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Derry or Londonderry? The Impact of the Troubles
Regarding the Question of National Identity in Northern
Ireland

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ABSTRACT

The different national identities that are present in Northern Ireland are a product of the shared history between Ireland and the United Kingdom. Furthermore, the differentiation between being 'Irish' or 'British' seems to be deeply bound to the religious beliefs. This Bachelor's Thesis analyzes the relation between national and religious identity in Northern Ireland through historical analysis. Since 1968, the clash between the Civil Rights Movement and the forces of order originated what is known today as *the Troubles*. This conflict has contributed to increase the distance between the two main communities making it difficult to find a permanent solution for the problem. Using sociological data, I will analyze the influence that *the Troubles* had in the radicalization of national identity in Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland. National identity. Religion. Segregation. Political violence. The Troubles.

La historia conjunta de Irlanda y el Reino Unido ha dado lugar a diferentes identidades en Irlanda del Norte. Además, la distinción entre 'Irlandés' o 'Británico' parece estar muy unida a las creencias religiosas. Este Trabajo de Fin de Grado analiza la relación entre la identidad nacional y la religiosa en Irlanda del Norte a través de un análisis histórico. A partir de 1968, el enfrentamiento entre los movimientos por los derechos civiles y las fuerzas del orden público originaron el conflicto conocido hoy como *the Troubles*. Dicho conflicto ha contribuido a la separación entre las dos principales comunidades haciendo casi imposible vislumbrar una solución duradera al problema. Usando estudios sociológicos, analizaré los efectos que *the Troubles* tuvieron en la radicalización de la identidad nacional en Irlanda del Norte.

Irlanda del Norte. Identidad nacional. Religión. Segregación. Violencia política. The Troubles.

Contents

Introduction	1
Objectives	2
Choice of Bibliography.....	3
Some Preliminary Issues.....	4
The Roots of the Conflict: A Clash of Identities	7
1.1.-Norman Invasions.....	7
1.2.-The Tudor Period (1485-1603).....	8
1.3.-The Protestant Ascendancy (1603-1801)	9
1.3.1.-The Ulster Plantation	10
1.3.2.-The Irish Rebellion	10
1.3.3.-The Jacobite/Williamite Wars.....	11
1.3.4.-The Penal Laws.....	13
1.4.-The Union (1801-1912).....	13
1.5.-The Birth of Northern Ireland (1921-Present).....	14
From the Troubles to the Peace Process.....	16
2.1.-The Civil Rights Campaign	16
2.2.-British Intervention and Interment.	17
2.3.-Bloody Sunday and Direct Rule	19
2.4.-The Peace Process	21
The Development of National Identity in Northern Ireland since 1968	22
3.1.-National Identity and Social identity.....	22
3.2.-National Identity and Religion	23
3.2.1.-Opinion Polls during the Troubles	24
3.2.2.-Opinion Polls during the Peace Process.....	26
3.2.3.-Opinion Polls after 1998	28
3.3.-National Identity and Politics	30
Conclusion	34
References.....	36
Annex I. Effect of Cromwell on Land Ownership in Ireland.....	39
Annex II. Partition of Ireland.....	40
Annex III. Distribution of Catholics in Derry (2001).....	41
Annex IV. Election results in Northern Ireland 1969-2015	42

Introduction

As Brian M. Walker asserted in *Past and Present: History, Identity and Politics in Ireland*, “It is often said that people in Ireland live in the past.”¹ I would rather say that some people use their versions of the story to justify their actions in the present. It is true that historical research is crucial in order to enlighten an episode of history as obscure as *the Troubles* was. However, the popular historical notion in Northern Ireland has been influenced during decades by both sides of the conflict following their own political purposes. Both Nationalists and Unionists have always had opposite versions of history which they use to validate their political positions; In the case of Nationalists, they claim that the people of Ireland form one nation and that Britain is the one to blame for keeping Ireland divided.² On the other hand, Unionists believe that there are two different peoples in Ireland – Protestants and Catholics– and therefore the division of the island is legit.³ It is fair to say then, that their biased revisions of the past cannot be a reliable source to base the future of Northern Ireland on. As Michael Pickering stated in *Research Methods for Cultural Studies*, “Historical representations should always be subject to question, for political and ethical as well as epistemological reasons.”⁴

It is a fact that society in Northern Ireland is divided into two different groups. From now on I will refer to them either as Protestants, Unionists or Loyalists on the one side and Catholics, Nationalists or Republicans on the other –I will expand on these labels afterwards–. It has been argued that this division within the community is mainly caused by their differences in terms of religion. However, religion tags have essentially been used to differentiate the two groups. This separation between the Catholic and the Protestant communities is more complex than it seems as it also involves economic, political, residential, educational and even psychological segregation. Ethno-national identification –

¹ Brian Mercer Walker, *Past and Present: History, Identity and Politics in Ireland* (Belfast: Institute of Irish Studies, Queen's University Belfast, 2000), Introduction.

² John Whyte, *Interpreting Northern Ireland* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990), 117.

³ Whyte, 146.

⁴ Michael Pickering, *Research Methods for Cultural Studies* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), 193.

that is strongly linked to the past— plays a key role in the social divide as a differentiation marker. Furthermore, Social Identity Theory can reasonably be applied to Northern Ireland and it can help us to understand the nature of this divide in terms of power relations.⁵

The Troubles is the name given to the ethno-nationalist conflict that took part in Northern Ireland from the late 1960s to the end of the 1990s. During this bloody period, the gap between the Protestant and Catholic communities dramatically increased. The Civil Rights movement is considered by many as the origin of *the Troubles*.⁶ This social movement emerged in response to the inequality between Catholics and Protestants aiming for social equality. However, from a Unionist perspective, it was seen as a Communist/republican-inspired campaign to reopen the border question, rather than a movement genuinely seeking reform.⁷ This difference in opinions ended in a confrontation between demonstrators and the local police. In this work, I will argue that *the Troubles* were not only the logical development of events due to historical reasons, but also a product of the social segregation of the time. In addition, the events that took place during that period generated a polarization of the sense of national identity and a raise in the hatred between the two communities that is still visible today.

Objectives

My aim in this paper is to expose the change of national identification within the two main communities of Northern Ireland after *the Troubles* began. In order to do so, I am going to explore the relation between religion and national identities and link the two main identities ‘British’ and ‘Irish’ with Protestantism and Catholicism respectively. As historical memory and national identity are so closely related in Northern Ireland, I will first examine the shared history between Ireland and Britain to look for the roots of those identities. Although a much wider historical analysis is needed to fully understand the origins of the division, I will focus on the key events that shaped today’s cultural and political aspects of

⁵ Whyte, 97.

⁶ Caroline Kennedy-Pipe, *The Origins of the Present Troubles in Northern Ireland* (Harlow: Longman, 1997), 3.

⁷ Dixon, 13.

society in Northern Ireland. In this section I will also review different commemorations and myths in order to understand the development of these celebrations and their influence in today's sense of national identity.

Secondly, I will analyse *the Troubles* and the key events that changed the peoples' point of view about the conflict. I will be focusing more on the city of Derry/Londonderry as it was one of the most affected areas by the ethno-nationalist conflict during almost three decades. Events such as the Civil Rights March in Derry on 5 October 1968, 'Bloody Sunday' and the Internments without trial will be analysed in depth as they had an enormous impact on the Catholic community. On the Unionist side, the intervention of Britain in the conflict as well as the role of paramilitary groups such as the PIRA (Provisional Irish Republican Army) will be linked to the polarization of national identity within the Protestant community. Furthermore, the relative success of the *Peace Process* during the 1990s which led to the signing on 10 April 1998 of the *Good Friday Agreement* will also be questioned in this study.

Finally, I am going to do a sociological analysis on the Northern Irish society from 1968 to the present. Firstly, I will study the relation between religious identity and national identity. For this purpose, I will use sociological data retrieved from different researches and investigators. Opinion polls that differentiate between Protestant and Catholic participants will be compared to show the evolution of national identity within these two communities during this period. Secondly, I will identify the two communities with the main political parties in Northern Ireland. Analyzing the results of the local elections I will give a further evidence of the radicalization of national identity and political views since *the Troubles* began.

Choice of Bibliography

To support my hypothesis, I will analyse data from research, critical analysis written by experts on the matter and newspaper articles. In cultural and historical studies the timeline of events is crucial. While studying the shared history between Ireland and Britain I will

follow a strict chronological order to highlight the importance of these events in building the notion of identity in Northern Ireland. I will use Jonathan Bardon's *A History of Ulster* as a guideline from which to explore the roots of the identity divide.⁸ To locate all the events occurred during *the Troubles* in their specific dates I will use the CAIN (Conflict Archive on the INternet) web service. Newspaper articles from *The Guardian* and *The Irish Times* that reported on some of the key events of this period will also be included in this study.

For the analysis of the evolution of national identity within the two communities I will focus on John Whyte's *Interpreting Northern Ireland* and follow his methodology.⁹ In his book, Whyte examines previous works about the conflict in Northern Ireland and using data from research prior to *the Troubles* he compares it to others that have taken part during the conflict. Whyte published his book in 1990, eight years before the *Good Friday Agreement* was signed in April 1998. Providing research obtained after the *Peace Process* I want to give an updated perspective on the analysis of the evolution of national identity in Northern Ireland. For the political analysis I will rely on Paul Dixon's *Northern Ireland: The Politics of War and Peace*.¹⁰ Dixon makes a profound analysis of *the Troubles* from a political approach reviewing the important political decisions that changed the course of Northern Irish history in this period.

Some Preliminary Issues

When discussing a divided society we need to give labels to identify the different communities. This can be problematic in Northern Ireland as the causes of the divide are a mixture between national identity, religion and political differences. When referring to the two main communities in Northern Ireland, I will generally do so as Catholics and Protestants due to historical as well as practical reasons. As Whyte pointed out in *Interpreting Northern Ireland*, "Virtually everyone in Northern Ireland can be identified

⁸ Bardon, Jonathan. *A History of Ulster*. Belfast: Blackstaff 1992.

⁹ Whyte, John. *Interpreting Northern Ireland*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1990.

¹⁰ Dixon, Paul. *Northern Ireland: the politics of war and peace*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.

with one community or the other.”¹¹ Where the distinction between the groups has political connotations, the groups will be referred to as Nationalists/Republicans and Unionists/Loyalists respectively.

Geographical terminology can also be problematic in divided areas. When addressing Northern Ireland –which is its legal name since 1920¹²–, many Protestants prefer to do so as ‘Ulster’ as I show in Chapter three. However, this label can be ambiguous as it also refers to the historical nine-county province of Ulster. Therefore I will use the term Ulster in the first part of my historical examination and I will refer to Northern Ireland when investigating *the Troubles*. However, one of the issues that generates most controversy nowadays is what name to give the city of Derry/Londonderry. During the Ulster Plantation, the city was named Londonderry by the Loyalists, while the Irish always preferred to refer to it as Derry. The use of either name has become an indicator used to associate the speaker with one of the two main political identities, especially after *the Troubles*. This dispute over names is a clear reflection of the conflict between nationalists and unionists substantiated by their own historical reviews. Nationalists refer to it as Derry claiming that it is the city’s original name and that it was anglicised from the Old Irish *Doire*. Loyalists defend the usage of the name ‘Londonderry’ appealing to the Charter that King James I granted on 29 March 1613 which stated “[...] that the said city or town of Derry, for ever hereafter be and shall be named and called the city of Londonderry [...]”¹³ The rename of the city was made to honour those companies of the City of London that invested in settlements during the Ulster Plantation. Yet again, two different revisions of history converged and clashed creating division. Following John Whyte’s criteria, I will use the term ‘Derry’ to refer to the city and ‘Londonderry’ to designate the county.

¹¹ Whyte, 20.

¹² “A Chronology of Key Events in Irish History,” CAIN Web Service, accessed June 22, 2015, <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/othelem/chron/ch1800-1967.htm>.

¹³ “Neutral Citation no. [2007] NIQB 5,” The High Court Of Justice In Northern Ireland, accessed May 29, 2015, http://www.courtsni.gov.uk/en-GB/Judicial%20Decisions/PublishedByYear/Documents/2007/2007%20NIQB%205/j_j_WEAF5707.htm.

Finally, the term ‘paramilitary organisation’ –as preferred by academic analysts of the conflict such as Adrian Guelke or John Whyte– will be used to describe groups which make use of violence for political ends such as the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA) or the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF). The reason of this choice over the term ‘terrorists’ – which is commonly used by the media outside of Northern Ireland– is not to justify the use of political violence. Quite the opposite, as pointed out by Adrian Guelke in his essay “Paramilitaries, Republicans and Loyalists” included in *Facets of The Conflict in Northern Ireland*, the term ‘terrorist’ and its implications can misjudge the nature of the conflict:

The weakness of such a characterisation of the violence in Northern Ireland is that it underestimates the gravity of the conflict and the extent to which the violence is embedded in deep sectarian divisions of the society. It also underestimates the historical roots of the use of violence by elements within each of the two main communities in Northern Ireland.¹⁴

¹⁴Adrian Guelke, “Paramilitaries, Republicans and Loyalists” in *Facets of The Conflict in Northern Ireland*, ed. Seamus Dunn (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1995), 114.

The Roots of the Conflict: A Clash of Identities

The shared history between Ireland and Great Britain is a history of conquest and rebellion. Since the first Scottish and English settlers arrived in The Ulster province until *the Troubles* of the late twentieth century and the *Peace Process* that followed, Northern Ireland has experienced a lot of changes in terms of demography, culture, religion, rulers and politics. All of these factors –some of them represented in several traditions– have shaped today’s sense of national identity of the people of this region. During the Ulster Plantation, many English and Scottish settlers came to the north of Ireland bringing their religion and culture with them. Their identities clashed with those of the native Irish due to a struggle over power and created the boundaries between the two groups that are reflected today in the polarized sense of national identity of the Northern Irish society. Garret FitzGerald, in his speech on *Irish Identities* explained the nature of this problem:

It is when more than one focus of identity is to be found within a single geographical area –whether it is the identity of white or black in South Africa or the Southern States of America –or in Brixton– or of Greek or Turk in Cyprus, or of Christian or Arab in Lebanon– that an explosive situation may be created. This is the nature of the problem of Northern Ireland.¹⁵

In this chapter, I will review the Anglo-Irish shared history paying special attention to those events that can help us understand the origins of today’s two main national identities in Northern Ireland, ‘British’ and ‘Irish’. I will also analyse how these identities have evolved during the past centuries due to the British involvement in Ireland.

1.1.-Norman Invasions.

Britain has long sought after Ireland. The first English attempt to conquer was made in the late 12th century –after the successful Norman Invasion– by Henry II of England. The king of England could not allow an independent Norman state in the neighbouring island.¹⁶ In order to assure his dominance he sailed to Ireland in 1171 with a large army so no one

¹⁵ Garret FitzGerald, *Irish Identities. The Richard Dimbleby Lecture, May 1982*. (London: British Broadcasting Corporation, 1982), 5-6.

¹⁶ Jonathan Bardon, *A History of Ulster* (Belfast: Blackstaff, 1992), 30.

could offer any resistance.¹⁷ Previously, in 1154, John of Salisbury, adviser to the archbishop of Canterbury, had persuaded Adrian IV –the only Englishman ever being Pope– to grant Ireland to Henry. He later wrote:

In response to my petition the Pope granted and donated Ireland to the illustrious King of England, Henry, to be held by him and his successors... He did this in virtue of the long-established right, reputed to derive from the donation of Constantine, whereby all islands are considered to belong to the Roman Church.¹⁸

With the authority of the papal bull ‘Laudabiliter’, Henry II of England claimed to be also the king of Ireland. He sought to attach the entire island to his kingdom, but he could only control a small area around Dublin known as the Pale. “Along the western coast and parts of the north of Ireland, Gaelic chiefs continued to rule their kingdoms with their own style and customs.”¹⁹ The crown’s failure to establish control in Ireland originated a fight over power between Gaelic and English communities.

1.2.-The Tudor Period (1485-1603)

Concerned about the Hundred Years' War and the Wars of the Roses, the English government left aside the conquest of Ireland. When the civil war between English barons ceased in 1487, Henry Tudor was ready to continue the conquest. In 1498, Henry VII joined forces with the O'Donnell's and advanced out of the Pale. But the king did not know what to do with Ireland. As Bardon asserted in *A History of Ulster*, “The Tudor monarchy vacillated until almost the end of the sixteenth century between conciliation and conquest.”²⁰ He believed that the Gaelic lords and their people, if treated with respect, would become loyal to the Crown. In June 1541 Henry the VII was proclaimed King of Ireland becoming the first English king to succeed in this enterprise.

Henry also imposed his church revolution in Ireland without any major incidents. The Irish clans soon recognized him as the supreme head of the Church in Ireland and religion did

¹⁷ “A Chronology of Key Events in Irish History.”

¹⁸ Bardon, 32.

¹⁹ “A Chronology of Key Events in Irish History.”

²⁰ Bardon, 62.

not cause division just yet. However, this period was pointed out by FitzGerald as when the Irish sense of identity began to arise in opposition to the British. “This sense of identity emerged in a particular form during the Reformation as a result of the fusion of the cause of Irish independence from Britain with that of the preservation of the Roman Catholic faith in Ireland. For long thereafter British rule and Protestantism were seen by many as a single opponent.”²¹ Some counter-reformist priests came from Catholic Europe and influenced the vision that Ulster had about Reformation.²² Protestantism was seen as an instrument of domination used by the English crown.

However, Elizabeth I was determined to continue with her predecessors’ Protestant reformation. By the end of Elizabeth’s reign, England had control over most of the island of Ireland. The only province that was still rebellious against the English rule was the Ulster. A Gaelic lord, Hugh O’Neill, created an alliance between the Irish clans threatening the English domain in Ireland. They eventually fought Elizabeth’s troops during the Nine Years’ War. In January 1602, the Irish troops, together with Spanish soldiers, were defeated in the south of Ireland at the Battle of Kinsale.²³ After this defeat, the Gaelic Earls fled Ireland leaving Ulster without any Gaelic rulers and ready to be taken by the British.

1.3.-The Protestant Ascendancy (1603-1801)

The *Protestant Ascendancy* was the domination of Ireland by Protestants during the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries. It began when the new king James I distributed the land to colonists from Britain. The king saw this as the perfect opportunity to silence any further native rebellion by removing the economic power from the Irish. This period is known as The Plantation of Ulster and it is by many considered as the origin of the segregation between communities in Northern Ireland.

²¹ FitzGerald, 6.

²² Bardon, 74.

²³ “A Chronology of Key Events in Irish History.”

1.3.1.-The Ulster Plantation

As it happened later in America, in the beginning of the 17th century, settlers from all over Scotland and England moved to the north of Ireland looking for prosperity. They were promised cheap land in the new plantations as part of the kingdom's plans to dominate the territory. They were mostly Protestant and had strong cultural ties with Britain. On the other side, the native Irish who were forced to give up their land were Catholic and culturally Irish. Although religion was not the main factor in the conflict between the people living in the plantation it was used to differentiate and discriminate between sections of the community.²⁴ As in many other examples in the history of colonization, the Irish natives were considered by the British as savages and uncivilized. This gave the colonizers the perfect moral excuse to justify their presence in the island. In James I's words, the project would be a 'civilising enterprise' which would "establish the true religion of Christ among men...almost lost in superstition."²⁵

As a consequence of the plantation Protestants acquired land and wealth and Irish lost theirs. In 1603 Catholics owned 90 per cent of the land but by 1641 this had fallen to around 60 per cent.²⁶ By 1703, less than 5 per cent of the land of Ulster was still owned by Catholic Irish.²⁷ In one hundred years the British had managed to take over the landlordship of the territory in Ulster.

1.3.2.-The Irish Rebellion

The next two centuries consolidated the differences between the two societies. In 1641 an uprising known as the Irish Rebellion attempted to get back the power and lands lost by the Irish during the Plantation. The initial proclamation gave assurance that the Irish remained loyal to the king and that they sought "only the defence and liberty of ourselves and the

²⁴ "The Northern Ireland Conflict," CAIN Web Service, accessed April 22, 2015, <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/faq/faq2.htm>.

²⁵ Bardon, 124.

²⁶ Micheál Ó Siochrú and Éamonn Ó Ciardha. *The Plantation of Ulster: Ideology and Practice* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012), 2-3.

²⁷ Darby, 17.

natives of the Irish nation.”²⁸ Nevertheless, the popular rising became soon radicalized and attempted to “extirpate the English and Protestants”²⁹ and recover the stolen land from them. After forgetting its primary political objectives, the rebellion turned into a show of barbaric ferocity against the settlers and ended up with the massacre of over 4000 settlers contributing to the hatred between both communities.³⁰ The massacre of Ulster left scars within the Protestant community that still remain today. From a Unionist perspective, this rebellion is remembered as a warning of the hostility of Catholics and the consequences of not being vigilant.³¹

The Irish Rebellion led to The Irish Confederate Wars that ended with Cromwell's victory for England in 1653. After his bloody ‘re-conquest’ of Ireland, Cromwell later wrote:

I am persuaded that this is a righteous judgment of God upon these barbarous wretches, who have imbrued their hands in so much innocent blood and that it will tend to prevent the effusion of blood for the future, which are satisfactory grounds for such actions, which otherwise cannot but work remorse and regret.³²

As a result, the English Parliament ordered the confiscation of land owned by Irish Catholics as a punishment for the rebellion restoring Protestant dominance in Ulster as we can see on the Map 1.1. (See appendix I).

1.3.3.-The Jacobite/Williamite Wars

A Catholic King, James II took the throne of England in 1685.³³ This raised hopes in the Catholics and fears in the Protestants. However, in 1688, the Glorious Revolution supposed the deposition of the Catholic English king James II by the Protestant Dutch William III of Orange. Nevertheless, James still counted with many supporters in Ireland known as ‘Jacobites’. From Ireland, the former king attempted to regain his three kingdoms –

²⁸ Michael Perceval-Maxwell, *The Outbreak of the Irish Rebellion of 1641*. (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan 1994), 214.

²⁹ Perceval-Maxwell, 241.

³⁰ Jane Ohlmeyer and John Kenyon, *The Civil Wars* (Oxford University Press, 1998), 278.

³¹ Dixon, 12

³² Thomas Carlyle, ed. "Oliver Cromwell's letters and speeches, with elucidations". William H. Colyer. (New York, 1846), 128.

³³ Bardon, 149.

England, Scotland and Ireland—. On the other hand, Protestants in Ireland supported William and they became known as ‘Williamites’. The period that followed is known as the Jacobite/Williamite Wars and it was one of the most fertile periods of Ulster history in terms of myths.

One of those myths is the Siege of Derry. The commemorations of this event have evolved during the past three centuries. Nowadays, this tradition is a major event for many Unionists. However, back in the late eighteenth century, it used to be celebrated as “a great blow against tyranny which brought liberty to people of all Christian denominations”³⁴ in which not only Protestants but also Catholics took part. In the early nineteenth century and reflecting the rise of tension between Protestants and Catholics in Ireland, the siege came to be seen increasingly as a protestant celebration. From then on, it became a symbol of the victory of Protestantism over Catholicism dividing both communities once again.

Another of these mythicized events has been the Battle of the Boyne in 1690 in which William defeated James’ troops. This battle is possibly the most iconic celebration for Unionists as it represents for them the ultimate victory of Protestantism over Catholicism in Ulster. Since the 1880s, every 12th of July many Protestants in Northern Ireland celebrate this victory to espouse their national identity and promote unionism with Britain.³⁵ There have been numerous riots between Protestants and Catholics coinciding with these commemorative parades throughout the years, not only during *the Troubles*.³⁶ Some of these parades pass through Catholic neighbourhoods –especially in Belfast– which is interpreted as a provocation by nationalists. Unionists defend their right to express their national identity in their country.

³⁴ Ian McBride, *The siege of Derry in Ulster Protestant Mythology* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1997), 46-52.

³⁵ Brian Mercer Walker, *Past and Present: History, Identity and Politics in Ireland* (Belfast: Queen's University Belfast, 2000), 80.

³⁶ “A Chronology of Key Events in Irish History.”

1.3.4.-The Penal Laws

As a consequence of the Protestant victory, the 'Penal Laws' were introduced in Ulster in 1695. They consisted of a set of rules that would assure the Protestant domination over the Catholics. The first ones prevented Catholics from "bearing arms, educating their children and owning any horse above £5 in value".³⁷ The final penal law was introduced in 1728 and it denied the Catholics the right to vote. Once again, the British had made use of legislation to deprive Catholics in Ireland from economic and political power. Furthermore, these regulations kept vivid in the memory of the Catholic community the defeat and confiscation after the Williamite wars. The last of the 'Penal Laws' were not overturned until 1829.³⁸

In 1782, and taking advantage of Britain's involvement in the American Revolutionary War, The Irish Parliament requested legislative independence from the British Parliament in the Dungannon Convention. The central government granted all their demands and from then on The Irish Parliament in Dublin could make its own laws. However, for some Nationalists this was not enough and they saw it as the first step towards independence.³⁹ Inspired by the ideas of the French and American revolutions, the United Irishmen raised up against British rule in May 1798. The revolution was a failure and it only lasted a few months but it left many casualties. In order to avoid future uprisings and restore the stability, a 'union' between Great Britain and Ireland was proposed.

1.4.-The Union (1801-1912)

On 1 January 1801 this political union became law with the Act of Union and the Irish parliament was abolished. This reinforced the existing division between Nationalists, who wanted self-government for Ireland and Unionists, who wanted Ireland to remain part of the United Kingdom. During the nineteenth century various attempts to overthrow the union were made without much success.⁴⁰ Some of these movements used political means like the Repeal movement in the 1840s and the Home Rule from the 1870s. However, there were

³⁷ Bardon, 168.

³⁸ "A Chronology of Key Events in Irish History."

³⁹ Bardon, 215-216.

⁴⁰ Darby, 16-17.

others like the Fenians and the Irish Republican Brotherhood that used violence to achieve independence. On the Protestant side, violence was also used for political purposes. In 1911, The UVF –a Unionist armed militia equivalent to the IRA– was set up in order to use “all means which may be found necessary”⁴¹ to stop Home Rule. As both parts in the conflict became more radicalized, a civil war seemed imminent.

1.5.-The Birth of Northern Ireland (1921-Present)

The First World War brought some calm to the Irish question but it did not last for too long. When the war was over, the Sinn Féin (SF) –the political wing of the IRA– won the elections and in 1918 they replaced the old Irish parliament. As a consequence, in 1919 the Irish War of Independence between Britain and the IRA broke out. The war ended in 1921 with the Government of Ireland Act and the independence of Ireland from Great Britain.⁴² However, the Ulster Unionists would only accept the Home Rule if the country was partitioned. The British government considered this as a temporary measure, and its original proposal was that the new partition consisted of the nine counties of the historic province of Ulster, in which Unionists had only a narrow majority.⁴³ This was rejected by the Unionists who requested that only the six counties of Ulster where the Protestants were in a majority remained part of the Union.⁴⁴ In 1921, as a solution for this conflict and following the Unionists’ demands, the island was divided into two –as shown in Map 1.2 (see appendix)– creating Northern Ireland, dependant on Great Britain.

The partition of Ireland did not solve the problem between the two communities. Rather, it created a new one, the double-minority model: In Northern Ireland the Catholics were a minority, but in the context of Ireland as a whole, the Protestant were also a minority. This social context created an atmosphere of distrust in which both communities felt deeply threatened by the other.⁴⁵ In the years that followed, a system of economic discrimination

⁴¹ Bardon, 439.

⁴² “A Chronology of Key Events in Irish History.”

⁴³ Whyte, 164.

⁴⁴ Thomas Hennessey. *A History of Northern Ireland, 1920-1996* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 1997), 6.

⁴⁵ Whyte, 100-101.

was introduced against the Catholic minority in Northern Ireland. On the nationalist side, the IRA carried out military campaigns in the 1920s, 1940s and 1950s with the objective of uniting Ireland.⁴⁶ As a response, the modern version of the UVF was formed. The UVF issued a statement in May 1966 containing the threat that, "known IRA men will be executed mercilessly and without hesitation".⁴⁷ In this context of growing tension between both factions and their paramilitary groups the Civil Rights Movement of 1967 emerged.

⁴⁶ Darby, 17.

⁴⁷ "A Chronology of Key Events in Irish History."

From the Troubles to the Peace Process

As Michael Pickering asserted in *Research Methods for Cultural Studies*, “bringing cultural history and contemporary media/cultural studies together [...] seems vital in developing a broad understanding of long-term cultural processes.”⁴⁸ In this chapter I will review the recent history of Northern Ireland and I will connect it to the protagonists of the previous chapter, Protestants and Catholics. During *the Troubles*, sectarian violence committed by both sides of the conflict and also by the security forces increased the social boundaries and generated a polarization of national identity that is still present today. In this section, I will analyze the main incidents that affected the two communities’ views on the conflict.

2.1.-The Civil Rights Campaign

Thanks to the Education Act in 1944 –that granted free secondary education for all– and economic diversification, a strong Catholic middle class emerged in the mid-sixties.⁴⁹ Between 1947 and 1952 the total number of pupils in secondary schools doubled.⁵⁰ This new generation of educated Catholics focused more on their positions as citizens of Northern Ireland rather than on their identity as Irish Nationalists, and did not identify themselves with the cause of the IRA.

However, there were still many inequalities between Catholics and Protestants and in the late the 1960s The Civil Rights Campaign emerged. This movement included groups and individuals with very different political views and class backgrounds.⁵¹ On 1 February 1967 the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA) was created and began a non-

⁴⁸ Pickering, 194.

⁴⁹ Hennessey, 127.

⁵⁰ James Loughlin, *The Ulster Question Since 1945* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 25.

⁵¹ Paul Dixon, *Northern Ireland: The Politics of War and Peace* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 70.

violent campaign for change.⁵² The NICRA had several objectives that included the universal franchise for local government elections –one man, one vote– and the removal of discrimination in the allocation of jobs and houses.⁵³

The emergence of a Civil Rights movement within the Catholic community in 1968 posed the first real threat to the stability of the Irish settlement as it exposed the sectarian nature of the Northern Irish regime. The abuse of power highlighted by Catholic demands for equality in employment, housing and education provided an impetus for reform in the Ulster.⁵⁴

On 5 October 1968 in a Civil Rights March in Derry, serious rioting and confrontation with the RUC (Royal Ulster Constabulary) –the local police force at the time– occurred.⁵⁵ The Television cameras filmed the police batoning the defenceless demonstrators. The next morning newspapers like *The Irish Times* published pictures and reports that showed the abuse of the police forces:

The police moved rapidly down the street clearing everything in front of them. Small groups detached themselves to go after individual marchers; young girls and women went screaming hysterically into doorways or along the street. At this stage, some of the police appeared to go out-of-hand how far or how generally one could not say.

The widespread coverage of the riot by the media had an enormous impact especially on the Catholic community. The RUC was being increasingly seen as an ally to the Unionist paramilitary groups and was regarded with distrust by the civilians. This incident is considered by many scholars as the beginning of *the Troubles*.

2.2.-British Intervention and Interment.

In 1969 the Civil Rights movements lost popular support as they only took non-violent political action. Many of the old fears, myths and prejudices that Protestants and Catholics held of each other led to a radicalization of national identity –I expand on this in Chapter three–. The use of force to achieve political objectives became increasingly socially accepted. Paramilitary groups such as the UVF and the IRA found new supporters in this

⁵² “The Civil Rights Campaign - A Chronology of Main Events,” CAIN Web Service, accessed May 3, 2015, <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/crights/chron.htm>.

⁵³ Darby, 18.

⁵⁴ Kennedy-Pipe, 3.

⁵⁵ Hennessey, 142.

new context of violence. Due to the RUC inability to police The British government decided to take part and on 14 August 1969 they agreed to the Northern Ireland Government's request for the deployment of Regiments of the British army to assist the local police.⁵⁶ The British troops were initially welcomed by the Catholic community and they were regarded as neutral peace keepers. However, the army did not stay neutral for long. Dixon put it this way: "It was in the interest of republicans to draw the British Army into conflict, but the army's repressive approach to policing also contributed to its deteriorating relationship with nationalists."⁵⁷

After the failure of their campaign of 1956-62, a transformation began within the IRA. In December 1969 the paramilitary organization split into the Official IRA and the Provisional IRA.⁵⁸ The Official IRA (OIRA) decided to reject violence declaring a ceasefire in the summer of 1972 and they adopted Marxist theories aiming for social equality.⁵⁹ On the other hand, the PIRA –Provisional IRA– considered the British intervention as an invasion and they killed the first British soldier on 6 February 1970.⁶⁰

On 12 March 1971, thousands of Belfast shipyard workers marched demanding the introduction of Internment without trial for members of the IRA.⁶¹ "On 9 August 1971, a series of raids took place across Northern Ireland where 342 people were arrested. There was an immediate upsurge of violence and 17 people were killed during the next 48 hours. Of these 10 were Catholic civilians who were shot dead by the British Army."⁶² Internment without trial had been initially proposed by Unionist politicians as the solution to the social insecurity. In practice, it was only applied to the Catholic community, despite the fact that loyalist paramilitary groups were also responsible of many deaths and sectarian violence. Internment continued until 5 December 1975. During that time 1,981 people were detained;

⁵⁶ Hennessey, 163.

⁵⁷ Dixon, 282-283.

⁵⁸ "A Chronology of the Conflict."

⁵⁹ Dixon, 11.

⁶⁰ Loughlin, 55.

⁶¹ "Internment - A Chronology of the Main Events," CAIN Web Service, accessed May 25, 2015, <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/intern/chron.htm>.

⁶² "Internment - A Chronology of the Main Events."

1,874 were Catholic, while only 107 were Protestant.⁶³ Far from preventing paramilitary violence and civil disorder, Internment caused quite the opposite effect. These arrests and the ill-treatment of suspects led to a very high level of violence over the next few years and increased the Catholic support for the IRA. On the loyalist's side, the consequences of the PIRA campaign led to the creation of the Ulster Defence Association (UDA), another loyalist paramilitary group.⁶⁴ They justified their attacks as a response to the IRA's violent campaign. "We had to stop them. Tribal survival. We had to hit back."⁶⁵ Unionists could not understand that the British Army did not unconditionally support the Protestant community as it remained 'neutral'.

2.3.-Bloody Sunday and Direct Rule

On Sunday 30 January 1972, during a non-violent NICRA demonstration in the Bogside⁶⁶ area of Derry against Internment, soldiers of the 1st Parachute Regiment of the British Army opened fire to the marchers killing thirteen people and injuring another seventeen. Another man died later.⁶⁷ Known as the 'Bloody Sunday' this incident had traumatic consequences in the Catholic community and it became an emotional trigger as well as a propagandistic device for both Republicans and Unionists.⁶⁸ Back in the day, Republicans claimed that British soldiers from the Parachute Regiment deliberately opened fire against the demonstrators. On the other hand, the Army assured that the soldiers were surrounded by PIRA snipers and acted only in self-defence. *The Guardian* newspaper, on its article on 31 January 1972, partially refuted the Army's version with the following statement: "Those of us at the meeting heard only one shot before the soldiers opened up with their high-velocity rifles." *The Irish Times* also reported the day after the killings providing a different review of what happened:

⁶³ "Internment - A Chronology of the Main Events."

⁶⁴ Loughlin, 60.

⁶⁵ Hennessey, 205.

⁶⁶ The Bogside area is a Catholic neighbourhood just outside the city walls of Derry where some of the bloodiest episodes of violence during *The Troubles* took place. It shares border with the Protestant neighbourhood Fountain which can explain the tensions still present in this area.

⁶⁷ Hennessey, 206.

⁶⁸ Kennedy-Pipe, 60.

Troops followed the marchers into the Bogside to arrest stonethrowers, and the firing began. The British Army claimed that their men opened fire only after they had been fired on by snipers, but eye-witness reports claimed that the paratroopers opened fire first and fired indiscriminately into the large crowd.

Condemnation to the killings by the press was followed in Britain and Ireland, and internationally. The British government announced an official inquiry to investigate the circumstances of the shootings. The Widgery Tribunal was published less than twelve weeks after Bloody Sunday and it legitimated the British Army's actions. However, the families of the victims did not accept this verdict and requested another investigation. A new inquiry known as 'The Saville Inquiry' was put together in 1998 and, after gathering thousands of testimonies and evidence, it was released in June 2010.⁶⁹ The report confirmed that those murdered were in no way of any threat to the British soldiers. Prime Minister David Cameron soon apologised on behalf of the nation in an act of total honesty:

I am deeply patriotic. I never want to believe anything bad about our country. I never want to call into question the behaviour of our soldiers and our army, who I believe to be the finest in the world.[...]But the conclusions of this report are absolutely clear. There is no doubt, there is nothing equivocal, there are no ambiguities. What happened on Bloody Sunday was both unjustified and unjustifiable. It was wrong.⁷⁰

Be that as it may, the British Army, which had been seen as a neutral force by many Catholics since their intervention in the conflict, became an enemy from then on and the IRA received new supporters to their cause. Bombing campaigns by the Official IRA and the PIRA followed killing and injuring many civilians. Once again, retaliation followed by the loyalist's paramilitaries. The situation in Northern Ireland could not be left to worsen. The Northern Ireland Act, 1972, suspended the Northern Ireland Government imposing direct rule from Westminster.

⁶⁹ "British Army kills 13 on Bloody Sunday," BBC History, accessed May 28, 2015, http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/events/british_army_kills_13_on_bloody_sunday.

⁷⁰ "Bloody Sunday: PM David Cameron's full statement," BBC News, accessed May 22, 2015, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10322295>.

2.4.-The Peace Process

The conflict had reached such a point of violence that the main political parties decided it was time to start putting an end to it. The 11 January 1988, John Hume, then leader of the SDLP, had a meeting with Gerry Adams, then President of Sinn Féin (SF)⁷¹. However, convincing voters of both sides to reject political violence was not going to be easy. The Sinn Féin had problems convincing Nationalists to move towards agreement. The end of the Cold War appeared to be moving towards resolution and was used by the Sinn Féin leadership to justify unarmed strategy.⁷² Unionists were sceptics at first. The IRA did not proclaim a ceasefire until 1993 which certainly slowed the *Peace Process* negotiations. After years of negotiations between the Irish and the British governments along with the main political parties of Northern Ireland, an agreement was reached. The 10 April 1998 the *Good Friday Agreement* was signed putting an end to this period of the Northern Irish history but not to the division of its society.

⁷¹ “The Irish Peace Process” CAIN Web Service, accessed June 13, 2015, <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/peace/sum.htm> .

⁷² Dixon, 289.

The Development of National Identity in Northern Ireland since 1968

National Identity is more important in Northern Ireland –along with Scotland– than it is in any other region of the United Kingdom. “In Britain, for the most part, lines of ethnicity, class and religion run across the preponderant 'British' identity.”⁷³ In Northern Ireland, conversely, identity labels have a determinant role in societal relations. They are used by the different communities as a differentiation marker. As argued in chapter one, the differences in identity have their very roots in the colonization of the Ulster by the British and more precisely in the Ulster Plantation of the seventeenth century. In chapter two we saw how these identities became radicalized. In this chapter, I will analyze this radicalization in national identification and discuss about its possible causes and consequences. The results shown in this section are product of my own research, though I make use of other people’s analysis and data to support my thesis.

3.1.-National Identity and Social Identity

Social Identity Theory can help us understand the reasons of this radicalization in national identification. It claims that where there is an inequality in power relations between different groups, those groups will identify the differences between them and amplify them in order to maintain their power. Simultaneously, they will identify their similarities within the group and adopt them as their own.

[...]It is also relevant how groups as a whole interact, especially if one group is more powerful than another and if there is competition for resources. This is particularly the case where ethnic or racial minority groups face a majority group. In such circumstances, the individuals in the groups tend to exaggerate the differences between groups, to find a clear boundary distinguishing one from the other. They also tend to seek more similarities within the group, to conform more to the norms of group behaviour, beliefs and values.⁷⁴

⁷³ Edward Moxon-Browne, “National Identity in Northern Ireland” CAIN Web Service, accessed April 14, 2015, <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/othelem/research/nisas/rep1c2.htm#chap2> Originally published in *Social Attitudes in Northern Ireland* Ed by Peter Stringer and Gillian Robinson (Belfast: Blackstaff, 1991)

⁷⁴ Michael Byram, Manuel Tost Planet, “Social identity and the European Dimension: Intercultural Competence through Foreign Language Learning.” (Germany: Council of Europe publishing, 2000), 20.

Nowadays, in some urban areas of Northern Ireland, a particular community can be associated with a particular residential area. In some towns this fact is very visible due to the unionist and nationalist flags or mural paintings displayed. This was not as much the case before *the Troubles* began. When violence started, there was a mass movement of Catholics fleeing from Protestant areas in search of safety in their own community and, to a lesser extent, Protestants also moved out of Catholic areas. As Paul Dixon asserted in *Northern Ireland: the politics of war and peace*, “The rioting of the late 1960s and early 1970s precipitated what was until then the largest movement of population in Western Europe after the Second World War.”⁷⁵

On Census Day 2011, Derry was the second city in Northern Ireland with the highest proportion of residents who were either Catholic or who had been brought up as Catholic – 75 per cent–.⁷⁶ This can explain why The Civil Rights Campaign of the late 1960s was so successful in this city. As shown in Map 3.1. the boundaries between the two communities in the city of Derry are clearly visible. In the dark green areas we can see that the Catholic presence varies from 90 to 100 per cent. Across the river Foyle, the Protestant areas are less numerous but within these areas the residents are mostly Protestant.

From an integrationist approach, the mixing and contact of different communities can break down prejudices about ‘the other group’⁷⁷. If we reverse this theory, residential segregation may have the opposite and undesirable effect. The segregation of communities, especially of those that already held historical prejudices towards one another, can increase the boundaries between both groups and this has been the case in Northern Ireland.

3.2.-National Identity and Religion

As seen previously in chapter one, the differentiation between being ‘Irish’ or ‘British’ seems to be deeply bound to the religious beliefs. These religious beliefs in most of the

⁷⁵ Dixon, 22.

⁷⁶ “2011 Census” NISRA Web service, accessed May 28, 2015, http://www.nisra.gov.uk/Census/key_stats_bulletin_2011.pdf.

⁷⁷ Dixon, 21.

cases have been inherited along with the sense of identity linked to them. In addition, it is also common to represent political views associated to a particular religion. Nowadays, the labels of 'Catholic' and 'nationalist', and 'Protestant' and 'unionist', respectively, are often used interchangeably.⁷⁸ Nevertheless, if we analyse the attitudes of both Protestants and Catholics from the beginning of *the Troubles* until today, we may notice significant variations that show an evolution in their national identity. For these reasons, I have decided to analyse opinion polls that differentiated between these two religious beliefs.

3.2.1.-Opinion Polls during the Troubles

Richard Rose, in his survey of 1968, interviewed 1291 people in Northern Ireland asking them about their political and social attitudes. As Whyte pointed out in his analysis of various surveys, Rose conducted the interviews in the last few months before *the Troubles* began making the results a unique and extraordinary source of information.⁷⁹ The results that Rose obtained (See Table 3.1.) showed the identification according to national identity of the Northern Ireland society at a time when the region was in peace. An interesting fact is that only 39 per cent of Protestants identified themselves as 'British' whereas 76 per cent of the Catholics preferred the 'Irish' label. Before *the Troubles* began, 20 per cent of the Protestants and 15 per cent of the Catholics chose their supposed antagonist identity. These figures were about to change drastically in the next decades as a result of the radicalization and polarization of the political views. Finally, we can see that in 1968 the term 'Ulster' was preferred by 32 per cent of the Protestants, almost as much as 'British' whereas only 5per cent of the Catholics picked it. This makes 'Ulster' a predominant Protestant term which may resemble past times when Protestants were in rule. Unfortunately, Rose did not include the more neutral choice 'Northern Irish' in his questionnaire. It was added by Smith in his survey of 1986 and reused in later surveys due to its popularity.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Moxon-Browne, "National Identity in Northern Ireland."

⁷⁹ Whyte, 6.

⁸⁰ Whyte, 68.

Table 3.1. National identities v religion, 1968 (percentage shares)

	Protestant	Catholic
Irish	20	76
British	39	15
Ulster	32	5
Sometimes British;sometimes Irish	6	3
Anglo-Irish	2	1

Source: Richard Rose, *Governing without Consensus: An Irish Perspective*. (London: Faber and Faber, 1971) 208

Ross's data is very interesting, especially if we compare it to other surveys conducted after *the Troubles* began. The greatest change can be seen in Moxon-Browne's survey of 1978 (See Table 3.2.) when 67 per cent of Protestants identified themselves as British –an increase of 28 per cent with respect to Rose's survey–. This enormous change in the Protestants' sense of national identity can only be explained by the events that took place in that decade. Whyte found a possible explanation: "By 1978 the IRA campaign to force the unionists into a united Ireland had been going on for seven years, and perhaps its effect had been to reinforce in them a non-Irish identity."⁸¹ Statistics of deaths ignore the actual impact that the threat of paramilitary can have on the civilian population.⁸²The 'siege mentality' that had been installed in the Protestant community since the seventeenth century emerged by the IRA attacks making them feel more attached to their sense of 'Britishness' and less so to their sense of 'Irishness'. On the Catholic side, most of the figures stayed stable. Even still, 15 per cent of them picked the choice 'British' despite the murdering of Catholic civilians by the British Army. Surprisingly, the number of Catholics who chose 'Irish' decreased by 7 per cent with respect to 1968. This change of opinion could be explained by the fear many Catholics experienced of being associated to the IRA during the decade of the Interments.

⁸¹ Whyte, 68.

⁸² Dixon, 25.

Table 3.2. National identities v religion, 1978 (percentage shares)

	Protestant	Catholic
Irish	8	69
British	67	15
Ulster	20	6
Sometimes British; sometimes Irish	3	8
Anglo-Irish	2	2

Source: Edward Moxon-Browne, *Nation, Class and Creed in Northern Ireland*. (Aldershot: Gower, 1983) 6

In Smith's survey of 1986 (See Table 3.3.), the term 'Northern Irish' was introduced substituting the obsolete 'Anglo-Irish'. This became a popular choice being picked by 11 per cent of the Protestants and 20 per cent of the Catholics and its popularity has continuously increased since then (See Tables 3.5. and 3.6.). This new identity seems to include both communities regardless of any religious background serving as a label of conciliation. Nonetheless, the antagonist terms 'British' and 'Irish' remained the top choices among Protestants and Catholics respectively. The violent conflict was not over yet and the two communities were still deeply divided.

Table 3.3. National identities v religion, 1986 (percentage shares)

	Protestant	Catholic
Irish	3	61
British	65	9
Ulster	14	1
Northern Irish	11	20
Sometimes British; sometimes Irish	4	7

Source: David J. Smith, *Equality and Inequality in Northern Ireland*. (London: Political Studies Institute, 1987)

3.2.2.-Opinion Polls during the Peace Process

Since 1998, the Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey began to record the attitudes and beliefs of the people in Northern Ireland. As a part of the 'Community Relations' module, a survey asked the question 'Do you think of yourself as British/Irish/Ulster/Northern Irish?' also differentiating between Protestants and Catholics answers. The first survey coincided with the year of the signing of *The Good Friday Agreement*, which gives us a sense of the identity vibe at that time. The results (See Table 3.4.) do not show important changes in

respect to 1986. This can be interpreted as a continuation of the polarization of the two political views that we saw on previous surveys. Although the Belfast Agreement had the best of intentions in their attempt to integrate the two communities, the truth is that society did not seem to be ready for conciliation just yet. *The Troubles* had left many open wounds that would take time to heal.

Table 3.4. National identities v religion, 1998 (percentage shares)

	Protestant	Catholic
Irish	3	65
British	67	8
Ulster	10	0
Northern Irish	18	24

Source: Community Relations Module “ARK, accessed May 10, 2015, http://www.ark.ac.uk/nilt/1998/Community_Relations/NINATID.html

Although the typology of the questionnaires changed throughout the years, we can still make a comparison between them to highlight any changes that happened during the three decades that the conflict lasted. Back in 1968 Protestants were split between the ‘British’, ‘Ulster’ and even ‘Irish’ labels whereas Catholics mostly identified themselves as ‘Irish’ (See Table 3.5.). Some scholars argued that this fragmentation among the Protestant community helped to increase the sense of insecurity. Furthermore, the lack of agreement in their sense of identity might also be linked to their strong feelings about the issue.⁸³

Thirty years later, research shows that they sharply rejected to identify themselves as Irish – only three per cent chose it in 1998–. We could argue then that Protestants are surer of what they are not than of what they are.⁸⁴ Their sense of national identity seems to be more situational than that of the Catholics.

In the Catholic side, changes in the opinion polls are not so strong during the same period. The Catholics’ sense of national identity did not move towards polarization as Protestants did. Actually, 11 per cent less of Catholics chose the label ‘Irish’ between 1968 and 1998.

⁸³ Whyte. 99-100.

⁸⁴ Whyte. 70.

Instead, Catholics gradually preferred to identify themselves with the ‘Northern Irish’ identity –24 per cent chose it in 1998–. Also less Catholics identified themselves as ‘British’ but there was still 8 per cent who did so.

Table 3.5. National identities v religion, 1968-1998 (percentage shares)

	1968	1978	1986	1998
Irish				
Protestant	20	8	3	3
Catholic	76	69	61	65
British				
Protestant	39	67	65	67
Catholic	15	15	9	8
N. Irish				
Protestant	*	*	11	18
Catholic	*	*	20	24
Ulster				
Protestant	32	20	14	10
Catholic	5	6	1	0

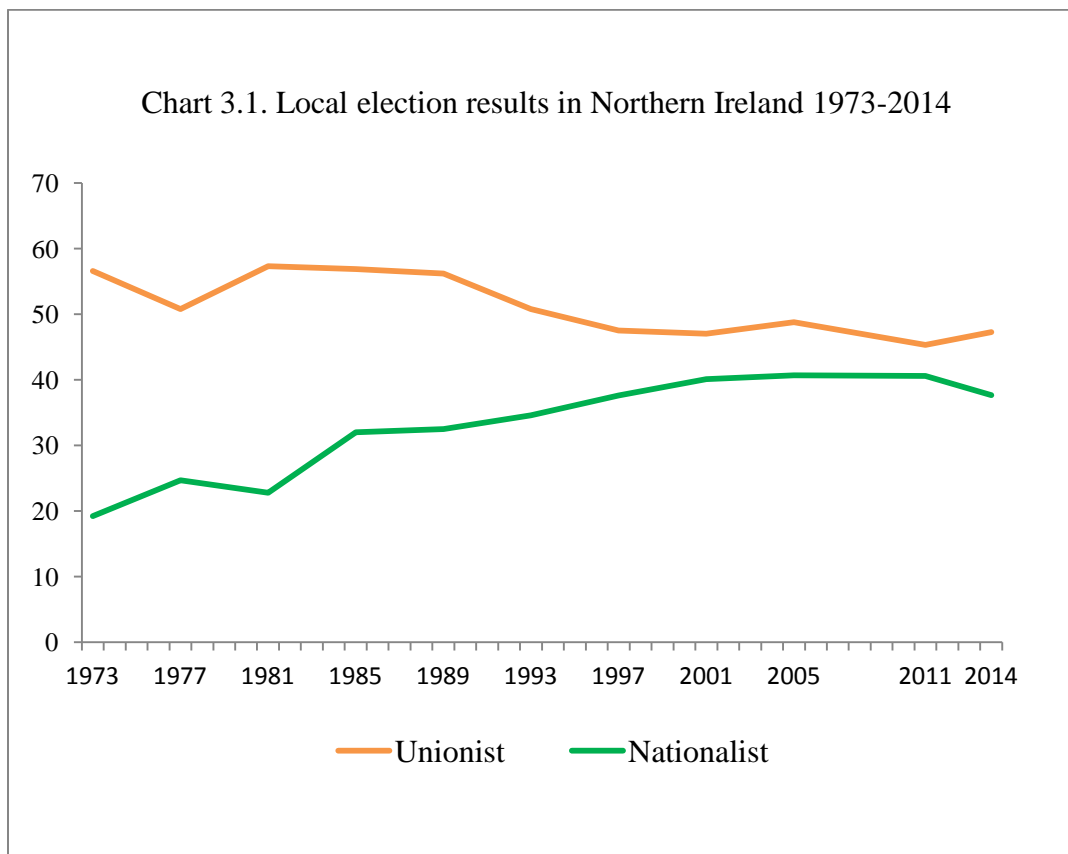
*Not asked

Source: Sergio Hernández. Data collected from John Whyte, *Interpreting Northern Ireland*. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990) and “Community Relations Module” ARK, accessed May 13, 2015, <http://www.ark.ac.uk/nilt/results/comrel.html>

3.2.3.-Opinion Polls after 1998

In the recent period there have been important social and political transformations which might be expected to change the identity structure in Northern Ireland.⁸⁵ Since *The Good Friday Agreement* of 1998, the economic and social differences between the two communities have noticeably decreased. Furthermore, the growth in the representation of Nationalists parties in the political scene (see chart 3.1.) has generated equalization in power relations between the groups.

⁸⁵ Jennifer Todd; Theresa O’Keefe; Nathalie Rougier and Lorenzo Cañas Bottos. “Fluid or Frozen? Choice and Change in Ethno-National Identification in Contemporary Northern Ireland” in *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* (Dublin: Taylor & Francie, 2006), 5. http://researchrepository.ucd.ie/bitstream/handle/10197/2345/TODD_NEP%5B1%5D.rev.2.pdf?sequence=1.



Source: Sergio Hernández. Data collected from <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/issues/politics/election/electsum.htm>

However, those social advances in favour of the Catholic community have been interpreted by many unionists as a defeat to their cause as they feel abandoned by both the British and their own governments.

Out of frustration with the fact that the IRA has survived British security measures; frustration with Britain's abolition of the Parliament and Government at Stormont; certain insensitivities connected with direct rule from Westminster; and British attempts to find a form of devolved self-government acceptable to the nationalist as well as the unionist section of the community in Northern Ireland [...] there has emerged over these past ten years amongst Northern Protestants a growing sense of alienation from Britain.⁸⁶

The Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey has been carried every year between 1998 and 2013 –with the exception of 2011– and by comparing the results obtained on them we can observe the evolution of national identity from the *Peace Process* until today (See Table

⁸⁶ FitzGerald, 8.

3.6.). Once again, it is within the Protestant community where we can see more variations towards polarization although not as radical as during *the Troubles*.

Table 3.6. National identities v religion, 1998-2013 (percentage shares)

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2012	2013
Irish															
Protestant	3	2	3	2	3	2	3	5	3	4	4	3	4	3	2
Catholic	65	68	59	62	62	63	61	60	61	62	61	66	58	69	58
British															
Protestant	67	72	72	70	75	66	74	65	63	61	57	63	61	69	70
Catholic	8	9	9	8	10	8	12	8	11	9	8	6	8	9	9
N. Irish															
Protestant	18	17	15	17	14	22	17	24	26	27	32	29	28	24	22
Catholic	24	22	28	26	25	25	25	29	23	23	25	23	25	16	26
Ulster															
Protestant	10	7	7	9	6	8	5	5	7	5	6	3	5	1	4
Catholic	0	0	1	1	1	0	2	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0

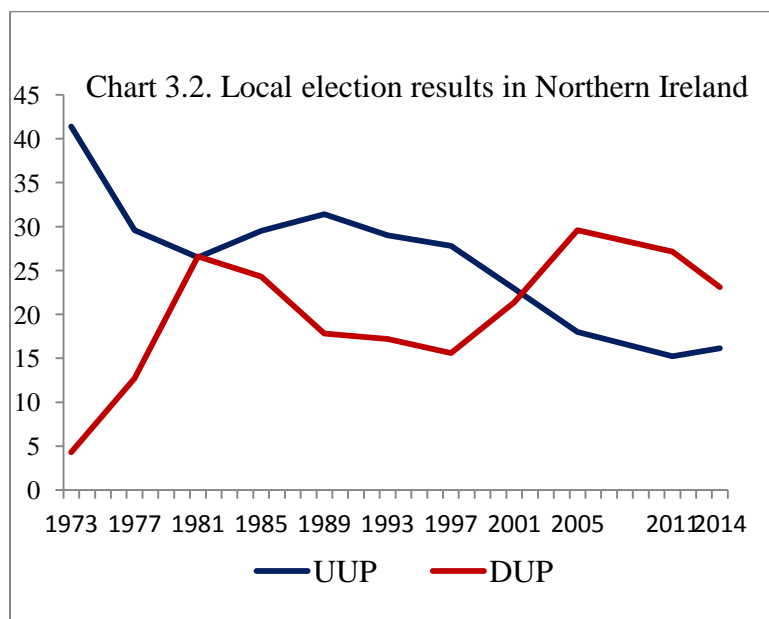
Source: Sergio Hernández. Data collected from “Community Relations Module” ARK, accessed May 13, 2015, <http://www.ark.ac.uk/nilt/results/comrel.html>

3.3.-National Identity and Politics

Political representation in democratic elections can also be a good indicator of the sense of national identity at a time. Furthermore, if the different identities are strongly linked to a particular political view –as it happens in Northern Ireland– the results of the elections can be very relevant to the topic that we are discussing. As we saw in the previous section, in Northern Ireland is common to represent political views associated to a particular religion. There is an undoubtedly connection between voting to a particular party and being a unionist and protestant, or catholic and republican.

Despite the conflict, elections were held almost uninterruptedly throughout the three decades. During the 1970s and the early 1980s political parties emerged in representation of this context of ideological polarization. Also old parties were reformed to differentiate their position in the political scene.

On the unionist side, the UUP (Ulster Unionist Party) –that was the dominant party in the Stormont era 1921-72–⁸⁷ began to fragment. This was due to different views on the British Government’s interventionism and the support of its leader, Brian Faulkner, of power-sharing in an Irish dimension.⁸⁸ The DUP (Democratic Unionist Party) was founded by Ian Paisley in September 1971.⁸⁹ This loyalist party was created in response to the apparent softening in the UUP’s attitude towards Catholics and the Republic of Ireland.⁹⁰ In their first Local elections in 1973 they only won 4.3 per cent of the total votes. Over the years, however, their support has increased –mainly from UUP voters– and in 1979 they won 29.8 per cent of the vote in the European elections becoming the biggest unionist party. In the Westminster elections in 2015 they won 25.66 per cent of the vote maintaining their status of the most voted party in Northern Ireland (see chart 3.2.). This swift of the voters from a more conciliating party to a more unionist one can only be explained by the influence that *the Troubles* and the loyalist propaganda had on the unionist voters.



Source: Sergio Hernández. Data collected from <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/issues/politics/election/electsum.htm>

⁸⁷ Dixon, 14.

⁸⁸ Dixon, 14.

⁸⁹ “Political Parties in Northern Ireland,” CAIN Web Service, accessed June 16, 2015, <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/issues/politics/parties.htm>.

⁹⁰ Dixon, 15.

On the nationalist side, two main parties entered the political scene in the 1970s. The Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) was founded in 1970.⁹¹ The party received support mainly from working-class as well as middle-class Catholics.⁹² The SDLP supported the Civil Rights Movement of the 1970s and it aimed for a unification of Ireland only through democratic means and by agreement. We could classify it as a centre-left moderate nationalist party. Since its foundation it became the most representative party for the nationalist cause obtaining 13.4 per cent of the vote in the 1973 Local elections. However, in the Assembly election in October 1982, the Provisional Sinn Féin decided to take part winning 10.1 per cent of the vote. The party was formed following the split in the IRA in 1969, creating the Official SF and the Provisional SF. This involvement of the IRA in the elections completely changed the British interventionism policy towards the Northern Irish question. “The standing of SF in the polls, and the fear that it would surpass the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) as the main voice of Nationalists in Northern Ireland, was one of the reasons why the British government signed the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985.”⁹³

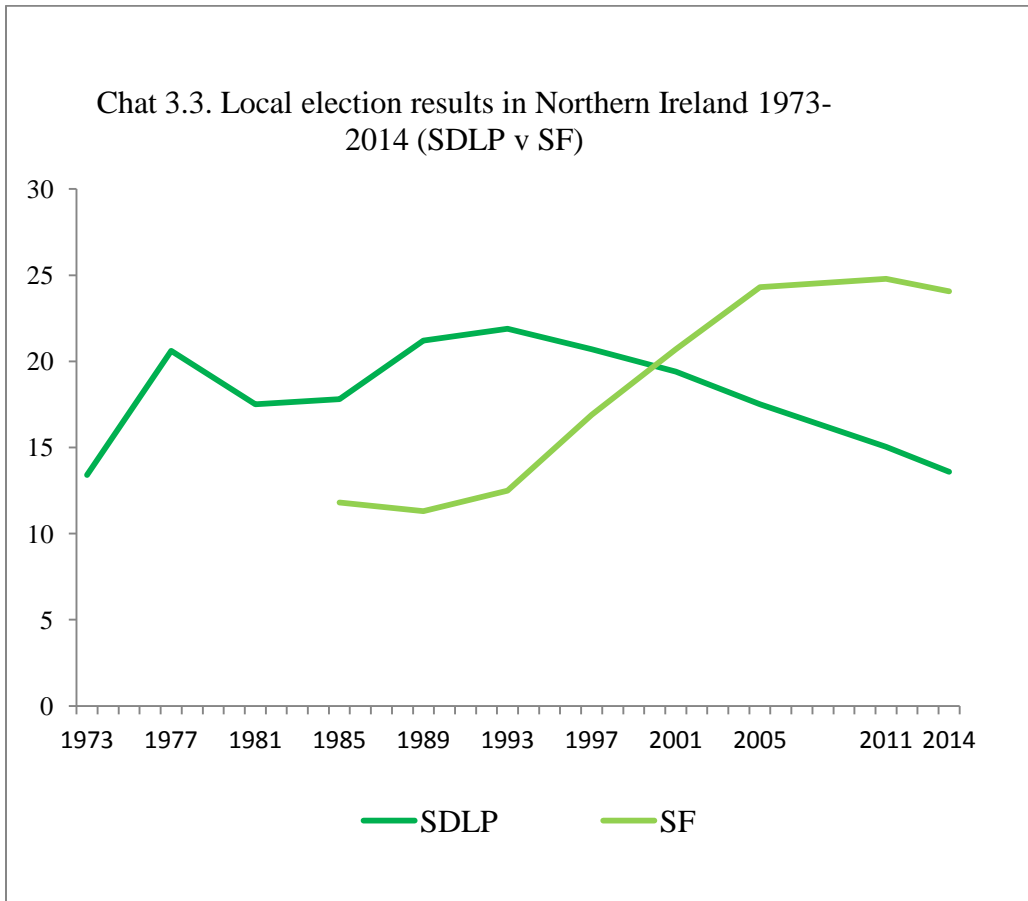
The propaganda war and the hunger strikes also had enormous impact on the people’s views on the conflict. During the *Peace Process*, however, the strategy of the political parties drastically changed. Paul Dixon, in *Northern Ireland: the politics of war and peace* stated that “The British and Irish Governments, Sinn Féin and the SDLP attempted to win down the propaganda war by choreographing the Peace Process”⁹⁴ Nevertheless, the radicalization in political support continued. In the local elections of 2001, SF obtained 20.7 per cent as opposed to 19.4 per cent for the SDLP becoming the most voted nationalist party for their first time in recent history. As shown in Chart 3.3., SF support continued to increase and in the local elections of 2014 they obtained 24.07 per cent of the vote becoming the most voted party in Northern Ireland.

⁹¹ “Political Parties in Northern Ireland.”

⁹² Dixon, 11.

⁹³ “Abstracts on Organisations” CAIN Web Service, accessed June 23, 2015, <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/othelem/organ/azorgan.htm>.

⁹⁴ Dixon, 289.



Source: Sergio Hernández. Data collected from <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/issues/politics/election/electsum.htm>

Conclusion

In this dissertation I have explored the very roots of the conflict between the two main communities that coexist in Northern Ireland: Protestants and Catholics. These communities, while building their notion of self-identity –in which religion had a major role–, have developed contrasting senses of national identity. These divergences have increased during the years due to struggle over power. We have also seen how both Nationalists and Unionists have made use of their own revisions of history creating myths to justify their political objectives.

During *the Troubles* of the last century, sectarian violence and political propaganda increased the gap between Protestants and Catholics. After the Civil Rights Movement clashed with the police forces and the British Army, violence escalated generating a radicalization of political ideologies and national identity. We have seen this polarization reflected in different surveys carried out during this period. In 1968, Rose found that Protestants were divided between the ‘British’ and ‘Ulster’ labels. However, as the conflict became bloodier, and particularly because of the PIRA campaign against British intervention, Protestants have been more attached to their British identity in opposition to the Irish one.

This division is also reflected in the evolution of political representation in Northern Ireland since 1968. In chapter three we have also analysed local election results since 1973 to highlight any significant changes. This analysis shows how Republicanism has been increasingly supporting SF at the expense of SDLP. On the other hand, Unionists’ political representation has also become more radical moving towards DUP to the detriment of a more moderate party such as UUP.

All these dramatic changes in the Northern Irish society in such a short period of time show how deeply *the Troubles* have affected the sense of national identity of the population. The

present survey shows that the polarisation between Protestant ‘Britishness’ and Catholic ‘Irishness’ is even stronger now than before. Despite the good intentions of the different governments and political parties towards conciliation prior to the signing of the *Good Friday Agreement*, the social trauma and the propaganda derived from *the Troubles* has proved too strong to be patched overnight.

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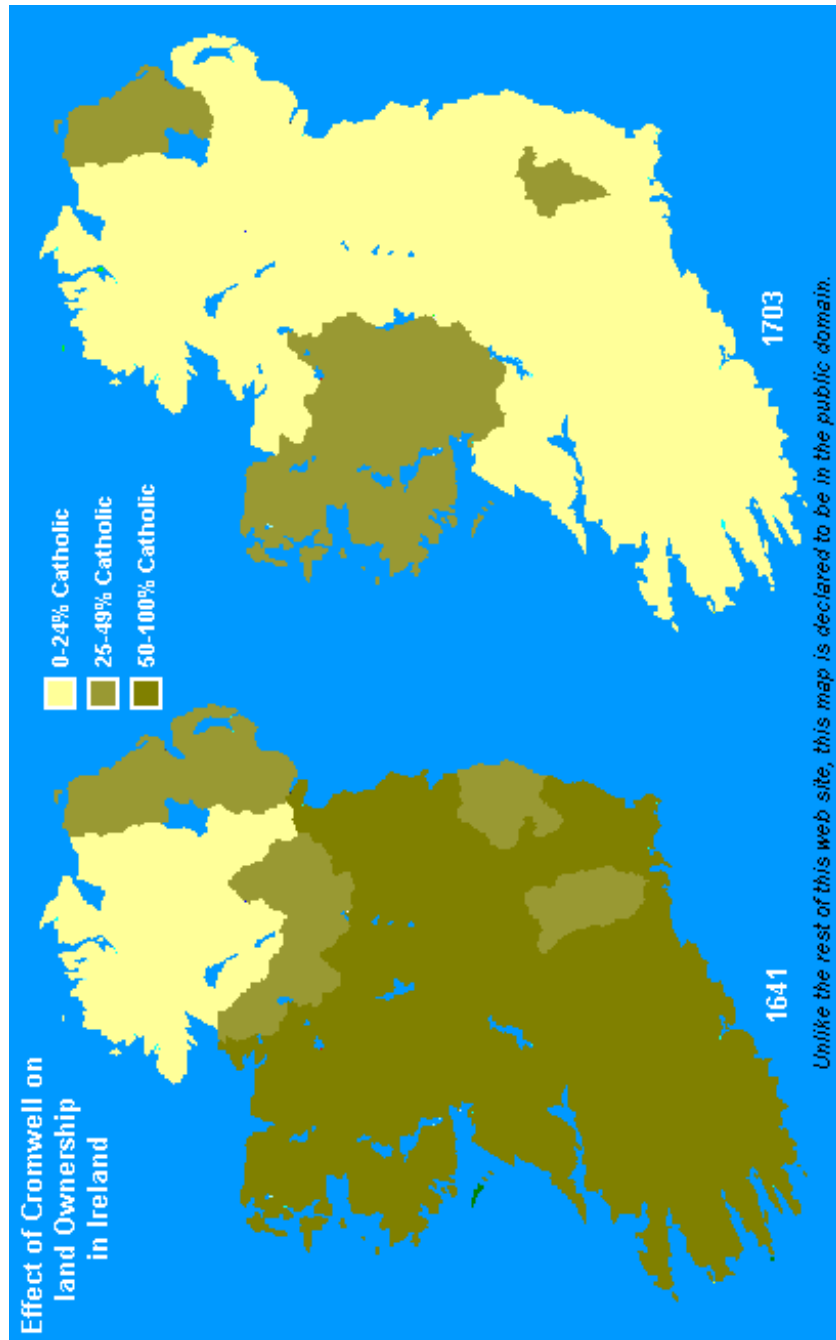
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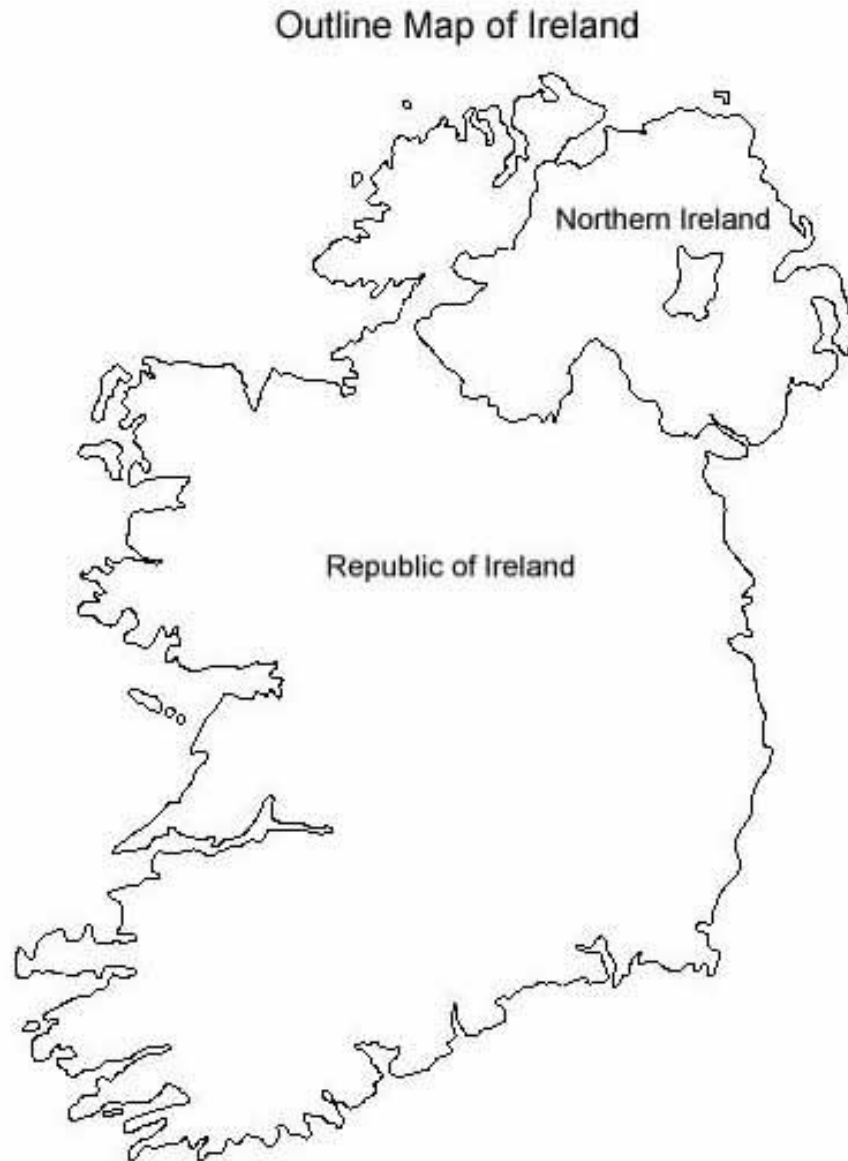
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Annex I. Effect of Cromwell on Land Ownership in Ireland



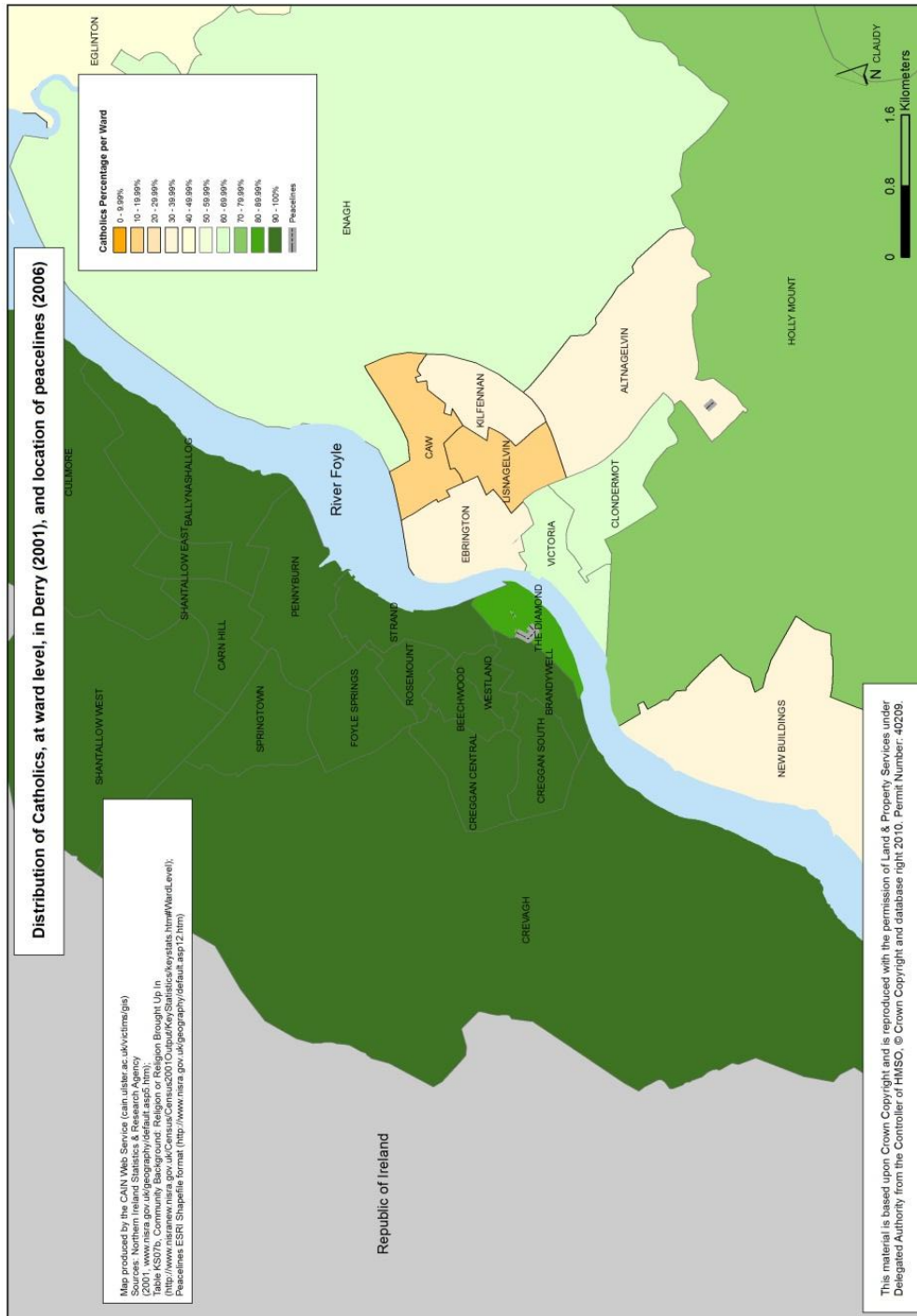
Map 1.1. Source: CAIN Web Service, “Maps of Ireland and Northern Ireland”
<http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/images/maps/maps.htm>

Annex II. Partition of Ireland



Map 1.2. Source: CAIN Web Service, “Maps of Ireland and Northern Ireland”
<http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/images/maps/maps.htm>

Annex III. Distribution of Catholics in Derry (2001)



Map 3.1. Source: CAIN Web Service, “Maps of Ireland and Northern Ireland” <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/images/maps/maps.htm>

Annex IV. Election results in Northern Ireland 1969-2015

Election	UUP	DUP	Other U.	SDLP	SF	Other N.	APNI
1969 Stormont	61.1	-	6.3	-	-	18.8	-
1970 Westminster	54.3	-	4.5	-	-	23.3	-
1973 Local	41.4	4.3	10.9	13.4	-	5.8	13.7
1973 Assembly	29.3	10.8	21.8	22.1	-	2.0	9.2
1974 Westminster	32.3	8.2	23.7	22.4	-	4.5	3.2
1974 Westminster	36.5	8.5	17.1	22.0	-	7.8	6.3
1975 Convention	25.8	14.8	21.9	23.7	-	2.2	9.8
1977 Local	29.6	12.7	8.5	20.6	-	4.1	14.4
1979 Westminster	36.6	10.2	12.2	19.9	-	8.2	11.8
1979 European	21.9	29.8	7.3	24.6	-	6.7	6.8
1981 Local	26.5	26.6	4.2	17.5	-	5.3	8.9
1982 Assembly	29.7	23.0	6.7	18.8	10.1	-	9.3
1983 Westminster	34.0	20.0	3.0	17.9	13.4	-	8.0
1984 European	21.5	33.6	2.9	22.1	13.3	-	5.0
1985 Local	29.5	24.3	3.1	17.8	11.8	2.4	7.1
1986 Westminster	51.7	14.6	5.2	12.1	6.6	-	5.5
1987 Westminster	37.8	11.7	5.4	21.1	11.4	-	10.0
1989 Local	31.4	17.8	5.7	21.2	11.3	-	6.8
1989 European	21.5	29.9	4.8	25.5	9.2	-	5.2
1992 Westminster	34.5	13.1	8.2	23.5	10.0	-	8.7
1993 Local	29.0	17.2	4.6	21.9	12.5	0.2	7.7
1994 European	23.8	29.2	1.0	28.9	9.9	-	4.1
1996 Forum	24.2	18.8	9.9	21.4	15.5	-	6.5
1997 Westminster	32.7	13.6	4.2	24.1	16.1	-	8.0
1997 Local	27.8	15.6	4.1	20.7	16.9	-	6.5
1998 Assembly	21.3	18.0	8.1	21.9	17.7	-	6.5
1999 European	17.6	28.3	6.3	28.1	17.4	-	2.1
2001 Westminster	26.8	22.5	3.4	21.0	21.7	-	3.6
2001 Local	22.9	21.4	2.7	19.4	20.7	-	5.1
2003 Assembly	22.7	25.7	3.3	17.0	23.5	0.2	3.7
2004 European	16.6	32.0	-	15.9	26.3	-	-
2005 Westminster	17.7	33.7	0.4	17.5	24.3	-	3.9
2005 Local	18.0	29.6	1.2	17.4	23.3	-	5.0
2007 Assembly	14.94	30.09	2.71	15.22	26.16	1.18	5.24
2009 European	17.11	18.23	13.66	16.20	26.04	-	5.51
2010 Westminster	15.19	24.96	10.45	16.47	25.52	-	6.35
2011 Local	15.23	27.16	2.95	15.04	24.78	0.76	7.40
2011 Assembly	13.48	30.57	3.41	14.52	27.45	-	7.84
2014 Local	16.15	23.09	8.02	13.58	24.07	-	6.65
2014 European	13.33	20.95	16.04	13.03	25.52	-	7.10
2015 Westminster	16.01	25.66	4.85	13.90	24.54	-	8.57

Source: Martin Melaugh. "Political party support in Northern Ireland, 1969 to 2015," CAIN Web service, accessed June 20, 2015, <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/issues/politics/election/electsum.htm>