contributes saliently to these high numbers, but not exclusively. Even if leaving aside the cases from Srebrenica, the region still holds the highest number of deaths.

The idea of 'dirtiness' was recurrent among Bosnian interviewees from the area (fieldwork interviews 2006-2007) who compared this conflict to the ones suffered in the country during the two world wars. Even though they were clear that atrocities were committed in those previous wars, they emphasized that, from their experiences, this war (at least in north-eastern Bosnia) was fought going 'house to house', targeting families rather than military victories in the battlefield.

²³ These figures include eight more municipalities (Čajnice, Foča, Goražde, Kalinovik, Rogatica, Rudo, Sokolac and Višegrad) which complete the geographic region of Podrinje (in the south). This is the way they have been aggregated in the RDC document consulted.

²⁴ With the exception of a few areas which opposed resistance and came under siege: Cerska, Goražde, Srebrenica and Žepa.

²⁵ Srebrenica was one of the four Bosniak enclaves within Serbian-controlled territory in the eastern part, where large numbers of refugees from the area concentrated. Srebrenica was declared as a UN 'safe area' together with the other remaining enclaves (Goražde and Žepa) in 1993 after the fall of the fourth one (Cerska), whose refugees had in turn fled to Srebrenica. The enclave was overrun by Serb forces in July 1995. The ensuing events are the only instance of the Bosnian war which has been declared an act of genocide by the ICTY so far.

These perceptions are in line with the conclusion of many observers (e.g. Malcolm 1994; UN Security Council 1994c; Amnesty International 1997a; ICG 1997; Romeva 2003; Becirevic 2006; Hoare 2008) and ICTY judgements²⁶ that this region was subject to a strategy (consistent with the May 1992 Strategic Goals declaration) aimed not only at controlling the territory, but also at expelling its non-Serb population, which involved serious war crimes and atrocities, frequently committed by locals.²⁷

4.2. The return process

4.2.1. Drawing borders, and waiting people to go 'home'

The frontline which marked the 'safety areas' for each group during the war became crystallized in the Dayton General Framework Agreement for Peace (GFAP) signed in December 1995 that brought an end to the war. The GFAP thus politically endorsed the two entities emerging from the militarily controlled areas and their underlying ethnic definitions. These are the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina (usually referred to as 'the Federation of Muslims and Croats') and the Republika Srpska (frequently referred to as 'the Serb Republic' or 'RS').²⁸

The frontline, with some readjustments, became officially recognized as the Inter-Entity Border Line (IEBL), a purely administrative demarcation not establishing any restriction whatsoever for freedom of movement. The readjustments in the

²⁶ E.g. Blagojević and Jokić (IT-02-60), Krajišnik (IT-00-39), Krstić (IT-98-33), Nikolić (IT-02-60/1), Plavsić (IT-00-39 & 40/1).

²⁷ Some examples of locals condemned in ICTY judgements are: Blagojević and Jokić (IT-02-60), Deronjić (IT-02-61), Krstić (IT-98-33), Nikolić (IT-02-60/1), Obrenović (IT-02-60/2).

²⁸ The two entities (plus the district of Brcko, under international mandate) share common state-level bodies that have little effective powers.

IEBL provoked further displacement moves, estimated in 80,000 persons (IDMC 2008: 61).²⁹

In the two sides of the IEBL separate (mono-ethnic) army and police structures stayed in place – which furthermore included numerous demobilized paramilitaries and people suspected of war crimes (European Stability Initiative 2007) – as well as separate pension funds, health care and education systems. But while endorsing the war time division based on (predominantly ethnic) ‘safety areas’ and ‘non safety areas’, the GFPA also devoted one whole annex (Annex VII) to the explicit goal of seeing people return to their former homes.

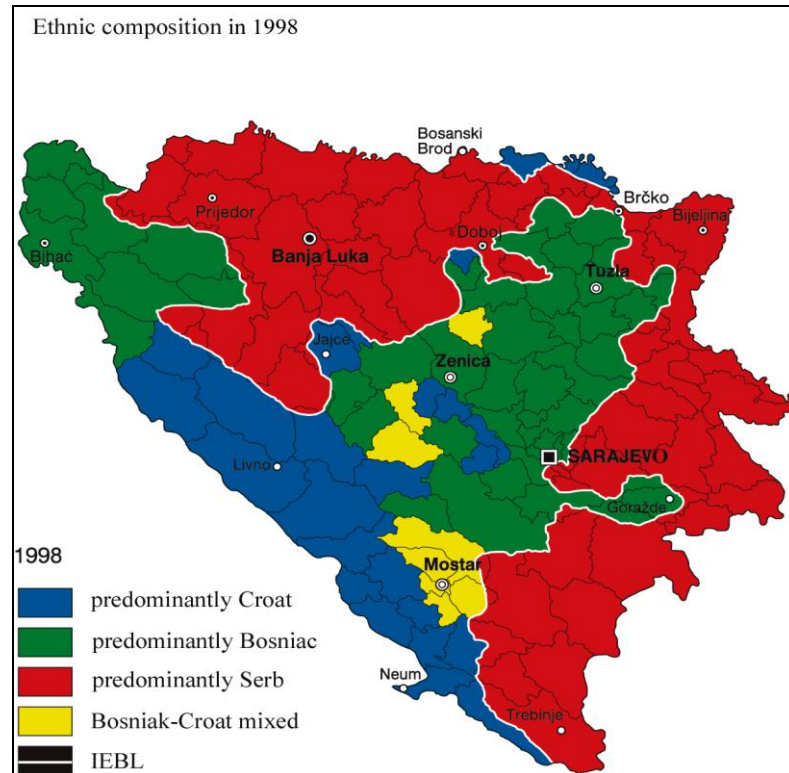
This was a breakthrough in the history of violent conflict settlement: “For the first time, it was stated that not only should refugees be able to repatriate to their country of origin but also that IDPs should be able to return to their *pre-war homes*” (Phuong 2000a: 5; emphasis added), understood as the physical structure in which displaced people lived before the war.

An estimated 2.2 million persons had got displaced, roughly half of the population (Min. HRR BiH 2005: 45). The inclusion of Annex VII sent a strong signal that return was a top priority for the international community (Leckie 2000; Englbrecht 2001; Smit 2006; Davies 2004). And it was so for “the moral and political imperative” to reverse the ‘ethnic cleansing’ embodied in that war division (Mooney 2008: 2). The Annex actually made a special emphasis on the return to ‘non-safety areas’ (following the war

²⁹ These were in great part pushed by the authorities handing over territories, in many cases under the promise of land or house allocation in the other side of the IEBL (Hoare 2008). This was saliently the case in the suburbs of Sarajevo, from where some 60,000 Serbs were pushed to leave by “Bosnian Serb police, paramilitaries and extremists” in a matter of days, while at the same time torching the buildings left behind (UNHCR 2000b: 230-1). A mixture of organised threats, prospects of communal violence and selective incentives would explain these displacements.

division)³⁰ and UNHCR describes the success of Annex VII as directly related to minority returns (UNHCR 2007d: 5).

Map 4.6. Geographic distribution of the three main ethnic groups in 1997-8



Source: OHR (available at <http://www.ohr.int/ohr-info/maps/>, accessed 19 November 2009).

³⁰ Article 2 states: “The Parties shall ensure that refugees and displaced persons are permitted to return in safety, without risk of harassment, intimidation, persecution, or discrimination, *particularly on account of their ethnic origin, religious belief, or political opinion*” (emphasis added).

Note that this moral and political imperative amounts to a restoration claim from a collective point of view, grounded in the understanding that the war had violated the rights of 2.2 million persons to freely remain in their homes based largely on their ethnic identities. This aim presented an obvious tension with the human rights language in which it was anchored, emphasizing the individual's right to choose her destination (i.e. whether to return or not), and her right to get her property restored or to be simply compensated for it (Articles 1 and 4 of Annex VII). This has the obvious potential to detract from return and, in turn, from the goal of reversing ethnic cleansing.

This goal obviously collided in a frontal way with the alleged ethnic cleansing enterprise that it intended to fight. Therefore, it did not only challenge the *statu quo* emerging from war, displacement and GFAP itself, but it also tackled with the core of the conflict, encroaching conflict dynamics. This meant, as it was pointed out in Chapter 2, that strong resistance was to be expected.

This was especially the case with the Serb side and the RS institutional level,³¹ given that the resulting political and demographic division fulfilled the Strategic Goals delineated in May 1992 (calling for the delimitation of the Serb territories in Bosnia-Herzegovina and for separation from the other ethnic groups)³² and they were also an intermediate solution or step

³¹ Croats favouring the unification with Croatia and/or ethnic separation were likely to oppose return, just like the Serb side. Also Bosniaks favouring ethnic separation (i.e. nationalist parties) were likely to oppose return from minorities (ICG 1997: 7). But it is unclear what preference would dominate for them regarding local integration of Bosniak DPs *versus* their return to territories where they had become a minority, given claims over those territories.

³² This position was reasserted by Radovan Karadžić in his opening statements at the ICTY court in March 2010. In his defense Karadžić argued that “the idea was to divide Bosnia in three units using a Swiss model” and that “if Muslims were living in the part that *belonged to* Serbs, or Croats, like in the Prijedor area, the plan was to form cantons” (quoted in BalkanInsight 2010).

regarding a possible reunification with Serbia (Hoare 2008; Romeva 2003).³³

On the Bosniak side, the *statu quo* raised, on the contrary, important restoration claims from a collective point of view. On the one hand, the division emerging from the GFAP questioned the integrity and effective independence of the country (Hoare 2008) for which the Bosniak side had largely fought in the war. On the other hand, large amounts of Bosniaks had been targeted by violence, expelled and dispossessed as a result of their ethnic identity, facing also a *de facto* loss of territory over which they had some claim, such as pre-war demographic domination.

The strategy of the international community focused on guaranteeing the option to return and in facilitating it, following two main lines of intervention:

1. Security issues

In line with the model proposed in Chapter 2, that considers security as a necessary condition to return, the largest and earliest efforts were concentrated in breaking that barrier and enabling the “*physical* possibility of return” (Mooney 2008: 2-3; emphasis added). Although Annex VII committed the parties in conflict to “ensure that refugees and displaced persons are permitted to return in safety, without risk of harassment, intimidation [or] persecution” (Article 2) a lack of political will and capacity to honor such commitment was evident and direct attacks on minority returnees were common place in the initial years (Mooney 2008: 2).

³³ The GFAP allowed for special relations of the RS with Serbia (and of the Federation with Croatia) (Hoare 2008). In line with this argument, current RS Prime Minister, Milorad Dodik has repeatedly called for the celebration of a referendum for secession from Bosnia (BalkanInsight 2008a). Saliiently, he has at the same time become “the staunchest defender” of the GFAP, firmly opposing any reform attempt (Hoare 2008).

Although some returnees did venture to cross the IEBL in their private cars (Amnesty International 1997a), this entailed almost certitude of some physical attack (Mooney 2008: 2-3). During 1996 to 1998 the only relatively safe method to travel across the two entities was using UNHCR escorted buses, but these also got attacked in many occasions by angry crowds (UNMIBH 1997; UNHCR 1999).³⁴

The situation was particularly serious in the RS, where attacks were more frequent and more serious, especially in so called 'hard line' areas, located mostly in the eastern part (Romeva 2003; ICG 1997; HRCC 1999, 2001b).³⁵ There were incidents of arson, grenade attacks, physical assaults, verbal threats and stone-throwing, including fatal casualties and various murders (OHR 1997; UNMIBH 1997). Such assaults were usually carried out by angry crowds, but they were overtly encouraged and condoned by the local authorities (ICG 1997). The police also had a salient role in active harassment (OHR 1997: para.99; Amnesty International 1997a).

Improvements occurred across time, mostly brought about by robust and direct engagement of the international community. This involved saliently the creation in 1997 of the Bonn Powers, which gave the Office of the High Representative (OHR) – the international body overseeing the implementation of the GFAP – the capacity to remove public (and elected) officials, to bar them from holding office in the future and to impose local legislation. In

³⁴ The initial runs were escorted by international military forces and monitored from the air, and in many occasions turned back for security reasons by those escorts (ICG 1997: 38).

³⁵ These included attacks and harassment to international forces deployed in the area (see e.g. IFOR 1996). The situation became such that UNHCR suspended repatriations to RS in July 1996 and it organized the evacuation of Bosniaks from Banja Luka in September (ICG 1997: 35).

1998 the High Representative imposed a common license plate freeing vehicles of visible indications of the place of residence.³⁶

This measure was followed in late 1999 by a significant increase in the removal of obstructive officials. These removals saliently included “members of the police force who were blocking minority returns and inciting or condoning violence” (Mooney 2008: 2-3). At the same time there was also an increase in the number of arrests of individuals suspected of having committed war crimes (*Ibid.*). But UNHCR reported that, although incidents were not a daily occurrence, “they happen with enough frequency to indicate that tensions remain high” (UNHCR 1999: para. 2.46).

The general security situation improved visibly after those initial years (Global IDP Project 2003: 16) partly as a result of a moderate shift in national elections in 2000 (IDMC 2008: 26). Still, in 2002 some 430 return-related security incidents were recorded (i.e. more than one daily); another 155 incidents were recorded during the first five months of 2003. But the number diminished to 135 in 2004 (UNHCR 2003, 2005a).

These incidents included several fatal incidents caused by the explosion of booby traps and landmines. Some salient cases were the killing of a returnee leader in Teslić, the killing of three members of one same family, and the killing of a sixteen-year-old returnee shot dead at her home,³⁷ all of these cases in the RS (Global IDP Project 2003: 16; UNHCR 2005a: 15).

Since 2005 systematic and serious incidents have subsided and they have taken mostly the form of attacks to religious symbols, including graveyards, buildings and also clerics (see a brief review

³⁶ The change was translated into the progressive resumption of commercial bus lines between 1998 and 2002 (IDMC 2008: 92-3). By December 2000, nearly two million IDPs had used the 54 IEBL bus lines (Englbrecht 2001).

³⁷ This occurred on July 11th, in the sixth anniversary of the massacre of Srebrenica. The incident took place in Piskavica, in the municipality of Vlasenica, a neighbour village of Cerska, one of the two research locations.

in IDMC 2008: 70-1). But still isolated personal assaults, attacks on returnee properties, verbal harassment and threats subsist; as well as occasional murders and mortal attacks (UNHCR 2005a; HCHR 2006; US Department of State 2006).

A lenient attitude by local authorities, the local judiciary and the local police regarding most of these crimes and offences remains, especially in the RS (UNHCR 2003, 2005a; US Department of State 2006). Removal of suspected criminal elements, particularly in public employment and in the police, remains a slow process (UNHCR 2007d: 5),³⁸ again especially in the RS (Human Rights Watch 2005: 359-60). War elites have kept and reinforced their power positions and the suspected presence of paramilitary or semi-paramilitary formations has been denounced by international organizations such as ICG and the European Stability Initiative (ICG 2000; Romeva 2003).

In sum, the main source of direct attacks has been mostly scattered (e.g. angry crowds, gang fights, hostile demonstrations, ethnic slurs, particular episodes of personal attacks). There are nonetheless good reasons to argue for the presence and salience of organised threats.

For instance, the police posed a high degree of intimidation especially at the beginning of the process. However, the police only entered in actual confrontation or engaged in violent attitudes with returnees in very isolated occasions, frequently with a markedly local and even personal character. And although harassment and attacks may be argued to have been encouraged and coordinated by government actors, government organizations

³⁸ “Considering the magnitude of war crimes committed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the active role of local administrators in the execution of these crimes, it is unlikely that all war criminals have been removed from local administrative bodies. In cases where officers have been decertified [as a result of being suspect of war crimes], IDPs and returnees have come across them in other central roles in their former municipalities, either as experts or consultants to the Ministry of Interior, in the judicial systems and other central parts of the local administration, including in schools” (UNHCR 2005a:4).

in general have not been a (visible) source of direct attacks (*cf.* Ito 2001).

Nevertheless, much of the observed scattered violence is arguably the product of direct or indirect actions by paramilitary groups with roots in the police or links with radical leaders holding public positions or connected to different government levels (ICG 2000b).

2. Restitution of house property

Article 1 of Annex VII emphasizes return to the home origin, understood as the physical structure of the house, which the individual had the right to be restored (or to be compensated for). Access to these properties was impeded either because they had been destroyed during the war, or because of property issues.

(1) Property issues. Most of non-destroyed real properties, especially in urban areas, were occupied by other displaced persons “in many cases of a different ethnicity, and whose own homes were occupied or destroyed” (Mooney 2008: 2). This was to a great extent coordinated and supported by the authorities in all sides as a solution to the housing problem of the immense displaced population.

But it followed as well a logic of war gains and war compensation (ICG 2002b; IDMC 2008: 199-200): “[The] view that members of other ethnic groups had forfeited the right to their homes was so widespread that ‘it pass[ed] as respectable in political society everywhere in Bosnia’” (Cox and Garlick quoted in IDMC 2008: 200). During and after the war all sides introduced a series of laws declaring these properties abandoned and giving legal preference to the new occupiers over the pre-war ones.

The situation was such that even houses from the majority group members which got occupied as a result of being empty during or after the war were hard to repossess by their pre-war owners. Prevalence was given to the right of displaced families to access an accommodation, especially in the case of socially owned

apartments, in which pre-war rights were not defined specifically as 'ownership' but as 'occupancy' rights (Williams 2004: 15; CRPC 2003).³⁹

Restitution of these properties was considered essential by the international community in order to make possible return and most particularly the reversal of ethnic cleansing. But occupation was essential in all sides as an economic and political asset, as well as an important measure of individual and collective restoration. As a result, despite explicit provisions in Annex VII (Article 1 and whole Second Chapter), restitution was fiercely opposed (CRPC 2003; Davies 2004; Mooney 2008).

By late 1999 the international community conceived a Property Law Implementation Plan (PLIP) which was basically executed between 2000 and 2003. The PLIP involved on-the-site monitoring, daily oversight, statistical reporting, dismissal of non-compliant officials and mayors, and direct imposition of domestic law implementation (ICG 2002b; CRPC 2003; Williams 2004). Evictions were supervised and, if necessary, carried out by the International Police Task Force (IPTF).⁴⁰

The implementation rate increased to 21%, 41%, 69% and 92% in four years (CRPC 2003: 28). By 2003 the international body in charge of the process, the CRPC, had adopted a decision on a total of 259,194 claims, of which 92 percent were confirmed and implemented (CRPC 2003; Mooney 2008).⁴¹ Once again, the

³⁹ There were many 'illegitimate' cases by these standards, with cases of double occupancies or of non-displaced or non-dispossessed persons occupying properties (CRPC 2003). This was a result (and a measure) of the general acceptance of occupancy, which was in itself an incentive for roguery.

⁴⁰ In some cases the legal owners reached an agreement with the occupiers so that they could stay, at least for the time being. In most cases, though, occupiers were evicted or abandoned the place before being physically evicted after receiving a confirmation on the decision and a notice to leave.

⁴¹ The responsibilities of the CRPC were transferred to local authorities by the end of 2003.

implementation rate in the RS lagged behind, with particularly problematic cases mostly in the eastern part (OHR *et al.* 2001).

The PLIP remains as one of the biggest successes regarding the implementation of the GFAP and Annex VII (Mooney 2008: 2-3). But the priority given to its attainment led to the disregard of important related aspects. Although Article 1 of the Annex was explicit about the right to have restored *any property* of which individuals were deprived during war, or to be *compensated* for them, this consideration was cut down in the practice: properties other than houses were not paid similar attention in the repossession processing, and no alternative forms of compensation were actually contemplated. This included business premises and usurped land (ICG 2002b).

And not included in Annex VII was the right to get their employments back for tens of thousands of workers who were dismissed because of their ethnicity in what was “the first step” into the dynamics of the war (Amnesty International 2006).

(2) *Reconstruction.* The other main impediment to the restitution of pre-war houses was house destruction or damage. Despite overwhelming attention and praise of the PLIP, reconstruction was more critical, since 60% of the housing stock was partly destroyed and 18% was completely destroyed (CRPC 2003: 24). Besides, occupation was mostly an urban phenomenon, while reconstruction affected both towns and, most especially, the countryside. UNHCR estimates place the number of housing units that were partially or completely destroyed in 459,000 (roughly the double of repossession claims filed by CRPC). By 2008 approximately half of them (some 260,000 houses) had been reconstructed (*Ibid.*).

The reconstruction gap has various explanations. In some cases there has been no claim for reconstruction at all. In other cases the criteria posed by different organisations in charge of implementing reconstruction projects or standardized criteria by the local Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees (which took over responsibilities in 2003) were not met (UNHCR 2006c). For

instance, pre-war household members had no right to apply for the reconstruction of more than one house, even if more than one house existed before the war.⁴²

But most cases are explained by the lack of adequate funding (ICG 2000a; Global IDP Project 2003). Whereas in the initial years after the end of the war there were plenty of funds available (ICG 1997), donor fatigue and a serious reconstruction funding gap became visible already by 1999 (ICG 2000a: 2, 7). And the longer time it passed, the larger the funding gap.⁴³ This meant prioritizing some cases over others and many were left out (ICG 2002b). The main and most common criteria (standardized in 2003 by the Ministry), besides social status, were the following:⁴⁴

(a) *Proven willingness to return*, which was usually taken to mean permanent or frequent presence in the area of return, preferably including all household members. As a minimum, it was expected that willing returnees would clean the rubble before getting any assistance.

(b) *Type of temporary accommodation* and possession of other properties available for living. Households occupying a property

⁴² For instance, there were cases in which, before the war broke out, a house was ready or almost ready for one of the sons (just married or soon to be married) to move in with his new family. In those cases the new (and grown) family by the time of return had no right to apply for house reconstruction.

⁴³ In 2002 the funding gap between demand for reconstruction and available funds amounted to €600 million: there were 66,500 houses in the waiting list with funds available for between 9,000 and 11,900 units (ICG 2002b). The waiting list included 16,000 already returned families, of which between 4,000 and 7,000 did not get it before the winter. ICG reports the case of returnees in Glogova (in the north-east) who were still in tent villages or crammed together in partially reconstructed since 2000 (*Ibid.*).

⁴⁴ Interviews with staff members and internal documents from IRC, Mercy Corps, UNHCR and Min. Human Rights and Refugees staff (Tuzla 2005-2007).

or who had being evicted and households in collective centres were prioritized over those who rented a property or to whom a property was lent. If the household possessed some other property available for living, normally it would not be entitled to reconstruction assistance.

(c) *Number and ages of family members* who will return. The more and the younger, the more prioritized.

The timing of return was crucial in getting reconstruction assistance. At a later stage of the process, when the funding gap stretched, a self-help methodology was introduced in most reconstruction programs, which consisted in providing only construction materials and refinement works (such as piping and electricity installations). The building labour force was expected to be provided by the beneficiaries, either through their own work, by getting assistance from neighbours or by contracting it. A fundamental criteria became then being willing and able to accept this methodology. This was problematic especially for households composed of just elders or female-headed households (IDMC 2008: 111).⁴⁵

The availability of reconstruction assistance was also largely a function of the organisations that were willing to provide assistance in a given area, and this was frequently subject to the number of people who were willing to return and thus estimations of sustainability and efficiency of the investment effort.

⁴⁵ Although some organizations did provide quotas of key-in-hand methodology (i.e. full construction assistance) for such special cases, this depended largely on the extent to which each organization was willing to compromise a lesser number of houses reconstructed as a result, given the higher cost of key-in-hand methodology and the limited available funds.

4.2.2. *The people in between*

Of the 2.2 million persons displaced as a result of the war, one million are estimated to have stayed in the country, and from the 1.2 million who asked for refugee protection abroad almost half million (446 thousand) have subsequently repatriated, as registered by UNHCR (Min. HRR BiH 2005). This leaves a potential pool of almost 1.5 million displaced people residing in the country and having to take a decision whether to return to their home origin within the country or not.

The information we have on this 1.5 million people is very limited. Still, existing data (summarized in Chapter 3) allows us to approximate some of the characteristics and whereabouts of these populations. For instance, following war patterns, it is expected that a large share of the 2.2 million got displaced when fleeing 'non-safety areas' along war cleavages and that, consequently, a large share of the displaced population in 1996 constituted potential minority returns.

Although we have no data for the war period, neither for the year immediately after the war, the OSCE data from 1997-8 suggest that this was the case.⁴⁶ Taking only cross-IEBL minorities (i.e. Croats and Bosniaks from the RS and Serbs from the Federation) these amount to 64 percent of the registered voters who were not living in their pre-war residences.⁴⁷ This leaves out minority returns at the municipality level within the Federation, which would increase the share of minority returns.

The displaced people have tended to concentrate around urban areas. This trend is a marked one among the remaining registered IDPs (UNHCR 2007d:3), somewhat attenuated in the general displaced population, i.e. non-returnees, who are only slightly

⁴⁶ It is important to note that these data exclude cases of early returns during the war and in 1996. In 1996 there were 253,000 registered returns, of which around 90% were majority returns (UNHCR n.d.). This would leave still 1,950,000 displaced people (out of the total estimated displaced population) of which these data are a reasonable sample.

⁴⁷ Data obtained from Tabeau *et al.* (2009 [2003]: Table 4a).

more likely to be in urban areas (UNDP 2007a:20). But the tendency has been important, since in 1998 the estimate was of 60 percent of the total population living in urban areas, compared to only 39 per cent before the war (UNHCR 1998).

This is partly explained by the fact that countryside housing units suffered a much higher level of destruction, and the majority of the displaced population got accommodated in those abandoned houses and apartments which kept some degree of habitability (Min. HRR BiH 2005: 55).

Occupation was the dominant accommodation arrangement. The living conditions were frequently very unsatisfactory, since many of these housing units had suffered damages before or after being abandoned (e.g. many of them had been burned) and they frequently lacked basic utilities and infrastructures (fieldwork interviews, 2005-2007). By the end of 1999 the PLIP entered into forced and those occupying the over 200,000 housing units that were successfully reclaimed got evicted, most of them between 2000 and 2003. Many of these returned, but many others searched for a new accommodation in their locations of displacement.

Accommodation arrangements other than occupation were in place also since the beginning. Most of them were bound to be temporary solutions. This was saliently the case with collective centers⁴⁸ and 'alternative accommodation' (AA) provided by the authorities.⁴⁹ Living conditions in these accommodations tended to be very poor, especially the more time it passed, due to a lack of funds and the disinterest in prolonging these temporary solutions (UNHCR 2007d:3). They involved a high degree of uncertainty and the need to look for alternatives.

⁴⁸ At the end of the war in December 1995, some 45,000 displaced resided in such centers; the number declined drastically to 18,500 at the end of 1996, and after that it has been gradually reduced (IDMC 2008: 108; citing UNHCR).

⁴⁹ Displaced people holding the IDP status and meeting some other requirements (e.g. low income threshold) were entitled to AA, frequently housing units built by NGOs or contracted private houses.

Employment opportunities were (and keep being) scarce across the country, with an official unemployment rate more or less constantly kept around 40%, somewhat higher in the RS than in the Federation, where salaries are also lower and poverty more extended (UNDP 2002, 2003a; Kappel 2006; IDMC 2008:167). This situation hit particularly hard IDPs (IDMC 2008: 65, 167) with only a marginal percentage employed – around 17 percent in recent years – (UNHCR 2007d: 3; IDMC 2008: 13). This poses an important challenge for sustainability especially in urban areas.

Many displaced households became dependent on pensions and other allowances or entitlements, as well as on remittances from family abroad (UNHCR 2007d: 3). A large portion of displaced people are estimated to have been without *any* source of income through very large periods of time; the estimated figure for 2007 was 20% (*Ibid.*: 3). In a 2002 UNDP survey 49 percent of respondents (from the total population) in the Federation declared that they did not earn enough to meet basic ends. The percentage increased to 67 percent in the RS (UNDP 2002: 21).

Having this picture in mind, it is obvious that the entitlements and benefits that the IDP status provided, such as health insurance and housing, were of great importance for many households. The IDP status entitled to stay in an occupied property until an eviction notice arrived, and more generally it entitled to the right to be provided with AA. The IDP status was also a requirement for accessing a number of assistance programs, most saliently reconstruction programs.⁵⁰

Those considering return confronted differing scenarios depending on whether their pre-war houses were occupied or destroyed. In the case that they were destroyed, they would face all the difficulties for accessing reconstruction assistance it already

⁵⁰ IDMC notes that “it may not be incidental that the number of IDP families (40,000) [in the 2005 re-registration process] corresponds to the number of applications for reconstruction assistance” (IDMC 2008). But, at the same time, both IDP and application for reconstruction assistance were a pre-condition for government-funded temporary accommodation.

noted. And many people found themselves evicted without having their houses reconstructed yet.⁵¹

Since a requirement to get this assistance was being present in the area of return, many did opt to return resorting to makeshift shelters such as tents, partially reconstructed and collective houses, or improvised shacks (fieldwork interviews, 2006-7) (UNCHR 2000). These were frequently men, while other members of the household stayed in the location displacement, either waiting for the eviction or, once evicted, in some other temporary arrangement (UNHCR 2000c; Phuong 2000b). This situation could prolong for many months and even years in some cases.

Besides housing problems, those considering returning to rural areas faced also a total lack of basic infrastructures. On top of the hard conditions in rural isolated areas already in place before the war, war had ravaged basic infrastructures, most saliently electricity and water supplies, as well as roads and communication infrastructure (Mooney 2008: 4). This had been met with the complete abandonment of entire areas for many years, which had made dense vegetation grow in previously cultivable land.

In the case of minority returns, this was aggravated by the resistance and obstacles from public companies, especially in the RS, to provide the reconnection to basic services such as electricity (HCHR 2006; US Department of State 2005; IDMC 2008: 104). This was extensive to basic services such as education and health care, with a total lack of schools and medical centres in the more isolated return areas. In the case of minority returns, this was compounded by concerns about the school curricula,⁵² and more generally about possible mistreatments that the kids could suffer. For this reason, children were frequently left behind in the other entity or they commuted by bus.

⁵¹ At the time of the IDP re-registration in 2005, still 82% of the registered IDPs had destroyed property (UNHCR 2007d:3).

⁵² There were three programs or curricula in place: one in Croat-majority cantons in the Federation, another one in Bosniak-majority cantons and another one in the RS.

The bleak economic situation was also made worse for minority returns, who faced discrimination in accessing to the already scarce employment opportunities, including employment in the public service (IDMC 2008:13; UNHCR 2009d).⁵³ The majority of returns and minority returns have actually taken place to rural areas where agriculture and cattle-breeding provide a subsistence (IDMC 2008: 13).

But their sustainability gets complicated by the failure to harmonise (or to implement harmonized) legislation on health care, pension funds and other social services and benefits across the IEBL (Mooney 2008: 4). Upon return, the legal entitlements derived from IDP status, and in many cases other entitlements recognised in the location of displacement, such as pension eligibility and related health care, were lost (IDMC 2008: 4). For this reason many returnees did not register their return so that they would continue being entitled to health care and other services in their location of displacement.⁵⁴

The situation improved for pensioners in 2000, when they got entitled to maintain their pensions once they returned across the IEBL, as well as to receive health care in their places of return (IDMC 2008: 163-5). But this did not include the health insurance (and other benefits) attached to veteran disability pensions or war victim pensions (IDMC 2008: 163).

The situation regarding education also improved in 2003, when minority children got entitled to choose from the three curricula available for various basic subjects (language, history, geography, literature and religion), provided that there were at least 18 pupils choosing such a curriculum. Still, many parents

⁵³ Discrimination does not only happen at the inter-group level, but also at the intra-group level. Basically, people unsympathetic to or disconnected from the majority parties (and from local prominent figures, many of them war elites or war profiteers) find their access to employments seriously hindered (OHCHR 2003; Romeva 2003).

⁵⁴ As already noted, the monitoring of the IDP and return status in the location of displacement was quite loose until 2000, and keeping the IDP status was then relatively easy.

kept having concerns about possible mistreatments in the school or in the way to the school, as well as about offensive symbols and school names, which were not systematically regulated and monitored until 2004 (OSCE 2004).

For minority returns a generally unwelcoming atmosphere was the rule at the beginning and it keeps being the case in many areas. This has its root at the institutional level, where nationalist parties have dominated since the end of the war virtually at all levels. Ethnic issues have dominated ever since the public debate (IDMC 2008:254) and local institutions – ranging from public companies to the education system or to justice and police officers – have undergone an important process of ethnic homogenization (UN Commission on Human Rights 2005).

These frequently include among its ranks suspected war criminals and perpetrators, well known hard liners and war elites, and displaced people from the majority group, all of them frequently obstructive or openly hostile towards returnees, and likely to make them feel unsafe and uncomfortable (ICG 2002b: 16-8; IDMC 2008: 177).

The provocative use of national or religious symbols, including the construction and maintenance of religious buildings in minority settlements and privately owned land is still widespread in many areas, notably in the RS where attacks on minority national and religious symbols already discussed are also frequent (UN Commission on Human Rights 2005; UNHCR 2003, 2005a; HCHR 2006).

4.2.3. Going home, or not

From the one million estimated internally displaced people, roughly half million have been registered as returned (UNHCR 2008c). From the 1.2 estimated refugees, there have been another

half million registered as returned, which raises the total number of UNHCR registered returns to over one million.⁵⁵

The most salient feature of the return process is that almost 60 percent of all registered returns took place in the first three years after the war, between 1996 and 1998. The flow of registered returns presents a declining trajectory from the opening year onwards, only interrupted by a relative peak emerging between 2000 and 2002. From that point onwards, return declined sharply and it became almost marginal after 2004.

A most important qualification is that the bulk of the massive early returns between 1996 and 1998 were majority returns (85 percent),⁵⁶ that is, most of the persons repatriating or returning in those years were returning (assumingly) to a municipality where their ethnic group was dominant. The return of people in such situation is considered to have been mostly completed in those years, with most of them registered as returning (UNHCR 1998, 2000b).⁵⁷

Minority returns registered a breakthrough in the year 2000, four years after the end of the war. However, these numbers are still much smaller than the ones for majority returns in the initial years. This level was sustained during three years (similarly to majority returns), after which the pace of minority return languished. And since 2004 it became clear that further returns could not be expected in significant numbers (UNHCR 2006c).

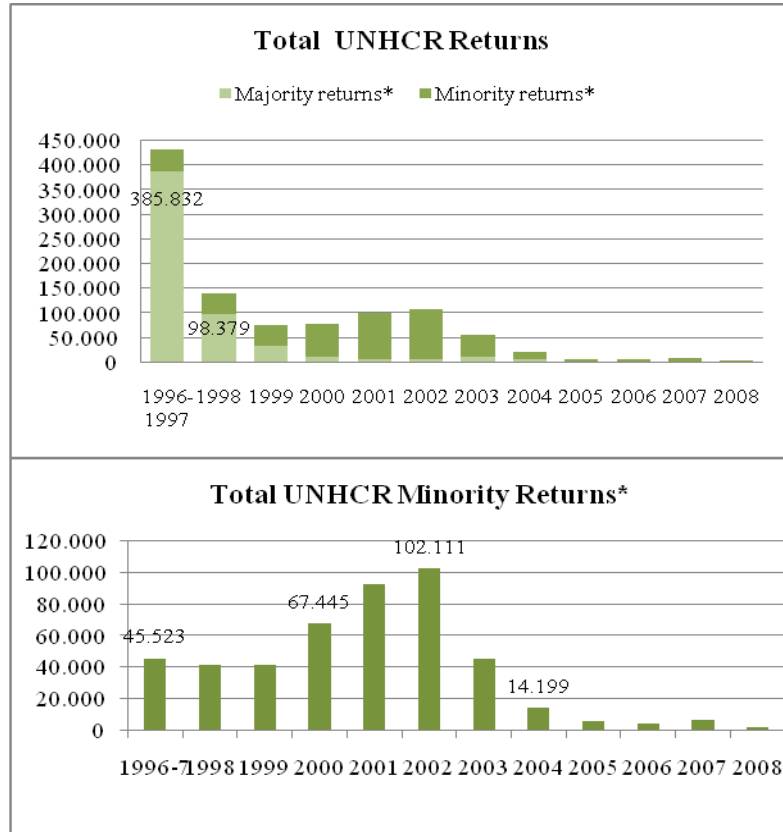
⁵⁵ This and all other data discussed in this section are based on personal compilations from *UNHCR Statistical Packages* (2001-2008) unless otherwise specified. These data are available at: <http://www.unhcr.ba/return/index.htm>

⁵⁶ Majority returns occurred even before, as early as 1994, two years before the official end of the war (Mercy Corps local staff member, Tuzla, October 2005). These returns involved people whose homes of origin were in 'safety areas' but near the frontline and who left as a result of instability but were able to return as the situation got more stable.

⁵⁷ More than 90 percent of all majority returns took place between 1996 and 1998.

The total amount of minority returns by December 2008 was 467,000 – still below the 560,000 total majority returns.

Figure 4.1. Total UNHCR majority and minority* returns (repatriations + IDP returns) in the period 1996-2008

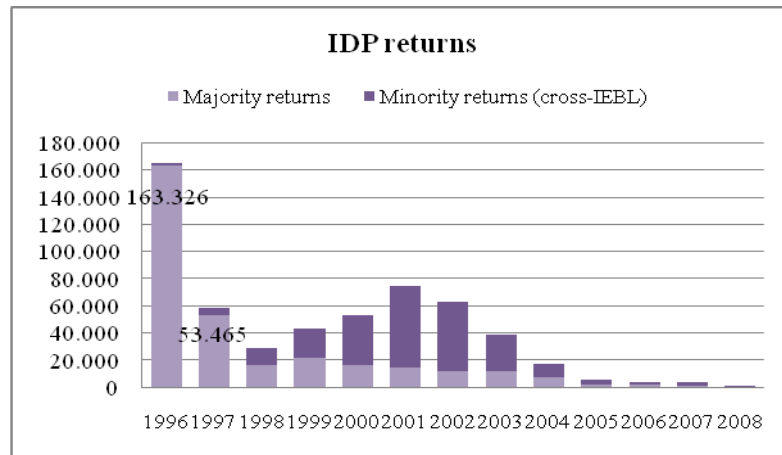


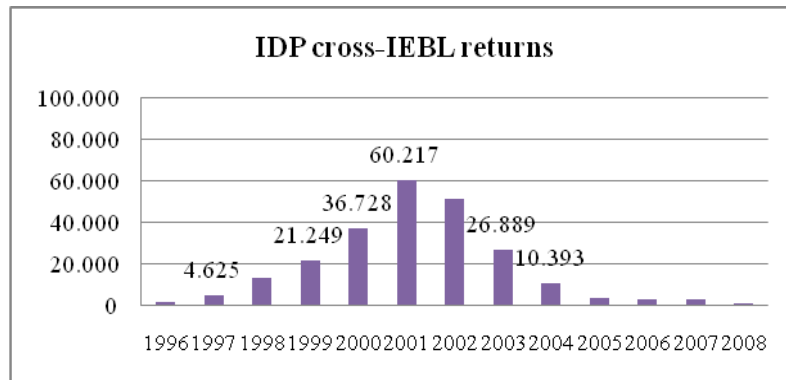
Source: UNHCR Statistics package. Personal elaboration.
 * Minority and majority returns defined at the *municipality* level.
 Note: For numerical data see Annex 4.2 (Tables 2 and 3).

Although accurate rates of majority and minority returns cannot be established (due to the absence of data on the size of their displaced populations), based on the assumption (justified in section 3.1.4) that the share of potential minority returns was larger than the one for majority returns, it is possible to assert that the rate of minority returns is significantly lower than that for majority returns.

The rate would be even lower if having into account the likely inflated nature of the registry data on return (regarding both IDP registered returns and repatriations, see Chapter 3), which is expected to affect the most minority returns. The magnitude of the non-realized minority returns will not be fully and accurately appreciated until a new census is produced (the latest census was carried out in 1991). But based on the existing evidence, the issue of minority returns “remains a major political issue repeatedly raised as not being successful” (UNHCR 2007d: 5), despite having been the major focus of the international community in Bosnia.

Figure 4.2. IDP majority and minority* returns in the period 1996-2008





Source: UNHCR Statistics package. Personal elaboration.

* Minority and majority returns defined at the *entity* level.

Note: For numerical data see Annex 4.2 (Table 4).

Focusing only on IDPs and on cross-IEBL returns,⁵⁸ which are the universe of study in this work, some differences emerge. While the return pattern of IDPs does not differ much from the overall pattern (compare the upper panels of Figures 4.1 and 4.2), it strikes the eye that their cross-IEBL returns in 1996 were almost non-existent and continued to be very marginal in 1997 (see lower panel of Figure 4.2).

In general, the pace of these returns is much weaker in the initial years: only 9 percent of all IDP cross-IEBL returns took place between 1996 and 1998 (as compared to 19 percent in minority returns including repatriations). The overall size of yearly returns decreases in the whole period an average of 15 points.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ These are Bosniaks and Croats returning to the RS and Serbs returning to the Federation.

⁵⁹ Although the pattern of weak cross-IEBL returns in the early years is clear, it must be born in mind that the real figures are likely to have been somewhat higher, since at that point many of the scarce cross-IEBL returns taking place tended to go unreported (see OHR and RRTF 1998: annex 5; ICG 2000a: 5; 2002b: 4; IDMC 2008: 163-5, 244). At that time the registration of returns was far from being comprehensive and

The cross-IEBL returns in those years were “either isolated individuals (usually elderly people) or communities moving collectively” (OHR and RRTF 1998:para.7; see also Amnesty International 1997a). The latter were mostly initiated by returnee leaders (IDMC 2008: 185), frequently with strong international back-up, although sometimes with the opposition of the international agencies due to security concerns (Informant B09 n.d.; ICG 1997). These locally organized returns were particularly politicized, especially by Bosniak authorities, who frequently targeted strategic locations (Amnesty International 1997a; ICG 1997; Ito 2001).

Security concerns by the international community seem to have been well justified, based on the amount and seriousness of violent incidents occurring in those years, and the involvement of the police and local authorities, as detailed in subsection 4.2.1. This was especially the case in the RS, where entity and local authorities explicitly and vigorously opposed the process (Engbrecht 2001; Ito 2001; Hoare 2008). Actually, the overwhelming majority of documented returns to the RS in those years occurred to the de-militarized Zone of Separation (ZOS), a stripe of various kilometres of width along the IEBL (OHR and RRTF 1998: para.7).

These early returns (between 1996 and 1998) went back to desolated areas with virtually all housing units and infrastructures destroyed. They did have a relatively easy access to ready available reconstruction assistance, thus facilitating the filling of this gap. They still faced serious violence and institutionalized discrimination. But, since they were relatively close from the IEBL, they had a readily available safe exit option and they could access basic services such as education and health care, or even

systematic (OHR and RRTF 1998:para.8) and the incentives to keep registered as an IDP in the location of displacement were particularly high given the situation of uncertainty, the hostility by the receiving authorities and populations, and the fact that no efforts had begun yet to harmonize social legislation and social security systems.

work in the other entity. Control and registry of IDP and return statuses were very loose in those years, leaving room for returnees to keep their registration in the other entity and also their IDP status.

Table 4.2. Cross-IEBL returns in the period 1996-2008

	Cross-IEBL returns	Yearly increase	Cumulated cross-IEBL returns	Cumulated %
1996	1.373		1.373	0,6
1997	4.625	3,37	5.998	2,6
1998	13.109	2,83	19.107	8,1
1999	21.249	1,62	40.356	17,2
2000	36.728	1,73	77.084	32,8
2001	60.217	1,64	137.301	58,5
2002	50.970	0,85	188.271	80,2
2003	26.889	0,53	215.160	91,6
2004	10.393	0,39	225.553	96,0
2005	3.412	0,33	228.965	97,5
2006	2.612	0,77	231.577	98,6
2007	2.720	1,04	234.297	99,8
2008	586	0,22	234.883	100,0
<i>Total</i>	<i>234.883</i>			

Source: UNHCR Statistics package. Personal elaboration.

Note: Positive growth rates **in bold**.

By 1999, with earlier returns already more or less established and with the international community making increasing use of the Bonn Powers, returns begun to take place to gradually ‘deeper’ areas away from the IEBL (ICG 2000b; Mercy Corps staff member, Tuzla 2005) usually nearby the earliest sites of return. All these developments put increasing pressure on entity and local authorities to accept and facilitate returns, as contemplated in

Annex VII. Subsequent large-scale moves generally happened when receiving the green light from local authorities.

This did not occur at once in all the territory. Different municipalities and even different areas within the municipalities officially ‘opened’ the return process at different time points. The latest ones did so in 2000 (fieldwork interviews with NGOs staff members and returnees, 2005-2007) when return to places to which return was ‘unthinkable’ even one year before begun taking place (ICG 2000a). In total, 63 percent of all cross-IEBL returns (up to 2008) took place between 2000 and 2002.

Most of these later returns were actually ‘spontaneous’, meaning that they were not coordinated neither closely monitored by any local or international agency. Such spontaneous returns were actually encouraged by the international community and by Bosniak leaders in order to depoliticize the return process and facilitate it.

In some areas, particularly in eastern RS, they kept the tendency not to register their return in order to maintain their social benefits but also in order to keep a low profile *vis-à-vis* the local authorities and population (ICG 2000b). They were returning to not only deep areas (away from the IEBL) but also remote and isolated from the rest of the population (ICG 2000a: 4). These were also devastated areas, frequently with very difficult access and communications. Moreover, for most of these areas there was no donor funding available at the time (ICG 2000a: 7).

One important limitation of the registry data on return is the lack of disaggregated data (IDMC 2008:63). The registration system accounts only for numbers, without information on age or gender, for instance. Only anecdotic evidence from those having a daily contact with the return process on the field (NGOs and agencies) and some survey data exist.

In general, elders seem to have prioritized return and to have returned in larger proportion in comparison with younger persons and younger households (OHR and RRTF 1998:para.12; UNHCR 2007d: 1; IDMC 2008: 170), although there are recurrent reports informing of the return also of young families with school-age

children, especially at later stages of the process (ICG 2000a). A nationally representative survey by UNDP in 2007 revealed that there is a significantly higher probability that non-returnees are relatively young, but there was no inverse value for returnees (UNDP 2007a: 20). On the other hand, around 70 percent of all households maintaining IDP status are female-headed households, and similarly around 70 percent of all remaining registered IDPs are women (UNHCR 2007d).

Consistent with the patterns already identified in the previous sections, the UNDP survey also found that non-returnees are more likely (although only slightly) to be in urban areas, and returnees are more likely to be in the countryside (*Ibid.*: 20). The larger weight of rural return does not have to do only with a larger size of rural displacement, but also with much less frequent urban returns. For instance, return to towns in eastern RS, such as Zvornik, Bijeljina or Srebrenica is almost non-existent. Return in this area and in many others has taken place largely to rural settlements.⁶⁰

In line with this finding, and with the obvious connection with agriculture as a means of subsistence, non-returnees tend to be more unemployed (as compared to inactive) whereas returnees hold the inverse relation (*Ibid.*: 20). And those more willing and likely to return to minority areas (overwhelmingly rural areas) are less skilled, less educated and less resourceful than average (OHR and RRTF 1998: para.12; ICG 2002b; UNDP 2003b: 21-2).

⁶⁰ Interviews with staff members from GTZ, ICG, IRC, Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, Mercy Corps.

4.3. A theory-grounded interpretation of the Bosnian return process

4.3.1. Security-utilitarian model of return

(1) What type of security barrier: Scattered source, groups targeted

The case of Bosnia presents fundamental variation in the types and amount of threat faced by displaced people, which is most helpful in evaluating the reasonableness of the categorisation of threats proposed in Chapter 2.

On the one hand, a rapid and massive return of majority returnees occurred once the threat they faced during the war (i.e. organized government forces and armed groups, and the intensity of their cross-fire) ceased, after the GFAP entered into force. This is consistent with the argument that organized sources of threat are more easily monitored and that, once there is objective ground to expect their cessation, return can be expected in important numbers.

On the other hand, the evidence detailed regarding security incidents in post-Dayton Bosnia confirms the existence of scattered sources of threat (e.g. angry crowds, gang fights, hostile demonstrations, ethnic slurs, particular episodes of personal attacks) that targeted those returning to the 'wrong side' following war divisions, the so-called minority returns, and most saliently those crossing the IEBL to return to the RS.

Smaller numbers of these returns, as well as their escalated pattern of return, are consistent with the elusiveness and uncertainty attributed to the evaluation of scattered threats and to their characterisation as sticky barriers to return. Thus, although the level of incidents and violence was particularly high (frequent and serious) in the early years of return, the weighted probability of being reached by violence could not possibly compare to that during the war (see Chapter 2).

It is important to note that, although the main source of direct attacks was largely scattered, there is evidence to suggest that much of this observed violence was the product of direct or indirect actions by paramilitary groups with roots in the police or links with radical leaders holding public positions or connected to different government levels (ICG 2000b; Ito 2001; Romeva 2003).

However, as it will be discussed in Chapter 5, the returnees and non-returnees interviewed did not perceive the threat they confronted in those terms, which is an interesting finding in itself.⁶¹ Thus, although I initially classified Bosnia as the extended version of type 6 (following the classification developed in Chapter 2, see Table 2.2), which includes a salient presence of armed groups, finally the case has been analysed as the simple version of such type.

Actually, the arguable presence of such organised formations is far from evident, since they (if in place) do not act openly as such. This is a common observed pattern in other types of conflict and violence, such as guerrilla-like and urban guerrilla movements that try to get invisible and confused with the whole population (Kalyvas 2006). Another example is that of riots, where it is difficult to establish the extent to which violence is organized and coordinated, or rather spontaneous and with a scattered origin (Horowitz 2001; Wilkinson 2004).

This strategy offers the double value of invisibility (for those organizing violence), which facilitates the avoidance of punishment or persecution,⁶² and of confusion with the general population, which conveys the image that an important part of the

⁶¹ Some examples of the type of sources identified during the interviews are angry or hostile neighbours, displaced people from the opposing group, young males and drunkards provoking trouble, local level gangs acting, people taking revenge from war episodes, or people involved in war crimes carrying out actions to deter investigations and witnesses from declaring.

⁶² In this case, likely punishments by the international community are avoided, as well as the likely damage to the political position of these actors in many negotiations table.

general population share their motives and positions.⁶³ The different implications of organized and scattered threats for return identified here suggest the possibility that this strategy *also* provides the benefit of conveying (to potential returnees) the perception that a scattered source of threat is in place.

Scattered sources of threat are argued here to pose a resilient and hard-to-tackle level of uncertainty regarding the evaluation of the threat. Their evaluation is likely to be more loosely connected with objective indicators and observable developments, and it is likely to get more prolonged and sustained relative to those objective measures. As a result, scattered-source threats do not require high or sustained levels of violence to pose a substantial threat.

In short, the perception that an important scattered source of threat is in place seems to have the capacity to be a more efficient deterrent of return, given that it requires much less investment in violence, and it furthermore provides the benefits of invisibility and of confusion with the general population.

The high levels of risk and uncertainty posed by scattered sources of threat is accentuated in cases where the members of the opposing group are geographically dispersed and in spatial proximity to members of the targeted group; as it occurs in Bosnia and in most of its areas of return. Such dispersion and intermixing has a particular pattern of micro spatial segregation in the countryside, however, which, particularly in mountainous areas, offers a more advantaged position in order to avoid and deter attacks. The fact that more returns have been registered in rural areas than in urban ones is consistent with this consideration.

⁶³ This is most important for a nationalist ethnic-based program as the one defended by violence in Bosnia. Furthermore, by extending responsibilities at the collective (group) level, reconciliation and attainment of (individual or collective) restoration by the opposed group are importantly handicapped.

(2) *Economic sustainability: Beyond the security barrier*

Despite all the evidence suggesting the existence and the likely impact of the security barrier, it is not possible to attribute automatically the non-observation of return, i.e. the much fewer minority returns in comparison to majority returns, to the presence of the security barrier. Following the survival-utilitarian model of return, much of the non-observed minority returns can be instead (or also) the product of the individuals' utilitarian function pointing towards not returning.

The economic disadvantages of minority returns *vis-à-vis* majority returns arises from the serious prospects they faced of discrimination, i.e. hindered access to already scarce employment opportunities and to basic services such as health care or communication infrastructures (summed up to other factors impinging on economic sustainability).

The lesser amount of urban returns relative to rural ones would seem *a priori* to contradict the economic logic, since rural habitats provide much less economic opportunities and a much lower level of public services and public goods. But the situation gets likely reversed for minority returns. Rural areas, although hardly hit by the lack of basic infrastructures, are more self-reliant thanks to agriculture. Conversely, urban areas have little or no alternative to counterbalance employment discrimination.

Furthermore, the main housing problem in rural areas for minority returns was reconstruction, which has been largely in the hands of international organizations and thus less subject to discrimination. The main housing problem in urban areas was repossession, which was strongly obstructed by local authorities (and by the receiving population), at least until the PLIP entered into force. Even when the PLIP entered into force, housing *per se* was also unlikely to provide enough perspectives of economic sustainability due to job discrimination.

Moreover, in urban areas there were distinct economic incentives facilitating sustainability *in displacement*, and thus likely to detract from return, which were not present in rural areas:

this was provided by an important market demand for urban repossessed properties that made it possible (and even profitable) to sell them or to exchange them. This option was not available in rural areas. Thus, for displaced people of rural origin the only benefit they could derive from their reconstructed properties was actually making use of them, either as a temporary residence facilitating agriculture activities, or as a permanent residence. (Moreover, reconstruction was to a great extent conditioned to actual return, at least initially, unlike repossession). Following this, displaced people of urban origin have been overall in a better position to ensure their sustainability in displacement. This has been the case also of wealthier households in general, which are also found to have returned less.

As pointed out, housing was a salient issue in displacement, especially once the PLIP entered into force in 2000. The majority of the displaced people were occupying a property, which was largely taken to be a more or less safe option until the PLIP arrived. At that point, occupiers found themselves suddenly with the need to provide for an alternative. Wealthier households were more able to access renting or ownership, whereas poorer households had to resort to alternative accommodation or other temporary solutions characterized by very poor living conditions and continued uncertainty.⁶⁴

In turn, although poorer households could make use of these temporary solutions to cumulate resources with which to provide for renting or ownership, in many cases these options were not affordable at all. This readjustment process, especially pressing among poorer households, is consistent with the increased wave of minority returns registered at the time of the PLIP⁶⁵ (see Table 4.2

⁶⁴ In a 1999 survey among displaced people by CRPC, the second most important motivation to return (after the home link, which will be discussed below) was that current housing conditions were “unacceptable” (HRCC 2000).

⁶⁵ It must be born in mind, nonetheless, that this increase in minority returns bears the suspicion that it is partly an artificial product of the

above). Testimonies are not difficult to find stating that “I had not choice but to return; if I had owned enough money, I would have stayed away” (returnee woman from a rural location, in UNDP 2007a: 4).

(3) Time variation: Disentangling effects

From the two points above it follows that it is difficult to disentangle the differential role that the scattered threat and discrimination patterns have in depressing minority returns (and urban ones). However, the impact of discrimination (and of other factors impinging on sustainability) does not seem capable of explaining the escalated pattern of minority returns *vis-à-vis* the rapid majority returns.

The most important developments related to discrimination and sustainability factors (for minority returns) – such as the execution of the PLIP, restrictions in the access to the IDP status as a result of the 2000 and 2005 re-registration processes or the cross-IEBL agreement on pensions – were all concentrated around the year 2000.

Apart from these improvements, which can obviously be related to the acceleration in the growth of cross-IEBL returns that year, the presence of discrimination seems to be more of a constant.⁶⁶ Concerns about discrimination and economic sustainability were already central in 1998, only subordinated to security worries (OHR and RRTF 1998: para.13) and they have

registration method, counting repossessions and reconstructions automatically as returns.

⁶⁶ For many observers, the issue of discrimination has undergone a process of moving from more visible forms of discrimination and mistreatment (i.e. violence at the very beginning) to more subtle ones (i.e. alleging budget gaps for not investing sufficiently in minority returnee areas). But other not so subtle forms of discrimination persist, such as the non-restitution of business premises or lost jobs and employment discrimination generally (ICG 2002b; Amnesty International 2006; IDMC 2008: 91; 2009).

kept being the major handicap to return in the latest years (Kappel 2006; UNDP 2007a; IDMC 2008). In a 2007 UNDP study, participants in group discussions stated, for instance: “If there was a chance of employment in the place of return, I would go there” (man, 25, non-returnee, urban location).

Conversely, security levels seem to have progressively improved across the years, which would mean progressively breaking the security barrier of different individuals. This provides a better basis for explaining the escalated pattern of minority returns. Since the evaluation of the threat is elusive and the distribution of security barriers and security thresholds is unknown, this is still consistent with the fact that security improvements and the timing of returns do not perfectly match.

Security improvements were more marginal in the initial years, with a jump around the year 2000⁶⁷ and then more progressive improvements, the most visible around the year 2005, whereas returns increased at a much faster pace in the initial years, also accelerated in 2000 and then began decreasing in 2002, probably as a result of a ceiling effect, since no more significant returns were expected since 2004 (UNHCR 2006c). In line with this, security threats emerged as the main barrier to return in surveys conducted among displaced people and returnees in the early years (OHR and RRTF 1998: para.13; HRCC 2000; UNHCR 2000a: 327-8) but they have become a marginal worry in the latest times (UNDP 2007).⁶⁸

Another important observation consistent with the determinant role of the security barrier in escalating the return process is the variation observed between those more or less likely to be targeted for violence following the personal saliency dimension identified in Chapter 2. Higher saliency was predicted for those returnees

⁶⁷ An obvious and related explanation for the push in minority returns in the years 2000 and 2001 is the official ‘opening’ of the return process in deeper areas to which return was ‘unthinkable’ previously, basically due to radical security threats.

⁶⁸ By 2006, only 15 percent of minority returnees surveyed were concerned about the possibility of violent incidents (Kappel 2006).

posing more of a threat (in security, socio-political and demographic terms): young males, young households, and very visible leaders or pioneers in the return process. Consistent with this expectation, elders have returned the most and the earliest, as compared to youngsters and to younger households.⁶⁹ And, whereas early returns to the ZOS occurred in a highly visible and politicized manner, and consequently attracted important levels of violence, the later and deeper returns (also more numerous) opted for a low profile and for going as invisible as possible.

Higher saliency was also predicted for those returnees constituting more vulnerable targets: households with children and female headed households. Consistent with this, men have also returned first, leaving behind women and children, and both households with children and female headed households seem to have returned much less and later on.

It must be noted nevertheless that lesser or belated return of all these categories – younger persons and households, deeper returns, female headed households, households with children – also coincides with important sustainability arguments: elders can rely on their pensions and subsistence agriculture better than young households having to provide for their children; ZOS returns were more able to keep accessing services and job opportunities in the other entity; female headed households had the most trouble in accessing reconstruction assistance; schools took some time to get reconstructed.

Data at this level of aggregation do not allow disentangling these two effects. However, the presence of a sticky (and variable at the individual level) security barrier is consistent with existing evidence, and it has the most potential for explaining the scattered pattern of minority returns, underscoring the unrealistic character of the expectations of early and massive return (as contemplated in

⁶⁹ By 2001, “80 percent of minority returnees belonged to social categories that were considered ‘non-threatening’ by the dominant forces in the majority group [which] mainly indicates a predominance of elderly people” (USCR data cited in Jansen 2009: 55).

the Dayton Peace Agreement) in this type of scenario (Mooney 2008: 5).

(4) Indirect effects: Intertwining effects

It is important to note that the fact that the security barrier (and discrimination concerns) deterred return for many minority returnees during various years after the war (most saliently until 2000) is likely to have had some indirect timing effects. Under the assumption of rational individuals, the rapid and massive return of majority returns implies that, for most of them, return was rational (i.e. more advantageous than costly) at the time.⁷⁰ Based on security and/or discrimination concerns, this was clearly not the case for most of minority returnees, who returned only marginally in those years.

It is expectable that in those years, and especially having into account the uncertainty surrounding the possibility of return, displaced people were more likely to develop alternative strategies of subsistence and livelihoods which were disconnected from the return option. This includes investments which are location specific or non-movable, such as land, house or business premises, for instance, or even in some fortunate cases, simply getting a more or less stable job.⁷¹ This would reinforce the arrows pointing towards displacement, and by the moment the security barrier got broken, no return could be expected.

⁷⁰ It should be noted though that many of them did not simply return but actually repatriated in those years as a result of restrictive asylum policies in their host countries.

⁷¹ For instance, some UNDP respondents stated that: “We only thought about returning in the first years after the war; after that it was not really an option” (man, 24, non-returnee, urban location); “The longer you stay, the less likely you are to return” (man, 53, non-returnee, urban location); “It would be difficult to return now; we would have to start out again” (woman, 25, non-returnee, urban location) (UNDP 2007a: 7).

As a conclusion, the evidence seems to confirm the salient role of the security barrier and of calculations of sustainability in the decision to return in the Bosnian case. However, most of the observed variation at this level of aggregation does not allow disentangling the specific role of each of these factors, which roughly work in the same directions: depressing minority returns and most especially urban ones, as well as return from younger persons and households, households with children and female-headed households. But, given the escalated pattern of minority returns, it seems that the security barrier has actually a precedent role in enabling the decision to return, which can then be prevented (or delayed) also by sustainability concerns.

4.3.2. Emotional concerns into the model

Emotions are understood as absolute concerns: something matters – e.g. a threat must be avoided, proximity to a loved object must be attained, or an injustice must be addressed – regardless of other considerations, i.e. ‘no matter what’. These absolute concerns may have nonetheless a larger or a smaller weight, i.e. they may be more or less determinant overall in the decision to return *vis-à-vis* the more reflective security-utilitarian components of the decision. The extent to which these concerns are present and to which they play an important role is hard to elucidate from aggregate level data.

(1) Toleration of the threat: fear in the Bosnian return

In observing the likely presence and role of the security barrier above, it is unclear to what extent levels of *toleration of the threat*, which are expected to be directly related to fear, have a role side by side with different evaluations of the threat. An important piece of evidence consists nevertheless of the fact that many of the registered IDPs remaining in the last years, after the last 2005 re-registration, actually suffered from long-term post-traumatic stress

disorder (PTSD) or severe trauma (IDMC 2008:118). This diagnosis is especially prevalent in households headed by females (70 percent of the remaining registered IDPs). Many of these women are not only war widows and mothers who have lost sons (and in some cases also brothers, father, uncles) but also victims of sexual violence.⁷²

Still, emotions are hardly measurable in these terms, as discussed in Chapter 2. Emotional reactions to the very same circumstances vary across individuals, and different circumstances can also bring about similar emotional reactions from different individuals. In other words, although these figures are suggestive of the presence and likely role of fear, they cannot capture neither proximate its actual distribution and weight.

(2) The drive for home: Love ties (embedded in home links) in the Bosnian return

Love has been defined as the concern for care and proximity with loved objects. Without individual-level data on the presence, characteristics and residence patterns of family and friends, the role of this concern for loved persons cannot be assessed. But existing variations at the aggregate level permit deriving expectations regarding the *drive for home*, understood as the drive for proximity with a place with which a home link exists.

The home link is composed of three psychological processes, all of them intimately connected with the emotion of love: familiarity, attachment and identity. All three processes are likely to have gone disrupted by the processes of violence and displacement, most especially among minority returns.

Minority return areas, most saliently in the RS, are likely to have been affected by high destruction levels, large death tolls and scattering of its population, including friends, family and old

⁷² In a 2004 survey, the ‘continuing effects of rape during the war’ were considered to be the most difficult problem for women by 54 percent of the respondents (Irwin 2004: 5).

acquaintances. At the minimum, their pre-war demographic and social patterns have frequently been radically altered.⁷³ Persistent security threats basically undermine the sense of safe heaven frequently characterizing the home link. And the persistence of the ethnic divide in national political discourse and policies (IDMC 2008: 1), which includes for instance school textbooks and education curricula (Warshauer *et al.* 2004), is likely to make minority returns feel unfamiliar and estranged, detached from or even aversive to the new place, and hardly self-identified with it, even provoking important identity conflicts (Ajdukovic and Corkalo 2004; Corkalo *et al.* 2004; Warshauer *et al.* 2004).

Minority returns are also more likely to have been deprived of an important object of what usually constitutes 'home', namely their houses, i.e. the physical structure to which Annex VII made central reference. In the case of rural returns, these houses were a place and object to which many of them felt particularly attached due to cumulated life experiences, since many of them lived in only one house during their family life, and since most of them built them with their own hands across long periods of time (Bringa 1995: 86).

These houses were also an important component of the self-identity of many rural Bosnians, conferring them the status of private owners, a sense of social worth, and social esteem: "When they lose their house, they lose all they have worked for in the past and much of what they would have lived for in the future" (*Ibid.*: 86).

However, contrary to this expectation of disruption, there is abundant evidence to suggest that the home link with the place of origin is strongly present among potential minority returnees, with

⁷³ Demographic changes can be expected to affect the most minority returns, but testimonies abound as well (mostly in urban areas) in which domiciles from the majority group long for the 'good old times' and for their old neighbors (from the minority group), declaring their preference for them over the new reality and the newly arrived displaced people from their own group, who tend to have in most cases a very different (rural) background (see e.g. Corkalo *et al.* 2004; Stefansson 2006).

strong feelings of nostalgia and homesickness, most especially among returnees (UNDP 2007a).⁷⁴ And it figures prominently as one of the most salient motivations to return among returnees (UNDP 2007a: 4-11; Stefansson 2004; Jansen 2009). In a 1999 survey by CRPC, out of the 63 percent of the interviewees stating a wish to return home, 59 percent cited “the mere fact that ‘that was their home’ as their main motivating factor” (HRCC 2000).

In many of these cases, returning home amounts to a core objective and goal to attain in itself, with other considerations apparently being secondary or not taken into account: “Yearning to go home ‘*no matter what*’ is clearly the main pull factor for the majority [of returnees]” (*Ibid.*: 4; emphasis added).

This ‘no matter what’ seems to defy even security barriers: describing the early UNHCR bus program, the ICG notes that “[the] buses were often filled to capacity and the frequently emotional response of the riders made clear that beneath the surface of the inter-community cold wars, there remains a pool of ‘normal people’ who resist the nationalists’ program” (ICG 1997).

Potential minority returns did not only pack UNHCR buses likely to be stoned, running a high risk to face angry crowds and physical attacks during visits. Many of the people who actually experienced such attacks still insisted in their return, as an elderly Bosniak couple from Banja Luka interviewed by Stefansson: “The elderly couple visited Banja Luka for the first time in 1997,

⁷⁴ Interestingly enough, this seems to be especially the case among Bosniaks, the group object of study here, as opposed to Serbs. Although the home link with the pre-war home and the home drive to return is also identified among Serb minority returns (see e.g. Jansen 2009), research in the area of Banja Luka reveals a “remarkable absence of nostalgia toward homes and places of origin” among displaced Serbs (Stefansson 2006). This extended disruption with the pre-war homes seems to be centred around the issue of identity, and most concretely around group-based identity: “Serb’s antagonism toward the option of return rendered the lost home less meaningful as an object of continual emotional attachment. [...] Serbs felt [...] emotionally attached to the ‘big home’ of Banja Luka and Republika Srpska” (Stefansson 2006: 129).

but on that occasion they were almost beaten to death by an organized group of Serb demonstrators. Nonetheless, they refused to give up the dream of return, and in 2001 they permanently returned to their hometown after finally having repossessed their house” (Stefansson 2006: 116).⁷⁵

The ‘no matter what’ character of the home drive seems to defy above all sustainability concerns. UNDP respondents stated, for instance: “Even though I knew that there were no prospects, I returned” (woman, 40, returnee, rural location) or “It’s better here in a tent, than living there in a villa” (man, 40, returnee, rural location) (UNDP 2007a: 4-11), which goes justified in the following terms: “The sun shines brighter here” (woman, 47, returnee, rural location) or “The heart wants to go where you were born” (woman, 41, returnee, rural location) (UNDP 2007a: 4-11).⁷⁶

These cases are most saliently registered in rural areas, where returning home meant frequently returning to a piece of land covered with rubble and vegetation, without the (destroyed) physical structure of the house. In many of these cases, as pointed out in the sections above, there was a complete uncertainty about the availability of reconstruction assistance (*Ibid.*: 11).

At the same time, in rural areas, relatively segregated and isolated from the majority population, although destruction levels are likely to be high, the reconstruction of demographic and socialization patterns is relatively more feasible than in the newly homogenized urban environments. Thus, the familiarity and identity processes can be expectedly more easily recovered.

⁷⁵ This does not mean that the couple actually felt secure: they received the researcher with a locked door and a distrustful gaze that later on they regretted and justified in terms of everything they had gone through, and as something unthinkable before the war, when their door was always open for ‘*druženje*’ (‘sociability’).

⁷⁶ The motto of displaced people from Podrinje in their meetings in preparation of return was ‘*Nijedna kuća ko svoja, nijedna rijeka ko Drina*’, meaning ‘There is no house like your own, there is no river like the Drina’ (Jansen 2009; fieldwork interviews in Podrinje, 2006-7).

In any case, the presence and relevance of the home link with the pre-war home (at least in some salient cases) has not been sufficient as to counterbalance other factors that have depressed minority returns *vis-à-vis* majority returns. Among the factors that can interact with the pre-war home link and mediate its translation into not returning is the possibility that a new home link might have developed in displacement, with the drive for home thus potentially pointing out into two directions (or in the direction of displacement only). The existing evidence suggests, however, that displaced people frequently did not feel their location of displacement as 'home', with testimonies of estrangement and disaffection, and most especially of lack of identification, dominating especially among returnees (UNDP 2007a: 4-11).⁷⁷

It is important to note that the displacement trajectory of most displaced people has actually been a trajectory of multiple stops, locations and accommodation arrangements (UNDP 2007a: 19),⁷⁸ which in itself detracts from the sense of familiarity, and most likely from the probability of development attachment ties and of becoming self-identified with a given location and physical structure.

Furthermore, host populations tended to be resentful and spiteful towards displaced populations, including frequently verbal abuse (UNDP 2007a: 5-6), basically due to the fact that displaced people were the main receivers of assistance in a situation of general necessity, but also due to their rural origin and different costumes.⁷⁹ This was even more the case with Bosniak displaced people, who were often charged with not having

⁷⁷ As already mentioned a more widespread presence of a home link with the location of displacement, specifically centred on identification issues, seems to be found among Serbs.

⁷⁸ 53 percent of those who declared having been displaced in the 2007 UNDP survey said they had been displaced more than once, and 45 percent that they had got displaced three or more times (UNDP 2007a: 19).

⁷⁹ Bringa (1995:59), YEPP (2009: n.p.); interviews with Amica and ICRC staff members, Tuzla, 2005-2007.

defended as they should have their territories, and who were frequently asked to go back to their places of origin (Cohen and Deng 1998: 28).

Displaced people thus frequently felt as strangers who did not belong⁸⁰ and who had little in common with their neighbourhoods and locations of displacement, and they frequently felt at loss with the different costumes and ways of socializing. All of this detracted from their sense of familiarity and from their possible attachment to the place. In general, displaced people frequently felt their condition of displaced as a stigma⁸¹ which nullified or contradicted their personal identities (UNDP 2007a: 5).

UNDP respondents asserted, for instance: “I was never called by my proper name [...] instead they referred to me as ‘the one from Hasan’s apartment’” (woman, 58, non-returnee, urban location) or simply “I was tired of being [...] called a ‘refugee’” (woman, 45, returnee, rural location) (*Ibid.*: 5).

The stigma of being a refugee contradicted pre-war social statuses. Most saliently, it contradicted the fact that most of those displaced people, especially those of rural origin, were largely autonomous and self-reliant and, very importantly in the case of displaced people of rural origin, home owners. And “[particularly] for the man as husband and father, the house [...] symbolized his social worth; it was the proof of his hard work and commitment to his family” (Bringa 1995: 86).

Thus, the degree of dependency, on which accommodation status and the shock of the PLIP for occupiers had a fundamental impact, and the extent to which they were able to self-provide in

⁸⁰ For instance: “I was tired of being a stranger” (woman, 45, returnee, rural location), “People always think of you as a foreigner” (man, 25, returnee, urban location), “We were not accepted” (woman, 20, returnee, rural location).

⁸¹ “The category of ‘displaced persons’ [in Bosnia] is associated with homeless, impoverished people of an ‘uncultured’, rural background who bring with them criminality and extremism to their new places of living” (Stefansson 2006: 129).

displacement are then likely to have played an important role in the sense of 'home' among many displaced people.

In other words, the home link with the pre-war location is deeply connected with sustainability issues;⁸² and more concretely, with the ability to self-provide and with the provision of stability, as opposed to the uncertainty and frequent disruption faced during displacement. UNDP respondents (2007a: 4-6) stated for instance: "The most important thing is that you are in your own house" (woman, 52, returnee, rural location); "The main motive [for returning] is a feeling that you are in your own property" (woman, 41, returnee, rural location); "Whatever I grow, I know it is mine" (woman, 38, returnee, rural location); "I have my own wood, firewood for free, and I can cultivate my own land" (man, 64, returnee, urban location).

All of this manifests the difficulty to separate the emotional component from the more utilitarian one. This difficulty is also reflected in the cases of non-returnees, in which the presence of a home link with the location of displacement seems to be more extended. On the one hand, many non-returnees seem to have had a better integration and acceptance by the host community, making them feel well accepted and welcome (UNDP 2007a).⁸³ But this may have been the result of higher autonomy levels. Indeed, non-returnees tend to be wealthier and of urban origin, thus facilitating their sustainability in displacement and facing important discrimination upon return.

⁸² Working with Bosnian repatriates in Sarajevo, Stefansson emphasizes their attempts to "re-establish a 'sense of normal life' by creating *sustainable livelihoods*, as well as by finding a place of relational identification and developing a site of cultural attachment" (Stefansson 2004: 174; emphasis added).

⁸³ Importantly enough, this seems to be a circumstance in place from the beginning of displacement, and not the result of a longer stay or of a decision not to return that would alter the individual's attitude towards the receiving community and vice versa, thus creating endogeneity problems. And it seems it has to do partially with personality traits (i.e. degree of adaptability) (UNDP 2007a: 7).

Similarly, younger people are likely to have spent most of their socialisation period outside their household's pre-war homes and in displacement, so they are likely to be more familiar, to have more attachment ties and to self-identify more with the location of displacement than with the pre-war home, at least in comparison with older people.⁸⁴ But they are also more likely to have developed skills appropriate for that environment, thus improving their sustainability prospects in displacement, and detracting from those prospects upon return to, say, more rural areas.

In all these cases, the sustainability component and the emotional component of the drive for home get intermixed, and in many of them they also overlap with variation in security issues. Longitudinal variation cannot help disentangling effects either. The home link with the pre-war home can be expected to have improved overall with security and sustainability improvements upon return, which would make the drive for home consistent with the longitudinal patterns of return already identified. Similarly, the home link with displacement, based mostly on a better degree of integration, is likely to have been reinforced by the indirect timing effect of the security barrier and discrimination concerns, thus overlapping also with this effect.

But the evidence documenting the presence of the home link with the pre-war home origin, especially among returnees, and the presence of a home link with the place of displacement especially among non-returnees and younger people, is important in confirming the relevance of the drive for home as a component of the decision to return. However, it is not possible at this aggregate level to determine the specific weight of this component *vis-à-vis*

⁸⁴ This is not to imply that younger people cannot develop such home links. Many are constantly talked about the place of origin. This, together with the warm feelings expressed by their loved ones, the load of memories and information constantly conveyed to them, the construction of their social identity based on it, frequent social contact with people originating from the same area, and sometimes even frequent visits to it, may all contribute to a sense of familiarity, attachment and identity.

other considerations, that is, whether it played a determinant (or even leading) role in the decision to return or not, or whether it just accompanied other factors pointing in that direction.⁸⁵

The UNDP study of 2007 reached the conclusion that returnees seemed to have been mostly driven by this kind of emotional motivation, whereas returnees seemed to be more calculative – that is, in the model here, for returnees security and utilitarian considerations seemed to be more determinant. However, it is difficult to assess and to validate this assertion, both for returnees and for non-returnees, without taking into consideration the whole decision structure of each individual.

(3) The drive for restoration: Anger or the concern for justice in the Bosnian return

Anger has been defined as the concern to undo some perceived injustice, and it is directly connected with the drive for restoration – understood as the drive to ‘undo’ displacement and other related injustices. The precondition for this drive to be in place is not only the presence of a restoration claim, but also the perception that it will be (better) served by returning (or by not returning).

(a) Restoration claims at the individual level. Restoration claims in Bosnia may be simply aimed at undoing the fact that the individual and her household were expelled or forced to leave (UNDP 2007a:8). But this is very frequently connected with related losses and damages, such as dispossession of properties – clearly connected with sustainability issues – or the loss of

⁸⁵ A reasonable suspicion is that in some of these cases the clutching to the home drive might amount to a rationalization mechanism for justifying a decision based instead in the failure to stay in displacement due to sustainability or even legal issues (in the case of refugees). However, the emergence of this drive is robust across different scenarios and time periods, using different instruments and frameworks of observation.

'home', as it has just been seen, following the logic that: 'this is my home and nobody has the right to force me away from it'.

When the drive for restoration is connected to the recovery of 'home' (understood as the pre-war home) or to simply undoing the injustice of being expelled, it seems to have been quite powerful among some returnees and it may have helped breaking security barriers and downplaying sustainability issues, as in the case of the Serb elderly couple above (UNDP 2007a). But, as in the case of the home drive, it is difficult to assess to what extent it was a determinant (or even a leading) motivation rather than simply accompanied other components of the decision.

When the drive for restoration is (also) connected with sustainability issues, such as repossession, reconstruction, or social position and labour status, it seems *not* to have been translated into return necessarily. This is partly due to important constraints for the attainment of many restoration claims.⁸⁶ But it is also due to the fact that the losses and damages to be repaired do not necessarily require of return, and they might be better repaired by not returning.

For instance, restitution of real estate property is important in satisfying the moral claim of restoration, but it is also fundamental in terms of repairing important losses and damages, most fundamentally to economic sustainability, as well as to home links. The regained control and free handling of these properties improved in most cases the household's sustainability and it could help the fulfillment of the drive for home. But, as just seen above, both sustainability and the drive for home might be pointing out towards displacement rather than towards return.⁸⁷ Thus,

⁸⁶ Some of the restoration claims put forward by UNDP respondents were "to return people to the positions they had before the war" (woman, 52, returnee, rural location) and to "re-open factories and put UN people in charge[to avoid discrimination]" (man, 60, returnee, rural location) (UNDP 2007a: 22).

⁸⁷ In Stefansson's words, "although repossession of pre-war housing was regarded by displaced Bosnians as important for reasons of morality, justice, and economic rehabilitation, sustainable return usually also

restoration connected to property restitution is not necessarily connected with return. Property restitution will lead to return only if sustainability and/or the drive for home point in that direction.⁸⁸

In sum, even if restoration claims at the individual level seem to have been present, their role in the decision to return has been mostly dictated by either the direction of the home drive or by sustainability concerns, none of them necessarily pointing in the direction of return.

(b) *Restoration claims at the collective level.* Restoration claims made from a collective point of view are not directly connected with the sustainability dimension, neither so clearly with the home link as such, but rather with self-affirmation of the collective identity through some perceived attack or collective grievance: ‘they do not want us, but they do not have a right to expel us from here’. A 1998 survey among displaced people concluded that “the determination of minority displaced persons to return to municipalities where they were pre-war majorities (or large minorities) seems often premised on a desire to alter the political control of the return destination” (OHR and RRTF 1998: para.12; see also Jansen 2009: 46).

These claims are likely to be the most strongly present among Bosniaks from the RS, where the dominant position during the war favored partition and separation from other groups, a position confirmed by post-war survey and field data.⁸⁹ In the 1998 survey,

demanding access to jobs and other sources of livelihood [...]. This, however, meant that [...] ‘sustainable *relocation*’ had eventually come to be the desired goal.” (Stefansson 2006: 117; emphasis added).

⁸⁸ The disconnection between repossession/reconstruction and return has actually become more and more evident with time (UNHCR 2007b; Smit 2006).

⁸⁹ Based on a 2007 survey, being Orthodox and being from the RS have the strongest effect on the probability of holding an ethnically exclusive identity, i.e. identifying exclusively with their own ethnic group and rejecting the Bosnian citizenship’s identity (UNDP 2007a: 49-50).

a large majority of displaced Serbs (55 percent) intended to relocate within the RS (or otherwise to go to third countries), and less than one third (23 percent) intended to return to their places of origin. In contrast, 80 percent of surveyed Bosniaks declared their wish to return and only 7 percent stated a clear preference for relocation in the Federation or somewhere else (OHR and RRTF 1998: para.12).⁹⁰

Although other factors might have played a role in shaping these preferences, Stefansson finds that, whereas Bosniaks generally articulate an 'ideology of return', most Serbs stick to an 'ideology of remaining' and express a strong desire to settle permanently in the RS (Stefansson 2006: 128; emphasis added).

Serb reticence to return to the Federation is the more remarkable having into account the Federation's clear advantage over the RS in economic terms. By the same token, the dominant wish among Bosniaks to return to the RS is also remarkable, moreover having into account the strong obstruction encountered to it, including serious security threats and serious discrimination (ICG 1997: 38; UNMIBH 1997; CRPC 2003; IDMC 2008; Hoare 2008).

But evidence points out that return in these terms is precisely seen as a challenge against all those imposed constraints (UNDP 2007a: 8). As a respondent in the UNDP study put it: "[A main motive to return is to] show them that they have not succeeded in creating a mono-ethnic area. That would be a motive for returning" (man, 24, non-returnee, urban location) (UNDP 2007a:

⁹⁰ In 1999, 76 percent of the displaced people from the RS (mostly Bosniaks) expressed a wish to return, for only 34 percent of the displaced people from the Federation (mostly Serbs). The percentages were 74 and 16 percent in 2000 (HRCC 2000, 2001a). In another important regard, the attribution of war blame and responsibilities also varies sharply. In a 2004 survey, 68 percent of Bosniaks placed Serbs at the top of the list, followed by the international community, and only 8 percent allocated themselves a large share of the blame. Serbs blamed mostly the international community (66 percent) and 23 percent allocated themselves a large share of the blame (Irwin 2004: 4).

8). However, it remains unclear to what extent these claims have actually translated into return decisions.

This type of motivation was the most obvious in the strongly politicized early organized returns to the ZOS (ICG 1997; OHR and RRTF 1998; ICG 2000a; Ito 2001). Although clearly political interests were behind such moves, the collective restoration claim on which they were founded was arguably an important motivation for those following them. Still, aggregate data do not permit to evaluate the extent to which these restoration concerns were actually leading the decision or whether they rather accompanied other considerations also pointing towards return.

In conclusion, the intermixing of emotional concerns with the security and the sustainability components of the decision to return make it hard to disentangle the different effects. There is supportive evidence for the presence of all the identified emotional concerns, but evidence suggests a relevant role only for fear, the drive for home and the drive for restoration at the collective level.

For all three there are salient cases in which emotional concerns have possibly played a leading or a most relevant role in the decision: severe cases of trauma seem able to produce a decision not to return on its own; a salient home link with the pre-war home (and a related restoration claim) seem able to clearly dictate a decision to return, regardless of security and sustainability considerations; and there is room for considering such a role for collective restoration claims, especially at the beginning of the process.

Based on this, and although the fundamental aggregate level variation in the amount and timing of minority *versus* majority returns seems to be largely explained by security and sustainability issues, the presence of emotional concerns seems to be confirmed, as well as their potential for influencing the decision to return. It is likely then that, as a minimum, emotional concerns are capable of playing a role in reinforcing or counterbalancing security and sustainability considerations. And they could play a decisive role when the direction of these arrows is unclear – i.e. when the

security barrier gets broken but the utilitarian function does not clearly point to either return or displacement.

It is not possible at this level of aggregation to gauge the role that emotional inputs may have at the behavioural level. And, even more clearly, it is not possible to assess their more subtle cognitive inputs. In other words, individual-level data targeting each of these components and trying to distinguish them are required.

CHAPTER 5. RETURN TO THE DRINA

5.1. The cases of Cerska and Križevici¹

In this chapter I present the results from the sample of 62 households produced among the pre-war population of the locations of Cerska and Križevici (see Chapter 3 and Annex 3.1) in order to analyze the plausibility and adequacy of the proposed model. In this initial section I present background information about the context in both localities and the basic descriptive statistics of the sample obtained. In section 5.2 I discuss the proposed components of the utility function of return leaving aside security assessment. In section 5.3 I incorporate these security assessments, completing what I have called the utilitarian model of return.

¹ Data in this section relative to the two locations have been gathered and cross-checked through interviews with key actors (see Chapter 3 and Annex 3.1). They have been further cross-checked and supported with the testimonies of returnees and non-returnees and through observant participation. Population data and data on the municipalities and the region for the pre-war period are based mostly on the 1991 census, unless otherwise specified. These data are available at: <http://www.bhas.ba/new/census.asp?Pripadnost=19&mode=dark> (accessed 1 April 2010) and <http://www.fzs.ba/Eng/population.htm> (accessed 1 April 2010).

5.1.1. *Background*

Cerska and Križevići are located in the north-east region of the RS, in the region of Podrinje, along the natural border with Serbia, the Drina River. This is a mountainous area without major industries neither a major agriculture sector.

The two pre-war municipalities to which Cerska and Križevići belong – Vlasenica (nowadays divided into Vlasenica and Milići) and Zvornik – are eminently rural: between 70 and 80 percent of the population lived in rural habitats in 1991. Most households in the region had nonetheless mixed livelihoods before the war (IRC 2005). Breadwinners tended to be unskilled or skilled labourers, from bricklayers to welders, carpenters, electricians, car mechanics or lorry drivers (Bringa 1995: 51) who entered contracted labour all over the former Yugoslavia² in a commuting or seasonal mode, while other members of the households stayed in the village in charge of small-scale farming activities – growing vegetables, taking care of livestock, exploiting the forest (Jansen 2009: 46-7).

Cerska MZ encompasses approximately 60 km² of steep mountains with difficult access and terrible roads. It was known before the war as one of the poorest and most illiterate areas of eastern Bosnia, handicapped by its geographical isolation and poor infrastructures. Farming activities were seriously limited by the complex topography and the bad quality of the soil, the most salient activity being the production of plums, apples, nuts and wild raspberries. During the 80s, and right before the war, the area was experiencing some improvements: after getting electricity in the mid-1970s, the area got an ambulance and various bus lines.³

Križevići MZ, located forty minutes to the northwest of Cerska, is also a hilly but flatter area concentrated in fewer square kilometres. Križevići is also closer to the main road, and the road

² Many of them ended up working some periods abroad, in other non-aligned or socialist countries, or in Germany.

³ Interview, former MZ representative, April 2007.

in the village is asphalted and in good condition up to almost every hamlet. It is closer to the regional centre, the town of Zvornik, where there were opportunities for employment in various factories and in commerce.

Map 5.1. Municipalities of the north-east region of Bosnia-Herzegovina after 1996



Source: UNHCR. Author's elaboration.

Its geographical position, and better and easier communications, importantly facilitated and encouraged access to

higher education levels in Križeviči. Flatter terrain, better access to markets and good quality soil also facilitated agriculture activities. In the years before the war, the area underwent an important mechanization process with the acquisition of 53 tractors.⁴ Overall, Križeviči households enjoyed a higher socio-economic status than those in Cerska.

Both Cerska and Križeviči were virtually all-Bosniak areas – 99 and 81 percent of their population was Bosniak. But both MZs neighboured various Serb and mixed villages and MZs. Serbs were thus part of the *komšilik*. They did not only share the physical space and common infrastructures, such as public transport, but also schooling, health care, markets, public services, and jobs, often working together in the same factories and firms (Bringa 1995:51; Jansen 2009: 46).

The population in the two areas was dispersed in multiple hamlets scattered across hills and mountains. The MZ of Križeviči was composed of two villages: the large Bosniak village of Križeviči (2310 inhabitants), composed of 8 sub-villages and hamlets, and the smaller Serb village of Kitovnice (621 inhabitants). The MZ of Cerska was composed of three Bosniak villages, Cerska (1409), Gobelje (227) and Rovaši (1236), encompassing over 10 sub-villages and hamlets. These hamlets are a basic social unit composed of first and close neighbours in a place where the next hamlet is usually kilometers away.

Towns and villages in the region suffered a fierce violent campaign in April 1992 and they came rapidly under Serb military control. Civilians were hardly hit by military operations, round ups, summary executions, disappearances and detention camps. All of the Bosniak population fled, was deported or perished. A large proportion of households were affected by death or disappearances (Jansen 2009). Križeviči was controlled by the Serb forces in June 1992, after various weeks of resistance. Before that, most of its population had fled towards Bosniak-controlled

⁴ Interview with MZ representatives, January 2007. All of these were looted when the population fled.

territory. The death toll in Križevíci amounted to over one hundred persons, half of them civilians – most of these (35) were elders who stayed behind and did not flee the area.⁵

The area of Cerska opposed strong resistance, helped by its extremely rough topography. The area came under siege for one year until it finally fell in March 1993. Most of the population had remained and they fled as a refugee column towards the neighbouring enclave of Srebrenica, which was also under siege until July 1995, when it was overrun by Serb forces. Women and children were sent to Bosniak-controlled territory, but men were rounded up and massacred. An important part of the male population tried to escape through the mountains, and some of them reached the Bosniak-controlled territory (mostly through Tuzla airport) after weeks – and in some cases after months – walking and hiding through mountains and forests, without food or means to orient themselves. The death toll for Cerska was of hundreds of persons, most of them civilians.

The majority of the population from this region had the area of Tuzla as their destination when escaping.⁶ Those remaining in Bosnia found accommodation mostly around the town of Tuzla, in the current Tuzla canton in the Federation.⁷ In this area several hundred housing units were built or rehabilitated as collective centres and alternative accommodation (AA). But the bulk of the displaced population occupied houses owned by Serbs who had also got displaced (Jansen 2009: 48; see UNHCR 2003), mostly

⁵ Interview with MZ representatives, January 2007.

⁶ It is noteworthy that various interviewees, especially from Cerska, stated the same idea: “War was over, for me, when I reached Tuzla (July 1995)”. This area was the closest Bosniak-Croat stronghold. It was close to the frontline but under relatively firm military control, and it was connected with the Western part of the country and Croatia, which was the main door for becoming a refugee abroad in that side of the frontline.

⁷ Some got subsequently re-accommodated in the Sarajevo canton, especially after the signing of Dayton, when tens of thousands of Serbs left the Sarajevo suburbs.

from rural and semi-rural habitats around the towns.⁸ In these rural and semi-rural areas there was land available to cultivate, although houses tended to be burned, seriously damaged or looted.

In the years of the war and after the signing of Dayton, countryside areas in the north-east region, including Cerska and Križeviči, got subject to thorough physical destruction of houses and infrastructures. Houses were looted, torched or mined, sometimes in several occasions. The area also received a massive influx of Serb displaced people during the war, and especially after the signing of Dayton. In Križeviči, only the hamlet in the lower part – Čektali – was not destroyed, and houses got occupied by Serb displaced people, mostly from the Sarajevo area.

The ethnic breakdown of the population got radically altered due to the outflow of Bosniaks and the inflow of Serbs into the area (UNHCR 2001a: 54).⁹ In 1997-1998 it was estimated that 97 percent of the population in Zvornik and Vlasenica, and 99 percent in Milići were Serbs. The proportions of Bosniaks were 6%, 2% and 0% (Tabeau *et al.* 2009 [2003]: A1.Table1).

The north-east region includes some of municipalities considered as 'hard line' by the international community, among which Zvornik, Vlasenica and Milići are counted (UNHCR 2001a: 54). These are municipalities in which Serb radical nationalists

⁸ Urban apartments were also vacated and occupied, but urban Serbs from this area had not left *en masse* as rural Serbs who faced direct attacks to their villages.

⁹ The municipality of Vlasenica was divided into two at the beginning of 1992 – under Serb initiative and with Bosniak conformity. The southern part became the municipality of Milići, encompassing roughly half of the original total population. The MZ of Cerska got divided between both municipalities: the villages of Cerska and Gobelje, encompassing around 60 percent of the MZ population remained in Vlasenica. The village of Rovaši, encompassing around 40 percent of the MZ population became part of Milići municipality. The resulting ethnic breakdown in Milići municipality was 49% Bosniaks and 49% Serbs. In the remaining of Vlasenica Bosniaks amounted to 61% and Serbs to 36% of the population.

dominate public positions and have been particularly active in obstructing the return process.

In these municipalities security incidents were particularly frequent and serious, and condoned by the local authorities (Romeva 2003; ICG 1997; HRCC 1999, 2001b; UNHCR 2003, 2005a; US Department of State 2006);¹⁰ there was a salient presence of suspected war criminals in public employment or power positions (ICG 2000b; Human Rights Watch 2005: 359-60);¹¹ obstruction to police reform or property restitution have been particularly serious, as well as difficulties in getting re-connection to utility supplies (OHR *et al.* 2001; UNHCR 2001a; ICG 2002b; HCHR 2006; IDMC 2008: 104); the predominant hostility towards return also made concerns about education and health assistance particularly salient in this area (ICG 2000a, 2002b).¹²

These hard-line areas have also become prominent by attacks to important Bosniak symbols and rituals of reparation, such as incidents preceding or following the commemorations of the fall

¹⁰ A most salient case was the killing of a sixteen-year-old returnee girl who was shot at her home through the window in the MZ of Piskavica, very close to Cerska in the municipality of Vlasenica. Incidents included also attacks and harassment to international forces deployed in the area in the initial years of return (see e.g. IFOR 1996).

¹¹ In a non-comprehensive report by the International Crisis Group in 2000, the think tank identified prominent cases of public figures with “questionable war records”, i.e. suspects of war crimes (International Crisis Group 2000: ii). The report pointed out three salient cases in Zvornik and four in Vlasenica. In Zvornik, one of them was a member of the assembly elected in 2000 and another one was a top-rank police officer up until 1998. In Vlasenica, one of the public figures was the director of the largest employer in the region (*Boksit*); a second case was an armed security guard in the municipal court (International Crisis Group 2000: 61-3).

¹² Partly as a result of it, rough estimations in 2006 were that 60 percent of the Bosniak returnees to the area had no health insurance at all, as a result of losing their rights in the Federation (personal communication, *Vaša Prava* staff member, October 2006).

of Srebrenica in the Potočari memorial (Knezevic 2005; Society for Threatened People 2008; Latal 2009),¹³ or the opposition by the authorities and by hundreds of persons to the collective burial of the victims of the massacre in the *Vuk Karadžić* school in Bratunac, which finally took place in May 2007 (Jelenek 2007).

The unwelcoming environment for Bosniak returnees is made visible for instance through Serb nationalist symbols that can be easily found along any main road, such as Serbian flags or graffiti in road signals depicting the symbol of the four Cs – a nationalist symbol calling for the unity of all Serb Orthodox Christians. Radical nationalist symbols and messages can also be found in town buildings and village houses, such as prominent posters, and demonstrations honouring radical Serb nationalist leaders accused of war crimes take place with regularity (IDMC 2008: 72).

Other powerful symbols can be found in public and private land plots, where mosques have been demolished to build up parking lots, and where Orthodox churches have been built up in private Bosniak properties or in the middle of all-Bosniak villages.¹⁴ The main road crossing this area – from Tuzla to Zvornik and down to Milići and Vlasenica – is flanked by mass grave sites from the Srebrenica escape route.¹⁵ Once you cross the

¹³ For instance, “On 12 July 2007, a day after the 12th anniversary of the massacre and the burial of a further 465 victims, a group of men dressed in Chetnik uniforms marched the streets of Srebrenica. They all wore badges of military units which committed the massacre in July 1995” (Society for Threatened People 2008: 2). The sixteen-year-old girl killing Piskavica took place on July 11th 2001, also in the anniversary of the fall of Srebrenica.

¹⁴ Some examples are found in Zvornik town, the village of Đivić in Zvornik municipality, and the village of Konjević Polje in Bratunac municipality, just a few kilometres away from Cerska and where kids from Cerska are sent to school after 4th grade; the church is actually in the way to the school.

¹⁵ The two sites where the biggest mass graves have been found are Crni Vrh and Snagovo, the first one is a peak that dominates the view during kilometres, and the second one is just by the road.

IEBL from the Federation towards the RS, immediately on the left hand it is located the Memići memorial, where Bosniak victims from the area of Zvornik are buried. And schools in the area which were used as detention camps and which were scenarios of killings and massacres keep receiving children today.¹⁶

The whole north-east region, together with other rural areas in the RS, is among the most economically depressed areas in the country. Most of the already scarce factories and industries have either closed down or reduced their production capacity significantly, and Bosniaks have difficult access to those rare employment opportunities. The disappearance of the Yugoslav labour market and a strong visa regime imposed on the country make it impossible to access the type of contracted labour which was predominant in the area before the war, especially with the traditional commuting mode. As a result of it, farming, besides construction work, has become central to survival, supplemented in most cases by “tiny and delayed pensions, humanitarian aid and remittances” (Jansen 2009: 48). This left Križevići in a relatively advantaged position to that of Cerska, since in Križevići there was a previous history of agriculture-based economies and natural conditions are also more favourable to it.

On top of the depressed economy situation, being included in the list of ‘hard-line’ municipalities entailed excluding the municipality from any type of international aid other than humanitarian aid (amounting basically to reconstruction assistance for house). Zvornik, Vlasenica and Milići were all considered hard-line (UNHCR 2001a: 54). The first one to abandon the list and to begin receiving international aid was Milići, which opened the door to returns in 1999 (UNHCR 2000d:n.p) and developed an increasingly cooperative attitude, partly led by the necessity to reach agreements and coalitions with Bosniak representatives. Milići is also one of the most economically developed municipalities in the RS, thanks to the revenues it receives from

¹⁶ Such as the primary schools in Bratunac or in Grbavci (located in the entry point of the road leading to Križevići).

the bauxite mine and the now privatised firm *Boksit*, which is the main source of wealth and employment in the area. Zvornik, a much larger municipality, follows suit, with a larger industrial and commercial sector. Vlasenica stands out in the opposite extreme, as one of the most depressed municipalities in the region (UNHCR 2001a: 54). Vlasenica was also the last one to abandon the 'hard-line' list.¹⁷

Reconstruction assistance and other types of humanitarian aid were also indirectly conditioned by the 'hard-line' character of the municipalities, due to the requirements of safety conditions imposed by international organisations and to the criteria for getting reconstruction assistance discussed in Chapter 4. In the initial years after the signing of Dayton, when the most funds were available, these went largely to majority returns to or within the Federation (ICG 1997). When return activities began to the deeper north-east areas of the RS, among which Križevići and Cerska are included, there was no funding available for these areas (ICG 2000a).

Bosniak parties and displaced associations worked in planning collective return and some of them succeeded in securing some foreign funding (Jansen 2009). This was the case of Križevići, whose local representatives were strongly organized and had actively worked in the earlier return process to the ZOS area and thus they were well connected with available donors and organisations. Križevići also met most of the requirements, saliently a high number of people willing and planning to return.

But, when most of these deeper returns actually undertook return activities, they only had some vague promises that funding would arrive if they initiated the return and stayed in the area (UNDP 2007a). By that time the funding gap was growing and many areas and households were left out of the assistance following reconstruction assistance criteria and organisations'

¹⁷ Milići has received twice as much international aid (not counting reconstruction assistance) as Vlasenica. Zvornik, with a larger size, has received ten times more (UNDP 2003).

concerns about the feasibility and sustainability of return in certain remote areas with few returnees (see Chapter 4). This was the case of Cerska, which had much more trouble in securing international reconstruction assistance, both for houses and infrastructures, including the school.

In Križeviči the school was reconstructed in 2000 and it opened in 2001. Initially, the school was allowed to teach up to the 4th grade and kids in upper grades (up to 9th) were to be sent to the primary school in Grbavci – the school in a Serb village by the main road which served as a detention camp at the beginning of the war. The parents went into strike and they were finally granted also the higher grades.¹⁸ Kids go to school mostly walking, since distances are not too large and the terrain is not particularly bad.

In Cerska the school was not reconstructed until 2004, and it teaches up to the 4th grade only, since the low number of kids – between 20 and 30 each year, as opposed to around 200 attending school in Križeviči – prevents fulfilling the required criteria for obtaining higher grades.¹⁹ Kids also had to walk to the school until 2006, some of them up to 10km across very steep terrain. In 2006 a van was contracted for transporting them.

Kids attending higher grades (from 5th to 9th) are sent to the primary school in Konjević Polje – where the Orthodox Church was built in Bosniak private land – which is around 8km away from the centre of Cerska, where Cerska school is located. These kids face furthermore a change in the curriculum they are taught,

¹⁸ Serb kids from the Serb village of Kitovnice were sent to the Grbavci school instead in all grades. Before the war, both Bosniak and Serb kids attended school together in Križeviči up to the 4th grade and then continued to the Grbavci school.

¹⁹ MZ representatives estimate that the school would have between 70 and 80 pupils attending if all IDP families with kids returned or if those returned did not send their kids to the Federation. Before the war, the school in Cerska had approximately 1000 pupils. Many of these arrived from surrounding villages, not only Cerska. Still, the large difference gives an idea of the exodus of families from Cerska to Western countries.

including for instance the predominance of the Cyrillic alphabet in the textbooks rather than the Latin alphabet, which frequently leads to obtaining worse results.²⁰

Regarding health assistance, people from Križeviči have approximately 8km since the main road up until the nearest primary assistance and hospital facilities in Zvornik town. The primary health centre for people from Cerska are in Milići (3km away once in the main road) and Vlasenica (around 8km).

The return process got the green light in hard-line deeper areas of the eastern region – not bordering the ZOS – between 1999 and 2000. These were areas to which return was ‘unthinkable’ until a few months before (ICG 2000a, 2002b; Jansen 2009:48). Among the three considered municipalities, Milići and Zvornik were the first to unblock return, in the spring of 1999 (HRCC 1999; UNHCR 2001a).²¹ Vlasenica followed in 2000, and Cerska was the latest area within the municipality to be granted such permission. Zvornik and Milići have registered a minority return rate of approximately 30 and 24 percent relative to their Bosniak pre-war population, whereas Vlasenica registers only 15 percent.²²

Internal variation within the municipalities is nonetheless important. In 2007 the estimation for Križeviči was of 375 households and 1,790 people returned, which amounts to 61% of

²⁰ Students of secondary school in Križeviči are divided between Zvornik (10 km away) and the nearest secondary school in the Federation, in Kalesija (23 km). The second option is more frequent. In Cerska, not one single student attends secondary school in Milići or Vlasenica. They all go to the Federation, usually staying with relatives, but they do so in much lesser numbers than in Križeviči.

²¹ Milići constituted the deepest return area in the eastern RS at the time (50km from the IEBL) (UNHCR 2000d).

²² These rates are a personal elaboration based on 1991 census data and UNHCR minority returns data. This return rate does not discount the deceased, neither those displaced or migrated abroad. And reliability problems of official return numbers must also be born in mind (see Chapter 3).

the original population and 51% of original households²³ – Križevići is the second largest area of return within Zvornik.

In the case of Cerska, in 2006 it was estimated that around 220 households and 700 persons had returned, which amounts to 25% of the original population and 38% of original households.²⁴ However, it is noteworthy that most returns have taken place to the Vlasenica area rather than to the Milići area, which is striking having into account the more cooperative and advantaged situation in Milići municipality.

In the words of the MZ representatives of both Cerska and Križevići, the process of return had three main stages: first came the 'returnee pioneers' or, much more expressively 'the crazy ones or the fools', who returned spontaneously, without any kind of external support or backup,²⁵ when the green light was not yet properly in place. Then the 'smart ones' followed, when the green light arrived. This wave lasted an average of two years: 1999-2000 in Križevići, and 2000-2001 in Cerska.²⁶ Those returning after that point were, in the words of the representatives, mostly 'people who were left with no other choice'.

Independently of whether the representatives' assessment of each wave is accurate or not, the waved pattern of return seems to have been consistent: a group of 'risky pioneers' took the lead, then a larger number of 'initial returns' occurred during an average period of two years once the return process was officially opened, and later years saw the return of some more 'followers'.

²³ The MZ of Križevići counted 737 households and 2,931 inhabitants before the war.

²⁴ The MZ of Cerska counted 573 households and 2,872 inhabitants before the war.

²⁵ For instance, without the area having been demined or assessed for demining.

²⁶ I consider 2000 the opening year of return for Cerska, since the majority of the pre-war population of Cerska MZ falls within the limits of Vlasenica, and also having into account that most of return cases have taken place in this part of the MZ.

In the following sections of this chapter I will take the two basic periods of return based on such description as a main reference: first, a period of early return (in the initial two years or before, t_{ret}) and the follow-up period (t_{fol}). These time points in the process of return will be denoted in the remaining of these empirical chapters in the following manner:

Table 5.1. Relevant time points of the return process

		Križevići	Cerska
t_{ret}	Year opening return and following one (or before)	1999-2000	2000-2001
t_{fol}	Years after the initial period t_{ret}	2002-2006	2001-2006

The return processes in both locations registered very different patterns nevertheless, not only in terms of their calendar. In Križevići, community leaders had been actively involved in the organized return process to neighbouring areas in the ZOS, and they were part of a larger organized movement of return to the municipality of Zvornik, in which community leaders from Kozluk most saliently (another MZ in that municipality) and Križevići were the most active. When the return process was opened for Križevići, the return process was largely channelled through this type of organized return. Conversely, in Cerska there was not such degree of organization, and returns were mostly spontaneous.

5.1.2. The sample

I present now some basic descriptive statistics of the sample and the dependent variable. The sample is composed of 62 households. The average (and modal) household interviewed is

headed by a middle-age male. These results are in line with the gender and age biases expected to be in place among HH (see Chapter 3).²⁷

Table 5.2. Gender and age distribution of HHs in the sample

	Cases	Percentage
Male	53	85%
Female	9	14%
Total	62	100%
16-20*	0	0
21-40	23	37%
41-60	34	55%
61-100	5	8%
Total	62	100%

* Age in 2006: 16-20 = 'Youngsters', 21-40 = 'Young adults', 41-60 = 'Middle-age adults', 61-100 = 'Elders'.

The two research locations, Cerska and Križeviči, have an almost equal weight in the total sample (47%-53%). As for the representativity of the data at the level of each particular location, in Cerska sample there are 8 out of over 10 hamlets represented, plus other 3 hamlets which do not properly belong to the administrative Cerska MZ (see Chapter 3). In another important regard, the sample satisfactorily approximates the asymmetric division of Cerska between the municipalities of Vlasenica and Milići (62% and 38% respectively). In Križeviči sample there are 8 out of 8 hamlets represented in the sample, plus 2 other hamlets which do not properly belong to Križeviči MZ.

²⁷ Only the low number of households led by elders deviates from the expected pattern, which is the product of practical difficulties in obtaining in-depth interviews with this population (see Annex 3.1).

Table 5.3. Cases by location of research

	Cases	Percentage
Cerska	29	46.8%
<i>Milići</i>	(11)	(38%)
<i>Vlasenica</i>	(18)	(62%)
Križevići	33	53.2%
Total	62	100%

The sample also encompasses important variation at the local level in displacement: 27 villages and towns of displacement are represented in the sample – accounting all residences since 1996. Approximately 70 percent of these (encompassing 82% of the sample cases) belong to 3 municipalities: Srebrenik, Tuzla and Kalesija, all of them within the Tuzla Cantons.

This high level of concentration may raise concerns that the snowball sampling might have biased the sample, tending to overexploit the geographical pool of initial contacts around specific geographical areas. However, such concentration pattern is confirmed by overwhelming anecdotic evidence gathered during the fieldwork, in informal daily conversations,²⁸ as much as in interviews or research focused activities, and through secondary sources (see e.g. UNHCR 2003).

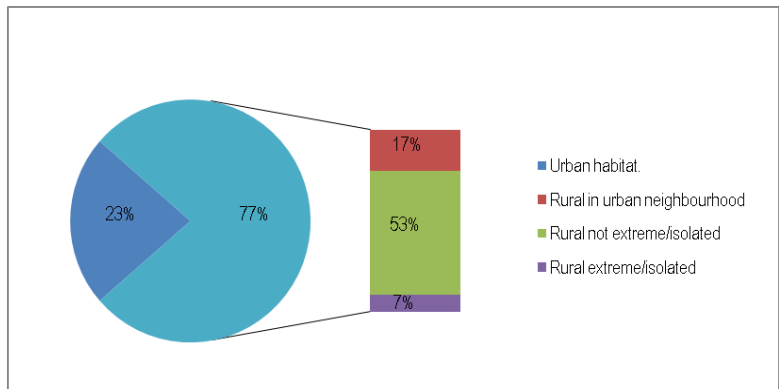
It is important to note furthermore that the sample of *returnees* is unlikely to have been selected or biased in this sense, since they

²⁸ The sources were refugees themselves, domiciles, organisations working on return, reconstruction, community development and other social issues, and common people. All these actors continuously referred to certain areas as ‘refugee areas’ and described them unambiguously by the specific origin of the refugees residing in there. These were typically formerly Serb-majority (or Croat-majority) areas. For instance, Simin Han is well known to have been residence to a large concentration of refugees from Zvornik (including Križevići), whereas the rural areas around Srebrenik town are well known to have housed largely refugees from southern Podrinje (including Cerska).

were contacted in the area of return.²⁹ And the sample of *non-returnees* was put together through multiple and varied sources of key actors and returnees. Returnees provided us with non-returnee contacts extracted from a variety of pools: from family networks, pre-war neighbours, community leaders or neighbours in previous residences of displacement – for instance, in Srebrenica, before arrival to the Federation – not necessarily connected with their own residences of displacement.

The sample covers big urban centres such as Tuzla and Sarajevo, smaller urban centres such as Kalesija, Živinice and Srebrenik, and rural habitats, which are the majority in the sample (76%). This seems to contradict the documented pattern at the global level of Bosnia for a tendency to concentrate in urban areas.

Figure 5.1. Habitat of residence in 1996 (% over valid cases, n=57)



However, what is usually referred to as urban areas amounts frequently to town suburbs which actually present a more rural

²⁹ A bias could then be expected only if the location of return is thought to have a direct effect *per se* on the probability of returning, which seems highly unlikely. In any case, locations of displacement broadly varied among returnees.

landscape and profile, despite the urban vicinity – these habitats are counted as rural here (see below).

Moreover, the country-level data includes the largest urban centres in Bosnia (Sarajevo and Banja Luka), which have a large absorption capacity of displaced people. These data do not distinguish either between rural and urban origin displaced populations: the latter (of which the universe of study here is not a part) are more likely to have ended up in urban environments, and they have returned in much less proportions. It must finally be noted that, since both Cerska and Križevići populations are rural in origin, the fraction of their population residing in urban habitats contributes to the identified urbanization trend within Bosnian internal displacement.

Still, the predominance of rural habitats might be partly attributable to the sampling strategy, as rural residents were easier to track down than urban ones, who are more scattered and disconnected among themselves, and who are more invisible in the mixture of towns. But such sampling bias can be more or less safely discarded if considering the substantially different patterns displayed by Cerska and Križevići samples, which were both subject to the same sampling strategy. Urban cases represented 39% of Križevići sample in 1996 for only 4% of Cerska sample. The differences between the two samples help reassuring that the sampling method is able to capture such diversity and variation, although still it cannot be assessed whether urban population in both samples is underrepresented (or overrepresented).

Among a series of factors which may have contributed to these differences, the very different time and modus of arrival to the Federation of Cerska and Križevići samples may have played an important role. The late and massive arrival of Cerska refugees following the Srebrenica massacre in July 1995 was met by an acute scarcity of available accommodations.³⁰ Most of Križevići

³⁰ The peak number of IDPs occurred in 1993, when IDMC estimates that there were 1 million people displaced within the country (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre 2009: 72).

cases had arrived three years in advance, at the beginning of conflict, and in a more escalated manner. The arrival of Cerska refugees was also much more closely monitored and channelled due to the specific and dramatic circumstances surrounding it.

In short, the fact that Cerska sample ended up in urban habitats to a lesser extent than Križeviči's could be partly explained by the limitation in the choices available to them by their time of arrival. This argument is in line with the finding that, in the subsequent re-accommodation round (i.e. second residence since 1996) the proportion of urbanites increases from 4% up to 23% among those cases from Cerska who change their residences.³¹

Finally, regarding the dependent variable and its behaviour in the sample, returnees have a larger presence than non-returnees in the sample (66%), constituting 62% in Cerska sample and 70% in Križeviči sample. These figures are well above the estimated rates of return to both locations – 25% and 61% respectively. However, these estimates are not directly comparable to the proportions in the present sample, given that the former are based on a broader population base (1991 census population) whereas the sample proportions are based on a more restricted universe (1991 census population minus those deceased and minus those who have migrated abroad).

In other words, the global estimated rates of return compute a part of the population which is either deceased or outside the country, and which, as such, is not part of the sample universe.³²

³¹ The proportion also increases for Križeviči, but to a lesser extent (from 39% up to 46%).

³² When the deceased and out-migrated populations are computed, the number and proportion of non-returnees obviously increases. If the size of those populations is large enough, the change in the rate of return can be substantial. This remark is important, not only in operational terms, but also from an analytical point of view. It is important to distinguish three different sources for no return. One is *death*, which is logically accentuated by war. Another source is *cross-border migration*, either as refugees or as economic migrants before and after the war. As already discussed in Chapter 3, there are several factors that make this

Thus, the difference between the estimated return rate – based on pre-war population – and the sample returnees proportion is much larger in the case of Cerska (37 points, as opposed to 9 points in Križeviči sample) but this is consistent with Cerska's higher death toll in the war – various hundreds as compared to roughly one hundred people in a population of around 2,900 persons in each location.³³

Table 5.4. Return by research location at the time of the interview (2006-2007)

	Cerska		Križeviči		Total	
Non-returnee	11	37.9%	10	30.3%	21	33.9%
Returnee	18	62.1%	23	69.7%	41	66.1%
Total	29	100.0%	33	100.0%	62	100.0%

Until a new census is elaborated, and lacking exact data on the number of deaths and out-migration, the whereabouts of the population at the aggregate level cannot be effectively assessed and it is difficult to determine whether, to what extent, and in which direction the sample figures at the local level are biased or

migration peculiar and deserving specific analysis, such as the economic unbalance between destination and origin when dealing with migration towards developed countries. A very different source of no return is internal displacement, in which both economic and non-economic factors are *a priori* more balanced. This helps delineating the scope and relevance of this concrete study. But it also brings attention to the fact that common perceptions about no return and the reasons behind it can be putting in the equation different things at the same time.

³³ The large gap in Cerska might be also supplemented by larger out-migration flows. Unfortunately, there is no systematic data available documenting out-migration at this level of disaggregation. Impressionistic data from the field suggests that this is also the case nonetheless.

inaccurate. It is expected that this predominance is partly due to an underrepresentation of non-return, due to the difficulties involved in locating and reaching out non-returnees, as described in Annex 3.1.³⁴

Nonetheless, if non-returnees are underrepresented they are so in the same measure in both locations of research, provided that such underrepresentation is the result of the sampling strategy, applied in the same manner to both locations. Thus, the comparison between both locations would still be valid. This would mean that the rate of return among IDPs has been more similar than expected in the two locations when discounting the deceased and those migrated abroad: the sample difference is reduced from the estimated 36 points to only 8.

The sample still reflects a higher proportion of return in Križeviči, even though to a smaller extent than expected. Importantly enough, the sample also reflects important variation in the timing of returns between both locations. The timing of return is one crucial aspect to assess such ongoing process. Return at the aggregate level rarely, if ever, occurs at one single shot. It is indeed difficult to determine the end of the return process in cases where all potential returnees have not returned yet.

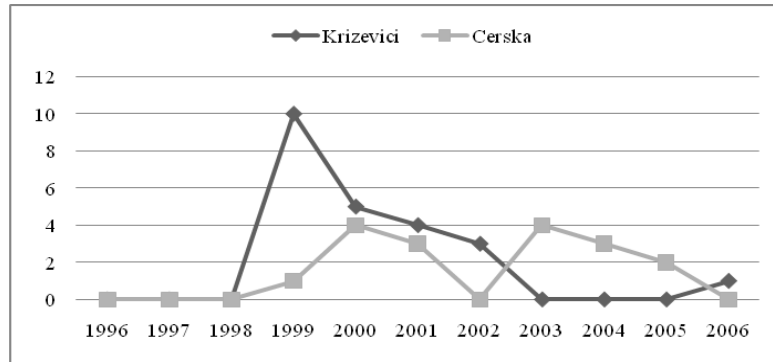
In Križeviči sample there is a remarkable concentration of cases in the opening year of return (43%) with declining numbers in the following years (see Figure 5.2). After 2002 the sample registers only one more case of return. In Cerska sample the return process is much more dispersed across time. It registers two smaller peaks of return followed as well by diminishing numbers. The first peak occurs, as in Križeviči sample, in the opening year (23%) but there is a second peak in 2003 (23%).

Thus, in the terms presented in the section above (5.1), return in Križeviči has been mostly led by ‘initial returns’ – the first two

³⁴ Although the difficulties to locate them might be influenced by their reduced numbers, it has been made evident in Annex 3.1 that a varied set of factors reduced on their own the possibility of increasing the number of non-returnees interviewed.

years sum up 63% of all returns – whereas in Cerska there has been a larger weight of ‘followers’ – the first two years sum up only 41% of all returns.³⁵ And there is not one year or period with a remarkable concentration of return, as in Križeviči.

Figure 5.2. Year of return by research location* (n=40)**



* Year since which the HH has his/her main residence in the return area.

** Missing cases correspond to non-returnees plus one returnee case for which the year of return is unknown or unclear.

The calendar of return in the sample reflects quite perfectly the opening years of return in both locations,³⁶ and it shows very divergent patterns for Cerska and Križeviči that are in line with the peculiarities of the return process in both locations: the one more organized seems to have drawn a larger amount and proportion of returnees at once, at the beginning of the process; the one more spontaneous gathered a much more modest initial return which got more sustained and dispersed across time. These divergent patterns help increase confidence in the sample.

³⁵ In the case of Cerska 53% of returnees in the sample returned after 2003, in contrast to only 4% in Križeviči sample.

³⁶ The case in Cerska sample returning in 1999 is a case from the Milići area, where returned was opened that year.

5.2. The utilitarian model. Economic component

The utilitarian model of return described in Chapter 2 focuses on the calculation of gains and costs to be made from returning and from not returning. Based on this, a decision to return is expected when the utility of returning (leaving aside by now the security component) is larger than the utility of not returning. In the next subsection I discuss the components and indicators used for proxying the households' utility function and I present the relevant descriptive statistics for the sample. In the second subsection I present the main findings from multivariate analysis.

5.2.1. The utility function

The characteristics and circumstances of the household determine the shape of their utility function and the utility derived from returning and from not returning in each case. The head of the household (HH), as the decision maker, considers the gains to be made from returning – net of the costs involved in that decision – weighting them against the gains to be made from not returning. The more gains are to be attained upon return, the higher the utility of that option and the more likely is return. The same goes for the no-return option.

Gains are given by possible sources of income (x_{hh}) and existing assets (z_{hh}) of the members of the household which are specific to either the return or the no-return option. They include public goods (PG) and opportunities at the aggregate level (o) which are specific to each location; and the interaction of these opportunity structures with the household skills (ed_{hh}). Finally, familiarity (f_{hh}) is not considered as a gain, but it is expected to facilitate adaptation and livelihood strategies, thus mediating possible gains.

The lack of any of these sources of utility, or uncertainty about them,³⁷ would enter the equation with a negative sign, thus accounting for potential push factors for both the return and the no-return options. The utility functions of returning and not returning are then the following:

$$U(\text{econ}_{\text{ret}}, \text{home}_{\text{ret}}) = (x_{\text{hh}}, z_{\text{hh}}, \text{PG}, o \mid \text{ed}_{\text{hh}}, f_{\text{hh}}) - (C_{\text{hh}}) \quad \text{eq.22}$$

$$U(\text{econ}_{\text{stay}}, \text{home}_{\text{stay}}) = (x'_{\text{hh}}, z'_{\text{hh}}, \text{PG}', o' \mid \text{ed}_{\text{hh}}, f'_{\text{hh}}) - (C_{\text{hh}}) \quad \text{eq.23}$$

The main hypothesis following from this model (and leaving aside by now the security component included in it) is that return is expected when the utility of returning is larger than that of not returning. More specifically, no return is expected if the utility of not returning is larger *or the same* than the utility of returning (eq.17), consistently with the fact that return is a costly decision – including migration costs and some risk of violence.

The cases in the sample are evaluated at two different time points. First, at the opening years of return (t_{ret}) corresponding to 1999-2000 for Križeviči, and to 2000-2001 for Cerska. The cases which did not return in this early period are also evaluated in later years (t_{fol}), in the period 2002-2003 for Križeviči and 2003-2004 for Cerska, that is, after an elapse time of one year.³⁸ Returnees in each period are evaluated in their year of return. This produces two samples of 62 and 38 cases for the early and the late period respectively, and one pooled sample of 100 case-year observations.

The year 1996 and the financial situation of households at that time is the starting point for this analysis, since the shock of the war and the manner households survived it economically is expected to importantly condition the household's financial situation in the two periods of interest. In 1996 half of the

³⁷ As a remainder, the focus in this work is put on the short-medium term rather than on the long term.

³⁸ Besides allowing a sufficient elapse time after the initial wave, this period coincides with the arrival of the bulk of these later returns, thus being the most representative period of the 'followers' wave.

households in the sample were unable to meet their more basic needs, and one further third barely managed to do so (see Table 5.5).³⁹ This difficult economic situation reinforces the expected importance of economic sustainability for the return decision. Some households ended the war in a better-off situation nonetheless: almost 20 percent were able not only to cover their needs but also to save money and even progress economically.

Table 5.5. Financial situation in 1996 (n=59)

	Cases	Percentage
Cutting on some needs, not covering all expenses	29	49.2%
Just meeting our needs with our savings/incomes	19	32.2%
Enough for living with our savings/incomes, and able to save	9	15.3%
Quite good, able to save money and progress	2	3.4%

1. Sources of income and assets

The main sources of income and assets – which are location specific – in the Bosnian case are employment, farming activities, and housing. Other relevant sources of income are pensions and remittances, but these are largely movable sources of income which are not significantly connected to the decision to return or not. That is, they do not constitute gains or losses in the manner specified above.⁴⁰ The importance of these financial resources, and

³⁹ The situation was worse in Cerska sample, where 68 percent of the households did not cover their basic needs for 32 percent in Križeviči sample (see Annex 5.1, Table 1). This is in line with the lower socio-economic status of Cerska sample before the war and with the prolonged situation of siege lived by this sample.

⁴⁰ In the two time periods evaluated, once the return process was opened in the two research locations, the inter-entity agreement allowing to maintain pensions upon return was already in place (since 2000). Only

more generally of the financial situation of the household will be considered below as an important mediating mechanism which must be controlled for within the utility function. First I detail the main sources of income and assets just enumerated.

(a) Employment

At the time at which return was opened in each locations (t_{ret}) 66% of the households in the sample had not one single member employed or self-employed.⁴¹ Out of 26 existing jobs, 21 were in the Federation, only 4 in the RS and one abroad (in Germany). The situation remained roughly the same among those who did not return immediately. In the later period 63% of the non-returnee households had no job, there were 13 jobs in the Federation for 3 in the RS and one abroad (in Croatia).

Jobs in the Federation corresponded mostly to professional soldiers, workers in the service sector – various teachers, a politician, a clergyman, and a social worker – and small entrepreneurs. Jobs in the RS were largely return-related.⁴² It is important to note that most of these jobs did not actually require living in either the Federation or the RS. In most cases it was feasible to work in a commuting mode, but definitely more costly, especially for Cerska natives (due to the larger distance). In any

those returning as early as 1999 faced a different scenario in which they risked to lose their pensions. However, as already said, at that time return went frequently unregistered and Federation entitlements were generally maintained upon return to the RS.

⁴¹ Five households (8%) had two members employed. Two of these cases had one job in the Federation and another one in the RS. The employment situation was also worse in Cerska sample, with 83% of the households without any stable employment, for only 51% in Križeviči.

⁴² A local party representative, a NGO employee, a policeman – newly recruited as part of the minority recruitment effort pushed forward by the international community – and a construction worker hired by a firm working in house reconstruction.

case a pulling effect would be rationally expected towards the place where the job is held – in order to avoid commuting costs.⁴³

The higher frequency of jobs in the Federation suggests that, in general, there were better employment perspectives relative to those in the RS. Although this is partly a product of the fact that respondents' job statuses are evaluated at a time when they resided in the Federation, and consequently they had higher chances to get employed there, this finding is in line with the more advanced economic situation in the Federation and with the persistence of discriminatory practices across the IEBL.⁴⁴

(b) Agriculture and farming activities

At the time when return was opened in each location (t_{ret}) 34% of the households had no access to land or livestock in their locations of displacement and 45% had access to just some small piece of garden where they grew some vegetables for self-consumption or kept some small cattle. Only 21% had access to a significant portion of land and were undertaking farming activities when the return process was opened. The percentages were still similar in the later period (39%, 45% and 16%).

In most cases this access to land and farming activities was subject to a relatively high degree of instability and uncertainty, especially among those with substantial access to land, since this access was granted through specific accommodation arrangements involving high levels of uncertainty (see below). These are cases

⁴³ Some jobs did require residence in the same place, such as small entrepreneurs who held a store or who travelled from marketplace to marketplace in deeper areas of the Federation.

⁴⁴ It is worth noting that, among those who declared themselves concerned with the difficulty to attain a job upon return, 85% found the general job situation in the RS to be worrying, and 75% were concerned about discrimination as a barrier to get hired. The latter percentage is similar for both returnees and non-returnees. But concern about the general economic situation was more widespread among those who finally returned.

of occupied houses with land attached to them, or of land allocated by the municipality or the MZ to displaced people in AA.

Some households did rent or buy some land, together or independently from their housing arrangement.⁴⁵ But most of these (6 out of 9 in the early period, and 5 out of 8 in the later period) were small land plots providing only for marginal gardening activities. That is, households in the sample had not made the necessary investments to make of agriculture or farming in the Federation a more or less secure source of income or basic goods, either due to a lack of resources or to the prioritisation of other livelihood strategies.⁴⁶

On the other hand, all households in the sample possessed some piece of land in their location of origin, and 80% of the cases had substantial properties – over 5 *dullums*.⁴⁷ Actually, half of the sample covered all of their food needs before the war through agriculture and farming – as an important complement to paid employments – and for one fourth this furthermore represented an important source of income, i.e. they also sold their product or even lived exclusively out of it.

However, the land had been abandoned for many years and making it productive again required time and investment; in many cases, especially in Cerska, this involved either important transportation costs – if not returning permanently – or returning to a place in which there was no appropriate roof to stay under (at

⁴⁵ In a few cases land was lent by some neighbour.

⁴⁶ When households made important economic investments in displacement, these were overwhelmingly focused on buying houses (or the land to build them). Some cases invested also, or instead, in small businesses.

⁴⁷ 1 *dullum* = 1000 m² = 0'1 hectare = 0'247 acres. Properties above 5 *dullums* are considered by the RS government sufficient for agriculture production. On those bases, those households owning more than 5 *dullums* are not entitled to the minimum health insurance provided to people registered as unemployed, since it is assumed that, even if unemployed, they could make a living off the land (personal communications with MPDL and *Vaša Prava*).

the beginning of the process and later on for many cases). The benefits to be attained from agriculture were on the other hand rather small, given the limited resources available for most families to make the necessary investments in tools and inputs. This was more markedly the case in Cerska, where land quality was worse and most properties were scattered in various parcels across rough and difficult terrain, besides facing worse communication (and thus market) infrastructures.

This situation is confirmed by the concerns that interviewees declared to have regarding return. Out of those concerned about how to make an appropriate living upon return (n=36) 80% were concerned about the difficulty to do so out of agriculture – this percentage raised to 100% in the case of Cerska, as opposed to 65% among Križeviči interviewees. The reason for such concern was largely the lack of means and productivity (88%) rather than the lack of knowledge or appropriate skills (which was mentioned by only 22% of the interviewees). The latter percentage rose to almost 40% in Cerska, where there was somewhat less of a tradition of agriculture activities, in contrast with 7% in Križeviči sample.

In sum, the relatively poor advantages offered by agriculture activities make not to expect a particularly strong weight of these on the decision to return or not. Their weight could be expected to be somewhat larger for households in particularly bad financial situations, without other sources of income at all, for whom subsistence economy can remain crucial. These are only eight cases (with no source of income at all) and they all eventually returned, living off agriculture or heavily depending upon it once they returned. Only one of them had access to substantial farming activity in displacement.

(c) House

In 1996 the majority of the sample (64%) was occupying a property (see Table 5.6) in line with the already discussed predominance of this form of accommodation. In most cases these

were directly provided or arranged by the municipality, while in other cases houses – or some space in them – were just physically occupied by the household, although typically a municipal permit would be issued later on. Collective centres and other forms of accommodation provided by the authorities amounted to only 12% of the cases, similar to the proportion of lent accommodations. Other forms of accommodation – being hosted, renting – were marginal, and none of the households in the sample had ownership rights over the place they lived in.

Table 5.6. Accommodation status in displacement in the early return period (Tret) and late return period (Tfol)

	1996		Tret		Tfol	
	Cases	%	Cases	%	Cases	%
occup	37	63.8	36	62.1	9	25.0
AA	7	12.1	5	8.6	5	13.9
host	2	3.4	0	0	1	2.8
lent	7	12.1	9	15.5	5	13.9
rent	2	3.4	5	8.6	6	16.7
own	0	0	3	5.2	10	27.8
(abroad)	3	5.2	0	0	0	0
<i>Total</i>	<i>58</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>58</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>36</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Note: Percentages above 20 percent **in bold**.

The situation when the return process was opened in Križeviči and in Cerska was very similar: 62 percent of the households in the sample were occupying a property (only one case abandoned such status since 1996). However, the situation at the time had radically changed for occupiers due to the creation of the PLIP at the end of 1999. Evictions became in these years almost a

certainty in the short term.⁴⁸ In short, in these years occupiers were left virtually ‘without’ accommodation arrangement in displacement, having to look for some alternative – which could be return or some other accommodation in displacement.

This situation stood in stark contrast with that of households who had moved by that time into ownership and renting (14 percent of the sample). These options provided a ‘safe’ or stable accommodation arrangement. But they required of a serious economic effort: from 200KM monthly for renting, to 30,000-50,000KM for buying a house or buying land and building the house.⁴⁹ This typically required entering loans and credits, or getting financial help from family and friends. For many households these options were totally out of reach.

The remaining 24 percent of the cases were accommodated in intermediate solutions – i.e. AA, being hosted, and lent residences. These accommodation arrangements did not pose at the time such a high pressure to leave as occupations, but they involved a high degree of dependency and uncertainty, and a short temporary horizon in many cases – especially in AA arrangements which were timely bounded (from 2 to 5 years) besides being subject to legal and practical changes regarding the recognition the IDP status and the right to access AA.

In the later period the effectiveness of the PLIP can be sensed, with occupation shrinking from 36 to only 9 cases and representing just one fourth of the remaining non-returnees (n=36). In this period the number and share of owners and renters grew especially, doubling their presence (from 8 to 16 cases) and reaching 44 percent of those households which did not return

⁴⁸ The exception was constituted by cases who reached an agreement with the legal owner (or with the authorities) to extend the stay in the house. Frequently the former owner had sold the house to another displaced person who had some alternative arrangement or who remained abroad for the time being, and who allowed them to stay for more or less longer periods.

⁴⁹ The minimum wage in Bosnia has ranged between 250 and 320KM in the last decade (US Department of State 2009).

immediately. The intermediate solutions, which since 1996 had slightly descended, rose again in this period, constituting 30 percent of the cases at t_{fol} . This corresponds to a rebound effect from those abandoning occupied properties but not returning: some did reach stable solutions, while others simply commuted to AA and other cheap but unstable arrangements.

The expected effect of being in each of these categories is that, the more unstable is the category, the less of a solution is for the issue of accommodation. In turn, a pushing effect is expected by which households have to search for alternatives, which includes (and raises the likelihood of) return. The necessary investment to reach residential stability in displacement, i.e. buying or renting a property, contributes to this expectation. When such investment has taken place, not only does the pushing effect disappear, but there is also an important pulling effect (i.e. the anchor of the investment). Moreover, most households could not afford a double investment providing accommodation also in the return location (i.e. reconstructed house).⁵⁰

The alternative upon return depended largely on reconstruction of destroyed and damaged houses.⁵¹ In the early period, only 14% of the households in the sample had their houses reconstructed. In the second period (i.e. discounting early returnees) the percentage of reconstructed houses was 35%.

⁵⁰ It was a common wish for many households in the sample (and for many interviewees in general) to buy (or even rent) properties in the Federation in order to provide children with that 'safe option' or to facilitate their school attendance in that entity. While many of them wished or planned at the same time returning in the short or medium term (either the complete household or part of it). In most cases the household had to make a decision between both objectives. Thus some non-returnees delayed the return option and many returnees longed for the possibility of having a property in the Federation, which they had not been able to afford.

⁵¹ Only one case in the sample had his house occupied, and it also required of important repairs.

Getting the pre-war house reconstructed upon return provided an important asset that made return more attractive and eliminated one important push factor (the lack of appropriate accommodation upon return), especially in view of the situation regarding accommodation in displacement. The required investment was also important. Reconstruction costs ranged from 12,000 to 25,000KM, not including additional costs such as rubble cleaning, transportation costs, and complex logistics due to the distance with the displacement area, the difficulties of the terrain, the lack of communication infrastructures and the sensitive position *vis-à-vis* the RS authorities and population.

Reconstruction could be facilitated by assistance.⁵² In the early period only 48 percent of the households in the sample had been able (or willing) to apply for assistance and only 36 percent actually got it in that period. In the second period the immense majority had already applied (83 percent) some of them more than once, but only 26 percent got the assistance (in that whole period or before returning) in line with the known funding decline across time.

Still, assistance frequently covered only partially the costs involved – 60 percent of the households with reconstructed houses contributed more than 50 percent to that amount; one fourth contributed between 70 and 90 percent. That is, some investment was still required from the household. In cases of AA, and frequently of occupation, getting reconstruction assistance was furthermore normally connected with losing such an arrangement in displacement, which added an important pushing factor in displacement.

⁵² Reconstruction assistance did not only make reconstruction more affordable, it made it also more feasible *in the short term*: as an illustration, the elapse between the moment of return and the end of house reconstruction was significantly shorter for those returnees who received assistance – 0.96 years as compared to an average of 3 years for those not receiving assistance (one-tailed t-test, sig. = .004). This was crucial in order to provide an effective and appropriate accommodation solution upon return.

Although some endogeneity might be in place – i.e. those more likely to return and doing the biggest efforts, such as being frequently or permanently in the area, are more likely to get reconstruction assistance and to reconstruct their houses – this relationship does not seem to be a strong one. Many non-returnees did receive reconstruction assistance and a significant share of returnees did not receive assistance at all – 67% of the non-returnees received it, in comparison with 76% of returnee households.⁵³ And, although all returnees have reconstructed their houses (as compared to only 70 percent of the non-returnees) the immense majority (70%) returned when their houses were not reconstructed yet – they waited between 1 and 6 years to have them reconstructed. A minority (3%) waited over a year after reconstruction to return.

(d) Movable assets and sources of income

The need and importance of employment, the importance of agriculture, the pressing nature of accommodation deadlines and the importance of reconstruction assistance are all likely to be the larger the lesser the financial resources are available to the household. Above I have taken the financial situation of the household as of 1996 as a starting point for the analysis. From 1996 up to the two relevant periods of return some additional sources of income and financial resources should be had into account: pensions, remittances and demobilization packages.

Since none of these sources are directly linked to residence,⁵⁴ no pulling effect is expected for either returning or not returning

⁵³ Those non-returnees getting assistance include people who initiated some return activities (i.e. visits, stays, cleaning) thus fulfilling some of the criteria for getting assistance. But the mismatch between return and assistance is also explained by the widespread use of bribes and connections in order to circumvent these criteria and the general problems to access reconstruction assistance pointed out in Chapter 4.

⁵⁴ The inter-entity pension agreement was in place already in 2000, and before that returnees were able to keep their registration as IDPs and

from them. Rather, they are expected simply to expand budgetary limits and to make a broader range of alternatives affordable for the household, thus importantly mediating the decision to return or not.

In both the early and the late periods of return around 45% of the sample had access to some form of substantial pension (over 150KM monthly).⁵⁵ Pensions include workers' pensions (for retirement or disability), veteran's pensions (for disability or for family members of fallen soldiers, called *šehidska*) and pensions for family members of civilian victims of the conflict. Many of them consisted of merely symbolic quantities at the end of the war – in one case the first payment amounted to 0.5KM – but most of these had been substantially raised by the time the return process was opened in both locations.

The received amounts were from 50KM up to 400KM. In cases where various pensions are cumulated, they can provide an adequate standard of living for a medium-sized household, but these are rare cases – only 17% of the longitudinal observations sum up two or more substantial pensions, which amounts to roughly one third of all pensioners in the sample across time. As an alternative or supplementary source of income, almost 50% of the households were receiving some kind of regular remittances or financial help from family and friends in the early period (55% in the late period). Finally, some households received important amounts from demobilization packages around the year 2000 – 10,000KM plus some package of tools, materials or livestock – or

to maintain their pension rights. Pensioners in the RS entered nonetheless the added costs of having to pick up the pension in the Federation, as well as in many cases commuting for health care (see below). But, among all households who were receiving pensions at the time of return or across the two periods in the case of returnees, only one expressed that the pension regime was a concern when considering the return option.

⁵⁵ As already noted, the minimum wage in Bosnia has ranged between 250 and 320KM in the last decade. This is considered by many observers as insufficient for providing an adequate standard of living (US Department of State 2009).

from family members in order to buy land plots or to build or buy a house (these cases amount to roughly 10% of the total sample).

Both pensions and regular family help correlate negatively with the financial situation of the household in 1996.⁵⁶ That is, households with pensioners and households that required family assistance were in a worse position in 1996. Although the situation for pensioners is likely to have somewhat improved along time (with the progressive increase of pensions) this is most likely to have remained more or less the same, given the scarce amounts involved in pensions.

On the other hand, receiving important amounts of extra income (from demobilization programs or large financial help from family) correlates positively with the financial situation in 1996 (corr.= .370, sig.= .000). Those receiving demobilization packages were indeed among the few ones employed at that time (i.e. still working for the Army) and those receiving important amounts from family members in order to make some investment are likely to belong to more resourceful families and to be themselves resourceful enough as to significantly contribute to it.

In sum, the financial situation in 1996 seems to be a relatively efficient indicator of financial situation across the two periods considered, which underlines the crucial role of the shock of the war upon household's wealth and well-being.

2. Public goods and opportunities

Not only household-level endowments, but also context-embedded resources and public goods, and the structure of opportunities provided by the specific contexts of return and displacement, constitute potential gains and losses in the households' utility functions.

⁵⁶ This correlation is statistically significant only for pensions (corr.= .350, sig.= .000).

In the Bosnian relocation process there is suggestive evidence (as it was pointed out in Chapter 4) that an urbanization effect underlies or even explains many of the observed no-return decisions. Urban habitats offer a wider and more accessible network of services, such as health care or education, and more adequate infrastructures in general. They also provide better economic opportunities, although the extent to which this opportunity structure actually fits the household characteristics may vary. Another important public good whose accessibility may be affected by the decision to return is health insurance, given the different legal frameworks and barriers. I will briefly discuss all of these now.

(a) Habitat

The urbanization effect predicts that the more urban is a habitat, the better the living conditions, the more services available, including schools and health assistance, and the more economic opportunities accessible to the household. The less urban is the habitat, the less attractive is (either to stay or to return to). That is, the less its pulling effect.

Following this logic, the worst (most rural) habitat can be assumed to have a value (or a pulling effect) of zero, meaning that the habitat does not have any advantage or improvement to offer relative to any other kind of habitat. When comparing two habitats, the *net* pulling effect should be had into account: for instance, the net pulling effect of an urban habitat in displacement will be the larger the more rural is the habitat of origin.

The relevant habitats in the case of Bosnia, and more specifically in the concrete local contexts considered here, can be categorised into four different categories: extreme rural habitats enduring deep isolation, rough topography and physical conditions and very poor infrastructures; other rural habitats which do not

endure such extreme conditions; suburbs or rural habitats in urban neighbourhoods; and proper urban habitats, i.e. towns.⁵⁷

The two locations under research, Cerska and Križeviči, are rural locations, but with important differences. Cerska is an isolated area with very poor infrastructures and largely underdeveloped. This represents an 'extreme rural' case, which could reasonably take a value of zero in any urbanization scale for the case of Bosnia. Križeviči's habitat, on the other hand, represents a one-step improvement in that scale insofar it is not seriously isolated: it enjoys a better access to services and better living conditions, including also more economic opportunities. This represents a 'non-extreme' rural habitat. This habitat division approximates reasonably well the accessibility of health care and primary and secondary education, which are much more accessible from Križeviči (see above).

There is some temporal variation nonetheless: Križeviči lived one period, before the opening of the school in 2001, in which children had to commute to the school of Memiči, in the Federation, covering over 20km.⁵⁸ This roughly coincides with the dividing line between the early and the late periods of return in this case, so a difference could be expected on the probability of returning to Križeviči between t_{ret} and t_{fol} among households having school age children.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ It must be emphasized that this categorisation is not based on number of inhabitants, but on the distinct characteristics and living conditions of each of them, which are quite marked in the Bosnian case.

⁵⁸ The alternative was walking just one additional kilometre down the road to the school in the Serb village of Grbavci, but this option was rejected by all parents.

⁵⁹ Cerska also experienced an improvement in primary school accessibility in 2004, when their primary school was opened up to the 4th grade. Up until that moment, all kids had to go to school in the mixed area of Konjević Polje, 6km further away from the Cerska school. This period covers nonetheless both t_{ret} and t_{fol} so no big differences are necessarily expected between the two periods based on this.

Since 1996 and during the whole period under research, almost 40 percent of the DPs in the sample were living in urban or semi-urban habitats (see Table 5.7). This represents an improvement in habitat relative to both locations of origin, in line with the urbanization process undergone by the Bosnian population as a result of displacement (see Chapter 4). The majority of the sample resided in 'non-extreme' rural habitats, similar to the habitat of origin in Križeviči, but improving the habitat of Cerska proper.

Table 5.7. Rural habitat in displacement in the early return period and late return period

	1996		Tret		Tfol	
	Cases	%	Cases	%	Cases	%
Rural extreme	4	7.0	4	6.7	0	0
Rural non-extreme	30	52.6	33	55.0	22	59.5
Semi-rural	10	17.5	8	13.3	5	13.5
Urban	13	22.8	15	25.0	10	27.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>57</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>60</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>37</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Note: Percentages above 50 percent **in bold**.

It should be had into account, nonetheless, that the HH's education level and specific skills can have an important mediating role in the extent to which the household can actually take advantage of the improved opportunity structure. Another important issue that can mediate the effect of habitat is whether the household has children in school age or not, in which case a stronger effect could be expected.

(b) Familiarity

The urbanization effect needs to be confronted with and qualified by an opposing argument. Basically, the larger the

distance between habitat of origin and habitat of displacement (in this particular case, the more rural is the habitat of origin and the more urban is the habitat of displacement) the more likely is that the members of the household do not have the most appropriate skills and knowledge to efficiently adjust to the newer habitat.

By 'newer habitat' I mean a recent habitat where household members have spent a smaller proportion of their lifetime (relative to some other habitat). In the case of older households the 'newer' habitat would be that of displacement, whereas for young households this is frequently the habitat of origin. Age is thus a proxy of familiarity in the sense that, the younger the household, the larger the proportion of their lifetime has been spent in the habitat of displacement, and vice versa.

Other variables likely to contribute to familiarity with the environment are the number of years spent in the same habitat, municipality or village. In the early period most households (82%) had been living in the same village or town for 4 or more years. Stability was even higher at the municipality level (92%). The percentages remain very similar in the late period (73 and 89%) despite the fact that the shock of the PLIP – and the passing of time – had increased the percentage of households changing their accommodation arrangement at least once (from 25 to 62%). That is, after the shock of the PLIP and some other re-arrangements, relative residential stability kept being the norm.

Only between one fourth and 10 percent of the sample had lived in their current places for a relatively short time (3 or less years) in both periods. This runs contrary to the notion that displacement, and specifically displacement in Bosnia frequently implies a relatively high level of residential instability. Two qualifications must be made nonetheless. Firstly, these data cover only the period after 1996, once the war was over. Instability seems to have been more elevated before that moment. And secondly, this relative residential stability should be put in

perspective with the fact that most families had lived in the same location (the one they were displaced from) for generations.⁶⁰

Table 5.8. Years spent in the same accommodation, village and municipality in displacement (% over valid cases)

# years	Tret			Tfol		
	Accom	Village	Munici	Accom	Village	Munici
1	5.0	1.7	0	5.4	5.4	2.7
2	6.7	5.0	5.0	5.4	2.7	0
3	13.3	11.7	3.3	13.5	8.1	2.7
4	20.0	20.0	21.7	10.8	8.1	2.7
5	35.0	36.7	38.3	13.5	2.7	2.7
6	20.0	25.0	31.7	18.9	18.9	13.5
7	0	0	0	13.5	18.9	16.2
8	0	0	0	8.1	10.8	10.8
9	0	0	0	5.4	5.4	8.1
10	0	0	0	2.7	2.7	8.1
11	0	0	0	2.7	16.2	32.4
<i>N</i>	60	60	60	37	37	37

(c) Health insurance

After the war, the Bosnian population could get public health insurance on different grounds: mainly through employment, pension, or as registered farmers. Each of these categories led to different degrees and types of entitlement. Public health insurance could also be accessed in a subsidiary manner through registered unemployment and as 'social cases'. IDPs also had a right to subsidiary health insurance, largely equivalent to unemployment

⁶⁰ Almost 75% of the respondents' families considered themselves 'old natives' or that they had lived in the same place 'since always'. A further 16% moved in around World War I or II. Only a few marginal cases had moved in at a later point (in the 1970-80s).

insurance. One major category was that of war-related pensions: veterans' disability pensions and pensions for family members of fallen soldiers ('*šehidska*') and civilian victims. War-related pensions were in general the ones with the largest entitlements and the only ones not requiring any contribution.

As the displaced population began to take and lose jobs, emancipate from parents, change residence status, migrate, or start reconstruction upon return, the insurance landscape evolved, together with the legislation and the required criteria to maintain IDP insurance. By the late period of return most people had no right to IDP insurance, but they could still access limited insurance as unemployed persons.

Access to health insurance was handicapped for many upon return due to the persistence of two separate public health insurance schemes in the Federation and in the RS.⁶¹ Thus, employees whose firms contributed in the Federation were not entitled to health insurance in the RS. This involved enjoying health care access far away from the place of residence, with important costs and risks attached to that distance.

Owners of big land plots could also find their access to health insurance handicapped due to the legal provision excluding owners of more than 5 *dullums* of land from the minimum health insurance provided to unemployed people. In practice, many owners circumvented this limitation through the administrative trick of not registering the land under their names, in the common cases where property was still under the father's name. Also, due to the complexity of the social system in both entities and the differences among them, many lost their right to insurance due to a lack of knowledge of the procedures and specific requirements.

Households receiving veterans' and civilian victims' pensions were especially affected by the lack of harmonisation between the Federation and the RS social systems. Their pensions provided, on

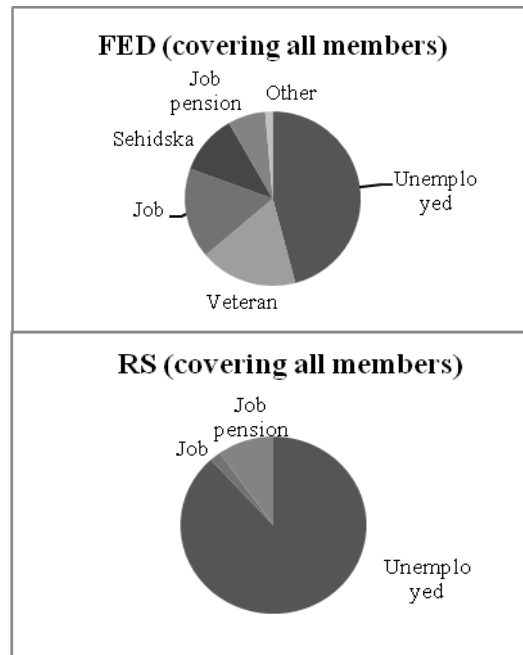
⁶¹ Returnees were entitled as such to subsidiary insurance only for the first 6 months upon return (personal communication, *Vaša Prava*, June 2006).

average, one of the highest levels of entitlement without contribution. This right was automatically lost if registering as residents in the other entity. For this reason it was common practice that those returning did not deregister and maintained their official residence in the Federation. Again, this solution involved enjoying health care access far away from the place of residence.

Other categories, such as pensioners and unemployed people, simply faced a choice between the RS public health insurance and that of the Federation. The former provided a lower quality of services on average, and specialized care frequently entailed being sent to different parts of the RS or even to Serbia, instead of being sent to places more nearby in the Federation.

At the time the return process was opened, the proportion of households who had a right to health insurance in the Federation, with varying degrees of entitlement, was 95 percent. In all cases the whole household was covered. The proportion descended to 90 percent in the late period with an added 3 percent of mixed households, in which some members were covered and others were not. In contrast, the proportion of households who had a right to health insurance in the RS at the time the return process was opened was 62 percent plus 13 percent of cases of mixed households. The percentages were very similar in the later period (63 and 16 percent). The overwhelming majority of these had a right to health insurance only as unemployed people or as pensioners, with a low level of entitlement.

Figure 5.3. Distribution of categories entitling to health insurance in the Federation and in the RS across the two periods of interest (n=98)



Across the two periods only one third of those with a right to health insurance in the RS actually registered in the RS. Those unwilling to register include saliently households with veteran's pensions, that is, with a right to large entitlements in the Federation but not in the RS⁶². But they also include households holding subsidiary insurance in the Federation. At the time of the interviews, only 55% of *returnee* households had all their members registered in the RS, with a further 12% of mixed

⁶² Only this category (households receiving veterans' pensions) register a significantly larger tendency *not* to register (Cramer's V= .289, sig=.017).

households. Roughly one third had no member registered in the RS at all.⁶³

5.2.2. Tracking down households' utility function

Various *logit* regression models have been run that provide supportive evidence for the relevance of the proposed components of the utility function. Results are largely consistent with the expectations derived from the theoretical model.

As a previous step, partial models have been run for each of the proposed particular components (i.e. employment, housing, etc.). Enlarged partial models have also been run separately for the assets and resources component of the utility function (centred at the household-level) and for the public goods and opportunities component (centred at the local-level dimension). For the sake of brevity I report here only the final global model in which all components and dimensions of the utility function are introduced. The global model includes the most robust and parsimonious measures of all components and dimensions.

All models have been run also with a control variable for the HH's genre which turns out robustly non-significant – most probably due to the low number of female HH in the sample. Results do not change significantly when including this variable. Results are not altered either by dropping outliers. Details and descriptive statistics for all the variables in the global model are given in Annex 5.1 (Table 2).

This global model is problematic following Long and Freese's (2006) rule of thumb for *logit* regressions with small samples, namely, that there should be at least 10 observations for each independent variable introduced. The global model has 91 observations and 15 independent variables. A selective global

⁶³ Returnees getting registered did so overwhelmingly in their year of return (63%) and none delayed it more than one year. Most non-returnee households have not registered at all, as it could be expected, but 10% are mixed households.

model (or *trimmed* model) has been run dropping some explanatory variables which turn out non-significant – consistently with theory and/or robustly across different partial and global models – while keeping all the relevant control variables.

The selective model totals 10 independent variables for 91 observations. This model performs very similarly to the complete one and results do not change significantly, increasing confidence in the robustness and reliability of the core model. Only coefficients are smaller than in the complete model, which suggests that the selective model is a conservative approximation to the considered effects. The results of the global complete and selective models are displayed in Table 5.9.

Due to its better technical adequacy, I stick to the selective model for computing predicted probabilities in trying to proxy the households' calculations regarding return. Unless otherwise stated, when discussing the results of the model, I will be referring to this selective model.

Table 5.9. Logit regressions with 'Return' as dependent variable. Utility function components as independent variables

		Complete model		Selective model	
		Coef.	Clustered Errors	Coef.	Clustered Errors
Job	JobInFed	-2,789*	1,230	-1,886	0,800
	JobInRS	2,610*	1,086	2,485	1,021
Farming	Fed_Agri	0,604	0,603		
	LandOwn	-0,161	0,450		
Housing	Status	-1,591*	0,689	-1,663	0,483
	Reconst_End	2,639**	0,880	2,477	0,677
Finance	Finan96	0,617	0,528	0,361	0,390
	HH_members	2,138**	0,705	1,789	0,762
Habitat	Urbanization	0,226	0,474	-0,059	0,440
	HH_edu	-0,521	0,430	-0,449	0,490
	HH_under18	-2,809*	1,122	-2,256	0,971

Table 5.9. Logit regressions with 'Return' as dependent variable. Utility function components as independent variables (continues)

		Complete model		Selective model	
		Coef.	Clustered Errors	Coef.	Clustered Errors
Familiarity	HH_Age	1,305*	0,591	1,057	0,432
	Years_muni	-0,012	0,011		
Health insurance	HighFed	0,867	0,885		
	InsuRightRS	-0,343	0,594		
_cons		-2,264	2,507	-1,445	2,349
		Observations = 91		Observations = 91	
		Pseudo R2= 0.456		Pseudo R2= 0.426	
		Correctly class.: 84.62%		Correctly class.: 80.22%	
		Hosmer-Lemes.: p=0.53		Hosmer-Lemes.: p=0.94	

All models with clustered standard errors.

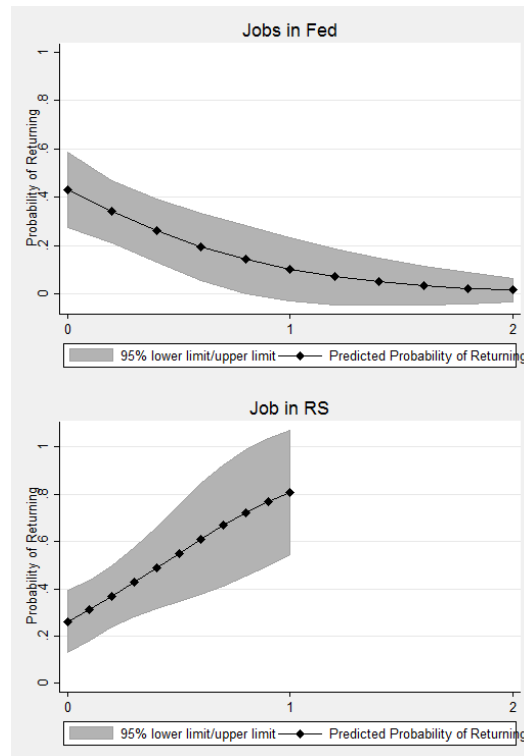
* Significant at < .05, ** significant at < .01, *** significant at < .001.

1. Sources of income and assets

As expected, having one or more employments in either the Federation or the RS (*JobInFed*, *JobInRS*) has a statistically significant effect on the probability of returning in the expected directions – negative and positive, respectively.

The effect of *JobInRS* is not significant in the partial model for the assets and incomes component. This effect seems then to be mediated by the gains (or losses) to be made in contextual resources and opportunities: for those to whom displacement offered important advances in those terms (or who would incur important losses by returning) a job in the RS was much less determining than for those facing little or no differences between the contexts of return and displacement. When these differences are controlled for, *JobInRS* turns out to play an important role.

Figure 5.4. Predicted probabilities of returning by employment (all other variables held at their means)



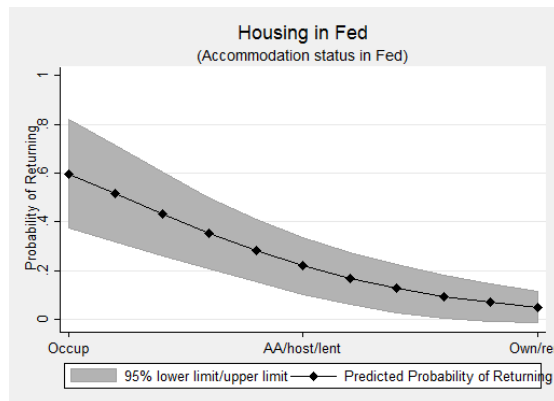
Note: Data for probability changes based on these and other variables are provided in Annex 5.1 (Table 4).

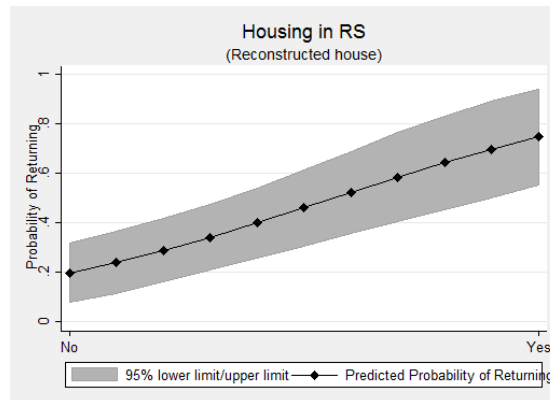
It is worth noting that *not having* a job either in the Federation or in the RS is linked to a probability of returning under 50% (43% and 26% respectively). That is, when there is no effective reason either to stay or to move (i.e. in the absence of jobs) the decision *not to move* seems prevalent (with probabilities of 57% and 74%) in line with the idea that return is a costly move. However, there is still a significant probability that return might take place, especially in the absence of a job in the Federation

(43%). As it has been stated in Chapter 2 and at the beginning of this chapter, the absence of any of the economic components considered as gains in the utility function should be read as a *push factor* rather as a mere absence of a *pull factor*. This would be a factor pushing towards return in the case of absence of job in the Federation, which translates into a 43% predicted probability of returning. And it would be a factor pushing *not* to return in the case of absence of job in the RS, which translates into a 26% predicted probability of returning.

The same significant effects are found for stable housing solutions in the Federation (*Status*) and for reconstruction upon displacement (*Reconst_End*). The absence of a stable housing solution in the Federation is linked to a probability of returning over 60% (i.e. this seems to be a more powerful *push factor* to leave displacement) which goes down to 5% when having a stable housing solution. The probability of returning in the absence of a reconstructed house upon return is 20% (i.e. it has a similar translation into the decision than the absence of job in that entity) which climbs up to 75% with a reconstructed house upon return.

Figure 5.5. Predicted probabilities of returning by housing (all other variables held at their means)

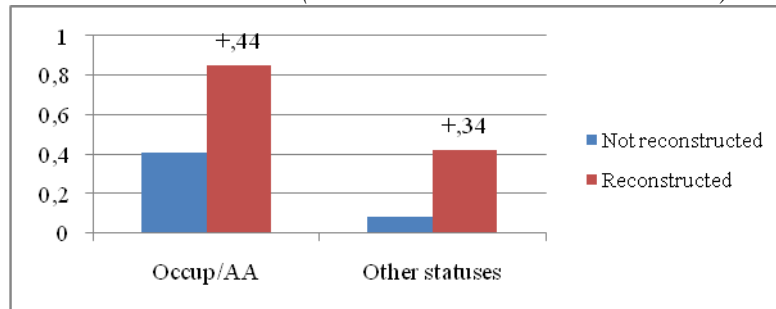




Note: Data for probability changes based on these and other variables are provided in Annex 5.1 (Table 4).

The effects of each of these housing variables increase when introduced separately in the equation, which seems to confirm some degree of interdependence between them (e.g. investing in one of the two options is likely to condition investment in the other). In cases of AA and occupied houses furthermore reconstruction was often connected with losing such an arrangement in displacement, thus providing both a pull and a push factor pointing out towards returning. This stronger effect can be appreciated when running the model only for cases of AA and occupation. In such cases having the house reconstructed in the RS makes return an almost certain event (predicted probability = 0.99). But there are too few observations in that model (n=54) so results are not very reliable. Sticking to the main model, the predicted probabilities of returning increase by .34 points when having the RS house reconstructed for those not occupying or in AA, and by .44 points for those in such situation (see Figure 5.6).

Figure 5.6. Predicted probabilities of returning by house reconstruction and accommodation status (all other variables held at their means)



Finally, access to agriculture activities in any of the two areas (*Fed_Agri*, *LandOwn*) turns out non-significant in all the models run, as predicted;⁶⁴ as well as the control variable for the financial situation of the household (*Finan96*).⁶⁵

2. Public goods and opportunities

The urbanization argument finds only some weak support. The central variable measuring the net difference between habitat of origin and habitat of displacement (*Urbanization*) turns out non-significant in most models run. It becomes significant nonetheless (with the expected negative sign) in the partial model for the public goods and opportunities component. Supporting the familiarity and adjustment argument, this effect increases when

⁶⁴ They have been dropped in the selective model.

⁶⁵ Besides *Finan96* other variables for specific mobile assets (i.e. pensions, family help, and extra financial help) and combinations of them have been tried out, but no significantly different results are obtained. The control variable for size of the household (*Members1*) turns out significant (and positive) in the global model, but this effect is not particularly robust, disappearing in various other partial and in the selective global model.

controlling for occupation (*HH_occup*),⁶⁶ which suggests that households with different occupational background adjust differently to habitat distance. However, the negative effect of *Urbanization* is non-significant in the global model. This suggests that this effect is largely related to actual household attainment (i.e. assets and sources of income). Once household attainment is controlled for, the significance of urbanization disappears.

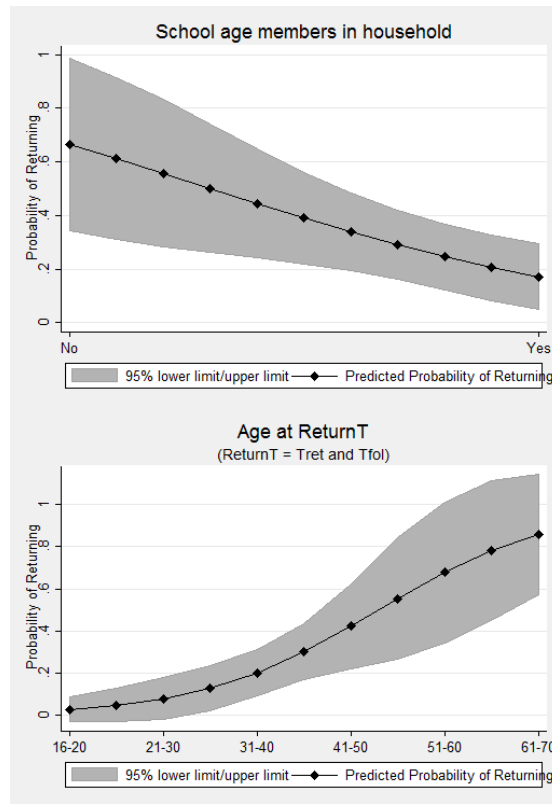
However, having school age members in the household (*Under18*), which was introduced as a control variable for the need to attend school – both primary and secondary –, does turn out significant (with a negative sign): it brings the probability of returning down to 17%.⁶⁷ Remarkably, this is so *even* once the effect of urbanization is controlled for. This suggests that the mechanism behind the negative effect of having minors in the household does not have to do (only) with the pragmatic issues involved in school attendance and school accessibility, but it should be found somewhere else.

There are two variables in the model intended to capture the alternative argument of familiarity and adjustment to the new context: age and number of years in the same municipality of displacement. The number of years in the municipality (*Ymuni*) behaves very similarly to *Urbanization*: it is significant with the expected negative sign in the partial model for public goods and opportunities, but non-significant in the global model.

⁶⁶ Occupational categories have not been included in the global model for the sake of parsimony. None of the occupational categories identified turns out significant, except being a qualified worker, which has a significant negative effect on the probability of returning (when controlling for all other variables in the global model). The overall model results do not change significantly and urbanization is still non-significant.

⁶⁷ The confidence interval for this low probability is much narrower than that for the higher probability of returning for households without minors, where there is more uncertainty about it (see Figure 5.7).

Figure 5.7. Predicted probabilities of returning by presence of school age members and by age (all other variables held at their means)



Note: The exact figures for probability changes based on these and other variables are provided in Annex 5.1 (Table 4).

Conversely, age at the time of return (*HH_Age*) is significant in the global and selective models⁶⁸ with the expected positive

⁶⁸ As with *JobInRS*, the effects of *HH_Age* and of having minors in the household (*Under18*) are not significant in the partial model (for public goods and opportunities). The fact that they turn significant in the global model suggests that their effects are mediated by household

value: the probability of returning is marginal among youngsters (HH) and it soars up to 86% for the eldest. As it was the case with the presence of minors, it must be noticed that this effect turns out significant *even* once the effect of urbanization (distance in habitat) is controlled for. That is, the younger the household the less likely is to return, *no matter what the rural or urban conditions* of the place of origin and displacement.⁶⁹ This finding is consistent with the familiarity argument (although not ruling out other possible mechanisms, obviously) but it makes it clear that familiarity does not have to do necessarily with urbanization issues.

Finally, access to health insurance in any of the two areas (*HighFed*, *InsuRightRS*) does not turn out significant in any of the models run, including the partial model on public goods and opportunities. They have also been dropped from the selective model without significant changes in the results. It seems that, even if they are likely to contribute to the decision of returning, their contribution is overrun by the other factors considered.

When putting together all the significant effects we could find, as it was suggested in Chapter 2 (section 2.4.2) what I called there ‘happy dilemmas’, i.e. cases where pull factors dominate for both return and no return options; ‘no-place dilemmas’, where push factors dominate for both; ‘return cases’, where all push and pull factors point out towards returning; and ‘non-return cases’, which is just the opposite case.

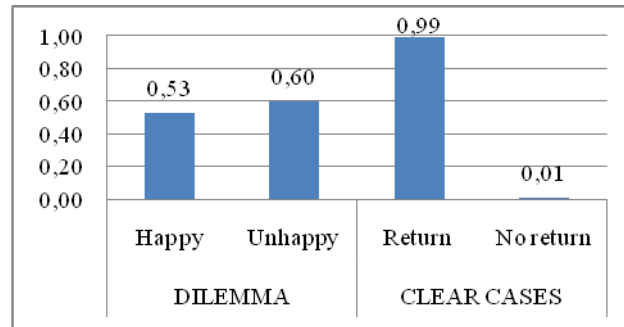
Focusing just on the described utility function components, I have simulated these four profiles combining different values of the job and housing variables. A happy dilemma is given here by having a job and a stable housing solution in both the Federation and the RS; a no-place dilemma is given by not having any of

attainment. For instance, being a young household (or having minors in the household) is more likely to be translated into *no* return for wealthier households who can more easily access stable housing solutions.

⁶⁹ The confidence interval is much narrower for youngsters than for elders, that is, there is less uncertainty about the low probability of returning for youngsters, while the prediction for elders is laxer.

them in neither location; a return case is given by having a job and a stable housing solution only in the RS, and a non-return case is given by having them only in the Federation. All other variables (including finance) are kept at their means. The predicted probabilities for each of these profiles are displayed in Figure 5.8.

Figure 5.8. Predicted probabilities of returning for hypothetical profiles



The most important feature of Figure 5.8 is that the so-called ‘return cases’ and ‘non-return cases’ actually display extremely high and low probabilities of returning (virtually 1 and 0). Whereas the ‘dilemma’ cases display intermediate values (.60 and .53). These intermediate values are nonetheless above the 50% threshold. However, the main hypothesis of the utilitarian model states that no return should be expected (or at least, in probabilistic terms, that the probability of returning should be significantly smaller than the probability of not returning) when the expected utility from returning is *the same* (or lesser) than the utility of not returning, as it is the case in these dilemma cases. The question that is left unanswered here is what does it push the probability of returning upward for these cases?

In order to see whether some of the longitudinal and local variation in the relevant variables translates into the expected differences in behaviour, the models have been run also including

dummy variables for location and time period.⁷⁰ The dummy variable for time period turns out significant in a robust manner (with a positive effect for the late period) whereas the dummy for location does not. In other words, there is something about being in the early or in the late period which produces a systematic effect (depressing return in the early period) and which is not accounted for the economic model presented here. But any role of location (depressing return to Cerska) seems to have been largely accounted for by this model.

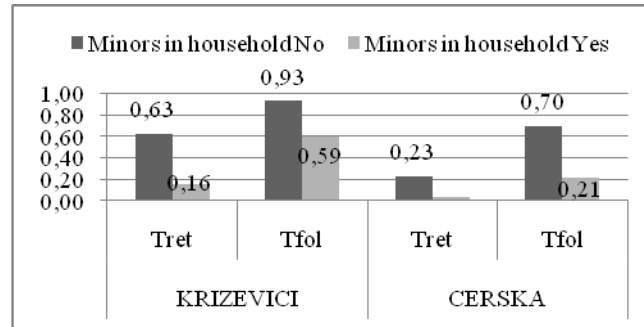
Four profiles have been produced in order to check variation across them: Križevíci in the early and late periods, and Cerska in both periods as well. Two main expectations were in place. First, a more significant effect for holding a job in either the Federation or the RS for Cerska, given the larger commutation costs involved (due to larger distances and worse access). This expectation is not met and the (positive and negative) effects of these variables are actually larger in the case of Križevíci.

Another expectation was related to the public goods component: Križevíci significantly improved the situation for households with school age members in the second period, when it opened the school (in 2001). Figure 5.9 shows how the probability of returning increases significantly in the late period for all cases (in both locations and for both households with and without school age members). However, the distance between households with school age members and those without them diminishes in the late period in Križevíci (from -.47 to -.33). For Cerska the situation is just the opposite: distance between those two types of household even increases by the late period (from -.20 to -.49).⁷¹

⁷⁰ The selective and global models have been run for Cerska and Križevíci samples separately, as well as for T_{ret} and T_{fol} samples. However, due to the low number of cases, these models are unreliable (or they cannot be run at all).

⁷¹ There was no particular (theory-driven) expectation for Cerska. Again, this distinctive behavior may be due to different reasons but here there can be only speculation about it. In Cerska there was no major improvement during the two periods evaluated here: the school was

Figure 5.9. Predicted probabilities of returning by presence of school age members by location and period (all other variables at their means)



5.3. The utilitarian model. Measuring the threat

Since I assume people are survival-oriented and value their physical security, the avoidance of violence is expected to be a major conditioning for return. Following the utilitarian scheme, a decision to return would be taken when the expected utility from returning is larger than the expected utility from not returning. The probability of being hit by violence (p) detracts from the expected utility from returning, and it could thus prevent a decision to return.

The role of this probability has not an absolute character, i.e. there is not a measure of what is 'enough' on itself to prevent a decision to return. Rather, it depends on the expected utilities of the two options (net of the probability of being hit by violence). That is, as it was stated in Chapter 2 (eq. 17), the larger the utility from returning (independent of security constraints) relative to the one of not returning, the higher the probability of being hit which is 'rationally acceptable' upon return. In other words, we need to

opened only in 2004, and only up to 4th grade. This increased pull effect in part of the second period may have been overcome nonetheless by the indirect timing effect discussed in Chapter 4.

include p and economic components together in the utility function equation.

In Chapter 2 (section 2.3.3) I developed a theoretical framework for characterizing the evaluation of the threat. Within this framework, and for the time period considered, Bosnia has been classified as the simple version of type 6 (see Chapter 4). The simple version of type 6 excludes the presence of salient armed groups as part of the threat. This issue was introduced in the standard semi-structure questionnaire used in the fieldwork research, as well as in informal interviews with both displaced persons and other key actors of return. It turned out that the interviewees did not perceive the presence of armed groups as such, neither blamed government structures (except at a very local and personal level) for direct threats to security.⁷²

Thus, even though there is ground to argue that governments (at various levels) and armed groups still played a relevant role in that period (ICG 2000b: ii, 65) the visibility and perception of what the actual sources of violent threat were corresponded rather to that of a scattered grassroots level threat. The probability of being hit by violence p upon return in the Bosnian case is then characterized through the following function:

$$p = P(\textit{hit})_6 = F\left(\frac{\textit{ComViol} * \textit{PS}}{G}\right)$$

In this section I describe the variables and indicators which I propose as relevant in the estimation of these probabilities for the case of Bosnia. I also present the descriptive statistics for the research sample. I then discuss the results from multivariate analysis.

⁷² They did blame them for general impunity and cover to actions threatening security.

5.3.1. The probability of being hit

The probability of being hit by violence can be decomposed into two components: the probability of an attack occurring – $P(\text{attack})$ – and the probability of being reached once an attack occurs – $P(\text{reached}|\text{attack})$.

1. Probability of an attack

The perceived probability of an attack occurring with this type of threat consists of the individual's estimated probability of a returnee being attacked by any individual (or group of individuals) within the segment of the population in the opposing side in the violent conflict.⁷³ The individual has to monitor the whole group filtering by the information she has available in order to profile and to single out the more likely sources of the threat. The fact that the scattered threat is geographically dispersed (and around the individual) makes it not only an immediate threat difficult to monitor; it also underscores that the population of primary concern is the population at the local level.

The information helping to monitor the population of concern consists of objective indicators (mediated by the individual's limited and imperfect information channels) and, crucially, given the uncertainty involved, the individual's beliefs about the population of concern. The estimated probability of an attack occurring can be then conceived as a mixture of subjective probability (given by the interviewee's perceptions) and of empirical probability (based on the counting of happenings, although filtered by the interviewee's perception).

In order to proxy this process of probability estimation, I take into account three components that are likely to shape individual's estimation: perceived attitudinal predisposition towards violence against returnees among the receiving population (motivation for

⁷³ In ethnic conflicts as the one at hand, this side largely coincides with ethnic boundaries.

agency), resources available to the potential sources of threat (capacity) and occurrence of violence confirming the existence of the former two plus a conducive incentive and opportunity structure (opportunity).

(a) Attitudinal distribution: Hardliners, supporters, bystanders

When dealing with scattered sources of threat, which require little preparation or use of resources – especially if those sources are geographically dispersed around the targeted individuals – the presence of a motivational basis for violent action is most determinant.⁷⁴ Although attitudinal readiness must be met with other requirements (such as capacity and opportunity) in order to be translated into action, the latter are less determinant in such a case. And motivation in itself becomes an almost direct threat.

The individual's perception of this attitudinal predisposition is the product of the information she has available – e.g. such as reports from neighbours or witnesses of war actions – and prior beliefs derived from previous experiences with the population of concern. Based on this, the population of concern is scanned and classified into different types.

'Hardliners' would be those individuals perceived to be hostile and ready to carry some kind of aggressive behaviour against returnees or to support it. 'Supporters' would be those perceived to have positive attitudes towards returnees and to be ready to engage in positive behaviours towards them. 'Bystanders' would be those perceived as not holding particularly hostile or supportive attitudes, or for whom no specific opinion can be formed on this regard.

The presence of hardliners amounts to an almost direct threat, especially if their amount (and the resources they command, as it will be discussed next) is large enough as to make punishment

⁷⁴ The nature of those motivations is not considered here. They can be of different types and they can include various at the same time, ranging for instance from hatred to self-interest.

relatively unlikely, and thus render violent behaviour almost not costly. This being so, the more hardliners there are, the more the chances that some kind of violent attack may occur. On the contrary, the absence of hardliners makes it very unlikely that violent attacks will occur, except if some external shock takes place.

The presence of bystanders is not a direct threat but an indirect one, given the potential for them to be dragged in into violence. A reasonable hypothesis is that the more hardliners there are, and the more resources they control, the more likely are bystanders to be dragged in. Bystanders are then particularly important for discounted calculations of the future, dealing not so much with the direct threat, but with what the threat could become under certain circumstances. In this initial model I am dealing only with the short term and direct threats, so I will assume for simplicity that bystanders do not pose a relevant threat to be monitored.

The presence of supporters could be considered to counterbalance the threat if we expect that they can do something to prevent attacks. But this is not very likely unless their proportion is big or unless they control a large amount of the available resources.⁷⁵ What is most determining about supporters is actually their absence, i.e. the actual predominance of hardliners or bystanders. In short, I consider that the perceived amount of hardliners in the local population of reference is the most relevant indicator and the most efficient measure for evaluating the potential for agency of violence from the individual's point of view.

The indicators used here to measure the perceived amount of hardliners, supporters and bystanders are the answers to a semi-closed question asking interviewees the proportion of Serbs in their area they considered to be 'hostile' (*SHostile*) and the

⁷⁵ Indeed, the argument made about bystanders can be reasonably extended to supporters, stating that the more hardliners there are and the more resources they control, the more likely are supporters to remain 'silent supporters' (which would be behaviourally equivalent to 'bystanders') and from there to be dragged into violence (or not).

proportion they considered to be 'supportive' (*SSupportive*) towards returnees. Respondents were then asked about the temporal evolution of these attitudes in order to try to establish differences between t_{ret} and t_{fol} .

Interviewees tended to provide general statements rather than actual figures or proportions. These answers have subsequently been codified into a 5-value scale from 0 to 4: 'None', 'A few', 'Half', 'Most', 'All' for both *SHostile* and *SSupportive*.⁷⁶ The distance left until 4 is the score for 'bystanders' (*SBystand*). Table 5.10 displays the descriptive statistics of the resulting perceived distributions.

The perception of hostile attitudinal predispositions towards returnees is quite overwhelming: two thirds of the interviewees consider that *most or all* members of the opposing group in their area are hostile towards them (see Table 5.10). Still, a significant minority (the remaining third of the valid cases) considers that there are only a few, or even none, hardliners.

It is important to note that the attribution of hostile attitudes does not imply in many cases an actual experience of hostility, but rather the attribution of it, even *despite* non-hostile behaviours. Indeed, personal positive experiences with the population of concern are mentioned with the same frequency than positive ones (46% and 44% of the cases answering, $n=57$). The behaviour from Serb neighbours was in many cases evaluated as quite correct and frequently polite or even friendly. However, this was not considered in most cases to deliver a credible signal about the person's true attitudes or preferences. One fourth of the interviewees explicitly stated that they deeply doubted the honesty of this behaviour and characterized the population of concern as prone to 'doing one thing while actually thinking another'.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ The sum of both variables should not exceed 4, which does not occur.

⁷⁷ When asked about the Serb population in the RS as a whole, roughly 70 percent of the interviewees answering ($n=42$) stated that, at the time of return, they believed that they should be suspicious of them.

Table 5.10. Perceived distributions of local Serbs' attitudes towards returnees

	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	Hostile <i>%</i>	
None hostile	1	2	32	None or few hostile, with varying degrees of supportive ones
Few hostile, most supportive	9	16		
Few hostile, few supportive	5	9		
Few hostile, none supportive	3	5		
Half and half	2	4	4	Half and half
Most hostile, a few supportive*	18	32	65	Most or all hostile, none or only a few supportive
Most hostile, none supportive	9	16		
All hostile	10	18		
<i>Total</i>	<i>57</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	

* Includes three cases with 'Most hostile' but no answer for supportive.

The root of such distrust is to be found in the process of belief updating undergone as a result of the war. In most cases, the behaviour of Serb neighbours – i.e. workmates, schoolmates, friends or just acquaintances – during and after the war terribly failed to the expectations of interviewees. Such expectations were based on pre-war experiences, when both groups held normal relationships of neighbourhood, comradeship or even friendship. Interviewees felt that their Serb neighbours had failed to these expectations. For instance, by not having provided some help or information in critical moments, if having been witnessed carrying radical symbols, or if they had been attributed some war crimes or misbehaviours, or simply they had been present when such misbehaviours occurred without doing anything.

“I didn't think that [the war] would be so bad and so bloody. Serbs knew about it, and they got weapons for themselves. But I never

believed it, I never believed that the people working with me would be capable of that” (1113, *male (69) Cers, ret*)⁷⁸

“If you had a Serb friend, he would turn his head when you met as if he doesn’t know you” (1114, *male (50) Cers, ret*)

“I have heard many stories about one neighbour who mistreated my father in the [detention] camp [before he died]. His younger son has a piece of forest and he needs to pass through my fields. He came to ask me for permission to use the path. At first I refused. Then my uncle told me that he’s not like his father, and I wanted to show him that I’m a better person than his father. I gave him my permission” (1004, *male (30) Cers, not*)

In turn, interviewees considered that war behaviours had revealed what the true preferences and attitudes of their acquaintances were, updating their beliefs and pushing upwards the perceived amount of hardliners. In many cases this categorisation was made extensive and applied at the group level as a result, leaving little room for filtering.

“I don’t know who in the *komšiluk*, but they have all attacked us” (2005, *fem (38) Kriz, not*)

“When I came to pick up some vouchers in 1999 I was surprised by the welcoming attitude, by people asking about who survived and who didn’t. But *there is evil embedded in them* [...]. One guy told me: ‘Is there anything else that we have to do for you not to return?’” (1105, *male (59) Cers, ret*)

Crucially, war experiences updated beliefs regarding the *low credibility* of their neighbours’ behaviour during peace time in order to predict their future behaviour in similarly violent

⁷⁸ From now on, all references to particular cases in the sample will be presented in this manner: first their identifying code, followed by genre, age, location (Cers=Cerska, Kriz=Križeviči) and whether it is a returnee (ret) or not (not).

scenarios or their relevant preferences regarding violence and the underlying conflict. The result of this is that non-hostile behaviour during peacetime was rendered uninformative on this crucial regard. The likelihood of positively updating beliefs was thus importantly diminished.

“Some of them are nice, but they are just playing innocent. How can we make peace with them, after what they have done and destroyed?” (2005, *fem (38) Kriz, not*)

“We will never feel at ease or secure. There will always be uncertainty about other people’s intentions, especially if the entity [RS] remains. The experience has shown what Serbs tend to practice: they have a formal opinion totally different from what they are actually doing” (1109, *male (35) Cers, ret*)

“We won’t trust them as long as we live. They tend to be very friendly while at the same time thinking to kill you. [...] We have to ensure that this experience passes from generation to generation. They’re not to be trusted” (1010, *fem (49) Cers, not*)

“Now I don’t believe anyone. I turn the head all the time. There is a lot of trauma out there. [...] You only think of trouble and bad things. We are handicapped. It will need time. I hope it doesn’t happen again, but...” (1012, *male (50) Cers, not*)

There is no claim here that this situation is translated into an actual impossibility to update beliefs in a positive direction, neither that this is an irreversible process likely to spread negative beliefs in an infinite time horizon. The overwhelming majority of respondents (86%) pointed out that there had been an improvement across time towards less apparent hostility and things were getting ‘better’.⁷⁹ And approximately 60% of the sample was actually capable of drawing relevant boundaries and

⁷⁹ This opinion is positively correlated with *SSupportive* and negatively with *SHostile*. The remaining cases said that things remained the same. None had noticed a worsening in the situation.

establishing filters regarding local Serbs' attitudes by singling out the presence of a few or more supportive local Serbs, or underlining that hardliners constituted only a small portion of the population.

This filtering, nevertheless, cannot be attributed *prima facie* to positive belief updating. They are in many cases the product of the survival of some pre-war general beliefs – sometimes rooted, in the interviewees' narratives, in their parents' or grandparents' teachings about human nature and war, for instance. They are also to a great extent the product of *selective* negative updating during war time and afterwards, granting some exceptions and producing simply a more skewed distribution of perceived attitudes across the population, rather than a generalization of negative beliefs.

“My opinion is that they are not that bad. All Serbs I have worked with [in my life], all of them, they are ok. Problems are organized somewhere else” (2106, *male (50) Kriz, ret*)

“I'm sorry that my children feel hatred. I haven't taught them that. I never said to my children to hate somebody just because of who he is. So now I am supposed to say to my children 'Hey, they killed your father, go and kill them'. No, I would never say that. I think most of them wouldn't have done what they did if not pressured by powerful ones. [...] I cannot blame all of them because they are not all the same. In every flock there is a black sheep” (1119, *fem (51) Cers, ret*)

“You have to consider individual by individual. Like everywhere, like always” (2109, *fem (47) Kriz, ret*)

“They were poor people. They were encouraged to commit crimes by promising them properties. That was common knowledge when it all started. [...] Some were killed if they refused to go to the frontline. I have a Serb first neighbour [...]. I'm not on excellent terms with her mother, but we do communicate. I tell her: 'I don't hate you. If you or your son did something, God will judge you'. The frontline is something different, there you have no choice” (1013, *male (52) Cers, not*)

But positive updating and filtering did happen during and after the war. For instance, some interviewees were happy to emphasize that their experiences with Serbs in their locations of displacement, or with Serb DPs and neighbours once returned, had been very charming and that they had received much help from them. In the same way that negative updating regarding the interviewee's own group and co-ethnics took place too, providing an important contrasting and levelling effect.

“Serbs in Vlasenica treated us [upon return] better than ours [Bosniaks] in Tinja [during displacement]” (1107, *fem (50) Cers, ret*)

“[DP] Serbs here didn't push us away. They helped us with electricity, so in the end we were without electricity only for seven days. For me they were nice and we had a nice relationship. That shouldn't be forgotten” (2123, *fem (40) Kriz, ret*)

“I'm afraid of war because I don't know who could fire a shell and maybe kill me or someone from my family. There are bad people within our nationality [Bosniaks] too. You never know who could come across” (1119, *fem (51) Cers, ret*)

“In war you see all kinds of things [in all sides]. I lived in Srebrenica [during the siege] and all kinds of things happened there [among Bosniaks]” (1012, *male (50) Cers, not*)

In order to better understand this process of belief formation, a factor analysis has been run including the main aspects mentioned by the respondents when evaluating local Serbs' attitudes.⁸⁰

⁸⁰ The analysis includes the central variables used here (*SHostile* and *SSupport*) plus a series of variables reflecting whether the interviewee holds negative evaluations of local Serbs behaviour *during* and/or *after* the war, denoting in most cases a feeling of failure or betrayal; whether the interviewee explicitly states that she doubts about the honesty of non-hostile behaviours; whether the interviewee has had *personal* good and/or bad experiences with Serb neighbours after the war; whether she blames Serb authorities for, on the one hand, pushing or tricking

Table 5.11. Factor analysis of elements contained in the evaluation of local Serbs' attitudes

	Components		
	1	2	3
<i>SHostile</i>	.810		
<i>SSupportive</i>	-.685	.408	
Bad attitudes and failure during war	.613		
Bad attitudes and failure after war	.529		-.249
Doubt their honesty	.646		
Bad personal experiences after war		-.236	.649
Good personal experiences after war	-.541		.441
They were tricked/pushed (into violence)		.504	.691
Institutional backup and guide (for viol)		.755	
Economic interests in return		-.737	
<i>Eigenvalue</i>	2.98	1.36	1.19
<i>Total variance explained</i>	29.88%	13.60%	11.91%

Extraction: Principal components analysis. *Rotation:* Varimax Normalization with Kaiser. KMO=.640, Bartlett=109.027 (sig=.000). Only loadings over .200 are shown. Loadings over .500 displayed in **bold**.

The main principal component is one on which *SHostile*, *SSupport*, negative evaluation of *war-time* behaviours and doubts about the *honesty* of peacetime behaviours load highly (see Table 5.11). Bad and good personal experiences *after* the war, from which negative and positive updating could be expected, load more moderately on this component. That is, the central variable here (*Shostile*) seems to be part of a latent variable constituted largely by beliefs and distrust emerging from war time.⁸¹

individuals into war and violence and, on the other hand, backing up the wilful actions of violence and looting; and finally, whether she emphasizes economic interest as an engine for their acceptance back.

⁸¹ A second principal component corresponds to structural influences shaping Serb attitudes: the role of institutions in pushing for violence or

On the other hand, although *SSupportive* correlates significantly and importantly with good personal experiences or with the perception of external influences (i.e. authorities, economic interest) on Serbs' attitudes, *SHostile* does not (see Annex 5.1, Table 7). That is, the perceived amount of hardliners is not prone to vary along these and it appears as rather different and independent from them. In short, although there seems to be room for refining perceptions regarding the amount of supporters, the magnitude of the related change concerning hardliners seems to be very limited.

As a consequence, changes in beliefs about attitudes – especially about hardliners – are expected to be small or scarcely significant on average across time, thus lessening concerns about time issues in the reconstruction of past perceptions (see Chapter 3). Also, if the perception about the amount of hardliners evolved somewhat easily with new pieces of information and experiences lived during the period of return, this could pose important endogeneity problems, i.e. returnees' perceptions might be different to those of non-returnees.

But in any case non-returnees in the sample have been exposed to a large extent to similar experiences to those of returnees. All of them have frequently visited the area of return and most of them have undergone the process of rubble cleaning and reconstruction; they have also had necessary contacts with the local administration; they have frequently visited the area of return, which in some cases includes prolonged stays during the reconstruction period or in a seasonal basis; and finally, they have received substantial informational input from actual returnees. Cross-tabulation analysis and t-tests actually indicate that there are no statistically significant differences in these perceptions among returnees and non-returnees.

in backing it, and the role of economic interests in smoothing negative attitudes.

(b) Resources: Hard-liners' control and counterbalances

Hardliners vary in the amount of resources they command – from economic to social and political – and thus in their capacity to pose (and extend) a threat. The more resources hardliners are perceived to control, the larger their perceived capacity not only to carry out violent actions – which is not as determinant for this type of threat – but also to cover, justify or even encourage such acts. The larger the control of resources that hardliners enjoy, the more resources for violent action and the less costly they are.⁸²

I consider two types of resources for this type of threat: local power structures, encompassing the political, administrative and judicial dimensions; and security forces with direct coercive powers. The main indicators here for these two types of resources are the answers to two closed questions evaluating the municipality – the mayor, the council, the municipal assembly and the administration – and the police forces at the municipal level.⁸³ These indicators are complemented by answers about the temporal evolution of these institutions, in order to establish relevant differences between t_{ret} and t_{fol} . I also consider the possible (positive) shock that the inclusion of co-ethnics in both the municipality and the police forces may have had on the perceptions about these institutions across time.

The assessment of the municipality (*Municip*) ranges from 'Willing to help' (0) and 'Just professional' (1) to 'Inefficient/not

⁸² And also, the more likely is that bystanders can successfully be dragged in into violence. As it will be seen during the empirical analysis, interviewees manifested in many cases a plain awareness of the influence that institutions and 'the powerful ones' have on attitudes and behavioural readiness to carry out violent or damaging actions.

⁸³ Although the judiciary is not directly part of this evaluation, the justice system at the local level is strongly politicized and dependent of these other local power structures in Bosnia. Judges and other personnel in the judiciary are largely designated by political authorities and they are broadly perceived by the citizens as an extension of the main local powers.

very supportive' (2) and 'Troublemakers/obstructive' (3). This variable is obviously not a direct measure of hard-liners' control of the municipality, since even a municipality 'willing to help' or 'just professional' might be perceived to be controlled by hardliners, but subject to international pressure, for instance. Or, on the other hand, inefficient and non-supportive local institutions do not necessarily imply the action of hardliners, but it could involve simply plain incompetence.

The problem lies in the fact that, given the international scrutiny upon municipal authorities in Bosnia, a hardliner municipality has incentives to fake being a non-hostile type. It has two alternatives to do that: either to work efficiently towards returnees so that they are reasonably satisfied despite its true preferences, or to continue working in an obstructive although not openly and explicitly hostile manner towards returnees, so that any inadequacy can be explained in terms of budget shortages or similarly independent factors.⁸⁴

Whichever the option taken, once the hostile type is faking, the two types (hostile and non-hostile) become not readily distinguishable and there is observational uncertainty. But the problem becomes an advantage in order to better understand individuals' evaluations under uncertainty. Interviewees in the study who had a reasonably satisfactory impression about the municipality's performance split themselves into those whose evaluation was plainly positive, without nuances (falling into category 0) and those who were still distrustful or perceived hardliner attitudes lurking behind apparent normality (falling into category 1).

(0) 'Willing to help'

"They really are. They are even more professional than in Srebrenik [in displacement]. [There] you don't get anything without paying [fees and bribes]. Here I saw how this illiterate Bosniak woman was

⁸⁴ In fact, both options are part of a continuum in which each hard-liner municipality can place itself.

having trouble and the clerk finished all the paperwork for her. They're really polite and professional" (1004, *male (30) Cers, not*)

"They're helpful and they help whenever you're asking for something" (2124, *fem (72) Kriz, ret*)

(1) *Just professional*

"Frankly, I haven't had any problems... They're treating us fairly, but they're not actually helping. [...] You have no problems if you need some paper from the municipality. But no one is helping. The municipality never came here to ask about the situation" (1120, *male (41) Cers, ret*)

"They're correct, simply professional. But you don't know what they think" (1113, *male (69) Cers, ret*)

In contrast, whenever interviewees observed bad performances they unanimously attributed it to the presence of a hostile type, without considering the possibility of other explanatory causes of inefficiency.

(2) *Inefficient and not very supportive*

"Vlasenica was the last municipality to allow return, and Cerska was the last area within Vlasenica to be allowed. That's the last thing they've done for us" (1106, *fem (46) Cers, ret*)

"They only do [for us] what they are forced to do by law" (2122, *male (37) Kriz, ret*)

"They only care about their own [Serbs]. One [Bosniak] guy got beaten and they paid him 1000KM not to sue the aggressors" (2112, *fem (45) Kriz, ret*)

(3) *Obstructive and troublemakers*

"We are not welcome at all. They are not helping us at all, instead they try to give us trouble" (1112, *male (39) Cers, ret*)

"There is one *četnik* [radical Serb nationalist] working there and he prides himself on that. It's really bad" (1116, *male (59) Cers, ret*)

“In May we tried to register [as residents] but we didn’t succeed. You only get things done [in the RS] by paying [bribes] either for getting registered in the employment office or for any other thing. Otherwise, you can just go home and die. Like the case of this lady with health problems who couldn’t get assistance here, but everything was ok in Kalesija [Federation]” (2116, *fem (49) Kriz, ret*)

This is in line with the argument and evidence presented above about the lower credibility of non-hostile behaviours: negative behaviours are straightforwardly taken to confirm beliefs about hostility⁸⁵ whereas positive behaviours do not have such a direct translation.

Table 5.12. *Opinions about the municipality and about the difference it makes that there are Bosniaks in it*

Municipality	N	%	Bosniaks in Municipality	N	%
Obstructive/ troublemakers	18	32.7	Even worse	2	4.2
Inefficient/not very supportive	7	12.7	No difference	24	50.0
Just professional	14	25.5	Yes	19	39.6
Willing to help	16	29.1	Yes, a lot	3	6.3
<i>Total</i>	<i>55</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>48</i>	<i>100</i>

The final result is that almost half of the population (45%) have a negative opinion of the municipality, founded mostly in perceptions of hostility and discrimination. A further 25% is

⁸⁵ Indeed, the opposite causal direction cannot be discarded, and beliefs about hostility might actually self-impose in the evaluation of performance.

relatively satisfied but distrustful. Only one third of the respondents have no distrust or negative impressions about the way they are treated by the municipality. The resulting picture is consistent with the characterization of the three municipalities evaluated as hardliners.

A positive *evolution* of the municipality was noticed only by 40% of the respondents. A majority (54%) think that the situation has remained largely the same across the period – with mostly negative evaluations overall – and 6% consider that things have been getting worse. Although important local government shifts have occurred in recent years (from SDS dominance to SNSD dominance) this has done little to alter the consideration of these municipalities as hardliners.⁸⁶ In general respondents pointed out a positive trend in external behavior (from aggressive manners and open opposition to correct and professional manners) but once more these external changes were not considered necessarily deep and genuine but rather adaptation to pressures or changing conditions.

One important factor that could affect the evaluation of these institutions, particularly across time, is related to the presence of co-ethnics. Such presence might counterbalance the control hardliners have of these resources, provided that co-ethnics occupy appropriate positions and that they are actually willing to exercise such a role.⁸⁷ Bosniaks have been present as elected members of the municipal assemblies in both locations since the first local elections in 1997. They remain nonetheless a minority in

⁸⁶ A particular shock at the level of the municipalities which seems to have had the potential to affect returnees' perceptions is the election of a pragmatist businessman as the new mayor of Zvornik in 2007. This new mayor was hailed at the time as a promising politician who would help boosting the local economy and who would put ethnic issues in a very secondary place. However, this event took place when the interviews were roughly completed.

⁸⁷ For instance, their presence in the municipality might be partially endogenous or conducive to their collaboration with the majority group and dominant hardliners.

the assemblies and they hold positions with very limited influence. Interviewees were asked whether their presence actually made a difference in the municipality, with answers ranging from 'A lot' to 'They make it even worse' in a scale from 2 to -1.

Only 46% of the respondents considered that their presence did make a positive difference (see Table 5.12).⁸⁸ The majority considered that they were not in a position to make a difference, or even that they made things worse.⁸⁹ No major impact is expected at the global on the opinion about the municipality then, especially since the presence of Bosniaks has been the same almost since the beginning of the return process.

The variable assessing the police forces (*Police*) ranges from 'Mostly willing to help' (0) and 'There are no problems with them' (1) to 'Not willing to help' (2), 'They give trouble' (3) and 'They are really threatening' (4).

Table 5.13. Opinions about the police and about the difference it makes that there are Bosniaks in it

Police	N	%	Bosniaks in Police	N	%
Really threatening	1	2.1			
Giving trouble	2	4.3	Even worse	2	4.5
Not willing to help	3	6.4	No difference	14	22.7
No problem	29	61.7	Yes	10	31.8
Mostly willing to help	12	25.5	Yes, a lot	18	40.9
<i>Total</i>	<i>47</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>100</i>

⁸⁸ "It's better if one of ours is working there. You feel safer" (2010, fem (46) Kriz, not). "It's important [that there are some of ours there]. At least they hear what is going on" (2122, male (37) Kriz, ret). "It would be much harder in any case if they weren't there" (2009, male (46) Kriz, not).

⁸⁹ This was attributed to a lack of will to help returnees and rather to make a profit out of their privileged position relative to other returnees.

The evaluation of the police behaviour is much more positive than that of the municipalities, with an 87% roughly approving them (for 55% in the case of municipalities). But the percentage of plainly positive evaluations (category 0), that is, without distrust about hardliner attitudes lurking behind (category 1) is similar to that of municipalities (25% as compared to 29%).

Intensive and direct international intervention and monitoring of police reforms is the most likely explanation for this. The product of these efforts is a more responsive and less hostile police force, which interviewees appreciate: 76% of the respondents considered that the police had positively evolved across the period, in line with the documented evolution of police structures in the RS. The evaluation of the police has actually changed quite dramatically since the initial years of return, when most returnees acknowledge that (based on negative experiences or incidents experienced either personally or by others) they deeply distrusted and were afraid of the police.

But respondents were nonetheless broadly convinced that this evolution had been driven largely by external factors and not necessarily by true and deep attitudinal changes. Actually, the perception of improvement does not significantly correlate with the general evaluation made of the police, which points out that belief updating is not necessarily or likely attached to the perception of improvement.

On the other hand, the presence of minority police officers has experienced a salient evolution across time. Such presence was strongly resisted for years in the police structures emerging from the war. Once their incorporation started, around the year 2000, it occurred very gradually, and it was followed by strategies further delaying their effective integration within the police forces. Frequently they were not issued firearms and some of them were subjected to harassment (International Crisis Group 2002: 41). In Vlasenica, for instance, no Bosniak officer had received a firearm by 2001 (*Ibid.*).

Although no official figures are publicly accessible regarding the composition of the police forces at the local level, official data

gathered by ICG for the RS placed the percentage of Bosniak officers in 2005 at 6.4%.⁹⁰ For Vlasenica, ICG reported the presence of 4 Bosniak officers (and 83 Serb officers) in 2002 (ICG 2002a:41). For Milići, informant A012 reported that there were 2 Bosniak officers in 2007.⁹¹ For Zvornik, informant B108 reported 4 from MZ Križeviči (from 2001 to 2007).⁹²

Numbers are in any case very low,⁹³ but such low numbers must be put in perspective with the fact that Bosniak police officers are not spread around the entire municipality. They rather serve in mixed patrols covering the specific return areas where returnees tend to concentrate. This qualification is important from the point of view of the interviewees' perceptions and their evaluation of the impact that Bosniak officers may have in their security. Actually, 53% of the sample noticed that their presence brought about an important change.

“When they come one Serb and one Muslim, it’s a different story. That’s a democratic police. If only we could reach the half and half rule” (2103, *male (43) Kriz, ret*)

“They don’t have rights: Serb policemen carry guns, Bosniaks don’t. But we’re better and safer [with them]” (2010, *fem (46) Kriz, not*)

“We sit down and chat with them [Bosniak officers]. And they have a good opinion about their colleagues and their work. There should be more of them” (1001, *male (41) Cers, not*)

“It’s good to know they are there. It helps” (1105, *male (59) Cers, ret*)

⁹⁰ The complete ethnic breakdown is: 92.2% Serbs, 0.9% Croats and 0.5% Others.

⁹¹ Informant A012. Local representative.

⁹² Informant B108. Former community leader and active member of the community.

⁹³ Low numbers reflect the difficulties just mentioned and their discouragement effect, but also lower wages in the RS, and in general low rates of minority return.

It is interesting to note is that there is no significant correlation between the evaluation of the municipality or the police forces and the perception of local Serbs' attitudes, whereas a notable correlation exists between the former two (corr.= .410, sig.= .002). This suggests that the mechanisms for the evaluations of popular attitudes and the institutional level are seemingly different and independent. This finding is in line with the argument that *scattered* sources of threat are specific in their evaluation relative to organised actors or institutions in general, which are likely to be evaluated in a more unitary manner⁹⁴ and, subsequently, more straightforwardly.

A complementary measure of the presence of hardliners in the municipality, and of the control they have of it, was attempted through the inclusion of a query about the presence of suspected war criminals in the local institutions. Interviewees were asked whether there were rumours or whether they had some notion that that might be the case, generally. The wording of the question was carefully done so as to make it clear that no names, details or direct accusations were being searched. But the question was obviously very sensitive, and despite all cautions, most interviewees declined to answer (n=27, missing observations=35).

Of those answering, almost half mentioned the existence of one or two cases. One fourth reckoned the existence of various cases. The remaining cases either generalized ("all of them are criminals") or declared that they were not aware of any such a case. The fact that all the cases mentioned tended to be always the same, and that such cases were frequently also mentioned in informal conversations, supports the view that there was an extended awareness of the presence of such cases, as well as of the details involved, in both locations. The low response rate is

⁹⁴ Only in one case did the respondent find it problematic to evaluate the municipality structure as a whole, alleging that it varied from person to person within that structure, and that it depended also on the issue and circumstances at hand.

informative about the level of threat that is embodied in dealing with war crimes.

Although the lack of data disallows the incorporation of this variable into the analysis, still the main variables considered here (popular attitudes and local power structures) are probably capturing the effect that the presence of suspected war criminals may have on the individual's perception of the threat. One of the main impacts of the presence of suspected war criminals in public positions is that such presence signals the dominance of hardliners in the wider socio-political structure. On the other hand, the presence of suspected war criminals is not a necessary condition for hardliner attitudes to be dominant in the local power structures or among the population.

Summing up, the evaluation of institutions and resource control is generally negative all throughout the period, consistently with the political background and history of the three municipalities, characterized as hardliners, i.e. nationalist strongholds actively obstructive of the return process. And such evaluation has not changed greatly in the relatively small time span considered here (eight years), neither in general or through the incorporation of Bosniaks into these institutions. Only the incorporation of Bosniaks to the local police, which occurred after t_{ret} , might have had a significantly negative impact on the evaluation of the probability of an attack occurring that might be systematically affecting the reconstruction of opinions and evaluations.

Regarding endogeneity problems, both returnees and non-returnees have had similar contact (to similar extents and for similar purposes, e.g. paperwork and documentation, application for reconstruction assistance, etc.) with both the police and the municipality. This would lead to expect that their perceptions about these institutions do not significantly vary, which would diminish the problem of endogeneity. Cross-tabulation analysis and t-tests do indicate that there are no significant differences in

the perceptions about these institutions between returnees and by non-returnees.⁹⁵

(c) The occurrence of violent episodes

The occurrence of violence equals the materialisation of the threat. Unlike the threat posed by attitudinal predisposition and available resources, which is mediated by other conditioning factors, the occurrence of violence confirms the existence of all these factors conducive to it. That is, it confirms the convergence of an adequate opportunity structure with motivation for agency and capacity for attacks, what makes it likely that violence might occur again. Thus, the occurrence of episodes of violence is likely to be the most consequential for the evaluation of the threat.

Two basic components are likely to affect the impact that the occurrence of violence has upon the individual's evaluation of the threat: its frequency and its seriousness.⁹⁶ Distant occurrence of violence is likely to have a different impact from that of closer occurrence.⁹⁷ As a minimum, the shorter the distance between the

⁹⁵ The only exception is the importance given to the presence of Bosniaks in the municipality, which tends to be *less* appreciated by returnees.

⁹⁶ As it was discussed in Chapter 2, the more frequently violent episodes occur, the higher the observed probability of such episodes occurring, and consequently the higher its expected probability. And the more serious a violent episode, the larger the size of the costs involved.

⁹⁷ The salience of violent incidents is likely to decrease also with the time elapse since they occur. Beyond psychological considerations, the rationale for such assumption is that, if violent episodes signal the convergence of agency, capacity and opportunity, they do so for the very moment in which the violent episodes occur. Motivation, capacity and opportunity may all evolve over time, so the signal loses its value progressively as time passes by. Still, all three components (motivation, capacity and opportunity) tend to change very slowly and to be perceived as such, except when some external shock occurs. Violent incidents in a relatively stretched time gap (e.g. a year) may have a similar weight in the individual's considerations.

violent episode and the individual, the smaller the reference area, and thus the smaller the population of the group residing in it and constituting a potential target (G). The smaller is G , the larger the probability of the individual being hit (next). I assume three spatial horizons in the consideration of violent events, based on areas of daily relevance and interaction. The theoretical definition of these units and the corresponding observational units for the case of rural Bosnia are detailed in Table 5.14.

Table 5.14. Geographical areas of reference for the evaluation of violent incidents

	Theoretical definition	Observational unit*
A1 / A1+	The concrete area of return, which is the area that the individual would usually cover in her daily life upon return	Hamlet / Village (surrounding hamlets)
A2	The wider area of return, which is the area covered daily by the individual's relevant local networks containing her basic sources of information and services	MZ-municipality (main personal area)
A3	The general area of return, which corresponds to all areas of return relevant for comparison	Return areas in RS, but also in general

* For a description of these empirical units see Chapter 3.

Violent incidents registered in each area will be denoted as V_1 , V_2 and V_3 . The group population in each will be denoted as G_1 , G_2 and G_3 . In general, it is expected that $G_1 < G_2 < G_3$. Based on this, my assumption is that the impact of violence in A2 and A3 is lesser than that of violence in A1, which can be expressed in the following manner:⁹⁸

⁹⁸ A reasonable way to proxy k and k' is making them inversely proportional to the size of their targeted populations (G_2 and G_3) relative to the size of G_1 . For instance, if $G_1=50$, $G_2=1000$ and $G_3=90000$ then $k=1/20$ and $k'=1/1800$.

$$V = V_1 + k(V_2) + k'(V_3) \quad \text{where } k' < k < 1 \quad \text{eq. 24}$$

The three-level framework used here for delimiting the relevant geographic units of reference (A1, A2 and A3) was not directly applied in the questionnaire since it was expected that participant observation and interviewees' answers would help define them. The observational units took a definite form and specification through an open question about the occurrence of violence 'in this area' or 'here'. The definition of 'area' or 'here', intended to capture the central geographic area of reference, was totally open for the interviewees. It turned out that they vastly referred to their concrete hamlet (A1) and at maximum to their immediate surroundings (first limiting villages within their village, what I have called A1+).

But in many cases interviewees did not stop in the concrete details about that area and, on their own initiative, they tended to put it in perspective by comparing it with the situation in a wider area also of relevance for them. This was largely composed by other areas within the MZ or surrounding it, other nearby areas with important similarities to their own or being part of the *corridor* linking the Federation with their homes in the RS, as well as the local urban centre. With the partial exception of some corridor areas, this reference area neatly coincided with the theoretical delineation of A2.

This self-initiative to comment on A2 when answering about A1 is quite important. First, given that the question was an open one and it was overwhelmingly answered in reference to A1 and A2, the relevance of these as distinct reference areas has thus been confirmed. Second, the rationale that pushed interviewees to give details about A2 is also important. This was mostly a result of the declared non-existence or low levels of violence in A1. Basically, incidents in A1 were explained to have been limited to the very

beginning of the return process and that these had all been 'minor' incidents.⁹⁹

Most interviewees, both in Križeviči and in Cerska, although especially in Cerska, explained this scarcity of violence in A1 by the fact that 'they cannot touch us here; here we can defend ourselves and they have no escape'. This notion of security in the village was crucial in the narratives of many returnees – and the lack of such security was conversely crucial in many non-returnee ones. Various factors contribute to it: rough terrain, which gives an important advantage to locals for self-defence; the isolated and homogeneous character of these areas, which facilitates the monitoring of possible attacks; and finally, the likely presence of strong social mechanisms of mutual self-protection and defence, which constitute an important deterrence factor.

The flip side was security in A2, where most interviewees found the real problems had been, and in some cases continued to be. This discrepancy between A1 and A2 was the reason why many of them jumped into comparing A1 with A2 on their own initiative, in order to give a more complete picture which would have been otherwise missed by the researcher's question.¹⁰⁰

With the information available from these answers the level of violence reported by the individual in A1 and A2 has been codified into 5 categories built along the dimensions of frequency

⁹⁹ The only exception was probably an incident in Križeviči where a group of Serbs came into the village and rounded up a few men cleaning up the rumble of the school building in preparation for its reconstruction. Even in that case, many interviewees downplayed its seriousness, since the episode did not involve weapons neither other kinds of life-threatening violence, but basically bare-hand physical fight.

¹⁰⁰ This is one clear advantage of semi-structured interviews, and, in general, of in-depth interviewing allowing for extensive comments by the interviewee, thus gathering complementary and relevant informal pieces of information which could otherwise be missed. The downside of this strategy is that, given that A2 was not contemplated in the questionnaire and no systematic questioning about it took place, answers concerning A2 in this question are very low (n=39).

and seriousness of the violent episodes reported: ‘Frequent *and* serious’ (4), ‘Frequently *or* serious’ (3), ‘Some, but not too serious’ (2), ‘Minimally or unimportant’ (1) and ‘None’ (0).

Saliently, category 4 is empirically empty.¹⁰¹ Almost half of the sample informs that, in the worst period of violence (t_{ret}) there were no incidents at all in A1 and the rest point out to very occasional (from one to two or three) or just testimonial incidents. This evaluation even improved in the second period. The picture was very different for A2, where 24% of the respondents noticed the occurrence of either frequent or serious incidents in the early period and up to 73% noticed the occurrence of occasional ones. The evaluation improved only slightly in the later period.

Table 5.15. *Perception of violent incidents occurring in A1 and A2*

	V1 (village)		V2 (MZ-municipality)	
	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>
None	48.3	78.9	3.0	17.9
Minimally or unimportant	20.7	7.0	21.2	17.9
Some, but not too serious	27.6	10.5	51.5	42.9
Frequently <i>or</i> serious	3.4	3.5	24.2	21.4
Frequently <i>and</i> serious	0	0	0	0
<i>N</i>	58	57	33	28

Note: Percentages above 40 **in bold**.

The information about A3 has been obtained from a question about interviewee’s reactions to the occurrence of violent incidents related to return ‘somewhere else’, where interviewees explicitly referred the occurrence of serious or non-serious, frequent or infrequent violence, and to the interpretation they made of it. That ‘somewhere else’ captures all violence in areas of

¹⁰¹ In Chapter 2 it was discussed that this category would likely apply to cases of generalized violence or open violent conflict (see Figure 2.1 in section 2.3.1).

return other than A1 or A2 to which interviewees made explicit reference.

Information about perceived levels of violence in A3 was also obtained from questions directly centred on security concerns in the RS in another part of the questionnaire. The combination of these answers has been codified into a four-value scale ranging from 'None' (0) to 'Unimportant violence' (1), 'Some violence' (2) and 'Serious or/and frequent violence occurring' (3).¹⁰² Saliently, the category of 'None' is empirically empty.

The most striking reaction was that in many cases interviewees referred (when answering to the first open question) also, and sometimes most especially, to incidents occurring to Serb (or Croat) returnees in the Federation. That is, they spontaneously pointed out to violence arising from their co-ethnics against returnees from other groups. Besides important implications regarding group identity and general repulse and fear of violence,¹⁰³ this finding is also important in understanding that interviewees perceived all kinds of ethnically-targeted violence, and more specifically returnee-targeted violence, as part of the same process. And they perceived that such violence encouraged or laid grounds for justifying violence against them too, thus indirectly contributing to the threat they faced.

The answers and the statements provided to these questions tended to average the occurrence of (distant) violence across the large territory to which they referred, providing general views rather than going into much detail or qualification. The result is that most cases (69% of the respondents) simply manifested awareness that some cases of violence were occurring all around the RS and all around Bosnia (category 2). A few respondents (14%) noticed that these were serious or very frequent violent

¹⁰² When there was a conflict between the two questions, the higher value was retained.

¹⁰³ They were explicit about how that violence affected them importantly in an emotional sense, almost to the same extent that violence against their own group, i.e. violence likely to target them personally.

incidents (category 3). A few others minimized this occurrence or the importance of it (category 1).

Similarly, none of the respondents drew clear lines of evolution across time.¹⁰⁴ Some did focus on the more serious and frequent incidents of the early period, but the perception attached to them was extended to the later periods (and up to the time of the interview) when still minor and some serious incidents were taking place (although not with the frequency of early periods). Basically, the evaluation made of A3 was not only less refined and less concentrated on details, but also it did not seem to follow actual (and current) levels of violence. Instead, the simple presence and continuation of incidents of different kinds helped sustain the general perception that respondents had.

Table 5.16. Perception of violent incidents occurring in A3

	V3	
	(return areas - RS)	
	N	%
None	0	0.0
Minimally or unimportant	7	12.1
Some violence occurring	43	74.1
Serious <i>or/and</i> frequent violence occurring	8	13.8
	58	100.0

Note: Percentages above 40 **in bold**.

Interestingly, those in categories 2 and 3, that is, those noticing violence as serious and frequent and those noticing a somewhat lesser level of violence, experienced very similar reactions. In general, respondents in both categories got anxious and took incidents as a signal that they must be constantly alert and ready to

¹⁰⁴ A downward trend in the perception of violent incidents was expected as a result of the progressive decrease of violent incidents all throughout the RS and in hardliner areas as the ones at hand.

leave or to react if it comes to them.¹⁰⁵ Many returnees stated that whenever they heard about some incident they regretted having returned or considered leaving, and some non-returnees explicitly self-reaffirmed in their decision not to return.¹⁰⁶ This would be in line with the argument made in Chapter 2 that violence does not need to be particularly serious (i.e. lethal) in order to have a significant impact in discouraging return.

(3) *Serious or/and frequent violence occurring*

“[Every time I hear about some incident] I prepare immediately to leave” (2112, *fem (45) Kriz, ret*)

“I get angry. We’re not guilty of anything. Then I get afraid for the kids. We grew strong and ready for everything [...] if someone attacks us again. But I have fear for the kids” (2108, *male (40) Kriz, ret*)

“It makes me sick thinking that there are still people who instigate conflict. Like this woman who got killed in Srebrenica. The guy was from Stupare and he was nationally motivated, there were no personal reasons. And it makes me afraid” (1104, *male (55) Cers, ret*)

“It [always] comes like a shock. You think that everything is ok and then... I get disappointed that it hasn’t stopped. Everything would be possible if there were some will. But [those responsible] never get judged neither condemned. So you lose faith” (1012, *male (50) Cers, not*)

¹⁰⁵ This provoked not only fear, but also feelings of disappointment, sadness and disgust. Many stated that they could not understand what they were guilty for or why should they be afraid in their own homes.

¹⁰⁶ One returnee stated: “The most important thing [for deciding to return or not] was getting the donation [for house reconstruction]. But those incidents were one of the reasons that made people change their mind about returning, and to go to the US instead, for instance” (1118, *male (35) Cers, ret*).

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“I felt afraid [whenever hearing about some incident]. And I felt sorry that I came back here with my children and to have to worry about those things. The war has passed and now you have to be afraid of coming back to your own home!” (1119, *fem (51) Cers, ret*)

(2) *Some violence occurring*

“For every incident, for every demonstration, even in Christmas time, when you hear them shooting [as a celebration], you kind of panic...” (2123, *fem (40) Kriz, ret*)

“I get surprised [every time I hear about some incident]. I work with people of that nationality. I can’t believe that yesterday we were out for a coffee and now... I take it as a message not to relax” (2004, *male (25) Kriz, not*)

“It freezes me immediately. I would never return there” (2009, *male (46) Kriz, not*)

“It’s a mixture of feelings. First you feel sad [about the victims]. Then you get concerned that you may be next” (1106, *fem (46) Cers, ret*)

“I have minor panic attacks. It’s not easy” (1112, *male (39) Cers, ret*)

“No matter how safe the situation is, fear is constant. Then if something happens it surfaces immediately. Last time that there was trouble in Konjević Polje I was in the village [visiting the return area]. I was afraid to go to get fuel [to go back home]” (1004, *male (30) Cers, not*)

“The first impulse as an individual is to do something about it, to retaliate. Then you think twice. Your family is living there. Raising tension is not a smart option” (1009, *male (40) Cers, not*)

One important finding is that perceived violence in A1 is not significantly correlated in the sample with perceived violence at either A2 or A3 (in none of the periods or across them). On the other hand, violence in A2 and in A3 do significantly correlate

(corr.= 0.420, si.g= .002). This seems to confirm the specificity of A1 and the relatively different safety mechanisms and outcomes in this area in comparison with the other reference areas. The more distant and heterogeneous violence in A3 seems to be evaluated to some extent in accordance with the closer experience of A2.¹⁰⁷

Similarly, the more distant or the larger is the area of reference, the less perception of improvement across time is registered in the sample. Regarding the issue of endogeneity, although the informational input and relevant experiences are likely to be again similar for returnees and non-returnees, geographical distance and the particular position of returnees *vis-à-vis* the risk of violence could provoke differences in the impact and processing of these inputs between both categories, posing endogeneity problems. However, this does not seem to be case and cross-tabulation analysis and t-tests indicate that there are no significant differences in the perceptions of security incidents by returnees and by non-returnees.

Summing up, the individual's estimation of the probability of an attack having place is likely to be a function of the perceived amount of hardliners, the perceived amount of resources controlled by these (in terms of local power structures and security forces), and the occurrence of violent episodes in the areas and time periods of relevance.

$$P(\text{attack}) = F(\text{ComViol} | \text{Hostile}, \text{Resources}, \text{Violence}) \quad \text{eq. 25}$$

An important test for the internal validity of this sample consists of examining the evaluation made by respondents of the three municipalities at the aggregate level, i.e. having into account the average evaluation made by their returnees and non-returnees in the sample. Results are largely consistent with the already discussed categorization of the three municipalities.

¹⁰⁷ It is likely also that violence in these two areas of reference followed similar patterns, provoking similar evaluations at the individual level.

Milići has the lowest average values regarding negative attitudes among the population and negative evaluation of institutions. Thus it seems to be the softest municipality, followed by Zvornik, which only has a particularly bad evaluation of the police. Vlasenica would be, based on these results, the toughest municipality of all three.¹⁰⁸ Differences between the three municipalities are nonetheless reduced to the minimum regarding the occurrence of violence. Once again, this seems to underscore the idea that increased levels of violence are not that determinant in evaluating the threat.

Table 5.17. Average values of (standardized) SHostile, Municip, Police, V1 and V2 by municipality

	Shostile	Municip	Police	V1	V2
Milići	.53	.36	.18	.25	.50
Zvornik	.59	.52	.27	.18	.48
Vlasenica	.75	.55	.24	.24	.50
<i>N</i>	58	55	54	59	39

Note: Highest value in the comparison among municipalities **in bold**.

2. Probability of being reached (if an attack occurs)

In a conflict like the one at hand, where a group is targeted for violence, the probability that, if an attack occurs, an individual will be actually reached by it decreases with the number of members of the group in the area (*G*), following a safety in numbers argument. This probability can increase based on the individual's personal saliency (*PS*), that is, depending on personal

¹⁰⁸ With the only exception of the evaluation of the police, where Zvornik falls to the bottom. The larger perception of hostile attitudes in Vlasenica relative to the other two municipalities is the only statistically significant difference following t-tests and Anova tests.

characteristics that single her out from the general group population as a potential target.

(a) *Number of returnees*

The perceived probability of being hit by violence decreases the more people return, as the individual is less likely to be the specific target of aggressions. The larger the number of potential targets the lesser the likelihood of *being targeted among all of them*. This is a matter of probability, but also of the fact that the more returnees are back, the less visible and salient is the individual, *ceteris paribus*. In a general model, G refers to the number of group members which are potential targets. In this particular case, since all Bosniaks left the area during the war, G amounts to the number of Bosniak returnees ($G=Ret$).

$$P(\text{reached} | \text{attack}) = f(Ret) \approx \frac{1}{Ret} \quad \text{eq. 26}$$

I expect a decelerating effect: an increase in the number of returnees when these numbers are small is likely to have a larger effect than increases when numbers are already large. I would indeed expect that the perceived probability of being reached stabilizes at some point. That is, when the group population is large enough, the probability of being reached becomes unaffected by additional returns. This relationship can be modelled through the natural logarithm of Ret .

$$P(\text{reached} | \text{attack}) = f(Ret) \approx \frac{1}{\ln Ret} \quad \text{eq.27}$$

The relevant areas of reference for Ret are likely to be those of daily interaction for the household, that is, where household members spend most of her time: A1 and A2. The expected relevance of these two areas for estimating the probability of being reached by violence was supported by empirical observation

during field work, as detailed above: most of the interviewees mentioning security concerns did refer to concerns when travelling across the RS as a whole (A3), but their pivotal concerns were those referring to areas they would more or less frequently visit, such as the local town centre, and the areas immediately surrounding their particular villages.

Some particularities were also suggested above for A1 *vis-à-vis* A2. At the hamlet level (A1) it seems that 'safety in numbers' might not be as important as the 'strength in numbers': the more co-ethnics or returnees there are at this level, not only the less likely is a given individual to be hit, but also the more capacity they have *to defend themselves and to retaliate aggressions*, in turn raising the costs and decreasing the probability of aggressions. Such capacity is mediated to a great extent by the presence of social ties and networks, which facilitate solidarity mechanisms and collective action.¹⁰⁹ These are more likely to be present at the hamlet and village level (A1 and A1+) where the most dense networks and strong ties can be expected to be in place.¹¹⁰ Also, the shorter the physical distance, the faster and the more fluid communication and coordination are, and the more effective are these mechanisms likely to be.

This would make of A1 a crucial area of reference. The deterrent role of the strength in numbers at this level can be thought as 'deviating' the threat away from the village and making it less likely that the individual becomes targeted, at least while being in A1. Thus, although returnees numbers in A2 are important in diffusing the threat following the safety in numbers arguments, return numbers in A1 are specially important *also* in

¹⁰⁹ See Granovetter (1973, 1978, 1985), Coleman (1990), Macy (1991), Hardin (1995), Fearon and Laitin (1996), Beggs *et al.* (1996), Gould (1999), Lin (2000), Petersen (2001).

¹¹⁰ Family, friends and first neighbours overlap to a great extent in rural Bosnia. Even if they do not, first neighbours constitute a crucial social institution in Bosnia, most especially in rural Bosnia, and they can be safely characterized as strong ties (see Bringa 1995).

‘deviating’ that threat, following the strength in numbers argument.

The number of returnees in A1 (*Ret_t*) has been longitudinally and geographically reconstructed for each hamlet represented in the sample based on the information compiled throughout the semi-structured interviews, other informal interviews and personal communications. The core information contained in this variable is again the product of interviewees’ subjective perceptions. This poses particular validity problems due to the intrinsic difficulty of defining what is ‘return’ and consequently what is counted as such. As it has been discussed above when defining the dependent variable, the process of return is very fluid and fuzzy. The consequence is not only that each respondent’s criteria for defining (and then counting) return may vary,¹¹¹ but also that such counting is likely to be little accurate about numbers and years in most cases.

Having this in mind, I have resorted to the reconstruction of return numbers at the hamlet level, relying on the average measure of the numbers reported by all interviewees from the same village. Where there was only one respondent from a given village, the information provided has been contrasted (or supplemented) with other sources of information. When there was no available data for a given year/hamlet, I have extrapolated the proportion of yearly returns in the hamlet relative to the average number of return per hamlet that given year. I have double-checked the plausibility of these extrapolated data with the documented trends in the return process and through general accounts provided by interviewees.

¹¹¹ For instance, return can be understood as the beginning of the first visits, or it may include only the period when people were doing some preparations and staying with more or less frequency, or it may be restricted to permanent return (which is also hard to define and establish).

Table 5.18. Number of returnees at Tret and Tfol in A1 and A1+

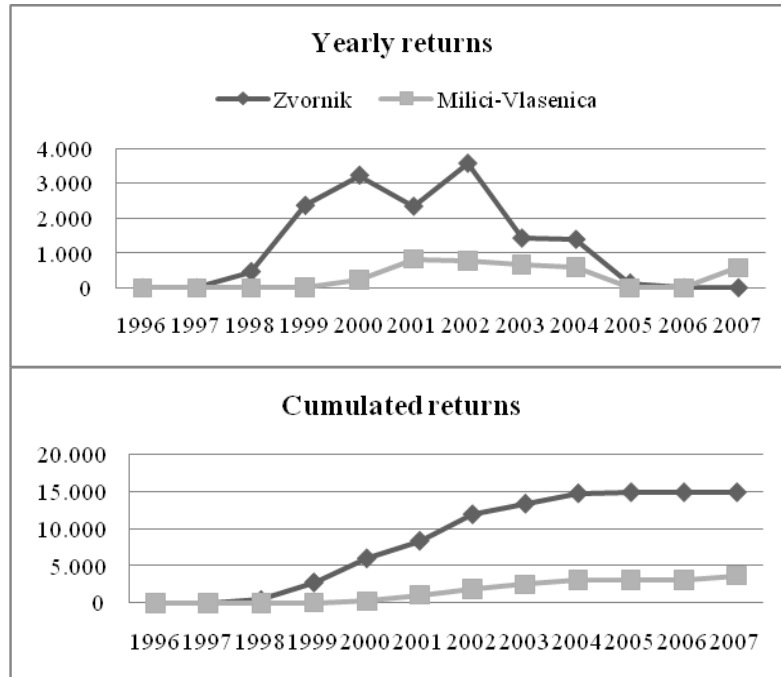
	Min	Max	Average	Stand. Dev.	N
A1	0	72	27.17	20.86	100
A1+	22	974	640.97	201.40	100

The number of returnees for the wider area A2 (Ret_2) has been proxied through UNHCR yearly figures of return for the municipalities of Zvornik and Vlasenica-Milići.¹¹² The number of registered returnees up to 2007 is 15,000 and 4,000, respectively, that is, there have been almost 4 times more Bosniak returnees in Zvornik municipality.¹¹³

¹¹² Even if registered returns are not an accurate measure of permanent return (it is expected that it is upwardly biased) this figure does proxy reasonably well the presence of Bosniaks in the area. Being registered as a returnee was usually attached to relatively frequent visits, relatively long stays, administrative visits, and return-related works, such as rubble cleaning.

¹¹³ Following the 1991 census, Zvornik had a population twice the size of (at the time) Vlasenica municipality. The proportion of Bosniaks was very similar in both municipalities (59% and 55%). In total, the Bosniak population in Zvornik was 2.5 times that of Vlasenica (48,000 and 19,000 respectively).

Figure 5.10. Bosniak returns at the municipality level (1996-2007)



Source: Personal compilation based on UNCHR Statistics Package (2001-2007) and data provided by UNHCR AOR Tuzla (1996-2000).

The modelling of the estimation of the threat can be refined to include larger units of concern beyond the individual, most saliently household members.¹¹⁴ The number of members (m)

¹¹⁴ On a more technical note, the calculation of the probability of being hit should have into account the likely or average size of the attacks, i.e. how many individuals are usually reached in every single attack. The unit is the right numerator when attacks tend to be individually targeted, whereas massive attacks (e.g. bombing) can reach hundreds of people. In the scenario of return under *ComViol* – in the Bosnian case at least – attacks were frequently individually targeted, although not too rarely they could reach, purposefully or not, small

would be in the numerator, that is, the probability of being reached would increase with the number of persons of concern.

Table 5.19. Number of household members at Tfol and Tret

	Min	Max	Average	Stand. Dev.	<i>N</i>
# Household members	1	15	4.68	2.176	98

(2) *Personal saliency*

The individual's personal saliency within the violent conflict context raises the probability of being hit by violence by singling her out among other potential targets. The characteristics which raise the saliency of the individual or her household in the context of return and with the type of threat at hand – i.e. targeting a specific group—are mostly given by three factors.

First, their visibility and resonance. Thus, pioneers and local leaders or activists are more likely to be targeted because of the indirect threat they represent in terms of opening the way for further returns. Secondly, personal saliency can be given by the potential (physical or economic) threat that a given individual or household represent. Thirdly, saliency can be given by the attributed roles of the individual or the household during war. Most saliently, the household will be more liable to revenge attacks if their members are associated with war crimes, either based on specific information or on individual characteristics, such as age and gender or location of origin.

The first dimension of personal saliency, namely visibility, has already been tackled with through the safety in numbers argument. The other two dimensions contribute to the personal saliency of

groups of people (e.g. members of a family working in a backyard, a group of friends being rounded up, attacks during community works). For the sake of simplicity, I assume the prevalence of unipersonal attacks.

young males and young households in general: the former are more of a security threat and the latter are more of a socio-demographic and hence political threat. Besides, young males are also more liable to be associated to war crimes or to war fighting. Other types of threat posed by returnees but not so relevant in the specific cases at hand are economic threats, for instance, claims for property restitution by house and land owners. It should also be had into account that female-headed households, female alone and returnees alone in general will be more vulnerable.

Summing up, the individual's estimation of the probability of being hit by violence is likely to be a function of the perceived probability of an attack occurring (*ComViol*), the number of returnees and the number of household members. Personal saliency must be also had into account.

$$\Pr(\textit{hit}) = F(\textit{ComViol}, \textit{Ret}, m) \quad \text{eq.28}$$

5.3.2. Tracking down the estimation of p

As stated in Chapter 2, the individual's estimated probability of being hit by violence (p) is not expected to affect the decision to return directly, but by detracting from the utility of returning relative to the utility of not returning. Thus, p is expected to depress the probability of returning. However, p cannot be directly observed. An initial test for the adequacy of the indicators described above for proxying p consists of running a *logit* regression with return as the dependent variable.¹¹⁵ The percentage

¹¹⁵ This model and all others presented here have been run with the longitudinal sample (n=100). The variables used for *Shostile*, *Municip* and *Police* incorporate the temporal evolution described in the section above. These three variables, as well as the three variables for violence ($V1$, $V2$, $V3$) have been standardized from 0 to 1, given their non-natural categorisation and the different scales used for various of them. Further

of correctly classified cases for this model is 64% (much lower than the percentage for the economic model, which was around 80%) and the Pseudo R2 is very low (.125). However, measures of fit are satisfactory and three variables turn out significant with the expected sign (*V3*, *Ret1* and *youngmale*) (see Annex 5.1, Table 9). It seems then that these indicators do have an effect on the decision to return.¹¹⁶

Table 5.20. Logit model for 'Return'. Indicators of *p*

	Indicators for <i>p</i>	
	Coef.	Clustered Errors
SHostileMiss0_1	-1,004	0,816
MunicipMiss0_1	0,796	0,706
PoliceMiss_0_1	-1,316	0,883
V1Miss_0_1	2,092	1,256
V2Miss_0_1	0,574	1,648
V3Miss_0_1	-2,539*	1,171
lnRetA1	0,559*	0,233
lnRetA2	-0,254	0,207
HH_members	0,162	0,122
Alone	0,336	0,882
Youngmale	-1,039*	0,504
_cons	1,628	1,898
		Observations = 94
		Pseudo R2= 0,125
		Correctly classified: 63,83%
		Hosmer-Lemeshow: p=0.42

* Significant at < .05, ** significant at < .01, *** significant at < .001.

detail and descriptive statistics for all the variables can be found in Annex 5.1 (Table 8).

¹¹⁶ Their direct effect loses statistical significance when including the economic variables. However, this model is non reliable due to the elevated number of variables vis-à-vis the number of observations (20 variables and n=87).

A factor analysis can help assessing the relationship and relevance of these indicators with p by revealing whether there are one or more latent dimensions underlying them which are consistent with the theoretical arguments proposed in the subsection above. Three main dimensions (or latent variables) emerge explaining almost 60% of the total variance.

Table 5.21. Factor analysis of indicators used in the estimation of p

	Components		
	Local NoViol	Local Latent	Gralized Viol
SHostileMiss0_1	-.459	.362	.293
MunicipMiss0_1		.769	
PoliceMiss_0_1		.728	
V1Miss_0_1	-.663		.363
V2Miss_0_1		.247	.789
V3Miss_0_1		-.227	.707
lnRetA1	.779		.355
lnRetA2	.771		
Household members		.613	
<i>Eigenvalue</i>	2.27	1.47	1.37
<i>Total variance explained</i>	25.29%	16.36%	15.29%

Extraction: Principal components analysis. Rotation: Varimax Normalization with Kaiser. KMO=.629, Bartlett=114.090 (sig.= .000). Only loadings over .200 are shown. Loadings over .500 displayed in **bold**.

In the first one the main contributors are the natural logarithm of returnees in both A1 and A2. Since it is expected that the more local returnees, the less likely to be reached by violence, but also the more deterrent effect, this component can be read as the *expectation of no violence occurring at the local level (FAC_locnoviol)*. Consistently with this interpretation, there are

two more important contributors, but with a negative sign: violence at the hamlet level (V1) and perceived hostility by the local Serb population. These are the two more direct threats at the local level (i.e. actual violence and perceived motivation for violence).

The main contributors to the second component are (negative) evaluations of the police and the municipality, proxying the capacity or potential to encourage and support violence. This component can be read as the *degree of local latent threat (FAC_loclatent)*. Another important contributor is the number of household members, that is, the number of household members to worry about.¹¹⁷ Finally, the third component can be read as *generalized levels of violence (FAC_gralviol)*: the main contributors are V2 and V3, that is, the evaluation of violence beyond the hamlet. Once again, V2 and V3 seem to be evaluated in close relationship and to be somewhat different from V1, which also loads positively in this component but much more moderately.¹¹⁸

In general, all variables behave on a consistent manner with the arguments presented above. And all of them make a salient contribution (over .500) to one of the three main dimensions identified. The only exception to this pattern is *Shostile*, the indicator representing the best the scattered nature of threat. *Shostile* makes (more moderate) contributions to all three dimensions, always in the expected directions.

¹¹⁷ Although weakly, V3 loads negatively in this component, which suggests that the perception of distant violence and the perception of local latent threat might be built in opposition: the more violence is perceived far away, the better evaluated the local situation, and/or vice versa.

¹¹⁸ A more surprising contribution is that from Ret1, which suggests that the number of local returnees also incorporates to some extent some 'tension in numbers': the more returns, the more attraction is brought to the area; and also the more threatening returnees become, which might increase the chances of being attacked.

Summing up, it seems that the proposed indicators work in the expected direction for the estimation of p . Based on this, the three latent variables identified will be used to proxy p in the subsequent analysis. Table 5.22 compares the results from the economic model discussed in the previous section and those from the expanded model including these three latent variables ('full utilitarian model I').

Table 5.22. Economic model (with conventional utility function components) Vs Full utilitarian model (adding p to the utility function)

	Economic model		Full utilitarian model I	
	Coef.	Clustered Errors	Coef.	Clustered Errors
JobInFed	-1.886*	0.800	-2.034*	0.885
JobInRS	2.485*	1.021	3.617**	1.196
Status	-1.663**	0.483	-1.928**	0.570
Reconst_End	2.477***	0.677	3.024***	0.753
Finan96	0.361	0.390	0.431	0.473
Members	1.789*	0.762	1.956*	0.975
Urbanization	-0.059	0.440	-0.322	0.591
HH_edu	-0.449	0.490	-0.783	0.509
HH_under18	-2.256*	0.971	-2.038*	1.013
HH_Age	1.057*	0.432	0.951*	0.425
FAC_locnoviol			0.117	0.310
FAC_loclatent			0.009	0.382
FAC_gralviol			-0.649*	0.322
_cons	-1.445	2.349	-0.312	2.579
	Observations = 91		Observations = 87	
	Pseudo R2= 0.426		Pseudo R2= 0.450	
	Correctly classified: 80.22%		Correctly classified: 80.46%	
	Hosmer-Lemeshow: p=0.94		Hosmer-Lemeshow: p=0.17	

* Significant at < .05, ** significant at < .01, *** significant at < .001.

Despite increasing the number of missing data, the expanded model improves the predictive power of the economic model.¹¹⁹ One of the latent variables (*FAC_gralviol*) turns out significant with the expected (negative) sign. But even more importantly, the inclusion of these latent variables introduces changes in the way economic components affect the estimated probabilities of returning. Once the assessment of violence is controlled for, the change in the predicted probability of returning when getting a job in the RS or getting the house reconstructed turns out larger than in the simple economic model (from +.55 to +.70 and +.64). This indicates that the assessment of violence importantly conditions these effects (by depressing them).

Table 5.23. Change in predicted probabilities based on job and housing (all other variables at their means, including *p* in Full Utilitarian model)

	x=min		x=max		Change	
	Econ model	Full model	Econ model	Full model	Econ model	Full model
JobInFed	0.43	0.40	0.02	0.01	-0.41	-0.39
JobInRS	0.26	0.21	0.81	0.91	0.55	0.70
Status	0.60	0.58	0.05	0.03	-0.55	-0.55
Reconst_End	0.20	0.16	0.75	0.79	0.55	0.64

Note: Larger values in the comparison between the two models **in bold**. Graphics available in Annex 5.1 (Figure 1).

On the other hand, the assessment of violence does not seem to condition the effect of gains to be obtained in displacement, which makes sense having into account that these gains are not mediated by possible losses due to violence. This also contributes to sustain the theoretical assumption (see Chapter 2, eq.17) that

¹¹⁹ From a Pseudo R2 of .426 to .450. And from 80.22% correctly classified cases to 80.46%.

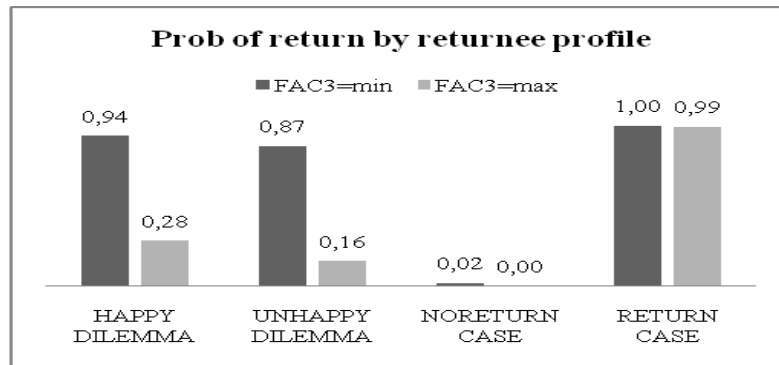
the utility to be derived from staying in displacement is pivotal in the decision to return, since such utility is not subject to security considerations and their surrounding uncertainties.

These results suggest that individuals' estimation of the threat (p) does not have a decisive role on its own in the decision to return. Although some of the indicators and proxies used for p turn out statistically significant in some of the models, this statistical significance does not robustly hold when considering the economic variables at the core of the utility function at the same time. Any direct influence of p in the structure of decision gets dissolved or absorbed by them. However, having p within the equation improves the performance of the model and most importantly it introduces changes in the predicted effects of the significant economic variables. In other words, p seems to modulate the effect of these economic components. This is in line with findings in the most recent literature on displacement about the intertwining of the threat of violence and sustainability.

A very graphic illustration is provided by the behaviour of simulated 'happy dilemmas', 'no-place dilemmas' and clear return and no return cases (as defined in the previous section) when introducing the consideration of violence into the equation. Having a minimum or a maximum perception of the threat of violence (as proxied by *FAC_gralviol*) has little influence on the predicted probability of returning for clear return and no return cases. But it does importantly modulate the predicted probability of returning for those in a dilemma situation: from a probability of .53 ('happy dilemmas') or of .60 ('no-place dilemmas') as predicted by the economic model (see Figure 5.8) these hypothetical profiles descend to probabilities between .20-.30 when there is a strong perception of violence (see Figure 5.11).¹²⁰

¹²⁰ However, they also soar up to probabilities around .90 when there is no perception of violence, which remains puzzling having into account the expectation of no return when return does not offer a comparative advantage.

Figure 5.11. Change in predicted probabilities for hypothetical profiles based on FAC_gralviol



The full utilitarian model (I) is problematic nonetheless due to the large number of variables relative to the number of observations (13 variables and $n=87$). An alternative procedure for checking its robustness and improving technical adequacy is to use the predicted probabilities from the economic model in the model together with p 's latent variables, which I call 'full utilitarian model II'. The model does not lose predictive capacity (81.6% correctly classified, Pseudo $R^2=0.423$, see Annex 5.1, Table 10) and goodness-of-fit measures provide strong support for this model as opposed to the simple economic model (see Annex 5.1, Table 11). Figure 3 in Annex 5.1 graphically displays the fit between predicted probabilities and return outcomes in both models. I will stick to the full utilitarian model (II) for computing these predicted probabilities.

CHAPTER 6. EMOTIONS IN THE RETURN TO THE DRINA

6.1. Emotions in the return process

When taking the decision to return individuals take into account the gains and costs of such a decision, as it has just been detailed and analysed. However, at the same time, deep and sometimes contradicting emotions are present and part of the process of decision-making. In order to analyze whether emotions also play a role in the decision the first necessary step is to observe precisely their presence and behaviour. In this section, I introduce the indicators used for grasping the presence and intensity of the emotions (fear, love, hatred, anger) and I present the descriptive statistics for the emotional landscape emerging from the sample. The next necessary step is to question whether the presence of these emotions does make a difference in the decision-making that adds explanatory power to the utilitarian model. I address this question in the following section 6.2.

The ‘compellingness’ of an emotion *which is likely to be pervasive, recurrent and thus somewhat durable* (i.e. the kind of emotion relevant for the decision at hand) will be proxied here through a number of direct and indirect measures. By indirect measures I refer to beliefs relevant for the arousal of the emotion and likely to follow from the events and memories arousing them. By direct measures I refer to self-report measures on the one hand; and to appraisal patterns emerging from narrative accounts of

emotional events and their contextual features (i.e. contained in episodic memories) on the other hand.

The semi-structured and open nature of the in-depth interviews allowed and encouraged that interviewees broadly commented their answers and described the experiences they were having in mind while answering (see Annex 3.1). These comments and narratives are very rich in details and insights into emotional reactions and appraisal patterns. I have compiled those comments and narratives for 28 particular questions and blocks of the questionnaire in order to track down the presence of appraisal patterns related to fear, love, anger and hatred. Annex 6.1 (Table 1) offers a description of these 28 items.

6.1.1. Fear

Fear is the most basic and universal of all emotions. It is relevant for the decision at hand inasmuch it signals a concern to avoid possible threats, following individuals' natural concern for security and immediate survival. Given the structure of decision I am assuming here (i.e. radical uncertainty upon return and safe displacement) safety is taken to be always a concern with a negative sign in the direction of return. Still, the intensity of such concern can vary and it might be low or even very low, regardless of the individual's perceived level of threat (which has been analysed above).

I. Indicators

Two measures self-reporting the experience of fear have been considered: fear experienced during the first visits to the return area after the war and fear experienced as a reaction to the occurrence of return-related violent incidents. Three measures have been derived from the analysis of appraisal patterns: the count of fear-related narratives and comments noted in the 28 items used; and two indicators derived from the qualitative

analysis of those comments and narratives evaluating the intensity of two types of fear: 'floating fear' and 'accurate fear'. Two main indirect measures of fear have been used: the belief about whether the war was really over or not when Dayton was signed; and a battery of questions depicting negative beliefs about the security situation of Bosniaks in the RS.

(a) First visit to the return area after the war

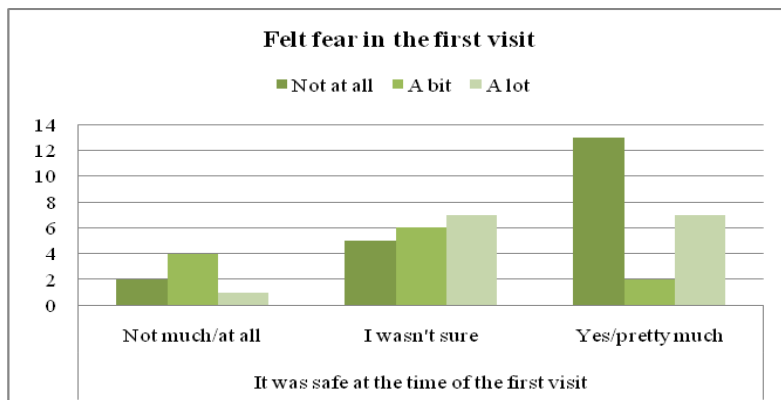
Almost 40% of the respondents visited their area of origin for the first time after the war between 1998-1999 and a further 50% between 2000-2001.¹ These first visits provoked in most of the respondents strong emotional reactions (which they tended to visibly relive, rather than simply memorize and describe, during the interview). Fear was one of them, but also love for home, sadness and in some cases also anger.

There is no apparent relationship between these reactions and objective and perceived variations in the experience. From those considering that the situation was safe (48%) one third declared that they nevertheless experienced much fear. And among those considering the situation was not safe at all, most of them declared having experienced only some fear (57%) or none at all (29%).²

¹ The majority of these visits (61%) were organised visits, that is, they had some kind of organisational infrastructure, including in all cases permission by the local authorities. A few cases, all men, travelled across the IEBL and visited on their own their villages right after the war (1996-1997). The overwhelming majority (almost 90%) had not visited the area before because they were not allowed (by the local authorities), which was tightly tied to insecurity.

² Besides possible under-reporting, this is largely in line with the fact, profusely documented by psychologists, that emotional reactions are largely idiosyncratic, or at least the product of multiple and complex interpersonal variations.

Figure 6.1. Fear in the first visit



In total, 26% acknowledge having been somewhat afraid, and 32% admit having been very afraid, totalling almost 60% of the respondents.

“You don’t want to recognize to yourself that you are afraid, you don’t want to admit it. You worry about the people (going with you) and you can’t show the fear. So you play a role” (1012, male (50) Cers, not)

“Nobody mistreated us or anything, but... when passing the *koridor*³ and Zvornik [main town in the area of return]... [you experienced] an uncontrollable emotion... fear... But then in the village it was far easier... some were just happy, other sad, other relaxed...” (1004, male (30) Cers, not)

³ Respondents referred by this name to a strip of terrain along the main road joining their locations of displacement and return across the IEBL. In that area, within the military separation zone (ZOS), international forces established a market area in which the first economic and social exchanges between the populations in both sides took place. The initiative was a huge success, and the open market place continues to be in place nowadays.

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“There was fear. But we organised ourselves at the beginning, keeping guards. We didn’t sleep well. We only had a nylon clothe covering the door and the roof...” (2108, *male (40) Kriz, ret*)

“A cousing of mine couldn’t sleep at all. He would just cry until the dawn and the light came. It was hard. There were shootings and fightings...”(2118, *fem (72) Kriz, ret*)

“You heard them [Serbs]. At dawn sometimes they were shooting down there [in the lower part of the village, where there were Serb DPs]” (2114, *fem (44) Kriz, ret*)

“We had so much fear. We didn't separate from each other. We couldn't even walk [freely] because of the mines...”(2010, *fem (46) Kriz, not*)

Still, 41% of the respondents declare they were not afraid or even that they were not thinking about security issues, in most cases rather overwhelmed by other emotional experiences and memories.

“As soon as I came here, I no longer had any fear” (1118, *male (35) Cers, ret*)

“Fear? No [I didn’t]. This is my house, my place. As long as there was no shooting [against us]...” (2007, *male (47) Kriz, not*)

“Emotions were stronger than safety concerns. I just thought I wouldn’t mind to die in that right moment [‘*Neka umrem odmah*’]” (2122, *male (37) Kriz, ret*)

Obviously, the first visit to the area of return is a very specific and salient experience, and the emotional reactions experienced in such circumstances might be unique, rather than having a perdurable or recurrent character.

(b) *Return-related incidents*

Interviewees were asked about their emotional reactions when they heard about violent incidents that were return-related. They answered openly, and if they did not specify any particular emotion or only one, they were asked whether they experienced fear, anger, disappointment, or disgust.⁴ Here I report about the answers related to fear, which was by far the most extended reaction (88% of the respondents experienced it).⁵

“[When something like that happens] it raises suspicion and fear. Those are the very same things as at the beginning of the war [before the war started]. Really similar...”(1103, *male (50) Cers, ret*)

“Up until today [I keep feeling fear]. For instance, in Christmas time, you hear them shoot [as a celebration], and you kind of panic. And the same thing with every incident, with every demonstration... then if you have to go to municipality building to finish something...” (2116, *fem (49) Kriz, ret*)

“I prepare myself to leave immediately” (2112, *fem (45) Kriz, ret*)

“What can I say, it’s not easy. I did have minor panic attacks” (1112, *male (39) Cers, ret*)

“Of course it worries me; it’s a reason of concern for my family. Now as a returnee I feel worse [about incidents]” (1115, *male (52) Cers, ret*)

⁴ No significant difference emerges in the reporting of these emotions between returnees and non-returnees (based on cross-tabulation analysis).

⁵ The second most reported reaction was anger (62%), which will be discussed below. The triad of sadness, helplessness and disappointment reached around 50% of the respondents. And disgust reached almost 40%. In most cases the overall emotional reaction was a complex mixture of all or some of them.

Only a few (12%) explicitly declared not having felt any fear at all.

“I know those are only youngsters [giving trouble]. It’s really nothing” (2106, *male (50) Kriz, ret*)

“I don’t pay any attention. We live normally, as before. And before the war there were also brothers killing brothers. It’s not overly serious” (1102, *male (57) Cers, ret*)

“We actually felt safer. Whenever we see any incident on TV, we know it is provoked by some concrete event during war. Like this Serb who shot this young girl... she was the daughter of a commander who attacked his village and killed his people. He was retaliating. That makes us feel safer, because we have nothing to fear, we didn’t spill any blood during war” (1105, *male (59) Cers, ret*)

(c) Appraisal patterns

Fear is one of the most pervasive emotions of all, being present not only in those items more related to fearful experiences and security concerns, but almost in any other (especially as related to loved ones). Appraisal patterns of fear have not been specifically noted in only four of the 28 items.⁶ Three measures have been derived from this exercise.

Firstly, from the qualitative analysis of the comments and narratives, it became obvious that there were two types of fear, loosely speaking, contained in most of them. I refer to the first one as *‘floating fear’* and it refers to general distrust and to fears related to the future, i.e. to the possibility of war happening again. This includes war memories and concerns that those events might repeat themselves again. The second type of fear is what I call *‘acute fear’* or *‘immediate fear’* and it is related to fear of what might happen at any moment, in an immediate manner, namely the

⁶ Anger focused at the collective level is the only emotion more widely showing up, as it will be seen below.

kind of incidents that define a scattered threat. I have classified each case in a scale from 0 to 3 (3=extreme, 2=medium, 1=low, 0=none) for each of the two types.⁷

Extreme

“[When escaping Srebrenica he was wounded and his group decided to leave him behind. They finally didn’t do so because an officer stepped out in the last minute forcing the other men to take him with them. That experience, both in its negative and positive side, left a profound mark in him] // I didn’t even think about it[returning]. When someone told us that they were going back I told them they had got mad. I was immediately reminded of the killings, the suffering... // *[Deep sigh]* The experience of violence I went through... I still have that fear with me. Those neighbours are still there... // When seeing the police, just by seeing the uniform badge, I get really scared. The police came one day to the door looking for someone. My sister didn’t want to open. Even if they come now in mixed patrols, it doesn’t matter, just seeing the uniform badge provokes this fear... // *No matter how safe the situation (is), fear is constant. Then, (if something happens) it would surface immediately.* Last time (that there was trouble) in Konjević Polje I was in the village, and I was afraid to go to get fuel // History teaches us that we must (be constantly alert for possible danger). It can happen again, just look at history. It’s cyclical, every 50 years we are at war. That is what concerns me the most. In this part [Federation] we are the safest” (1004, male (30) *Cers, not*)

“Before leaving [from our home, at the beginning of the war] I was living for three months in the forest, sleeping in the barn, surrounded by snakes, with my son [as a preventive measure]. I wouldn’t bring

⁷ ‘*Extreme*’ denotes cases where fear seems to take over control in many instances and to roughly focus most aspects of life and return-related decisions. ‘*Medium*’ tags cases where there is a conscious awareness and worry about safety issues and natural fear accompanies them. ‘*Low*’ refers to cases where respondents declared themselves only slightly worried and paying only relative attention to such issues, or where fear was very conditional, restricted to very specific circumstances. ‘*None*’ denotes cases where fear was explicitly ruled out.

the kid back there. I have already lost one, what's the need? I know what they have they done and how they have behaved. *It's better to have less [in economic terms] but to be safe.* Here [in displacement] a Serb returnee scared off my boy when he wanted to come into his backyard to pick up our chickens, which had run away. He said to him "I'm going to kill you, don't you ever enter in here" while holding a stone up his head. I was so angry... I told to him "you have already killed one of my sons, and now you want to kill another!". If he did something like that here [Federation], what would happen there [RS] if I send the kid to the school?" (2009, *male (46) Kriz, not*)

"I am still afraid. I go every ten days to visit my mother-in-law and I can't sleep. When you lose your dear ones, you do not trust anyone else anymore. I feel like the shooting may start again. And I don't let the kids to get off the road, there are mines, snakes... Because the worst part of this whole experience [war] was going into the woods alone with kids... If we all returned [family, neighbours] it would be a lot easier... // I avoid them [Serbs], in general, everybody. After passing Kalesija [last town in Federation, right before the IEBL] I get stomach aches. We have Serbs in here too, and they do not bother me at all. But there... it might happen again. After all the horrible things that happened, I have no wish to go there" (1002, *fem (39) Cers, not*)

Medium

"We were sleeping in the woods, they could come for us at any moment // You are still afraid of everything, we [in our area] are first line if anything happens again, we are in a very strategic position" (2003, *male (27) Kriz, not*)

"Of course it is still a reason of concern for my family... when I watch the TV, I like to pay attention to politics. Like last night with Dodik persisting about the referendum [of independence for the RS]. Then I start thinking about the conflict resuming, becoming again a DP, losing the house again..." (1115, *male (52) Cers, ret*)

"Of course, we were most concerned with the people who might have bad intentions. We had no protection at all, we didn't have even electricity. It's normal, even people coming from abroad [refugees

visiting] nowadays still have a difficult time in accepting that people are living here again normally" (1112, *male (39) Cers, ret*)

"We were worried about the weaponry left over. Specially by night it has never been totally safe. The situation has improved much, with the unified army and everything, but still many have been killed in the RS [after returnin], like those two girls in Bratunac [one by a sniper, another one by a bomb]"(2108, *male (40) Kriz, ret*)

"We had a power generator, and with the noise it made we couldn't hear if a train was passing by [railtracks pass just by the house backyard]. So we were afraid that a group of chetniks [radical Serb nationalists] could show up at any moment, after getting off the train [there was a serious fight in the village once, provoked by a group who actually used the train to reach the village]" (2114, *fem (44) Kriz, ret*)

"I was concerned the most about the mines. Because it is possible for anyone just to plant it at your place at any moment"(2106, *male (50) Kriz, ret*)

Low-None

"I forget the fear when I am there. I simply don't think about it. Before it is an issue"(1001, *male (41) Cers, not*)

"We have now again our freedom to walk around. We have got there little by little. But there are always fools everywhere"(2110, *male (59) Kriz, ret*)

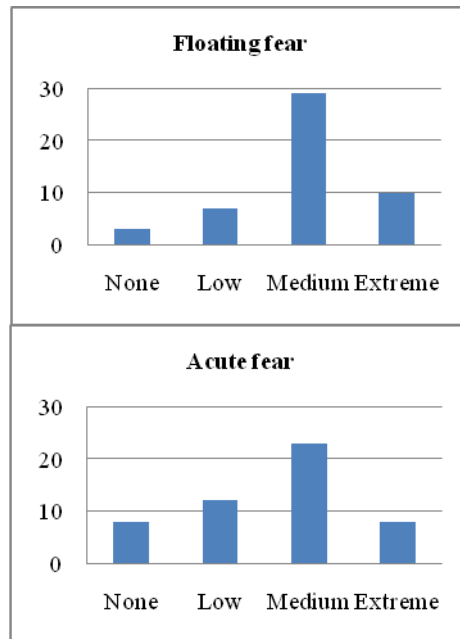
"I'm not afraid of anyone, just of God. Women are afraid to go in *dimije* and scarf to Zvornik. But I left like that and I am coming back like that. Nobody is going to forbid me that"(2104, *fem (52) Kriz, ret*)

"I didn't think about that at all. And I know I was being naïve, that all kinds of stuff might have happened. Once IFOR men came with translator [to check how was everything going and whether we needed some support]. We just said that the situation was safe, and they left" (2109, *fem (47) Kriz, ret*)

"I didn't even think about it. Once I heard "you can return"... Besides, we don't have Serbs over here, they are far away, I never see them. So I was and I am not worried" (1107, *fem (50) Cers, ret*)

Figure 6.2 shows the distribution of these two variables ('floating fear' and 'acute fear'), which are closely although not perfectly related ($\text{corr.} = .506$, $\text{sig.} = .000$).

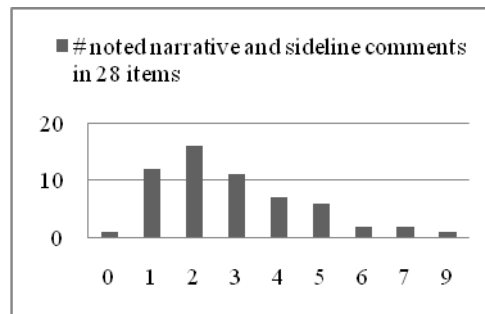
Figure 6.2. Distribution of fear intensity as displayed in appraisal patterns



The third measure derived from this exercise is partly a measure of reliability, and partly a measure of saliency. It is the count of items out of the possible 28 in which the respondent delivered an appraisal pattern related to fear. The more such appraisal patterns show up, the more obvious that this is a constant

with a salient presence in that person's life and judgement.⁸ This is especially the case in extreme cases, in which fear emerges even in the most unexpected questions. At the opposite extreme of the spectrum, when fear is only mentioned once or twice, for instance, and in those questions more obviously raising the issue of security, the reliability and strength of these measures, especially when delivering high values, might not be as good as in other cases.

Figure 6.3. *Count of fear-related narratives or comments per respondent*



⁸ Obviously, this measure has an important risk of being biased positively towards those commenting and narrating the most during their interviews. However, no extensive or profuse narratives were necessary in order to note a fear appraisal pattern. Sometimes the respondent would answer a closed question by sharply stating "there was fear". The context of the interview, the nonverbal communication and the knowledge acquired about the personality and worries of the interviewee allowed to categorize these answers in an appropriate manner. Cases which have most of the interview incompleting have been left out of the analysis. Other cases with incomplete interviews have not being discounted since most interviews suffer from some gaps at different points of the questionnaire for different reasons (see Annex 3.1). Some of these reasons include researcher's consideration of not overexposing emotionally respondents which clearly displayed salient emotional issues (i.e. cases of trauma and others).

(d) Dayton and the end of the war

Probably the only (almost) unanimous answer in the whole questionnaire is the one about whether respondents ever thought or considered that a war might ever occur in Bosnia. Only one respondent answered positively.⁹ All other respondents stated that they had never expected a war at all, and they furthermore did it in a very emphatic manner:

“No way, we looked at the Croats and we laughed! We laughed at how something like that could happen! And when my mother talked about World War II we would always reply to her: “We will never go into that”. But we will also remember this war and talk about it...” (2109, *fem (47) Kriz, ret*)

“Not even in my worst nightmares. I had so many, so many friends and so much faith in them. My best friend was Serb. We worked together. When war began in Croatia and someone told me to buy a gun and leave, my answer was: “You are all a bunch of ignorants” [*vi ste bezobrazni*]” (2114, *fem (44) Kriz, ret*)

“Croatia was far away for us. They were not ‘ours’. [We thought] people there do fight, and then [naturally] the army intervenes. I went to school with my best friend, who was a Serb. We beat together a boy who called me ‘*bošnjaka*’ [*smiles*]” (2115, *male (32) Kriz, ret*)

“I couldn't believe it even when it had begun” (2001, *male (39) Kriz, not*)

“No way. There was shooting already and I still refused to believe it. I worked with all kinds of people and I didn't pay attention (to it).

⁹ The interviewee was in the JNA in Kosovo when Slobodan Milošević removed Kosovo's autonomy in 1989. He stated that “things happened there which were a forerunner”. Still, he stated, “I never expected *such a war*”, which was also a constant in other respondents' answers.

The idea that a man could kill another... no way" (1115, *male (52) Cers, ret*)

"Many young people died because we didn't believe it. Like a schoolmate of mine who worked for an electrical company. He was asked to go somewhere to repair something... he never returned" (1001, *male (41) Cers, not*)

"During the war in Croatia, I saw a refugee woman on TV and for me it was kind of funny, puzzling. Later on, my father in law wouldn't allow us to leave [from Križeviči] because he was convinced that "it won't be like you think, it will be just a few days". He was convinced even after a sniper killed his wife in their backyard... Even when hundreds of bullets were flying on us, so many that one side of the house got torn down..." (2112, *fem (45) Kriz, ret*)

Not only did most people not believe that a war would happen (and not as long and fierce as it was in the end) but also they did not believe that it would come to their doors and affect them personally. The overwhelming majority (78%) did not come to terms with such an idea until the war had already started.¹⁰ The way this shock affected the beliefs (and the emotional landscape) of the respondents can begin to be gauged with the answer to another question: whether, once Dayton was signed, they believed the war was really over. Only 35% did believe it. The remaining 65% had a hard time in believing in the end of war and violence.

The latter based their concerns mostly on their judgement about military and political developments (71%). The former mostly stated that they simply 'believed it', that it was time for it to end, or simply that they wished it so much (64%). That is, those

¹⁰ Only 13 respondents declared that they had begun to be somehow suspicious in advance, the majority around the year 1991, with the wars in Slovenia and Croatia going on. All these are males or households who worked in firms around the whole Yugoslavia, where they began to perceive changes in attitudes and to hear rumours about a possible war (which they still refused to believe).

more optimists were not looking for further information on which to base their judgement, whereas those more worried were. This is consistent with the knowledge we have about the relationship between emotions in general, and fear specifically, and cognition.

Believed in the end of the war

“I didn’t think. Everybody wantd it to be over” (2111, *male (43) Kriz, ret*)

“When someone told me [I felt] as if someone had given to me all treasures in the world. In any case war ended for me when I arrived to Tuzla [after scaping Srebrenica]” (1004, *male (30) Cers, not*)

“It was time for it to stop” (1010, *fem (49) Cers, not*)

“I knew there had to be an end. It had lasted long four years. And the world was looking. In whose interest was all of it [to beging, to last and to end], that I don’t know” (2008, *male (38) Kriz, not*)

Did not believe in the end of the war

“We couldn't believe it would stop. There is this Bosnian say: "Bitten by snake, freaks out when sees a worm"; and "Took a sip of burning milk, and you blow on yoghurt”” (1103, *male (50) Cers, ret*)

“It was difficult for us all to believe... We had thought that the war would be short... Because of what they said about World War II, that they then returned immediately and without problems” (2103, *male (43) Kriz, ret*)

“It was nice, but it was hard to believe. They had also signed Srebrenica as a safe area [before it was overtaken by the Serb army]...” (2108, *male (40) Kriz, ret*)

“Even today I still don't believe that war cannot happen again. I don't know, but I would like to have one more house in Federation [just in case]” (1119, *fem (51) Cers, ret*)

(e) IGBI items related to safety: Vulnerability and distrust

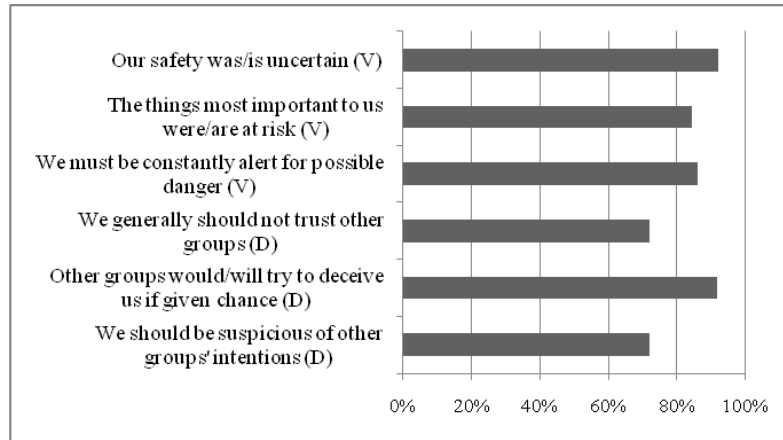
An adapted version of the Individual-Group Belief Inventory (IGBI) was included at the end of the questionnaire.¹¹ It deals with five core beliefs domains – vulnerability, injustice, distrust, superiority, and helplessness – identified as pivotal beliefs in collective mobilization and intergroup conflict. I focus here on the two more directly related to fear: vulnerability and distrust. Very briefly, and following Eidelson (2009): *vulnerability* is the view “that the world is a dangerous and risky place, where safety and security are elusive and overwhelming loss always lurks on the horizon”. *Distrust* “focuses on the presumed hostility and malicious intent of others”.

The inventory consists of three items for each belief domain with which the interviewee may strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree. The items were rephrased in reference to ‘Bosniaks in the RS’, at the time of return (*tret*) and since then. Items referring to other groups were phrased in reference to ‘other groups, and particularly Serbs’. Figure 6.4 displays the frequency of positive answers (agree and strongly agree) to each of the items.

Vulnerability and distrust beliefs are widespread in the sample. All items considered are endorsed by more than 80% of the sample, except the two prescribing how should respondents and their group behave in such a context. These two items affirm that they should not trust other groups in general, and that they should be suspicious of other groups’ intentions. There was a significant resistance in the sample towards these items, as many respondents stated that, although they should always be cautious, chronic and generalized distrust and suspicion would not allow them to have a normal life, neither to look into the future.

¹¹ This inventory was developed by psychologist Eidelson (Eidelson and Eidelson 2003; Eidelson and Plummer 2005; Eidelson and Horn 2008; Eidelson 2009). The inventory has three versions dealing with: beliefs about the ingroup, beliefs about ingroup’s collective worldviews, and beliefs about the personal world. I have used the first version.

Figure 6.4. Proportion of positive answers ('Agree' and 'Strongly Agree') in IGBI items for vulnerability and distrust (% over valid cases)



However, the central item for the distrust domain, namely the one stating that other groups, and specifically Serbs, would try to deceive them if given the chance, stands out among all other items by surpassing the 90% threshold (in line with the findings in Chapter 5 which underscored distrust as a core component of the post-war social landscape). The central item in the vulnerability dimension, the one stating that Bosniaks' safety in the RS is uncertain, also surpasses that threshold.

Vulnerability

"In the RS, yes (we must be alert). In town you go down the street on your toes and you always look out. There are killing attempts" (1008, male (32) *Cers, not*)

"Everyone has fear, it's simply not safe (for us here). And they [Serbs] think the same about the Federation" (2010, fem (46) *Kriz, not*)

344 / *Return after violence*

“Of course we should be alert. No one knows what will happen from today to tomorrow. Specially as long as the criminals sit in the government bodies” (1120, *male (41) Cers, ret*)

“Not continuously alert, just careful” (1001, *male (41) Cers, not*)

Distrust

“They wanted (and still want) to eradicate us [*iskorenje, izbrisati*], to eradicate one whole nation. They didn’t left one single mosque standing” (2104, *fem (52) Kriz, ret*)

“Of course > they would destroy us [if given a chance]. That was their original intention. We should never forget what happened. Nothing should be forgotten. We assumed they[Serbs] would treat us in the same way we did. We have to ensure that the experience passes from generation to generation. They’re not to be trusted” (1010, *fem (49) Cers, not*)

“I would prefer if we all could trust each other. However I can’t. I have many doubts. We forgive quicker, we don’t have malice and forgive others. We have a hard time learning from History, and we keep committing the same mistake. They [Serbs] try to kiss and make up. They would really like that everything could be forgiven and forgotten” (1004, *male (30) Cers, not*)

“Not always (we should be suspicious), but in certain circumstances” (2106, *male (50) Kriz, ret*)

“Not necessarily (we should not trust). In such case we wouldn’t be able to behave as human beings” (1115, *male (52) Cers, ret*)

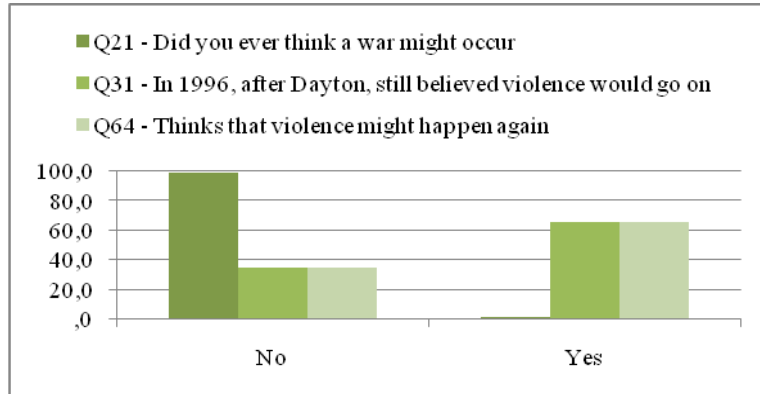
“We should trust everyone and cooperate, within limits of tolerance, within rational limits” (1001, *male (41) Cers, not*)

(f) Future violence and war

As seen above, the occurrence of a war was something unthinkable for almost the whole sample before it happened. It was conversely difficult for them to think that it was ending in

1996. Respondents were also asked at the end of the questionnaire whether they thought that there would be more violence and war in the future. Figure 6.5 shows that the level of confidence in peace has almost not varied since 1996.

Figure 6.5. Beliefs about the possibility of a war occurring (1992, 1996, 2006)



What has changed since 1992 is the *unquestionable* character of peace. The majority of the respondents gather around the uncertainty option, with varying degrees of concern.

“In time there will be war. I don't believe it's over” (2104, *fem* (52) *Kriz, ret*)

“I have learnt history. It's exactly 45 years between wars [in this region]. And that passes fast. Eleven years are already gone. Thirty-five years more and there will be war” (2115, *male* (32) *Kriz, ret*)

“It can happen at any time. And then what? All over again? When I listen to Dodik [RS President] it gets me the shivers... But I don't understand about politics... Last night they signed the police reform, but you could see they were doing that unwillingly, he didn't even look directly to the camera” (2123, *fem* (40) *Kriz, ret*)

“Everything that I'm seeing on TV news looks suspicious to me. [...] They are promoting hatred again, TV stations are dirty, like with the kind of guests they invite to the studio. I would take the gun again, you know hot it goes” (2111, *male (43) Kriz, ret*)

“After everything that's happened, everything is possible. What worries me the most is the issue of Kosovo and Serbia combined with Dodik's politics, (there is only talk about) “Serb rivers, Serb forests”... I'm sick of it [*boli me glava od toga*]” (2122, *male (37) Kriz, ret*)

“Everything is possible. I think there are more chances that it happens. As long as we have three Presidents [one for each ethnic group]” (1006, *fem (35) Cers, not*)

“Maybe. But it won't be like this one, for sure. There's no way. At least for a very long time. Then they had the JNA in their hands. Now it's different” (2110, *male (59) Kriz, ret*)

“I no longer know a thing. But only fools do not think about it” (2112, *fem (45) Kriz, ret*)

“I don't think about it” (2114, *fem (44) Kriz, ret*)

And still 35% of the respondents believe that the possibility of another war is totally or almost ruled out.

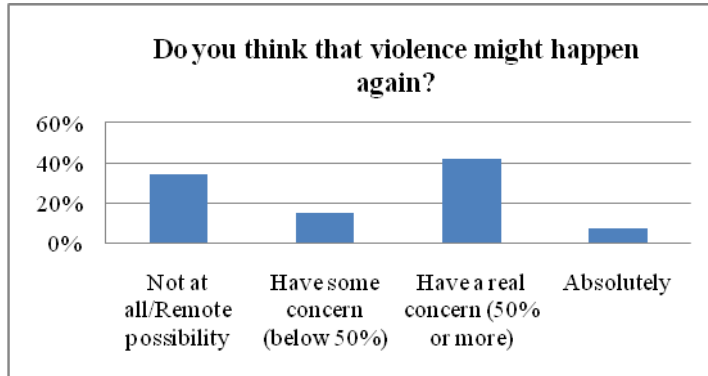
“There's no way. The world wouldn't allow it, particularly the US” (2008, *male (38) Kriz, not*)

“We won't, for sure. It is very unlikely that the same scenario will concur” (1013, *male (52) Cers, not*)

“I'm 90% sure it won't (happen again anytime soon). Serbs here have not the capacity for it. They need help from Serbia (and now it's not in Serbia's interest to go to war). We have never had a war which has not began and came from outside” (1105, *male (59) Cers, ret*)

“In general I think that it's not possible. Isolated incidents, maybe”
(2107, male (25) Kriz, ret)

Figure 6.6. Belief about the possibility of a new war happening



II. Measuring fear

Various factor analyses have been conducted to assess the internal validity and consistency of the measures above.¹² The resulting factor analysis produces one main component in which four indicators load over .500: appraisal pattern measures and fear reactions due to return-related incidents. The indicator of fear upon the first visit turns out to be measuring a different dimension,

¹² One of the previous factor analyses shows that all IGB items for vulnerability and distrust load up strongly in one single component or latent variable (between .642 for 'we should be suspicious' and .925 for 'other groups would/will try to deceive us'). Based on this, an index has been built for the IGBI items by summing up all the scores and standardizing by the number of answers provided by each respondent. The index thus has the same range that the original items [-2, 2] and it averages respondent's answers to these items. Analyses have been run with the original items and with the index, the latter producing better measures of adequacy of the factor analysis.

as well as indirect belief measures, which load highly in two separate components.

Table 6.1. Factor analysis for indicators of fear¹³

	Components			
	1	2	3	4
1st visit ('FvisitFear')				.934
Return-related incidents ('FeltIncidFear')	.764			-.500
# Narratives and comments ('countFear')	.800		.277	.315
Floating fear ('floating')	.951			
Immediate fear ('immed')	.542	.775		
Believe in the end of war ('OverDayton')	-.305		-.857	
IGBI vulnerab-distrust ('FearSum')		.935	.206	
Possibility of another war ('ConcernFut')		.474	.755	
<i>Eigenvalue</i>	3.28	1.42	1.24	1.07
<i>Total variance explained (%)</i>	41.04	17.77	15.51	13.42

Extraction method: Principal components analysis. Rotation method: Varimax Normalization with Kaiser. KMO=.530, Bartlett=69.404 (sig=.000).

Only loadings over .200 are shown. Loadings over .500 displayed in **bold**.

For categorizing individuals (high, medium and low fear) I rely on the four variables loading highly (above .500) in the main component. I have into account first the one with the highest loading, and so on consecutively. A combination of a high value in floating fear and a high value in the number of noted narratives and comments is the main criteria for classifying a case as 'high' in fear intensity.¹⁴ The immense majority of these cases also

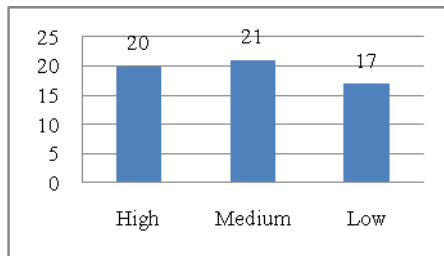
¹³ Descriptive statistics for all variables in Annex 6.1 (Table 2).

¹⁴ High and medium values are defined as follows. For 'Floating' and 'Immediate' (with a range between 1-3) a value of 3 is considered high and 2 medium. For 'CountFear' I consider a score of more than three as high and between 2-3 as medium. The choice of these thresholds

display high values in the other two variables ('FeltIncidFear' and 'Immed'). Cases are classified as 'medium' if they have a medium value in floating fear and a medium value in noted narratives. In all cases fear because of incidents is also in place, and acute fear has a medium value. Finally, cases are coded as 'low' in fear intensity when there is a combination of medium and low values in the main two variables ('Floating' and 'CountFear') or both values are low.¹⁵

Fear intensity turns out to be distributed in the following manner across the sample based on these criteria: 34% with high levels, 36% with medium levels, and 29% with low levels of fear.

Figure 6.7. Distribution of fear intensity in the sample



6.1.2. Love

Love is a more complex emotion, inasmuch it intertwines with love sentiments towards specific and varying objects. I pay attention to three important objects of love that might have a bearing on the decision to return: family, friends and place. All of

is based on the frequency distribution displayed in Figure 6.3. In the dichotomic variables 'FvisitFear' and 'FeltIncidtFear' a value of 1 is considered high. Scores below these thresholds in all variables are considered low.

¹⁵ When the main variable (floating fear) is missing, I rely on the value of the number of narratives and follow the same method.

them can provide some sort of ‘home’ link through familiarity, attachment and identity. In addition, love has two important behavioural correlates: care and proximity with the loved object. I focus on the latter one, although, obviously, the former cannot be ignored and it might mediate the latter.

1. Love for family

Families in rural Bosnia tended to be very sedentary and their members tended to live side by side: from parents and brothers to uncles and cousins. Over 90% of the interviewees lived in close vicinity with all their children, living parents and brothers by 1992. This percentage has radically decreased after the war across time. By 2005 12% of the children, 37% of the brothers, and 40% of the living parents resided away from the respondent households – somewhere else either in Bosnia or abroad.

Table 6.2. Residence patterns of (HH's) family units across time

<i>Average proportion of...</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>In vicinity/ together</i>	<i>In another country</i>	<i>In another continent</i>	<i>N</i>		
<i>Children</i>	1992	0.94	0.03	0.00	45	45	45
	1999	0.84	0.05	0.01	55	54	54
	2005	0.70	0.10	0.02	58	58	58
<i>Brothers</i>	1992	0.90	0.04	0.00	50	50	50
	1999	0.37	0.26	0.04	31	31	37
	2005	0.39	0.23	0.14	45	45	45
<i>Parents</i>	1992	0.94	0.02	0.04	53	53	53
	1999	0.81	0.14	0.03	31	32	31
	2005	0.55	0.37	0.03	31	31	31

The consideration of this variable cannot overlook a huge reality that conditions it: personal losses in the family because of the war. Although it is out of the reach of this work hypothesizing

about the effect of personal losses¹⁶ it is important to have this reality into consideration, given its enormous emotional (besides non-emotional) weight in people's lives and likely in the decision to return – among others, through the emotional components I am taking into consideration (fear, love and anger).

In total, two thirds of the sample households had suffered at least one violent death in the family – having only into account the HH's family, and not that of the spouse). In some cases, the losses were massive: one of the interviewees had lost 14 nephews, including five who were brothers and who got executed at once.¹⁷ Individuals suffering these losses react differently: grief and painful memories are frequently most present, although to different extents, at least more or less visibly. Sometimes loving memories are also strongly emphasized. Frequently fear and anger become salient parts of the emotional landscape. The emotional burden of such losses simply cannot be described or gauged from outside.

“It was horrible. When I take into consideration what has happened to me and to many others, cases like mine when you lose your husband and your brother... It was as when you cut a tree. When you cut off the branches and the roots and you just have the tree trunk! Just the body! No head and no legs! That's what the war brought to me” (1119, *fem (51) Cers, ret*)

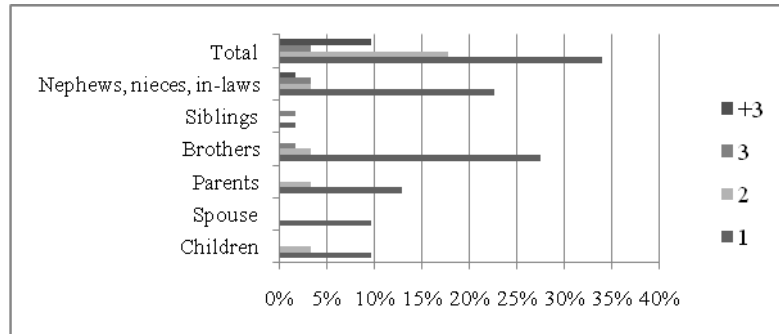
“[When narrating his experience in Srebrenica and escaping through the woods] We went to the woods and... I can't forget it... my brother told us to hide... we were waiting to support him... he got

¹⁶ This does not only depend on the circumstances and characteristics of the family, the position within the family and the number of those deceased, but also very clearly on the idiosyncrasy of the ones left behind.

¹⁷ These five brothers were all the sons of a widow mother. Ten years later, only three of the bodies had been found. That very same year, a few weeks after they got finally buried, their grieving mother died, with two sons still unbound. Cases like this one are not a rarity, neither in this sample.

caught and killed... five minutes before he was telling us to hide... [the brother is still missing]" (1115, *male (52) Cers, ret*)

Figure 6.8. Distribution of personal losses (as a result of violent death during the war)



Not only the losses, but the prospect of losing the loved ones also leaves deep emotional marks and memories.

"[When asked about what good memories he had from the war, he answers unhesitatingly and visibly moved] When my father came back from the frontline. I even remember the colours of his clothes" (2107, *male (25) Kriz, ret*)

"It's horrible. I lost my brother. There is just pain and suffering. And my husband was in the frontline. I was always waiting for the worst. Everyday someone known died. And I was at home with the kids thinking wouldn't see him again" (2010, *fem (46) Kriz, not*)

"That's the problem that killed my father. You have a life and from one day to the other you have nothing left. Only a hotel room [as a refugee]. He [...] had three sons in the frontline. He waited for them every day in the balcony" (2115, *male (32) Kriz, ret*)

But there is no straightforward relationship between personal losses and specific emotional (as well as cognitive and

behavioural) reactions. This can be seen by taking into account the question about the concern for future violence and the wish for the children to stay or live in the place of return: despite concerns for future violence, the wish for the children to stay overcomes in many cases, especially among returnees. Among those with serious concerns for future violence, 40% would still like them to stay, and 10% do not have a clear preference.¹⁸

The important point here is that, obviously, love for the lost ones does not disappear with them. The presence of such love and such losses has also been captured in the indicators that will be discussed now. Where there are loved ones left, which is in all cases in this sample, such emotion continues to be concerned with them.

1. Direction of the concern

Given the multi-unit and mobile character of families, the concern for proximity can have different translations. If returning means separation from family members, the concern for proximity would enter the decision making with a negative sign. The sign would be positive if the result of return is reunion. Finally the concern would have a null value if none of these consequences follow (e.g. if there is no family or if they reside in a third place unrelated to the decision to return) or if both consequences, reunion and separation, follow (i.e. if return means at the same time reuniting with some family members and separating from others).

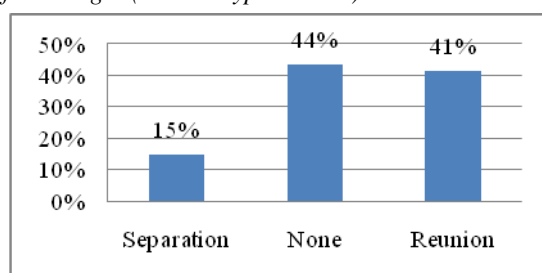
Using as a reference the two time periods for return identified in Chapters 4 and 5 (t_{ret} and t_{fol}) or the year of return when applicable, three variables have been created assigning a positive, negative or null value (1, 0, -1) denoting whether a decision to

¹⁸ Even more strikingly, the percentages diminish to 33% among those who think of war only as a remote possibility. The relationship between these two variables is not statistically significant (Cramer's $V=.348$, $sig=.127$).

return at the time meant separating from children, parents or brothers.¹⁹ A value of 0 means that there are no children, brothers or living parents; that there are both in the location of return and in the location of displacement; that they come along whatever the decision is (i.e. small children and dependents); or that they are abroad or somewhere else in Bosnia. By summing up these three variables, a new variable is obtained with an empirical maximum and minimum of 2 and -2.

What this variable reflects is that, for the majority of the longitudinal sample (56%), return made a difference regarding family proximity: 15% would mostly separate from family members and leave them behind if returning, whereas 41% would be mostly reuniting with them.

Figure 6.9. Separation or reunion with children, parents and brothers following a (real or hypothetical) decision to return



¹⁹ Sisters are not had into account because, due to the predominant patriarchal system in Bosnia, it was expected that sisters, when marrying someone from another village, would go to live in their husband's village. This was not experienced as a disruption but as something natural. For this reason, sisters had a negligible role in respondents' narratives, both males and females. Female interviewees (both married and widowed) constantly referred to and talked about their husbands' families, with a few exceptions. And in their narratives they included mostly husband's brothers and almost never husband's sisters.

Obviously, this variable is somewhat tricky, since in many cases families made the decision to return together or very closely.²⁰ In such cases, it is difficult to differentiate who is influencing whom, and some endogeneity is likely to be in place. It is important that the coding of each case has been made out of close knowledge of all of them, following the respondents' narratives and other informal communications. Still, in many cases it is just not possible to establish a causal direction (i.e. who made the decision first). I simply assume the counterfactual that, had the respondent's household not returned, the rest would have (i.e. I assign a value of 1).

II. Indicators

For the emotion of love I rely only on direct measures. I did not come out with any belief robustly and straightforwardly connected to the emotion of love. The direct measures employed do not self-report the actual emotion of love, since I consider that asking directly about whether and to what extent respondents loved their family members would result largely pointless and uninformative, besides little appropriate. They are based on reports about: war priorities (i.e. whether family concerns are mentioned as such); priorities or plans once the war was over (*idem*); what did respondents miss the most as a result of displacement and war; and a variable emphasizing what did they remember the most and most dearly from the time before the war.

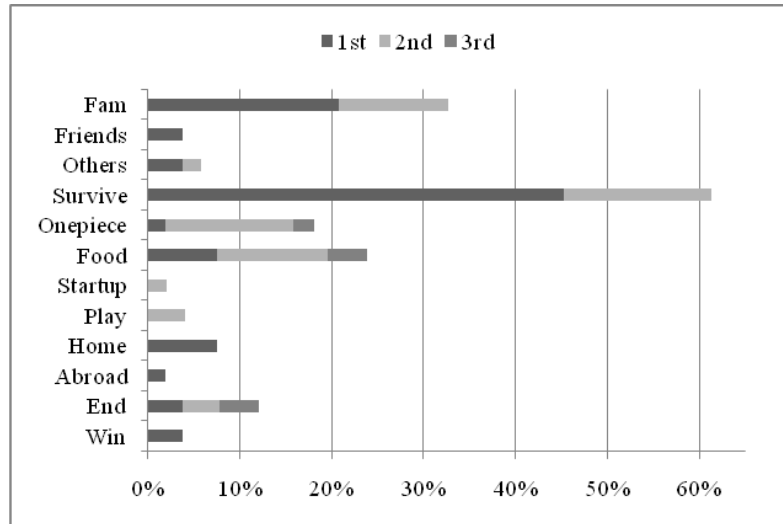
(a) War priorities

Respondents were asked in an open manner about their three top priorities during war time. The absolute priority was survival (60% of the respondents mentioned it, in most cases as the number 1 priority). Only family-concerns (i.e. the family being ok, the

²⁰ This is especially the case for returns to Križeviči in 1999, but also for many cases in Cerska.

family surviving, reuniting with the family) comes somewhat close to the importance of mere survival, with over 30% of the respondents mentioning it.²¹

Figure 6.10. Priorities during wartime (n=53)



(b) Plans 1996

Respondents were asked in an open manner what were their plans and priorities when the war ended. There were three main answers, each of them mentioned by roughly one fourth of the sample. First, to start up life again (i.e. finding sources of income,

²¹ The other priorities were: getting food (23%), not being wounded, tortured or losing body parts (17%), the war to end (11%), going home (8%), friends and other people not suffering (4% and 6%), to win battles and war (4%), to be able to play around in the case of some young respondents (4%), and finally being able to go abroad or to start up life again (2%).

finding a place to live, starting up some business, etc.); second, to go home (i.e. return); and third, nothing at all, either because they were simply enjoying the end of the war, or because they found themselves in a state of dumbness, not being able of thinking clearly.

There were two more minoritarian answers: to go abroad; and to educate the children, which was an all-consuming concern wherever present. I have taken the latter as a measure of love for family (in this case, for children). I offer now a brief sample of all the related answers.

“For three or four years I was literally lost. I had no direction, I stayed locked in myself, in a confusion circle. I didn’t think much even about the money” (2009, *male (46) Kriz, not*)

“Plans revolved around the fact that we were not able [allowed] to return and that we did not have a house of our own, and that we would be like a Kurdish or gipsy family for our whole life” (1114, *male (50) Cers, ret*)

“[The plan was] to start life all over again [*početi živjeti ponovo*]” (2122, *male (37) Kriz, ret*)

“To put myself together and to keep going [*Da se obnavljam a idem naprijed*]. Back there we had the bare fields. We had to do it all over again. We had no cattle... I wanted to check the food we had buried for conservation (potatoes, corn, veggies... prepared with salt and herbs)” (2117, *male (66) Kriz, ret*)

“My only plan was to return immediately. The Polish Red Cross said they would help me to return. But we came only to border, not any further” (1106, *fem (46) Cers, ret*)

“To come back home, and how to do it. But for sure that I would somehow” (2110, *male (59) Kriz, ret*)

“The most important thing to me was to educate my children, that they became educated and not uneducated as I am [...]. When my husband got killed I was left with the 3 of them. [Eldest son] had just

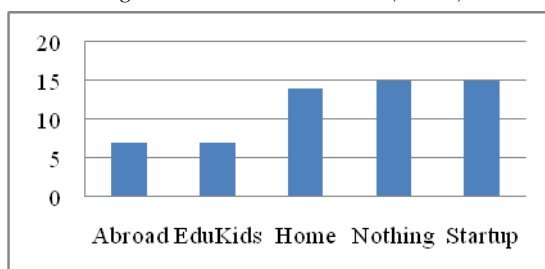
begun the 1st grade. [...] Thanks to God and to people who helped us we were not hungry [...]. I would like most if they could stay here [with me]. But if I had a chance to send them somewhere abroad I would, because there are no firms around here to work in, you can only work in the agriculture. So they can live with me because I have a pension, but what will be when that pension expires?" (1119, *fem (51) Cers, ret*)

"There were no plans. Except getting the kids to finish the school and making sure they do not end up in Podrinje [return area]" (1006, *fem (35) Cers, not*)

"Nothing. Just to look after the kids and to provide them with a normal life and with normal conditions" (1002, *fem (39) Cers, not*)

"First of all, to get kids to finish school. [...] Meanwhile working in the market place. So that we had the basic. Then I began thinking whether to return or not... In 2001 I filed an application to go to Australia. But eldest son didn't want to go, he wanted us to stay" (2116, *fem (49) Kriz, ret*)

Figure 6.11. Plans in 1996 (n=58)



(c) *Missed*

Respondents were asked also in an open manner what were the things that they missed the most once they had left their homes because of the war. Once they had freely answered, they were

presented with a list of 8 items in order to check out whichever item that had not been mentioned.²² In the open answers two items clearly stand out: the family being together (almost 60% of the cases with separated families, n=35, raised the issue) and having or being in a place which is your own (40% of the respondents raised it).²³

“I missed all of us [family] being together. I tried to find one house for all of us, but I couldn't, so we got separated” (1105, *male (59) Cers, ret*)

“That's what's eating me the most. That there is no way we can be together again” (1116, *male (59) Cers, ret*)

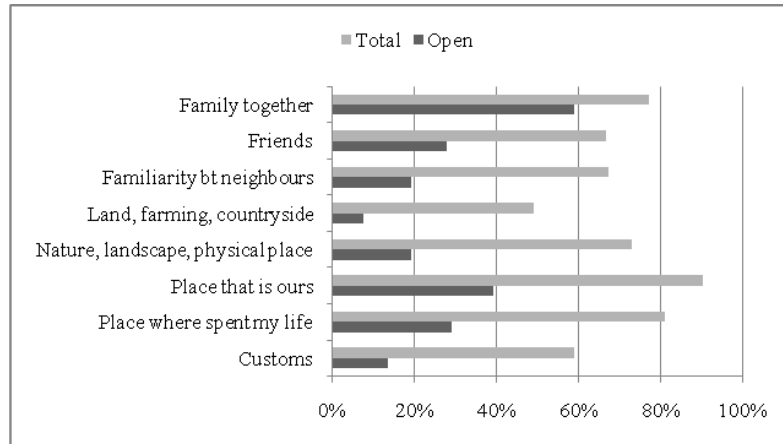
“The ones who are not anymore. They motivated me to come here” (1117, *male (30) Cers, ret*)

“I really did not miss anything [from there]. I just miss my parents and brothers, they are the only relationship I have with Križeviči” (2007, *male (28) Kriz, not*)

“I did not really miss anything. I just wish I could find my husband's remains. Without him [that place] doesn't mean anything” (1002, *fem (39) Cers, not*)

²² Family, friends, the familiarity of the neighborhood, the work in the countryside, having a place which is yours, the nature, the place where life memories occurred, and the customs of the place.

²³ Other things being missed were friends (28%), the place where most of one's life had been spent (29%), the familiarity with the neighbours (19%), the natural landscape (19%), the customs (13%) and the work in the land (8%).

Figure 6.12. *What did they miss the most after displacement (n=54)**(d) Memories of life before war*

At the beginning of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to describe what they remembered the most from life before the war, in the 1980s more concretely. This question frequently provoked very visible (and positive) emotional reactions, including a certain amount of surprise and amusement. This made answers typically very open, relaxed and detailed. I have later on coded all the main components showing up in those answers. Family is at the top of the list, together with memories of well-being in general: having a job, a house, a good life, a promising future.

“I remember getting married, my marriage. When we made our own house, we got a car, I had a job... and then the child was born” (2007, *male (47) Kriz, not*)

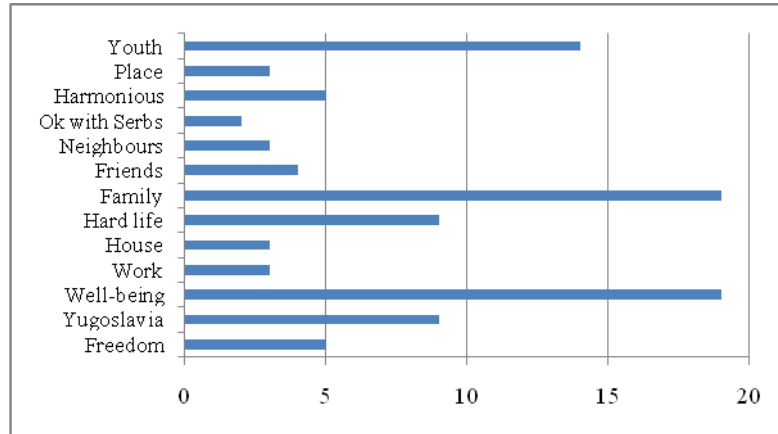
“I remember everything but, the most... my parents and brothers. Now I don't have anyone [they all died in the war]” (2114, *fem (44) Kriz, ret*)

“We had a nice family, we always had a good life. It was nice for anyone wanting to work” (1109, male (35) *Cers, ret*)

“I remember the most when we built our own house and I moved in with my husband [to form a family]. We had no roof for 3 years, but life was nice, we were so happy. We were only eight years there, and my husband spent some of them in Irak to gather some money. When we finally managed to put the roof, the war begun... It wasn't meant to be” (1010, fem (49) *Cers, not*)

“So many things [*Svašta*]. My husband, my sisters, my brothers... All the people who have died [also 1 brother-in-law and 1 nephew]” (1002, fem (39) *Cers, not*)

Figure 6.13. Topics of the most salient memories from the 1980s (n=60)

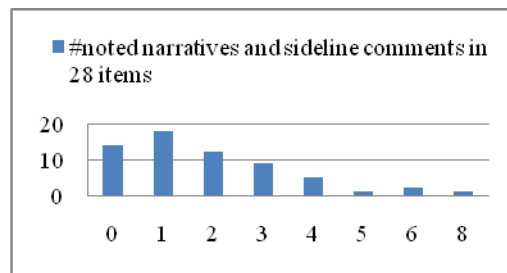


(e) Appraisal patterns

Appraisal patterns related to love for family have a somewhat less extended presence than fear in narratives: they do not show up in 9 out of the 28 items studied. This obviously does not mean that love has a lesser presence and intensity as an emotion, since

concern and love for family is frequently taken as a given and it is an implicit part in many narratives, even if not explicitly enough as to be coded as such.²⁴

Figure 6.14. Count of narratives or comments related to love for family per respondent



The measure based on the qualitative analysis of the appraisal patterns is built under this premise: that in all cases love for family is likely to be present. Although a value of zero is contemplated, none of the cases has been coded as such. A value of 1 ('medium') has been given as a baseline for all appraisal patterns related to family concerns. A value of 2 ('high') has been given to cases in which family love shows up as particularly salient, that is, where a specific and recurrent concern is displayed. A value of 3 ('very high') has been given to cases where such a concern is overtaking, dominating in practically all accounts and declarations.

Overtaking

“The most important thing was getting the kids to school, and not separating from them // (Plans 1996) Nothing, just to look after the kids and provide them with a normal life and normal conditions // If

²⁴ An obvious example is the question about plans in 1996 and the answer coded as ‘startup’, where the concern for providing well-being and normal conditions to the family as a whole is simply implied in most of them.

I'm with children, wherever I am, I'm fine // A lot of things (missed): my husband, my sisters, my brothers... all the people who died // (Reason not to return) There is no one, no family, no husband over there [in return]" (1002, *fem (39) Cers, not*)

"I didn't care to live or die. I just cared about the kids." (2118, *fem (72) Kriz, ret*)

"The only thing I wanted [after the war was ended] was to go down to the cemetery with my father and mother. And now is the same. I just want not to be given any trouble [because of it]" (2110, *male (59) Kriz, ret*)

"Well, best memory is when you form your family... When I came out (of Srebrenica) and when I saw that all my children are safe in Tuzla. When I arrived to Dubrave someone was shouting "Mom!" [it was her eldest son, age 14). [...] // The most important (thing) to me was to educate my children // [Once they finished school] I came back on my father's land . There were no one else who could come back because his son got killed. I was happy that I returned and lived here. My husband and my brother got killed, fighting for Bosnia, it would be hard for me if I have not returned here on their land // I have returned here because I am already an old woman but if I had had any chance to send my children somewhere else I would. Because I'm still afraid of all what has happened during the war. I would not like my children to get killed like my husband and my brother. But I would stay here // I would have bought a house in the Federation, but I can't afford it. Because I don't know what can happen tomorrow again. But I would not exchange (or sell) this one (in the return area). I just would like to have one more in the Federation, so that my children could have houses here and there" (1119, *fem (51) Cers, ret*)

Salient

"(I want my children) to stay and live in the Federation. Now I regret we didn't go as a family to Federation when had chance" (2109, *fem (47) Kriz, ret*)

"What could I say, I had nothing special in my mind, just to provide a house for myself and my family. // [Displacement was unjust, and

return is important because of it] but I care more about my family's well-being" (1103, *male (50) Cers, ret*)

"The only thing I cared about was to stay safe and sound, and sane. And the same for my family // (Importance of other returnees) Having my brother here is good enough" (1104, *male (55) Cers, ret*)

"I wanted to go abroad for the sake of the kids. But we came back among the first. We had all we needed, materials, documents... Now is a concern how put kids to educate" (1112, *male (39) Cers, ret*)

"I didn't feel good about return because there were no people in the village and we would be alone. Plus [his son] doesn't feel he belongs in here. All his friends are refugees from somewhere else. There are youth here but he doesn't get on with them" (1115, *male (52) Cers, ret*)

"I would like my kids to be wherever I am [*Volio bih da budu gdje budem i ja*]" (1120, *male (41) Cers, ret*)

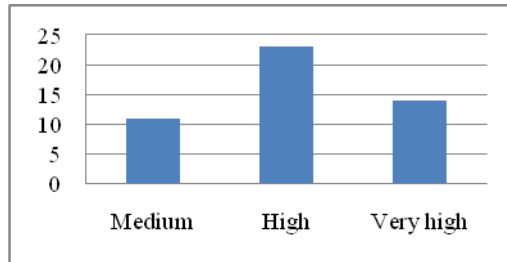
Normal

"There [in displacement] I had opportunities, family... But I wanted to return here, this is mine" (2120, *male (40) Kriz, ret*)

"Good memories from war! Not even one! The only good thing is that I got my baby // The kids had got used in there [in displacement] but it's not worthy, you don't have a place of your own. In the end, the best thing is to be in your own place [*Na kraju najljepše je na tvoje*]" (2105, *fem (46) Kriz, ret*)

"At first I did not even considered the possibility of not returning ever and staying over there [in displacement]. Otherwise I wouldn't have gone to Army... But then it was nice over there, it wasn't terrible. But I didn't think too much about it, the important thing was family" (2111, *male (43) Kriz, ret*)

Figure 6.15. Distribution of love for family intensity based on appraisal patterns



III. Measuring love for family

Various factor analyses have been conducted to assess the internal validity of these indicators.²⁵ The resulting factor analysis produces one main component in which four indicators load over .500: appraisal pattern measures, plans in 1996 being focused around family concerns, and missing family as a result of displacement and war. Family being a priority during war loads weakly in this component (.271). The only indicator that clearly seems not to be part of the identified dimension is family-focused memories of the 1980s, which scores almost in isolation in a separate component.

For categorizing individuals (very high, high and medium love for family) I repeat the method used above for fear: I rely on the four variables loading highly in the main component and I have into account first the one with the highest loading, and so on consecutively. A combination of a high value in 'lovefam' and a high value in the number of noted narratives and comments is the

²⁵ An index has been built for the family being missed upon displacement by summing up the scores in the open question and in the follow up. This index produces better measures of adequacy of the factor analysis than the separate original variables.

main criteria for classifying a case as ‘very high’.²⁶ All except two of the cases centering their 1996 plans on kids’ education are present in this group. And almost all the cases in this group score highly in missing the family whenever there has been separation from them (which are the majority of the cases also in this group).

Table 6.3. *Factor analysis for indicators of love for family*²⁷

	Components		
	1	2	3
Memories from 80s: family-centered (‘Mem80sFam’)			.975
Family as a priority during war (Fam1)	.271	.854	
MissedFam + MissedOPENFam (‘MissedFamSUM’)	.582	-.589	
Plans 1996: kids education (‘planKids’)	.733		
# Noted narratives and comments (‘countLoveF’)	.804		.271
Appraisal patterns: love for family (‘lovefam’)	.834		
<i>Eigenvalue</i>	2,30	1,12	1,03
<i>Total variance explained (%)</i>	38,3	18,7	17,1

Extraction method: Principal components analysis. *Rotation method:* Varimax Normalization with Kaiser. KMO =.621, Bartlett=35.077 (sig=.002).

Only loadings over .200 are shown. Loadings over .500 displayed in **bold**.

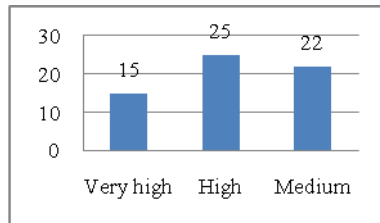
²⁶ High and medium values are defined as follows. For ‘LoveFam’ (with a range between 1-3) a value of 3 is considered high and 2 medium. For ‘CountLoveF’ I consider a score of more than three as high and between 2-3 as medium. The choice of these thresholds is based on the frequency distribution displayed in Figure 6.14. For ‘MissedFamSUM’ I consider a score of three or more as high (meaning either that the respondent missed ‘terribly’ her/his family, or that she mentioned missing them or missing them terribly also in the open question); a score of 2 as medium (meaning that the respondent admitted missing them when asked about it). In the dichotomic variables ‘Mem80sFam’, ‘Fam1’ and ‘planKids’ values of 1 are considered high. Scores below these thresholds in all variables are considered low.

²⁷ Descriptive statistics for all variables in Annex 6.1 (Table 3).

Cases are classified as ‘high’ if they have a medium value in ‘lovefam’ and a medium value in noted narratives. In none of these cases 1996 plans were centered on educating the children, but they all scored highly in missing the family whenever there was separation because of war. But cases of separation are much less frequent. Finally, cases are coded as ‘medium’ in love for family intensity when there is a combination of medium and low values in the main two variables, or both values are low.²⁸

The intensity of love for family turns out to be distributed in the following manner across the sample based on these criteria: 24% with very high levels, 40% with high levels, and 35% with medium levels of love for family.

Figure 6.16. Distribution of intensity of love for family in the sample



2. Love for friends

1. Direction of the concern

Similarly to what happened with love for family, the objects of love for friends are multiple and mobile. Depending on their geographical distribution, the concern for proximity with them may have different translations regarding the decision to return.

²⁸ When the main variable (‘lovefam’) is missing, I rely on the value of the number of narratives and follow the same method.

Return may entail separating or reuniting with friends (1 and -1 respectively), both of them at the same time or none of them (0).

In order to identify the direction of the concern, a new variable has been built. It is based, on the one hand, on the reported proportions of old friends who have returned or who remain in the vicinity of the location of displacement; and, on the other hand, on the reported amount and characteristics of new friends made in the location of displacement.²⁹

The variables regarding the proportion of old friends in both locations describe whether none, a few, some, many, most or all of the old friends (from the location of origin) have returned or reside in the vicinity of the location of displacement.³⁰ A value of none has been coded as 0, a value of a few or some has been coded as 1, and a value between many and all has been coded as 2 (a value of 2 frequently implies a value of 0 in the other location, although not necessarily). Two variables result from this procedure, one for the proportion of friends who have returned (*'Friendsback_prop'*) and another one for the proportion of friends in vicinity in displacement (*'FriendsDisp_prop'*).

A third item in the questionnaire asked whether the household, and specifically the HH, had made new friends in the location of displacement (none=0, some=1, many=2).³¹ Based on the

²⁹ This is a blunt characterization of the concern for proximity with friends, since the *who* rather than the *how many* is likely to be a more salient factor in many cases. However, evaluating the weight of specific friendships is hard and complex to evaluate. Moreover, cases in which specific friendships have a salient weight on their own in the decision to return seemed to be much rarer than cases in which there was a simple preference for being surrounded by friends and acquaintances in general.

³⁰ Regarding old friendships in general, in half of the cases the relationships had got distant or had ceased. For the rest, they had stayed the same (41%) or even improved (11%).

³¹ 95% had made new friends (31% emphasized that many or plenty of them). And for 62% the new friendships were just the same or even better than the old ones. But for one third they were just not the same or not the same at all. Some of these new friends were domiciles, and some

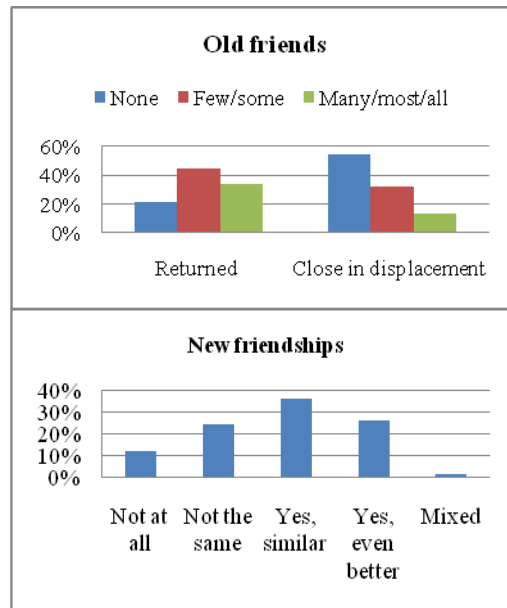
evaluation they made of these new friends (-2=Not at all comparable to old ones, -1=Not the same, 1=Very similar, 2=Similar or even better) I have created a new variable of the amount of new friends which are comparable to or better than the old ones (*Newfriends_wprop*). This variable takes the values from the original one (none=0, some=1, many=2) but it assigns a 0 value to new friends which are not considered as good as the old ones.

By summing up this variable with *FriendsDisp_prop* a final indicator for friends in displacement (*FriendsDisp_prop2*) is obtained ranging between 1 and 3. All 3 values have been recoded as 2, so that the scale coincides with that of *Friendsback_prop* with comparable meanings. The two final variables, *Friendsback_prop* and *FriendsDisp_prop2*, reflect whether the individual has many or most friends (2), some (1) or none (0) in the location of return or in the location of displacement. By deducting *FriendsDisp_prop2* from *Friendsback_prop* I obtain positive values (more friends in return), negative ones (more friends in displacement) and null values (there is a similar proportion in both locations).

What this variable reveals is that 29% of the respondents faced mostly separation from friends if returning, whereas 42% faced mostly reunion if returning. These figures have to do not only with the amount of (friends) return, but mostly with the fact that old friends tended to be scattered in displacement or abroad (i.e. they were frequently not in close vicinity). Also the combination of having made many new friends who were comparable to the old ones was not widespread. Figure 6.17 displays the pattern of geographical distribution of old friends, and the amount and comparison of new friends *vis-à-vis* these old ones.

were refugees from other villages and regions (some of these had returned, but in most cases they were more easily contacted in any case if not returning).

Figure 6.17. Geographical distribution of old friendships and evaluation of new friendships made in displacement (% over valid cases)



I. Indicators

Three main direct measures have been used to proxy the intensity of love for friends: whether friends are mentioned among war priorities, among the things most missed and among the things most remembered from before the war (see above). One set of indirect measures of love for friends has been considered. These are three closed items evaluating the relationship with the neighbours and residents in the locations of return and displacement.

(a) War priorities

In the open question about the three top priorities during war time only 4% of the respondents mentioned friends and neighbours among these top priorities (see Figure 6.10) which clearly stands out and suggests a salient presence of love for friends.

(b) Missed

When asked openly what did they miss the most after displacement, almost one third of the sample answered (among others) that their friends or neighbours (see Figure 6.12). The percentage rose to 67% when directly asked, some of them stating that they actually missed them ‘terribly’ (7%).

“I missed the *komšiluk* [neighbourhood], narod [*the people*]” (2007, male (47) *Kriz, not*)

“And even today. There are some still in Sarajevo [not returned], and it is hard” (1105, male (59) *Cers, ret*)

“I was the saddest a person can be thinking that none of them here would survive [she was safe abroad when the war broke out]. I suffered psychological changes, depression, I experience them even today. I was not worried about anything else, I couldn’t enjoy life. I had the opportunity [over there] to have a good life for my family, but I could just think of that, of returning, of reestablishing contact with everyone over here” (1106, fem (46) *Cers, ret*)

“I missed so much the neighbours and relatives [all members of the *komšiluk*]. Even though I had good friends and neighbours [in the location of displacement], I missed them” (1109, male (35) *Cers, ret*)

“I missed the people. A lot of them got killed, many friends, many good fellows who would probably be there [in return] if they were alive. Also the ones in the diaspora, especially in the US, they come every years and they always initiate something” (1001, male (41) *Cers, not*)

(c) Memories of life before war

When inquired about their memories from before the war, only 12% of the respondents referred specifically to friends or neighbours (see Figure 6.13). However, when mentioned, these tended to be very emotional memories:

“I remember the people. The good company, social life. The time we spent going to school and back. In Cerska school we were around 1,500 pupils. Today only 5 of my friends are still alive...” (1117, *male (30) Cers, ret*)

“Those were the best years of my life, in the old neighbourhood” (1002, *fem (39) Cers, not*)

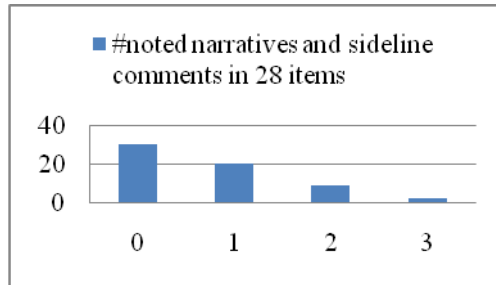
“I remember the works in the fields. Everybody from around [coming to work] and the whole family. And when I arrived from the job [on weekends], we worked in the houses [being built in the *komšiluk*] all the time. The whole village worked in the building. Now all of that is gone. It was good, it was ideal” (2117, *male (66) Kriz, ret*)

“That time was a beauty, it was a good life, we were being happy. I remember the neighbours the most. We were all hunters. And the dance, the fairs, the parties...” (1116, *male (59) Cers, ret*)

(d) Appraisal patterns

Appraisal patterns related to love for friends have the scantest presence in the narratives and comments to the 28 items under consideration. They show up in only 5 of the 28 items. In most cases they do not show up at all, and there is a maximum of three narratives noted per case. This is in line with the expectation stated in Chapter 2 that love for friends is likely to be the less salient and compelling of all the three love concerns identified (family, friends and place).

Figure 6.18. Count of narratives or comments related to love for friends per respondent



Cases have been coded with a value of 0 ('none') if friendships do not exist or if they are explicitly disregarded. They have been coded with a value of 1 ('normal') when there is mention of them. With a value of 2 ('caring') when the presence of friends does seem to make a difference for the respondent. And with a value of 3 ('strong') when such presence has a specific weight in the individual's judgement and it seems to produce a strong push, whether transformed into action or not.

Strong

"I'm sorry that we are not there. They love us and we love them. I miss them a lot. Simply life is easier here. There we broke our backs working and here we have a job. And we have lost so many neighbours..." (2007, male (47) Kriz, not)

"I don't feel from Tuzla even for one second. As soon as I can I go there and do something for the people... repair the road, basic things for life... My heart aches when someone there is lacking something or has some problem. I was a part of the return process for 6 years..." (2008, male (38) Kriz, not)

Caring

"When we needed help to harvest I couldn't believe how many people showed up, around 50 of them // I knew the old neighbour were already back. So there was someone to rely on. It was an

encouragement, that old friends and neighbours were over there” (1105, male (59) *Cers, ret*)

“That time was a beauty, it was a good life, we were being happy. I remember the neighbours the most. We were all hunters. And the dance, the fairs, the parties...” (1116, male (59) *Cers, ret*)

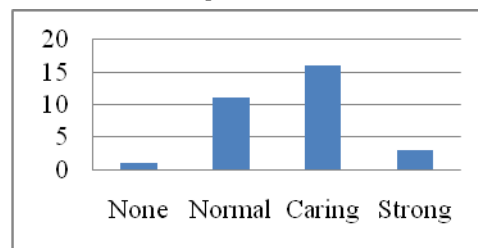
“I really liked it over there [in displacement]. If I could choose I would build another house there. They were all crying when we left, and sometimes we go and visit” (1102, male (57) *Cers, ret*)

None

“None of the ones that I knew from before helped me at all” (1118, male (35) *Cers, ret*)

“My company and friends are my husband and my daughters” (2123, fem (40) *Kriz, ret*)

Figure 6.19. *Distribution of love for friends intensity based on appraisal patterns*

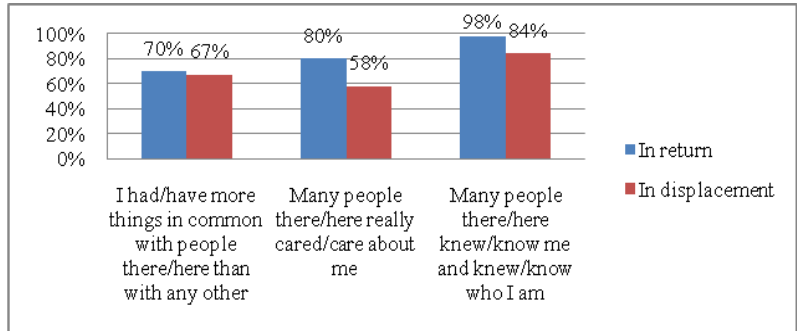


(e) Evaluation of residents and neighbours

The set of indirect measures consists of three closed items evaluating the relationship with the neighbours and residents in the locations of return and displacement. The items were: ‘I have more things in common with people from here than from anywhere else’; ‘Many people here really care about me’; ‘Many

people here know me and know who I am'. Respondents could strongly agree (2), agree (1), disagree (-1) or strongly disagree (-2) with each of them. The items referred to the period since return was opened.

Figure 6.20. Relationship with neighbours and residents in return and displacement (% over valid cases)



III. Measuring love for friends

Once more, various factor analyses have been conducted to assess the internal validity of these indicators.³² The resulting factor analysis reveals the presence of two main components. The first component seems to be centrally constituted by emotional longing, with the indicators of missing friends and neighbours loading the highest, accompanied by the intensity of love for friends as measured through appraisal patterns ('lovefriend').

The second dimension seems to correspond to past scenarios of friendship ties, with memories from the 80s and friends as a war priority loading the highest, accompanied by the appraisal patterns

³² Two indexes have been built for friends and neighbours being missed upon displacement by summing up the scores in the open question and in the follow up. This index produces better measures of adequacy of the factor analysis than the separate original variables.

indicators. All the considered indicators load above .500 in one of the two dimensions, except the appraisal measure of ‘lovefriend’, which loads highly in both components. In the case of love for friends, then, a significant number of indicators load highly and consistently in two (rather than one) components.

Table 6.4. Factor analysis for indicators of love for friends³³

	Components	
	1	2
Memories from 1980s: friends, neighbours (‘Mem80sFrien’)		.822
Friends/neighbours as priority during war (‘Friends1’)	.232	.558
MissedFriends + MissedOPENFriends (‘MissFrienSUM’)	.922	
MissedNeigh + MissedOPENNeigh (‘MissNeighSUM’)	.923	
# Noted narratives and comments (‘countLoveFr’)		.764
Appraisal patterns: love for friends (‘lovefriend’)	.612	.516
<i>Eigenvalue</i>	2,59	1,47
<i>Total variance explained (%)</i>	43,1	24,5

Extraction method: Principal components analysis. Rotation method: Varimax Normalization with Kaiser. KMO =.669, Bartlett=32.997 (sig=.005).

Only loadings over .200 are shown. Loadings over .500 displayed in **bold**.

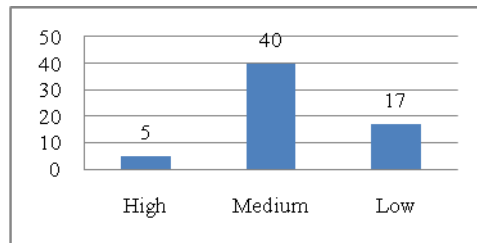
The procedure for categorizing individuals (high, medium and low love for friends) slightly varies as a consequence of these results. I take into consideration all the variables, since all of them load highly in at least one of the components. I have into account first the variable loading above .500 in both components (‘lovefriend’). I then take into account the ones loading the highest in any of the two components: ‘MissFrienSUM’ and ‘MissNeighSUM’ from the first component and ‘Mem80sFrien’ and ‘CountLoveFr’ from the second component.

³³ Descriptive statistics for all variables in Annex 6.1 (Table 4).

The main criteria for classifying a case as ‘high’ in the intensity of love for friends is to find a combination of a high value in the three sets of variables:³⁴ ‘lovefriend’, one of the ‘Missed’ indexes *and* either ‘Mem80sFriends’ or ‘countLoveFr’.³⁵ Cases are classified as ‘medium’ if they have a medium value in at least two of these sets of variables. All other cases are classified as ‘low’.

Based on these criteria, the intensity of love for friends turns out to be distributed in the following manner across the sample: 8% with high levels, 65% with medium levels, and 27% with low levels of love for friends.

Figure 6.21. Distribution of intensity of love for friends in the sample



³⁴ High and medium values are defined as follows. For ‘lovefriend’ (with a range between 1-3) a value of 3 is considered high and 2 medium. For ‘CountLoveFr’ I consider a score between 2-3 as high and of 1 as medium. The choice of these thresholds is based on the frequency distribution displayed in Figure 6.18. For ‘MissedFrienSUM’ and ‘MissedNeighSUM’ I consider a score of three or more as high (meaning either that the respondent missed ‘terribly’ her/his friends, or that she mentioned missing them or missing them terribly also in the open question); a score of 2 as medium (meaning that the respondent admitted missing them when asked about it). In the dichotomic variables ‘Mem80sFrien’ and ‘Friends1’, a value of 1 is considered high. Scores below these thresholds in all variables are considered low.

³⁵ Positive cases of ‘Mem80sFriends’ and scores of 2-3 in ‘countLoveFr’ are very scarce and thus salient cases.

3. *Love for place*

The case of love for place is slightly different to those of love for family and friends. The concern for proximity with the location of return enters with a positive sign, and love for the location of displacement enters with a negative sign. The strength of the love tie to each of these locations will determine whether there is a dilemma in place cancelling out the expected effects, or whether there will be a clear pull effect towards returning or towards staying in displacement.

An important baseline to have in mind for understanding the peculiarities of the empirical case at hand is the degree to which households and families in the sample were tied through time and generations to their places of origin (I take into account HH's family line only). Almost 75% of the respondents' families had been residing in that same place 'since always' and they considered themselves 'old natives', or they declared they didn't know but they assumed that 'since always' or at least 'since I can remember'. A further 16% moved into the areas of origin around World War I or II. Only a few marginal cases had moved in at a later point (in the 1970-80s).

I. Indicators

The main set of self-report measures for love for place is a battery of closed questions about the tie linking the respondent with each of the two locations.

(a) The tie of home

At the end of the questionnaire there was a battery of closed questions about the tie linking the respondent with each of the two locations. Each item intends to grasp one of the three dimensions of the home tie (familiarity, identity and attachment), as well as specific emotional reactions and the very notion of home. The

items, referred to the whole period since return started, are shown in Table 6.5.

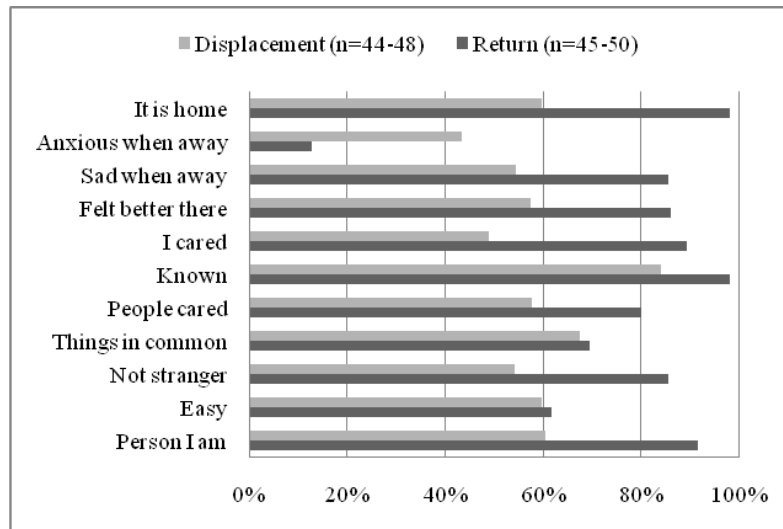
Table 6.5. Items used as self-report measures for the link between the respondent and the two locations (return and displacement)

	Dimension targeted
I am the person I am because I've lived/grown up in this place	IDENTITY
It is/was very easy to know what was going on, who was who, where to find hem	FAMILIARITY
I have/had more things in common with people from here than with any other	IDENTITY/ FAMILIARITY
I don't/didn't feel as a stranger	IDENTITY
I care/cared immensely about this/that place	ATTACHMENT
Many people here/there really care/cared about me	ATTACHMENT
Many people here/there know/knew me and know/knew who I am	FAMILIARITY
I feel/felt better here/there than in other places	Emotional reaction
I feel/felt sad and nostalgic while away from here/there	Emotional reaction
I get/got anxious and distressed while away from here/there	Emotional reaction
This is/was home for me	'HOME'

The results obtained are presented in Figure 6.22, where the distribution of positive answers ('agree' and 'strongly agree') is presented. All the considered components of the home tie, as well as the very notion of home, have a much larger presence for the location of return. Although 60% of the respondents felt the location of displacement as home, such percentage soars to 98%

for the location of return. That is, some kind of home link is relatively frequent with the location of displacement. However, such link is pervasive when considering the location of return.

Figure 6.22. Evaluation of the home tie with the locations of return and displacement (% over valid cases)



The two components with a similar presence for return and displacement – i.e. having more things in common with the people from that location³⁶ and finding it easy to manage oneself in there – are two items related to familiarity. The other familiarity item – i.e. being known and acquainted in the location – is very high also in displacement. This is supportive of the expectation that

³⁶ This can be partially explained by the fact that many neighbours in displacement were frequently people displaced from the same area of origin or simply displaced in general, which made interviewees to self-identify with them and their experiences.

familiarity is likely to be the easiest dimension of the tie of home to be attained upon displacement.

It is noteworthy that the only item that is more frequently associated with the location of displacement than with the location of return is the emotional reaction of anxiety when leaving or being away from the location considered. The explanation probably lies in the fact that departure and separation from the location of displacement is most frequently associated with return, which, as it has been profusely discussed in here, is a move characterized by uncertainty and risk. However, it is remarkable that anxiety when being away from the location of return is extremely low. Sadness, on the other hand, is very widespread. This is likely explained by the fact that, as assumed in the theoretical framework of this work, the case under research is a case of safe displacement. Respondents did not particularly feel anxiety after various years of displacement and once the war was over. Still, sadness and nostalgia do not seem to have subsided or significantly diminished with the passing of time.

In order to open the black box of the tie with home, as well as to reduce the number and nature of the indicators which will be used for proxying the intensity of this tie, I have run a factor analysis with these items which produces two important general results. Firstly, the analysis is problematic in statistical terms when including the answers for both locations, whereas it runs smoothly for each location separately. Secondly, and reinforcing the apparent need to separate both sets of answers, their separate analyses reveal that *the dimensions underlying the home tie to each of these locations are noticeably different.*

In the analysis for the location of return, three large components emerge. The first one seems to be composed largely of *identity issues* ('person I am' and 'not feel as a stranger') which are accompanied by strong emotional reactions ('feel better', 'sad when away', 'anxious when away'). This would confirm the idea discussed in Chapter 2 that identity is largely an emotionally built process. The second component is composed of *attachment issues* ('I care for that place', 'people there care for me') accompanied by

mutual knowledge and familiarity ('people there know who I am'). The notion of home ('it is home for me') loads highly in this dimension (and more moderately in the identity dimension), which would confirm the important link established in Chapter 2 between attachment and the notion of home.

Table 6.6. Factor analysis for items measuring the components of the home tie with the return location³⁷

	Components		
	1	2	3
I am the person I am because I have lived/grown up there	.735	.427	
Not feel/felt as a stranger	.764	.298	.302
I feel/felt better here/there than in other place	.737	.335	.392
Sad when away	.884	.234	
Anxious when away	.833		-.293
I care/cared about the place		.877	
People here/there care/cared about me		.674	.378
People know/knew me and know/knew who I am		.886	
It is/was home for me	.444	.642	
Easy to find out who is who, what is going on...			.876
More things in common with the people here/there	.338		.621
<i>Eigenvalue</i>	4.99	1.73	1.36
<i>Total variance explained (%)</i>	45.3	15.6	12.3

Extraction method: Principal components analysis. *Rotation method:* Varimax Normalization with Kaiser. KMO =.779, Bartlett=214.125 (sig=.000). Only loadings over .200 are shown. Loadings over .500 displayed **in bold**.

Finally, the third component is largely built out of *familiarity* issues ('it is easy to find my way around', 'I have more things in common with people here') and the rest of the items load very weakly in it. This emphasizes once more the peculiarity of the familiarity dimension. On the one hand, familiarity is probably the

³⁷ Descriptive statistics for all variables in Annex 6.1 (Table 5).

component of the home tie that can be developed more easily with new locations. On the other hand, as it was discussed in Chapter 2, familiarity has the particularity of being importantly connected to the utilitarian dimension and not only to the emotional one.

The results of the factor analysis for the home tie with the location of displacement are quite different. Firstly, the *identity dimension* ('person I am', 'things in common') becomes only the third dimension in relevance (in terms of accounting for the total variance of all the considered items) rather than the first. And very saliently, it gets disconnected from the emotional reactions considered here.

The most important dimension for the home tie with displacement is not identity but *attachment*. But the attachment dimension gets divided into two different ones: on the one hand, one dimension built out of the degree to which *the respondent cares* about the place, which is the one connected to the emotional reactions considered ('feel better', 'sad away', 'anxious away'). This is also the most important component (explaining 38% of the total variance) and the one in which the notion of home loads highly, again emphasizing the strong link between home and attachment. A second attachment component (second also in relevance) is the one built of the degree to which the respondent feels *that people* cares or cared about them, and know or knew them. The dimension of *familiarity* (combined with identity) stands out once more as a different and separate dimension ('easy', 'not feel stranger').

Table 6.7. Factor analysis for items measuring the components of the home tie with the location of displacement³⁸

	Components			
	1	2	3	4
I cared about the place	.766			
I felt better there than in other place	.776	.439		
Sad when away	.744	.404		
Anxious when away	.839			
It is home for me	.872			
People there cared about me	.312	.751		-.273
People knew me and knew who I am	.278	.832		
I'm the person I am because I lived/grew here			.928	
More things in common with the people there		.349	.752	
Easy to find out who is who, what is going on...	-.356	.540	.247	.585
Not feel as a stranger	.334	-.213		.849
<i>Eigenvalue</i>	4.16	1.99	1.35	1.04
<i>Total variance explained (%)</i>	37.8	18.1	12.3	9.5

Extraction method: Principal components analysis. Rotation method: Varimax Normalization with Kaiser. KMO =.693, Bartlett=145.875 (sig=000). Only loadings over .200 are shown. Loadings over .500 displayed in **bold**.

Two important conclusions can be drawn from here: that the home tie with the location of displacement is mostly built out of attachment, whereas the tie with the location of return is mostly built out of identity. We also know that the second link seems to be much stronger (based on the widespread nature of all components of the home tie concerning the location of return). And second, that the *notion* of home is basically tied to attachment.

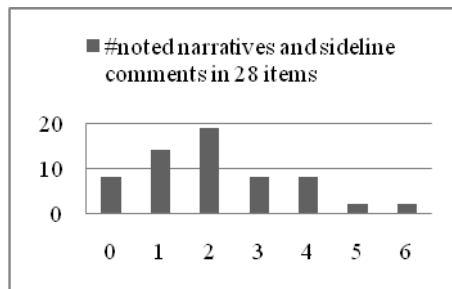
³⁸ Descriptive statistics for all variables in Annex 6.1 (Table 6).

(b) Appraisal patterns

Appraisal patterns related to love for place are pervasive, but not as much as fear-related ones: they do not show up in 9 out of the 28 analysed items, and there is a maximum of 6 related narratives per respondent.

The qualitative analysis of these narratives and comments has produced a similar result to that of the factor analyses conducted above: love for the location of return and love for the location of displacement seemed to be two different and independent (even if somewhat connected) emotional processes. Two measures have been produced therefore (*lovePlaceRet* and *lovePlaceDisp*), each one referring to the strength of the tie or emotion towards each location.

Figure 6.23. Count of love-for-place narratives per respondent



Cases have been coded with a value of 3 ('overtaking') if love for the place seems to be an overriding concern, colouring and focusing most other answers and life accounts. Cases have been coded with a value of 2 ('strong') when love for the place seems to bear a specific weight and push in the respondent's judgements and life options. A value of 1 ('low') refers to cases where a link with the place is present but it is presented in a mild manner, such as simply liking the place. A value of 0 is given to those cases where no love tie is self-reported at all.

Overtaking

“When war stopped I just repeated: “Come on, just let me return to my place // I had the chance to buy a house in Stupari [Federation] and we had the money for it. But I didn’t want to. Return begun then, and it was immediately clear to me: I wanted to come back” (2123, *fem (40) Kriz, ret*)

“(For me return was fixed in my mind) since the first visit, with the people in the bus (totally overwhelmed with emotion) saying: “We will come back soon”. Then each one went on his own way, but for me... (When I returned) My heart was full, and before there had been emptiness in my soul” (2111, *male (43) Kriz, ret*)

“I felt miserable (thinking about not returning) // (Upon first visit) Emotions were stronger than safety concerns. I just thought I could die in that precise moment” (2122, *male (37) Kriz, ret*)

Strong

“It’s my grandfathers’ and my father’s land... there I have my roots // It was dangerous over there, everything was mined. But we organised ourselves, without plans or larger organization. Had we waited [for the IC and local authorities permission] (we would have never done it)... Simply, we wanted to return and we repeated just the same idea: “we want to return, we will” [*hoćemo se vratiti, hoćemo!*]” (2001, *male (39) Kriz, not*)

“When things got calmed I got sick of wandering around. There is no place like your own place. If it’s a tent, a tent then, but MY tent // There [in displacement] it was nice for me. I got used to it, I got two babies over there, and it’s something between the town and the countryside, so it’s perfect. And the neighbours were all refugees, we were good. But you don’t have many options if you don’t have money. // It’s important to return to your own place” (2105, *fem (46) Kriz, ret*)

Low-None

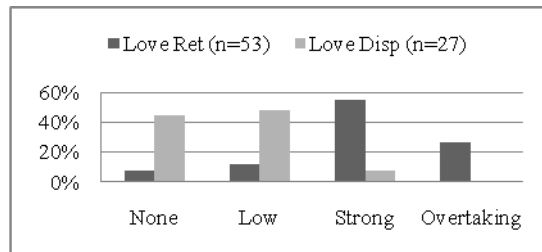
“After 1993 things began to change for me. I was in town for the first time... I was a kid, I had been in charge of looking after the cattle, and it was nice for me in the village. But I didn’t know

anything better. Not it's different, I don't see myself back there // I don't like going there: the bad roads, no one from my generation, everything is far away, there are no opportunities for education... ” (2004, male (25) Kriz, not)

“I would never live there [displacement] even if I became the richest person. Those are terrible people. We had so many fights with domiciles (for cutting firewood), even when we were given a landplot they were still claiming that it was theirs afterwards. They even put locks on the water shells! Not even our Srebrenica refugees treated us like that...”(1107, fem (50) Cers, ret)

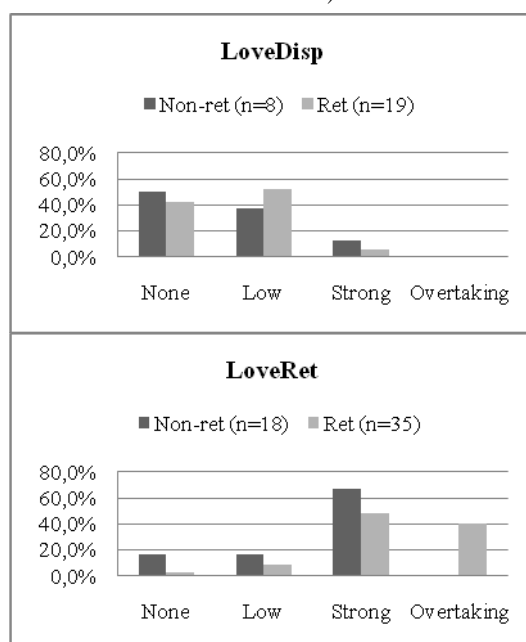
The statistics of these variables are worth looking at. Regarding the location of displacement, almost no strong cases (2-3) are registered, whereas these are the majority for the location of return. There exists a statistically significant relationship between ‘lovePlaceRet’ and being a returnee³⁹ – all cases classified as ‘overtaking’ are returnees. But there is not an equivalent (and expectedly negative) relationship between ‘lovePlaceDisp’ and being a non-returnee. Figure 6.24 displays the distribution of the two variables and Figure 6.25 offers a graphic account of their relationship with return.

Figure 6.24. Distribution of love for place intensity based on appraisal patterns (% over valid cases)



³⁹ Cramer's V=.448 (sig=.013).

Figure 6.25. Relationship between love for place and return (% over valid cases)



II. Measuring love for place (return and displacement)

Once more, various factor analyses have been conducted to assess the internal validity of these indicators.⁴⁰ The counting measure for appraisal patterns turns out problematic and it has been left out of the final analyses. The resulting factor analyses

⁴⁰ Various indexes have been built corresponding to the dimensions identified in the previous factor analyses for the home tie. They have been built by summing up the scores in each of the items and standardizing by the number of answers provided by each respondent. These indexes thus average respondent's answers to these items. The indexes produce better measures of adequacy than the separate original variables.

reveal that, for the location of return, all the considered indicators load above .500 in one single component. The familiarity dimension is again the weakest within the component. I will follow the usual method for categorizing cases having into account the other three variables ('RETIdentity', 'RETCare' and 'RETFamiliarity').

Table 6.8. Factor analysis for indicators of love for place (return)

	Component 1
RETIdentity	.841
RETCare	.747
RETFamiliarity	.509
Appraisal patterns: love for place of return ('lovePlaceRet')	.740
<i>Eigenvalue</i>	2.07
<i>Total variance explained (%)</i>	51.83

Extraction method: Principal components analysis. *Rotation method:* Varimax Normalization with Kaiser. KMO =.661, Bartlett=31.283 (sig=000).

Only loadings over .200 are shown. Loadings over .500 displayed in **bold**.

For the location of displacement, only the attachment and familiarity dimensions load highly in the main component, whereas the identity dimension and appraisal pattern measures load in a different dimension. I will stick to the three indicators loading in the main component in order to categorise cases ('RETCared', 'RETCaring' and 'RETFamiliarity').

Table 6.9. Factor analysis for indicators of love for place (displacement)

	Components	
	1	2
RETIdentity		.889
RETCared	.803	.453
RETCaring	.866	
RETFamiliarity	.729	
Appraisal patterns: love for place of return (‘lovePlaceDisp’)		.892
<i>Eigenvalue</i>	2,24	1,49
<i>Total variance explained</i>	44,76%	29,80%

Extraction method: Principal components analysis. Rotation method: Varimax Normalization with Kaiser. KMO =.572, Bartlett=28.155 (sig=.002).

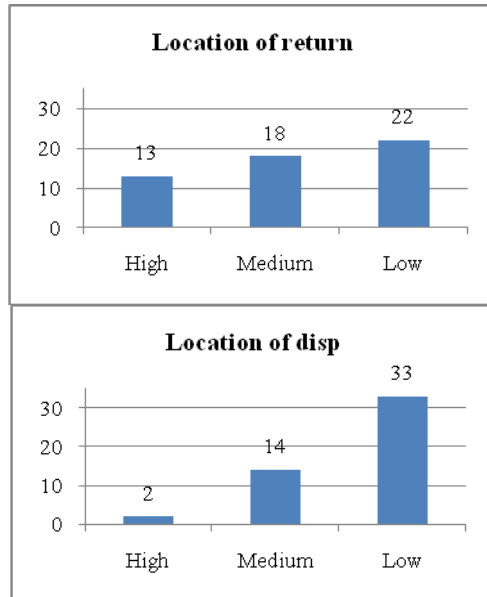
Only loadings over .200 are shown. Loadings over .500 displayed in **bold**.

The procedure for categorizing cases has been the same for both return and displacement: ‘high’ in intensity of love for place are cases with high scores in at least two of the three considered variables;⁴¹ ‘medium’ is the coded value for those with at least two medium scores in those three variables; ‘low’ are all other cases.

The results are the following: 58% of the respondents have a strong or very strong tie with the location of return, for only 33% with the location of displacement. A low intensity tie with the location of return exists nonetheless for 42% of the respondents, which soars to 67% in the case of displacement.

⁴¹ The range of the original variables and of the indexes elaborated is [-2, 2] corresponding to strongly disagree and strongly agree values, respectively. A high score is considered to be 1.5 and above. A medium score is considered to be between 1 and 1.499. A low score are all those not reaching 1, including negative values.

Figure 6.26. Distribution of intensity of love for place in the sample



6.1.3. Hatred

The analysis of love for place would not be complete without taking into consideration the possible presence of a contradicting emotion, namely hatred, towards the population dominating in the area of return, which might condition or even cancel the effect of love ties to the place.⁴² The logic for this argument is that hatred has an important aversive behavioral correlate, besides an aggressive one. A drive for group separation follows from such aversive component.

⁴² There are no theoretical neither empirical bases for expecting a robust presence of hatred concerning the location of displacement.

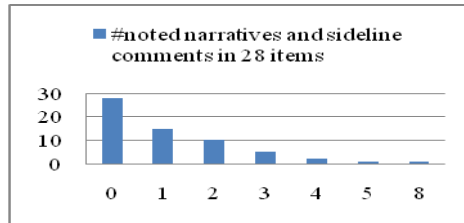
I. Indicators

The emotion of hatred is proxied through appraisal patterns and one indirect measure to which I refer as ‘*SecondChance*’.

(a) Appraisal patterns

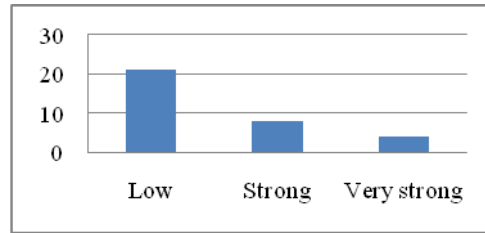
Hate-related narratives show up with a frequency similar to that of love for place and family. However, their presence per person is quite scarce: the majority do not produce such narratives, and cases with three or more narratives are rare. That is, hatred rarely appears.

Figure 6.27. *Count of hatred-related narratives or comments per respondent*



Cases have been coded with a value of 3 (‘very strong’) when hatred seems to be profound and overtaking; with a value of 2 (‘strong’) when it shows up as an otherwise specific and marked concern; with a value of 1 (‘low’) when the respondent is not completely indifferent to these appraisal patterns, but there seems to be no marked concern (i.e. aversion and drive for separation). A value of 0 was contemplated but not one single case has been coded as such. But high values of this emotion seem to be also quite marginal: the immense majority of coded cases fall in the ‘low’ category.

Figure 6.28. Distribution of hatred intensity based on appraisal patterns



Very strong

“I want to make sure that we do not end up in Podrinje. // (Why not returning) Because of Serbs, nothing else. The most important thing for me is that kids don’t go to the same school with Serbs. And rather than receiving health assistance over there [RS] I would rather die on the way to Tuzla [Federation]” (1006, *fem (35) Cers, not*)

“I prefer not to see them (Serbs) at all, neither that they see me. And they have done nothing to me personally. And among ours we also have fire inside. But we rarely act like them. We have never ever killed a kid // (Serbs) are aggressive. And you do something little and they don't forget... // And everything they do... A few days ago they were singing in Srebrenica (memorial) during *Bajram*. There were two Muslim policemen and they shouted at them: "With all the *balije's* [despective name for Bosniak or Muslim] heads we've cut, we can cut yours to the two of you too!" // I bought this house to a Serb. He has still something over here and he visits us when he comes. But I would prefer that he doesn't come. He didn't do anything to me but...” (2010, *fem (46) Kriz, not*)

“I just wanted not to return my kids to the Serbs // They (always) say that they have been ‘abroad’ during war, playing innocent. But how can we make peace with them after everything they did to us, after bombing our houses. I don’t know who, but all of them, everybody in the neighbourhood attacked us. There is this guy who told me [upon return]: "Don't make me send you to Karadzic"”(2005, *fem (38) Kriz, not*)

Strong

"I have a right to health insurance in the RS. But I don't have the will to go there. I have fear and *I have aversion* to them [...] // You think, and where to go now? There [RS] is now someone else's country [*država*]. Our old neighbours said to the (Serb IDPs) "this is yours now". They tricked them. And everything on the upper part was left flat, it was all burnt. They thought we would never come back" (2114, *fem (44) Kriz, ret*)

"I haven't experienced it, but I feel it in the air. I hear a lot of things, someone being harassed... I can't imagine a Serb giving priority to a Bosniak. You know what their welcome to us is? Three fingers [Serb nationalist salutation] // I want to emphasize my experience in Montenegro, while working in a restaurant. Four young men order four coffees and I asked what kind of coffee. They answered 'chetnik' coffee. And I said I didn't cook that type of coffee. They began singing chetnik songs and swearing on those that (don't have) Serb blood. I approached them and told them: "the way I understand it you're singing to me". One of them stood up, put a knife on my throat and told me: "You have the nerve to tell us you don't have Serb blood!" and then hit me on the head. "Go ahead" I said in Arab. And he: "What are you saying? Translate to me!" and he kept swearing. The owner then intervened and things got calmed. Not even that episode made me feel so bad, so discouraged, as when I saw them on TV destroying the mosque. I decided to quit the job" (1106, *fem (46) Cers, ret*)

Low

"It was hard... in the war... you see the hatred. I never thought I would come to Zvornik // I doubt their honesty. I keep only basic relationships with them, like in the market place. One called me *komšija* [neighbour, with affective connotations] in the *koridor* [marketplace] and I replied to him: "You are not my *komšija*, had you been, you would have saved Hana's life" (2103, *male (43) Kriz, ret*)

(b) Second chance

This is an indirect measure of hatred based on a closed question which offered a choice between two contrasting opinions about war and return:

a) I don't think it is possible, or desirable, that we all live side by side just as before
b) We can all live together side by side as before

The results of this item provide an encouraging landscape for coexistence after war: over 60% of the sample considered that it is possible to live side by side again, and they do not mind to live with the Serbs as neighbors. One third of the sample takes nonetheless the opposite option. Very saliently, there is no statistically significant relationship between this variable and being a returnee or not.

II. Measuring hatred

The factor analysis run with these indicators produces one single component in which all three indicators load above .500. The 'second chance' indicator bears a negative sign due to its coding (1 corresponded the positive answer 'we can all live together as before' and -1 to the negative answer 'I don't think that is possible or desirable').

I have classified cases taking into account the two variables loading highly in the main component ('countHate' and 'hateful'): a 'high' value is given to cases with high scores in both variables, or with a combination of high and medium scores.⁴³ A 'medium'

⁴³ High and medium values are defined as follows. For 'hateful' (with a range between 1-3) a value of 3 is considered high and 2 medium. For 'CountHate' I consider a score of 3 or above as high; medium scores are 1-2. The choice of these thresholds is based on the frequency distribution displayed in Figure 6.27. Scores below these thresholds in all

value is given to cases with at least one medium score in one of the variables. The rest are ‘low’ values.

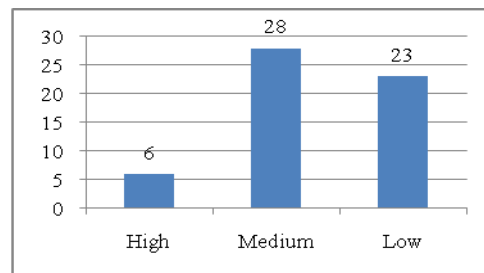
Table 6.10. Factor analysis for indicators of hatred⁴⁴

	Component 1
Second chance	-.509
# Noted narratives and comments ('countHate')	.889
Appraisal patterns: hate ('hateful')	.830
<i>Eigenvalue</i>	1.74
<i>Total variance explained</i>	57.98%

Extraction method: Principal components analysis. *Rotation method:* Varimax Normalization with Kaiser. KMO =.522, Bartlett=13.592 (sig=.004). Loadings over .500 displayed in **bold**.

The resulting distribution is sharply divided between low intensity of hatred (40%) and medium intensity (49%). Cases of extreme intensity are quite few (11%).

Figure 6.29. Distribution of intensity of hatred in the sample



variables are considered low. For ‘SecondChance’ a score of -1 is high; 0 is medium and 1 is low.

⁴⁴ Descriptive statistics for all variables in Annex 6.1 (Table 7).

6.1.4. Anger

The precondition for anger to be relevant in the decision to return is that a perception of injustice is in place, as well as a drive to address it and the consideration of return as a means to attain it.

I. Direction of concern

I have used three closed items to assess whether injustices are perceived to be in place, and if there is a drive for, and a belief in, restoration through return. The three items offered the respondents the following pick-up choices:

Table 6.11. Items used for establishing a concern for restoration

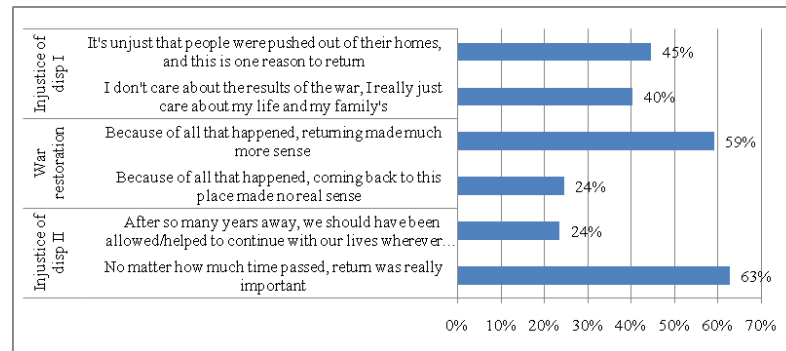
a) It's unjust people were pushed out of their homes, which is a reason to return b) I don't care about the results of the war, but about my life and family
a) Because of all that happened, returning made much more sense b) Because of all that happened, coming back to this place made no sense
a) After so many years away, we should have been allowed/helped to continue with our lives wherever we chose to b) No matter how much time passed, return is really important

Figure 6.30 displays the results obtained.⁴⁵ What has been found is that, when weighting the injustice of displacement against family well-being, there is a striking division among respondents: roughly 40% of them prioritise one or the other. However, when discussing about return in general as a means of restoration – i.e. that it does make sense because of all that happened (war, displacement) and that it is important (so policies should keep emphasizing return rather than displacement) – the answers are

⁴⁵ Intermediate answers (i.e. respondent who could not pick one or the other are left out). They amount to roughly 15% of the respondents.

overwhelmingly positive: roughly 60% agree with such a stance.⁴⁶ Less than one fourth of the sample considers that return does not make any sense or that it is not that important.

Figure 6.30. *Opinions about return and restoration*



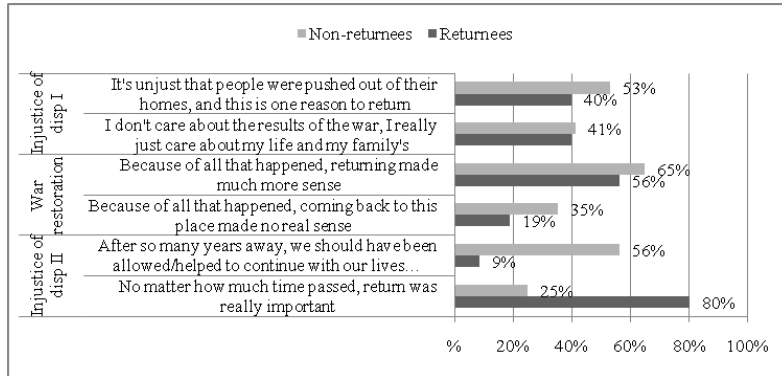
The picture changes noticeably when looking separately at returnees and non-returnees. Returnees have a harder time in deciding between any of the different options: 20% and 25% of them cannot make a choice regarding the first two items, for only 5% and none at all in the case of non-returnees.

Leaving this apart, the percentages of positive and negative answers in these two items are very similar. The big difference occurs in the discussion about whether return is a paramount issue or not: returnees answer massively in a positive manner (80%) whereas non-returnees are more divided – a majority finally picks up the opposite option (56%). Whether this is a product of respondents' rationalization of their own decisions to return or not, or whether this is at the basis of those very same decisions is an

⁴⁶ This is in line with other findings, such as those in the UNDP survey of 2007 where most respondents, including returnees and non-returnees emphasized the importance of return and the need to encourage it and support it, rather than supporting non-returnees.

issue that cannot be solved here, and it must be had into account when interpreting the final results of this analysis.

Figure 6.31. Opinions about return and restoration among returnees and non-returnees



In order to establish the presence of the concern (which will take a value of 1 if present, and a value of 0 if not present) I rely first in the ‘injustice of displacement’ item, which displays the larger variation and thus it seems to be the most informative of all three items. If data is not available in that variable, I rely then on the ‘war restoration’ item, which does not have such clear endogeneity problems as the third item. In a few cases none of these variables was available and I have relied on the third one. The sample turns out to be sharply divided regarding the concern for restoration: 52% of the sample does not have such a concern, whereas 48% do.

1. Anger (individual level)

Whenever the concern for restoration is present, still its intensity may vary. In order to proxy such intensity, I rely once again in direct and indirect measures of it. I analyse first anger

focused on restoration concerns at the individual level and then on restoration concerns at the collective level.

II. Indicators

The indicators used for the individual level are a self-report measure (based on emotional reactions to return-related incidents), appraisal patterns measures and two sets of indirect measures: first, a series of indicators for things that are likely to have been precious to the respondents and that they are likely to have lost because of war and displacement. I also attempt to control for possible sources of perceived injustice in the location of displacement. For that, I consider one of the items used for measuring the home tie with that location: whether the individual felt as a stranger there.

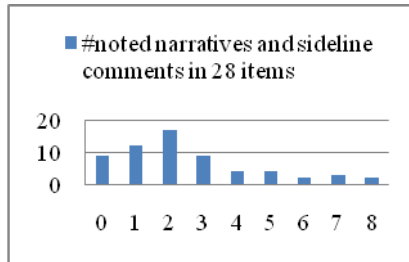
(a) Self-report

The main self-report measure consists of whether, among the emotional reactions mentioned as experienced when hearing about return-related incidents, anger or rage were one of them. This is the case of 62% of the respondents, with anger being the second most experienced emotion after fear.

(b) Appraisal patterns

Anger focused at the individual level has a similar presence to that of love for family or place: related appraisal patterns do not show up in 5 out of 28 not mentioned. Comments and narratives containing such appraisal patterns are relatively frequent, reaching a maximum of 8 per person.

Figure 6.32. Count of narratives or comments related to anger (individual-level focus) per respondent



Cases have been coded with a value of 3 ('very high') if anger seems to be overtaking, colouring and focusing many of the answers and life accounts. Cases have been coded with a value of 2 ('high') when anger seems to be otherwise a salient and conscious issue. A value of 1 ('moderate') refers to cases where appraisal patterns related to anger are present but not very saliently. The sample is dominated by the latter two values.

Very high

"(I didn't expect this war to happen) not even in my worst nightmares. I had so many friends (among Serbs) and I trusted them so much. My best friend was a Serb workmate // At first I always thought we would eventually return, but when they bombed the houses after Dayton... it was really hard // Now there [RS] is someone else's country // I can't get my job back. Instead they just sent me to the unemployment bureau. Now that I have reached my forties, there is nothing for me... // Our old neighbours said to the Serb IDPs "this is yours now" // They thought we would never come back. They left all flat, everything was burned down // Before war I had everything but now... my parents and brothers are gone, now there is no one left. And my firm, where I worked, I gave 10 years of my life there, the best years of my life. And in the end there is nothing left. I even dream about it // [She worked in her old firm in Zvornik with her husband, father and brother]" (2114, *fem (44) Kriz, ret*)

“I regret we we didn't burn the house ourselves. At least that we do that ourselves (and don't let them the pleasure to do it // [He cries] I said “I won't (get registered as an IDP)”, if I do I wouldn't be the person I am [in the end he did it, until that moment he could not get the *šehidska* pension for his lost son] // Those who have lost someone, that can never be returned. Any other thing can be restituted and recovered [he cries] // (My plans in 1996) were simply to pull myself together and to go on, to look forward. Back there [in return] we only had the bare fields, we had to do everything all over again, we had no cattle... // It's as if you begin life again, everything new // (Serbs) do (for us) what they have to do forcefully only. You see those Serb women lying [telling histories of the war] on TV, singing some songs... [...] They are not willing to hep [...] It makes me nervous to watch TV and see those people talking and lying to the camera” (2117, *male (66) Kriz, ret*)

High

“I didn't expect to find ‘Hiroshima’ [when we came back]. I expected houses burnt, but not devastation to the extent we found. It was all levelled. It just doesn't go into my head, those kinds of things... those are irrational actions, destroying graveyards, mosques... It's just not justifiable, there is no logic for it // I was shocked to find the grass to the chest, and to see everything so neglected. The second time back I was surprised with numbers coming back to clear out the roads... “ (2009, *male (46) Kriz, not*)

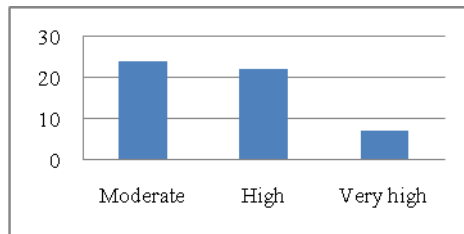
“When came back we faced provocations, Serbs walking in the return areas with their cattle, hunters in large groups in military trucks sending the message that "this is their territory". But there is law, if the municipality doesn't apply it, then OHR and IPTF do. Now all of that is regulated // Now all firms are private and it is hard to find employment here. We have only Boksit [bauxite mine] but only a couple of Bosniaks are working there. There are stories that some international organization promised a donation of 300 trucks if the mine employs 300 Bosniaks. But they kept the offer in a drawer until a few days before the application deadline expired. Then they said they had proved that “Bosniaks don't want to work here” - Keep the trucks) // We have no support, for instance, no child support for school transport or books” (1109, *male (35) Cers, ret*)

Moderate

“It still bothers me the fact that I lost my *šehidska* benefits from Federation [when getting registered upon return]. If only I could receive my pension in Milići [RS]. Now I have to spend one day to get there [Federation] because there is no agreement between banks in the RS and war veterans” (1102, male (57) *Cers, ret*)

“I couldn't recognise my house, because all houses around were blown up. Mine had been burned down. There was a lot of cattle around, so many you couldn't pass by. Those were cattle left behind by the people in Cerska which Serbs had taken. And then Serbs were claiming them that we started stealing the calves. There was some fighting until we took them out” (1107, fem (50) *Cers, ret*)

Figure 6.33. Distribution of anger intensity (individual-level focus) based on appraisal patterns



(c) Losses

I have considered two sets of indirect measures in order to proxy the presence and intensity of anger focused at the individual level. First, a series of indicators for things that are likely to have been precious to the respondents and that they are likely to have lost because of war and displacement. The initial two variables are derived from the narrated memories from life before the war, in 1980s.

The first one (*MemCol*) is a dummy indicating whether in those narrations the topics of nostalgia of Yugoslavia, freedom,

security, and harmonious community life were a central issue. These are 28% of the respondents (n=60). The second one (*MemUtil*) is another dummy indicating the centrality of narratives of well-being, past wealth, and emphasizing job and house possession. These are 38% of the cases. As a complement to these measures, I also include the respondents' assessment of their financial situation in the 1980s (*Finan80s*, *Saving80s*) and after the war (*Finan96*). These latter variables were presented and discussed in Chapter 5.

Second, in order to control for possible sources of perceived injustice in the location of displacement I have also considered one of the items used for measuring the home tie with that location: whether the individual felt as a stranger over there (54% of the sample did feel that way). This was in most cases the result of feeling rejected or mistreated by the local population and the local authorities, or by the general situation of hardship and little support involving many displaced people

III. Measuring anger (focused at the individual level)

The factor analysis reveals one main component (32% of the total variance) in which appraisal pattern measures load highly, followed by the variable *MemUtil*. The variables for the financial situation in the 1980s also load moderately and positively in this component. All of it indicates that anger at the individual level seems to be primarily connected with the losses suffered at the socio-economic level. Socio-economic status before the war also loads highly in a third and minor component (12% of the variance) together with the item of not feeling as a stranger in the location of displacement. This finding reinforces the argument made in Chapter 4 that DPs did not feel at home but rather 'mistreated' and at conflict with their DP status mostly as a result of the loss they had suffered in that socio-economic status.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ In a final twist to the analysis, I have incorporated two measures of personal losses as a direct result of the war: the number of children and

Table 6.12. Factor analysis for indicators of anger (focused at the individual level)⁴⁸

	Components		
	1	2	3
Felt incidents: anger, rage ('FIncidAnger')		-.618	.568
# Narratives and comments ('countAngerInd')	.761		
Anger at individual level ('AngerInd')	.852		
Memories from 1980s: 'MemCol'	-.221	.831	.249
Memories from 1980s: 'MemUtil'	.638		
What living did you make in the 80s ('Finan80s')	.457	.307	.611
What living did you make in the 80s ('Savings80s')	.423	.398	.711
Financial situation in 1996 ('Finan96')		.864	
I did not feel as a stranger there			.758
<i>Eigenvalue</i>	2,91	2,06	1,17
<i>Total variance explained (%)</i>	32,3	22,8	13,0

Extraction method: Principal components analysis. Rotation method: Varimax Normalization with Kaiser. KMO =.606, Bartlett=62.064 (sig=.004).

Only loadings over .200 are shown. Loadings over .500 displayed **in bold**.

For categorizing cases I use the variables loading highly in the first component: first 'AngerIndiv', then 'countAngerInd' and finally 'MemUtil'. A value of 'high' is given to combinations of two high scores in the two first variables, or of high and medium.⁴⁹

the total number of victims in the family. Interestingly enough, none of them seems to be part of any of the identified dimensions, loading separately and roughly in isolation in a fourth component. KMO=.564, Bartlett=84.971 (sig=.006).

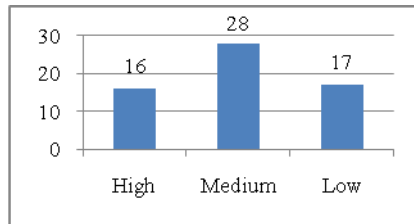
⁴⁸ Descriptive statistics for all variables in Annex 6.1 (Table 8).

⁴⁹ High and medium values are defined as follows. For 'AngerIndiv' (with a range between 1-3) a value of 3 is considered high and 2 medium. For 'CountAngerInd' I consider a score of 4 or more as high and between 1-3 as medium. The choice of these thresholds is based on the frequency distribution displayed in Figure 6.32. In the dichotomic variable 'MemUtil', a value of 1 is considered high. Scores below these thresholds in all variables are considered low.

A value of 'medium' is given to the rest of cases with at least one high or medium score in one of these variables. The rest are 'low' cases.

Based on these criteria, the intensity of anger (focused at the individual-level) turns out to be distributed in the following manner across the sample: 46% register medium levels, whereas 26% and 28% register high and low values.

Figure 6.34. Distribution of anger intensity (individual level) in sample



2. Anger (collective level)

II. INDICATORS

Anger focused at the collective level is proxied through a self-report measure (the same one as above, keeping track of anger reactions to return-related incidents), appraisal pattern measures, and various indirect measures based on closed items collecting opinions about the role of different groups in the war and about the situation of Bosniaks as a group in the RS.

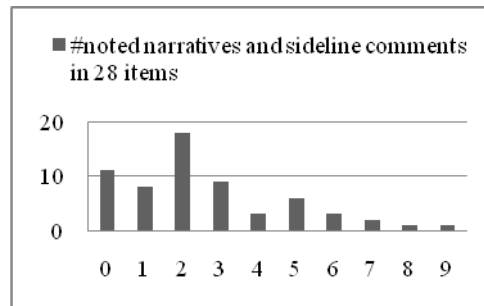
(a) Self-report

The same self-report measure used for anger at the individual level has been considered in this case: anger as an emotional reaction experienced when hearing about return-related incidents.

(b) Appraisal patterns

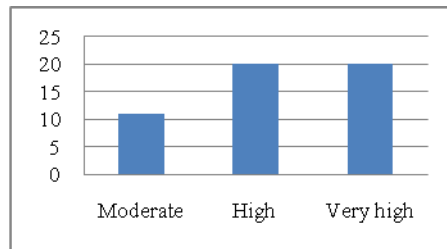
Anger-related appraisal patterns focused at the collective level are the most pervasive ones across the whole questionnaire. This is the only type of appraisal pattern emerging across the questionnaire more frequently than fear-related ones they do not show up only in 3 out of the 28 items analyzed. Comments and narratives containing such appraisal patterns are also relatively frequent at the individual level, with almost half of the sample displaying such patterns in 3 or more items, reaching a maximum of 9 per respondent.

Figure 6.35. Count of narratives or comments related to anger (collective-level focus) per respondent



Cases have been coded following the same rule that above for anger focused at the individual level. The sample is clearly dominated by high values of this type of anger.

Figure 6.36. Statistics of anger based on appraisal patterns (collective level)



Very high

“I can’t just care about myself, it would be unfair... If war had been different, there wouldn’t be that much return. But *there is resentment (contained) in return...* // This has been the 12th genocide in Bosnia a row since Turks went away. Only now it is more spread, bigger, and before there was no information on what was going on. Most people from Eastern Bosnia were expelled from Serbia. I think this will be the last time, but we will see. Most people don’t know about their inheritance, I know because my father’s grandfather was educated. But there exists some reason why Bosniaks have never washed away Serbs, nor anyone else, ever... it’s one thing to think about” (2001, male (39) Kriz, not)

“I want return because I’m born here, I grew up here, my family grew up here, and I want to die here. I know this is mine. We have to show in a good way that we haven’t been defeated. I have an obligation to return. I don’t want to give up // We have almost no kids over there [return]. This is *de facto* ethnic cleansing. All those legislations disallowing people for their insurance, their benefits... [...] We had very few Bosniak teachers before war, but today we have teachers. They don’t want to return because there is a lower salary over there [RS], but there is not such a big difference! I would force them to come and teach. That is an essential contribution to society // It should suffice to say that they are very rude people [holding the researcher’s gaze firmly, suggesting he is being politically correct]. They still deny everything that happened. If Bosniaks had done what Serbs did, at least some of us would be

objective and admit that what was done, was done. And they are claiming we did what we didn't do // We have to return, just because of the victims // I would like to see more people returning” (2009, *male (46) Kriz, not*)

“Maybe the experience of fear does something contrary to what the enemy expected [by motivating return rather than discouraging it], it just went against their plans of ethnic cleansing” (1106, *fem (46) Cers, ret*)

“What I know is that they really wanted to exterminate us and to spill blood. [...] And then that you have kids returning and they get killed [she is referring to the girl killed in a nearby village and other post-return incidents in general] // And we forget quickly, drinking beer with them...” (2102, *fem (44) Kriz, ret*)

High

“(We Muslims) didn't know that there will be a war, and they knew! They knew 3 years before it started. In 1989 I bought a cow from a Serb woman (1988). She hesitated to sell it because she thought that Muslims could slaughter it one day, she said "If I know that the Turks will eat it"... but then she said that the cow will come into Serb hands again. That meant that there will be a war. They have prepared it. They asked for it. And they were preparing it for a long time) // When I issued my birth certificate during Tito's time, I had to go to municipality. Well, there you couldn't find the term "Muslim". Later on we got certain rights but... Now there are no Bosniaks in authorities or in public offices... But we have returned here anyway” (1120, *male (41) Cers, ret*)

“I would never allow my children to go there (to school) and learn THAT history, about Bosniaks committing atrocities, and not teaching Bosnian language. In Konjević Polje [return area] 90% of the students are Muslims but they learn the Serb curriculum”(1009, *male (40) Cers, not*)

“I thought I would be back in home in 20 days, that's what they said about II World War. And I believed it. “Brotherhood and Unity”. “Our JNA”. I believed all of it. I was all wrong // At the beginning the school was only opened until 4th grade and they began preparing

410 / Return after violence

the school in Orahovac, where there were massive killings. We went into strike, the media came, foreigners as well... [...] They had to work it out” (2120, *male (40) Kriz, ret*)

Moderate

“We were frowning at them and they were frowning at us. [...] They were angry when they saw us coming back. They were thinking they had caused so many victims and that (still) Muslims were coming back here again. Because they had already divided our land among themselves, they thought this was now their land. But when they realized everyone is coming back they retreated and realized they can't do anything about it” (1119, *fem (51) Cers, ret*)

“I was shocked really, I was like dead. “Brotherhood and unity"! I really believed in it...”(1101, *male (43) Cers, ret*)

It is important to note that in some cases respondents made explicit a conflict between this restoration drive at the collective level and other individual considerations, including restoration at the individual level.

“Fadil Banjanović [return leader in the Zvornik region] wanted us to return to live under a plum tree! // Very simply, no one should ever give trouble to anyone [*ne treba niko da nikoga dira*]. As we lived before the war. Now everything goes through the nationality issue... War has brought that hate. And for them is good. The ones who had little before, now they are the strongest. They just need to pay for their votes. You can buy our people for very little money [*Za malo para možeš kupiti naše narode*]” (2123, *fem (40) Kriz, ret*)

“Why have I returned? I have no clue myself. Fahro and Mevlu [local leaders] said “Let's all return” [*Hajmo da se vratimo*] and we all followed... They have got a good money for it for sure...” (2112, *fem (45) Kriz, ret*)

(c) *Beliefs about war and groups in the RS*

Two main indirect measures have been considered. First, a closed item in which respondents had to choose between two

opinions about how is responsibility for war to be distributed. The answer was overwhelmingly (92%) that some groups, and specifically Serbs and not Bosniaks, have more responsibility than others.

a) Some groups bear more responsibility than others
b) All groups bear similar responsibility for war

The second set of items registers more variation. It consists of the belief domain of ‘injustice’ included in Eidelson’s IGBI. Briefly, the *injustice* domain “involves the perception of being the victim of mistreatment by others” (2009:3). The inventory provides three items with which the interviewee may strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree:

1) I believed that other groups treated us unjustly
2) I believed that other groups criticized us unjustly
3) I believed that my group’s efforts often went unrewarded

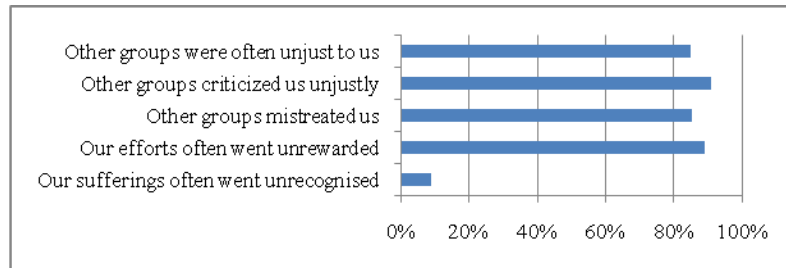
The items were rephrased in reference to ‘Bosniaks in the RS’, at the time of return (*tret*) and since then. Items referring to other groups were also rephrased in reference to ‘other groups, and particularly Serbs’. In trying to reflect more accurately restoration concerns present in the Bosnian context I have introduced two more similar items:

4) I believed that other groups mistreated us
5) I believed that my group’s sufferings often went unrecognised

Figure 6.37 displays the frequency of positive answers (agree and strongly agree) to each of the items. The beliefs about collective injustices suffered by Bosniaks in the RS are widespread in the sample. All items considered are endorsed by more than 80% of the sample, similarly to vulnerability and distrust items, as it was seen above. The item stating that the

group's sufferings often go unrecognized is the one gathering the most support (92%).

Figure 6.37. Proportion of positive answers ('Agree' and 'Strongly Agree') in IGBI items for injustice (% over valid cases)



These indirect measures based on beliefs about war and groups in the RS bear an important problem for the analysis at hand, which is that they have very little variation. However, this finding is in itself very informative of the post-war landscape in Bosnia conditioning return.

III. Measuring anger (focused at the collective level)

Factor analysis reveals two main components (accounting for 37% and 24% of the total variance contained in the listed variables). The first one is constituted by four of the five IGBI items. The perception of being (collectively) mistreated by other groups and that one's group's sufferings are not recognised load the highest in this component. The variable for emotion intensity based in appraisal patterns loads highly in the second component, although the largest contributions come from the belief in Serbs' responsibility for war and from the IGBI item stating that other groups, and specifically Serbs in the RS, treat Bosniaks unjustly.

Given the little variance registered in the sample for the IGBI items I rely on the second component for classifying cases. For the

same reason I do not assign much weight to ‘WARresp’ for this classification of cases either.

Table 6.13. Factor analysis for indicators of anger (focused at the collective level)⁵⁰

	Components		
	1	2	3
War responsibility: some groups (‘WARresp’)	-.894		
# Noted narratives and comments (‘countAngerCol’)			.880
Anger at individual level (‘AngerCol’)	.670		.572
Other groups were often unjust to us (‘Unjust’)	.874		
Other groups criticized us unjustly (‘Criticize’)	.512		.453
Other groups mistreated us (‘Mistreat’)	.902		
Our efforts often went unrewarded (‘Unreward’)	.720	.560	
Our sufferings often went unrecognized (‘Unrecog’)	.882		
<i>Eigenvalue</i>	2.98	1.94	1.12
<i>Total variance explained (%)</i>	37.2	24.3	14.0

Extraction method: Principal components analysis. *Rotation method:* Varimax Normalization with Kaiser. KMO =.545, Bartlett=81.563 (sig=.000).

Only loadings over .200 are shown. Loadings over .500 displayed in **bold**.

I give a value of ‘high’ where at least ‘Unjust’ or ‘AngerCol’ have high scores.⁵¹ Almost by default, ‘WARresp’ also scores highly in such cases and most cases with a high score in ‘Unreward’ (which are few) are concentrated in this category. A value of ‘medium’ is given when the two first variables have both

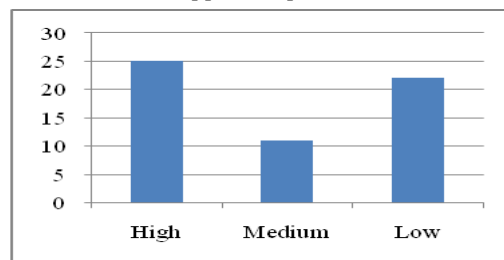
⁵⁰ Descriptive statistics for all variables in Annex 6.1 (Table 9).

⁵¹ High scores for ‘Unjust’ and ‘Unreward’ are 2 (strongly agree), a medium score is 1 (agree) and a low score is 0 or negative values (don’t know / disagree). A high score for ‘AngerCol’ is 3, medium is 2, and low is 1. For ‘WARresp’ a high score is -1, and a low one is 1.

a medium score (the immense majority have also a medium score in 'Unreward' and high in 'WARresp'). All other cases are considered 'low'.⁵²

The results are very different to those of anger focused at the individual level: the majority of the sample (43%) registers a high intensity of collective-based anger; only 19% of the respondents are registered as 'medium' and 38% are coded as 'low'.

Figure 6.38. Distribution of anger intensity (collective-level focus) based on appraisal patterns



6.2. Tracking down the role of emotions

The central question in this dissertation regarding emotions and rational decision-making is whether emotions play a role in the decision to return or not that is necessary to take into account in order to understand such a decision. In other words, whether the presence and intensity of these emotions makes a difference in decision-making and add explanatory power to the utilitarian model. The main problem in answering this question is an observational one. In many cases emotions may just run in the same direction that utilitarian calculations. In such cases, we can observe the presence and salience of an emotion, but we cannot

⁵² Where there are missing cases but there is at least one of these two variables available, I rely on 'Unreward' and 'WARresp' as substitutes for coding.

attribute a specific or decisive role to it (neither to the utilitarian function). These would be over-determined cases. If all cases were so over-determined, and speaking strictly in methodological terms, emotions would not be adding explanatory power to the rationalist account.⁵³

However, it is expectable that in many cases emotions run contrary to the predictions of the utilitarian model. In such cases we find fertile ground to assess whether they have a specific weight in the decision to return or not. Particularly, although it has been seen in the previous chapter that the utilitarian model has a high predictive power, still around 20% of the cases are not correctly classified following this model. Might emotions be the explanation for the unexpected decision taken by these cases, failing to return or returning *despite* what their utility functions pointed out?

The utilitarian model also left various important questions unanswered in Chapter 5. One of them concerns what I call 'dilemma cases'. Those are cases where the decision does not clearly lean towards returning or not returning, and where a decision not to return is expected due to the costly nature of the decision to return. However the probability of returning for these cases was still above the 50% threshold. The main question mark there was what does it push these probabilities upward?

Here I will reframe it by questioning more broadly about that grey area around the 50% threshold which serves to statistically classify cases as 'success' (i.e. return is predicted) or as 'non-success' (i.e. no return is predicted). Roughly 10% of the cases produce a predicted probability between .4 and .5999, and 21% between .3 and .6.999. Among these cases we still observe positive decisions in significant proportions: one third of the former, and 44% of the latter. How is the decision to return taken in such grey

⁵³ This is obviously a blunt statement since the problem would remain at the methodological level, i.e. alternative observational solutions should be looked for and further and more refined analyses should be pursued in order to get to differentiate their input into decision-making.

area, and what does explain these differences among cases with such similar predicted probabilities?

Table 6.14. Observed return for different predicted probabilities by the utilitarian model II

Return	Predicted probabilities				N
	.0-.299	.3-.699	.4-.599	.7-.999	
No	0.87	0.56	0.67	0.13	53
Yes	0.13	0.44	0.33	0.87	34
N	46	18	9	23	87

In the following subsection I will examine those cases where the utilitarian model fails to predict the outcome. I expect that such deviations may be at least partially explained by emotional concerns. In subsection 6.2.2 I will examine those cases where the utilitarian model predicts a probability of returning between .4 and .5999, which I will consider as dilemma cases. I also expect that variation in the decisions to return among such cases can be at least partially explained on these grounds.

6.2.1. Unexplained cases

In Chapter 2 it was anticipated that there are four observations that we can obtain: firstly, return which is coherent with the utility function (i.e. utilitarian model II in the previous chapter). I will call this type of observation 1E ('return, expected'). Second, return against the utility function, to which I will refer to this type of observation as 1U ('return, unexpected'). Third, we can observe a decision not to return which is coherent with the utility function. I will call this type of observation 0E ('no return, expected'). Finally, we can observe a decision not to return which is not coherent with the utility function. I will refer to this type of observation as 0U ('no return, unexpected').

The observations 1U and 0U will be crucial in assessing the added explanatory power of emotions in the decision to return. These are cases of *return despite the utility function*, and of *failure to return despite the utility function* pointing out in that direction. Unexpected cases of return or no return amount to 14% of the valid cases (N=87, n=12).⁵⁴

Table 6.15 presents the list and main characteristics of puzzling cases of *return* (1U). There are five unexpected returns in the early period, when their predicted probabilities of returning were between .1 and .3. Three other cases returned against all odds in the late period. These cases had a very low probability of returning (.0-.1) *also* in the earlier period. The increase of such probability in the second period was minimal or null. However, for some reason, in the late period they decided to return.

Table 6.15. *Puzzling cases of return: 1U*

Case	Return		Predicted probability by utilitarian model II	
	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>
2110	1	-	.3	-
1112	1	-	.1	-
2102	1	-	.2	-
1117	1	-	.3	-
1109	1	-	.1	-
2106	0	1	.0	.2
2114	0	1	.1	.1
1107	0	1	0.	.2

Note: Cases of early return have only one observation. Cases of late return or no return have two observations (for the early period and for the late period). Puzzling observations are shadowed.

⁵⁴ The percentage of incorrectly classified is larger (20%) because it includes also cases around the .5 threshold that I consider here as dilemma cases. I take into account here only cases with large predicted probabilities of returning and not returning, which I consider to be those with predicted probabilities between 0-.2999 and between .7-.9999.

Table 6.16 presents the list and main characteristics of puzzling cases of *no return* (OU). There are four cases whose decision not to return *in the early period* is puzzling. In the second period they all acted consistently with their utility functions: where the components of the utility function kept pointing towards returning, they did finally return; where there was a change and the predicted probability of returning sensibly decreased, the decision not to return was maintained as expected.

Table 6.16. *Puzzling cases of no return: OU*

Case	Return		Predicted probability by utilitarian model II	
	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>
2010	0	0	.6	.0
1113	0	1	.9	.9
1106	0	1	.7	.9
1104	0	1	.7	.9

Note: Puzzling cases are shadowed.

I will now assess the plausibility for each of the considered emotions to account for these puzzling decisions. After these separate assessments, I will bring together all the emotions and I will assess the possible role of emotions as a whole in the decision to return or not.

I. Fear

Fear is an enabling condition of return. It is expectable that the security threshold emerging from fear may have had a role in the decision *not return* despite what the utility functions pointed at (OU). The expectation is that low levels of security threshold (as signalled by low levels of fear) are likely to have been met both in the early and in the late period (when security assessments significantly improved in most cases, see Chapter 5) thus allowing

returning since the early period.⁵⁵ In cases with medium and high thresholds such option is likely to have been inhibited *especially* in the early period (when security assessments were in most cases worse).

Table 6.17 presents the puzzling cases in the sample failing to return (0U) and the intensity of fear present in them, as coded in the previous section. In line with the expectation, three out of the four cases display high levels of fear.⁵⁶

Table 6.17. Puzzling cases of no return: 0U and fear

Case	Return		Pred. Prob		FEAR
	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>	
2010	0	0	.6	.0	High
1106	0	1	.7	.9	High
1104	0	1	.7	.9	High
1113	0	1	.9	.9	Low

Note: Puzzling cases are shadowed.

⁵⁵ It is important to note that respondents’ assessment of security issues is already included in the calculation of the predicted probability.

⁵⁶ In one of these cases (2010), the predicted probability of returning crumbled in the second period, thus making a decision to return not expectable even in utilitarian terms (i.e. this would amount to an over-determined observation). In the other two cases (1106, 1104) the predicted probability of returning increased by the late period and both cases returned at that point. It is important to bear in mind that in the calculation of the predicted probability the assessment of security issues, and thus the improved perceived security situation in the area in the second period (see Chapter 5), is already included. Therefore, it may be reasonably argued that, at that point, the (high) security threshold present in these two cases was more likely to have been met. It is also possible that other emotional concerns contributed to this decision, which I will discuss next.

As an important test for the argument, I also analyse the presence of fear in unexpected cases of *return*. The expectation is that in these cases, the fear intensity is much lower, at least on average terms. The evidence summarized in Table 6.18 confirms the expectation. In contrast with the previous cases, out of the eight puzzling cases of return, the majority have either a low (3) or a medium level of fear (3). There are only 2 cases with high levels of fear.

Table 6.18. *Puzzling cases of return: 1U and fear*

Case	Return		Pred. Prob		FEAR
	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>	
2110	1	-	.3	-	Low
1117	1	-	.3	-	Low
1112	1	-	.1	-	Medium
1109	1	-	.1	-	Medium
2102	1	-	.2	-	High
2106	0	1	.0	.2	Low
2114	0	1	.1	.1	Medium
1107	0	1	.0	.2	High

Note: Cases of early return have only one observation. Cases of late return or no return have two observations (for the early period and for the late period). Puzzling observations are shadowed.

Still, there are salient cases that cannot be accounted for in terms of the security threshold argument or that contradict its expectations. Among the puzzling cases of *no return*, one of them (1113) fails to return in the early period with a low security threshold. Despite having a predicted probability of returning of .9 (the highest possible) he still did not return until the second period. That is, neither the utilitarian scheme nor the security threshold argument seem to be able to account for this case.

Among the puzzling cases of *return*, there are two (2102, 1107) cases with high levels of fear, which clearly contradicts the expectation. Most saliently, one of them (2102) returned in the early period, when it is hard to argue that such a high security threshold might have been met. Indeed, the predicted probability of returning, which includes the individual's assessment of the security situation, was very low in both cases at the moment of return (.2).

II. Love

Love for family is arguably the most extended and basic emotion after fear, so some important weight of this emotion and concern would be expected. The classification made in the previous section of love intensity was actually built on the assumption that family love is likely to be strong in most cases, and so the minimum level codified, 'medium', is still expected to be quite strong.

Love for family and love for friends can act both as inhibitors and as motivators of return, depending on whether the household faces family separation or family reunion upon return. If one of these consequences is in place, the concern for proximity will point out towards not returning or towards returning, respectively. If both or none of these consequences follow from the decision taken, no particular effect would be expected.

Among the four cases of *failed return* (0U) only in one case (1104) return raised an issue of family proximity, and it might thus be explained by such concern (see Table 6.19). This case is nonetheless totally consistent with the argument: the household failed to return in the early period, despite a predicted probability of .7, when returning meant family separation. The household finally returned in the second period, when returning implied family reunion.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ At that time the predicted probability of returning had also increased to .9 thus over-determining the decision to return.

Among the eight cases of unexpected *returns* (1U) in five cases return raised an issue of family proximity. Four of them (1109, 2102, 1117, 2106) are consistent with the argument: return implied family reunion for them.⁵⁸

Table 6.19. *Puzzling cases and love for family*

Failure to return despite utility function (0U)							
Case	Return		Pred. Prob		Proximity*		LOVE FAM
	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>	
2010	0	0	.6	.0	-	-	-
1113	0	1	.9	.9	-	-	-
1106	0	1	.7	.9	-	-	-
1104	0	1	.7	.9	Separation	Reunion	Medium
Return despite utility function (1U)							
Case	Return		Pred. Prob		Proximity		LOVE FAM
	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>	
1109	1	-	.1	-	Reunion	-	High
2102	1	-	.2	-	Reunion	-	Medium
1117	1	-	.3	-	Reunion	-	Medium
2110	1	-	.3	-	Separation	-	Very high
1112	1	-	.1	-	-	-	-
2106	0	1	.0	.2	Reunion	Reunion	Medium
2114	0	1	.1	.1	-	-	-
1107	0	1	0.	.2	-	-	-

Note: Puzzling cases are shadowed.

* A symbol of '-' means that the decision to return did not raise a proximity issue, so such concern is left out of the analysis.

In total there are six (out of 12) cases whose puzzling decisions cannot be accounted for in terms of concern for family

⁵⁸ The intensity of love for family was 'medium' for the majority of these cases and 'high' for one of them.

proximity since there was not such issue involved in their decisions. These cases did not face either separation nor reunion (or they did face both), so no specific role of love for family can be expected in their decisions.

And there is one case of unexpected return (2110) which contradicts the expectations of the argument. This case returned despite facing family separation upon return and despite having an extreme intensity of love for family. This is a case of lonely return: a widowed elder male returning on his own.

Love for friends is expected to have a lesser role in the decision than love for family. The evidence in Table 6.20 seems to confirm this point. Out of six cases with available data, four cases faced friend separation or reunion upon return (1104, 1112, 1109, 2114). Three of them acted in contradiction with such concern.⁵⁹ Only in one case (1109) the decision was consistent with concern for friend proximity – it returned in the early period thus experiencing friend reunion.⁶⁰ Two other cases (2010, 1113) cannot be accounted for in terms of concern for friends proximity, since such issue was not raised.

Table 6.20. *Puzzling cases and love for friends*

Failure to return despite utility function (0U)						
Case	Return		Pred. Prob		Proximity	LOVE FRIENDS
	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>		
2010	0	0	.6	.0	-	Medium
1113	0	1	.9	.9	-	Medium
1106	0	1	.7	.9	<i>n.d.</i>	High
1104	0	1	.7	.9	Reunion	Medium

⁵⁹ One case (1104) failed to return in the early period despite facing friend reunion upon return (this case nonetheless did return in the second period). Two other cases (1112, 2114) unexpectedly returned in the late period despite provoking friend separation by taking such decision.

⁶⁰ All four cases present medium levels of love for friends.

Return despite utility function (1U)						
Case	Return		Pred. Prob		Proximity	LOVE FRIENDS
	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>		
2110	1	-	.3	-	<i>n.d.</i>	Medium
1117	1	-	.3	-	<i>n.d.</i>	Medium
1112	1	-	.1	-	Separation	Medium
1109	1	-	.1	-	Reunion	Medium
2102	1	-	.2	-	<i>n.d.</i>	Low
2106	0	1	.0	.2	<i>n.d.</i>	Medium
2114	0	1	.1	.1	Separation	Medium
1107	0	1	0.	.2	<i>n.d.</i>	Medium

Note: Cases of early return have only one observation. Cases of late return or no return have two observations (for the early period and for the late period). Puzzling observations are shadowed.

Love for place is expected to have somewhat of a more salient role in the decision. The evaluation of this concern is more complex since both love for the location of return and love for the location of displacement must be had into account, as well as the possible counterbalancing effect of hate concerning the location of return. The evidence is somewhat mixed.

Beginning with cases of *failed return* (0U), on the one hand there is one case (2010) perfectly matching the expectation. It displays low levels of love for the location of return, and medium and high levels of love for the location of displacement and of hatred, respectively. This case has not returned either in the second period.

On the other hand, the other three cases failing to return (1113, 1104, 1106) display high levels of love for the location of return. Moreover, they also display low levels of love for the location of displacement and low levels of hatred (except for one of them with high levels). Thus, they seem to epitomize the contradiction of the argument: their strong tie with the home origin, furthermore 'undisturbed' by competing home ties or by hatred, seems not to have been enough to produce a decision to return.

However, all these three cases ended up returning in the second period. By that time their predicted probabilities of returning were very high (.9) but so were they also in the early period (.7 and .9). In other words, these are over-determined cases in which the utility function and love for place run in the same direction. Both fail to produce an immediate decision to return and rather see such decision delayed up until the second period.

Table 6.21. Puzzling cases and love for place

Failure to return despite utility function (0U)							
Case	Return		Pred. Prob		LOVE	LOVE	HATE
	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>	RET	DISP	RET
1113	0	1	.9	.9	High	Low	Low
1104	0	1	.7	.9	High	Low	Low
1106	0	1	.7	.9	High	Low	High
2010	0	0	.6	.0	Low	Medium	High
Return despite utility function (1U)							
Case	Return		Pred. Prob		LOVE	LOVE	HATE
	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>	RET	DISP	RET
1109	1	-	.1	-	High	Low	Medium
2110	1	-	.3	-	High	Low	Low
2102	1	-	.2	-	Medium	Low	Medium
1112	1	-	.1	-	Medium	Low	Low
1117	1	-	.3	-	Low	<i>n.d.</i>	<i>n.d.</i>
2106	0	1	.0	.2	High	Medium	Low
2114	0	1	.1	.1	Low	Low	High
1107	0	1	0.	.2	<i>n.d.</i>	Low	Medium

Note: Puzzling cases are shadowed.

Among the seven cases of unexpected *return* (1U) with available data, five are consistent with the argument and they may have been driven partially or saliently by home ties. There are

three cases (1109, 2110, 2106) with high levels of love for the home origin⁶¹ and two cases (2102, 1112) with medium levels. They all go furthermore 'uncontested' by love for the location of displacement (low) or by the presence of hatred (low and medium).

An important observation is that in the two cases with medium levels of hatred (1109, 2102) this does not seem to have interfered with a decision to return, which would reinforce the salience of the love tie and undermine the one of hatred. Still, there are two cases of unexpected return (1117, 2114) whose puzzling decision cannot be accounted for in terms of the home tie, since they display low levels of love for the home origin.⁶²

III. Anger

Anger signals a concern to address some perceived injustice, that is, a concern for restoration. This is the emotion with expectedly the least robust translation into action, given that it is mediated by the perception that such injustice is addressable through return. However, anger is considered to be a very compelling emotion with strong cognitive and behavioural correlates. The evidence suggests that the restoration concern, when present, has a salient role in the decision to return.

On the one hand, three out of four cases *failing to return* (0U) did not have such a concern, whereas five out of seven cases *unexpectedly returning* (1U) did have such a concern. Even more importantly, all these latter cases (1117, 2110, 2102, 1112, 2114) display high levels of anger either at the individual level or at the collective level, thus making the concern not only present but also

⁶¹ One of these (2106) is a case of late return, thus qualifying the expectation of outright return in the early period as a result of the home drive being an overriding concern.

⁶² Neither by the hatred argument, since one of these is one of the rare cases in the sample with high levels of hatred, and still she returned.

very compelling.⁶³ One of these cases (1117) actually displays extreme anger at both the individual and the collective level.

Table 6.22. Puzzling cases and anger

Failure to return despite utility function (0U)							
Case	Return		Pred. Prob		Concern	ANGER INDIV	ANGER COLLEC
	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>			
2010	0	0	.6	.0	No	Medium	High
1104	0	1	.7	.9	No	Medium	Low
1113	0	1	.9	.9	No	Low	Low
1106	0	1	.7	.9	Yes	Low	High
Return despite utility function (1U)							
Case	Return		Pred. Prob		Concern	ANGER INDIV	ANGER COLLEC
	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>			
1117	1	-	.3	-	Yes	High	High
2110	1	-	.3	-	Yes	Medium	High
2102	1	-	.2	-	Yes	Medium	High
1112	1	-	.1	-	Yes	Low	High
1109	1	-	.1	-	No	High	Medium
2114	0	1	.1	.1	Yes	High	Medium
2106	0	1	.0	.2	No	Low	Low
1107	0	1	0.	.2	<i>n.d.</i>	Medium	Low

Note: Puzzling cases are shadowed.

Only the puzzling decision of three cases (out of 12) cannot apparently be accounted for in terms of anger. Two of these cases (1109, 2106) had no restoration concern and low predicted probabilities and still returned. The third case (1106) failed to return in the early period despite having a restoration concern and

⁶³ Only one (1112) has a low value (at the individual level) rather than medium or high.

a high level of anger at the collective level. However, this case did return in the second period. Again, the predicted probability of returning was high in both periods (.7 and .9) but both the utility function and anger failed to produce an immediate decision to return and they rather saw such decision delayed up until the second period.

IV. Accounting for unexplained cases through emotions

The separate analysis of the different emotions has provided evidence *consistent with the expectations* derived for each of them, with only a few exceptions: two cases (out of 12) contradict the security threshold argument, one contradicting the concern for family proximity, and two contradicting the concern for friends proximity.

The analysis has also suggested a high *explanatory power* (regarding these puzzling cases) particularly for fear, love for family and anger. Only one case of no return cannot be accounted for in terms of the security threshold. Six puzzling cases (out of 12) cannot be accounted for in terms of love for family, but only because in such cases return did not raise the proximity issue. Where such issue was in place, all cases (6) acted consistently with that emotional concern, except one. Finally, only three cases (out of 12) cannot be accounted for in terms anger.

The analysis has produced mixed evidence for the role of love for place. This emotional concern leaves only two cases of puzzling return unaccounted for. But it is partially contradicted by the delayed return of three cases failing to return in the early period. The analysis has also documented that love for friends has the lowest explanatory power of all the considered emotional concerns.

Tables 6.23 and 6.24 offer a summary of all these findings. This summary allows locating those cases that cannot be accounted for by particular emotions (noted as 'Unaccount') or that contradict the expectations for some of them (noted as 'Contrad'). In these cases, the puzzling decision at hand cannot be

accounted for neither by the utilitarian scheme nor by the particular emotion. The interaction of different emotional concerns might be key in accounting for them.

Table 6.23. Puzzling cases of no return (OU) and emotions

Case	Return		FEAR	LOVE FAM	LOVE FRIEND	LOVE PLACE	ANGER
	<i>T</i> <i>ret</i>	<i>T</i> <i>fol</i>					
2010	0	0	(inhibit)	-	-	(inhibit)	(no drive)
1106	0	1	(inhibit)	-	<i>n.d.</i>	(delay)	(delay)
1104	0	1	(inhibit)	(drive)	(delay)	(delay)	(no drive)
1113	0	1	Unaccoun	-	-	(delay)	(no drive)

Note: Puzzling observations of return or no return are shadowed. Observations between parentheses denote observations consistent with the expectations for each particular emotional concern. Problematic observations in this sense are shown **in bold**.

Among the four cases *failing to return* (OU) one case (2010) seems to be very well explained due to the inhibiting effect of fear and the security threshold (high) on the one hand, and, on the other hand, of a medium level of love for the location of displacement (which is not frequent in the sample). This is combined with a high level of hatred *versus* a low level of love for the home origin. Besides, there were no issues of family or friend proximity and no drive for restoration that might have interfered with (or contributed to) the decision.

Two other cases (1106, 1104) seem to be also relatively well explained due to high levels of fear. These cases returned nonetheless in the second period, when it is reasonable to argue that their (high) security thresholds may have been met.⁶⁴ The security threshold might also thus account for the delay in the

⁶⁴ Their predicted probabilities of returning at the time (which include security assessments) were also very high.

decision to return *despite* high levels of love for the home origin (and low levels of love for the location of displacement); and, in one of the cases, despite a high concern for restoration at the collective level. These delays in the decision to return, which were identified as puzzling in the analysis above, would thus be explained in terms of the security barrier.

Besides this plausible role of the security threshold in delaying the decision to return, one of the cases (1104) also faced separation from family in the early period, while facing reunion instead in the second period. Thus, it seems that not only the emotional barrier of fear was broken, but also an additional emotional drive pulled in this case towards returning.

The fourth and last case of *failed return* cannot be accounted for in terms of the security threshold. This case failed to return in the early period also despite having a high level of love for the home origin (and low for the location of displacement). This case had no issues of family or friend proximity that could explain the delay in the decision to return either. So this would be the only case left unaccounted for, both following the utilitarian scheme and emotional concerns.

The explanation for this delay lays somewhere else: this is the only case in the sample with a job abroad in the early period.⁶⁵ He had worked for almost 20 years in Germany in a commuting mode (it is also the only such a case in the sample). By the time the war ended, he maintained this commuting mode, residing with his children in the Federation when going back to Bosnia regularly. As a result of it, he was able and willing to undertake the consuming process of returning only once he retired in 2002 (i.e. in the late period of return).

⁶⁵ The utilitarian scheme contemplated here takes into account whether the household held a job in the Federation or in the RS. This particular case has a value of 0 in both variables. Since cases of jobs abroad are quite unique (only one in each period), this circumstance has not been systematically contemplated in the model, thus left unaccounted for.

I turn now to the eight cases of *unexpected return* (1U) (see Table 6.24). Most of these cases present relatively low levels of fear, thus supporting the argument of the security threshold. Two cases (2102, 1107) are problematic nonetheless for this argument, due to their early and late return despite high levels of fear.

Unfortunately, there are no sufficient data to assess one of these two cases (1107). The other case (2102) provides nonetheless strong supportive evidence for the presence of an interaction effect between emotional concerns. Although the level of fear was high, in this case there were also a concern for family proximity, a significant tie with the home origin (*versus* a low tie with the location of displacement) and a high concern for restoration at the collective level (besides a medium concern for restoration at the individual level).

Table 6.24. Puzzling cases of return and emotions

Case	Return		FEAR	LOVE FAM	LOVE FRIEND	LOVE PLACE	ANGER
	<i>T</i> <i>ret</i>	<i>T</i> <i>fol</i>					
2110	1	-	(no inhibit)	Contrad	<i>n.d.</i>	(drive)	(drive)
1117	1	-	(no inhibit)	(drive)	<i>n.d.</i>	Unaccou	(drive)
1112	1	-	(no inhibit)	-	Contrad	(drive)	(drive)
1109	1	-	(no inhibit)	(drive)	(drive)	(drive)	Unaccou
2102	1	-	Contrad	(drive)	<i>n.d.</i>	(drive)	(drive)
2106	0	1	(no inhibit)	(drive)	<i>n.d.</i>	(drive)	Unaccou
2114	0	1	(no inhibit)	-	Contrad	Unaccou	(drive)
1107	0	1	Contrad	-	<i>n.d.</i>	<i>n.d.</i>	<i>n.d.</i>

Note: Puzzling observations of return or no return are shadowed. Observations between parentheses denote observations consistent with the expectations for each particular emotional concern. Problematic observations in this sense are shown in **bold**.

There are three other cases (2110, 1112, 2114) whose decision to return contradicted the concerns for proximity with family and friends. Cases with concerns for family proximity are the most problematic, given the expected strength of such concern, but there is only one such case (2110), whereas concern for friends proximity is contradicted in two cases (1112, 2114). In the first case there is nonetheless a strong drive for home⁶⁶ and a salient drive also for restoration (high at the collective level, and medium at the individual level). In the other two cases (1112, 2114) there is also a salient drive for restoration, and for home in one of them (1112).

The last three cases present the least problems, since they do not contradict any of the arguments. They simply present low levels of drive for home (1117) or of restoration concern (1109, 2106) and thus they cannot be accounted for in these terms. But all these cases had other very salient emotional concerns which are likely to have had an important weight in the decision to return. The first case (1117) faced family reunion upon return, and it presented a very strong concern for restoration (high at both the collective and the individual level). The other two cases (1109, 2106) also faced family reunion upon return, and they presented a strong drive for home.⁶⁷

6.2.2. *Dilemma cases*

'Dilemma' cases are those where the utility function does not convey a clear case for returning or for not returning. I consider cases with a predicted probability between .4 and .5999 as such

⁶⁶ With a registered high love intensity for the location of return, *versus* low for the location of displacement and low levels of hatred.

⁶⁷ The first one (1109) registered a high intensity of love for the location of return *versus* low for the location of displacement and medium levels of hatred. The second one (2106) also registered a high intensity of love for the location of return *versus* medium for the location of displacement and low levels of hatred.

dilemmas. Dilemma cases amount to 10% of the valid cases (N=87, n=21).

The case of dilemmas *failing to return* is not particularly puzzling. Since their predicted probabilities are close to the .5 threshold, and given the costly nature of the decision to return, it is reasonable to expect a decision not to return. Thus, the more puzzling cases are those ending up in return (2111, 1116, 2105). In the early period, two out of seven dilemmas returned.⁶⁸ In the second period, there were two dilemmas with exactly the same predicted probability (.4). One of them returned and the other did not. Why do these differences occur?

Table 6.25. Dilemmas. Why to return (or not)?

Case	Return		Predicted probability by utilitarian model II	
	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>
2111	1	-	.5	-
1116	1	-	.4	-
1010	0	0	.4	.0
1003	0	0	.5	.1
1102	0	1	.4	.9
1101	0	1	.4	.9
1103	0	1	.5	.9
2105	0	1	.3	.4
2007	0	0	.1	.4

Note: Cases of early return have only one observation. Cases of late return or no return have two observations (for the early period and for the late period). Puzzling observations are shadowed.

I. Fear

The role of fear as an inhibitor of return is more invisible in dilemma cases, since the expectation is already that they will not

⁶⁸ The other five cases experienced radical changes in their predicted probabilities in the second period (to .0-.1 or to .9) and they acted in accordance: either returning or not returning.

return. Still, it is arguable that, on top of such expectation (confirmed by the non-return of six out of nine observations), the security threshold emerging from fear may have also had a (precedent) role in the decision not return. That is, that high levels of fear were present making return not an option in any case. The evidence seems to support this possibility. Five out of the six cases *failing to return* display high or medium levels of fear,⁶⁹ whereas two out of the three *returning* display low levels of fear.⁷⁰

Table 6.26. *Dilemmas and fear*

Case	Return		Pred. Prob		FEAR
	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>	
1010	0	0	.4	.0	High
1101	0	1	.4	.9	High
1003	0	0	.5	.1	Medium
1103	0	1	.5	.9	Medium
1102	0	1	.4	.9	Low
2111	1	-	.5	-	Low
1116	1	-	.4	-	Low
2105	0	1	.3	.4	Medium
2007	0	0	.1	.4	Medium

Note: Cases of early return have only one observation. Cases of late return or no return have two observations (for the early period and for the late period). Puzzling observations are shadowed.

⁶⁹ Out of these five cases two saw their predicted probabilities crumble in the second period, thus making a decision to return even less expectable (1010, 1003). Two other cases (1101, 1103) lived the opposite situation: their predicted probabilities soared in the second period (to the maximum, .9). These three cases present low, medium and high levels of fear. As it has been already discussed, in the second period, and with such high predicted probabilities, it is reasonable to argue that the security threshold was likely to have been met.

⁷⁰ The third puzzling case of return displays a medium level of fear. However, it did not return until the second period, when it is more likely that the security threshold was reached.

II. Love

A concern for family proximity was in place for seven (out of nine) dilemma cases (see Table 6.27). Two cases (2111, 2105) faced reunion with family upon return and they both returned – against the rationalist expectation and accordingly with the concern for family proximity. They furthermore present high levels of love for family. Five cases faced on the other hand family separation upon return, reinforcing the rationalist expectation of not returning. Four out of the five) did not return.⁷¹ Still one of these cases (1116) did return, contradicting both the rationalist expectation and the concern for family proximity.

Table 6.27. Dilemmas and love for family

Case	Return		Pred. Prob		Proximity		LOVE
	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>	FAM
1103	0	1	.5	.9	Separation	Reunion	High
1003	0	0	.5	.1	Separation	-	High
1010	0	0	.4	.0	Separation	-	Medium
1101	0	1	.4	.9	Separation	-	Medium
1102	0	1	.4	.9	-	-	-
1116	1	-	.4	-	Separation	-	Medium
2111	1	-	.5	-	Reunion	-	High
2007	0	0	.1	.4	-	-	-
2105	0	1	.3	.4	Reunion	Reunion	High

Note: Puzzling cases are shadowed.

⁷¹ Three of these four cases faced no issue of proximity in the late period, and they acted accordingly with their utility functions. Where the predicted probabilities crumbled (to .0 and .1) there was no return (1003, 1010). Where these probabilities soared (to .9) they returned (1103, 1001). The fourth case acted in accordance with an increased predicted probability (.9) but also with the prospect of family reunion upon return in that period.

Love for friends seems once more to be a much less determining concern. Two of the four cases facing friends separation returned nevertheless (1116, 2105) – thus contradicting both the rationalist expectation and this emotional concern. The other two cases (1103, 1102) returned in the second period, consistently with an increased predicted probability (up to .9) and contradicting this emotional concern. It is clear then that utilitarian considerations weighted more than this emotional concern in these cases. Still, in the one case facing friend reunion this did return (2111). This seemingly ‘minor’ emotional concern may have contributed to reaching a decision.

Table 6.28. *Dilemmas and love for friends*

Case	Return		Pred. Prob		Proximity	LOVE FRIENDS
	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>		
1010	0	0	.4	.0	<i>n.d.</i>	Low
1101	0	1	.4	.9	<i>n.d.</i>	Medium
1003	0	0	.5	.1	<i>n.d.</i>	Low
1103	0	1	.5	.9	Separation	Low
1102	0	1	.4	.9	Separation	Medium
2111	1	-	.5	-	Reunion	Low
1116	1	-	.4	-	Separation	High
2007	0	0	.1	.4	-	High
2105	0	1	.3	.4	Separation	Medium

Note: Cases of late return or no return have two observations (for the early period and for the late period). Puzzling observations are shadowed.

The evidence summarized in Table 6.29 concerning the role of *love for place* is again mixed, as it happened with the puzzling cases of return above. Half of the dilemma cases *not returning* are consistent with the argument of love for place (1010, 1102, 2111) since they present low levels of love for the location of return. But

the other half rather contradict it (1101, 1003, 1103) since they display medium levels of love for the location of return *versus* low levels for the location of displacement (besides low levels of hatred), which would have led to the expectation of return out of this emotional concern.⁷²

On the other hand, out of the two dilemma cases *returning* (and with available data) one is also consistent with the argument, displaying medium levels of love for the return location (2105). In this case, however, the levels of love for the displacement location and of hatred were also elevated. The other case rather seems to contradict the argument, displaying low levels of love for the home origin (2111). This case presents nonetheless also low levels of love for the location of displacement and low levels of hatred. That is, although there is not a high concern for proximity with the place, there are no strong inhibitors for it either.

Table 6.29. Dilemmas and love for place

Case	Return		Pred. Prob		LOVE	LOVE	HATE
	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>	RET	DISP	RET
1010	0	0	.4	.0	Low	Low	Low
1102	0	1	.4	.9	Low	<i>n.d.</i>	Low
1101	0	1	.4	.9	Medium	Low	Low
1003	0	0	.5	.1	Medium	Low	Low
1103	0	1	.5	.9	Medium	Low	Low
2111	1	-	.5	-	Low	Low	Low
1116	1	-	.4	-	<i>n.d.</i>	<i>n.d.</i>	<i>n.d.</i>
2007	0	0	.1	.4	Low	Medium	Low
2105	0	1	.3	.4	Medium	Medium	Medium

Note: Puzzling cases are shadowed.

⁷² Two of these cases ended up returning in the second period, nevertheless, but their predicted probabilities at the time were very high (.9) thus presenting a case of delay in return despite emotional concerns and over-determination.

In sum, in only half of the cases the drive for home is a clear candidate to have played a role in the decision.

III. Anger

There is little supportive evidence for anger having played a role in motivating decisions to return or not under a dilemma situation. Three out of the five cases *not returning* displayed a concern and high or medium levels of anger at the collective or at the individual level (1010, 1101, 2007).⁷³ This was nonetheless insufficient to produce a decision to return under the dilemma situation.⁷⁴ Finally, and more importantly, in the two cases returning for which there is available data (2111, 2105) none of them had a concern for restoration, so it is very doubtful that their decision to return was motivated by such concern. Still, the two cases display medium and high levels of anger.

Table 6.30. Dilemmas and anger

Case	Return		Pred. Prob		Concern	ANGER INDIV	ANGER COLLEC
	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>	<i>Tret</i>	<i>Tfol</i>			
1010	0	0	.4	.0	Yes	High	High
1101	0	1	.4	.9	Yes	Medium	Low
1003	0	0	.5	.1	No	Low	Low
1103	0	1	.5	.9	No	Low	Low
1102	0	1	.4	.9	<i>n.d.</i>	Low	Low
2111	1	-	.5	-	No	Medium	High
1116	1	-	.4	-	<i>n.d.</i>	Low	<i>n.d.</i>
2007	0	0	.1	.4	Yes	Medium	Medium
2105	0	1	.3	.4	No	Medium	<i>n.d.</i>

Note: Puzzling cases are shadowed.

⁷³ The other two cases of no return showed no concern for restoration and very low levels of anger.

⁷⁴ One of the cases (1101) did return when the predicted probability reached .9 in the second period.

IV. Accounting for the variation in dilemma cases through emotions

Tables 6.31 and 6.32 summarize the findings in the previous discussion in order to assess whether the interaction of different emotional concerns can account for the problematic observations found above.

Table 6.31. Dilemma cases not returning and emotions

Case	Return		FEAR	LOVE FAM	LOVE FRIEND	LOVE PLACE	ANGER
	<i>T</i> <i>ret</i>	<i>T</i> <i>fol</i>					
1010	0	0	(overdet)	(overdet)	<i>n.d.</i>	(overdet)	Contrad
1101	0	1	(overdet)	(overdet)	<i>n.d.</i>	(delay)	(delay)
1003	0	0	(overdet)	(overdet)	<i>n.d.</i>	Contrad	(no drive)
1103	0	1	(overdet)	(overdet)	(overdet)	(delay)	(no drive)
1102	0	1	(no inhibit)	-	(overdet)	(overdet)	<i>n.d.</i>
2007	0	0	(overdet)	-	-	(overdet)	Contrad

Note: Puzzling observations of return or no return are shadowed. Observations between parentheses denote observations consistent with the expectations for each particular emotional concern. Problematic observations in this sense are shown in bold.

Focusing firstly on cases of *no return* (see Table 6.31), which are not puzzling from a rationalist point of view, it turns out that the security threshold and the possibility of family separation have been in place producing the expected results in all cases (with the exception of case 1102, and partially 2007). The extent to which they have played a determinant role in the decision remains however undefined since we cannot observe them separately from the rationalist expectation of no return characterizing these cases.

Other emotional concerns seem to have played a much weaker role in any case. Three (out of the 6) cases contradicted or delayed

their concern for restoration (1010, 1101, 2007). Anger actually seems to have played the weakest role of all emotional concerns in these cases: where restoration concerns were present, still a decision to return did not arrive or it was delayed until the second period, when the predicted probability of return was also high.

Other three cases contradicted or delayed their concern raised by love for the location of origin (1101, 1003, 1103). But all these cases summed up the rationalist expectation of no return to high or medium levels of fear, and in four of the six cases to the prospect of family separation. Thus, again the interaction of different emotional concerns provides room for supporting the hypothesis that emotions may have played a role *also* in these not puzzling cases in which such role cannot be observed directly.

Table 6.32. Dilemma cases returning and emotions

Case	Return		FEAR	LOVE FAM	LOVE FRIEND	LOVE PLACE	ANGER
	<i>T</i> <i>ret</i>	<i>T</i> <i>fol</i>					
2111	1	-	(no inhibit)	(drive)	(drive)	(no drive)	(no drive)
1116	1	-	(no inhibit)	Contra	Contrad	<i>n.d.</i>	<i>n.d.</i>
2105	0	1	(inhibit)	(delay)	Contrad	(drive)	(no drive)

Note: Puzzling observations of return or no return are shadowed. Observations between parentheses denote observations consistent with the expectations for each particular emotional concern. Problematic observations in this sense are shown **in bold**.

The more puzzling cases of *return* in dilemma situations offer little room for evaluation given their short number and the lack of data in one of them. Still, the three cases behave in a consistent manner with the security threshold argument: two of them display low levels of fear, and the third one displays medium levels but it delayed her decision to return until the second period, when it is more likely that the security threshold was met. The most crucial

test for the role of emotional concerns in explaining the deviation of these cases from the rationalist expectation of no return lays nonetheless in the provision for motivations to return.

The first case (2111) shows low levels of fear, and it faced family reunion upon return, combined with a high level of love for family. It also faced friend reunion, although this is unlikely to have played as much a salient role, given that the registered level of love for friends was low. Still, all of these emotional concerns may have helped unbalancing the decision towards returning despite rationalist expectations. This was so despite a low level of love for the home origin (although with low levels of love for the location of displacement, besides low levels of hatred too) and despite not having the added motivation of a restoration concern.

The second case (2105) is a case of delayed return. This delay can be explained in terms of the predicted probability of returning (which was only .3 in the first period) but it might be also explained in terms of the security threshold: with a medium level of fear, such threshold may not have been met in the first period, and it is likely to have been met in the second one. Either the utilitarian or the emotional explanation (or both) may account for the decision not to return in the early period despite facing family reunion and a high level of love for family.

However, once the predicted probability reached a dilemma (or once the security threshold was reached) the drive for family proximity seems to have played a decisive role. The same could be said of the love for the home origin, which registers a medium level (but this is combined with medium levels of love for the location of displacement and medium levels of hatred as well). Finally, since no restoration concern is present, anger is not expected to have played a salient role. The same goes for the concern for friends' proximity, since returning meant separating from them (but the level of love for friends was only medium).

Finally, the early return of the last case (1116) meant separating from family and from friends. However, this case displays the minimum level possible for love for family (medium) and it has been observed above that the role of the concern for

friends' proximity does not seem to be a very salient one for most cases. Unfortunately, there is no data available for assessing the possible interaction with other emotional concerns, namely love for place and anger.

Summarizing, the separate analysis of each emotion (both with unexpected cases of return and no return, and with dilemma cases) has provided supportive evidence for the proposed behavioural correlates of each emotion regarding the decision to return in each particular case (whether to inhibit it, motivate it or none of them). In most of these cases the role of emotions helped accounting for a decision to return or not which was puzzling or not too strongly predicted by the utilitarian model. The least support has been found for the concern for friends proximity which, as expected, seems to have a lesser role in the decision to return.

However, various significant cases have been found in which one particular emotion could not account for the decision at hand. Or the emotional concern was even contradicted by such decision. The analysis of the different emotional concerns present in each case has allowed confirming that the interaction between these different concerns can account for many of these problematic cases.

Although the analysis remains at a very rudimentary level, given the difficulty to compare the intensity and salience of different emotions, it seems that the most basic emotional concerns considered here, namely fear and love for family tend to be able to account for most of those problematic cases. All other concerns, except perhaps love for friends, also seem to have the capacity to explain many of these cases, although their explanatory power is not as robust as the one displayed, particularly by fear.

In the end, only three cases remained problematic. One of them is a particular case whose circumstances (job abroad) were not contemplated in the utilitarian model, and which account for the delayed timing of his return. The second case is a puzzling case for the utilitarian model running also against the security

threshold argument, but there are no data available for other emotional concerns in order to assess whether the interaction with those other concerns might account for her puzzling return. Finally, the third case is a dilemma case that returns despite that meaning renouncing to proximity with family and friends. This case is also lacking data with which to assess other emotional concerns.

Overall, only three out of 23 cases analyzed remain unaccounted for. The evidence that emotions are likely to have played a role in such particular cases opens the door for considering that they are likely to have played such a role also, to different extents, in other cases in which it is not directly observable. Most importantly, it provides the important answer that emotions do add explanatory power to the decision-making model.

CHAPTER 7. CONCLUSIONS

7.1. Main findings

7.1.1. A model of return

The core of this dissertation is the development of a theoretical framework for the systematic analysis of the decision to return to the place of origin after a violent conflict, and of the role of emotions in such a decision. Such theoretical framework did not exist, neither other important theoretical references, constituting an enormous gap of great importance not only for academic research on this area, but also, and even more crucially, for the elaboration and application of intervention programs, and for the design of related policies by national governments, international bodies, and most saliently by international agencies such as UNHCR dealing on a daily basis, in different contexts around the world, with these realities.

The theoretical model developed here identifies two types of factors as necessary for understanding the decision to return: enabling factors (which are security-related) and motivational factors (economic and non-economic ones). Enabling factors have a role in inhibiting or not a decision to return, whereas motivating factors are the ones pointing out a decision to either return or not through pull or push components working in both directions. This simple scheme improves existing ones in the migration literature emphasizing the pull and push factors working only in an outward direction.

The model helps systematizing abundant but fragmented (and sometimes contradictory) insights on displacement existing in the literature and among practitioners. In these fragmented insights, different explaining factors and resulting situations are emphasized at different points, without taking into account important variation and heterogeneity across individuals and particular cases.

The scheme proposed here helps uncovering that displaced people may sometimes find themselves sometimes in a 'happy dilemma' where pull factors dominate in both directions: they have good reasons for returning but also for staying in displacement. These are people who have found a new promising life in displacement, but still have plenty of reasons (and emotional drive) for longing their home origin. Unfortunately, much more frequent seem to be the cases of 'no-place dilemmas', where push factors dominate in both directions: they have good reasons for *not* returning and also for *not* staying in displacement. These are people who seem to have no place to stay and no place to go back.

Finally, there are also 'clear' cases of return, where there are good reasons for returning (pull factors) and for *not* staying in displacement (push factors). The most clear illustration of such cases in the context the Bosnian return are elders or uneducated people who cannot adapt easily or find a place for themselves in the new reality, and who have a whole life of investments (both material and emotional ones) back in their place of origin. Youngsters and educated people tend to present the opposite case, constituting 'clear' cases of no return.

7.1.2. Getting to the emotions

The discussion of the theoretical model within a rational choice framework has made it evident that conventional rational choice is ill-equipped to deal with some of the motivations and mechanisms underlying the decision-making of return. Emotional

concerns such as fear, the drive for home or the drive for reparation and justice are fundamental components of the decision. These are all connected to the realm of emotions and they have little to do with the trade-off logic of conventional rational decision-making.

Thus, whereas, on the one hand, the threat of violence is likely to enter the decision as a possible cost detracting from the gains to be attained from such a decision, fear has a different logic. Fear signals a concern for survival that is deeply ingrained in the human brain. Such concern is likely to take precedence over utilitarian considerations, and probably over most other concerns, at least when immediate survival is questioned. In other words, whereas the level of security threat that is 'rationally acceptable' depends on the gains and costs of the alternatives of returning or not returning, the level of security threat that is felt as 'tolerable' by is rather given as an absolute value, as dictated by the emotion of fear.

The empirical analysis has provided supportive evidence for the pervasive presence of fear and its salient role in inhibiting the decision to return, even despite utilitarian considerations. A similar role in inhibiting or producing a decision to return has been documented for other salient emotional concerns: the drive for home, as embedded in love ties with family members and with the place of origin (and to a lesser extent, at least in the studied case, with the location of displacement). And the drive for restoration, especially when intended at undoing perceived injustices at the collective level, that is, when displacement and violence are perceived to have unjustly targeted individuals as a result of belonging to a given group and against such a group. Little role has been identified nonetheless of hatred as an inhibitor of return in such a context.

Quantitative analysis makes it clear nevertheless that the utilitarian component has a highly explicative power of the decision to return. Overall, displaced households take centrally into consideration the horizons of economic sustainability and well-being offered by the options of return and non return. The

behaviour of the immense majority of the studied sample can be explained in these terms. However, the presence of the emotional component is also undeniable, sometimes accompanying utilitarian considerations, sometimes running against them.

The observation and measurement of this component is much more complex, and disentangling it from the utilitarian considerations is not always possible. The procedure used here has been to assess their explanatory power for those cases that the utilitarian model fails to explain appropriately. The fact that most of these cases can be explained in terms of emotional mechanisms suggests that the role of emotions is likely to be present also in other cases in which it is not directly observable. And it confirms that emotions do contribute an added explanatory power to the rationalist framework of decision-making.

The bases for such an analysis have been provided by the existing empirical evidence about emotions from psychology and neurobiology. This evidence has provided the bases for determining the existence of a systematic component in emotions that makes it possible to formulate hypotheses about their presence, and about when and why to expect such a presence, thus increasing the robustness of the proposed arguments. That accumulated evidence has also helped defining the manner in which emotions participate in the decision-making process, and thus the manner in which they can be introduced in a rational choice framework. Last, but not least, it has provided also fundamental criteria and tools for the observation of emotions and it has allowed establishing clear behavioral correlates for each of the emotions considered, in turn producing the necessary observable implications.

7.2. Main contributions

The main goal of this dissertation has been making a contribution to the literature on displacement in post-conflict scenarios that can help correcting (and bringing attention to) some

of the analytical, methodological and substantive biases which have characterized existing research and existing understandings about these realities.

As it was pointed out in the Introduction, the phenomenon of displacement as a result of mass violent conflict has become one of the main humanitarian and political concerns in the international arena of our times. The way we research and understand this phenomenon has been largely shaped by the refugee regime given by the institutional and legal framework dealing with such humanitarian and political concerns. Existing research (and policy-making) has left aside important aspects of the realities of displacement as a consequence.

7.2.1. Redirecting the research agenda

First, most attention has been given to the short-term and longer-term consequences of these population movements, as well as to their more practical implications. There has been on the other hand an insufficient attention to the fundamental interconnections between conflict, violence and displacement. A deeper and broader analysis is needed to understand the dynamic and continuous manner in which such interconnections unfold: from the initial movement of displacement, to later movements of relocation and return.

This dissertation has evidenced that the decision to return is strongly mediated by the characteristics and circumstances of the violent conflict originating the displacement: for instance, whether groups are targeted, the characteristics of the threat, the type of restoration issues raised, the degree and type of destruction endured. Return also bears important consequences for the dynamics of some conflicts – particularly, those where conflict is fought along socio-demographic lines and where displacement is in itself part of the conflict – besides other important consequences at the economic, social and political levels. The study of such interactions has been also overlooked by the

literature on violent conflict, to which this dissertation makes a contribution in this manner.

Second, most attention has been traditionally devoted to the study of international refugees whereas internal displacement (and most especially the return of IDPs) have received much less analytical and empirical research efforts despite the larger and growing empirical weight of these phenomena (and despite the complex humanitarian challenges they present). The research question in this dissertation and the methodological decision to focus on IDPs significantly contribute to filling this gap.

7.2.2. *Reviewing the paradigm*

Besides these substantive biases, extended assumptions about the nature and characteristics of displacement movements have produced biased, unrealistic, non-rigorous and poorly refined understandings of these realities.

(1) Bringing actors back

The main assumption underlying the political and academic analysis of displacement has been for a long time that there is no room for individual agency in such processes, as curtailed and dominated by structural conditions imposed by the violent conflict. This assumption is being increasingly discussed in the last years, confronted with the reality that individual agency is not only kept in most cases (at least in some or most instances of the displacement and relocation processes) but it also has important consequences.

Displaced people are not only affected by violent conflict, they also react to it and cope with their situation. In doing so, they become – and should be considered as – relevant actors determining not only some of their life options but also some of the dynamics and outcomes of the violent conflict that made them flee. A micro-level understanding of individuals' constraints and

incentives is necessary in order to establish what are the determinants of their decisions and the consequences of these. Such micro-level approach has been missing in the displacement literature until very recently and this dissertation constitutes one more contribution in this sense.

One important consequence of the assumption of radical determination in displacement moves has been the predominance of a simplifying and blunt characterization (and analysis) of the relationship between violence and displacement: violence automatically produces displacement; the more violence, the more displacement; return is not possible with violence going on and it is expectable once violence subsides. To begin with, little attention has been given to what is understood by violence, as well as to the multiple and complex forms that violence can adopt. This view has led to overlooking not only the individual's perspective – i.e. variation in the manner and extent in which different individuals are affected by violence; uncertainties involved in the decision-making – but also other important sources of variation, such as local-level variation.

By adopting a micro approach, two specific theoretical contributions have been made here that could help furthering understanding and research about these realities. On the one hand, an attempt has been done to produce a refined understanding of the concepts of violence and threat of violence based on the individuals' perspective. This has allowed a more rigorous analytical and empirical approach to such issues and to the role they may have in inhibiting a decision to return. This approach includes the consideration of indicators appropriate for each particular context.

On the other hand, and building on this, a systematic and empirical classification of different types of threat of violence has been made, helping identifying different scenarios of displacement and return. This is an important contribution in order to advance in the identification of internal boundaries in the universe of study of the displacement literature.

(2) *Bringing choice and conflict back*

A second important assumption which has been pervasive, especially at the policy level, for a long time, has been the assumption that return is a natural decision, and that such decision is expectable once violence subsides. This assumption has been sustained by the lack of rigorous analysis of the motivations and determinants to return, a situation to which this dissertation comes to put an end.

It has been evidenced here that return is simply *one more* option and that the decision to return requires a complex understanding of the motivations and determinants that move an individual to return (or not) after violence and displacement. The lack of rigorous analysis at this level (and the assumption of return as a natural option) has helped sustaining the idea that those refugees and displaced people who decide not to return when the security situation improves are in fact mere 'economic migrants'. This study has not only helped identifying the complex motivations and determinants that underlay such a decision, but it has also made evident that such motivations and determinants are strongly mediated by the specificity of violent conflict and the threat of violence: both through the utilitarian component and through emotional mechanisms.

The refugee regime has been characterized since its inception by the search of 'solutions' to the 'refugee problem'. Such solutions are traditionally referred to as 'durable solutions' (see any manual at use in UNHCR). As a result of the shift in the refugee regime towards a 'containment' paradigm – prioritizing prevention and containment of refugee flows within their countries and regions of origin – return, and more specifically the formula of 'voluntary repatriation', have been actively and systematically encouraged at the policy level as the most appropriate durable solution for displaced people. This has meant leaving in a more secondary place the two remaining durable solutions traditionally contemplated: local integration in the country or location of displacement; and resettlement to a third country or location.

The prioritisation of some durable solutions over others is just one (although central) illustration of the top-down and overarching approach that tend to define policy design and particular interventions in contexts of displacement. This type of approach has not only missed the micro level (and the study of individual agency, motivations and constraints) but it has also typically lacked rigorous analytical efforts and references (which has facilitated in turn the persistence of the assumption of return as a natural option, for instance). In other words, the focus on the search for 'durable solutions' has likely handicapped the search for 'desirable solutions', more attached to the real experiences of the persons who have undergone violence, and to the complexities of the new contexts they arrived to. This dissertation would be fulfilling its most basic goal if it contributes to this latter search.

7.3. Future lines of research

There are three main areas in which the present study can be importantly improved and which can help developing the lines of research it opens. They consist basically of widening the empirical scope of the study, introducing some methodological improvements, and incorporating further theoretical areas of interest.

7.3.1. Going beyond Cerska, Križeviči and Bosnia

Since the object of study of this dissertation is extremely complex and heterogeneous, one of the main concerns here has been avoiding theoretical and empirical overclaiming. Another important concern has been being able to observe the most basic mechanisms underlying the decision to return, keeping aside specific and non fundamental complexities.

For these reasons the theoretical and empirical universe of study has been progressively reduced leaving out of the analysis,

among others: displaced people who have crossed an international border, types of conflict and violent threat different to the one exemplified by Bosnia, or cases of non-safe displacement. Each of these exclusions opens the door to a future line of research, all of them important for assessing the robustness of the model, and of enormous intrinsic value. The challenge lays in being able to develop and adapt the model so that it can account for other cases.

An even more provoking question is the one about the robustness of the particular findings made here for the case of Bosnia. For instance, to what extent would we find a similar presence and role of the emotions considered here in other conflicts, either similar or totally different to the one in Bosnia?

7.3.2. Expanding the methodological toolbox

All methods and research designs face trade-offs and bear some defining pros and cons. The choices made here have allowed me to acquire an invaluable familiarity and proximity with the realities under research and to produce quality in-depth reliable data, both of which are very hard or impossible to acquire with alternative research strategies. I think this type of data and insight, produced within deductive rigorous theoretical frameworks, are necessary and too scarce in the social sciences in general, and in the literature on displacement and violent conflict in particular.

However, some important methodological drawbacks cannot be overlooked, and one desirable line of future research would be producing complementary analyses with different methodological approaches. One of these drawbacks consists of the lack of representation of the data produced, due not only to the low number of observed cases, but also to the nonrandom character of the sample employed. Similarly, the consideration of a larger number of local units would allow a proper comparison and analysis at the local level, solving issues of lack of variation and over-determination. The challenge is to produce such a kind of

data while still following the basic guiding principles of fieldwork research delineated in Annex 3.1.

Another important complementary analysis to the one made here would consist in producing qualitative and quantitative evidence for sustaining empirically (and improving) the classification of types of conflict developed in Chapter 2.

7.3.3. Additions to the model

Two important constituent parts of the original project of this dissertation have been finally left out of the analysis due to considerations of space and complexity.

First, the analysis of the role played by social networks and by the group in the decision to return. The decision to return is rarely an individual decision taken in isolation. Rather the decision to return occurs within the aggregated process of return, in which numbers, characteristics of the returnees, social networks, strong ties (family and friends) and the group itself can (and frequently do) play a fundamental role. These social mechanisms and aggregation processes are likely to mediate each and all of the enabling and motivating factors considered in the model developed here. The study of these influences is a most important future research direction.

Second, and last, the analysis of emotions has been largely focused here on developing a framework for dealing with them at the theoretical and at the empirical level. For practical considerations of space and methodological complexity, the analysis of their role in decision-making has been concentrated on the reduced group of cases unexplained by the utilitarian model. However further and more fine-grained analysis can be tried out. Even more importantly, the analysis of the role of emotions should also include the indirect role they may have on decision-making through their cognitive effects. Whereas the consideration of this indirect role was originally contemplated for this study, it has finally been left out, again for practical reasons. However this is

an important area of research if wanting to take the role of emotions seriously.

Ultimately, the plea to consider more rigorously the factors involved in the return decision as well as to acknowledge the complexities of situations of displacement and conflict will help us to improve our understanding of these realities. A better understanding of the circumstances experienced by displaced people will produce important areas of improvement in policy-making, in terms of more realistic regulations and more efficient post-conflict interventions.

ANNEXES

Annex 2.1. Types of threat provoking or maintaining internal displacement

I present here a brief characterization of the six types identified.¹ It must be born in mind that this is based merely on the observed behaviour of the cases in the sampled universe (by the year 2002), not in logically or conceptually necessary criteria. This exercise simply gives an idea of fundamental differences likely to emerge in the monitoring of the threat, depending on the kind of threat (as identified here) the individual is facing.

Type 1. IDPs fled conventional inter-state warfare (between armies) *affecting* civilians. The threat arises from a foreign power, although it may also include communal violence. Upon return, the situation may remain unstable or the foreign power may be in control of the area. In these cases, the individual's estimation of the probability of being hit was likely to be given by:

¹ The following notation will be used: *ComViol* = communal violence, *AbuseGov* = abuses by the government, *AbuseAG* = abuses by armed groups, *Intensity* = intensity of the conflict between two organised actors, *PS* = personal saliency, *ETH* = ethnic group, *N* = inhabitants of the area of relevance, *G* = inhabitants of the area of relevance belonging to the (targeted) group.

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$$P_1(\text{hit}) = F\left(\frac{\text{intensity}}{N}\right)$$
$$P_1'(\text{hit}) = F\left(\frac{\text{intensity}}{N}, \frac{\text{ComViol} * PS}{G}\right)$$

Type 2. IDPs confronted violence *affecting/targeting* all civilians arising from armed groups acting against the government and/or the population, or fighting each other (i.e. government is weak or non-existent). In some cases, existing ethnic cleavages were dragged into the violent conflict, so the threat of violence increases (to varying degrees) with ethnic ascription. If the threat arises from one single armed group, the individual had to monitor its developments and the personal risk they posed.

$$P_2(\text{hit}) = F\left(\frac{\text{AbuseAG} * PS}{N}\right)$$
$$P_2'(\text{hit}) = F\left(\frac{\text{AbuseAG} * PS * ETH}{N}\right)$$

If there are various armed groups fighting, the individual must monitor the general degree of violence going on (i.e. intensity of conflict), as well as the personal risk involved in returning if the individual is perceived to be involved or to belong to one of the sides in conflict. Return would be particularly risky if that particular side is not in (full) control of the area. In these cases, the individual's estimation of the probability of being hit was likely to be given by:

$$P_{2b}(\text{hit}) = F\left(\frac{\text{Intensity}}{N}, \frac{\text{AbuseAG} * PS}{N}\right)$$
$$P_{2b}'(\text{hit}) = F\left(\frac{\text{Intensity}}{N}, \frac{\text{AbuseAG} * PS * ETH}{N}\right)$$

Type 3. IDPs confronted generalised violence *affecting/targeting* all civilians in the country/region between the government and armed groups such as factions or rebel groups.

The threat arises from each of the sides, including the government. In some cases, existing ethnic cleavages were dragged in into the violent conflict, so the threat of violence increases (to varying degrees) with ethnic ascription. The individual must monitor the intensity of conflict as well as the personal risk involved in her return arising from each group's developments. In these cases, the individual's estimation of the probability of being hit was largely given by:

$$P_3(\text{hit}) = F \left(\frac{\text{Intensity}}{N}, \frac{\text{AbuseGOV} * PS}{N}, \frac{\text{AbuseAG} * PS}{N} \right)$$

$$P_3'(\text{hit}) = F \left(\frac{\text{Intensity}}{N}, \frac{\text{AbuseGOV} * PS * ETH}{N}, \frac{\text{AbuseAG} * PS * ETH}{N} \right)$$

Type 4. IDPs confronted violence *targeting* their ethnic group by the separatist armed group of the majority in the area, and it might include communal violence. Besides observing the intensity of the conflict between the government and the armed group, the individual must observe the personal risk posed by the armed group and in general by members of the majority group in the area. In these cases, the individual's estimation of the probability of being hit was likely defined by:

$$P_4(\text{hit}) = F \left(\frac{\text{Intensity}}{N}, \frac{\text{AbuseAG} * PS}{G} \right)$$

$$P_4'(\text{hit}) = F \left(\frac{\text{Intensity}}{N}, \frac{\text{AbuseAG} * PS}{G}, \frac{\text{ComViol} * PS}{G} \right)$$

Type 5. IDPs confronted violence *targeting* their ethnic group by the government, and more generally violence *affecting* all civilians, also by the separatist armed group. In mixed non-homogenous areas, it may include communal violence and armed groups from the minority in the area.² Besides observing the

² For instance, Bengali settlers in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (Bangladesh) mobilized against the indigenous communities as these

intensity of the conflict between the government and the armed group, the individual must observe the personal risk posed by the armed group and in general by members of the minority group in the area. In these cases, the individual's estimation of the probability of being hit likely had the following components:

$$P_5(\text{hit}) = F\left(\frac{\text{Intensity}}{N}, \frac{\text{AbuseGOV} * PS}{G}, \frac{\text{AbuseAG} * PS}{G}\right)$$

$$P_5'(\text{hit}) = F\left(\frac{\text{Intensity}}{N}, \frac{\text{AbuseGOV} * PS}{G}, \frac{\text{AbuseAG} * PS}{G}, \frac{\text{ComViol} * PS}{G}\right)$$

Type 6. IDPs confronted violence *targeting* their ethnic group and arising from non-organised actors across society (from different ethnic groups), though also frequently from armed groups. Upon return, ethnic cleavages are likely to have been exacerbated during the conflict (as a result of either organised or communal violence), thus posing a threat upon return, especially if returning as a minority. In these cases, the individual's estimation of the probability of being hit had the following shape:

$$P_6(\text{hit}) = F\left(\frac{\text{ComViol} * PS}{G}\right)$$

$$P_6'(\text{hit}) = F\left(\frac{\text{ComViol} * PS}{G}, \frac{\text{AbuseAG} * PS}{G}\right)$$

fought government interference. And the Malaitan population of Guadalcanal (Solomon Islands) formed the Malaita Eagle Force (MEF) to counter attacks by the Guadalcanalese Isatabu Freedom Movement.

Annex 3.1. Coping with realities: When models meet persons, villages and mountains

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1. Introduction

As noted in Chapter 3 in this dissertation I have aimed at producing rich context-grounded data providing detailed and reliable information on individuals' and households trajectories, perceptions and emotions. In order to tackle with the practical, methodological and ethical difficulties in producing this type of data in post-conflict scenarios I have resorted to psychosocial approaches of intervention with survivors of violence, on the one hand, and to ethnographic methods of research on the other hand.

Ethnography is indisputably one of the longest and best established traditions of social research, focused on the study of particular contexts and on the extraction of insights from their detailed and intensive observation (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995; Gold 1997). The ethnographic methods of research provide the necessary instruments and guidance to undertake such kind of intensive and detailed observation. The main instruments of research are observant participation and systematic gathering of field notes. The most characterizing feature of ethnographic research is extensive and intensive presence within the communities researched, and continued interaction within them.³ Psychosocial intervention with survivors of violence on the other hand is a relatively recent tradition in the intersection between psychology, psychiatry and humanitarian intervention (Pérez Sales 1999). I discuss the most relevant details of these approaches and their role in the present research below.

Obtaining satisfactory results from the fieldwork depended on three equally important processes: reaching out potential informants, getting them to be willing to talk to the research team, and the interviewing process itself. In the next section I present a fieldwork memo detailing the characteristics of the fieldwork activities carried out focusing on the first and second of those

³ See e.g. Bringa (1995), Lareau *et al.* (1996), Myers (2006), Lubkemann (2008a).

three processes. Section 3 will deepen on the second process and it will pay particular attention to the third one.

2. From a theoretical model to a conversation in front of a cup of coffee

2.1. Fieldwork memo: Fieldwork activities

(1) *Where to begin.* I arrived to Bosnia by the end of September 2005 and settled down in the town of Tuzla, in the northeast of the country. Tuzla is the third largest city in the country and capital city to the canton by the same name. During the war it became a reception centre for displaced people who fled the eastern part of the country (currently RS). After the war, Tuzla has been and is still the operational base for most international and local organizations working in this part of the country and dealing with the return process, both in the Federation and in the RS. A significant number of the displaced people from the north-east have settled down in the area, whether in town, in the surrounding areas, or in neighbouring municipalities within the canton (UNHCR 2003). Settling down in Tuzla was thus a convenient decision in order to easily reach relevant organizations and key actors, important displacement sites and the very areas under research.

(2) *Networking.* I became actively involved with the accompaniment and voluntary work done with different organizations and institutions. Most especially *UHD Prijateljice* and *Fondacija Tuzlanske Zajednice*, two organizations running a wide range of projects dealing with both displaced and returned populations, in whose daily routines I became integrated as a volunteer. Other contacts consisted of both local and international organizations which agreed to share their insights, experience and documentation with me. Most importantly, some of them also agreed to take me to the field in order to acquire first-hand

knowledge on the different areas, the various dimensions of the issue of return, and the catalogue of projects addressing them.⁴ The visited areas covered all the north-east, including both the RS (northeast and east) and the Federation (Tuzla canton and Zenica-Doboj canton), covering both return and displacement areas. These activities were also crucial in allowing me to knit a dense network of contacts in a relatively short period of time, which quickly multiplied and stopped being dependent on the initial contacts. Such network, together with the practical knowledge acquired in the process (such as language skills and cultural familiarity) was determinant for the success in planning and implementing the subsequent research.

(3) *The team.* This network of contacts facilitated enormously the crucial step of putting together a competent and well-prepared fieldwork team.⁵ This was a hard and key process. The role of the interpreter (and to a lesser extent of the driver) was to be crucial, since he would not only be an interpreter as such but also the main

⁴ Among the organizations and institutions contacted were:

- Local NGOs and third sector organizations: IPAK Simin Han and IPAK Križeviči, Merhamet, Prijateljice, Priroda, Snaga Žene, Tuzlanska Zajednice, Vaša Prava, Vesta, Vive Žene, Udruženje Podrinja.

- International NGOs and third sector organizations: Amica, CISP (Comitato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo dei Popoli), ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross), IRC (International Rescue Committee), Mercy Corps, MPDL (Movimiento por la Paz, el Desarme y la Libertad), Spanish Red Cross.

- International agencies: AECI (Spanish Agency for International Cooperation), GTZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit), UNHCR Tuzla and UNHCR Sarajevo, OHR Bratunac, OSCE Tuzla and Zvornik.

- Local authorities and local agencies: Tuzla Canton Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees, local agencies for development NERDA Tuzla and BREDA Zvornik, municipalities of Tuzla, Milići and Zvornik.

⁵ This was to be originally reduced to just an interpreter. But, since none of the candidates had either a car or a driving license, I had to recruit also an experienced driver.

communicator and intermediary with the researched communities. He would be key in facilitating mutual understanding and in building trust relationships. The main requirements were having an excellent command of English language, having profuse field experience (with displaced persons, with relevant organizations, in areas of the RS) and certain personal qualities such as good social and communicative skills, capacity to deal and connect with different kinds of people, and an honest interest for the work and issues ahead of us. It was important also that the person would be a male and a Bosniak, in order for the team to be gender-balanced, and so that the interviewees, which were to be mostly Bosniaks, would have the least reticence because of group ascription.⁶

Extensive experience in the field was a necessary requirement, but also a handicap. On the one hand, the interpreter (and other key contacts) became the prime consultant for issues regarding fieldwork planning and logistics, given his broad experience. On the other hand, he had some acquired habits and attitudes which clashed with the methodology and approach of this research and which had to be adequately addressed.⁷ Thus, although he was enormously experienced, sensible and sensitive to important

⁶ Alis was the person finally selected, after an arduous search and selection process. Alis did not only have the required qualities, but also some more extra skills and resources. For instance, he had creative skills and capacities which were very useful. He is an excellent photographer, with professional equipment, and he extensively documented our visits to the field. He used to take pictures of the families we interviewed and visited so that we could give them back to them as a gesture of appreciation. Those pictures were also a good excuse to visit them and spending some more time together.

⁷ Such as superiority attitudes towards some of the people we contacted, reflecting the habit to see them as 'beneficiaries' and to see the person posing the questions as the ones deciding 'when' and 'how', besides assuming that there is a right to be given whatever information is required. Thus, things were ordered rather than asked. Another example was the insistence in that there was no need to ask for permission to record our interviews and conversations, given that many people actually opposed it.

issues, and although I largely relied on his criteria regarding fieldwork strategies and decisions, it was important to have a specific and continuous training in order to keep the research within the desired parameters.

After one year, Alis, the interpreter, received a better job offer and he had to leave the project by the time we were ending up the fieldwork in the first location. This was a great shock to the project given the cumulated experience of working together for almost one year, a time when he had developed an intimate knowledge of the project, its methods and priorities, and we had reached a high level of mutual understanding, invaluable for our work together. The selection and training of a new interpreter took two months approximately. The fieldwork activities in Križeviči, the second location, were delayed until that moment.

(4) *Selecting the research locations.* The locations of research were chosen among the many locations visited or heard about from organisations and particulars and which fulfilled the requirements of the research design. All candidate locations were as a consequence within the area of fieldwork of all those organizations, with Tuzla as headquarter. This meant that all candidate locations were within a reasonable distance to travel there daily and, most importantly, that many key actors and informants, besides many non-returnees, would be at hand in Tuzla. Since all candidate locations shared these basic feasibility criteria I was able to focus only on the requirements of the research design in order to pick up the concrete locations.

Cerska is a rough mountainous area of difficult access, one hour and a half away from Tuzla, to which almost one more hour had to be summed up to reach the furthest away village. Visits to Cerska had to be delayed until April due to weather conditions. Travelling back and forward from Križeviči, fifty minutes away from Tuzla and in a much softer terrain than Cerska, was much easier.

(5) *Designing fieldwork activities.* The design of the fieldwork activities – calendar, logistics, and practical details, such as appropriate gifts for hosts, modus of contact, etc. – was made under consultation of various sources from these initial network of contacts. This planning was most important for adapting the research strategy to the realities of the field, so that it would serve the research goals in the most efficient possible way. For instance, we needed to have into account the months in which roads were likely to be closed or in a very bad state in order to make an efficient use of time (i.e. by avoiding visiting the sites more complex to reach and focusing instead on other sites or activities). The same goes for the agriculture season calendar, which largely conditioned the availability of most people in the countryside. Another issue which resulted very salient was understanding hospitality customs and the ways in which we were expected to respond to them, as well as the ways in which we would be incurring into abuses. It was also the most crucial to assess whether some of our activities might engender some kind of risk or compromise the interests of the individuals involved.

(6) *Arrival to the communities.* The initial phase in both locations was dedicated to contact key actors in the area, aiming for people who managed information above the average, people with higher communicative skills and people who would facilitate our interaction with the community. These were people with roots or activities in Cerska and Križeviči, or otherwise related to these areas.⁸ We kept informal non-structured interviews with them or

⁸ Some of these key actors were the following:

- Municipal representatives and civil workers from Milići and Zvornik municipalities, including members of the Return, Development and Integration Commissions (RDICs) of Milići, Vlasenica and Zvornik municipalities.

- Various returnee representatives and former and current MZ leaders.

- Personnel from international NGOs and agencies working in the areas (CIPS, Mercy Corps, IRC, UNHCR, OSCE, OHR).

in many cases simple chats. We asked them to draw some maps, and they also facilitated some documentation, data and materials, such as official maps. Apart from the more direct data gathering, the aim was to maximize the number and variety of possible inroads into the community. We also aimed at visiting all the villages and hamlets in both locations by meeting at least one family in all of them. The objective was spending as much time as possible with those persons more willing to receive us and more easily accessible, so that the experience and knowledge acquired with them, as well as their direct help, could serve us to find out the way to reach out those less willing or less available.

A second and most important objective was not only to familiarize ourselves with the local context, but also getting the community familiarised with us. Introducing both ourselves and the project was actually the most crucial part of the activities at that stage. For instance, explaining that, despite being an 'international', I would not be able to get any assistance for the area, but at the same time explaining the interest of a project like this, which is intrinsically so unclear and fuzzy, was a central challenge. Challenge was double: a battle of understandings, and a battle for trust (more on these issues below).

Pilot interviews were carried out by late April (2006) in Cerska. The selected interviewees were local representatives and relevant persons within the community. In that way I did not only put the questionnaire into test, but also the team and the project itself, as acceptance and approval by these persons would help ensuring acceptance by the rest of the community. The first formal interviews in Križeviči were realized in May (2007). The first person to be interviewed was our key contact in the area, a very

- Local organizations and NGOS (IPAK, Prijateljice, Udruženje Priroda, Udruženje Podrinja, Viva Žene).

- Local teachers and the director of the school in Križeviči, the local *hodža* (Muslim clergyman) in Križeviči.

- Entrepreneurial and other social actors with significant presence in the area (such as the cooperative Voćar, the agency for local development BREDA, or the electricity company Elektrodistribucija).

respected woman in the community whose evaluation would be similarly valuable for getting other people's trust and willingness to take the interview. Local representatives and other salient community leaders in Križevíci repeatedly declined to undertake the interview.

The snow-ball process was initiated through the network of contacts obtained during the preparation phase and since my arrival to the country, through the initial contacts made in the specific locations (through that network of contacts), and persons contacted directly and by chance during our visits to the areas. The aim was to get an initial sample as diverse as possible to be amplified in a subsequent snowball process.

(7) *Tracking down the dispersed communities: Reaching the non-returnees.* By the end of the summer we initiated the most difficult stage of the research, locating the non-returnees, whose residences were unknown and could be anywhere in the country. The strategy was to resort to the contact network built in the preparation period to help locate people originating from the two locations, but especially to resort to our interviewees and contacts in Cerska and Križevíci, whom I expected would have information on their old neighbours' residences. This procedure was intended not only at facilitating the location of the non-returnees but also at circumventing their expected reticence and mistrust when being contacted for the first time. Actually, finding them turned out to be relatively easy, as there were a few areas with a high concentration of displaced people from each location. By meeting a few non-returnees, we should have been able to more or less replicate the process done in the locations of origin. However, finding them was not as half an issue as getting their trust and their interest.

Even if we were introduced by relatives, friends or acquaintances, their unfamiliarity with us, mistrust and suspicions were far stronger than any recommendation. Had we not been introduced, sent or recommended by acquaintances and relatives it would have been otherwise impossible or extremely arduous to reach them in a fruitful way. At the same time, the procedure had

some clear drawbacks. The more complex contact chain could break in any of these links: the person in Cerska (or Križeviči) did not feel comfortable asking a third person, so contact did not happen; the person in Cerska did contact someone directly, but received a negative answer on which we had no chance to negotiate; the person in Cerska gave us the contact details of some candidate, but that person was hard to reach.

When we got to reach the person, we were usually welcomed and invited over, but in most occasions they stated that they preferred not to make the interview alleging it was too time-consuming, that they had not wish to talk or that they did not feel comfortable about it. Non-returnees had no previous (direct) knowledge of us or the project and its intentions, unlike people in Cerska or Križeviči, who got used to interacting with us. Given the scattered nature of non-returnee residences, there was much less room and opportunities to just visit and walk around, in order to get to know each other, to improve understanding of the project and to build mutual trust. Thus, they were less confident about us and about our questioning.

Some particularities of the non-returnee population may have played a role in their rejection to talk to us or to undertake the interview. For instance, many of them have pending legal or assistance issues, which they may have thought they endangered by talking to us. Also some of these persons have not returned because of serious trauma issues or serious losses during the war that prevent them from returning or from the thought of it. Many of them do not return in an attempt to turn the page and to never worry again about the issues and concerns of war and ethnic hatred. For the very same reasons, many of them have simply no wish to talk about it. Finally, social life and costumes are different to those in Cerska in these areas. Hospitality and visiting are somewhat less paramount. Also daily life dynamics vary, with people involved in different activities that keep them away from home.

In most cases the interview was just postponed *sine die* and never took place. We would insist from time to time if we did not

receive a direct negative statement. In that way we did get to interview some people who at first seemed uninterested. Persistence and making ourselves available was crucial in this sense, but only combined with sensitivity and respect towards people's decisions.

In the case of Križevici, one more difficulty got added: demographics. In Križevici there are less non-returnees to interview, as more people have actually returned, and from those not returning most (200 families) are abroad. This means there were fewer doors to knock on and on which to insist. And that decreased the chances of the snowball process. The difficulty increased even more due to the coincidence with the month of Ramazan (since 13th September until 14th October including Bajram), when many people fast and feel weak, visiting and guests multiply, and women spend the whole afternoon busy preparing the *iftar*. So, many interviews were postponed or excused for after Bajram.

(8) *Adressing the gender bias.* Taking the HH as the interview subjects meant that women were to be interviewed only in cases of female-headed households (FemHH), namely widows and separated women. The field strategy allowed nonetheless having a grasp not only of women's voices, but also of their interaction with the heads of the household. This was so, firstly, because during the interviews women (the interviewees' wives, grown-up daughters or mothers) would usually be present all throughout the interview taking care of hospitality costumes, i.e. serving coffee, making the place comfortable, etc. They would almost invariably become active participants in the interviews in two ways: providing data that the husband could not recall such as dates, family members' names or ages, and so on; and commenting on the questions and on the answers provided by the interviewee. This interaction provided a privileged insight into the internal dynamics of family discussion, even if imperfect as a result of distortions due to the researcher's presence.

In general discussions arouse very frequently and very openly. Disagreements were especially noticed and emphasized regarding, for instance, key questions about the decision to return, security issues or perceived Serbs' attitudes. Besides that, I as a female had preferential contact with women, due to cultural constraints and habits, which provided plenty of opportunities for informal contact and conversations that complemented that initial insight. Such informal contacts were complemented by active involvement in various women projects within different local organizations.⁹

In the second location of research, Križeviči, nonetheless, a notable deviation from the HH strategy occurred due to the peculiarities of the terrain. The initial entry in Križeviči occurred mostly through female contacts. Such contacts were in a position to facilitate connections with other women, but not so easily with men. They were also willing to accept being interviewed, as a result of personal contact and personal requests, but not so willing or able to pass the responsibility along to other (male) members of their families and neighbourhoods. Parallel efforts were made to establish direct contacts with male members of the community, independent of the original female contacts, but most of them did not provided the desired results. As a consequence, various women were interviewed in Križeviči (only one in Cerska) who did not hold the HH status but were instead the wives of the head of the household. The women interviewed under these premises were nonetheless able and willing to describe the household internal process of decision-making and their husbands' considerations, in such a way that the key information to be provided by the HH as the target subject of the interview was closely proxied. Furthermore, although these interviews represent a deviation from the proposed research strategy, they also help to fill in the gender-based gap, as these female interviews usually

⁹ These include UHD Prijateljice, Viva Žene y Snaga Žene. I had a specially intense and extensive involvement with the Women's Clubs of Prijateljice, constituted by groups of displaced women in Tuzla and returnee women in different areas of Republika Sprska.

took place without the husbands being present, constituting a perfect complement in order to check the reliability of the insights provided by male interviews and by women's inputs in those interviews.

(9) *Addressing the age bias.* Targeting HH as the subjects of interviews meant also excluding youngsters from the sample. The voice of the youth did not find alternative channels, unlike the case of women, given that their participation in the interviews and their interaction with the researcher were much more restrained. This was mostly due to cultural norms and habits, such as the norm to respect and listen to adults' statements, compounded sometimes by overwhelming curiosity about what the adults had to say.

All these issues were the most relevant in a context in which the researcher (unequivocally perceived as an 'international') had to overcome plenty of distrust barriers. In general, it was the HH's task to decide whether it was unproblematic and convenient to talk to the researcher, the kind and amount of information to be shared, and the degree and kind of contact to be maintained. Indeed, kids and youngsters have frequently been used by non-governmental organisations' staff as unintended informers when trying to assess the veracity of their parents' statements in application processes for assistance. Thus the usual trend to restrain the youngsters' voices was particularly emphasized in this context.

As a result, voicing of opinions and disagreements by the youth did not usually take place. Youngsters would frequently keep silent even when asked directly. Besides, cultural costumes also made it difficult to reach them in a more propitious context where they could talk openly and discuss their opinions. In short, the HH strategy resulted in almost totally missing out the youngsters' views. Such gap is problematic when assessing the process of return, in as much as the younger generations will determine how endurable the return and attached trends will be in the future, thus being a key part in characterizing some of the outmost results of violent conflict. Their lack of voice in the

research is a realistic reflection of the reality of return, as they do not have, in general, a voice of their own on the current decision whether to return or not. Still, assessing their views and opinions against those expressed by their predecessors was of great interest for the general objectives of this research. This was partly achieved through my engagement with various youth projects and my participation in social events that gave me opportunity and a better ground to interact with the youth.¹⁰

The HH strategy was again relaxed in the second location, Križeviči, in order to help bridging this gap, and four interviews were conducted with younger members of the household (HH's sons). These interviewees are not such a good proxy as wives, given that usually they do not have as good access to all the information and all of the decision-making process. Still, they did have and offered firsthand knowledge of the process as members of the household. Table 1 summarizes the presence of non-HH among interviewees.

Table 1. Position relative to head of the household

	Frequency	Percentage
Head of the household	48	77,4
Son	4	6,5
Spouse	10	16,1
Total	62	100,0

¹⁰ Among others, I participated in the '*Školški projekat*' of UHD Prijateljice, which took place in targeted schools and high schools from the north-east region of the country, across the two political entities of the country. This allowed me to have contact with both returnee and non-returnee children and teenagers, as well as with domiciles and remainees (see Chapter 1). I also became volunteer in the community centre of Simin Han, a centre particularly engaged in youth-related activities, in an area whose current population is mostly composed of Bosniak displaced people from the north-east region in Republika Sprska. I also interacted intensively with the youth centre in Križeviči, one of the two research sites.

Heads of household constitute over three fourths of the sample. Together with wives, who are the best possible substitute, they amount to over 90% of the sample. The sample from Cerska reflects the initial HH strategy, with only one non-HH (one spouse), which means that 96% of the sample are heads of household. The Križeviči sample is more problematic in this regard, as the percentage of HH descends to 60%. The rest of sample is composed by 9 spouses (27%) and 4 sons (12%). In Cerska, where women were interviewed only as a result of being heads of household, 83% of women in the sample hold that status, while in Križeviči only 31%.

2.2. Data output

The research team carried out a total of 66 in-depth semi-structured interviews within the universe of study (pre-war Bosniak population of Cerska and Križeviči). The valid sample is reduced to 62 cases due to the elimination of the pilot interviews, which were not carried out with the standard questionnaire used in the rest of the interviews. These are constituted by: 18 in-depth interviews with returnee households and 11 with non-returnee households from Cerska, and 23 with returnee households and 10 from non-returnee households from Križeviči. The duration of interviews varied from 1 to 8 hours and some of them were not totally completed. All answers and information flowing from these interviews have been coded and introduced in a series of datasets which allow for quantitative and qualitative analysis.

Data production was completed with informal interviews, including both key informants and potential interview subjects who finally declined or were not able to undertake the semi-structured in-depth interview. And it includes also profuse field notes and secondary data sources produced during participant observation and accompaniment of organisations.

Efforts were also made to obtain off-the-sample informal and formal interviews with cases falling outside the universe of study,

from different regions and local areas, and from different ethnic groups. This information was intended to complement the insights obtained from the systematic comparison between Križeviči and Cerska by expanding the scope of variation contemplated, and to complement the insights obtained from Bosniak population as a starting point suggesting directions for group differences and group comparison, as well as for the potential for generalizing any findings.

Among the efforts made in this direction, six in-depth interviews were carried out with individuals from four different locations and one different ethnic group (2 from Bijeljina, 1 from Bratunac, 1 from Srebrenica, 1 from Doboј, 1 Serb). The latter two interviews followed the standard questionnaire. Other efforts included contacts with returnee associations in Bijeljina (north-east) and Bihać (north-west), informal interviews with Serb returnees in Tuzla Canton and Serb IDPs in Srebrenica, and continued interaction with returnee and non-returnee kids and youngsters from all ethnic groups in the whole north-east region through the Školški Projekat of UHD Prijateljice. Finally, informal interviews and secondary data were gathered from different organisations working with returnees and displaced people from all ethnic groups in different areas including: Mostar (south-west), Trebinje (south), Banja Luka (north-west), Odžak (north) and neighbouring regions such as Knin in Croatia and Kosovo.

Interviews were in most cases preceded and/or followed by extensive and repeated interaction with the interviewee subjects, with their households and with their immediate surrounding. Data production was completed with informal non-structured interviews – these include interviews with key informants and with potential interview subjects who finally declined or were not able to undertake the semi-structured in-depth interview – as well as off-the-sample in-depth interviews conducted with subjects from different regions and local areas, and from different ethnic groups. Data production includes also profuse field notes and secondary data sources at the national, regional and local levels.

3. Confronting the cup of coffee and trying not to spill it

3.1. *Balancing power relations*

Having into account the sensitivity of the context and of the data I intended to produce, a particular issue of concern was the power unbalance in the relationship between the interviewees and the researcher, following the researcher double status as an 'international'¹¹ and as a scholar. This double status had the potential to distort the process of data production in very important manners.

The breach between potential informants and scholar researchers – i.e. in the language they use, in the parameters of what is important and what is not – tends to be particularly large in these post-conflict scenarios, moreover if the researcher is actually a foreigner with little connections with the culture, social patterns and recent history of violence in which informants are embedded. Frequently informants are suspicious or have no real clue of the way the information they are providing is going to be treated like by academic scholars – which is compounded in the case of low educated people –, whether they will tell 'their truths' or just the opposite, whether the output of such scholar research will have some use or not, apart from the particular benefit accrued for the researcher, and so on. Moreover, international researchers tend to be invariably perceived as members of the humanitarian community, or as potential intermediaries with it, and thus the

¹¹ This is the label used for encompassing members of the UN-system, other international agencies and NGOs, international diplomats, journalists and researchers, and in general all international personnel (from outside the region) who were deployed in Bosnia during and after the war as part of the peace enforcement, peace-keeping and peace-building efforts at the international level. 'Internationals' are thus members of a category with wide powers within Bosnia-Herzegovina, and most importantly directly managing most of the international assistance flowing to the country.

information conveyed may be distorted by the stakes perceived to be in place.¹²

In this sense, it was essential to attempt to balance the relationship as much as possible by inverting the power unbalance, trying to make the people under research at least partial owners of the process by having a larger control over it. This is one of the trademarks of psychosocial interventions and ethnographic methods of fieldwork research can also help enormously to attain this goal.

Psychosocial intervention with survivors of violence is a relatively recent tradition in the intersection between psychology, psychiatry and humanitarian intervention (Pérez Sales 1999). Rather than a specific type of intervention, it amounts to a cross-cutting approach giving centrality to the notion of dignity of the persons and communities targeted for intervention. This includes a series of methodological approaches – i.e. conducting a needs and strengths assessment, active participation in the design of these and other activities by the persons and communities affected, dropping out stigmatizing and foreign labels and concepts such as ‘victims’ or ‘trauma’ that may collide with persons’ personal identities and with their resilience mechanisms – but it implies above all working in a relationship of mutual trust and honesty, balancing power relations between the affected populations and the practitioners providing assistance.¹³

Firstly, our introduction to the communities and the introduction of the project was not limited to a verbal explanation in our first visits, but rather it was a continuous process, with special prevalence in the period of preparation within each community. In that period we would visit families and villages undertaking simple chats and informal presentations. Visits were

¹² For instance, conveying some particular information might actually compromise the interests of the informants in this sense (e.g. revealing that they do not perfectly meet the criteria for some type of assistance to which they are applying).

¹³ See e.g. Summerfield (1999), Beristain (2000), García del Soto (2008), Wessells (2008), Maya Villazón *et al.* (2009).

almost daily and every opportunity was taken to encourage people to openly comment on their impressions about the feasibility of the project, whether they considered it a good idea, suggestions for us to take into account, and specially on the doubts and concerns that it could create them.

People would very openly pose the kind of concerns provoked by the gap between scholars and common people mentioned above. And these were great occasions for us¹⁴ to discuss and reflect on people's own terms on the nature, intention and details of the research. Some people kept showing some degree of suspicion or disapproval, but most people broke a first barrier of reticence when given the opportunity to voice their concerns and when provided some answers that they accepted as somehow reasonable.

They were explained in very simple terms of the nature of scholar research and the kind of output that can be expected from it: where and how will it be published, who will read it, what will they do with it. Also that results and what will the conclusions look like cannot be known in advance even for the researcher. However, it was explained, if research is correctly carried on, counting with all possible relevant information, the results and conclusions should never distort the reality, and precisely for that reason it was important to have their voices heard. Finally, it was explained that the interest of the research, and the main intention of the researcher in undertaking it, was coming to understand the realities that they had went through. And that, although the outputs of such research would probably not be of any direct use for them – except for leaving a written record of their hardships, strenths, needs and wishes – they were intended to be of some use in the future for other people going through similar situations.

¹⁴ In this section I will frequently use the plural 'we' or 'us' since fieldwork activities and dynamics, especially at the beginning, were crucially a product of the team as a whole. The personal contributions of both Alis, the interpreter (and later on of Nedim), and Jovan, the first driver and guide, were as important as those of the actual researcher.

On the other hand, ethnographic methods of research require of an open approach to the realities of the communities which results the least intrusive. These methods give a more salient and leading role to the dynamics of the community, and a less prominent place to the researcher's predefined schemes and priorities. Through participant observation and informal chats and interviews, our presence in the communities got extended to natural scenarios of interaction – e.g. invitations for coffee, informal encounters, celebrations – in which people had a larger control of the situation, and of the parameters in which our interactions took place. Thus, making interviews only a small part of the interaction was crucial in facilitating those same interviews.

Since the beginning the idea of carrying out in-depth interviews was put on the table, and the possibility (and invitation) for everyone to undertake them. But no pressure was put on anyone to actually do it, and we rather encouraged simply consideration of it and discussion about it: for instance, whether it would be too time-consuming and how could that problem be circumvented; whether they would feel comfortable answering questions for hours and the possibility that they could simply stop the interview at any point or ask to skip some questions; the kind of questions being asked; and so on. Thus, they were not put in a position where they had to decide to undertake the interview or not. They became rather owners of such process of decision, which was also a truly informed process of decision. By the time someone took the decision to undertake the interview (which could be an immediate decision or a decision requiring months) I was usually confident that the person felt informed enough, and somewhat in control of the situation.

Similarly, during the interviews we encouraged their personal contributions and searched to approximate the interviewing dynamics as much as possible to the dynamics of a normal conversation. We always made it clear that we did not intend taking precedence over other duties and social activities of relevance. Interruptions were also frequent due to neighbours visits, social habits and daily domestic activities upon which we

never intended to take precedence. And maximum respect and flexibility for the whatever number and duration of interruptions the interviewee required or desired was ensured.

Crucially enough, by undertaking participant observation, the researcher brought herself to a more 'vulnerable' position, one in which she was more of a passive subject following the dictates of the more acquainted people from the community.¹⁵ For instance, people would advise me whether, when and how to go to the mosque in order to meet some people there. They would also encourage me to wear some traditional clothes and teach me some of their religious rituals. They would applaud my efforts with the language and help me with my learning. They would also invariably make jokes about it and pride themselves of my advances. They would also feel enabled to make questions about my personal beliefs or my personal life, for instance. Balancing the power relations helped in this way enormously in improving mutual knowledge and in building mutual trust.

2.2. Trust and honesty

Trust building was crucial in order to overcome the reasonable barriers of fear and mistrust in post-conflict contexts, as well, or especially, towards foreign researchers and foreign personnel in general. Many common people in Bosnia have been overexposed to such personnel, not always in positive ways, which has tended to produce, at the minimum, much disengagement and habits of (mutual) manipulation. Overcoming this barrier was fundamental not only in order to avoid distortions and informational gaps, but also in order to facilitate acceptance to undertake the long and very demanding (in terms of time, effort and emotional

¹⁵ As an elder Bosniak man advised anthropologist Tone Bringa: "When you go back among those people [in London], tell them about us and what you have learned among us. But when you are here among people who know better than you, do not speak but listen" (Bringa 1995: xvi).

engagement) in-depth interview which was used as the main research instrument.

Getting people to become participants rather than mere subjects of the research was crucial in breaking this gap by balancing the relationship and improving mutual knowledge. This facilitated circumventing reticence to undertake the interviews or simply establishing contact with the researcher. But still, it was most important that a relationship of mutual trust developed between the researcher (and the interpreter) and the informants. And the crucial test for this laid in what the actual intentions and interest of the researcher were thought to be. In this sense, it was most important to be honest about the potential benefits that the research could accrue for my academic career. Most people were very aware of such circumstance, whether right or wrong, and it was important to acknowledge what were those potential benefits. At the same time, the main challenge was to convince people that that was not the main interest driving the research, but that the main interest laid rather in its intrinsic value.

The way to attain this was most natural. Firstly, questioning about the project and even about the researcher's personal life, many of the people in the communities soon came to realize the important costs of the project and the important effort it entailed. Another important signal of genuine interest was the extensive period of time I devoted to each location,¹⁶ and the large amount of time I dedicated to sharing their time and experiences – sometimes even their work in the fields – frequently without realizing activities explicitly aimed at research. These included repeated visits of courtesy, very importantly, also once the interviews had been realised. In the repeated visits we would bring along the pictures that Alis used to take of the families, their houses and their children, and we would often see them hanging in the walls or on the shelves when we returned the next time. They also appreciated enormously the efforts I made to learn the

¹⁶ Overall, we spent almost one year in each location with almost daily visits.

language, to understand and to pay respect to their culture and customs – for instance, by adopting some of them, such as bringing a hospitality gift when visiting a house, which was a customary combination of coffee, sugar and some sweets.

Secondly, we also developed a genuine interest for all of the families we came to know. We got interested on their health problems and their evolution, on the school results of the children, on legal issues they had pending, and so on. We also got involved in some occasional minor tasks, such as driving some of our interviewees to some medical check-out, or picking up some girl from high-school on our way to the village. Although it was clear that we had no leverage or power in getting any assistance or help, we did everything in our hand to be useful to the families, also by taking advantage of our privileged mobile position and network of contacts. Our role typically consisted of pointing out the right institution or organisation to approach for some specific concern, and sometimes to facilitate the contact.¹⁷

These activities were our way of being thankful to the community, and, by going beyond the mere parameters of scientific research, they balanced our presence in the area by giving back something of what we received from the people. This rationale of mutual help became a most important basis of mutual trust. This relationship enormously benefited the research itself. To begin with, our presence in the area became widely tolerated and welcome. Very importantly, these activities also rendered first-hand information and experience about plenty of situations otherwise invisible to us, such as the simple experience of going to the doctor or of gathering all the documentation necessary to get

¹⁷ Some of these concerns were, for instance, how to get health insurance, legal assistance or information about veterans' rights to pensions. One of the greatest successes of this networking effort was facilitating a job offer for one of the persons we came to know, a specialized worker with very particular skills who was unemployed at the time. Our driver at the time was acquainted with the firm offering the job, which was having a hard time in finding the right person. We simply facilitated the firm with his details and put them in contact.

health assistance. But most importantly, we made ourselves recipients of people's trust and we reached a level of speech and areas of daily life and intimacy usually inaccessible for outsiders. The process was crowned by a twist in honesty, where people would correct or let us know aspects which they had kept silent or hidden at the beginning.

Although this could be discussed as a risk for scientific impartiality, neutrality and recommended non-involvement, I consider this option much more realistic and honest, on the one hand, and more efficient for the gathering of detailed individual data of high quality. As well as more ethic and appropriate when directly dealing with people who have suffered so much, and who can be expected to be in very vulnerable positions. These activities were preceded by and reinforced our awareness and sensitivity to the uncertainties and vulnerabilities affecting these populations, rooted at both the psychological and the socio-political spheres. Precisely the kind of uncertainties and vulnerabilities that are likely to produce important silences and/or distortions in the production of data. Besides making us more aware of them, and thus more able to circumvent them, these activities also made people feel much more comfortable and open to talk to us, thus minimizing the likelihood of such silences and distortions.

My conviction is that utter respect and sensitivity towards what these conditions entail is not only of enormous ethical importance but also convenient for research purposes. This kind of approach has the potential not only to improve the research at hand, but also to facilitate future research by improving the perception that common people have about this type of research in such contexts, frequently overexposed to outsiders' unengaged scrutiny.

2.2. Confidentiality

One of the basic requirements for getting reliable and valid data within interviews is the guarantee of confidentiality. This guarantee does not only ensure that none of the information provided will hurt the interviewee by getting to the wrong hands, but also that the interviewee will not talk as if talking to a potential audience. For this reason, although many interviewees stated that they had no problem in having their names openly displayed, it was important to insist that that would never be the case for due confidentiality reasons dictated by the research parameters.

A critical point for this confidentiality guarantee was the recording of the interviews. All interviewees were asked for permission to record the conversation, to which many of them opposed but many others did not. In any case it was essential to explain the confidentiality guarantees also for these recordings: how they would be stored in digital files under security password, and used only for translation (by someone blind to its origin) and for its analysis by the researcher. The recording would only start once we had coded all the personal data that could straightforwardly identify the person.

Once confidentiality guarantees were in place, the ideal situation would have left the interview as a matter of a simple conversation between the interviewee, the researcher and the interpreter. At this point, the mutual knowledge and mutual trust we had attempted to reach were crucial in making the interviewee feel comfortable and open to us, giving us honest and detailed answers to our questions. The structure of the questionnaire and the interviewing technique were also designed to facilitate and encourage this openness, as it will be discussed below.

However, in most occasions the situation was far from being this ideal one, since social customs almost guaranteed the presence of other members of the household (at the minimum, a wife, mother or daughter who would take care of hospitality customs, i.e. serving coffee and sweets) as well as of some neighbours and friends of the family. Even if we insisted in the necessity for

confidentiality and a quiet and isolated environment, the situation would keep repeating. On the one hand, many of them did not feel that the presence of those other persons did not break such an atmosphere of confidentiality and isolation. On the other hand, many of the persons present, especially neighbours and friends were frequently not invited. They just followed the very respected custom of showing up in the house at any moment without prior invitation. And it would have been just unthinkable to ask them to leave.

The presence of other household members was not a major concern, since most of the information asked in the questionnaire were common experiences and common knowledge for all household members. Still, it might have provoked some distortions in the interviewee's answers regarding attitudes and perceptions especially. Fortunately, these questions came at the end of the questionnaire. By that moment (typically after 3 hours of conversation), most household members tended to abandon the room to go back to their activities and we were frequently left alone with the interviewee.

The presence of neighbours and friends was especially problematic, since much of the information in the questionnaire was internal information about the household, and any foreign presence might have distorted the answers. But these tended to abandon the room and the house even earlier. Their initial presence was first of all a matter of communal hospitality and of welcoming to the research team, besides being in most cases driven by curiosity and in many cases by the wish to check out whether some assistance was being give out. Once all these concerns were met, interest for the rest of the interview (which they knew it would be very long) radically diminished, and they soon left. This was facilitated by the triviality of the initial part of the questionnaire, where we elaborated a detailed family tree that could take up to one hour to be completed in case of large families.

In any case, the initial presence of both household members and neighbours and friends had some added advantages of

relevance. To begin with, the presence of neighbours and friends facilitated direct contacts for future potential interviews. The close and intimate contact produced in the interviewing atmosphere, and the fact that they were making use of the hospitality of a common host, made it much more likely that they would accept (or encourage us) to come also to their place, and sometimes to undertake the interview. In a different vein, the presence of other household members was an important means for balancing the gender and age biases produced by the HH strategy (as already discussed), and for observing some of the actual household dynamics regarding discussion and decision making.

4. Transforming a cup of coffee into quality data

4.1. The in-depth interview structure. The questionnaire

A list of relevant variables and questions following the theoretical model and other relevant considerations was ready at my arrival to Bosnia. I kept working intensively on this list during the initial months of preparation, reviewing it on the light of all the newly acquired knowledge on the particularities of the context. I adjusted the questions and their phrasing to the reality surrounding me, in order to make them more culturally sensitive, more effective and efficient, and above all more appropriate and realistic.

I ended up with a 10 page-long document which I submitted to the interpreter and to a various other persons, mostly practitioners from NGOs and people with experience in the displacement and return processes, for comments and suggestions. Later on, I put it into test with four interviewees. From these pilot interviews I selected the final list of questions, considering those that worked the best, provoked the least problems and conveyed the most information, with a view to keep the questionnaire as short and efficient as possible. Using the reactions I observed in those pilot interviews (and in the comments I received) as a guidance, I also

designed at that point the most appropriate structuring for the questionnaire, paying attention to counterbalancing likely negative dynamics (i.e. initial reticence and tension, progressive boredom and tiredness) and to balancing the gamut of memories and emotions that the questioning was likely to elicit. The questions and their structuring should also help tackling with some backward-looking issues (see Chapter 3) and especially with distortions in memory retrieval provoked by present moods and emotions.

Finally, I discussed this refined version thoroughly with the interpreter, and I asked him to translate it into Bosnian. In this way we checked out first of all that he did perfectly understand all of the questions and the kind of information I intended to get with each of them. Secondly, we checked that all questions resulted reasonable and understandable to common people, even to those with a lower education level. In this regard, it was most important that the interpreter had clear what the targeted information was in each case. So in cases of confusion or misunderstanding he would be able to rephrase the question in the most appropriate manner. I asked a third person (an English professor with excellent command of the language) to back translate it, and some further refinements were added. The final document was 9 page-long, plus additional pages devoted to the family tree. The process was later on replicated for the non-returnee questionnaire, which was developed after finishing the bulk of returnee interviews in Cerska.

The final structure of the questionnaire looked as follows:

0. Family tree

This was frequently a surprise for the respondents, who expected mostly questions directly related to the war, to displacement and to return. Frequently this family tree became the longest part of the interview. This was so because, in talking about different family members one by one, interviewees tended to

evoke plenty of memories and details, not only about each concrete member, but about their lives in general. At the same time, these memories were not conditioned (*a priori*) by the expected framing of the interview (i.e. war disruption). Although important war related memories emerged, especially for those who had lost family members or who had suffered long periods of siege and misery, plenty of unrelated memories and details were elicited.

Opening with the family tree thus helped the interviewee enormously to relax and to acquire a more open attitude towards the interview. Due to its unexpected character, it put interviewee's mind away from the set of issues that he was likely to have in mind when facing the beginning of the interview. And most importantly, it elicited all kinds of memories and stories, both positive and negative, of most value for the research and also for balancing the initial mood of the interviewee. This initial information, most of which was spontaneously provided, facilitated also the rest of the interview by facilitating *ex ante* some required information and for giving a general framework to the more concrete answers provided later on.

The family tree covers 4 generations, since the respondent's parents down to her grandchildren, including siblings and nephews/nieces. Full details were taken only for the respondent's, her parents and siblings, her spouse and children.¹⁸ In the case of women, given the patriarchal system dominant in rural Bosnia, we let it open for them to choose which family they preferred to

¹⁸ I asked for:

- Name, year of birth and year of death if deceased
- Origin of in-laws and dates of marriage
- Highest level of education
- Occupation before and after the war
- Current place of residence (detailing since when)
- Year and place of burial if deceased
- Year of disappearance if missing, and desired place of burial
- Members of the household before and after the war

detail. Interestingly enough, most of them, especially in the case of widows, opted for their husband's.

1. Before the war (1.1. – 1.8.)

The family tree was followed by questions about the decade preceding the war, what was almost unanimously identified as the 'old good times' of Tito (and of the youth period of most of the interviewees). This elicited emotional and positive reactions from the interviewee, who besides had the family tree recent in her mind. At this point interviewees usually got especially relaxed and motivated, eliciting detailed memories of how was life in those times.

I began asking about the family's roots in the area of origin, and about personal memories of the place and the time before the war, including questions about the *komsiluk* (neighbourhood), a major social institution in Bosnia, before and after war, and in comparison to the place of displacement. I moved in to question about the economic situation of the household before the war. Special focus was given to the house in which they lived (how old/new was it, how long did it take to build it, whether they built it themselves), and to the role of agriculture in their lives both before and after the war.

2. War period (2.1. – 2.8.)

The questions on the war period were fewer and much more succinct, in an attempt to counterbalance the likely strong weight of war memories. The initial question was about their expectation of a war to happen (the answer was almost unanimously 'absolutely not'), asking then for the moment they realized it was reaching them, i.e. for the moment war began personally for them. Basic data followed about their time and route of departure with some subjective questions about: priorities, experiences of betrayal, and expectations of return since that moment.

I introduced then a question about good memories from the war which was inspired by previous stories I had heard from many of them and in common conversations, highlighting the ‘good moments’ of the war and particularly rewarding experiences lived in such a context. This was intended again to counterbalance the feedback process likely produced by the strong negative memories, trying to balance the general memory retrieval of those years and experiences. But, when the personal experience of the war was overwhelming, this question was difficult to make and the answer deepened the feeling and expression of horror. In view of this, I opted for skipping the question in cases where I had sufficient information to anticipate such reaction, in an attempt to avoid to the extent possible putting interviewees in a situation of high distress and possible re-traumatisation. In many cases, however, this question did elicit positive memories and it did ease this part of the interview.

3.-6. After the war

The most arduous part of the questionnaire was the one dealing with the displacement trajectory (residence, employment, financial situation) and with the process of return, beginning with the first news they received about the area of return, then the first visits, and finally the return process itself, where the questionnaire changed for returnees and for non-returnees. These were sections 3 to 6.

In these sections interviewees were brought to remember very concrete details, which they were able to produce in the majority of the cases. Otherwise, they would frequently search for them by asking other household members or by producing some written documentation that helped refreshing their memories.

Displacement (3.1. – 3.8.)

I began by asking about their initial reactions to the signing of the peace agreement, whether they did believe in it, and what were

their life plans conditioned to it. I then tracked down the places where the interviewee had lived since 1996, asking about the particular circumstances of each accommodation and its living conditions. Questions also included sources of income at the time, financial situation and health insurance status, which is inherently related to the source of income.

A group of questions tracked down the evolution of old and new ties of friendship and neighbourhood, as well as the evolution of their attitudes about staying or returning. At this point an open question was introduced asking what things they had missed the most about their place of origin.¹⁹ The answers to this question turned most emotive, and they gave a most valuable insight into the emotional twists of the previous answers.

Obstacles and bridges (4.1. – 4.2.)

After having questioned about their attitude towards return and about the positive things and memories about their place of origin, I moved into asking about the hurdles for return. Again, the question was made open, and then the options not mentioned were pointed out in order to check out all the items. Then I asked through which channels did they get informed about the situation in the area.

Visits and contact (5.1. – 5.6.)

The next group of questions related to their first visits back to their place of origin and the assessment of the security situation, together with the impressions they had on the attitudes of Serb people in the area. It included questions evaluating the attitude and functioning of the local powers (i.e. municipality and police forces).

¹⁹ The question was made open and I marked the answers spontaneously mentioned. When finished, I would point out the ones not mentioned and checked out all the items found affirmative.

Return (6.1. – 6.4.)

In this part I tracked down the process of return, its timing and conditions, giving special attention to community factors, such as how many people had already returned and the ties with them, and to the timing and conditions of reconstruction and assistance.

I ended by asking about expectations of a new war, and about the wish they had for their children, regarding where they would like them to spend their life.

7. Battery of items on emotions, attitudes and beliefs

At this point interviews had usually taken already almost three hours on average. I would then announce that the main part of the interview was finished and that the final part had a totally different dynamic. And that it would be finished in a few minutes. For some this was a sad announcement, but faced the announced new part with renewed curiosity and interest. For the majority the announcement came rather as a relief, since most of them got tired or impatient to move on. In this case, the announcement helped re-energizing them and re-focusing their attention.

This was important in order for them to correctly undertake the following questions, since we were moving from mostly semi-opened questions about concrete aspects of their daily lives into structured close questions where they simply had to choose a given option referring to more general attitudes and beliefs. There were four main batteries of questions: one related to return, where I voiced some of the most common (and opposing) views in Bosnia about the return process; another related to war, where I similarly voiced some of the views and explanations more commonly held; another battery related to the home link and the three processes composing it (familiarity, attachment and identity) referred to both the location of origin and the location of displacement; and finally a battery of items on negative beliefs about group circumstances focusing in five beliefs: vulnerability,

injustice, helplessness, mistrust, and superiority.²⁰ I repeated some of these items referred to 1991, in an attempt to assess impact of war-related events in those beliefs.

The non-returnee version of the questionnaire introduces only some minor changes to the phrasing of some questions and answer (e.g. using present tense instead of past tense when talking about the displacement area). The major differences with the returnees version are:

- Introduction of a 0.0. question about their current accommodation.
- Introduction of a sub-question in 2.7. regarding their attitudes and expectations regarding the possibility of returning in the future, as well as the basic reasons.
- Changes in questions about return process and reconstruction (6.2.-6.3.)

4.2. The interviewing method

(1) *Openness.* The interviewing method was very flexible, encouraging off-the-questionnaire contributions and informal discussion. Even though the interviews were structured and many of the questions had closed answers, the practice was very relaxed and open, so that the person would talk as freely as possible, as in a normal conversation. The ideal result was posing a question and having the person answer a few of the questions ahead without need to ask them. In most cases the interviewee would give details and data that contextualized and complemented the closed answers, illuminating many issues, and sometimes even raising some new ones or relating existing ones in an unexpected manner. Furthermore, in plenty of cases the interviewees or some member of the household produced, either during the interview or later on,

²⁰ This battery consists of the Individual-Group Belief Inventory developed by psychologist Eidelson (see Eidelson 2009).

graphic and written documentation related to the issues contained in the interviews.²¹ This documentation did not only supported and documented the interviewees' narratives, but most importantly it elicited further memories and improved the recalling exercise.

(2) *Translation and communication dynamics.* The interviews were made in English, with the interpreter translating both my questioning and the interviewees' answers. The family tree was directly elaborated by the interpreter, but for the rest of the interview, I posed the questions, he translated, and I filled the questionnaire and took notes. The method of translation evolved along time through the trial-error method. At the beginning we tried simultaneous translation, but this resulted confusing, it did not allow me to focus on the person's gestures, tone of voice, and other details, neither to pay attention to his words in order to advance my language skills and to try to understand on my own. It made the communication poorly fluent, but above all, terribly unnatural. Secondly, we tried with immediate translation, so that the interpreter would wait until the person finished his assessment, and then translate it all. This method turned out extremely difficult and non-reliable, as replies were frequently long and complex. The interpreter had to either interrupt the interviewee, which was an undesirable option, or he had trouble in translating absolutely everything, even if taking notes. The interviewee furthermore became bored, tired or anxious during the long periods of translation.

Finally, we opted for an intermediate method, in which the interpreter summarized in a structured manner the interviewee's replies: he translated absolutely everything that was directly related to the question, and also any concrete details (i.e. figures,

²¹ For instance, old pictures of the 'old good times of Tito' (with which all of them invariably got moved); pictures of their pre-war house, of what they found when they went back for the first time after the war, and of the reconstruction process; pictures of old Serb friends; old communist documents related to school, job, military service or bank accounts; and so on.

names, expressions, etc.), and he summarized more secondary thoughts and accounts. At this point it was crucial to count with the audio-recordings in order for me to be able to double-check all of the summarized answers later on.²²

This method became most adequate and efficient when my language skills radically improved. A few months after beginning fieldwork in Cerska I was able to check on-the-spot the interpreter's translation and ask for some missing points if necessary, or to discuss some ambiguity or confusion. By the time we began interviewing non-returnees I was perfectly able to understand most of what the interviewees answered, and we stretched then the method into translating just my questioning and those parts of the answer which I was unsure about or that needed to be stated more precisely. By the time we undertook fieldwork in Križeviči I did not require the interpreter anymore for common interactions and I spent much time in the community without him being present. This was an important reassurance having into account the inexperience of the new interpreter. It allowed us to concentrate his training on the correct translation of the questions, and the bulk of the off-the-questionnaire interactions and comments also during the interviews was realized without needing his intermediation.

(3) *Duration.* The duration of the interviews ranged from one hour to eight hours, over 3 hours on average in both locations. The initial target for the designed questionnaire was one hour-long interview on average. Keeping interviews as short as possible was important in facilitating the acceptance to undertake them and in facilitating the interviewing process, trying to avoid that people

²² Most of the interviews were audio-recorded, except when the person preferred not to, or if there was some technical problem. They were subsequently transcribed and translated by a third person blind to the identity of the interviewee.

got tired or anxious during its realization.²³ A shorter interviewing time diminishes the risk of the interviewee getting too tired, anxious or interrupted by duties and unexpected events. It lessens in turn any anxiety and rush in the research team to get short direct answers. And it leaves more room for added discussions, not directly emerging from the questionnaire, which enrich the content of the interview and the relationship with the interviewee. However, the pilot interviews made it evident that the target was overly unrealistic due to the degree of detail pursued. This was compounded by practical issues in the terrain. Cultural norms of hospitality and courtesy treatments extended importantly the rituals preceding, accompanying and followed the actual realization of the interviews. Interruptions were also frequent due to neighbours visits, social habits and daily domestic activities upon which we never intended to take precedence. Maximum respect and flexibility for the whatever number and duration of interruptions the interviewee required or desired was ensured.

The final duration of the interview widely varied from one interviewee to another, due to the open and flexible character of the interviewing method. Interviewees were always welcome to comment freely their answers and to provide as many detail as they wished, which they did to different extents. Informal parallel conversations and discussions did also frequently arise. They were invited also to comment on the very same questions, and to add new issues to the discussion.

One way to deal with too prolonged interviews, and one frequent result of it, was to carry out the interview in various shots, in different days. This amounted sometimes to a coping strategy against tiredness, but most of the times it was a necessary strategy – i.e. the interview had to be interrupted for some reason. This was a non-desirable circumstance given the risk that the continuation would not finally take place. Added interview shots

²³ A shorter duration also makes the field work obviously more efficient and productive, as the shorter the interviews, the more of them is feasible to realize.

also involved an increased duration and a higher investment of resources, both from the research team and from the interviewees. They involved for instance the repetition of hospitality rituals. Fragmented interviews also run a higher risk of disruptions in the internal fluidity of the interview. For instance, the researcher, the translator and the interviewee might forget some aspects already commented, thus becoming redundant or incoherent. But this was sometimes a convenient strategy in order to cope with too prolonged interviews risking excessive tiredness from the interviewee and the interviewing team.

Table 2. Time invested in each in-depth semi-structured interview

N	Valid cases	58
	Missing cases	4
Average		3:46
Median		3:45
Mode		4:00
Standard Deviation		1:38
Minimum		1:00
Maximum		8:00
Percentiles	25	2:30
	50	3:45
	75	4:22

(3) *Incompletion.* The incompleteness of interviews is obviously an outcome to avoid. Sometimes it occurred as a result of an interruption due to some external event or due to an excessive duration of the interview after which there was no continuation. Sometimes the interviewee preferred to skip some part, most of the times as a result of tiredness. This was most frequently the case with the final part of the questionnaire, when interviewees were the most tired.

Sometimes I myself decided to skip some parts considering special circumstances. For instance, if I was aware of strict time constraints on the side of the interviewee, I preferred to skip secondary questions in order to be able to reach all the most relevant ones. Also in many cases I considered convenient to skip questions that might sound as redundant given some previous answer by the interviewee (even if it was not) when I observed signals of growing impatience, in order to avoid negative dynamics that could impair on the rest of the interview. Finally, I also skipped sensitive questions whenever I had reasons to believe that they could put the interviewee under high stress, especially in the case of persons displaying symptoms of severe trauma and elders of weak health. In all these latter cases, repeated interactions with the interviewees and other household members provided information valuable in filling those gaps at least partially.

Table 3 shows the main descriptive statistics referring to the duration, fragmentation and incompleteness of interviews. From this table it can be inferred that the improvement in language and interviewing skills across time was noticeable, cutting the minimum and the maximum duration of interviews in Križeviči by half an hour and one hour. The rate of incompleteness also descended in Križeviči. Partly related to this, in Križeviči many more interviews got fragmented into different shots, i.e. after interruptions the team still succeeded in continuing the interviews later on. Still, the average duration suffered no changes, which means that the team's particular skills did not strongly influence this, but just the characteristics of the questionnaire and the interviewing method.

500 / *Return after violence*

Table 3. *Comparison of interview statistics between Cerska and Križevici*

	Cerska (2006)		Križevici (2007)	
Time invested per interview				
Average time invested per interview		3:53		3:39
Minimum time invested per interview		1:30		1:00
Maximum time invested per interview		8:00		7:00
Interview was carried out in one or various shots				
1-shot interview	24	83%	20	59%
2-shot interview	5	17%	12	35%
3-shot interview	0	0%	2	6%

Annex 3.2. Questionnaire

Note: This is a compressed version of the real questionnaires used in terms of space.

I. RETURNEE QUESTIONNAIRE

CASE NUMBER: _____ *Presentation of researcher and project* **Date – Time:**
Original location: _____ **Address:** **Municipality:**
Present location: _____ **Address:** **Municipality:**
Complete name: _____ **Position HH:** **Birth:**

FAMILY MAP

1.1. Since when have you/family lived in PLACE1?

.....
Where Period Reason

1.2. Did you ever live somewhere else (before war)?

1.3. What do you remember the most from life before the war (80s)? *Note elements, attitude*

.....
.....
.....

1.4. What kind of living did you make? (Let brief answer. Check the items brought. Ask for those not mentioned).

- | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| - Quite well-off | + Good savings | - Had car (___) |
| - Fairly well-off | + Able to make some savings | - Had no car |
| - Modestly | + No savings | |
| - Fairly poor | + Hardly meeting ends | |

1.5. What properties did you have in PLACE1 before the war? How many...

	House/Flat	Land	Business (what)
Since			
Legal status - Owned (us/member:.....) - Rented - State-employer (regime:.....) - Lent (friends/family) - Others:.....			
After war: - sold - lost right - destroyed – degree Reconstructed? - occupied Repossessed? When?			

1.7. Regarding the land:

How important was farming/collection/cattle in the living of the family?

- just as a complement
- covered most/all of our food needs
- sold in the market >>
- small complement to household income
- important income
- our basic income

Did you receive the help of neighbours, and vice versa?

- Definitely, it's a matter of custom
- Very frequently, it was quite common
- Sometimes, when it was really needed
- A few times that it was needed
- No, there was no need
- No, it didn't happen

(Not ask if "No, it didn't happen") In how many neighbours could you count for that?

- All of them, it was a matter of custom
- Most of them, it was the normal thing
- Only some people
- A few-None

1.8 .How frequently did your household receive visits from the neighbours in the house?

- Several a day
- One or two daily
- Much more
- Several a week
- One or two weekly
- + From all families around
- + From many families (__%)
- + From some (__%)
- + Only a few

Is it the same now?

- Just the same
- More
- Less
- Much less

2.1. Did you ever think that a conflict might occur?

- Absolutely
- Had some concern
- 0% - 50% - 100%
- As a remote possibility
- Not at all

2.2. In which moment did you realize war was happening and reaching here?

Day: Month: Year:

.....

2.3. When did you leave PLACE1? In which places and for how long did you stay afterwards?

Day: Month: Year: Towards: Conditions:
 Day: Month: Year: Towards: Conditions:
 Day: Month: Year: Towards: Conditions:
 Day: Month: Year: Towards: Conditions:

2.4. Was the rest of the family with you all the time?

- With me all the time

- Who: Where: Period: News (frequency):
 When reunited: Where:
 - Who: Where: Period: News (frequency):
 When reunited: Where:
 - Who: Where: Period: News (frequency):
 When reunited: Where:
 - Who: Where: Period: News (frequency):
 When reunited: Where:

2.5. Were people who you knew from before responsible for violence or persecution against you, your family, friends or neighbours?

- None that I know
- One or two
- A few
- Quite a few

2.6. What were your top priorities during the years of the war?
 (allow for different periods)

.....
 1. 1. 1.
 2. 2. 2.
 3. 3. 3.

2.7. Any good memory from that time?

.....
 Did someone's behaviour surprise you for the good?
S/B/C
 And for the bad?
S/B/C

2.8. Did you ever think you might not ever return? (Let brief answer and check out)

- Never, I was **clear I would**
- Always, I **thought I wouldn't**
- I **had doubts/shifts** all the time
- I thought I would, but
- I thought I wouldn't, but
- I had doubts, but changed my mind in:
- changed my mind in:
- changed my mind in:
- For good
- had doubts in:
- had doubts in:
- For bad

3.1. When war was over (1996) did you still think more violence could still happen?

- No
- Yes. Until when had this worry?.....

3.2. What were your plans when war ended?

.....

.....

.....

3.3. Where did you live at that moment (1996)? Did you have any other accommodation until you returned?

D1. Where: URBAN/RURAL Period: With whom:

- House - Owned/Rented/Lent/Hosted (S/B/C) >> RR:
- Flat - Squatting/A.A.
- Room in - State provided (regime:.....)
- CC (kind:.....) Any problems or **limits** to stay as long as you needed?.....
- Others:..... Any **requirements** to get it/stay there?.....

.....

- For us alone
 - Shared with ____ families, ____ persons
 - __Unknown __B - Water
 - __Friends __S - Electricity
 - __Neighbours __C - Own bathroom
- Worst thing about it:
- Best thing about it:

-Pensions -retirement -widow/lost member -disabled -other				
-Student				
-Housewife				
What were the main sources of survival of the household? Rank1-5				
Stable jobs				
Occasional labour				
Autonomous/business (.....)				
Farming (domestic // market				
Pensions				
Help from -family (where:.....) -friends (where/origin.....)				
Assistance from -humanitarian organisations/other kind -government (State - Fed - RS)				

Since the end of the war, were you or anyone in your household entitled to...?	In the Fed	In the RS	Where able to collect/receive it	Problems in transferring/collecting it in Fed/RS? (<i>until</i>)	Different amount/conditions?
Pension - retirement () - widow/lost () - disabled () - other ()					
Medical - insurance - benefit					

3.6. People from PLACE1 living around PLACE2? ()

WITH MOST A FEW

- In very close relationships
- In good relationships
- In weak relationships

How many stay still there? ()

During and after war, did you/someone in your family establish new friendships similar to the old ones?

FROM PLACE1 OTHER

- Yes, even better
- Yes, similar
- Not the same
- Not at all

Contact with those displaced in other areas/abroad?

WITH MOST A FEW

- Constant, fluent, frequent
- From time to time
- Occasionally/in specific occasions

Did the old relationships changed? MOST-ALL A FEW - NONE

- Not at all, just the same
- Grew stronger, brighted in hard times
- Got distant
- Ceased

How many of those old friends have...?

- returned
- resettled somewhere else
- already lived somewhere else
- deceased

3.7. How did you feel about the possibility of not coming back? 1996-7 1998-2000 2001-2005

1. I did never consider that possibility
2. Terribly sad and distressed
3. Sad, but it wasn't so important, other concerns were first
4. I didn't care that much about returning, just about doing well
5. Fine, indeed I didn't wish to return

3.8 What did you miss the most, if something at all? (Let brief answer first)

<i>a bit* a lot** terribly*** (Then Rank-up-3)</i>		
- The family being together		
- The friends		
- The familiarity, we all neighbours knew well each other		
- The land, the farming work and countryside		
- Things like the weather, the smell, the colours		
- Disposing of a place which is ours		
- Disposing of a place which has so long been ours		
- Being in the place where my family has so long lived- been buried		
- Being in the place where I spent/invested my whole life		
- The customs and character of the place (way to talk, way to relate, way to pay visits, to help...)		

4.1. What problems did you have in your head when considering return to PLACE1? (ONLY READ GREY ROWS)	<u>1996-7</u>	<u>1998-9</u>	<u>2000-1</u>	<u>2002-3</u>	<u>2004-5</u>
INSECURITY <i>Check X, then rank3</i>					
- mines <i>Of the 3, check X</i>					
- tensions with local people					
- tensions with new neighbours (Serb ref)					
- presence of military displayed in the area					
- police forces and other local authorities					
- bandits (thiefs..)					
NOT HAVING A PROPER PLACE TO LIVE IN	UNTIL...				
* <u>destroyed/damaged/fine</u>					
- lack of assistance					
- lack of own resources					
* <u>occupied</u>					
- lack of any procedure/decision					
- no implementation of decision					
- left in very bad state					
* <u>lost right</u>					
DIFFICULT TO ENSURE A LIVING THERE					
- difficulty of making a living out of farming					
* no means/funds					
* no knowledge					
- <u>difficulty of having a job</u>					
* <u>general situation</u>					

* discrimination					
- ensuring pension payment/other benefits					
WHAT EDUCATION AVAILABLE FOR THE CHILDREN					
- too far					
* too hard, inconvenient					
* too expensive					
- curriculum available					
- professors and atmosphere					
- quality of the centre in teaching					
- conditions of the centre					
HEALTH ASSISTANCE					
- too far					
- lose benefits/insurances from the Fed					
- personnel and attention					
- quality of the centre					
(HOW MANY) PEOPLE HAD (NOT) RETURNED					
- number of people					
- who specifically					
OTHERS:					

(Removal of) armed military groups			
(Lack of) strong international military presence*			
Local authorities' attitude			
Cooperation between IC - local authorities			

*(if mentions *international forces)* **Would you have visited/returned if had there not been such presence?**

Yes/probably/not sure/No

(if not) **Do you consider the international military presence was required?**

Absolutely / important-positive/not really

Until: Since:

5.2. In the moment when you begun your visits (/returned if no visits), what were your impressions about the attitude of Serbs in the area towards you and other Bosniak returnees? How many would you have said at the time that would...?

Help you/support you

How hostile was the area?

Nobody	0%		
A few			
Pol.a.pol.a	50%		
Most			
All of them	100%		

Was that better or worse in the years before? Much better/better/just the same/worse/quite worse

DK/DA

And has it improved/worsened along time? Much better/better/just the same/worse/quite worse

DK/DA

Did you know of anyone who had any trouble, even if just insults or some kind of mistreatment (before you returned)?

When: From whom: What happened: Why:

When: From whom: What happened: Why:

Did you/anyone from your family ever suffer any?

When: From whom: What happened: Why:

When: From whom: What happened: Why:

5.3. When you heard about violent incidents in this or in other areas, can you say if you felt a lot, a little or not at all any of these emotions?

	VERY MUCH	MUCH	SOME	LITTLE	NONE
- Sorry, sad	-				
- Enraged, aggressive	-				
- Helpless, discouraged	-				
- Worried, fearful	-				
- Other	-				

5.4. Since 1996, most municipalities have gone through changes in government and policies, also regarding return. Which one of the following you think applies the most to MUNICIPALITY? If it has changed along time you can point that too.

PERIOD – what changed (elections, concrete people...)

1 ...was very active in promoting return and facilitating life here

2 ...publicly supported return, and did some things,

but not very supportive

3 ...simply did not oppose return, even if did not like it

4 ...was not formally against return, but in practice gave

as much trouble as could

5 ...would make anything to prevent us from staying, and

to give us a hard time

Have any of the municipal elections so far meant any change? 1997 2000 2004

.....

Has the presence of Bosniaks in the Assembly meant any change?

5.5. Right after the war, was the local police...? Changed at some point? Did the entry of Bosniaks made a difference for you?

- Mostly willing to help - Yes, a lot - Not really a difference
- Not willing to help - Yes - Not at all
- Giving trouble
- Really threatening

5.6. As far as you had understood, were there in 1996 any (suspicious) war criminals holding public positions in the area?

Y/N/DK

Until What happened with that persons?

- Local Assembly/Council
- Civil servants
- Police
- School
- Health centre
- Others

6.1. So, after your first visit in (DATE 5.1.), did you make more visits afterwards (before actual return)?

Y /N /Returned that very same time

(If Yes) - Couple/ Frequently/ All the time

6.2. When actually returned? Day: Month: Year: Permanently? Day: Month: Year:

With whom (family):

With whom (family):

Along /together with other people/households?

- Alone - we had decided/made the return together - Improvised shelter Y/N Period:
- Family (___) - it just happened that we were all returning - Place shared with others Y/N (___) Period:
- Friends (___) - they were already there Security - Company
- Neighbours (___) Working together - No better place

Was it...?

- Spontaneous
- Coordinated with other returnees
- Organized by:
 - local leaders (with international help)
 - international organisations
- + transport
- + military escort/monitoring
- + negotiations/meetings local authorities
- + material/reconstruction

Who behind:	Where:	Dwelling status:	Why:
When followed:			
Who behind:	Where:	Dwelling status:	Why:
When followed:			
Who behind:	Where:	Dwelling status:	Why:
When followed:			

(If still separated from any close member and not asked before) **Separation from the loved ones is always difficult, but people cope differently with that. Would you say that, in your case:**

- *You take it quite well, it is something natural // for the good // temporal
- *It makes you feel sad, but you are doing ok
- *It makes you be very sad and worried most of the time

Approximately, **how many families already** returned at that point? People? Kids?
And returning **at the time/planning** to return? People? Kids?

And among these people who were here/returning with you, were there (for you)...?

- Inspiring examples (courage, dignity, progress)
- Clear leadership
- Great moral support
- Good social life
- Great cooperation
- + Very good friends of you
- + Family
- + Very respected persons (before/during war)

6.3. When did you hear about the first offers for reconstruction assistance? Month/Year: _____ How:

Any problem to apply/get it?

When did you first apply for it (even if you didn't get it)? Month/Year: _____ Where/with whom: _____
 Month/Year: _____ Where/with whom: _____
 Month/Year: _____ Where/with whom: _____

When did you get it? Month: _____ Year: _____

- full assistance
- only materials

- Did you invest/contribute with your own resources?
 How much/to what extent? Assistance __% Yourself __%

- further **help from:** Neighbours Family here/else/abroad Friends here/else/abroad

Labour			
Funds			
Materials			

When finished rebuilding? Month: _____ Year: _____ **As before?**

- water
- electricity
- indoor bath
- n° rooms

6.4. Any assets/savings to begin the farming/cattle?

- cattle
- seeds and agriculture material
- machinery
- savings

When heard about the first offers for assistance?

When applied?

When got it?

Insufficient Something to begin Enough to begin

Do you think that assistance has been well targeted and distributed? Do you think you have been well informed?

Y/N

- Authorities: local / entity / state
- Returnees representatives
- Implementing organisations
- International organisations / donors

Y/N

- Authorities: local / entity / state
- Returnees representatives
- Implementing organisations
- International organisations / donors

Would you like your children to stay here?

- Yes
- Not really
- Not at all

Do you think that conflict might happen again?

- Absolutely
 - Have some concern
 - As a remote possibility
 - Not at all
- 0% - 50% - 100%

People have different feelings and opinions about returning. How close do you feel to the following?

It's unfair that people were pushed out of our homes, and this is one reason to return	1	X	2	I don't care about the results of the war, I really just care about my life and my family's
Because of all that happened, coming back to this place made no real sense	1	X	2	Because of all that happened, returning made much more sense
After so many years away, we should have been allowed/helped to continue with our lives where we were	1	X	2	No matter how much time passed, I would have returned here sooner or later
I would have never left PLACE1 if not for the war	1	X	2	I might have left PLACE1 sooner or later, anyway
We can all live together side by side as before	1	X	2	I don't think that it is possible, or desirable, that we live side by side just as before

People have different opinions and views about the conflict. How close do you feel to the following?

No single group as such is to be blamed, only individuals	1	X	2	Each group should admit and bear responsibility for what was done in their names
All groups bear similar responsibility for war	1	X	2	Some groups bear more responsibility than others
This war was more about people wanting to take benefit	1	X	2	This war was more about a long history of previous hate and violence

About PLACE1	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I AM THE PERSON I AM BECAUSE I'VE LIVED/GROWN UP IN THIS PLACE					
How did you feel (moment of returning)					
It was very easy to know what was going on, who was who, where to find hem					
I had more things in common with people from here than with any other					
I didn't feel as a stranger					
I cared immensely about this place					
Many people here really cared about me					
Many people here knew me and knew who I am					
I felt better here than in other places					
I felt sad and nostalgic while away from here					
I got anxious and distressed while away from here					
This was home for me					

About PLACE2	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I AM THE PERSON I AM TODAY BECAUSE I HAVE LIVED THERE					
How did you feel (in the moments before returning)					
It was very easy to know what was going on, who was who, where find them.					
In that moment, I had more things in common with people there than any other					
I didn't feel as a stranger					
I cared immensely about that place					
I cared immensely about the people there					
Many people there really cared about me					
Many people there knew me and knew who I was					
I felt better there than in other places					
I felt sad and nostalgic when left					
I got anxious and distressed when left					
It was home for me					

<p style="text-align: center;">Now, I'm going to read a few sentences that may coincide or not with what you thought about NATIONAL GROUP <u>in the moment when you returned</u>. So you can agree or disagree with them. So, in that moment...</p>	Strongly agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I believed our safety was uncertain.					
I believed other groups were often unjust to us.					
I believed we had very little control over our future.					
I believed we should be suspicious of other groups' intentions.					
I believed my group was somehow better than other groups.					
I believed that we must be constantly alert for possible danger.					
I believed other groups criticized us unjustly.					
I believed other groups mistreated us.					
It was hard to be optimistic about our future.					
I believed other groups would try to deceive us if given the chance.					
I believed that it was important for us to do better than other groups.					
I believed that my group should be better positioned in this society.					
I believed that the things most important to us were at risk.					
I believed that my group's efforts often went unrewarded.					
I believed that my group's sufferings often went unrecognized.					
I believed that our fate was in the hands of others.					
I believed my group generally should not trust other groups.					
I believed my group's contributions to society were more valuable than others'.					
I believed other groups had a feeling of superiority towards my group					
I believed other groups had a feeling of dislike towards my group					

<p align="center">Now, I'm going to repeat a few of these questions, but <u>referring to the year 1991</u>, referring to what you thought at that time. <u>So, in that moment, 1991...</u></p>	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I believed our safety was uncertain					
I believed other groups criticized us unjustly.					
I believed that our fate was in the hands of others.					
I believed we should be suspicious of other groups' intentions.					
I believed my group's contributions to society were more valuable than others'.					
I believed that my group's efforts often went unrewarded.					
I believed that my group should be better positioned in this society.					
I believed other groups had a feeling of superiority towards my group					
I believed other groups had a feeling of dislike towards my group					

Phone contact:

RESULTS TO BE SHOWN

NON-RETURNEES CONTACT → OUR CONTACT

II. NON-RETURNEE QUESTIONNAIRE (only variations)

0.0. Where do you live?

Period:

* House

* Room in

* Others:.....

* Flat

* CC (kind:.....)

	LAND	HOUSE		LAND	HOUSE
OWNED			RENTED		
<i>PREVIOUSLY</i> Since - Whose name -			<i>PUBLIC</i> Regime - Amount -		
<i>BOUGHT</i> S/B/C (RR) - When - Help-facilities - Loan length/amount -			<i>PRIVATE</i> S/B/C (RR) - Contract length/amount -		
<i>BUILT</i> Themselves? - Help? - How long took? - Help-facilities - Legalized-taxes-bills? - Loan length/amount -			LENT		
			<i>ALTERNATIVE ACCOM.</i> Regime -		
			<i>OTHER PUBLIC</i> Regime -		
			<i>PRIVATE</i> S/B/C (RR) -		
			HOSTED		
			S/B/C/ (RR)		
			SQUATTING		
			How - Regime -		

- For us alone
- Shared with ____ families, ____ persons
 - __Unknown __B - Water
 - __Friends __S - Electricity
 - __Neighbours __C - Own bathroom

Is it nice there?.....
 Best/Good thing about it.....
 Worst/Bad thing about it:.....
 Any problems or **limits** to stay as long as you need/want?.....

What are the sources of income and maintenance for your family?

.....

 Pensioners:.....

- Stable jobs Students
- Occasional jobs Housewives
- Self-employed
- Unemployed
-

Do you dispose of any other properties in PLACE2?

	FLAT / HOUSE / ROOM	LAND	BUSINESS
Owned (previously/bought/built/donated)			
Rented			
Lent (public/private)			
Squatting			

2.7. Did you think at the time that you WOULD return eventually? (Let brief answer and check out)

- **Always**, I thought I would - **Never**, I was clear I would not - I **had doubts/shifts** all the time
- I thought I **would**, but - I thought I **wouldn't**, but - I had doubts, but changed my mind in:
 - changed my mind in: - changed my mind in: - For good
 - had doubts in: - had doubts in: - For bad

And now, do you think you will return?.....

- No, for sure
- There are many obstacles on the way
- Maybe
- As soon as certain issues are solved
- Yes, for sure
- + In this or next year
- + In a few years
- + Someday, in a distant future
- + FOR TEMPORAL VISITS AND STAYS ONLY

Main reason

- For returning		
- For not having returned so far		
- For not returning		

4.3. What are the problems and concerns (about PLACE1) that have stopped you from returning//that would make return the more difficult for you? (ONLY READ GREY ROWS)	<u>1996-7</u>	<u>1998-9</u>	<u>2000-1</u>	<u>2002-3</u>	<u>2004-5</u>
--	---------------	---------------	---------------	---------------	---------------

- 5.5. Have you had contact with the MUNICIPALITY1 at all?**
- Yes
 - Not much
 - Not at all
- What kind:.....**
- Would you say they are:**
- willing to help
 - just professional
 - inefficient
 - obtrusive // troublemakers

- 5.6. As far as you know, is the local police...? Changed at some point? Did the entry of Bosniaks made a difference for you?**
- Mostly willing to help
 - Not willing to help
 - Giving trouble
 - Really threatening
-
- Yes, a lot
 - Yes
 - Not really a difference
 - Not at all

6.1. So, after your first visit in (DATE 5.1.), Why?

how often have you visited PLACE1?

- Not anymore
- Couple // few more times
- Occasionally
- Regularly:.....
- Day-long stay
- Weekend stay
- Medium-term stay (e.g. week)
- Long stays (e.g. summer)
- When I have to: documentation/requirements/.....
- Self-duties: family attention/clearing-maintenance/.....
- **Farming** works (cultivation / cattle / collection)
- Whenever I can:

6.2. Do you have family living there? Old/good friends?

Since when?

- Family
- Friends
- People returned around:
- People planning to:
- Ties:
households (), # elders (), # adults (), # children ()
- Ties:
households (), # elders (), # adults (), # children ()
- # households (), # elders (), # adults (), # children ()
- # households (), # elders (), # adults (), # children ()

And among these people who are returned/returning, were there (for you)...?

- + Very respected persons (before/during war)
- Inspiring examples (courage, dignity, progress)
- Clear leadership
- Great moral support
- Great cooperation
- Good social life

6.3. Do you have a place to stay/live?

- No. No house reconstructed
- As a guest at family's place:() houses
- Own house reconstructed: just us/shared (...)
- As a guest at friends' place
- A floor/part of family house
- A room of family house

PARENTS // SIBLINGS // OTHER

How many HH: _____ + water Did you live there before the war? Y/N
Persons: _____ + electricity Did it exist before? Y/N
Children: _____ + indoor bathroom

The best of it:.....
The worst of it:.....

BEFORE THAT?

Period // With whom // Frequency, length... // Tie, number of people, conditions

- Not staying
- Improvised shelter
- As a guest at friends' place
- As a guest at family's place
- A floor/part of family house
- A room of family house

(About own house)

- (Re)built
 - (Re)building
- Planning to (re)build
- Not for now/Not at all >>> WHY:.....
(Jump to questions on **reconstruction assistance**)

(when applies)

- a) **When (will/did) begin rebuilding?**..... Existed before? Y/N
- b) **When (will/was) finished for living?**..... The same?
- Lived there?

With reconstruction assistance?

- Not even applied >>> WHY:
- Applied, did not get it Month/Year: Where/with whom: How:
- Yes Month/Year: Where/with whom: How:
- Month/Year: Where/with whom: How:

Annex 4.1. Map of Bosnia-Herzegovina



Source: UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations Cartographic Section, available at <http://www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/map/profile/bosnia.pdf>

Annex 4.2. Secondary data on Bosnia-Herzegovina return process

Table 1. Displacement estimations based on registered voters in the 1997-1998 Bosnian elections

	Bosnia-Herzegovina		RS		Federation	
	Displaced	Total population	Displaced	Total population	Displaced	Total population
Serbs	231,851	667,271	19,686	435,468	212,165	231,803
Muslims	329,154	959,036	203,210	211,266	125,944	747,770
Croats	112,046	312,416	39,495	45,869	72,551	266,547
Others	42,483	126,749	14,473	43,232	28,010	83,517
Total	715,534	2,065,472	276,864	735,835	438,670	1,329,637

Source: (Tabeau *et al.* 2009 [2003]) - Table 4a. Minimum IDPs and Refugees (OSCE).

Table 2. Registered returns (repatriations + IDP returns) in 1996-2008

	Total UNHCR returns			IDP returns			Repatriation returns		
	BiH	% Fed	% RS	IDP/ Total	% Fed	% RS	Repat/ Total	% Fed	% RS
1996	252,780	72	28	0.65	62	38	0.35	91	9
1997	178,575	92	8	0.33	91	9	0.67	93	7
1998	139,570	90	10	0.21	66	34	0.79	96	4
1999	75,035	77	23	0.58	69	31	0.42	89	11
2000	77,954	57	36	0.69	51	40	0.24	75	25
2001	98,865	54	41	0.76	49	45	0.19	74	26
2002	107,909	53	39	0.59	47	43	0.33	64	31
2003	54,315	63	34	0.71	65	31	0.26	55	44
2004	20,390	56	42	0.87	55	43	0.12	62	38
2005	6,437	53	47	0.80	57	43	0.20	39	61
2006	5,603	43	57	0.75	52	48	0.25	16	84
2007	7,578	25	66	0.22	37	47	0.40	7	93
2008	1,681	24	76	0.43	43	57	0.57	10	90
Total	1,026,692	72	26	0.54	61	36	0.43	87	13

Source: UNHCR Statistics package. Personal elaboration. Percentages over 50% in bold.

Table 3. Registered returns (repatriations + IDP returns) in 1996-2008

	Total UNHCR returns	Minority returns			Majority returns		
		Min/Total	% Fed	% RS	Maj/Total	% Fed	% RS
1996	252,780	0.11	98	2	0.89	79	21
1997	178,575	0.30	79	21	0.70	94	6
1998	139,570	0.55	68	32	0.45	89	11
1999	75,035	0.87	51	41	0.13	95	5
2000	77,954	0.93	51	44	0.07	90	10
2001	98,865	0.95	51	40	0.05	88	12
2002	107,909	0.83	56	40	0.17	95	5
2003	54,315	0.70	41	57	0.30	90	10
2004	20,390	0.90	48	52	0.10	100	0
2005	6,437	0.82	33	67	0.18	87	13
2006	5,603	0.91	19	71	0.09	86	14
2007	7,578	0.93	18	82	0.07	100	0
2008	1,681	0.46	59	36	0.54	83	17
Total	1,026,692	0.11	98	2	0.89	79	21

Source: UNHCR Statistics package. Personal elaboration.

Note: percentages over 50% **in bold**.

Table 5. Comparison of minority returns with and without repatriations

	% Minority returns/ Total returns		Yearly % over minority returns	
	All returns	IDP returns	All return	IDP return
1996-1997	0.11	0.09	0.10	0.03
1998	0.30	0.44	0.09	0.06
1999	0.55	0.49	0.09	0.09
2000	0.87	0.68	0.14	0.16
2001	0.93	0.80	0.20	0.26
2002	0.95	0.80	0.22	0.22
2003	0.83	0.69	0.10	0.11
2004	0.70	0.59	0.03	0.04
2005	0.90	0.66	0.01	0.01
2006	0.82	0.62	0.01	0.01
2007	0.91	0.71	0.01	0.01
2008	0.93	0.82	0.00	0.00
Total	0.46	0.42		

Source: UNHCR Statistics package. Personal elaboration. Upward divergences **in bold**.

Table 4. IDP returns and IDP cross-entity return in 1996-2008

	IDP returns			Minority returns (entity level)			Majority returns (entity level)		
	BiH	% Fed	% RS	Min/ Total	% Fed	% RS	Maj/ Total	% Fed	% RS
1996	164,741	62	38	0.01	86	14	0.99	62	38
1997	58,295	91	9	0.08	86	14	0.92	92	8
1998	29,570	66	34	0.44	46	54	0.55	81	19
1999	43,385	69	31	0.49	45	55	0.50	92	8
2000	53,837	51	40	0.68	38	62	0.31	98	2
2001	75,212	49	45	0.80	41	59	0.19	96	4
2002	63,708	47	43	0.80	41	59	0.19	95	5
2003	38,695	65	31	0.69	56	44	0.30	96	4
2004	17,675	55	43	0.59	32	68	0.41	92	8
2005	5,164	57	43	0.66	34	66	0.34	100	0
2006	4,184	52	48	0.62	27	73	0.37	93	7
2007	3,815	37	47	0.71	25	75	0.29	92	8
2008	715	43	57	0.82	31	69	0.17	100	0
Total	558,996	61	36	0.42	43	57	0.57	77	23

Source: UNHCR Statistics package. Personal elaboration.

Note: Percentages over 50% **in bold**.

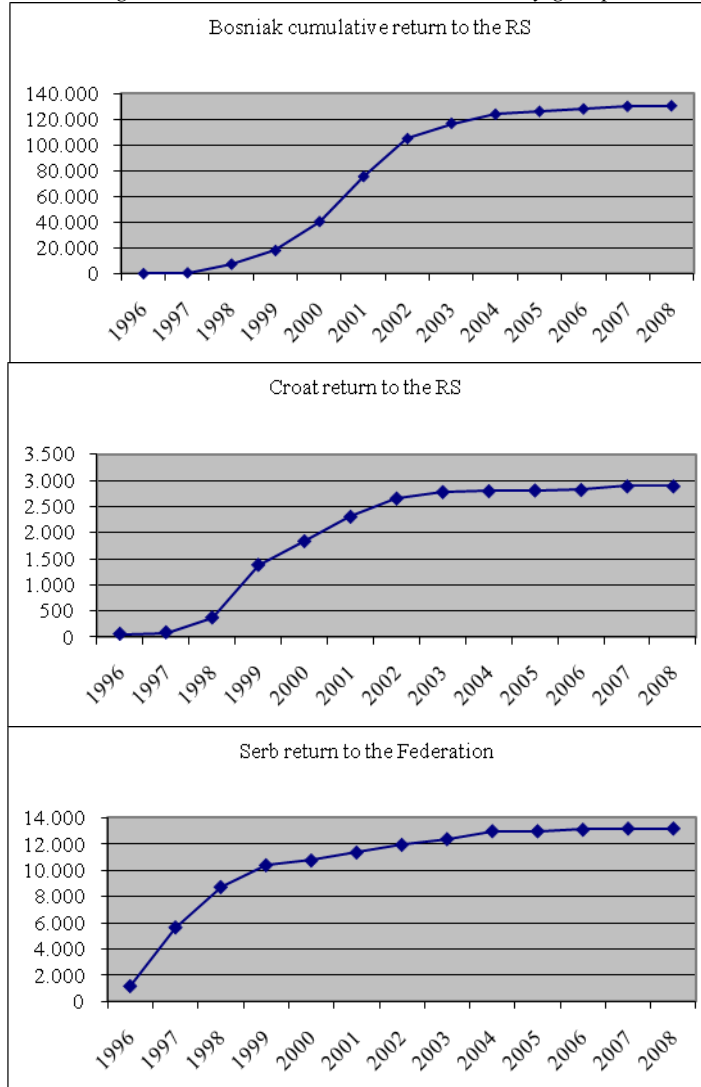
Table 6. Cross-IEBL returns in the period 1996-2008

	Bosniak returns to RS	Yearly increase	Cumulated Bosniak returns to RS	Cumulated %
1996	136		136	0.00
1997	626	4.60	762	0.01
1998	6,765	10.81	7,527	0.06
1999	10,587	1.56	18,114	0.14
2000	22,461	2.12	40,575	0.31
2001	34,952	1.56	75,527	0.58
2002	29,511	0.84	105,038	0.81
2003	11,803	0.40	116,841	0.90
2004	7,099	0.60	123,940	0.95
2005	2,220	0.31	126,160	0.97
2006	1,890	0.85	128,050	0.98
2007	1,980	1.05	130,030	1.00
2008	403	0.20	130,433	1.00
Total	130,433			

Source: UNHCR Statistics package. Personal elaboration.

Note: Positive growth rates **in bold**.

Figure 1. Cumulate cross-IEBL returns by groups



Annex 5.1. Statistical Annex to Chapter 5

I. Economic component of the utilitarian model

Table 1. Income level distribution in 1996 (Finan96) by location

	Total	Cerska	Križevici
Cutting on some needs, not covering all expenses	49.2%	67.9%	32.3%
Just meeting our needs with our savings/incomes	30.5%	14.3%	45.2%
Enough for living with our savings/incomes, and able to save	16.9%	14.3%	19.4%
Quite good, able to save money and progress	3.4%	3.6%	3.2%
<i>N</i>	59	28	31

Table 2. List of variables in the economic global model

VARIABLE	TYPE	DEFINITION	N	Min	Max	Av	SD
Sources of income & assets							
<i>JobinFed</i>	Num	Count of jobs in the Federation (household)	100	0	2	0.34	0.54
<i>JobinRS</i>	Num	Count of jobs in the RS (household)	100	0	1	0.07	0.26
<i>Fed_Agri</i>	Ord	Access to farming activities in the Federation, where 0 = no access, 1=access to minor activities such as gardening, 2=access to substantial activities (agriculture or cattle)	100	0	2	0.83	0.73
<i>LandOwn</i>	Ord	Amount of land owned by the household in the return location, where 0=0, 1=1-5 dullums, 2=6-10 dullums, 3=11-50 dullums, 4=51-100 dullums, 5=over 100 dullums*	98	1	5	2.62	1.01
<i>Status</i>	Ord	Residential stability in displacement, where 1=occupying; 2=AA, lent, hosted; 3=own, rent **	94	1	3	1.78	0.83
<i>Recons_End</i>	Dichot	Whether the house in the return location has been reconstructed	94	0	1	0.20	0.40
<i>Finan96</i>	Ord	Financial situation of the household in 1996, where 1=Cutting on some needs, 2=Just meeting our needs, 3=Enough for living and able to save some money, 4=Able to save money and progress economically	96	1	4	1.72	0.82
<i>Members1</i>	Ord	Size of the household, where 0=one-single person, 1=2-5 members, 2=over 5 members ***	98	0	2	1.19	.511

* *LandOwn* is the variable that performs the best of other possible alternatives tried out, including the raw data and squared data of the land owned by the household and by the larger family. *LandOwn2* also displays the relevant variation while maximizing the number of cases in each category. As an alternative, various variables have also been tried out measuring the importance of agriculture for the household economy, both before the war and currently (*AgriBF*, *AgriBFsold*, *AgriNW*, *AgriNWsold*), but they have all turned out robustly non-significant.

** In a simple logit model introducing only accommodation status in displacement and using dummies, only *Own* and *Rent* turn out significant (in the expected negative direction). Their coefficients and their standard errors are very similar, supporting their grouping into one single category in *Status*. The performance of both *Status* and the dummies improves if including *Deadline*, a dichotomic variable indicating whether a pressing deadline to leave the accommodation was in place at the moment, including eviction and other reasons to leave.

*** *Members1* performs better than the raw data on number of household members (*Members*). *Members1* is intended to capture the peculiarity of households composed of persons alone, medium-sized household (with a prototype of a couple with the possibility of 1 to 3 kids), and large households (with a prototype of either many children, or also parents and siblings).

Table 2. List of variables in the economic global model (Cont. 1)

VARIABLE	TYPE	DEFINITION	N	Min	Max	Av	SD
Public goods and opportunities							
<i>Urbanization</i>	Ord	Difference between habitat of displacement (0=rural extreme, 1=rural non-extreme, 2=semi-urban or urban) and habitat of origin (0=rural extreme, 1=rural non-extreme) with a range [-1, 2]*	97	-1	2	0.7	0.63
<i>HH_occup</i>	Categ	The categories are: clerk, farmer, manual worker professional or small entrepreneur, other (housewives, students, none)	-	-	-	-	-
<i>HH_edu</i>	Ord	Highest degree of education attended (not necessarily finished) where 0=Illiterate, 1=R/W, 2=Primary, 3=Secondary, 4=Secondary advanced, 5=University	100	0	5	2.7	0.96
<i>Under18Y</i>	Dichot	Whether there are members under 18 in the households†	100	0	1	0.7	0.45
<i>HighFed2</i>	Dichot	Whether holding a right to a health insurance in the Federation with large entitlements (worker, veterans pensions, job pension) ‡	98	0	2	1.0	0.94
<i>InsuRightRS</i>	Ord	0=none member of the household has a right to health insurance in the RS, 1=some members have, 2=all members have †	98	0	2	1.4	0.85
<i>HH_Age</i>	Ord	Age (1=16-20, 2=21-30, 3=31-40, 4=41-50, 5=51-60, 6=61-70)	100	1	6	3.4	1.04
<i>Ymuni</i>	Num	Squared number of years living in the municipality of residence †	97	1	121	44	35.05
<i>Company</i>	Ord	Old neighbours and friends around in displacement (0=None, 1=1-5 families, 2=6-10 families, similar to half pre-war hamlet, 3=11-25, similar to pre-war hamlet, 4=Over 25 families, similar to pre-war MZ)	86	0	4	1.9	1.34
<i>Residknown</i>	Ord	Acquainted within the neighbourhood, where 2=Strongly agree, 1=Agree, 0=Not Sure, -1=Disagree, -2=Strongly disagree	81	0	2	1.5	0.53
<i>Resideasy</i>	Ord	Could easily manage herself in the neighbourhood and around (2=Strongly agree, 1=Agree, 0=Not Sure, -1=Disagree, -2=Strongly disagree)	78	-2	2	0.3	1.19

* Various variables of habitat of origin and habitat of displacement have been tried out instead of using the net difference between them. None of these turned out significant.

† A variable for the presence of primary school age members (*Under14Y*) has also been tried, but it did not turn out significant. Dichotomic variables perform better than the counting of minors (*Under18*, *Under14*). As an alternative, variables were also used having into account only the children of the head of the household (*KidsPrimary*, *KidsSecondary*), but they have a weaker performance.

‡ Since the immense majority of the sample enjoyed a right to insurance in the Federation, such variable (*InsuRighFed*) does not display much relevant variation and it turns out robustly non-significant. Various dichotomic variables for different types of pensions (e.g. job pensions, veterans pensions by type or as a whole, etc.) have been tried out, but none of these turned out significant either. *HighFed2* also performs better than its ordinal variant (*HighFed*) indicating whether none, some or all members of the household are covered by a health insurance right with large entitlements.

† In the case of the RS, whereas not all the population has a right to health insurance, the overwhelming majority of those who do are covered simply by subsidiary insurance. *InsuRightRS* was then likely to be most determining in this case, and it does turn out significant in the partial models run. The variables considering access to large entitlements in the RS (*HighRS2* and *HighRS*) also turn out significant, but they lose that significance when introduced along *InsuRightRS*.

Ψ Similar variables have been tried out with years in the same house or apartment, in the same village, and in the same habitat. Only the variables for municipality and habitat turn out significant. The squared variables also perform better than raw data variables in terms of statistical significance, although their coefficients are smaller.

Table 3. Logit models for Return (observed at Tret and Tfol). Partial economic models

	Assets and resources		Public goods and opportunities	
	Coeff.	Clust. Errors	Coeff.	Clust. Errors
JobInFed	-1.771**	0.573		
JobInRS	1.670	1.150		
Fed_Agri	-0.068	0.419		
LandOwn	0.005	0.280		
Status	-1.145***	0.310		
Reconst_End	1.663**	0.548		
Finan96	0.339	0.337		
Members	0.138	0.496		
Urbanization			-0.715*	0.316
HH_edu			-0.307	0.255
HH_under18			-1.010	0.523
HH_Age			0.338	0.268
Years_muni			-0.015*	0.006
HighFed			0.098	0.503
InsuRightRS			0.676	0.392
_cons	0.994	1.147	0.075	1.814
		Observations = 91		Observations = 96
		Pseudo R2= 0.245		Pseudo R2= 0.186
		Correctly classified: 71.43%		Correctly classified: 67.79%
		Hosmer-Lemeshow: p=0.45		Hosmer-Lemeshow: p=0.94

Table 4. Predicted probabilities of returning (economic selective model)

	x=min	x=max	min>max	x=0	x=1	0->1
JobInFed	0.430	0.017	-0.413	0.430	0.103	-0.327
JobInRS	0.261	0.809	0.548	0.261	0.809	0.548
Status	0.597	0.051	-0.547	0.887	0.597	-0.289
Reconst_End	0.199	0.747	0.548	0.199	0.747	0.548
HH_under18	0.665	0.172	-0.493	0.665	0.172	-0.493
HH_Age	0.030	0.858	0.829	0.011	0.030	0.019

Note: Probabilities and changes over .50 in bold.

Table 5. Change in predicted probabilities (by selective economic model) per location and period (all variables held at their means)

	Var=min		Var=max		Change (Var min->max)	
	Cerska	Križeviči	Cerska	Križeviči	Cerska	Križeviči
JobInFed	0.273	0.652	0.003	0.013	-0.270	-0.639
JobInRS	0.129	0.425	0.552	0.860	0.423	0.435
Status	0.391	0.763	0.020	0.091	-0.372	-0.672
Reconst_End	0.093	0.340	0.538	0.853	0.444	0.514
Finan96	0.122	0.410	0.228	0.596	0.106	0.186
Members	0.013	0.060	0.501	0.834	0.489	0.774
Urbanization	0.104	0.368	0.177	0.517	0.072	0.149
HH_edu	0.553	0.861	0.031	0.136	-0.522	-0.724
Under18	0.487	0.826	0.074	0.285	-0.413	-0.541
HH_Age	0.015	0.069	0.676	0.913	0.661	0.843
	Tret	Tfol	Tret	Tfol	Tret	Tfol
JobInFed	0.256	0.701	0.006	0.037	-0.251	-0.664
JobInRS	0.132	0.509	0.647	0.926	0.515	0.417
Status	0.525	0.883	0.010	0.062	-0.516	-0.821
Reconst_End	0.098	0.426	0.541	0.889	0.443	0.464
Finan96	0.117	0.475	0.295	0.740	0.177	0.265
Members	0.022	0.135	0.421	0.831	0.398	0.697
Urbanization	0.160	0.564	0.141	0.527	-0.019	-0.037
HH_edu	0.477	0.861	0.043	0.232	-0.434	-0.629
Under18	0.402	0.821	0.090	0.402	-0.312	-0.419
HH_Age	0.011	0.072	0.753	0.954	0.742	0.882

Note: Larger probabilities and change in probabilities in the comparison between Cerska and Križeviči and between Tret and Tfol **in bold**.

I. Security component of the utilitarian model

Table 7. Significant correlations between variables relative to the evaluation of local Serbs' attitudes

	<i>SHostile</i>	<i>SSupportive</i>
<i>SHostile</i>	1.000	-.613**
<i>SSupportive</i>	-.613**	1.000
War attitudes	.372**	-.404**
Doubt honesty	.393**	-.188
Good experiences	-.268*	.400**
Institutional backup	-.189	.306*
Economic reasons	.027	-.257*

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Correlations larger than .300 in **bold**.

Table 8. List of variables in the model for the estimation of the threat (p)

VARIABLE	TYPE	DEFINITION	N	Min	Max	Av	SD
Probability of an attack							
<i>SHostile</i>	Categ	Evaluation of local Serb attitudes towards returnees (0=None,1=A few,2=Half, 3=Most, 4=All)	94	0	4	2.97	1.12
<i>SHostileMiss</i>	Categ	Missing values substituted* (miss=6)	100	0	4	2.97	1.09
<i>SHostileMiss0_1</i>	Num	<i>SHostileMiss</i> standardized [0,1]	100	0	1	0.74	0.27
<i>Municip</i>	Categ	Evaluation of the municipality (0=Willing to help,1=Just professional, 2=Inefficient/not very supportive, 3= troublemakers/ obstructive')	89	0	3	1.83	1.11
<i>MunicipMiss</i>	Categ	Missing values substituted* (miss=11)	100	0	3	1.85	1.05
<i>MunicipMiss0_1</i>	Num	<i>MunicipMiss</i> standardized [0,1]	100	0	1	0.62	0.35
<i>Police</i>	Categ	Evaluation of local police (0=Mostly willing to help, 1=There are no problems with them,2=Not willing to help,3=They give trouble,4=They are really threatening)	87	0	4	1.44	0.90
<i>PoliceMiss</i>	Categ	Missing values substituted* (miss=9)	96	0	4	1.45	0.86
<i>PoliceMiss_0_1</i>	Num	<i>PoliceMiss</i> standardized [0,1]	96	0	1	0.36	0.21
<i>V1</i>	Categ	Perception of violence at the hamlet level (0=None, 1=Minimally or unimportant, 2=Some, but not too serious, 3=Frequently <i>or</i> serious, 4=Frequent <i>and</i> serious)	94	0	3	0.65	0.91
<i>V1Miss</i>	Categ	Missing values substituted* (miss=6)	100	0	3	0.65	0.89
<i>V1Miss_0_1</i>	Num	<i>V1Miss</i> standardized [0,1]	100	0	0.7	0.16	0.22
<i>V2</i>	Categ	Perception of violence at the local level beyond the hamlet (A2) (0=None, 1=Minimally or unimportant, 2=Some, but not too serious, 3=Frequently <i>or</i> serious, 4=Frequent <i>and</i> serious)	49	0	3	1.98	0.80
<i>V2Miss</i>	Categ	Missing values substituted* (miss=51)	100	0	3	1.87	0.68
<i>V2Miss_0_1</i>	Num	<i>V2Miss</i> standardized [0,1]	100	0	0.7	0.47	0.17

<i>V3</i>	Categ	Perception of violence in other places (A3) (0=None, 1=Unimportant violence, 2=Some violence, 3=Serious or/and frequent violence occurring)	94	1	3	2.01	0.50
<i>V3Miss</i>	Categ	Missing values substituted* (miss=6)	100	1	3	2.01	0.48
<i>V3Miss_0_1</i>	Num	<i>V3Miss</i> standardized [0,1]	100	0.3	1	0.67	0.16
Probability of being reached attack							
<i>lnRetA1</i>	Num	Natural logarithm of the number of returnees in A1	100	0.0	4.9	2.92	1.04
<i>lnRetA2</i>	Num	Natural logarithm of the number of returnees in A2	100	3.1	9.6	8.01	1.10
<i>Members</i>	Num	Number of household members	98	1	15	4.68	2.18
<i>Alone</i>	Dichot	Single-person household	98	0	1	0.05	0.22
<i>Youngmale</i>	Dichot	Male HH under 40	100	0	1	0.51	0.50

* In all variables with *Miss* suffix, missing values have been substituted by the average value in the time period evaluated (T_{ret}/T_{tot}) in the corresponding municipality (Zvornik/Vlasenica/Milići).

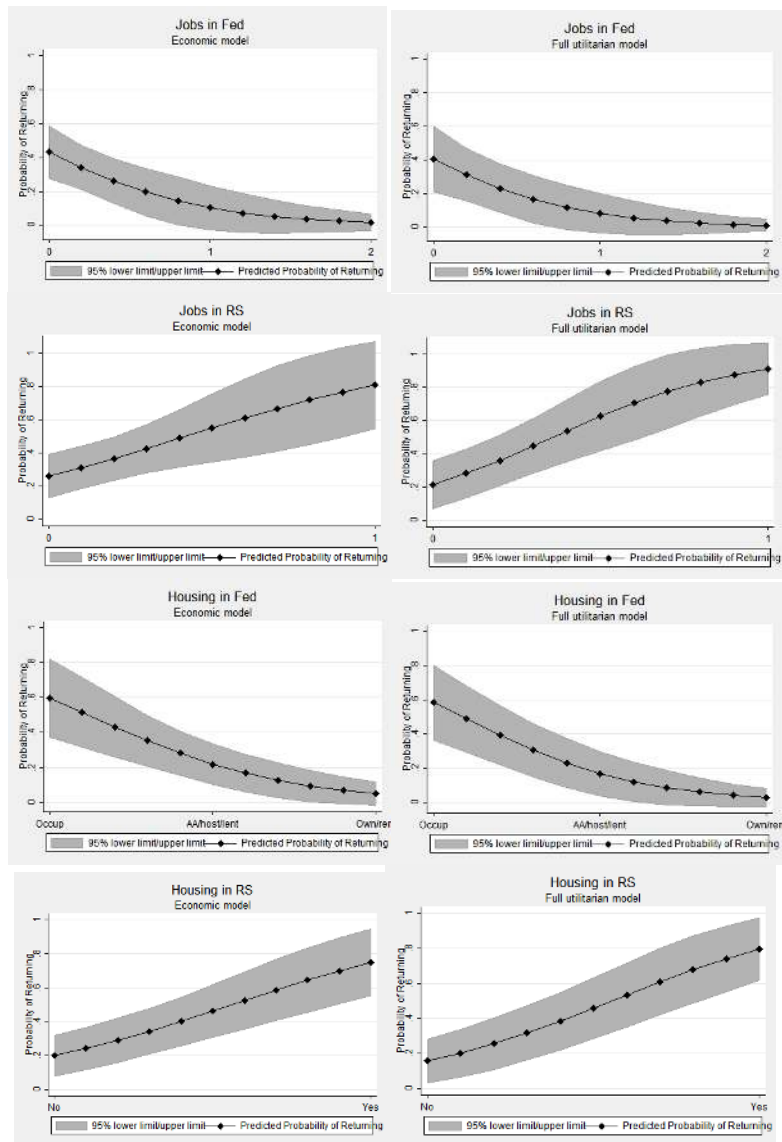
Table 9. Logit regressions for Return (observed at Tret and Tfol). Threat model and full utilitarian models

	Threat model		Utilitarian model I (econ + p)		Utilitarian model II (ProbEcon + p)	
	Coef./	Clustere d Errors	Coef.	Clustere d Errors	Coef.	Clustere d Errors
SHostileMiss0_1	-1.004	0.816	-1.441	1.832	-1.141	1.456
MunicipMiss0_1	0.796	0.706	-0.444	1.761	-0.339	1.396
PoliceMiss_0_1	-1.316	0.883	3.397	3.404	0.417	1.969
V1Miss_0_1	2.092	1.256	3.156	1.810	2.347	1.673
V2Miss_0_1	0.574	1.648	-5.324	2.756	-4.153	2.533
V3Miss_0_1	-2.539*	1.171	-2.807	2.559	-3.122	2.071
lnRetA1	0.559*	0.233	0.401	0.468	0.194	0.377
lnRetA2	-0.254	0.207	0.320	0.459	-0.036	0.401
HH_members	0.162	0.122			0.131	0.197
Alone	0.336	0.882	-2.937	4.171	-0.980	3.544
Youngmale	-1.039*	0.504	1.092	2.432	0.354	1.090
JobInFed			-2.580*	1.312		
JobInRS			3.351	1.796		
Status1			-2.038***	0.563		
Reconst_End			3.632**	1.086		
Finan96			0.329	0.502		
[HH_members1]			1.870	1.034		
Urbanization			-0.221	0.961		
[HH_edu1]			-1.427*	0.649		
[HH_under18Y]			-2.706	1.492		
HH_Age10ReT			1.241	1.072		
ProbECON					7.136***	1.587
_cons	1.628	1.898	1.238	4.568	-0.024	3.535
	Observations = 94	Observations = 87	Observations = 87			
	Pseudo R2= 0.125	Pseudo R2= 0.511	Pseudo R2= 0.474			
	Correctly: 63.83%	Correctly: 83.91%	Correctly: 83.91%			
	Hosmer-Lem: p=0.42	Hosmer-Lem: p=0.26	Hosmer-Lem: p=0.97			

All models with clustered robust standard errors.

* Significant at < .05, ** significant at < .01, *** significant at < .001.

Figure 1. Predicted probabilities: Economic model Vs Full utilitarian model I



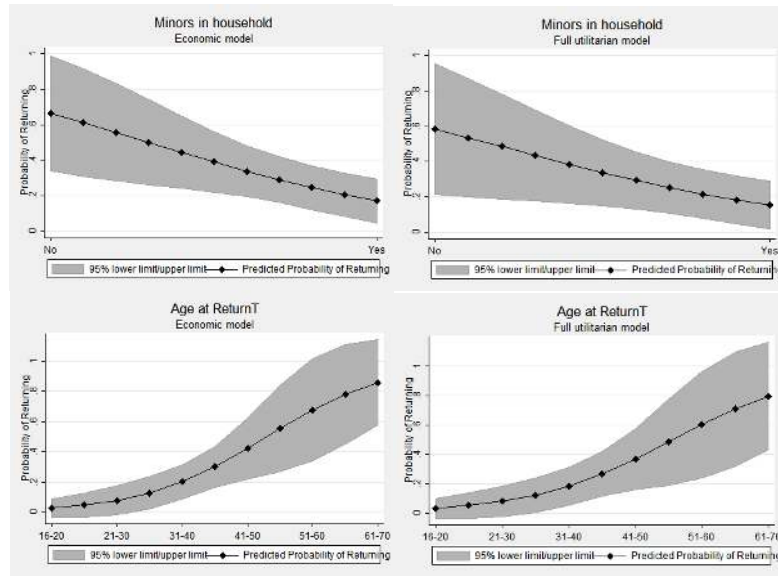


Figure 2. Predicted probability of returning for FAC_GraViol in the the full utilitarian model (I)

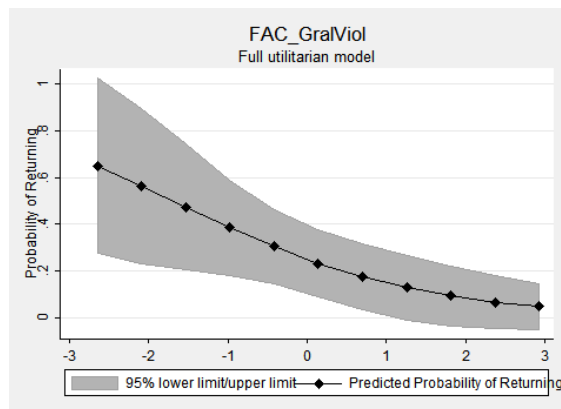


Table 10. Logit regressions with 'Return'. Full utilitarian model (I) Vs Full utilitarian model (II)

	Full utilitarian model I		Full utilitarian model II	
	Coef.	Clustered Errors	Coef.	Clustered Errors
JobInFed	-2.034*	0.885		
JobInRS	3.617**	1.196		
Status1	-1.928**	0.570		
Reconst_End	3.024***	0.753		
Finan96	0.431	0.473		
[HH_members1]	1.956*	0.975		
Urbanization	-0.322	0.591		
[HH_edu1]	-0.783	0.509		
[HH_under18Y]	-2.038*	1.013		
HH_Age10ReT	0.951*	0.425		
ProbECON†			6.322***	1.176
FAC_locnoviol	0.117	0.310	0.065	0.295
FAC_loclatent	0.009	0.382	0.022	0.244
FAC_gralviol	-0.649*	0.322	-0.509	0.301
_cons	-0.312	2.579	-3.151	0.577
		Observations = 87		Observations = 87
		Pseudo R2= 0.450		Pseudo R2= 0.423
		Correctly classified: 80.46%		Correctly classified: 81.61%
		Hosmer-Lemeshow: p=0.17		Hosmer-Lemeshow: p=0.32

* Significant at < .05, ** significant at < .01, *** significant at < .001.

† Predicted probabilities by the economic model.

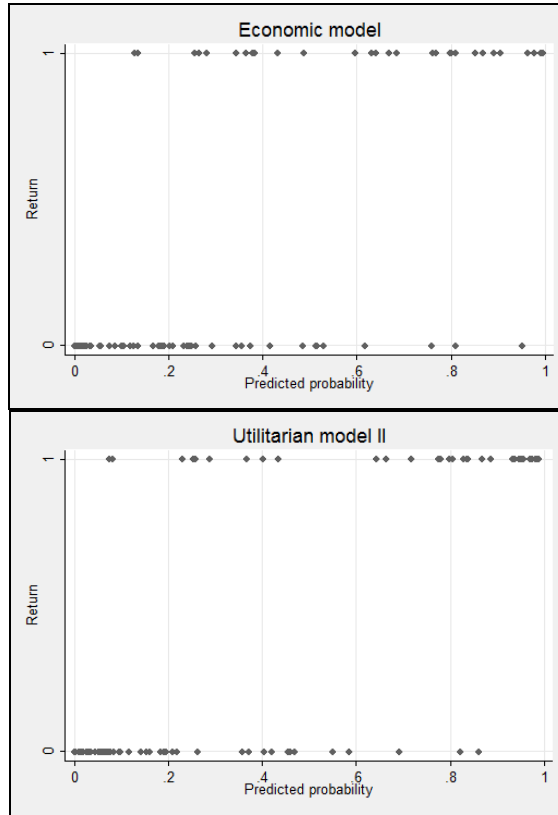
Table 11. Goodness-of-fit measures for the economic model and the full utilitarian model II

	Full utilitarian model II	Economic model	Difference
N:	87	87	0
Log-Lik Intercept Only	-58.212	-58.212	0
Log-Lik Full Model	-33.587	-33.338	-0.249
D	67.174(82)	66.676(76)	0.498(6)
LR	49.251(4)	49.748(10)	0.498(6)
Prob > LR	0	0	0.998
McFadden's R2	0.423	0.427	-0.004
McFadden's Adj R2	0.337	0.238	0.099
ML (Cox-Snell) R2	0.432	0.436	-0.003
Cragg-Uhler(Nagelkerke) R2	0.586	0.59	-0.004
McKelvey & Zavoina's R2	0.587	0.691	-0.104
Efron's R2	0.478	0.477	0
Variance of y*	7.969	10.647	-2.678
Variance of error	3.29	3.29	0
Count R2	0.816	0.805	0.011
Adj Count R2	0.529	0.5	0.029
AIC	0.887	1.019	-0.132
AIC*n	77.174	88.676	-11.502
BIC	-299.031	-272.733	-26.298
BIC'	-31.387	-5.089	-26.298
BIC used by Stata	89.503	115.801	-26.298
AIC used by Stata	77.174	88.676	-11.502

Difference of 26.298 in BIC' provides very strong support for current model.

Note: P-value for difference in LR is only valid if models are nested.

Figure 3. Predicted probabilities Vs observed return



Annex 6.1. Statistical Annex to Chapter 6

Table 1. Items used for assessing appraisal patterns

1	Mem80s	Question about what they remembered the most from life before war. in the 1980s
2	War before. coming. leaving	Questions about whether they had ever expected a war occurring. whether and when did they see it coming. and their experiences leaving their home and escaping to safe territory
3	Goodmemories, good surprises	Questions about positive memories and experiences during the war
4	Bad surprises	Questions about negative memories related to disappointment and negative surprises during the war
5	Might return	Question about whether they thought (during the war) that they might not be able to ever come back
6	OverDayton	Question about whether it was hard for them to believe that Dayton really meant the end of the war
7	Plans 1996	Question about the plans they had in 1996. when war was over
8	Will return	Questions about whether they think they will eventually or definitely return or not
9	NotBack/Stay	Questions about how they felt when they thought they might not come back. and whether they ever considered that they would stay in their locations of displacement rather than returning
10	Missed	Questions about what they missed the most from their home origin while being away
11	ConcernReturn	Open question about the concerns they had in mind when considering the option of returning
12	ConcernSafety	Questions about the safety concerns they had in mind when considering the option of returning.
13	ConcernHouse	Questions about the concerns they had in mind related to housing issues when considering the option of returning.
14	ConcernLiving	Questions about the concerns they had in mind related to earn a living when considering the option of returning.
15	ConcernEdu	Questions about the concerns they had in mind related to children's education when considering return.
16	ConcernHealth	Questions about the concerns they had in mind related to health assistance when considering the option of returning.
17	ConcernPeople	Questions about the concerns they had in mind related to the number and characteristics of other returnees when considering the option of returning.
18	FirstVisit	Question about how they felt in their first visit to the area of return
19	FirstVisitInsight	Question about the general experience of the first visit

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20	FeltIncidents	Question about how they felt when they heard about return-related incidents
21	FutureChildrenSTay	Question about whether they would like their children to live in the future in the area of return
22	FutureViolence	Question about whether they think there will be more violence or not in the future
23	IGBI Final	Final open comment after a battery of questions on negative beliefs about the situation of Bosniaks in the RS (vulnerability, distrust, helplessness injustice, superiority)
24	IGBI Fear	Questions in the battery above related to fear (vulnerability, distrust and helplessness)
25	IGBI Injustice	Questions in the battery above related to anger (injustice, superiority)
26	1X2 War and return	Closed questions about interpretations of return and war
27	MyComments	Researcher's observations about some remarkable and salient feature during the interview
28	FINALComments	Final open remark at the end of the interview

Table 2. *Descriptive statistics of fear indicators*

	N	Min	Max	Average	St.Dev.
FvisitFear	49	0	2	.92	.862
FIncidFear	34	0	1	.88	.327
ConcernFut	52	0	5	2.23	1.688
OverDayton	55	0	1	.65	.480
FearSum1*	51	-1.00	2.00	.96	.656
CountFear	58	0	9	2.97	1.901
Floating	49	0	3	1.94	.775
Immed	51	0	3	1.61	.940

* Range [-2, 2] although empirical minimum is -1.

Table 3. *Descriptive statistics of love for family indicators*

	N	Min	Max	Average	St.Dev.
Mem80sFam	60	0	1	.32	.469
Fam1	53	0	1	.32	.471
MissedFamSUM	53	0	6	2.13	2.353
planKids	58	0	1	.12	.328
CountLoveFam	62	0	8	1.84	1.710
Lovefam	49	0	3	2.02	.777

Table 4. Descriptive statistics of love for friends indicators

	N	Min	Max	Average	St.Dev.
Mem80sFriends	60	0	1	.10	.302
Friends1	53	0	1	.04	.192
MissFriendSUM	50	0	6	2.10	1.644
MissNeighSUM	46	0	6	1.87	1.515
CountLoveFr	62	0	3	.73	.833
Lovefriends	33	0	3	1.61	.788

Table 5. Descriptive statistics of love for place (return) indicators

	N	Min	Max	Average	St.Dev.
RETIIdentity*	53	-1.80	2.00	.88	.812
RETCare*	51	-.25	2.00	1.37	.587
RETFamiliarity*	50	-1.50	2.00	.73	.870
LovePlaceRet	53	0	3	2.00	.832

* Range [-2, 2] although empirical minimum varies.

Table 6. Descriptive statistics of love for place (displacement) indicators

	N	Min	Max	Average	St.Dev.
RETIIdentity*	47	-2.00	2.00	.39	.989
RETCare*	50	-2.00	2.00	.05	1.018
RETCaring*	46	-1.50	2.00	.66	.803
RETFamiliarity*	49	-2.00	1.50	.13	.972
LovePlaceDisp	27	0	2	.63	.629

* Range [-2, 2] although empirical minimum varies.

Table 7. Descriptive statistics of hatred indicators

	N	Min	Max	Average	St.Dev.
Second Chance	51	-1	1	.35	.913
CountHate	62	0	8	1.15	1.513
Hateful	33	1	3	1.48	.712

Table 8. Descriptive statistics of anger (individual level) indicators

	N	Min	Max	Average	St.Dev.
CountAngerIndiv	62	0	8	2.55	2.101
AngerIndiv	53	1	3	1.68	.701
FIncidAnger	27	0	1	.59	.501
Did not feel stranger there	48	-2	2	-.04	1.288
MemCol	60	0	1	.28	.454
MemUtil	60	0	1	.38	.490
Finan80s	61	-1	3	1.44	1.298
Saving80s	60	-1	2	1.18	1.142
Finan96	58	1	4	1.72	.854

Table 9. Descriptive statistics of anger (collective level) indicators

	N	Min	Max	Average	St.Dev.
WAResp	50	-1	1	-.88	.435
Unjust*	46	-1	2	.98	.802
Criticize*	33	-1	2	1.12	.650
Mistreat*	34	-1	2	1.06	.919
Unreward*	46	-1	2	1.09	.694
Unrecognized*	47	0	2	1.17	.564
CountAngerCol	62	0	9	2.61	2.168
AngerCol	51	1	3	2.18	.767

* Range [-2, 2] although empirical minimum is -1.

Annex 6.2. List of Cases in the Sample

Code	Location	Fem	Age	Ret	YearRet	Code	Location	Fem	Age	Ret	YearRet
2101	Krizevici	1	47	1	2000	1101	Cerska	0	43	1	2004
2001	Krizevici	0	39	0	99	1102	Cerska	0	57	1	2003
2110	Krizevici	0	59	1	1999	1103	Cerska	0	50	1	2005
2102	Krizevici	1	44	1	2000	1104	Cerska	0	55	1	2005
2116	Krizevici	1	49	1	2002	1003	Cerska	0	32	0	99
2123	Krizevici	1	40	1	2001	1105	Cerska	0	59	1	2000
2111	Krizevici	0	43	1	1999	1106	Cerska	1	46	1	2004
2109	Krizevici	1	47	1	1999	1107	Cerska	1	50	1	2003
2112	Krizevici	1	45	1	1999	1109	Cerska	0	35	1	2001
2107	Krizevici	0	25	1	2000	1111	Cerska	0	56	1	2001
2105	Krizevici	1	46	1	2002	1112	Cerska	0	39	1	2000
2106	Krizevici	0	50	1	2001	1113	Cerska	0	69	1	2003
2103	Krizevici	0	43	1	2001	1114	Cerska	0	50	1	2001
2003	Krizevici	0	27	0	99	1115	Cerska	0	52	1	2003
2119	Krizevici	0	19	1	1999	1116	Cerska	0	59	1	2000
2108	Krizevici	0	40	1	1999	1117	Cerska	0	30	1	2000
2104	Krizevici	1	52	1	2006	1118	Cerska	0	35	1	2001

2113	Krizevici	0	65	1	1999	1001	Cerska	0	41	0	99
2114	Krizevici	1	44	1	2002	1002	Cerska	1	39	0	99
2117	Krizevici	0	66	1	2000	1004	Cerska	0	30	0	99
2115	Krizevici	0	32	1	2000	1006	Cerska	1	35	0	99
2118	Krizevici	1	72	1	1999	1009	Cerska	0	40	0	99
2120	Krizevici	0	40	1	1999	1008	Cerska	0	32	0	99
2122	Krizevici	0	37	1	2001	1010	Cerska	1	49	0	99
2124	Krizevici	1	72	1	1999	1011	Cerska	0	40	0	99
2002	Krizevici	0	42	0	99	1012	Cerska	0	50	0	99
2004	Krizevici	0	25	0	99	1013	Cerska	0	52	0	99
2005	Krizevici	1	38	0	99	1119	Cerska	1	51	1	1999
2007	Krizevici	0	48	0	99	1120	Cerska	0	41	1	2004
2077	Krizevici	0	28	0	99						
2008	Krizevici	0	38	0	99						
2009	Krizevici	0	46	0	99						
2010	Krizevici	1	46	0	99						

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