



ANNA-KAISA KUUSISTO-ARPONEN

Our Places – Their Spaces

Urban Territoriality in the Northern Irish Conflict



ACADEMIC DISSERTATION

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After the first few months in University I was sure that I would never become a researcher and I even doubted if Geography was really the subject I wanted to study. Now, seven years on, I am defending my PhD, I am a researcher and Geography (Regional Studies) is my discipline. I must admit that I am more than pleased with my choice. My academic career in Geography began first as a student and then as a post-graduate student in the University of Joensuu, in the Department of Geography. I want to thank some of my teachers: Professors Perttu Vartiainen, Ari Lehtinen and Jouni Häkli who guided me in the world of Geography. Special thanks go to Jouni, who became the supervisor for my Master's thesis and thereafter for my post-graduate studies. Jouni, your encouragement and advice have been worth gold. I have been lucky to have this opportunity to learn from you. Especially, in times of academic confusion (and indeed there have been many of these) discussions with you have given me mental support. I also want to express my gratitude to Kristiina, Dave and Joni, who worked in the same research project of Borderland Studies. Being the youngest one in our team, I was named as "Baby Spice." I have proudly carried that name, but moreover working with you all has been a pleasure. Joni, you have always made time to listen and to discuss academic topics or life in general. Whatever happens in the future, Joni, you can account on our deal: I'll cut and you sweep.

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* * * * *

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Omistan tämän työn rakkaimmilleni, Tomille, Lumille ja Sampolle.

Tampere 25th February 2003
Anna-Kaisa Kuusisto-Arponen

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ABSTRACT

This doctoral thesis discusses *local territoriality* in the context of the conflict-divided society of Northern Ireland. Territoriality is viewed as a social process and culturally contextual phenomenon. In my research I have focused on the experiences of territoriality among the local Catholic and Protestant communities. In particular, the urban borderlands of the city of Derry/Londonderry are analysed.

Urban territoriality includes socio-spatial processes such as *categorisation*, *boundary drawing*, and the *politics of place*. These practices construct dichotomised realities, in which “us” and “them,” “our places” and “their spaces,” “Derry” and “Londonderry” are formed. This socio-spatial complexity gives rise to various overlapping urban borderlands, both symbolic and material. Urban borderlands are constructed by many agents, institutions, and structures across various geographical scales. Whereas the main focus in this work is on local territorial practices, the influence of other geographical scales is also discussed. Most illustrative in this respect is the current peace process in Northern Ireland.

Derry/Londonderry as an urban borderland consists of several local communities, contested spaces, political ideologies, and cultural and religious traditions. Restrictive territoriality, hostile community relations, and the legacy of long-lasting conflict are apparent in urban structures as well as in the everyday experiences of the people.

This study analyses what the adaptation to a strict territorial discourse, living in a “*territorial trap*,” means for the local people and their orientation to the society. Segregated living environments with restrictive social rules for interaction, and politicised territories with effectively guarded boundaries, form the communal security structures for the people. However, for some people this fixity of the territorial trap is too oppressive and emancipation is sought by criticising the dominant perceptions of segregated identity politics and the politics of place.

The processes constructing the *exclusive territorial discourse* and *inclusive challenging discourse* are assessed through several real-life examples found in the empirical material collected for this study. Experiences of people in L/Derry were collected in seven focus group interviews, and altogether thirty-six individuals took part in these. Three collective narratives were established on the basis of Derry/Londonderry experience: Activist, Acquiescent and Visionaries. The first two emphasise mainly the restrictive territorial order and the latter presents a challenging discourse.

Contemporary Northern Ireland is living through a period of transformations in which the historical legacy of a territorially ordered society confronts new challenges from within and also from outside society, particularly through the new multi-scaled political peace process. It is, however, the conclusion of this research that physical segregation, the division between *our places* and *their spaces*, will not necessarily disappear even after several years of peace. Occasionally some examples of the alleviation of the territorial dichotomies and cultural confrontations can be seen locally today.

Key words: Local Territoriality, Experience, Urban Borderland, Derry/Londonderry, Northern Ireland

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I

UNDERSTANDING THE NORTHERN IRISH CONFLICT

Introduction

The “Troubles” in Northern Ireland, as the locals call the ethno-nationalistic conflict, have a longer history than most people realise, beginning long before 1960s. The roots of the conflict can be traced as far back as to the twelfth century. This is when English colonial rule in Ireland began (in 1169). At that time, some English and Welsh colonists migrated to Ireland (Robinson 1984: 2). Violent confrontations between the Anglo-Norman settlers and the Gaels had occurred since the mid-twelfth century (e.g. Moody 1974: 2–3; Bardon 1997: 31–36). The most dramatic change in Gaelic Ireland was experienced during the Plantation of 1609, which aimed at the colonisation of the whole island of Ireland. In the 17th century the colonists came from England, Wales and Scotland and to large extent they were Protestants. The seeds of the contemporary conflict were sowed in the actions that the Irish took in order to resist becoming an English colony (Doumitt 1985: 25). Two of the most persistent stereotypes about the Northern Irish conflict are that the two communities, having different religious backgrounds, are fighting because of their faith, and second, that this struggle has been concentrated only in the last thirty years. Actually the conflict is far from being a purely religious one and the last thirty years of the conflict are not the only time when violence and armed struggle have been seen in Northern Ireland (e.g. Magee 1974: 1; Darby 1997: 53; Hennesey 1997: 1; also von Bonsdorff 1972). The two local communities are, however, usually called “*Protestants*” and “*Catholics*” because Northern Irish society in fact still functions on the basis of two distinct communities. In the early phase of the conflict religious denomination was a real source of division

among the people. Since then the division between the communities has become wider and more complex, i.e. many social, political and cultural issues have become part of the process. Religious categories persist, but in the contemporary situation they serve mostly not to stress religious feeling itself but more loyalty to a specific group. The Catholic and Protestant communities are often perceived as two distinct homogeneous groups, which implies that the most significant differences are inter-communal by nature. However, in the political setting, as well as in real life, many different views and ideologies exist within these two groups.

“Whenever the English think they have solved the Irish question, the Irish change the question (Quinn 1993: 101).”

The search for a solution has been going on almost since the first outbursts of large-scale resistance and violence in mid 17th century Ireland. Looking back over the history of the conflict and the accommodation efforts, a twofold change in the focus can be found: from reactive to proactive measures, and from primitive violent acts to political accommodation. However, Northern Ireland remains one of the black spots on the world map of ethnic conflicts (see e.g. Darby 1997: 16–17). A solution capable of fulfilling the expectations of all parties involved in the conflict cannot be reached without a commonly shared understanding of the situation and agreement on what the problem actually is. The quotation above summarises many important issues in the Northern Irish conflict. For many decades the Northern Irish conflict was considered a question of British domestic politics, in which the Irish dimension played only marginal role (e.g. Boyle & Hadden 1994: 109; Kearney 1997: 11; Elliot 2001). It was thought that the solution lay within the nation-state called Great Britain (Darby 1997: 77). Violence and civil disturbance were not tolerated in the territory of the British state and the solution to the Northern Irish problem was sought in the use of force. This can be explained as an attempt to restrict anti-social behaviour from spreading to the other parts of the monarchy’s territory. One interesting aspect of the Northern Irish conflict is that for several years different communities and agents who have either actively aimed at one-sided solution through action or talked about political accommodation have not handled the same set of questions. The desire to achieve a quick solution has led to the deepening of the conflict because a basic understanding of the problems, needs and interests of the two local communities is absent. So, in fact the Irish did not change the question because the question was never really defined.

The aim of my research is not to offer a solution or a way out of the conflict. Such a goal would not be possible. Northern Ireland is one of the world’s most researched conflicts, and obviously much solid research has been conducted on Northern Ireland, covering issues such as religion (e.g. Sectarianism I), history (e.g. Bardon 1997), politics (e.g. Kearney 1997; Porter 1998; Arthur 2000), culture (e.g. Crozier 1989, 1990; Graham 1997; Hastings & McFarlane 1997; Buckley 1998) just to mention few recent studies. However, it can be argued that too often research focuses on explaining and describing the situation rather than on understanding it¹. Digging below different

¹ My criticism of resolution-driven conflict research is general at this point and does not necessarily refer to the studies mentioned above.

positions, down to the interests and the needs of the people and communities, is often forgotten and neglected. Therefore, this study aims at understanding the broad logic and local experience of the conflict. This requires that particular attention is paid to the spatial processes that are intimately involved in the Northern Irish conflict. Often the spatial aspect of the conflict, *local settings of urban territoriality*, are taken as given. Here the question of “*our places*” and “*their spaces*” and *territorial processes* are analysed so as to better understand what lies behind the conflict and what the role of socio-spatial practices is in the production and reproduction of the conflict and societal divisions. My study places great emphasis on the importance of the *people’s local experiences* in these processes.

Friends and Enemies: Looking for a Vantage Point

Understanding, reflecting on and analysing societal processes and experiences in the context of a *conflict-torn society* requires sensitivity, a questioning frame of mind and, if possible, some sense of impartiality. The latter is important in order to cross the polarised loyalty positions in everyday life. This kind of research framework includes such challenges as the role of the researcher and her/his subjectivity in the interpretations s/he makes (see e.g. Dowler 2001). In this particular study it is useful to ask how deep an understanding of the situation can be attained by a researcher whose cultural background is different that of the people studied. Furthermore, the problem of impartiality needs consideration. Impartiality does not mean neutrality, but rather an attempt to include all views and voices that arise in the context, as well as an awareness of researcher’s own position in relation to the conflict and the research conducted. Impartiality includes the possibility of taking a stance on issues but not taking “sides.”

Discussion of my particular position as a researcher serves as background information and orientation for the reader, and pinpoints that no categorical loyalties to either side are proclaimed. My own interest in the Northern Irish issues started during the final year of my Master’s studies in Human Geography (1997). During the summer of 1998 I stayed in Northern Ireland for the first time while working in community-relations projects and finishing my Master’s thesis on territorial identities “*Living the Territorial Divisions in Northern Ireland*” (Kuusisto 1998). My familiarisation with the local contexts and the way of life has been a continuing process ever since. The fieldwork for this doctoral dissertation began in autumn 1999.

Any research based on societies foreign to a researcher creates the problem of “outsiderness” and “insiderness.” The forms of “outsiderness” and “insiderness” are always context dependent and the angle from which the context is approached depends on the researcher’s position². Usually the word “outsider” denotes something negative, less resourced, inferior, even a threat. On the other hand, in the context of colonialism, for example, it creates connotations of superiority and exploitation. These connotations can be misleading on many occasions. In this study the issue of “outsiderness” or “otherness” is relevant in two ways (see Figure 1).

2 For a similar discussion see e.g. Mohammad (2001), also Butler (2001).

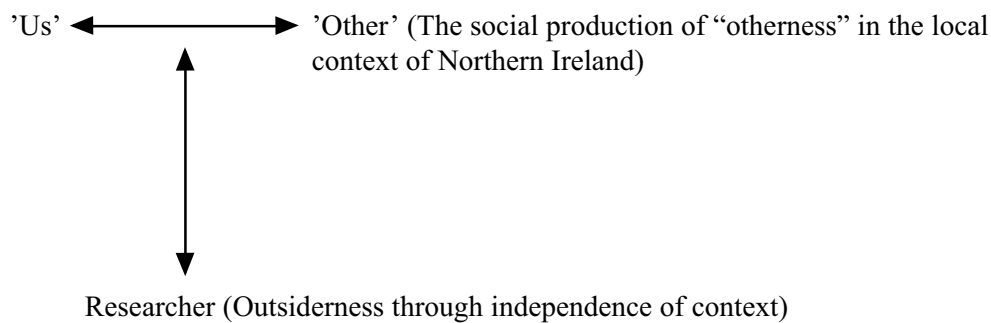


Figure 1. Dimensions of insidership/outsidership in this research.

In the Northern Irish context there is socially produced "outsidership", which is clearly linked with the negative definition of the word. This manifests itself in the two collectively experienced and distinct realities: one predominantly the reality of the Catholic community, and the other that of the Protestant community. "Outsidership" is created through social, cultural, political and physical excluding mechanisms. This "outsidership" is hard to overcome because the boundaries between "us" and "others", the included and the excluded, are strictly guarded. Physical and social boundaries control and ensure that these competing realities do not mix. "Others" are people to be overlooked and ignored, definitely not anyone to share ideas with or to learn from. Otherness is closely connected to the dichotomies of friend/enemy, good/bad and same/different.

Most often otherness is positioned in the realm outside "us." Otherness is also linked with enemy/evil (Aho 1994). Yet, dichotomies as such do not create confrontations. In every society there are exclusive categories that complement rather than contradict each other. Ideas of enemy enter the picture when "we" are viewed as being profoundly different from the "others" and good is vested in "us" only. At this point the others become enemies, who are frightening and form a threat to "us" (Harle 1991: 18). The factors that make the opposites become perceived as enemies depend not only on the social context and time but also on the relational position of the other. In Northern Ireland, for example, black skin colour might make a person less different from the local people than the heavy English accent of a tourist. On the other hand, difference does not have to be constructed through negative practices such as marginalisation but can be seen as a source of diversity, heterogeneity and hybridity (Woodward 1997: 35). As Derrida (1976) suggests, there is an alternative to the closure and rigidity of binary oppositions and category construction. He stresses contingency rather than fixity and for him the formation of meanings is processual (Woodward 1997: 38). Identities evidently are constructed in alternative ways. However, in Northern Ireland identities still become defined largely through binary oppositions rather than through a process of creating mutual acceptance and shared meanings for a cross-cultural identity.

Otherness has been extensively studied in the Social Sciences since the 1990s but this fundamental question has also attracted philosophers for several centuries –

a prominent twentieth century example being Foucault (Harle 1991: 16–17; Jukarainen 1999: 88; see also Connolly 1991, 1995; Aho 1994). Some of the recent studies concentrate merely on the rhetoric of otherness and difference, evading the real-life mechanisms that produce these divisions (for exceptions see e.g. Sibley 1988, 1992, 1995; Kylmänen 1994; Hall 1997; Woodward 1997; Jukarainen 2000). In this study the main focus is on the local processes of territorial exclusion and construction of otherness. In many ways this is a study of the production of otherness through the practices of everyday life. Moreover, otherness or outsidership related to my own position is part of the practical methodological framework throughout the study.

An inevitable condition for any interpretation that follows is my own position in relation to the local communities: a young, female academic from Finland trying to understand the realities in which people in Northern Ireland live. This second case of “outsidership” is viewed mostly in positive terms. It has allowed me to become familiar with both communities and their realities without having to make claims about whose side I am on (note: the answer was and continues to be, on no one’s side). One’s origin, especially if Irish or British, can create real barriers to research in Northern Ireland. I have been able to use my background as one of the basic building blocks for impartiality. Nevertheless, the experience of being an “outsider” has affected my work in several ways. The four categories of researcher presented in Figure 2 illustrate the various positions in which I found myself as a researcher particularly during my fieldwork but also throughout the whole research process.

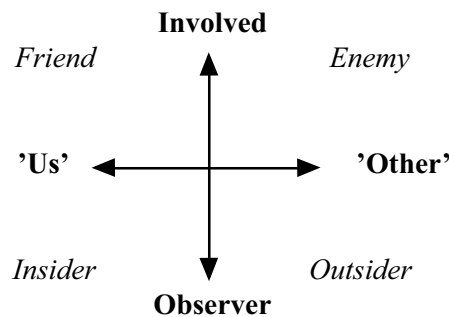


Figure 2. Positions of a researcher in relation to the local communities and the level of involvement.

When I first arrived in L/Derry in autumn 1999, I was an outsider. I was doing research, observing but having few connections with the local people. I was definitely viewed as a stranger, probably belonging to the category of other. Even though I was not marked by membership of the two local communities, Catholics or Protestants, I felt that there were suspicions that I preferred one of the communal views more. I became more familiar with the local people through several educational and cultural meetings that I attended. These cultural festivities were selected to achieve an equal share of contacts with both the Catholic and Protestant communities in the city of L/Derry. On several occasions, particularly in educational events, a cross-community dimension was presented by the organisers. Often I had the possibility to introduce myself and

the work that I was planning to conduct in L/Derry. This was just the beginning of the road I had to go down in order to gain trust and respect. Socialising with people, discussing with them, listening to stories and asking questions gradually moved me towards a new position. I had access to the life-world that I was studying. The access, of course, was only partial, one attained by the researcher, but in some sense I felt that I was an insider as well. What seemed to be extremely important in the process of gaining trust was to share openly information about myself. My personal background as a Finn became an advantage; I was considered harmless in relation to the two dominating national traditions. I was often asked, for example, who I knew from the city, and which part I lived in. Answering these questions without compromising the trust I had gained from my friends, but still showing respect towards the questioner, was at times complicated and challenging. I also had several interesting discussions about the history of Northern Ireland. In addition to the recent thirty years of the modern conflict, the earlier phases were also addressed. Information gained from books saved me from embarrassing ignorance, but there were other aspects that had to be considered in the discussions. One was to know who the people are and what their background is. This is due to the fact that the conflict has created two distinct ways of presenting history and its most important events (Kuusisto-Arponen 2002a).

The most valuable position to work from proved to be the one that I had reached through discussions and familiarisation. I could be among the people in the role of researcher but still remain impartial. Furthermore, I was inside and people trusted me and shared their stories with me. To overcome the “outsiderness” to any significant degree took months and indeed the process still continues. The better I have come to know the people of L/Derry, the greater the confusion in my mind has been as to whether I should be more involved or maintain a distance as previously. Sometimes it was not possible to remain an outsider as the social network I had developed began to take shape: some people were my friends, others colleagues and some just acquaintances whom I knew from different parts of the city. At this point the two roles of a researcher and a friend began to blur. To be inside and involved was the hardest position to work from. Moreover, the line between friend and enemy is thin, especially in the context where local loyalty boundaries define the “proper” and acceptable modes of communication and socialising. When socialising with people from one community might be viewed as betrayal in the other community, the research dialogue becomes short-lived. Therefore, I resolved right from the beginning that I should make it clear that I have contacts on both sides so that this would not come as a surprise to the people I was talking to. I made the decision on the basis of my experience and particularly because I had felt that too much involvement would only hinder the work I wanted to conduct. It cannot be denied that personal contacts and friendships have at some level affected my work and understanding of the conflict, but in the formal research (the collection of materials etc.) I have only operated with people whom I have not known previously. The whole research process has been a constant search for balance between the different positions, taking into account my level of involvement and “objectivity” (I think no researcher can be fully objective). There have been moments of sadness, failure and reconsideration regarding my own position, or the labels imposed upon me by some local people. All these have become part of the

texture of this research and I believe that for the understanding of the reasoning and results that follow, it has been crucial to openly discuss the process.

Studying local life-worlds requires knowledge and experience of the local contexts both on the day-to-day level and through literary sources. My understanding of the situation in Northern Ireland was first achieved through extensive reviews of the literature and short visits to Northern Ireland. Later on, the most educative period in the research process was my eleven months of living and working in Northern Ireland (September 1999 to July 2000). This opened up me for an opportunity to enter into the experience of the localities. My understanding and experience of the situation differs, of course, from those of the local people, because mine are based on academic foreknowledge applied and tested against real-life experiences and observations. Two points need to be acknowledged here: my own “outsiderness” can never become fully experienced “insiderness”, but on the other hand my own position allows me to research and analyse local communities critically.

The “outsiderness” I have experienced in my role as a researcher has in the course of the research evolved. “Outsiderness” has become a tool in analysing and interpreting the everyday life that people have told me about. Coming from outside the context requires a lot of preparatory work but especially in conflict research, if wisely used, this position can become a great advantage. To sum up: this research focuses on the experiences of spatial restriction lived through and experienced in Northern Ireland. The understanding of the situation is based on knowledge of people’s personal and collective realities (collected in focus group interviews during the fieldwork), interpreted through the viewpoint of an impartial, but not neutral academic. In many cases the interpretations put forth here are supported by the similar findings of other scholars sharing an interest in the Northern Irish question.

The Historical and Geographical Trap

The long history of the conflict is stored in the collective memories of the Catholic and Protestant communities. Commemorations of the past, recalling injustices, martyrs, and traitors, are an important part of the socialisation of the next generations. Confrontation, violence and rebellion have become almost an endemic condition in Northern Ireland (Quinn 1993: 3). The seventeenth century Plantation of Ulster and the Battle of Boyne are relived in the contemporary context in the same way as more recent incidents, such as the Bloody Sunday (1972) and the Hunger Strike (1981). The Northern Irish people live in a historical continuum, i.e. trapped in the past. Compared to many other societies, events in the past are experienced and relived with great intensity in Northern Ireland. Collective memories become an imprisoning part of individuals’ personal life history and, moreover, structured into their collective local identity. Whereas in many countries historical narratives are used in a positive manner in the construction of nation and nationalistic feelings, in Northern Ireland these memories are often based on the negative aspects and violent events of the past.

The everyday realities with which people live and operate are formed within collective loyalty boundaries. Many restrictions and rules govern behaviour in the

local communities; they govern the behaviour on a purely individual level, too. Social pressure forces the two communities into mutual distinctiveness. Fear, distrust, bitterness and the experiences of “otherness” are deeply structured within the society. Such a description of the everyday reality might sound unbelievable and some locals would surely oppose this interpretation. However, too often this captures the essence of the situation. The obscuring factor, for the local people as well as for the researchers, is the embeddedness of the conflict-inclined practices. Unveiling and challenging these social practices requires a closer look at the socio-spatial realities in which the divisions, feelings and loyalties are created.

The history and the sectarian nature of the Northern Irish conflict has formed a trap from which the way out, even the emergency exit, seems to be shut. The geographical trap³ began to take shape as early as the twelfth century in the struggles between the native Gaels and invaders, intensified during the Plantation (17th century) around the fundamental problem of land ownership, and continued all the way to the bounded and guarded urban territories so familiar for many in today’s Northern Ireland. In other words, current problems have clear connections to the ownership of land and the control of territory. Moreover, the metaphor of geographical trap describes the downsides of creating meaningful places. Certain places are inevitably meaningful for communities in all societies, but the way these meanings are created affects also the nature of a specific place (see e.g. Tuan 1977). In Northern Ireland defining and defending one’s place has gone beyond the level that most societies would consider “normal.” Meaningful places are experienced intensively. The amount of public space decreases and “claimed space”, that is, places and spaces that identify with one or the other side, increases. The neutrality of places may disappear and space may be divided into opposites of safe havens and places of fear (Sibley 1995). Meaningfulness becomes characterised with coercion and distinctiveness. The practices through which meaningful places are created become clearly visible in institutions, communication and everyday interaction.

Territoriality is a social process and human spatial strategy to control and influence people, phenomena and relationships by delimiting and asserting control over the geographical area, i.e. territory (see Sack 1983, 1986). The many forms of territoriality are experienced in social and physical space in Northern Ireland. Physical divisions are seen locally in the segregated housing estates, peace walls and in urban symbolism, such as painted kerbstones through which the boundaries of the socio-cultural territories are claimed in physical space. Social distinctiveness is visible in the education system, churches, politics and everyday-life practices such as shopping and leisure time. Geographical restriction affects everyday practices. Normal socialisation happens in a small circle of friends and relatives and in fairly restricted geographical area, that of one’s own housing estate or its vicinity. Some cross-community activities are becoming more popular than before, but these clubs and activities can reach only small fraction

3 John Agnew (1987, 1994) has referred to the state-centric understanding of society, using the term geographical (territorial) trap. In my study the connotation is different and illustrates both the result and the process of constructing the everyday socio-spatial order in a conflict divided society. Here, the concept of territorial trap is used as an illustration of the locally experienced strong categorising of space.

of the whole population. The territorial divisions of social activities separate the two communities to a much higher degree than merely living in different parts of the city. Young people, in particular, hardly ever meet across the community boundaries. This promotes segregated structures and ultimately will affect the social activity patterns of future generations (Kuusisto 1998: 68). Darby (1997: 50) argues that even if the potential to create cross-community social activities exists, in the contemporary situation social life in Northern Ireland is rarely conducted in ignorance of religious identity.

Northern Ireland has in some sense become a real-life laboratory of territoriality and power-games. The desire to control people and land has gone so far that the positive influences of the territorial bounding which was sought at by the communities, have become outweighed by the negative outcomes of the multi-scaled territorial politics. The Northern Irish situation can be compared to a guinea pig in a cage. If the cage is left open the animal will not come out, or if forced into freedom it will run around aimlessly, which usually ends in disaster. For a long time people in Northern Ireland have lived under tight social pressure created by the "others," but equally by their own community. This controlling and ruling system involves many socio-spatial practices so deeply embedded in communal life that they are rarely noticed by the people themselves. The historical legacy of the conflict affects the very organisation of the society. Past struggles and confrontations structure the contemporary divided reality. Hatred, bitterness and anger have characterised the life of many generations in Northern Ireland. Territorial identification is extremely strong and is found on all geographical scales from the local neighbourhood to the "nation-state." Affiliation to specific nation or locality illustrates the collective loyalties and the continuance of cultural traditions. A feeling of security is guaranteed only by yielding to strict rules, which simultaneously are looked upon as maintaining coherence within the community. Physical bounding is also a security measure that simultaneously creates a sense of belonging and of ownership of territory. This particularly is a sensitive issue for the local communities with social memories of losing their land in the battles of the previous centuries, or due to changes in sectarian demography, especially in urban districts since the 1970s.

General changes in the society at large may of course have a great impact on communal practices and the need for territorial restriction. In the contemporary situation a major challenge has been the peace process. The cage is open now, but the final reaction to the new freedom is still uncertain. A possibility to escape (this does not mean ignoring the past but rather taking another viewpoint) the historical and geographical trap exists, at least in theory, but currently it seems that freedom is not yet a real possibility for the local people and communities. Even though distrust and fear still dominate the dialogue, it has been a moment of hope for many to realise that in some situations constructive communication is possible after so many violent years.

During the last decade the forms of the socio-spatial organisation of society have become more fragmented in Northern Ireland. The hegemonic discourse emphasising territorial restrictions and control has confronted a competing spatial discourse. Pluralist values and co-existence form the core of the alternative discourse. In the first instance, the plural discourse reflects the changing values and social atmosphere rather than

any radical transformations in physical territorialities. The latter can only proceed slowly over a long period of time, and whether the change is for better or worse depends on the local context in question. In contemporary Northern Ireland some boundaries have been breached and real communication channels between the communities exist. Cross-community work is one of the most visible attempts to move beyond the historical and geographical trap that has for so long characterised the local borderlands. However, the processes of territoriality persist even though they have come under pressure and are being challenged in many ways. Undeniably, territorial control is a key element in the foundations on which the communities have built their functions. Therefore, it is important to analyse the significance of territoriality for the communities and also for the individuals. My research focuses on the local scale processes of territoriality through which distinct meaningful places are created. Especially the local experiences of the people living in the city of Derry/ Londonderry are presented and analysed.

The structure of this study is as follows. The research questions and framework are set in Chapter Two. The cultural contexts of Northern Ireland and particularly of the city of Derry/ Londonderry are discussed. The basic purpose in describing the several “settings” is to illustrate the narrated and experiential nature of territoriality. In addition, the collection of empirical materials by using focus group interviews is discussed in detail. The theoretical discussion is found in Chapter Three, in which place and space relations, categorisation, and place politics are examined from the point of view of urban territoriality. The history of Northern Ireland as a contested place is illustrated in Chapter Four. The two different senses of place and their relation to the tradition of segregation are further illustrated. Chapter Five contains a discussion of the empirical findings, contextualisation of theoretical concepts and analysis of local experiences of territoriality. The everyday life of thirty-six focus group participants show how hegemonic and counter-hegemonic territorial discourses and narratives are constructed, legitimised, and first and foremost lived locally. The contested ground and categorised realities are, however, being challenged, especially through the peace process. Chapter Six also discusses the crucial process of scaling the place politics that became possible with the co-operation of several agents at many geographical levels. Several political breakthroughs since 1985 opened up a new approach which included actors and institutions from different geographical scales. The politics of place through scales has been present in peace-building measures ever since. It consists, for example, of the peace reforms and their implementation in government, in varied institutional settings and in local contexts. Moreover, it stresses spatial organisation and experience. The scale approach in place politics aims to create and support the construction of peaceful localities and lessen the conflict-inclined and tense boundary lines and territorial segmentation. Finally, this work concludes by questioning whether the territorial legacy can be overcome in localities in which the security and familiarity is often still constructed through exclusionary socio-spatial practices.

* * * * *

Language is a sensitive issue in Northern Ireland. Many expressions and words have become politicised during the long years of conflict. There is a vocabulary on both sides that is used in order to insult the “others,” but also many everyday words have connotations which often reveal something about the speaker’s cultural or political background.

In the context of Northern Ireland the Catholics and Protestants refer to the two communities as a whole. This does not mean that they should be considered homogeneous blocs of people, quite the contrary. Within the two communities many political, social and cultural views exist alongside the unifying factor of the stereotyped similarity of the all members of the community. If political orientation is discussed, the Catholic community will make a distinction between Republicans [Sinn Féin, the political wing of the Provisional IRA, is the main political party for this community] and Nationalists [the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP)]. Loyalists [the Progressive Unionist Party (PUP), the Ulster Democratic Party (UDP)] and Unionists [the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP), the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP)] are the main political communities within the Protestant population.

The geographical entity most often called Northern Ireland is a highly politicised term in itself. For many living in the territory of contemporary Northern Ireland, this geographical context and its borders are not legitimate. Synonyms for Northern Ireland are the Six Counties, Ulster and the North of Ireland, all of which define differently the overall context in which Northern Ireland exists or should exist. In this research the term Northern Ireland is used mostly, while it is acknowledged that the terms above might feel more comfortable for some readers.

Derry, Londonderry, Doire, Maiden City, Stroke City⁴ are different names for one place. The fieldwork materials for this study were collected in the city of Derry/Londonderry. There has not been a commonly acceptable way to refer to the city. The first term is mostly used by the Catholic community and the second by the Protestants. Especially since the outbreak of violence in the late 1960s and early 1970s the name of the city has become a political stance. In this study the term L/Derry is used to accommodate both views.

4 For people not living in the city the name question has provoked some irony. It is due to the fact that the name of the city is often written Derry / Londonderry. More on the politics of naming the city is said in Chapter Five.

II

LOCAL SETTING AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Otherness, territoriality and narratives are key concepts in the framework of this research. In the conflict-divided society of Northern Ireland collective social realities have become contested. Sensitivity is needed in order to accommodate within one study different collective views, people's experiences and the context without ignoring the importance of any of these. Research based on experiences is heavily dependent on the context and the time in which these experiences are felt and collected. Most often experiences told to a researcher form a story in which the actual experience took place in the past but is interpreted in the light of the contemporary situation. Analysing these experiences requires knowledge of the situation in the past, but first and foremost an understanding of the contemporary context and time in which the experiences are articulated. In this study the experiences collected are tightly bounded with the *time and place* and *plot and scene* of L/Derry from late 1999 to spring 2000.

The experiences and their interpretations may change in the course of time even if the processes and phenomena experienced seem to be stable and fixed. Political, cultural and social climates evolve and therefore the experience of a particular issue might lose its importance, while that of another issue may come to be seen as crucial in a new situation. A high degree of context dependency in research does not lessen its value nor make it too specific. While some observations may be generalisable, the aim of this study is not to produce generalisations about territorial practices found in all divided societies, rather the goal here is to understand the particular communally based territorial processes existing locally in Northern Ireland. The journey to the complex world of the collective socio-spatial practices begins from the local setting of this study.

The Context of This Research

At least three different contextual settings are at work in this study. The first consists of the actual *geographical context* in which the collection of all the field materials took place. In this practical setting the political, social and cultural micro- and macro-climates are outlined, mostly because of their influence on local people's behaviour, attitudes and experiences. The second setting consists of *theoretical questioning and conceptualisation*. The research questions are briefly discussed along with the challenges of conducting research in a divided society. The last setting emphasises the *methodology and methods* required to fulfil the challenges presented in the first two settings. The role of narrativity and discursive understanding of the object of study are clarified.

Time and Place

The collection of experiences took place in the first four months of the year 2000. The point in time during which most of this research was conducted is interesting in many ways. The last year of the 20th century and the beginning of the new Millennium were often rhetorically connected to a opportunity for a new beginning for Northern Ireland. Moreover, the peace process was in an intense phase in late 1999 and early 2000. The political peace process was speeded up by the foundation of the local Assembly in Stormont, but this optimism did not last for long. In February 2000 Northern Ireland was in the middle of a series of political crises, which reached its peak in the suspension of the new Assembly.

The local socio-political climate is influenced by what happens on the national scale, but most of all by the tensions and the level of conflict-inclined activity locally. The actual timing of the fieldwork was carefully considered so that none of the most contentious commemoration days or parades would take place during the work⁵. Usually these symbolic days of commemoration will at the very least increase suspicion and distance between the communities. A social atmosphere like this would not be the best moment in time to conduct field research, even though as a research task it might be interesting. To minimise the "entrenchment factor" I decided that the most suitable time for the field survey would be from January to mid-April 2000.

The city of L/Derry is located on the north-west border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland (see Figure 3). Being located in the national frontier zone creates it own difficulties, but the city is also internally divided by many local, nationalistic, physical, mental, political, economic, social, cultural and religious

5 The time known as the marching season in Northern Ireland is between June and August. While not all the parades are politically contentious, most of the parades can be placed under either category of Loyalist or Republican. For example in 1998 Loyalist held 2584 parades and Nationalist held 216. (These figures are based on a lecture handout by Prof. Seamus Dunn 2.11.1999) The total number of parades per year has increased during the last ten years (see Jarman & Bryan 1996: 36–37)

boundaries (Kuusisto-Arponen 2002b). Arguably, L/Derry is formed of a *puzzle of borderlands* in which many loyalties and contestations exist simultaneously.



Figure 3. Northern Ireland and the location of the city of L/Derry.

The first traces of permanent settlement on the site of the current L/Derry date from 564 A.D. At that time the place was called *Daire Calgach* (Lacy 1988: 2). *Doire* (which is Irish and means oak grove), or *Derry* as it came to be called by the Anglo-Irish in medieval times, was a site of a monastery. During the Plantation of Ulster, the modern city was founded and in 1613 James I renamed the city Londonderry (Lacy 1989: 1). Despite the new name the city continued to be known as Derry. At the time the name lacked the political significance that it has today. In fact, only since the

beginning of the current Troubles in the late 1960s has the name of the city become politically contentious, emphasising socio-cultural loyalties. The early years of walled city of L/Derry witnessed conflicts and battles. However considerable times of peace were also experienced in the 18th and 19th centuries. The troubles in the city broke out again in the early 20th century continuing up to modern times, and the 30 years of violent conflict.

L/Derry is the second biggest city in Northern Ireland after Belfast. Because of the Plantation policy in the 17th century, L/Derry became an exclusively Protestant colony. Protestants formed the majority of the city, but from the late 18th century onward Catholics began to arrive in the outskirts of the city. During the 20th century the demographic situation changed radically and now L/Derry has the second highest percentage of Catholics compared to any other local governmental district (Smyth 1996a: 33). The fact that a large majority of the city's inhabitants is Catholic makes it different from the rest of Northern Ireland. According to the last Census of 1991, the total population in Northern Ireland was 1 577 836, of whom 38.4 % were Catholics, 42.8 % were Protestants and 7.8 % other religious denominations.⁶ (Smyth 1996a: 30) In 1991, the total population of city of L/Derry was 70 503, of which the Catholic population was 54 658 (77.5 %) and the Protestant 10 924 (15.5 %) and others 4 921 (7.0 %) (Smyth 1996a: 36). Since 1971, the Protestant population in the city has declined by approximately 5000 people. This is due to the Protestant movement out of the city to the outskirts and to nearby regions and towns such as Limavady and Coleraine, which have long been predominantly Protestant.

The city of L/Derry is divided by the River Foyle (see Figures 4 and 5). The Foyle is a natural geographical feature of the city that has a socio-spatial meaning, too. The river has become a demarcation line between the two communities. On the West Bank (Cityside – the CBD), it is estimated that 90.2 % of the inhabitants are Catholic and some 2.6 % are Protestant, many of whom live in one isolated enclave called The Fountain. The remaining percentages include people having other religious backgrounds. On the East Bank (Waterside), approximately 47.2 % of the population are Protestant and 38.1 % are Catholic (The Northern Ireland Census 1991). Segregation in the city has increased since the outbreak of the Troubles. In fact, most of the people in the city live in single-identity housing estates.⁷ A few mixed housing estates are found on the East Bank of the Foyle mainly inhabited by middle-class people. Calculations based on the 1991 Census data (religion by local governmental districts and wards⁸) in the city of L/Derry indicate that there are nineteen Catholic single

6 The missing percentages include the people who do not belong to any religious community or are under the category of “not stated”, which means that they have left the question unanswered.

7 Single identity housing estate means an area in which at least 75 % of the inhabitants are from one community.

8 It should be recognised that the wards and other governmental districts might not always be equivalent to the area of a residential or housing estate. However, it is not possible to define all residential and housing estates, therefore ward level statistics are used in my research. In L/Derry the number of people in one ward varies between 2000 and 9000.

identity wards, of which thirteen are more than 95 % segregated. Two Protestant single-identity wards and three mixed wards also exist in the city. In addition to these there are three wards on both sides which are more than 55 % segregated but not more than 75 % of the inhabitants come from one community (see also Figure 9).

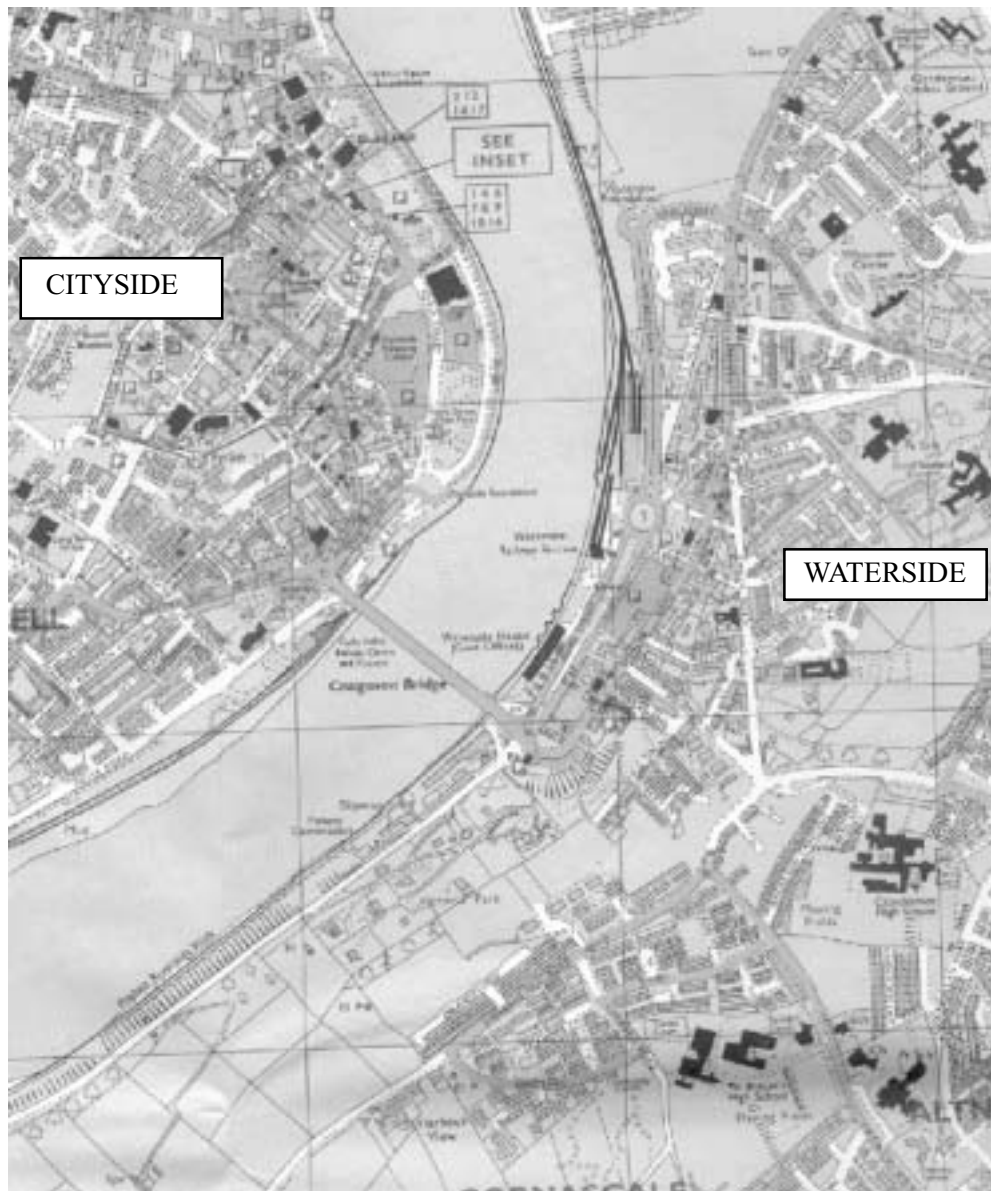


Figure 4. The city of L/Derry and the River Foyle (Modified from Street Map of Londonderry. Belfast: Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland).



Figure 5. The view overlooking the city taken from Waterside.

As the context of this study L/Derry is interesting and illuminating in many ways. From early on, the history of the city has been marked by battles and peace, questions of the legitimate ownership of land and territory, inner segregation in the city, overwhelming changes in minority and majority relations, and finally, the geographical position on the national border. For any social scientific research this kind of a setting is fascinating, indeed.

*Plot and Scene*⁹

L/Derry as a geographical position, as a socially constructed place, and as a meaningful home town of its inhabitants, forms the scene of this research. For the *reader* of this research, L/Derry presents itself almost like a scene in a theatre play. The scene, L/Derry, described here is not static but lived, experienced, socially formed, and challenged. I shall develop this metaphor further. As in the theatre the scene and the events happening on the stage are viewed differently by the members of the audience.

⁹ Here the term “scene” does not refer to the much discussed idea in the positivist tradition in geography in which space is only a static and passive platform for social practices. Here, scene as one of the illustrations of the complexity of local settings in L/Derry and space is understood as part of the (re)construction of conflict.

Interestingly, the actors on the stage usually act in concert and see the reality they are presenting to the audience coherently. Now, when applied to the Northern Irish situation, the metaphor changes the positions of the actors. If the local people were to play the role of actors in our scene, there are at least three realities these actors would like the audience to see: “ours,” “theirs” and “the ones in between.” Acting becomes hard because the actors are playing different plays and the director does not know what to do. The audience of this play consists of academics. They naturally view the play from their own backgrounds and interests, but more important is what they actually see. Will they choose one view presented on the stage? Do they prefer one view over another? Or are all three views equivalent to each other? Because of the competing realities the play becomes difficult to understand. After a time the actors begin to build up barriers and all the groups return to their uncompromising corners. The dialogues tell about mistrust, fear, anger, hatred, and the rare constructive ideas or criticisms of the enmity are pushed aside. At this point people unfamiliar with the Northern Irish context might become frustrated: why can they not make any compromises, so that their own life would become easier. This polarised dialogue makes a social scientist even more enthusiastic about the play. In the audience a political geographer tries to see what the realities presented are telling about the life in localities. She is interested in the spatial processes through which the social space that these groups occupy is created and how the territory (or the exclusive corners in the stage), boundaries and power (expressed in the dialogues) have become so essential in the construction of these exclusive realities.

The above illustration is a rather crude stereotypisation of the situation, but, not a totally fictive one. In real life there are no actors, certainly no a director, and even the academic audience is living among the people. The events take place on the ground instead of on a stage. Most importantly, the stage or ground is formed only as the play goes on, and the plot is not obvious all the time. It was, however, the idea of this metaphor, to illustrate the several viewpoints through which Northern Irish society is lived, experienced and researched.

At first glance L/Derry seems to be like any small city in Great Britain or Ireland: green trees along the roads, the River Foyle, historical buildings and the old stone walls. The friendliness of the people is not a myth but reality in the streets of L/Derry. However, when one takes a walk around the city walls, the first signs of conflict begin to show; a bombed statue, barred windows, some ruined buildings, Irish Tricolours and Union Jacks (the British Flag), political murals and graffiti. After a while, one begins to see the distinctiveness of the city. Behind the friendly faces sadness, fear and hopelessness appear. In the eyes of the world peace came to Northern Ireland in 1999, but the feeling one gets and the stories one hears there speak a different language.

The internationally and nationally led political peace process has many interpretations among locals. The latest ceasefire was announced in 1997 and it has, by in large, held up so far. The level of violence is decreasing, or more specifically, the number of conflict-related deaths has diminished. Street violence and intimidation have not disappeared. The overall atmosphere in L/Derry in late 1999 was calm and

relaxed, the effects of the political progress in the peace process were apparent¹⁰. Simultaneously, however, people seemed to be sceptical about the possibility of reaching sustainable peace and emphasised that anything could still happen.

Locally, the two most discussed topics in late 1999 and early 2000 were the implementation of the peace process and its reforms, and the growing concern about anti-social behaviour in the city. In addition to the everyday discussions in homes, streets and workplaces, views on these issues were presented in the two local newspapers *Derry Journal* and *Londonderry Sentinel*¹¹. On this official level the main opinion leaders were local politicians, community group activists and the Mayor of the city¹². Issues such as reforms in the police force and the decommissioning of paramilitary arms were intensively discussed. The passion with which these topics were discussed relates to the fear of losing part of one's tradition, status, or historical institutions. These contested issues show how deeply collective loyalty blocs still exist on the ground. Even if peace is desired by most of the people in Northern Ireland, they can rarely agree upon the ways to achieve it.

On the other hand, some signs of crossing the community boundaries can be found locally. In L/Derry the problem of late-night street violence was actualised during the fall of 1999. Some attacks were considered to be sectarian in motive. Public opinion turned against this violence on the streets of L/Derry and a civic forum was arranged to discuss the issue. Shared concern over this anti-social behaviour challenged the old ways of thinking and slowly the street violence ended¹³.

Finally, it has to be said that the time, place, scene and people provided a framework which was unique not just because all localities have their own particularities, but also because of the transition stage Northern Ireland is going through currently. The challenge set by the peace process confronts the old structures of a segregated society and the local people are trying to live in the cross-swell of these changes and demands. Reforms and ideas are not necessarily open-heartedly welcomed, because they create

10 It is actually amazing how calm the situation was at the local level, because the political struggle over the decommissioning of IRA paramilitaries as a precondition for Sinn Féin to enter the executive was extremely tense. The deadlock was solved mainly through two acts which awakened overall trust among political leaders on both sides. First, the IRA made a statement committing themselves to peace and agreed to nominate a representative to enter into discussion with the head of the decommissioning body, General John de Chastelain (17 November 1999). Second, the review of the Good Friday Agreement was concluded by Senator George Mitchell. He argued that the basis now existed for devolution to occur and the re-formation of an executive could take place (18 November 1999). (CAIN: Irish peace process)

11 *Derry Journal* is a local newspaper which is mainly read by the Catholic community. *Londonderry Sentinel* is a newspaper mainly read by the city's Protestant community.

12 The Mayor of L/Derry in 1999–2000 was Pat Ramsey (SDLP). His involvement in many social and cultural activities in the city was positively commented on during the year by both communities. He also made several proposals and initiatives in the city council to further develop the relationships between the communities.

13 For more details see sub-chapter Players and One-sided Truths.

pressure to change the social practices of the communities, which again are based on the community politics of the conflict-divided society. In the current scene, civic forums and sectarian attacks against school children, common concerns, and divided interests are present simultaneously.

Research Questions

A discursive understanding of territoriality forms the core of the theoretical framework in this research. Territoriality is seen as a collective (communal) spatial practice of controlling space and people. Discourse refers to socio-political meanings embedded in and forming the practices and processes of bounding, defining and controlling space and social interaction. In this study the territorial ordering of Northern Irish society is not taken for granted. On the contrary, the importance of this spatial process in the history and continuation of the controversy in Northern Ireland is clarified. The research focuses on the varied and multi-scaled practices of territoriality. However, of these the local scale is more closely examined. Arguably, it is local urban territoriality that is one of the key elements in understanding the Northern Irish conflict, one that has been relatively neglected, even though its existence was acknowledged in academic literature as far back as in the 1960s and 1970s (e.g. Poole & Boal 1973: 3). In addition, discourses with hegemonic status as well as counter-hegemonic discourses challenging the territorial discourse are discussed in my research. The following theoretical questions and conceptualisations summarise the main ideas of this study:

1. How are territorial divisions and conflicting cultural traditions interwoven in Northern Ireland?
2. How are territorial discourses constructed and lived through in Northern Ireland?
3. How are territorial practices and controlled spaces challenged in contemporary Northern Irish society?

The first question approaches territoriality as a theoretical concept, the meaning of which is clarified and applied in the particular context of Northern Ireland. The actual practices of territorial categorisation and bounding are also discussed. The second question focuses on how the spatial discourses of territoriality and the alternative plural discourses become localised and structured within the communities and their everyday activities. The effects of territorial control and the reconstruction of the system will be discussed through the borderland experience of L/Derry. The last question treats the tendencies that challenge the static order of things. The peace process is considered as the driving force for change, but the actual challenging takes place both through external international pressures and the reorganisation of everyday life within the local communities.

The challenges for this particular piece of research are fourfold: the conflict, segregated local contexts, research aims and the embeddedness of people's experience of territoriality. The conflict and the context require sensitivity in questioning people's

everyday practices and inclusiveness, so as to hear and appreciate the many voices in the society. The research questions and the aim of understanding local experience need to be supported by methods capable of entering into the realities of local people. The idea of the embeddedness of territoriality means that the processes cannot be taken for granted, but they need to be analytically examined and (only) for this purpose separated from the rest of the social fabric of the society. Making visible and recognisable the everyday practices, which are often unacknowledged by the locals, requires a certain degree of artfulness from the researcher. Context sensitivity permeates the whole research process from the theoretically applied information to the field texts collected on the ground. Therefore, generalisations of any results outside the particular context and time need to be most carefully considered. Even if the practices of territoriality seem to be stable and almost natural in the Northern Irish society, the experience of these issues changes in the course of time as the socio-political situation changes. All the listed factors above are structured into the core of this research. By acknowledging these challenges researching the contested territories in Northern Ireland has become a manageable research task.

Experiencing Territoriality

Territoriality is a complex spatial *experience* and *process*. It consists of divisions of space, control and identification, and it is based on a relationship between people and spatial units. Territoriality is found both in the personal experience of individuals and in the societal processes that consolidate social groups (Schnell 1994: 33). Territoriality can be found in the home, streets, neighbourhoods, regions and states, in institutions, in law and order, in the behaviour of individuals and collectives; it is a structural part of human communities (e.g. Sack 1986: 19–20). On many occasions territoriality seems to be almost like a natural and eternal part of communities' functions. This view, however, has become widely challenged among political geographers (e.g. Paasi 1984, 1996, 1999; Agnew 1987, 1994; Häkli 1994a).

The banal manifestation of territorial rules and practices makes the phenomenon hard to pin down. People usually cannot make a distinction between what in their behaviour is actually related to the territorial organisation of the society and what results from the collective socio-spatial control over individuals. Such theoretical conceptualisations and modellings are also typically absent from the locals' understanding of their life-world. The degree to which territoriality restricts or enables everyday life depends on the context. Often territoriality is intensively experienced, even if not acknowledged by the individual or the community. At this stage the researcher as an "interpreter" comes along. The largely hidden nature of territoriality is like the peel on an orange, which needs to be removed before the desired object becomes available.

In this research territoriality is approached as a collective experience. Because of the spatial nature of territoriality, its effects are discernible also in physical space. Locally, the visible forms of territoriality are reflected in the segregational tendencies,

especially in the urban environment, in the spatial behaviour of people, such as avoiding certain parts of the city, and in the physical bounding of places with high fences and barbed wires. Closely related to territoriality are the experiences of belonging, social practices of inclusion and exclusion, and the problem of legitimate power. People's experiences of territorial control reveal many things not only about the bounding of space and influencing people, but also of the resistance and defence acts of communities, the social effectiveness of these practices, and in general the "politics of place" that these communities practice. To reach these local experiences of territorial order and organisation, first-hand materials were needed. The situatedness of the experiences within a particular social context, history and time led me towards people's stories of their everyday life. As Clandinin and Connelly argue (1994: 416) people tell stories of experiencing their lives, but the researcher can come into the picture when describing those lives, collecting and telling stories of these lives and writing narratives of these experiences.

Experience as Narrative

Narratives are ways of signifying issues and events presented in the form of stories. In every narrative a time-scale of some kind is included grounding the narrative in a particular socio-temporal context. Furthermore, in every narrative agency, loyalties and tensions structure the narrative uniquely (Crang 1997: 194; Jokinen & Juhila 1999: 68). Narratives have a beginning and an end, and between these is the story itself (Crang 1997: 193). I make a similar distinction in my research between the concepts of narrative and story, one that should be taken into account. Narrative is more like a method or tool for researcher, while story is the phenomenon itself (Clandinin & Connelly 1994: 416). In other words stories are told about people's lives by themselves, and narratives are a researcher's attempts to retell these stories, analyse the structures, processes and ways of signifying things.

For individuals and collectives stories are one way to make sense of their lives and to organise experiences. The way stories are presented depends on the phenomenon that they tell about, the social context of telling, and the person. Stories come into existence when people "emplot" events (Ricoeur 1984 in Crang 1997: 194). In other words, stories consist of both the events and the belief systems that constitute particular narratives. Stories interpreting the same issue vary from one individual to another, but the argument here is that experiences can differ collectively as well. The shared past, common values and interests readily form a framework in which the collective stories are created. Hence, both individuals and collectives organise experience through the construction of stories. This also means that particular meanings or descriptions of the world may form a hegemonic system; in this study it sometimes means that the strict territorial discourse dominates whilst others are repressed. In collective experiencing the role of social memory becomes essential (Connerton 1989). This enables individuals to experience and to feel they are participating in the events and issues which have happened in the past, before they were born. Depending on the importance of an experience for a community, an individual experience of these past

events can be just as intense as if the individual concerned had lived through those times her/himself¹⁴.

Narratives and stories organise the lived past, but are simultaneously present in the contemporary time. Usually the definition of narrative looks only backwards to past experiences, which is partly true, but stories, when told and shared with other people, construct the future as well. Stephenson (2000: 112) argues that our understanding of the present cannot be separated from our recollections of the past and aspirations for the future. Furthermore, to form and understand narratives of territorial experience and the behaviour of collectives, it is necessary to place political concepts such as territory, belonging, and identity within the *context* of the current social and political life of a community (cf. Stephenson 2000: 115). Thus, the narrative is taken as a way of making sense of the socially constructed reality in which issues, events and experiences are signified.

It is now necessary to ask how the narrative relates to the concept of discourse, which that is one of the key elements in this research. Within the narratives of experience many discourses are found. As societal practices discourses shape the social reality. They are also formed in connection to other discourses (see Väliverronen 1993; Lehtonen 1996: 70). Discourses are systems of meanings that are not structured only within one particular narrative or way of understanding experience. Narrative may refer only to a small part of discourse, but the latter still has a profound impact on how things are understood and structured in a particular narrative. Discourses relate to other hegemonic and counter-hegemonic discourses, experiences and competing realities. One discourse might be found in several different narratives, but the role and the importance that this discourse plays in a particular narrative varies.

Meanings, on the other hand, are found in institutions, in technical processes, patterns of general behaviour and in transmissions and diffusions (Foucault 1971; 1977, in Macdonell 1986). More generally, Laclau (1980: 87) argues that any institutional practice and technique “in and through which social production of meaning takes place” may be considered part of discourse (Macdonell 1986). As these two definitions might sound too structural an approach for constructionistic research, it is necessary to say that “institutions” as referred to above are understood not strictly as established structures, but rather as social conventions and norms. It follows that social institutions and discourses are social constructions themselves. Thus, the social construction of meanings can take place through the identity politics of a community, family, church and other social processes of everyday life. These are referred to as “ideological practices” by Macdonell (1986: 4). The power of discourses derives, as Barnes and Duncan (1992: 9) put it, “not so much from the abstract ideas they represent as from their material basis in the institutions and practices that make up the micro-political realm which Foucault sees as the source of much of the power in a society.” This is why localities matter. However, I argue, that in the case of territorial discourses

14 An interesting analysis of collective narratives of war, heroism, myths and tragedy in the small village of Itziar, in the Basque country, is made by Zulaika (see Zulaika, J. (1988). *Basque Violence. Metaphor and Sacrament*. Reno & Las Vegas: University of Nevada Press). Similar historical and cross-generational narratives of experiencing prejudices and violence are found in Northern Ireland.

also the “abstract,” (the very idea of purified territories and categories; or the blurred ones) is the key element that gives strength and credence to the existence of the discursive territorial way of life in Northern Ireland.

I shall analyse experiences of local territoriality in Northern Ireland through stories based on people’s way of telling about their life in focus group discussions. The stories tell for example about the processes of signifying place, community and identity (see also Paasi 1996). The territorial discourses found in the stories are, in this research, first used as a conceptual tool to make sense of these complex social systems of signifying the spatial world, and second, as a way to clarify the importance and normative role of collective territoriality in the society.

Methodological Points

Narratives and discourses are part of the research approach that is based on the methodological framework of constructionism. Due to the “cultural turn” in many fields of the social sciences, constructionistic methodology has become quite popular in understanding the contemporary society. In constructionistic thinking conventional ways of understanding and categorising the world are challenged. In the discipline of geography constructivist research has often combined the humanistic approach of meaningful places with the structuralistic understanding of socially produced space. The processes by which space is socially produced can be analytically separated from the rest of the social fabric in order to understand the construction process itself. Societal relationships and power are also closely examined in constructionism (Gergen 1994: 48–54; Häkli 1999a: 142–146). One point of criticism made against constructionistic thinking has been that the approach may not be able to move in all different social layers without taking them out of their context and cutting off the natural social relationships embedded in these (Häkli 1999a: 159). Therefore, the analytic approach to socially constructed reality should always be sensitive to the particular socio-spatial context and the other multi-scaled realities which relate to this particularity.

The constructionist approach emphasises that people view their everyday life as a given reality, and simultaneously reproduce this reality in their thinking and action (Häkli 1999a: 133). Another interesting point in constructionist methodology is that it accepts the existence of many, often competing realities. The different systems of meaning and the ways of signifying are not necessarily mutual threats, rather they are complementary parts in the process of understanding the world (e.g. Jokinen & Juhila & Suoninen 1993: 17–41). Socially constructed realities cannot be examined in a “pure” form, as they always appear signified (Gergen 1994: 72; Burr 1995: 1–8; Jokinen 1999: 39). This signification is not necessarily a narrative or verbal articulation, but social realities can also be approached through symbols and meanings which are culturally bound (Jokinen & Juhila 1991: 1; Jokinen 1999: 39).

The methodological approach of constructionism informs this research throughout from the research plan to the final conclusions (Jokinen 1999: 40–41; Häkli 1999a: 160). Therefore, it is necessary to stress some of the basic methodological assumptions

present in this work. *First*, the research target of L/Derry and the processes of territorial control are examined through the views of the communities living in the area. No one view is valued more than another. Moreover, all social realities are acknowledged parts of the constant construction of the divided society in Northern Ireland. In other words, social behaviour and the construction of meaning are examined as they appear in a particular context. Both verbal and symbolic materials are used in analysing the territorial aspects of these signified realities. In this research materials such as focus group interviews and photographs were used. *Second*, as a framework for analysis the constructionist approach emphasises the relationship between the researcher and the target. In my study the interpretations about the meanings and experiences of local people are made by me, a researcher familiar with, but not culturally dependent on the context. My own influence as a researcher has been carefully considered in many phases of the research, mostly while working in the field, analysing the stories, and making conclusions about these social practices and realities¹⁵. Hopefully, this reflexivity is also mediated to the reader of this study. At times it is pinpointed clearly in the text, but in most cases it is implied in the overall methodological approach adopted.

Third, critical thinking and the desire to analyse socially structured realities, categories and power relations are inherent in constructionism. Categorical structuring of the social world aims to diminish its complexities. While academic research is one of the institutions supporting this categorisation, it is often also the realm in which the challenging and de-categorising take their first steps. In this regard academic research cannot avoid taking part in the politics of the society. Therefore, it can be argued that research is always political, even if this claim is not supported by all academics (Palonen 1988; cf. Häkli 1999a: 139). Views on the political aspects of academic research vary, depending on how the concept of politics is understood. In its broadest definition politics is everywhere and everything is political: actions, practices, symbols and so forth have implications for social practices and this makes them political. Politics includes the possibility to influence and change things, to support old structures or to build new ones, to be visible or to influence underneath the surface. Politics, however, is not the same as policy. Even though all research has an inherent political aspect, not all researchers want to make policy proposals.

The aspect of politics in this particular study is tightly connected to the methodological framework. The aim is to examine the everyday ways of seeing and doing things and to understand the structural features of these realities. Yet, the effects of this approach can be questioned. An analysis of the collective divided realities in Northern Ireland assumes their existence and acknowledges the widespread support for these realities by the people. This in itself makes a political claim, but even more so does the desire to change these categorised realities, and by bringing up local examples of these processes, to start a new path in the structuring of the realities. In

15 Among the results of my reflections on the role of the researcher were the active positioning of myself in the friend/ enemy, observer/ involved continuums, informing people that I was in contact with the both local communities and their representatives, maintaining a high level of confidentiality in the interviews when people were telling names or other personal information (due to the anonymity requirement).

other words, many political choices are made within this research, some of which are due to the scientific aspirations of this work and some to an attempt to contribute to the contemporary peace process at the local level. The latter aim comes closer to a policy approach.

Local Voices

The local voices through which experiences of the conflict came to be shared with the researcher were collected in *focus group interviews*. The overall aim in the collection of local experiences was to enable people to use their own everyday language and concepts in describing their life world. In focus group interviews the leading role of the researcher narrows and the group dynamic determines much that happens in the process. The role of the researcher is mainly to ask questions and keep the discussion on the tracks (Stewart & Shamdasani 1990: 11; Sulkunen 1998: 264). In this particular study the collection of everyday discussions as such was not a primary target. Therefore, the semi-structured questions focused largely on security, belonging, the physical and social divisions of the local communities, and the peace process (See Appendix I). As a part of academically categorised systems of thought, these themes were combined with the local experiences and understandings of the same issues in seven focus groups. It is acknowledged that while territoriality is a highly theoretical concept, its effects in many conflict-divided societies are lived through and rooted in the existence of local communities.

As a method the focus groups provided viable solutions to the challenge of studying territoriality as a collective spatial experience and process. The method itself is well-established in many works on methodology in the social sciences (e.g. Merton & Fiske & Kendall 1956/1990; Stewart & Shamdasani 1990; Eskola & Suoranta 1996; Mäkelä 1998; Bedford 2001; Crang 2001). Only a short description of the main advantages of the method for this research is therefore necessary. The group dynamics is effective in focus groups, especially the social control among individuals. In many ways a small group of four to seven people controls its members as effectively as the larger community. The downside of the social control is that individuals' differing views rarely come to the surface. The fear of being punished for different ideas leaves only one option, to follow the reasoning presented by the rest of the group. At times, depending on the issues under discussion or the personal qualities of the participant, the social pressure weakens and personal opinions get more space in the discussion. In my research, though, the social pressure proved to be an advantage and can be used as a tool to enter into the *collective* feelings and practices of the communities.

Because the goal was to attain an understanding of the meaning systems of micro-cultures, the focus group method served its purpose well (Sulkunen 1987: 195–196, 1998: 264). Shared norms, values and behaviour are built into the narratives people construct around the topics discussed. The stories and the experiences people share in the interview are seen as “true” constructs of their realities. It is important to understand that “truth” in this research is not an absolute concept. Many truths exist simultaneously, each are equally real for their supporters. Social pressure and control guarantee that

the collective truth becomes presented, even though sometimes this requires the sacrificing of personal opinions. Discursive reading of the social world accepts that many realities and systems of meanings co-exist and is not interested in finding the universal truth, even if this would be possible. The comparisons I have made of the focus group materials respect the different truths and realities.

The field materials for this study were collected in seven focus group interviews arranged in different parts of the city of L/Derry. Altogether 36 people took part in these discussions, the youngest being 14 and the oldest 70 years of age. Most of the participants (22 out of 36) were in their early teens, that is from 14 to 17 years old. The focus on young people is justifiable because of their important role as the future adult generation. Their ideas and views will form the basis of future decision-making, and moreover, these young people are the first generation for many decades who have experienced a period of relative peace during the important years of their teenhood. The difficulty of getting adults to participate in the focus groups resulted in there being only one group consisting over 21-year-olds. The main reason was probably the time-consuming method: most of the adult population were actively working and the interviewing would have taken a lot of their spare time and would have required arrangements for child care and so on.

To get the focus groups organised much effort was required, especially because I was totally dependent on the goodwill of the people and I did not have the possibility of offering any remuneration for the time they would spend in the interview. The criteria for the participants were as follows: both Catholic and Protestant people were needed, mostly young people over 14 years of age. Participation from different social classes was also emphasised (see Tables 1 and 2). Two methods were used in recruiting the interviewees. First, I contacted some *gatekeepers*, i.e. the leaders of some community groups in both communities, and I requested permission to come to their meetings and ask people to take part in the interviews (for such a method see Burgess 1984: 48; Valentine 1997: 115, 2001: 47). In a conflicted society gatekeepers or trusted people like this play an important role both in enabling and disabling personal contacts. Due to the high concern with security in local communities, these gatekeepers often want to make sure what business you are on, and thereafter decide whether it is safe to let you into to the community. In the beginning it was difficult to establish relationships with the gatekeepers and the local groups, but in the end the problem was rather that too many youths wanted to take part in the focus group interviews from one housing area. The difficulties in the beginning were mainly practical¹⁶. Contacts were first made by letter, but this did not seem to work effectively and only one group leader responded. I ended up contacting the gatekeepers directly by calling them. This option worked fairly well especially with an information letter sent beforehand. Second, the so-called *snow-balling* method was used, which meant that after an interview session the participants or the group leaders were asked if they knew any other group that might be interested in taking part (see also Valentine 1997: 116–117). The suggestions were of course critically examined before making contact so as to make sure that the sample of people would not become one-sided.

16 Some of the practical difficulties and challenges in conducting research in divided society are discussed in my article, Kuusisto-Arponen (2002a).

Table 1. The focus group participants by religion and gender.

Religion\ Sex	Male	Female	Total
Catholic	13	9	22
Protestant	8	4	12
None*	2	-	2
Total	23	13	36

* None = respondent stated option “no religion”

There are more Catholic participants than Protestants. The share of Protestant participants reflects the demographic factors, which show that 77.5 % of the people in the city of L/Derry are Catholics and 15.5 % are Protestants and the remaining 7.0 % belonging to other or no religious dominations. A general feature of the Protestant population has been the reluctance to take part for example in community-relations work which includes both single-identity and cross-community activities. This affected to some extent my fieldwork as well, and I had to expend more effort on recruiting people from the Protestant community. Especially in L/Derry the Protestant minority has often taken rather an introverted position. Among the Protestant community the role of the gatekeepers has been even more crucial. Getting to talk with the local people in their own estates required a lot of networking on the ground with academic colleagues, youth workers and even with people in the city administration.

Table 2. The focus group participants by religion and the area of residence (on the basis of respondents' perceptions).

Religion\Area of residence	Residential area	Housing estate	The Republic of Ireland**	Total
Catholic	11	10	1	22
Protestant	3	8	1	12
None*	2	-	-	2
Total	16	18	2	36

* None = respondent stated option “no religion.” Note: Later on in the research these respondents are included in the category of “mixed,” as both took part in the mixed focus group sessions.

** Two of the participants came from small rural villages across the border.

In the information sheet that was delivered in the beginning of the focus group interviews the question of the area of residence gave two options: residential area and housing estate. In the residential areas most houses are privately owned or rented. Housing estates are working-class areas where most of the housing stock is council housing. During the last years some of the council houses have been sold to the tenants to increase the feeling of ownership in the area, and in this way to reduce anti-social

behaviour. Therefore, not everyone living in housing estates is dependent on council housing. The ratio of participants by religion and the area of residence is interesting in two ways. First, it illustrates the class divisions, which are still a structural part of British society. The social background of an individual is frequently reflected in her/his level of education, income, employment, and the area of residence. In Northern Ireland working-class and middle-class people usually live in different areas. These spatial divisions are particularly noticeable in urban environments. Second, Table 2 shows how people perceive themselves and their community. Some of the participants from a working-class area who lived in a house which was owned by their family, saw themselves as living in a residential area, even though they were aware of the fact that the majority of the people in their estate lived in council-owned rented accommodation. Most often, however, the effect of owning a house did not change the perception of being part of the working-class community.

Due to the sectarian demography in the city and the lack of neutral venues where people from the both backgrounds could come without fear, the focus group discussions were organised in the particular area where people lived in. Local facilities such as the community house, school premises or youth club were used as meeting places. This meant that the security dimension was taken into account and the participants felt comfortable taking part as they did not have to leave familiar surroundings (see also Denzin 1970; Valentine 1997, 2001). Altogether seven focus groups were organised in six different locations, four of which were on the Cityside and two in Waterside. Three of the groups were Catholic, two Protestant and two were mixed groups. The mixed groups consisted of people from both sides and the participants knew each other beforehand. This proved to be the only way of getting participants from both communities into the same discussion. My other attempts to create mixed groups did not work because of the lack of spontaneous contacts between the communities. I was also warned by community workers that such an approach would require a lot of preparatory work and time, sometimes even years. I felt that I did not have enough resources to accomplish that and therefore mixed groups with a common denominator, such as a circle of friends or a shared hobby, were utilised as a part of this study.

The focus group interviews were structured so that they consisted of a group discussion and two additional parts covering personal information and a respondent's opinions on selected politicised practices (see Appendix I). This approach was used to capture the multilevel dimensions of territoriality, especially its social restrictions and the symbolic aspect. In the first part, a sheet with eleven questions was handed to the participants. The questions covered personal information and some sensitive questions on each individual's thoughts about relations to the other community. In this way the participants could answer the questions without revealing their opinions to the rest of the group. These answers were, later in the analysis, compared with opinions expressed in the discussion. The second phase of the interviews was a semi-structured discussion. Everyone was free to express their views on the questions and claims presented by the researcher. It was emphasised that everything said in the group was strictly confidential and all participants are guaranteed anonymity in the published research. The possibility of expressing dissident views and critical comments during the discussion was also stressed at the beginning.

The last part of the meeting focused on symbolism and the material was again collected with a form. Talking with the rest of the group was not allowed during this last part of our focus group session because personal opinions and feelings were again needed. Participants saw six different pictures and their task was to write down what the picture was about and what kind of feelings it evoked. Finally, at the end of the picture sheet participants had an opportunity to comment on the discussion and to give additional information to the researcher, if they so desired. These six pictures were from the city of L/Derry and they were all taken by the photographer Hugh Callagher. While looking for the most informative images I browsed through hundreds of pictures taken by Mr. Callagher and finally I chose six that were thought to present most effectively the wide range of territorial symbolism existing in Northern Ireland. The choice of pictures reflected the subjective preferences and the intuition of the researcher, but to minimise the risk of an ill-judged choice some local colleagues were asked to share their views about the most suitable pictures.

All the focus group interviews were recorded and to make the process of transcribing the tapes easier, notes were made about the order in which people talked. Usually the whole interview session took around two and a half hours. The numbers of participants in one group varied between four and seven. The records of the experiences of the thirty-six individuals form the empirical core of this research. Also several face-to-face interviews with key *informants* from different fields of the society were conducted. Information gathered in these meetings has effected the content of this research even, though not all interviewees can be directly cited in the pages of this study¹⁷. These twenty-five key informants included community group leaders, academics, representatives of governmental organisations, local politicians, and active citizens. The total number of people involved in the focus group interviews and single interviews was sixty-one.

¹⁷ The list of organisations and individuals interviewed in the course of my research is found in Appendix II.

III

APPROACHING TERRITORIALITY

Territories, i.e. bounded and controlled spaces, form horizontal and vertical hierarchies in which the power relations determine the significance of a particular territory in the political, economic or cultural world order. The nation-state system is one of the most visible forms of territorial control in the contemporary world. In the tradition of political geography the focus has for a long time been on (nation-)states and their role as a primary political agents in the international system (Johnston 1980: 440; Knight 1982; Oinas 1993: 3; Painter 1995: 27; Paasi 1996: 40; Newman 1999: 5–8). In academic literature this state-centric world order is sometimes referred as the “territorial trap”, stressing as it does fixed images of nation-states and identities (Agnew 1994; Agnew & Corbridge 1995; also Paasi 1999: 70). However, during the 1990s the scope of political geography broadened. Political geography still involves the study of boundaries and territories, but the geographical scale of the inquiries can range from the community to the global level. The new political geography covers such fields of interest as identity, human agency, the social production of territory, boundary narratives, and critical perspectives on geographical knowledge, to mention just a few. Along with Routledge (1996a: 509) and Häkli (1998a: 132) I argue that it is very important to discuss not only international and state politics but also the practices of (geo)politics and territoriality on local level (see also Agnew 1984, 1987; Staeheli 1994; Routledge 1994, 1996a). This is a particularly interesting approach in conflict-divided societies (e.g. Raento 1997, 1999; Yiftachel 1999) Political discourses, meanings and consciousness are also produced locally and therefore should be studied within local contexts. This can provide many new ways of understanding human territoriality and its concrete effects. In the Northern Irish case local territoriality and the complex system of communal (and national) loyalties are crucial elements in the continuance of the Troubles. Therefore, focusing on everyday territorial practices offers valuable

insights into local barriers and the possibilities for conflict management and the future development of the area.

Territories cannot be meaningful socio-spatial units *per se*. Rather their centrality for human societies becomes evident in connection with social practices, people, history and the cultural context. Moreover, territoriality is a complex spatial phenomenon with many dimensions. It can be defined as a strategy for controlling and influencing territories and people (Sack 1983, 1986), and as a process of dividing, bounding and signifying space. The research tradition on human territoriality can be traced back to the writings of classical geopolitics scholar such as Soja (1971), and other academics such as Gottmann (1973) and Malmberg (1980). However, it was Soja's work (1971) that aroused interest in the early 1970s. The most fundamental theoretical point of departure in researching territoriality came with the publication of Robert Sack's (1986) *Human Territoriality* (Agnew 2000: 91). The book has been widely cited and read not only among geographers but among students of other disciplines as well. Published in 1986, Sack's book was a product of its time and clearly based on the author's academic background in spatial analysis (Paasi 2000: 93). However, the influence of the Sack's book in providing new insights on the territorial organisation of space and spatial practices, cannot be denied. Since the mid-1980s, our understanding of human geography, as well as political geography, has changed greatly. A significant influence has come from the "cultural turn" in social sciences, which increased scholarly interest in constructionistic approaches, contextuality and reflexivity also in political geographic research. Moreover far-reaching changes, such as growing globalisation, the end of the cold war and the evolving role of nation-states, have stimulated a rethinking of the role of boundaries, spaces and human spatial behaviour. While Sack's book has also met with criticism, his theoretical discussions are in many ways still valid if read alongside contemporary culturally sensitive approaches. Therefore, it is useful to begin with Sack's definition of territoriality.

Sack (1983: 55) defines human territoriality as a strategy for influence and control. According to him territoriality is "an attempt to affect, influence, or control actions and interactions by asserting and attempting to enforce control over a geographic area. In everyday life territoriality is related to how people use land, how they organise themselves in space and how they give meanings to place" (Sack 1986: 2). In his definition the focus is on two crucial points: territoriality as spatial strategy and as human activity. Sack (1983, 1986) does not base his assumptions on biological foundations, as some other authors have done previously, but emphasises that territoriality is a fundamental feature of human spatial organisation (cf. Malmberg 1980). Territoriality is a conscious act, not an instinct, to influence spatial behaviour and exercise power over land and people (Paasi 2000: 94). Sack's (1986) notion of the role of powerful institutions in organising space is interesting. He also argues for the importance of territorial strategies as instruments for control and for gaining desired objectives, such as the membership of a community, the reordering of social power-relations, and the maintenance of the prevailing ideology (Agnew 2000: 91–92). The narrowness of Sack's analysis derives partly from his assumption that territoriality is an instrument of control and a use of power, whereas in contemporary discussions territoriality is perceived to be constitutive of power itself (cf. Häkli 1994a: 2).

Sack (1986) stresses the social element in the constitution of territoriality, but this has become one of the points of criticism. Currently, territoriality is understood as a social construct throughout, which means that many spatial processes, not just the discourses of controlling, may be relevant in the analysis of territoriality. Territorial strategies are constantly reproduced and they have an effect on people's lives and behaviour. Territoriality can be a highly politicised and regulated process among local communities much in the same manner as state territoriality. The politicisation of local spatial divisions takes place when communities use territorial control as a way to attain security. In such case, territoriality becomes equivalent to a security discourse, as in many societies with unresolved minority–majority questions, territorial conflicts and antagonistic identities. These socio-culturally sensitive issues were absent from Sack's theorisation, whilst they form one of the core areas of interest in contemporary political geography (cf. Sack 1997).

The other point of criticism is related to the role of geographical scales in Sack's analysis. For Sack there is a clear hierarchy of scales written into the concept of territoriality, but as Agnew (2000) stresses, more negotiation is involved in the process of defining interests and identities lodged at different scales of the hierarchy (Agnew 2000: 92). The view of territorial discourse as being organised top-down is too simplistic, and I believe that negotiations and confrontations in the territorial organisation of society take place also within different geographical scales, i.e., simultaneously horizontally and vertically. A horizontal construction focuses on the structures and processes defining the territorial frame within one particular scale, whereas a vertical construction points to practical connections and dialogue between the geographical scales. Moreover, if considering local ('ethnic') territorial discourses such as in Northern Ireland, the subjects and objects of control are often blurred; the controllers and the controlled are in fact the same. In addition the current geographical understanding of scales has become more critical and sensitive to the hierarchical approach. Scholars now recognise the porous and overlapping nature of these socially constructed scales (e.g. Jonas 1994; Häkli 1998b). The notion is that geographical scales have dominated extensively the structuring of world-views. They have attained a position in which they appear to be almost "real" structures, which geographical scales as socio-cultural constructs are not.

To grasp the multiple scales of territoriality it is necessary to look at a more contextualised and culturally sophisticated way of understanding territoriality and the role of territories. Whereas Sack examines the inner logic of territoriality as a strategy, Häkli (1994a: 33) emphasises a view in which territoriality is examined in close interrelationship with wider societal developments. The latter approach stresses the cultural logic of territoriality and takes into consideration the whole historical, material, administrative, practical and meaning environment when analysing the *process* of territoriality. I find both approaches useful in conceptualising human territoriality. For Sack (1983, 1986), human societies have used territoriality as one powerful (political) strategy to cope with phenomena that have been considered worth territorial control. The transformation of territoriality, on the other hand, is based on changes in the political economy (Häkli 1994a: 35). Historically oriented studies such as Sack's or the analysis of the organisation of divided spaces, focus on explaining the controlling

system and the inner strategies of territoriality. Häkli's (1994a) approach to territoriality stresses the intimate relationships between the social and spatial, people and place, and meaning and materiality. Territoriality is always constructed in a specific *social context* and therefore its character will depend on who is controlling whom, when and why (Painter 1995: 165–167). Paying attention to socio-temporal contextuality, different spatial scales, politicised practices, communication and community emphasises territoriality as a process.

Territoriality is established through boundaries, rules, people, social processes, communication and places, or should we say territories. Socially constructed territoriality is always communicated. Communication is a crucial part of the socialisation process by which territorial behaviour and practices are transmitted to future generations. It is also a necessary element in maintaining current social structures and spatial order. Often territorial communication is viewed in connection with boundary processes. Paasi (1996: 28) stresses the role of boundary as a mediator of interaction. He argues that boundaries not only separate groups and social communities from each other, but also provide channels for interaction. Sack (1986) also emphasises the role of boundary in the communication process. For him the territorial boundary may be the only symbolic form that combines direction in space and a statement about possession, i.e., inclusion or exclusion (Sack 1986: 32). I believe that Sack's idea of communication of territoriality is rather narrow. Territoriality can be communicated in many other ways too such as language, both written and spoken (see Häkli 1994a: 35–36), traditions, culture, politics, religion and so forth. Boundary is an essential part of territoriality, but it cannot be the only realm where the collection and the storage of territorial information, in other words communication, takes place (Häkli 1994a: 33, 35).

To reach beyond the visible territorial order of societies and communities we have to be able to “read space”, and furthermore, we need to become sensitive to everyday life experiences. Especially when focusing on localities as meaningful places, ways of communicating and reproducing territoriality other than formal institution-tied ones should also be examined. For example, territorial awareness and consciousness among the people may arise and be reproduced in everyday conversation among people. In this research the focus is on stories, where people's communal history becomes intertwined with narratives of place, fear and security, and of the bounding and controlling of places. The narratives and discourses found in the stories are examined as a part of territorial communication.

Drawing on the works by Sack and Häkli, the theoretical framework of this study is composed of two conceptual ideas: a) territoriality as a strategy which focuses on empirically verifiable outcomes of divided spaces and territories, and b) territoriality as a process and a cultural logic which emphasises the contextual, cultural and historical practices through which territoriality becomes institutionalised and reproduced in everyday life (see Figure 6). These two approaches intertwine, but can only be treated separately for analytical purposes. When territoriality is viewed as a discourse, the two parts, strategy and process, are reunited again. Territorial discourse is a meaning system that signifies the strategies to control and divide space, and simultaneously aims to make the prevailing territorial practices the only acceptable ways of viewing

the world and home territory. The relationship between the territorial discourse and the outcome/cultural logic is dialectical. The ways of signifying construct the outcome and the processes, but, simultaneously, the discourse takes shape.

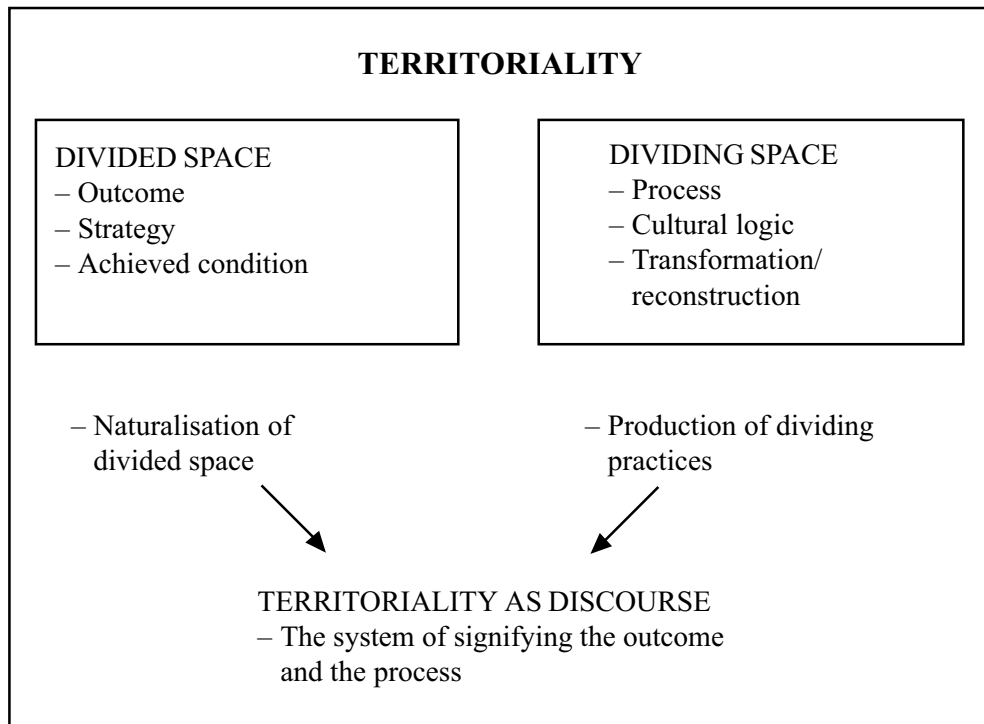


Figure 6. The theoretical dimensions of territoriality in this research.

In this chapter I will discuss further processes that are intimately connected to the territorial controlling and dividing of space, such as categorising space and politicising spatial behaviour. The main aim is to get beyond the administrative or bureaucratic definition of territoriality and, thus, to concentrate on the *everyday territoriality* that bounds the social spaces of people's living world and sets rules for interaction. Another defining factor is the urban context in which the territorial way of life is examined. In urban environments territorial practices are relatively easily observable because of physical boundary constructions, segregation and visible symbolism.

From Urban Segregation to Local Territoriality

Urban environments have been studied since their existence. The city as a stage of the modern way of life was a fascinating and perplexing subject for research in the beginning of the 20th century. In the following, the roots of researching urban segregation and territoriality in social sciences are charted briefly. In the 1960s, urban

research was “big business”, but actually the roots of the research tradition are found in the late 19th and the early 20th centuries. The early studies of urbanism, such as the Hull-House papers in 1895 and the Chicago University studies (later known as the Chicago School of Urban Sociology), began to view life in the cities as an interesting phenomenon in itself. From the point of view of my research the urban studies conducted in Chicago University are interesting because of their notions of the spatial segregation and the organisation of space. The Chicago sociologists studied the patterns and structures of the city and noticed that many types of social problems correlated with these urban structures. Burgess, Park and their students were working full-time with urban questions by the mid-1910s: physical patterns of the city, immigrants, youth, ethnic neighbourhoods, street corner groups and the desire for ethnic segregation. Park and Burgess studied communities within the city. The beginning of the studies on segregation was based on Park’s real-life observations in Chicago when he still worked as a journalist. The desire for segregation and the public prejudice against the city’s immigrant communities had sharpened ethnic divisions in Chicago. Park’s aim was to “understand and interpret the social and economic processes at work in the slums (segregated communities) and their effect in influencing the social and personal organisation of those who lived there” (Burgess & Bogue 1964: 1–14).

The Chicago school aimed to “map the social,” that is, to connect cultural life and spatial patterns. Interestingly, they also developed qualitative research methods applicable to their purposes. Park’s “nosing around” and making observations on social and physical phenomena have evolved into an empirical art form (Lindner 1996: 1–2). In fact the Chicago School has been criticised for their lack of scientific rigour. Park’s view of “natural regions” was theoretically deficient. Moreover, Park’s studies were based on the collection of facts, not on testing formal hypotheses, representative samples, control groups or strict methodological rules while planning and conducting research. This was unacceptable for some of Park’s contemporaries. Later on, it has been argued that Park did not deny the significance of theory but aimed at a direct combination of empirical and theoretical work (Harvey 1987). According to current understanding in the philosophy of science, the Chicago School scholars based their approach on inductive reasoning, beginning from their empirical observations and developing them into theoretical ideas.

The Chicago School of Urban Sociology has had a crucial role in establishing the ever growing interest on researching cities. However, often this influence and the role of the Chicago School is disputed. The Chicagoans have been accused of positivist or environmental determinist approaches. This has occurred mainly because of the zonal and concentric ring theories, which are the most famous products of Chicagoan urban sociology (Dear & Flusty 1998: 51). Few authors in the field have appreciated Park’s earlier studies, even though they reflect traces of Vidal de la Blache’s understanding of the relationship between people and the environment, which later on have gained a lot of academic interest (Ley 1977: 500; Tani 1995: 12). Thus, with their intensive and almost humanistic approach the Chicagoans contributed much to contemporary urban research. First, they emphasised the importance of the particular and experiential. For Park and his colleagues life and lived experience was a valuable source of research. This was evident in their choice of research topics as well as in their methodologies.

They often used the life histories of people and as Park argued, “by the use of personal documents we are able to get at the subjective aspects of life in the city” (Burgess & Bogue 1964: 9). Second, they viewed urbanism as a way of life which included social disorganisation and acculturation. Urban life had its own rules and modes of spatial organisation, which needed to be studied and challenged. The ideas of the Chicago School and pragmatism became part of the geographical imagination especially in humanistic approaches. This meant that interest paid to individual experience, meaning, and the interpretation of *place* in human geography (Unwin 1992: 151–152). For example Ley’s (1974, 1983, 1988) studies on people and the urban way of life and Jackson’s (1989) maps of meaning were among the first in the recent wave of humanistic geography emphasising understanding rather than exclusive explaining of social issues in the spatial world (Unwin 1992: 152–153).

As an object of research the city connects many disciplines such as geography, regional studies, sociology, planning, economics and politics. The urban question has been approached from many angles, which has enabled the formation of a multidisciplinary research field, where ideas are borrowed and exchanged without any major doctrinal confusion (see e.g. Amin & Graham 1997; Dear & Häkli 1998). Whilst sociologists have mainly focused on finding connections between the social, cultural, and spatial, for geographers the working order has been the reverse. The geographical tradition of research on cities and the organisation of urban space in the early 20th century focused on the notion of the functional differentiation of space and metropolitan regions. The creation of models on the structure of urban regions viewed the people and the spatial organisation of society as part of an economy-driven world, in which people were not active decision-makers nor of much influence in the process. For example, Hoyt’s (1939) sectoral model on the differentiation of the space, stressed the importance of the traffic routes on rental markets. These logistical issues were perceived to form the basis for housing segregation according to class status (Kultalahti 1990: 58).

For many decades economic and political geography research concentrated on the differentiation of space and spatial behaviour in relation to political economy, physical resources, and capital. The social dimension behind the spatial processes was often neglected. Segregation was not an active process led by the inhabitants, but it was always determined from above by powerful and faceless economic forces. Interest in qualitative research on urban environments had almost died out by the 1950s, when positivistic reasoning dominated the scientific discourse. Humanistic geography in the 1970s stressed again lived experience. New approaches to space and place were developed then (see Tuan 1977; Relph 1976). The new focus on the sense of place, its meanings and “placelessness” represented an alternative to the predominantly economic understanding of spatial practices. The individual subjective experience, rather than collective realities, was emphasised in humanistically inclined research. Currently the widely discussed and highly developed constructionistic methodology combines the experiential life-worlds, social structures, and the subjective realities with the collective ones.

In my research urban segregation is viewed from a particular point of view, that of territoriality. Segregation has a strong community dimension and therefore is perceived

as a collective experience. Moreover, the reasons and motivations behind segregation lie somewhere else than in mere economic factors. Currently many ethnic confrontations and conflicts in the world have resulted in ethnic cleansing and the geographical segregation of communities. Segregation is experienced all over the world: whether *voluntary* and as a part of the way of life such as the gated communities in the United States of America, or *forced* as in the case of Gypsies in Eastern Europe or even in England (on the latter, see, e.g., Sibley 1995). Whatever the motivating fact behind segregation, in the end both forms will exploit territorial ordering of space and people.

Whereas local territoriality has many similar characteristics with state territoriality there are significant differences, too. At times, local control systems can be in conflict with the state or with other levels of (territorial) politics¹⁸. This is evident particularly in marginal places which sometimes are transformed into sites of resistance (for more discussion, see Routledge 1994, 1996a, 1996b). Too often the everyday visibility and normative role of territoriality goes unacknowledged, particularly on the local scale. Being an embedded part of the socio-spatial organisation of segregated communities, territoriality often becomes naturalised. In such case the ways of behaving, of communicating with the other people, and of using space are based on a set of rules and structures that are seemingly fixed, transhistorical and unchallenged. Territoriality is manifested in urban structures, architecture, “our places” and “their spaces”, and symbols such as street signs, the use of flags, graffiti and posters. In order to understand the spatial organisation of communities and often hostile and violent identity construction processes between “us” and the “others”, it is necessary to carefully analyse actual socio-spatial dividing practices in Northern Ireland.

Local territoriality refers to territorial action and identification that takes place in sub-state contexts, such as provinces, counties, cities, towns and sometimes even in single housing estates. On the local scale, territorial control and the politics of place often become more concrete and tangible than on the national scale. Face-to-face contacts and close interaction within the community facilitate the development of strong socialisation processes and effective control over the self-defined territory. On the local level, actions targeted against the community or its territory are more easily observed and may lead to punishment of the offender. A strict territorial order aims at the homogenisation of the community and the securing of its boundaries. Local territorial practices are heavily loaded with symbolic meanings. For example, the road someone uses when going to work, the colour of someone’s clothes, or the particular words someone uses in everyday discussions may reveal a lot about person’s background and communal preferences. The extent to which communal practices become territorial depends on the context. Arguably, in situations where the community

18 An interesting analysis of the local terrains of resistance is made by Jansen (2001). He studied the meanings and strategies of space and territorial control in the 1996–1997 Beograd demonstrations against the Milosevic regime. His analysis show how the citizens utilised symbolism and spatial order in claiming the city under their control. These included such as crowds occupying space, keeping up noise, organising traffic jams, walking in the streets with banners. (Jansen, S. (2001). *The Streets of Beograd. Urban Space and Protest Identities in Serbia. Political Geography* 20, 35–55.)

feels itself threatened by an external force, such as the state government, international agents, or a local counter-group, strictly bounded places and territorial restrictions are, to some degree, used as a coping strategy (Kuusisto-Arponen 2002b). In other contexts where the threat is not so obvious, or does not exist, the influence of restrictive territorial rules is weaker. However, if conflicts emerge even in these less ruled communities, normative territoriality is effectively applied to everyday life. Thus territoriality is a measure aiming to guarantee a refuge for a local community and to secure home territories when there is an external threat to the community.

Local territoriality is not a widely researched topic. Yet, previous research clearly shows that a need to analyse the phenomenon exists. Local territorial practices have been most often examined in certain conflict societies where the place and the people have an intimate connection but often contested history (see e.g. Boal 1969, 1974; Poole & Boal 1973; Schnell 1994; Anderson 1996; Raento 1999; also Kaplan 1994). Steve Herbert (1996, 1997), however, has examined the normative ordering of police territoriality in the city of Los Angeles. His research delineates the modes of territorial conduct that police officers employ in their work. Police territoriality is a fascinating example of the importance of rules and values in structuring social action within a particular perceivably homogeneous community (Herbert 1996: 568). Police territoriality is to a great degree based on formal conduct: patrol divisions, law and bureaucratic control. However, personal values also influence policing practices: adventurism, machoism, professional competence in work, morality, and maintaining personal safety on duty (Herbert 1996). The police officers have no intimate connection with the patrol area where they operate. Moreover, (as a territory) the formally defined patrol area might not cohere with the real-life territories formed by the local communities. The way territorial power is used by the officers in the localities is based on law, force and the assumption of emptiable space. The patrolled territory must be emptied of criminal activity, anti-social behaviour, or anything which does not fit into the frames of rule and law. This detached approach is necessary in order to accomplish impartial and effective policing, but for this very reason it also creates difficulties between the police officers and the local community which they are controlling and guarding. The above territorial behaviour is applicable to many societies, especially on the institutional level. For example in Northern Ireland it is found among the British Army and the RUC (Royal Ulster Constabulary, the police force in Northern Ireland)¹⁹.

However, to grasp the logic of local territoriality it is more useful to discuss the issue not from the formal and bureaucratic point of view, but rather in relation to identity construction, everyday socialisation and the local politics of place. Home territories, extending out from the home itself, are functional living spaces with many experiential and meaningful places. The latter may emerge and slowly evolve into strong and normative discourses through the construction of territories and social environments for interaction. Therefore, the rationale in this research focuses on viewing the local territoriality as a way of life and as a cultural logic.

¹⁹ From 4.11.2001 the name of the Royal Ulster Constabulary was replaced with the "Police Service of Northern Ireland." In this study the RUC is used because at the time of my field work it was still the official name.

In the following the focus is on the ways in which local territorialities become into existence and slowly evolve into strong and normative discourses. Meaningful places and environments for everyday interaction will be the starting point, followed by a discussion of bounding and dividing practices, and in the end the focus is placed on the most extreme phase of local territoriality. When local territoriality is at its most restrictive, not just the physical space but also social life can be mapped. Maps like these consist of many lines of divisions both mental and physical. It is precisely through these territorial divisions that the local borderlands began to take shape. These most restrictive forms of territorial organisation are commonly experienced in Northern Ireland and in other communities living in the midst of conflicts or crises.

Place and the Sense of Belonging

One of the most fundamental questions in the life of an individual is: “Where do I belong?” Often the answer is related to one’s connection to a certain social community and a particular place. A sense of belonging enables people to orientate themselves in the world. Being part of a community also means an intimate connection to a place or a territory, independently of the scale of the meaningful space. Identification often occurs through several spatial units which can exist on different geographical scales. Therefore, national identification and the sense of belonging to local neighbourhood should not be viewed as contradictory but instead as parallel processes. Sometimes the connection between social identity and place is neglected or ignored on the local scale, as the relationship is mainly projected on larger scales such as the state territory (Murphy 1991: 28). This, however, is too simplistic view of the spatial identification of the communities in Northern Ireland. It should be, though, borne in mind that priorities in identity politics shift according to situations and contexts.

“Place” is not an empty or meaningless arena where people operate (see e.g. Taylor 1993: 225–228; 1994: 151). As often argued, spatial and social spheres are intertwined and the relationship between them is dialectical. Thus, places are meaningful environments for people’s activities, but people also have an effect on places and their appearance. Finding a generally acceptable definition for the concept of place is problematic, but the search has inspired many authors to analyse the “essence of place” (see, e.g., Relph 1976; Tuan 1977; Eyles 1985; Agnew 1987; Taylor 1999). Relph (1976: 43) sees the basic meaning, the essence, of place coming not only from location, nor only from the functions that the place serves, nor only from the community that occupies it, nor only from superficial and mundane experiences. He stresses that all these are common and perhaps necessary aspects of places. For Relph (1976) “the essence of place lies in the largely unselfconscious intentionality that defines places as profound centres of human existence.” Humanist tradition emphasises the role of meaningful places, which are formed in a dialectical relationship between place and society. In Relph’s (1976: 34) work, the relationship becomes obvious when he stresses that “people are their place and a place is its people.” From a more structural view point John Agnew (1987: 43) has defined place through three elements: locale, location, and sense of place. He sees these elements as being very important for the understanding

of the nature of place. Above all, Agnew argues that place is defined as a geographical context or locality in which agency interpellates social structure (Agnew 1987: 43). Agnew's view stresses the role of social structures over the sense of place. The two different definitions illustrate well the multidimensionality of a place. Notably, both authors stress the experiential nature of place. For Relph (1976) a place has an ultimate existential nature and for Agnew (1987) structures and institutions create the framework for experiencing.

Here, the concept of *place* refers to a politicised, socially constructed environment with acknowledgement of underlying processes and structures. Depending on the focus and methodological choices of the research, some specific characteristics of places become more central than the others. These characteristics, however, are not necessarily contradictory. When a place is viewed through experience, *belonging, sense of place and meanings* characterise the interplay of the people and the place. On the other hand, when collective categorisation of space is stressed, i.e., a formal and informal definition of a particular place, the *agency, structures and inclusion/exclusion practices* become central.

Traditionally humanistic geographers have understood the nature of place through the notion of personal attachment. Places exist only in personal experience and through the feeling of belonging to these places. This existential approach was later challenged by phenomenology, which added intersubjectivity to the framework. Interest in lived spaces arose and underlined the experiential everyday spatiality (Tani 1995: 19). Meaningful living environments are indeed always experienced in many distinct ways by the individuals, but these experiences are to some degree shared with the rest of the community and are intersubjective by nature. This means that the specificity of places is constructed of the unique experiences that individuals and groups associate with a place (Entrikin 1991: 21). This kind of contextual approach rediscovered the role of space and place in social transformations. This contextuality and narrative understanding of social life relates to the contemporary constructivist methodology. The narratives of place are structured within the interplay of personal and communal experiencing of the social world. Moreover, Entrikin suggests (1991: 23, 25) that place matters and is significant in the modern world, and that narratives are important in capturing this significance.

Often academic research tends to make an analytical distinction between individual and collective (spatial) identity formation. Thus, the concept of regional identification is commonly used when referring to collective spatial formations (see e.g. Paasi 1986; Häkli 1994b). However, in this study I have chosen to use the term (*collective*) *place identity*. The concept of place underlines contextuality and, arguably, is better able to capture the intimate nuances of signification and place identification. Some authors also distinguish the concepts of place and region according to geographical scale (Entrikin 1991: 6, footnote 1). This idea is not supported in my research, and instead my understanding is that place as familiar and experiential environment can vary from nation-state to home (see e.g. Taylor 1999). Moreover, the recent interest in local place has widened the perspectives on place construction, for example in the realms of identity, political processes, cultural products and mindscapes (see e.g. Agnew 1987, 2001; Tani 1995; Koskela 1999). Thus, I argue that the concept of place bridges

personal identification and the sense of belonging to the *collective*, community-level spatial identification. An individual's experience of place, based on social status, education, time spent in the place, other life experiences and so forth, mixes with the communal socio-cultural definition. Both realms of signifying place exist in the same body, that of an individual, but neither of them could exist without the other. The structure of place could be described through a metaphor of a brick wall: imagine yourself standing just in front of a wall, so close that your nose almost touches it. When looking down, you can see the first layers of the wall clearly: the colour of the bricks and their shape. These bricks represent the individuals' experiences, attachments and sense of belonging to the place. Every brick is, however, connected to other bricks, the members of the community. If you now distance yourself from the wall, you see fewer individual brick shapes the farther you go. Finally you cannot tell where one brick ends and the other begins; it looks as if the wall is made of one element. The latter describes the collective meaning of place. Cement connects the bricks and gives structures to wall. This cement in communal experience is the intersubjective meaning of place and identity. The upper layers of the wall could not come together and form the wall without the lower layers. Thus, the collectively experienced and signified place cannot not exist without the components from which it is constituted.

A similar idea on place was put forward by Relph (1976) who defined it as a centre of meaning for people at any geographical scale (Stock 2000: 616). "...places may be defined in terms of functions they serve or in terms of communal and personal experience. They can be at almost any scale [...] – as a nationalist my place is the nation, but in other situations my place is the province or region in which I live, or the city or the street or the house that is my home." (Relph 1976: 43 in Stock 2000: 616). Further Stock (2000) argues, when analysing the essence of place, that the concept of place is constructed in a subjective relationship between individuals and a place, it does not denote to one particular relation of one person to one place. "The word 'subjective' signifies the relevance to subjects and not to the particular individual: hence the sense of place may be the same for many people (Stock 2000: 616)."

A place gets its distinctive characteristics and meanings through interaction with other places and communities. Hence, the comparison between "our" place and "their" place always happens, even though it is not a conscious act or based on visible competition between two localities. Place is socially and collectively produced, but the *experience* that individuals have of particular places is personal. In this sense Paasi (1986: 114) is correct in arguing that places as personal experience will cease when the person dies. I would, however, add that places as communally experienced will have a more permanent structure, an aspect that Paasi describes using the concept of *region* (cf. Paasi 1986: 114–115, 1996: 206–211). Thus, in this research place is seen as an intersubjective socio-spatial construct. Moreover, I believe that the non-administrative territorial organisation of localities is often based on a desire to secure one's community and place from ceasing. A sense of belonging to a specific socio-spatial unit serves to guarantee security, similarity and ownership. These also serve as pushing reasons for territorial organisation and boundary construction.

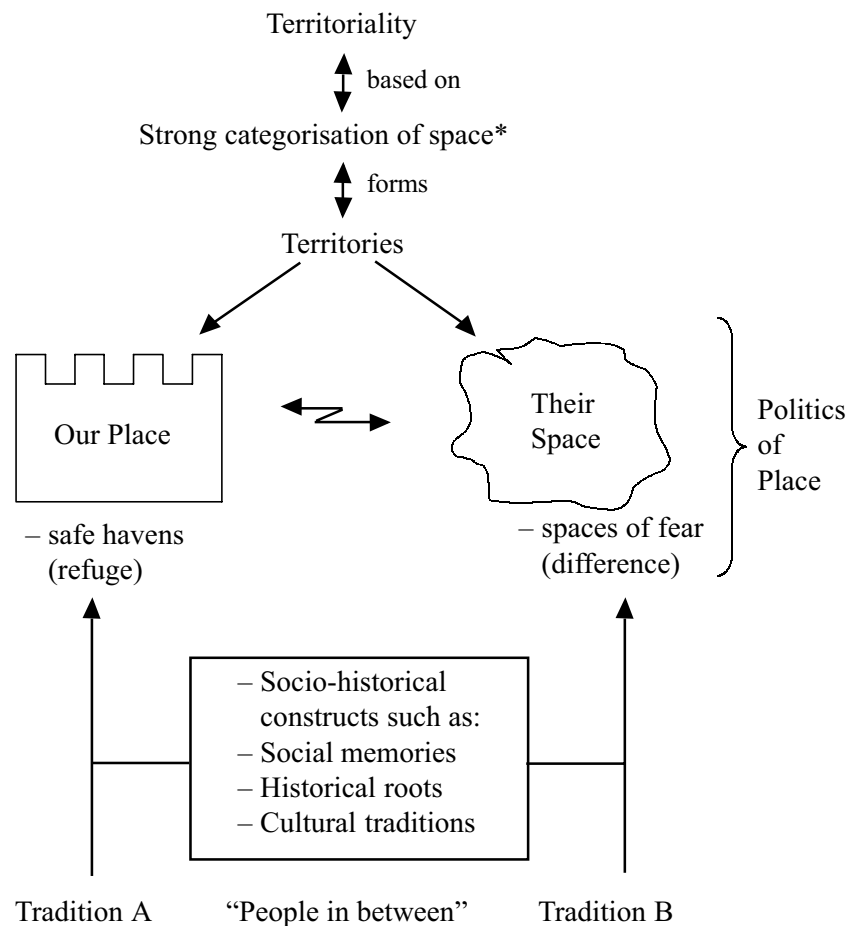
The role of place and place identity have in recent years been studied extensively in relation to the territorial strategy of (political) resistance (Entrikin 1996: 215; see

e.g. Keith & Pile 1993; Raento 1993, 1997; Graham 1994; on criticism e.g. Oakes 1997). Many scholars have attached greater importance than before to these experiential environments. These meaningful territories do not emerge only through a territorial strategy or resistance, but communal awareness and signifying are required. Places as sites of resistance are always representations of power relations as well. However, as Rose (1994) argues, power relations as such do not divide the cultural field into two opposing camps or, as in Northern Ireland, construct the contested local borderland. The cultural politics of place consists of “hybrid identities resulting from complex social relations which fracture the local cultural field (Oakes 1997: 524).” In Northern Ireland places as sites of resistance are a structural feature of society. Communal identities, the burden of conflict and competing visions of reality structure the relationship between places and people. Sometimes places of resistance are viewed as emancipatory, but actually they often are “insecure, precarious and fluctuating (Oakes 1997: 524; see also Rose 1993).” Similarly, Relph (2000: 619), while discussing the sense of place, points out that its empowering aspect is often connected to ugly and poisonous characteristics, such as ethnic cleansing or other exclusionary practices. Raento (1997: 202) has discussed the case of Basque resistance and concludes that the demonstrations and graffiti campaigns of radical nationalists are expressions of a sense of place. Similar practices take place in Northern Ireland. These collective acts create solidarity, group coherence and loyalty to particular community (e.g. Raento 1997). Evidently, understanding place-bound identities and place construction requires sensitivity towards various agents, processes, experiences and geographical scales. Furthermore, the politics of place is neither predictable nor straightforward (Relph 2000: 619). The case of Northern Ireland clearly illustrates the difficulties and tensions in the politics of place: emancipation and insecurity leads to the construction of safe havens as much as exclusionary tendencies create places of fear and otherness. All these characteristics make researching such places a daunting challenge.

On the local scale a neighbourhood can be a meaningful place. People living in a particular neighbourhood have personal experiences of living in this area, they often have some sense of community (to greater or lesser degree, depending on the context), they might have shared characteristics such as a middle-class background, religion or ethnic similarity, but most importantly they share the same territory. “Our” territory, is however, often constructed against some external other and opposing territorial unit. An interesting and indeed crucial notion for this research is the dialectic space-place interrelationships. As Taylor (1999) argues: “the same location can be both place and space depending on whose perspective is involved (Taylor 1999: 12).” This refers to the idea that for insiders a particular context is a place, whereas for outsiders it is a space (see also Relph 1976). In the case of local territorial discourses and the practices of controlling daily life, especially in conflict societies, the space-producers and place-makers are much the same group of people. This makes it rather difficult to make a distinction when we are talking on the one hand about place as a centre of meaning and on the other hand about the practices of abstract categorisation of the other group’s local space.

As the interest here is mainly on urban conflictive territoriality, it needs to be pointed out that the city (in my research L/Derry) is formed of lived spaces, which are

sometimes contested, but always important parts of everyday experience. The difference between place and space is conceptual, but if applied in the Northern Irish context it clearly illustrates how and why strict territorial order exists in localities. Our meaningful place makes little sense without an idea of “their space.” In this regard place and space are in a reciprocal relationship. If there is a need to define some rough reference point where the boundary between place and space exists, it can be concluded: “*we live in a place, they occupy a space.*” It is exactly this understanding of spatial order that is widely held in Northern Ireland. Our familiar territories are distinct from their unfamiliar and scary spaces. “Their space” is something “we” cannot nor do we even want to experience. In the politics of place, where the social and symbolic features of place, the sense of place and the identity of place are created, the place–space dynamics is a crucial element. It is in and between these two opposites, our place and their space; familiar and unfamiliar, that the contested urban borderland is constructed. The following figure illustrates the theoretical and conceptual framework applied in this research (see Figure 7).



* Here space should be understood as a generic term

Figure 7. “Our place” versus “their space.”

In Northern Ireland local territoriality is largely based on strong categorisation of space and the dualistic nature of the understanding of territory. On the one hand territory is perceived as a *place* and, on the other, territory is viewed as a *space*. The constant confrontations and interactions between these two socio-spatial constructs constitute the politics of place. The politics of place, operating in the conditions created by the historical legacy and the contemporary territorially divided reality, is one of the core process in construction of the contested urban borderland. It also needs to be noted that “our place” is often exclusively defined both in social and physical terms by the community, whereas “their space” – an unknown territory – is defined obscurely and “they” lack humanity.

In conclusion, and as Entrikin (1996: 219) aptly points out, there are many dimensions and ways in which place is constitutive of human experience. However, discussions and analysis of place or place bound identities are periled by social reductionism. Entrikin (1996) points out that social space is only one dimension of geographical place. Places are equally real and imagined, they include cultural, political, economic, religious as well as social aspects and, moreover, places exist equally for individuals and communities. Identification with a place requires a firm basis and ideological foundations which people can identify with. Moreover, socialisation, communal unity, a sense of place and physical structures of defined place often require boundaries and signified division lines between the included and excluded. These are most often attained by applying strong categorisation of space in everyday practices.

Categorising Local Space

The processes of categorising space gradually set everyday life under a socio-spatial control system. Usually categorisation is used to organise spatial interactions, whether these be the movement of goods, information or people. On the one hand, the practices of inclusion and exclusion aim at preserving the particularities of place, but simultaneously they homogenise the community according to particular criteria to prevent mixing with those who are different, i.e. the others.

Categorising local space is always based on particular codes of conduct. Hence, in the process also the rules, norms and values of the community are also tested and reproduced. The definitions and divisions of space tell who is included, and therefore part of “us” and our territory, and on the other hand, who will be excluded and expelled. While in the local categorising practices the belief and moral systems of the community have the most important influence, the effects of external and hierarchical forms of social control (such as state administration or legislation) cannot be neglected (cf. Sibley 1995: 81). These two systems together create the normative structures for space and spatial behaviour. Sibley (1995: 77) argues that spatial purification is one of the key characteristics in the organisation of social space. Purification does not refer to an idea of space as an empty and clean container, but points to the objectification of space. It creates the illusion that it is possible to control space and spatial processes in their totality. Purification means simply an attempt to remove unwanted articles from a particular space.

Places are familiar and comfortable, veritable safe havens and places of refuge. The sense of insecurity does not belong to these territories. It is the opposite, i.e. *spaces of fear*, which pose a threat for the community that views these spaces from outside. Instead the people inside feel that they are situated in a realm of safety and familiarity, bounded place, a safe haven. Notably, the space–place “schizophrenia” appears again. It is important to acknowledge this reciprocal relationship between space and place, and assess the processes in which this perspective shift occurs.

The structures of spatial purification can be characterised as open and inclusive, or closed and exclusive. In Sibley’s terms (1988, 1992, 1995) the former would refer to a weak categorisation (classification), and the latter to a strong categorisation of space. Sibley’s (1988, 1992, 1995) ideas are originally adapted from Basil Bernstein’s (1967, 1971) works relating to the open versus closed school curriculum. Sibley (1988: 412) stresses that Bernstein’s educational model provides an analogue for structuring space. Bernstein in his model argues that open and closed curriculum systems are based on two different ways of organising spatial, people and boundary relationships (see Table 3).

Table 3. Characteristics of open and closed curriculum systems (Sibley 1995: 79*).

Open (weak categorisation of space)	Closed (strong categorisation of space)
Ritual order celebrates participation and co-operation	Ritual order celebrates hierarchy and dominance
Boundary relations with outside blurred	Boundary relationships with outside sharply drawn
Opportunities for self-government	Very limited opportunities for self-government
Mixing of categories	Purity of categories

* Applied from the original.

The *weak categorisation* of space enables social mixing and encourages participation and co-operation. In addition, boundary construction and boundary processes are blurred, and so more interaction between categories occurs. Opportunities for self-government means that the community members can define their own goals and these become realised with the means present in the community. Even though the communal power relations are less hierarchical than in the case of strong categorisation of space, ritual order and codes of conduct nevertheless still exist. However, there is clear acceptance and tolerance of difference, which is not viewed as a threat to the organisation of the community (Sibley 1995: 78–81). Alternative sources of information such as the utilisation of cross categorical dialogue as well as the mixing of categories in everyday life are also found.

According to Sibley (1995), the opposite practice of spatial organisation and interaction is *strong categorisation*. Control plays an important role in strong categorisation, as it aims to exclude all possible threats and deviance that could

challenge the prevailing power structures. Hierarchical organisation is preferred, along with the purity of categories. Positions are defined by excluding and including, which simultaneously construct homogeneous units. Thus, sharp boundary lines appear, and govern interactions between the categories. People living in a society where strong categorisation takes place, have less opportunities for self-direction. The rules and restrictions set frames for social and spatial practices in these seemingly purified environments. Inflexible rules determine internal arrangements and challenging the prevailing way of life is difficult. As Sibley (1995: 80) argues, abjection is most likely to be experienced in strongly categorised environments. Whether this abjection is social, economic, or cultural depends on the context (Sibley 1995: 78–81).

The degree to which these two models, which not only define the boundaries of place as distinguished from “other’s” space, but also the meaning and sense of place, are embedded in communities’ territorial practices varies according to geographical scale, time, and context. In peaceful societies the weak categorising of space typically dominates over the strong categorising. Weak categorisation emphasises a concern for the integration of values and ideas. Weakly categorised spaces have permeable boundaries and are characterised with social mixing and/or mixed land use. The result is that mixture and diversity are accepted in the community, and the policing of boundaries will be unnecessary (Sibley 1992: 114–115). On the other hand, strong categorising of space creates exclusive territories, where there is strong pressure to support the one set of collective values, and those who do not may be expelled. In these territories boundaries are clearly defined and the collective values and ideals within are identified in unambiguous terms. In addition, homogeneity is valued and the blurring of boundaries would be seen as a threat to the community’s integrity (Sibley 1992: 114). Strong categorising forms territories that are divided into frontlines between two or more exclusive communities. Notably, both models of categorisation exist simultaneously in many societies, and the use and application of the models depends on the socio-historical situation, context and the position of the community. Seldom will either of the models exist in its purest form, as both are in a way utopian situations.

The categorisation of space is intimately connected with the construction of social identity. Social identity is based on similarity and sharing, which is obtained by controlling the membership of the community. The defined criteria for selecting individuals necessarily also create boundaries, beyond which the excluded belong. The search for similarity includes the creation of difference. These two features are actually two sides of the same coin: “our” similarity is “their” difference and “we” are the “others” to “them” and vice versa (Jenkins 1996: 80). Boundaries and identities cannot exist without categorisation. While the categories themselves have no visible boundary lines, the mental divisions may be as effective as walls topped with barbed wire. Invisibility often characterises spatial divisions, especially on the local scale. However, when the physical and mental elements are combined, visible boundary construction and marking do coincide. The crucial role of boundaries in socio-spatial organisation is presented and discussed by Paasi (1996). Paasi’s cross-tabulation is formed of four dimensions Us, Other, Here, and There (see Table 4). These social and spatial categories

are to be found in the space–place dialectic and the collective identification referred in this chapter. It is “us/here” that is the “place” and “others/there” refers to “space.”

Table 4. Basic dimensions of territorial identity construction (Paasi 1996: 14).

	HERE	THERE
WE	Integration within a territory	Integration over boundaries
OTHER	Distinction within a territory	Distinction between us and the other

The “we/here” dimension points to integration within a territory. In this case boundary construction aims to secure and protect the “defined we” in a particular *place*. “We/there” refers to the desired integration across the boundary in order to unite the social group, whether in a physical sense by extending the boundaries or by ideological striving to maintain the inner coherence and homogeneity of the community. “Other/here” makes distinction between social groups within one territorial unit. This is often the case with ethnic minorities. The last dimension “other/there” underlines the distinction between various territorial units, i.e. spaces and places. While often these four dimensions are referred to in connection to a nation-state’s socio-spatial organisation and boundary processes, it is necessary to point that all four dimensions of integration and distinction are found within other geographical scales, too.

Boundaries are often contested and therefore their role must be viewed as gradually changing. Many claims have been made that such contestation will result in the abolition of territorial boundaries on all geographical scales, and particularly in the case of nation-states (e.g. Allen & Hamnett 1995; Shapiro & Alker 1996; Taylor 1997). However, the real-life examples have shown that boundaries are not going to disappear, and in fact the “desirability of the membership in solidarity groups is still valued (Oommen 1995: 252).” Thus, Taylor’s (1997) argument on shared spaces and multi-identities as an alternative to separate spaces and national identity remains very much of an utopian idea, at least in many countries (see also Newman & Paasi 1998).

When conceptualising place identity, it is necessary to understand that identity is about processes of bounding rather than boundaries *per se* (Jenkins 1996: 98). These processes take place in the continuous organisation of interaction, communication and positioning of communities. Place identity combines social identity with the experience of living in a certain place. Therefore, localities become essential realms of belonging, identity construction and territorial organisation. Yet, place identities are not fixed, any more than are places or communities. Transformations in all of these are inevitable and also necessary.

Mechanisms of exclusion and inclusion create the framework for place identification. Territoriality, on the other hand, refers to a highly politicised form of spatial control. It naturalises the categorical realities and reproduces lines of division. Indeed, the very concept of place includes the possibility of politics. Politics in this

context should be understood broadly: politics is not only practised within institutions and by politicians, but also within the wider society and by ordinary people. It consists of processes of influencing, decision-making and action within society. Everyday politics is goal-oriented and just as normative as formal politics. The difference lies in the fact that everyday politicisation often contradicts the formal decision-making and interprets events in an alternative way (Kuusisto-Arponen 2002b).

In analysing the political nature of spatial realities, it is necessary to stress the ways in which the construction of politicised territories and the struggles of legitimising these occur. Keith and Pile (1993: 38) argue that all spatialities are political because they are the medium and expression of asymmetrical relations of power. The *politics of place* is a process where competing desires over places and spaces confront each other. Moreover, in the politics of place, the categorisation of people, the control of territory, and the sense of belonging come together. Primarily, the politics of place refers to the practices that produce and reproduce the images and sense of place. The struggle over the legitimate definition of place is continuous, active and processual. In this the politics of place always evolves through attempts to (re)produce the physical, social, cultural or mental appearances of the place²⁰. Moreover, place politics should always be analysed in a specific context as it is by nature also scale politics, i.e. dependent on actions and practices occurring on other geographical scales. Places (and their construction) are interconnected through both horizontal and vertical relationships. In other words, the politics of place in a particular context is influenced by the very existence of other places. Moreover, it is necessary to emphasise the multiple scales on which place politics is practised: the local, the national and the international. What becomes interesting in analysing territoriality from the perspective of the politics of place, are the interaction within, and across, the scales (more discussion see, Chapter VI).

Before discussing some real life examples of the models of organising social space, I would like to summarise how the main concepts of this chapter are understood and how they relate to each other.

Categorisation

- forms territories and boundaries
- creates distinct groups and categories of things
- includes and excludes
- sets norms and rules for socio-spatial interactions
- part of the formation of place identity (us/here vs. others/ there)

Politics of place

- the social and physical production of place
- emphasises the sense of place
- identity of place

20 However, it should be noted that the *politics of place* must not be regarded as equal to “politics in a place.” “Politics in a place” does not necessarily include dimensions which would have an impact on the meanings or essence of place.

- politicised spatial practices
- practised throughout all geographical scales

Territoriality

- naturalises the narratives of socio-spatial order
- contested divided spaces and dividing space
- control as a tool for, and expression of power

Once a generally accepted socio-spatial order is created it is often deeply embedded into the practices of communities and in the everyday routines of the people and social institutions. Often people are not conscious of this embeddedness and domination and are thus continuously reproducing the current order (Sibley 1995: 76). Eventually, the spatial dimension in itself and the controlling measures become politicised tools in the organisation of society.

Politicised Spatial Practices

As a consequence of the strong categorisation of space, the spatial dimension of the everyday life of communities may become overemphasised. Processes such as housing, economic developments, city planning and socialisation, and practices such as leisure activities, shopping and people's daily movements assume a different appearance and function when they come to serve territorial goals. For example, the choice of living in a particular area might not reflect free will, but loyalty and concern for personal security through homogenised place-community relationships. Often these politicised spatial practices are (visibly) symbolised. Housing estates with high fences, surveillance cameras and "no trespassing" signs restrict spatial interactions across the fence. The use of a particular road on the way to the supermarket in order to avoid another route, or shopping only in the community store effectively strengthens the prevailing spatial order and symbolise the way of doing things. Marking the edges of one's territory with graffiti or flags visualises the formerly invisible demarcation lines of us and them and expresses the divisive nature of this mental boundary. Symbolism strengthens and simultaneously banalises the effects of the politicised ordering of things. Symbols attach powerful images of belonging and also exclusion to the places where they appear. Often, as has occurred in Northern Ireland, these symbolised practices become part of the urban way of life and their function is hardly ever questioned by the people living in the area.

Politicisation is an active process, and it often becomes self-generating. Spatial behaviour is bound by norms and rules. On the occasions when the order is contested either by community member(s) or from the outside, the process itself is labelled with a new and stricter political order. This often leads ever-tightening territorial rules. The challenges and pressures these categorical communities confront create confusion and anxiety to a much greater degree than in less controlled societies, where changing conditions are part of everyday survival strategies. In a conflict society survival often means preserving the status quo. Highly politicised and territorially organised

communities are often reluctant to accept any kind of transformation because they view changing conditions as destructive rather than supportive of their existential goals. Even though the desire to maintain the status quo exists within the local communities, this does not stop them demanding radical change from the “other” community. This clearly illustrates the “us” and “other”, and inside/outside mechanisms of territoriality.

The politicised spatial order narrows the channels of normal everyday interactions and restricts the individual’s free choices. Usually, the politicised spatial rules occur in particular practices, such as communication across the communal boundaries, the organisation of security structures within the society, and in institutional practices. These practices also effectively transmit the communal norms and rules across generations, because they are part of socialisation into the life of the community. This is one of the characteristics that make politicised spatial order so powerful and seemingly eternal. Politicisation obscures the origins of particular behaviour patterns and presents them as trans-historical²¹.

In a conflict society struggle over the control of space may take on the character of a *zero-sum game*. In such a case, the competition between communities can only end with a win-lose situation. In territorial politics this might mean, for example, that compromising, i.e. sharing the territory, cannot come into the question because it would be seen as surrendering. In contexts where the actual physical territorialities are set and boundaries have become fixed, the territorial order gives the shape and boundaries for social space, too. Spatial interaction may become fixed and restricted, and consequently the social interaction, communication and community relationships are conditioned, even determined by the physical “naturalised” order. In such case it is possible to talk about *restrictive territoriality*. Finally, as most of the space comes to be claimed by someone, the amount of unclaimed public space diminishes, which further restricts the choices people have in their everyday life.

Restrictive territoriality stresses loyalty and the formation of alliances and forces people into categories. These communal measures reinforce the control system and hope to alleviate threats posed by people or communities different from one’s background. Simultaneously, individuals have created extremely sensitive strategies for survival in this categorised reality, such as the skills of reading space. Political and cultural symbols, the appearance of people and buildings, street names or the atmosphere of a place can reveal on what kind of turf a person is standing and if this

21 The degree and the target of politicisation vary considerably between local communities, as the reasons for politicisation differ, but they also vary within a particular community across time and the prevailing societal situation. De-politicisation does occur at times, but it is a slower process than politicisation, and it often creates resistance, while the loosening order on spatial and communal is perceived to create too much unregulated space. The local scale spatial interactions often requires the politicisation of socialisation processes (cf. Falah & Newman 1995: 691). Socialisation constantly reconstructs the community and the principles for belonging to it and the suitable behaviour of its members. Politicisation makes spatial processes more goal-oriented and aggressive than previously. The realms of social politicisation are found in neighbourhood, family, school and other formal and informal institutional settings (ibid: 691).

is a proper place to be. These *spatial reading skills* are learnt through socialisation into the membership of a community. They are also intimately connected with mental maps, in which some places are familiar and safe, but the fringes are obscure and turn blank (see Wood 1992; also Kuusisto 2000). These blank spots on the mental maps are the social sphere of others, their space. The mental maps and spatial reading practices facilitate everyday life in contexts where physical and social space is constantly contested. However, they simultaneously reinforce the prevailing politicised spatial structures.

The discussion of territoriality in this chapter, beginning with the definition of the key concepts and finishing with more concrete examples, was necessary in three important regards. First, territoriality is too often viewed as a fixed state-level activity. This view has been challenged in many parts of the above discussion, where the focus has been local forms of territoriality. Second, it needs to be understood that not all societies engage in place politics in this way. Even though territorial organisation is fundamental to the functioning of modern social communities, it is not the only means to construct a social order, nor are all spatial practices conflict-inclined. Neither do all socio-spatial contestations materialise in the form of action. Third, territoriality as an overarching cultural process can be more or less rigid and restrictive. The rigid occurrence are particularly rare and most often appear in societies with some form of conflict whether economic, religious, political or ethnic. What makes these contexts especially interesting is that territoriality as a human creation and as a social construct has become a fundamental part of the conflict instead of offering solutions. In many conflict societies, including Northern Ireland, territoriality has become an obstacle to social progress.

Territoriality as Discourse

Territoriality as a discourse refers to ways of *signifying* and *legitimising territorial action*. It also naturalises the divided reality. Discourse organises strategies and reflects the cultural contextuality of territoriality. In addition, discourses connect the use of language and how people and communities express and reproduce territoriality in their speech. As a form of societal story, territoriality can be read and analysed like any other form of narrated reality. In this way different phases of the process, various plots and scenes can be found. They combine history with the present and the future. Understanding territoriality requires seeing it as part of the rest of the picture; it can be read from social processes, physical space, politics, institutional structures, and from individual and collective experiences. As with any other story, the interpretations of territoriality differ according to the story-teller and the interpreter. The varied and often contradictory versions of the same phenomenon do not cancel each other out. Instead, they facilitate an analysis of the deeper meanings of the phenomena.

As I argued above, the degree to which people's and communities' spatial behaviour is territorialised varies significantly. Discursive reading of territorial practices is not restricted to any particular kind of social context. In a more pluralistic and less regulated society at least the visible forms of spatial control are harder to find, whereas in a

strictly controlled society the symbols often reveal or imply underlying processes. However, in both cases some forms of territorial control can be found. The easiest way to trace the control discourses is to focus on the local scale practices where territorial order is communicated. These include restrictions and co-operation across community boundaries, forms of governing, education system, social institutions, marriage, church, religious ceremonies, all kinds of communal festivities and everyday activities.

Analysis of territorial communication creates an understanding of the content of the *hegemonic* and *counter-hegemonic discourses*. Power relations are essential in the reconstruction of territorial discourses. These define who controls whom, how and where. Hegemonic power constructs physical or social spaces of domination. Obviously, the hegemonic discourse is the one prevailing in the society and has the widest support among the people. In Northern Ireland *territorially divided* and *segregated* everyday life has become the dominant socio-spatial discourse. However, it needs to be remembered that the goals and desires aimed at by a particular territorial discourse need not to be, and actually rarely are, the same across the local community boundaries. This means that even the hegemonic discourse is realised through many practices. The picture gets even more complicated when the counter-hegemonic discourses, aiming to challenge the way-of-things, appear. It is possible to find some general features in the counter-hegemonic discourse. Through active differentiation some people hope to challenge the restrictive socio-spatial system. In Northern Ireland, for example, challenging the segregated way of life is evolving into a counter discourse²². This means that *co-operation* and *breaching communal boundaries* is gaining a permanent foothold among some group of people.

Territoriality as discourse underlines the processual and contextual nature of spatial organisation and collective identity construction. Hegemonic territorial discourse is often highly visual in society, and moreover it is presented as the overarching socio-spatial practice, but actually often fails to achieve this. Traces of the formation of counter-hegemonic discourse(s) can be pinpointed in many contexts. However, often challenging narratives are consciously left out of formal community rhetoric, especially if there already are two competing realities, in order to hold onto the myth of homogeneous community structures. This is one of the ways through which the naturalisation of the dominant territorial discourse is upheld.

According to the constructivist view, telling stories and listening to, and interpreting them reconstructs reality. This means that territorial discourses inevitably are in a permanent state of flux. Therefore, the possibility of changing and challenging the discourse lies also in the discourse itself. Treating territoriality as a discourse provides many insights into the process itself: the history of the process, the role of agency, the politics of place, and identification are found in the various social narratives and stories of different kinds. In the following I will focus on the historical narratives of Northern Ireland, wherein lie the roots of the contested discourses of territoriality.

22 For the counter-hegemonic construction of identity and politics of opposition, see e.g. Bondi (1993).

IV

DIVIDED SPACES IN NORTHERN IRELAND²³

“A lot of our energy throughout our lives is devoted to ensuring that some people are included whilst some people are excluded. We declare boundaries between insiders and outsiders and we are prepared to kill each other over these declarations (Fingerpost, March 1998).”

The social and geographical dimensions of ethnic territorial segregation are experienced by most people in Northern Ireland. The declared boundaries between “us” and the “others” are usually mental but in conflict societies these mental division lines are often accompanied by physical boundary constructions. Geographical segregation is most visible in residential areas, which are sharply delineated for different communities (MacGinty 2000: 54). The numerical difference between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland has become smaller, which has meant radical changes in minority–majority relations (see Table 5). Due to demographic changes, it is not surprising that segregation in Northern Ireland has increased. Moreover, segregation is a strategy for people to cope with the conflict and sectarian violence. Especially in the late 1960s segregation was imposed in order to gain security and to show solidarity in the event of an attack. Street battles and the burning out of houses meant that many families fled to the safety of an area where they were among their own (Smyth 1996b: 40).

On average, 50 % of the total population in Northern Ireland live in areas which are 90 % or more segregated (Smyth 1996a: 30). This physical distinctiveness is the

23 Part of this chapter is based on my article: Kuusisto, A-K. (1999). Politics of Place and Resistance: the Case of Northern Ireland. *Nordia Geographical Publications*, 28 (2), 15–27. Also in CAIN: <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/issues/identity/kuusisto99.htm>

way of life. It is safer and easier to live as part of the majority of an area, rather than as part of a minority (McGinty 2000: 55). Territoriality and segregation go hand in hand. It is not possible to claim which one originally constituted the other: dividing space requires boundary construction, and this categorised reality demands the ever-increasing segregation, which, again, calls for strong and exclusive boundaries.

Table 5. Religion of the population in Northern Ireland between the 1861 and 1991 (Source: Smyth 1996a: 30).*

Year of enumeration	Total population	Percentage of Catholics	Percentage of Protestants	Percentage of others
1861	1 396 453	40.9	57.7	1.3
1871	1 359 190	39.3	58.3	2.4
1881	1 304 816	38.0	58.8	3.1
1891	1 236 056	36.3	60.1	3.4
1901	1 236 952	34.8	61.2	3.9
1911	1 250 531	34.4	61.4	4.0
1926	1 256 561	33.5	62.2	4.1
1937	1 297 745	33.5	61.8	4.5
1951	1 370 921	34.4	60.6	4.6
1961	1 425 042	34.9	58.2	5.0
1971	1 519 640	31.4	53.4	5.8
1981**	1 481 959	28.0	45.9	7.6
1991	1 577 836	38.4	42.8	7.8

* Missing percentages include people who are “not stated”.

** The Census data is not totally reliable, especially the 1981 calculation, because one of the many protests at the time called on people not to reveal their religious background and in 1981 many Catholics did not do so.

Segregation needs to be viewed also through different geographical scales. Micro-level segregation is an intense and sometimes drastic experience for people, but when focusing on a larger scale, segregation is viewed primarily as an aspect of the movement of people. The latter approach lacks the dimension of intimate experience. However, people’s experience is always part of the segregation process. When looking at the whole of Northern Ireland, the demographic changes since the 1960s have led to a higher proportion of Catholics in southern and western areas, while areas where Protestant are in the majority are found in the east of the Province. The inner cities of Belfast and L/Derry are becoming increasingly Catholic-dominated (Darby 1997: 65).

A theme map illustrates (see Figure 8) the spatial distribution of Catholics and Protestants in different parts of Northern Ireland. Five categories were created: over 75 % Catholic area, over 55 % Catholic area, mixed area (46 % to 54 % Catholics and Protestants), over 55 % Protestants and over 75 % Protestants. Regions which are over 75 % dominated by one community were earlier defined as single-identity areas. In the map, the mixed areas, i.e. those including almost equal shares of Catholics and

Protestants, are also illustrated. At this point it is necessary to underline the fact that Figures 8 to 10 show proportional shares of Catholics and Protestants in one particular area, and do not take account the category of “other religious denomination” or “not stated.” The numbers in these two latter categories are estimated to vary between 4 % and 20 %, depending on the area. Thus, for example in the city of L/Derry the proportional share of Catholics rises to 77 %, whereas the absolute percentage according to the 1991 Census is 69 %. Because these maps illustrate only the Catholic and Protestant division, it must be remember that a fraction of the whole population in Northern Ireland does not claim membership of either of these categories.

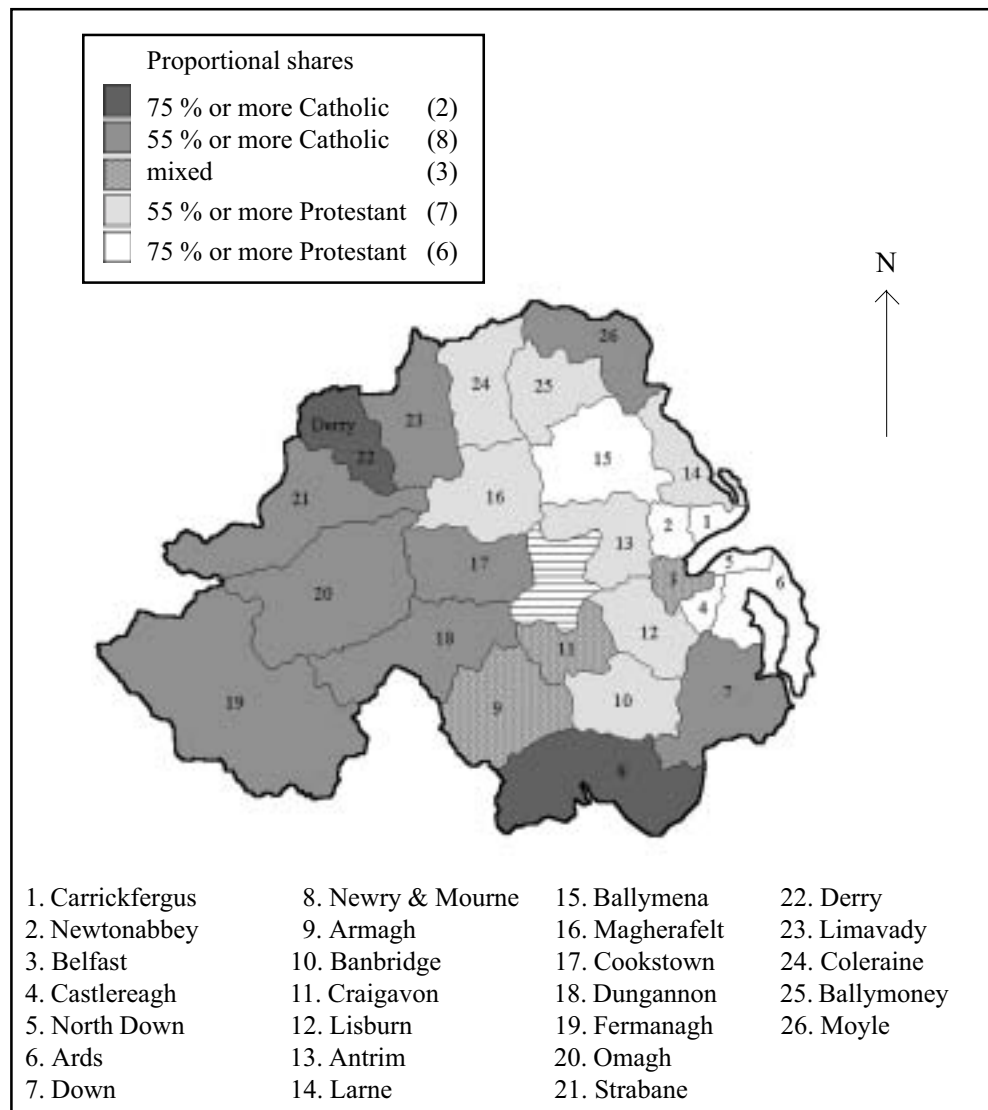


Figure 8. Proportional shares of Catholics and Protestants in different District Council areas in Northern Ireland. (Original statistics from the Northern Ireland Census 1991)

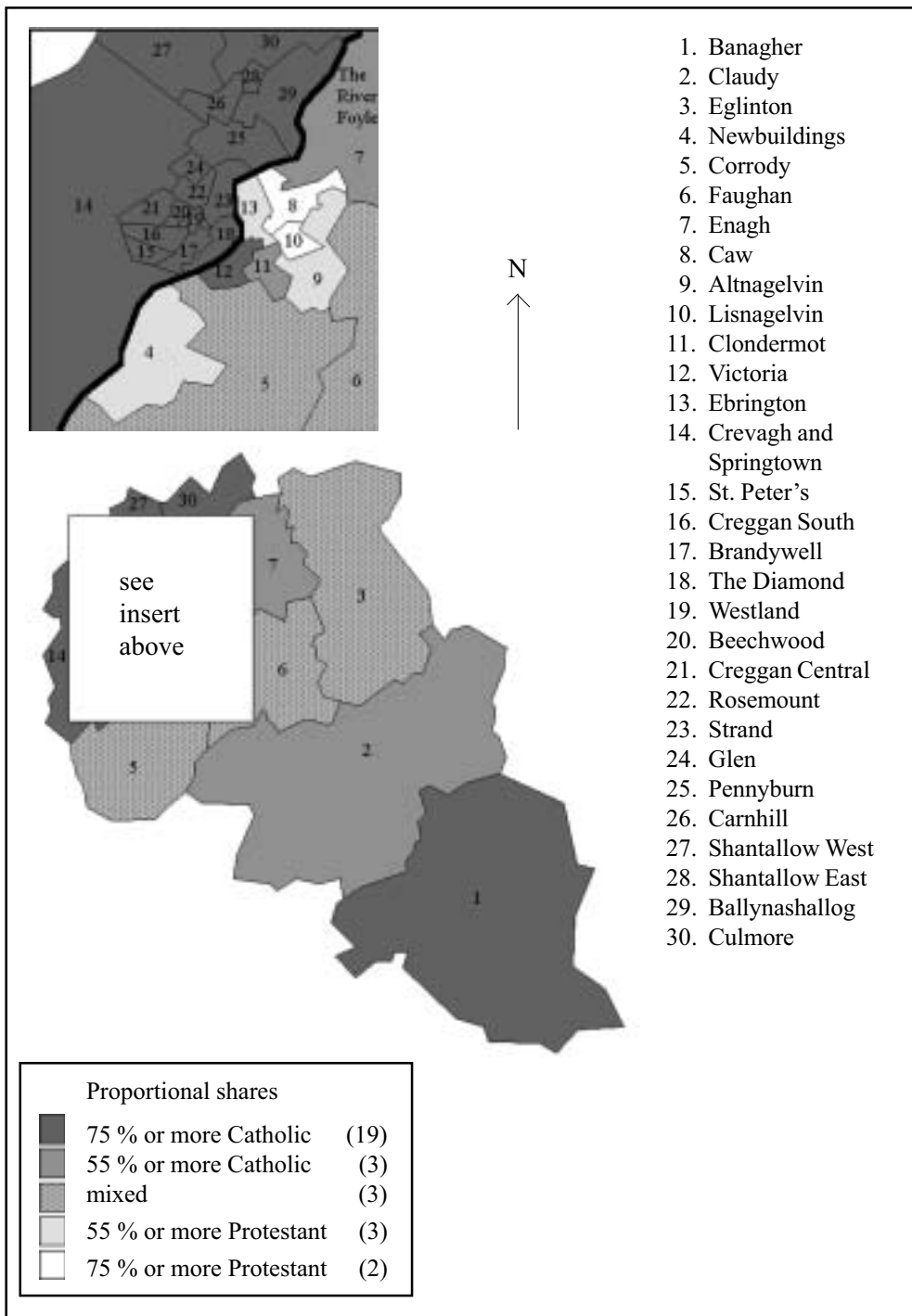
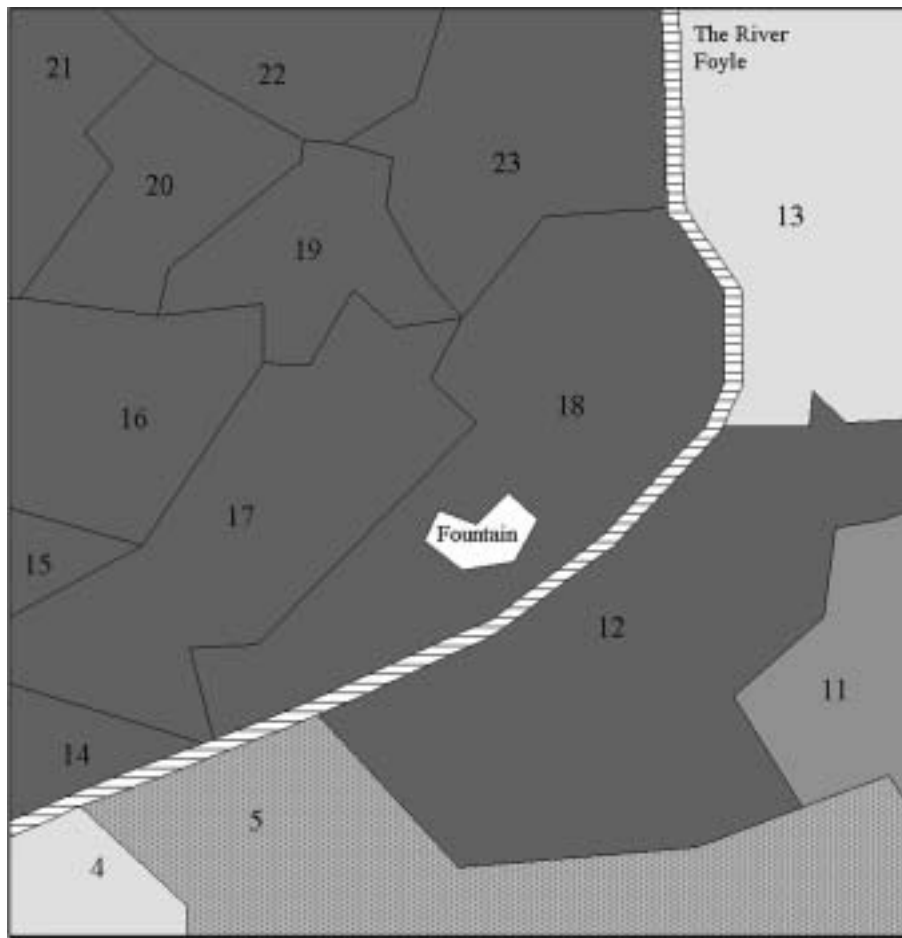


Figure 9. The proportional distribution of Catholics and Protestants in a ward-level analysis in the city of L/Derry. (Original statistics from the Northern Ireland Census 1991)

The theme map of Northern Ireland easily creates an illusion of clear-cut minority–majority positions within particular parts of the province. On the local scale the variations are wider, however. For example the city of L/Derry is predominantly Catholic, but there are also wards in the city which are more than 75 % Protestant dominated (see Figure 9). The complexity of segregation lies in the fact that the claim to a particular area can change street by street, and therefore the cartographic generalisations are often too rough to represent the reality. The distribution of Catholics and Protestants in L/Derry is shaped by the River Foyle: on the West bank (Cityside) 90.2 % are Catholics, 2.6 % are Protestants and 7.2 % are other religious denominations or non-stated. On the East bank (Waterside) 38.1 % of people are Catholics and 47.2 % are Protestants and 14.7 % categorised as others (The Northern Ireland Census 1991). The ward-level analysis clarifies the minority–majority relations in different parts of the city, but even this approach can be too general if aiming to show the real-life communal boundaries within the city. Thus, a re-mapping of the residential segregation on the basis of small area statistics would reveal even more complex spatial divisions.

Enclave areas are another particular feature of segregation in many parts of Northern Ireland. In L/Derry the two most distinct enclaves are the Protestant Fountain on the Cityside (see Figure 10) and the Catholic enclave called Cobnascale in Waterside. Both areas stand out from the neighbouring environment because of their religious outlook. The Fountain has since 1971 decreased both in terms of population and geographical territory. In 1991 there were only 467 people living in the area, a figure that is only 36.43 % of the total population in the Fountain in 1971 (Smyth 1996a: 39). According to the statistics some 64 Catholics also live in the Fountain area in 1991, but actually the figure is much lower, because the boundaries claimed by the residents do not match the statistical units used. Thus, the Fountain is more segregated than the statistics suggest. The Cobnascale, on the other hand, is surrounded by Protestant areas. The total population in Cobnascale is 1312 of which only five claimed to be Protestants in 1991 (Smyth 1996a: 40). Often such enclaves do not stand out in the ward-level statistical analysis even though in reality the divisions, hostility and mistrust between people living in enclaves and the ones living in the surrounding territories often take concrete forms in these particular local contexts. Thus, it must be remembered, as this study clearly demonstrates, that territories are not surface areas, mathematical or uncontested spaces. Territories are socially constructed and politicised units. Thus, for example the idea of repartitioning Northern Ireland, which at times has been suggested in order to solve the Troubles, is not possible in terms of boundary drawing. The spatial complexity of segregation necessarily means that the repartition would always leave some part of the population on the wrong side of the boundary, as already happened in the 1921 partition of Ireland.



Proportional shares	
75 % or more Catholic	(11)
55 % or more Catholic	(1)
mixed	(1)
55 % or more Protestant	(2)
75 % or more Protestant	(1)

- 4. Newbuildings
- 5. Corrody
- 11. Clondermot
- 12. Victoria
- 13. Ebrington
- 14. Crevagh and Springtown
- 15. St. Peter's
- 16. Creggan South
- 17. Brandywell
- 18. The Diamond
- 19. Westland
- 20. Beechwood
- 21. Creggan Central
- 22. Rosemount
- 23. Strand



Figure 10. The enclave of Fountain in relation to the surrounding wards.
(Original statistics from the Northern Ireland Census 1991)

Mental divisions, through which the signified places are communally guarded and bounded, often strengthen physical boundaries and vice versa. The so-called peacelines, which separate the Catholic and Protestant housing estates, have characterised urban regions such as Belfast and L/Derry for over three decades. New ones appear and the existing ones are reconstructed, even though peace negotiations have been going on since 1997 (see Figure 11). These walls weaken the already thin communication channels in these local interface zones and instead of providing security they often generate hostility and deepen the mistrust across the boundary. “Our places” and “their spaces” form a puzzle of borderlands and constant confrontations occur.

Divided spaces are most visible in the urban environment, but they do appear in countryside as well (see Murtagh 1999). The divisions are not as visually prominent in the rural areas as they are in the urban environment. Generally, in the cities people tend to move to the area they regard as the safest for them, while in rural areas people stay more permanently on their land (Boyle & Hadden 1994: 7). The rural trend is obvious because of the historical family ownership of farming land (see Anderson & Shuttleworth 1998: 198). The urban way of life stresses the quest for security at the expense of traditional dwelling places. Moreover, the tight urban structures create pressures for local boundaries to be only distinctive in their nature. The closeness of the local communities is not viewed positively, but it forms pressures and threats for survival, which is most often solved by applying ever stricter rules for socio-spatial behaviour and interaction. Often in the cities a sense of security is achieved only through physical segregation and wall construction.



Figure 11. The new peace fence (built in summer 2000) around the Protestant Fountain separates it from the surrounding Catholic dominated Cityside in L/Derry.

Segregation necessarily influences the patterns of social interaction. The claim of loyalty to either community can be made through extremely banal everyday practices such as patterns of voting, attitudes towards mingling and mix-marriages (only 6 % of all marriages in Northern Ireland are between Catholic and Protestant partners), the choice of newspaper, the sport one attends, and the social and geographical environment one socialises in. Moreover, the segregated school system, where Catholic children mainly go to Catholic schools and Protestant children attend state-maintained schools, reproduces the patterns of segregation from an early age on. Due to the highly segregated social life, it is exceptional that young people meet and socialise across community boundaries before they reach the age of 18 and can get into discos and bars. Even for adults the social interactions are restricted and dependent on their educational background, political ideology, the area they live in and the nature of their workplace. Cross-community mixing is not encouraged by formal institutions, such as schools and the Catholic and Protestant churches, any more than informal ones, such as the family and the local community. Thus, the venues for meeting people from the other community and learn from other cultures are rare in Northern Ireland.

The normatively divided reality disables social life as much as enables it. People who do not fit into the existing categories, or actively resist the necessity to show their loyalties, are left in between. Therefore, some people are pressured between the two main communities and are left in a difficult situation with little space for inter-communal dialogue. In terms of housing these people tend to live in mixed estates. Most of the latter, but not all, are middle-class estates or other areas where the intensity of the conflict and paramilitary activity are not experienced daily (Boyle & Hadden 1994: 35). For certain people the option of mixed housing seems to offer a real alternative, whereas often in working-class communities mixing is considered one of the greatest personal security-threats. Because of the exclusiveness of the Catholic and Protestant traditions, the people in between, whether living in a mixed family, having alternative opinions on community-relations or for some other reason, have sometimes enormous problems in defining their own (social and geographical) place in the society:

I have a lot of trouble with being connected to both sides. I find it difficult being from a mixed family. Some people I meet, I have to pretend to be wholly Catholic or Protestant in order to get out of the situation safely. [...] Some areas accept you for being mixed, but still I would like to move abroad. There I would not have to constantly justify myself. (Female, mixed background, cited in Kuusisto 1998²⁴)

Researches (sometimes) pay too much attention to just the minority versus majority setting in Northern Ireland. It is interesting how the whole issue of security appears in a different light when the feelings of the mixed community are considered. The people in between challenge the normativeness of segregation and territorial behaviour and therefore, unfortunately, are often targeted in sectarian attacks. The majority of the people, however, often silently accept the segregational politics, because of its long tradition in Northern Irish society and the lack of experience of other models of organising society.

24 This quote is taken from the field materials collected for my Master's thesis in 1998.

Segregation is neither a permanent nor a stable condition. The segregated communities might be seemingly fixed, but in fact they are constantly evolving. This does not necessarily connote anything positive. The dynamics of holding onto a position and gaining more power to control territory often erupts with local confrontations and violence. Studies have shown that the overall tendency towards segregation has increased in Northern Ireland (e.g. Smyth 1996a: 42). Segregation is a phenomenon which predates the current Troubles, which began in the late 1960s. Actually the striving towards mutual distinctiveness can be traced as far back as the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (see Darby 1997: 62; Farrell 2000). Then segregation and violence were concentrated in the poor rural areas, but during the nineteenth century urbanisation brought the conflicts over space and territory to the urban slums (McCartney 1999). The divided reality with its varied segregative practices is a *socio-historical construct* which is constantly reproduced in contemporary Northern Ireland. We cannot understand the complexities of this spatial reconstruction process without analysing its roots. Especially crucial is the politics of place, in which particular places are signified in terms of the relationships between “us” and “them,” “our places” and “their spaces.”

Historical Burden in Politics of Place

Since the 12th century the communal confrontations in Northern Ireland have often involved the question of territory and its control. The tension-laden social and political situation has led to the naturalisation and deepening of the dividing processes. The quest for legitimisation of the territory, whether national or local, is the ultimate goal in communal survival strategy. Thus, identification with a place and a collective community has also become a conflict-prone process. Spatial identification is a must rather than an option for people. In Northern Ireland belonging to one place and community excludes the possibility of belonging to, or sympathising with, the other community and their spatial attachments. Too often the explanation for the conflict-proneness of the two communities is not taken any further than the assumption of cultural difference between the Catholic and Protestant traditions. The differences are explained through ethnicity, religion or formal politics. The two communities’ *understanding of place* is rarely examined, nor have scholars related the different practices of (re)construction of place to the conflict. Therefore, I argue along with Graham (1994, 1998) and O’Dowd (1998) that the meaning of place is differently constructed among the Catholic and Protestant communities and that this should be taken into account when analysing the conflict. This may clarify why the communities act differently, even though at first sight the practices of collective identification and of the bounding of territory and its defence against threats seem to be similar across the communal boundaries. The viewpoint taken here is important in understanding the different practices of resistance and also in finding a solution to the problem of *sharing* space. A historical perspective is applied in the discussion of Northern Irish politics of place. Emphasis is laid on the differences between the two communities’ construction of meaning and the politics of place, particularly before the current armed conflict broke out in Northern Ireland.

The two communities are often locked into the categories of Irish, Catholic, Nationalist/Republican, or British, Protestant, Unionist/Loyalist. However, the roots of the communities lie rather on a multi- than mono-cultural basis. For example, the Irish cultural nation owes its heritage to the Viking, Norman, Scots and Anglo-Saxon contributions alongside those of the “ancient” Celtic race. Therefore, Kearney (1997) argues that the exclusivist equation of “Irish Irish” with Gaelic and Catholic is in fact a betrayal of the full complexity of Irish culture (Kearney 1997: 6). Another often forgotten fact is that between 1770 and 1790 many Protestants attempted to forge a collective sense of Irishness, which would have united them with the indigenous majority (Catholics). This emerged, however, only in order to achieve autonomy from England. Moreover, members of the Ulster Presbyterian middle-class were among the first to participate in the Republican project (Kearney 1997: 30–32). During the 19th century, Republicanism became connected to Irish nationalism for the most part. One result of this connection was that the idea of a republic became less of an end in itself, which meant a sliding towards a nationalist end. The original project of universalist Irish nationalism was a failure and tensions between Protestants, Catholics and Dissenters emerged (Kearney 1997: 35–36; also Pringle 1990: 160). When universalist Republicanism proved itself to be as a lost project, Ireland generated into a battlefield for two sectarian nationalisms for the next two centuries.

Sectarian violence is one of the defining features of modern Northern Irish experience. Since the 1780s clashes between Protestant and Catholic mobs have occurred frequently (Farrell 2000: 4). It is surprising that while Northern Ireland is one of the world’s most studied societies, an established research tradition has not emerged which connects the violent conflict with the spatial undercurrents (for exceptions see e.g. Boal 1974, 1978; Graham 1994, 1997, 1998; Anderson 1996, 1997; Livingstone & Keane & Boal 1998). For example Stewart (1977) has argued that the clash was an atavistic one between the two communities over the same ground. He has also described the contested territories as seismic zones, which is still used today as an illustrative metaphor (Farrell 2000: 5). These seismic zones have become established in many ritual and practical acts of claiming space and positions of power. The sectarian violence in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was tied to the issue of control in the North. Protestants wanted to maintain their hegemony over the Catholics, who for their part focused on reversing the historical dispossession of Catholic people from “their” land (on the “land war” see Bew 1979). These different visions of how to structure Northern Irish society lie at the root of the sectarian conflict in Northern Ireland (Farrell 2000: 7).

The conceptualisation of societal phenomena is always challenging and partial, mostly because of the complex nature of the social world. It becomes even harder if there is no shared understanding of what is happening in the society and why. In the analysis of spatial contestation it is useful to focus on identity and place, and the relationship between these two. Graham (1994) approaches the dilemma of communal violence in Northern Ireland by applying the concept of representative landscape²⁵.

25 A similar idea is put forward by Häkli (1999b: 124, also 2001a: 113–115), who uses the concept of “discursive landscape.” The concept encompasses the many ways in which geography is involved in the construction of national identities and territorial belonging.

Representative landscape is defined as “an encapsulation of people’s image of itself, a collage, based upon the particularity of territory and a shared past which helps define the communal identity (ibid. 258).” I argue that the analysis of representative landscape clarifies well the deep processes of territorial identification, especially its historical roots. In a representative landscape the space, identity, community and history are combined. Representative landscape also functions as a necessary part of collective identity politics, which means that many competing desires and goals are simultaneously present in the structuring process. Similar ideas on place, identity and experience are found in Duffy’s (1997) article. He argues that the *sense of place* is formed out of the ways in which people experience representations of present and past landscapes and sense of place forms an important part of territorial identity and geographical understanding (Duffy 1997: 64). While using different concepts, Graham and Duffy are referring to the same set of phenomena, that of collective place relations. In contrast to the sense of place, there is also a concept of *placelessness* (Relph 1976) that refers to a lack of unifying narrative of place.

Moreover, Graham (1994: 258) argues that representative landscape is a cultural product which “functions as a signifying system through which the social system is communicated, reproduced, experienced and explored.” As the focus of this research is on the multiple territorial discourses appearing in Northern Ireland, it is useful to look at the way in which representative landscapes function in territorial ordering. Hence, the representative landscape is here seen as a parallel to the concept of politics of place, with the distinction that through the latter the actual connections between identities and place are constructed and the image-building is accomplished. The former is merely a product of this creative process.

The burden of place politics and collective spatial identification is apparent in the formation of representative landscapes in Northern Ireland. The construction of myths is based on the assumption of homogeneity and solidarity within a particular community (Graham 1994: 259). Representative landscape emphasises the meta-narrative, which people can identify with. The Protestant representations do not form a unifying nor agreed or coherent narrative and therefore the process of collective identification is characterised by complexity and feelings of uncertainty. In contrast, the Catholic tradition presents a texture which connects history, community and place. These differences between the two communities can be found in many everyday situations, partly because the historical meta-narratives have created particular modes of behaviour, which still surface in intra- and inter-communal relations.

The Protestant Community: Weak Representative Landscape

Irishness is characterised by Gaelism, Catholicism and strong cultural nationalism. This definition effectively excludes the Protestant community. In reaction to this the Unionist collective identity is based on opposition to Irish nationalism (Graham 1994; Connolly 1996). Protestants define themselves first and foremost as *not* being Irish or Catholics and only secondarily as being British and Protestants. It can be argued that Protestants in Northern Ireland tend to be sure of what they are not, but are less confident

about what they are (Graham 1994: 261). Thus, after the 1921 Ireland became divided less by the actual border between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland than by the juxtaposition of an increasingly confident Irish identity alongside a confused and heavily qualified sense of Britishness (Graham 1997: 8).

On some occasions Northern Irish Protestants feel more British than the British themselves, but more importantly this sense of unity is extremely conditional. For example, in 1985 the Anglo-Irish Agreement, which acknowledged and formalised the Irish influence in Northern Ireland, was perceived as a betrayal by the Protestant community. They felt that Britain had made a concession towards a united Ireland and had totally ignored their Protestant fellow-citizens in the consultation process (Bardon 1997: 757). The Anglo-Irish Agreement led to wide spread demonstrations and to the Unionists' campaign of non-cooperation in national politics. Generally speaking, Northern Irish Protestants feel British as far as this safeguards their rights as citizens of United Kingdom and maintains their fixed status in the Province of Ulster. Thus any change in these preconditions will rapidly promote feelings of inferiority and defensiveness. This is the so-called siege mentality, which the Protestant community has been accused of (see Figure 12). Identification with the national territory among the Protestants is conditional and similar confusion on the local level is often experienced.



Figure 12. Graffiti in a Protestant housing estate in L/Derry in 1999.

The Protestant community has never achieved a confident *text of place* provided by the representative landscape (Graham 1994: 266; Duffy 1997: 77; O'Dowd 1998: 244). This implies a weakness of the collective narrative. There has not been a unifying *strong* representative landscape, nor cultural features on which Protestant identity construction could have been firmly laid. The significance, for example, of parades as

the core of the Protestant culture is acknowledged. However, the message of the parades is often connected to the negative *siege mentality*. Therefore, they do not provide a similar confidence to the cultural traditions of the Protestant community as is the case with the Catholic community. O'Dowd (1998: 244) argues that Protestant community has no *linking narrative*, i.e. *no text of place*, which would connect the major events in the Protestant history reading, such as the Siege of Derry (1688–89), the Battle of Boyne (1690), and the crucial moment for many Ulster soldiers in the First World War in the Battle of the Somme (1916). These events are publicly commemorated every year, but they do not form a unifying cultural texture in which a positive sense of community could be celebrated.

An interesting feature of the Protestant history reading is the very nature of the events which are regarded as being crucial. These events mostly refer to negative or distressing periods in history. Most of them emphasise the superiority of Protestants over the Catholics and refer, for example, to military victories, such as the Siege and the Battle of Boyne. In fact these single mystified events often tell more about the mental resilience and the situation of the Catholic community than they tell about the Protestant community. In this regard the Protestant identity is mainly constructed in comparison to Catholic tradition, rather than from its own cultural features and myths. Pringle (1998), on the other hand, criticises Graham's theorisation, by arguing that Protestants do have a historical myth: "one that depicts them as having had to defend themselves against Irish nationalist/Catholic aggression." Pringle (1998) aptly points that the latter is a powerful myth, but as any other historical myth, it is based on a distortion of historical events. However, also Pringle admits that the Protestant myth is discontinuous and does not connect to a strong sense of place (Pringle 1998: 232).

Protestant identity in Northern Ireland is thoroughly political: it is based on a conditional sense of Britishness (Ferguson 1990; Duffy 1997: 77). Before the partition of the island of Ireland in the 1920s Protestants avoided engaging in the contested cultural definition of the Catholic community by politically defining the area (especially the northern parts of the island). Moreover, after the Second World War the very sense of Britishness was in transition because the previously celebrated imperial identity was melting down. Robbins (1990: 12) rightly points out that "Britain had reached a point when the hopes and myths which had sustained and underpinned national existence – the imperial destiny – no longer had validity." This transformation meant that the already porous Protestant identity construction and place identification again tended to prioritise the question of security (e.g. Ferguson 1990). To this end the Protestant community sought to follow the politics practised in mainland Britain. The Protestants also had to redefine their communal identity to match their changing political position (Ferguson 1990: 44). They hoped this would support and strengthen the Protestant voice. The conditionally British identity and the distinction from "Irish things" still form the basis for the Northern Irish Protestant identity. In the light of current knowledge it can be claimed that insecurity is extensively felt among the Northern Irish Protestants because of the strained relationship, sometimes even oppositional stance, between British interests and the local understandings.

In terms of the sense of place, for some Protestants Northern Ireland is still more a target for conquest than a territorial entity loaded with socio-historical features of

nativity and a sense of motherland. In fact the term “native” in the Irish context refers most often to the Catholic population, who strongly proclaim their Gaelic origin. The Protestants (including Presbyterians and Methodists) are viewed as the “settlers” because their ancestors arrived in Ireland from Scotland and England. The labels of “settler” and “native” are still firmly rooted in Northern Irish society. Even though the ancestors of the Protestant descent came to Ireland over 400 years ago, collective identification and place relations still are constructed on the basis of the settler narrative. The settler identity emphasises the legitimacy of the conquest of the land and the hegemonic position²⁶ of the group over the Catholic minority. Protestant community has in some sense maintained a kind of colonial mentality, in which first by conquering the land, then by subordinating the native people, and finally by defining themselves as superior, societal control and a position of power could be achieved. Many Protestants resisted difference, i.e. the Catholic community, who could threaten their position as power holders. According to Ferguson (1990: 42) the Protestants have held on tenaciously to their titles and adapted their politics to defend their claims, but not until recently have they spent any serious thought on who and what they themselves really are.

Protestants do have strong bonds to their local territories and to the contemporary territory of Northern Ireland, but for them the essence of place appears in a very different guise when compared to that of the Catholic community. In addition, the representations of place among the Protestant community are often contradictory. The hegemonic position of the Unionists in the early 20th century led to a political definition of Northern Ireland, which almost totally neglected the cultural dimension, and this political image the Catholics rarely identified with. The failure of the political definition was that it did not create a social system which could be effectively communicated and reproduced. Unionists failed to acknowledge that the use of social power requires the definition, exploitation and legitimisation of social space (Graham 1998: 143). This failure was drastic for two reasons: first the cultural identification of the Protestant people living in the island of Ireland and having a strong political allegiance to the British state, has never reached the level of confidence required for positive community development. Second, the political definition excluded the Catholic community, who instead developed their own unifying socio-spatial meta-narrative, mainly based on Gaelic culture, Catholicism and the all-Irish context. Thus, in Northern Ireland two alternative ways of identifying with place exist but rarely meet.

Confusion in collective place relations and spatial strategies are reflected in the localities where the most extreme versions of spatial politics are applied. This in itself exposes the conflict between the communities. Protestant place identity can be characterised as rootless and confused, accompanied by the negative siege mentality. This historical heritage is nevertheless applied effectively to modern day community formation.

26 Not all Protestants can be included under the category of “hegemonic” in earlier times. There were some dissenters among the Protestant community, who had for example anti-state or anti-British opinions and therefore were often seen as enemies by the majority of the Protestant community.

The Culturally Strong Catholic Community

The Catholic community has been able to incorporate its historical and cultural traditions into an iconography of a cultural landscape. They have created a coherent text of place in which spatiality, history and community smoothly come together. One of the most central myths in the construction of the Catholic sense of place was the image of Ireland's West. The West was seen as rural, wild and primitive. Its mountain landscapes became a part of nationalist iconography in the Free State. The West was the heart of the Irish identity, located in a landscape different from the industrialised and modernised landscapes of Britain (see Duffy 1997: 66–69). This myth of the West was in contradiction with the reality, however. The West was one of the Ireland's poorest areas and people were emigrating (mostly to Britain and the USA). This, however, did not alter the vision of the romanticised West. The West was mystified by artists and writers. The idea of West contained the nation's fundamental features: a national landscape, a common heritage, the native Irish people, the Gaelic language, in short an Irish place.

These stereotypical images were made part of the Catholic politics of place: confident and celebrated. The mystified Celtic Ireland can still be seen in the Catholic localities, for example in the form of Gaelic street signs placed alongside the English-language ones (see Figure 13)²⁷. The dominant view among the Irish Catholic community and popular culture emphasised the historic deprivation of the Irish Catholic Church and its adherents. Furthermore, the sense of dispossession was represented in the eighteenth century by the relatively loss of landholding rights. The Catholic narrative derived much of its legitimacy from a particular view of the Irish past that focused on the status and power lost due to the Protestants' conquest of Ireland over the previous two centuries (Farrell 2000: 15).

In general, the Catholic community's understanding of place is not as exclusive as the Protestant community's. In the South of Ireland (after the partition in 1921) the Protestants (who were left on that side of the border) either became part of the Irish civic nation, or at least did not form a separate "nation within a nation." The official policy of the new Irish state opposed a manipulated geography of homogeneity. The strong local sense of place prevailed but it was closely related with more the diverse class, gender and ethnic trajectories of identity. These have created today's secularised, materialistic and urbanised society in the Republic of Ireland (Graham 1997: 12). The Protestant minority in the south was included in the Irish place and society. In the North, neither the state nor the civil society (including both Catholics and Protestants) achieved a unifying narrative of place. In addition, the community conflict deepened further the atmosphere of apprehension. Therefore, in the North, the strong attachment to place was defined territorially and articulated in sectarian terms. Northern Irish society became characterised by cultural incoherence, political impotence and sectarian conflict (Brown 1991: 82; Graham 1997: 12).

27 For more discussion on the symbolic use of Irish language see e.g. O'Reilly (1998).



Figure 13. Gaelic street sign in the city of L/Derry.

The differences in the sense of place have also influenced the forms of resistance. Following the partition of Ireland, the Catholic community in Northern Ireland focused on securing itself and its place in the new context. This meant the purification of Catholic social space, involving the rejection of difference and the securing of boundaries to maintain homogeneity (e.g. Sibley 1988: 409). After a while a strong sense of communality emerged among the Northern Catholics and the focus was moved to national liberation and unification with the rest of Ireland. The resistance of the Catholic community was passive at first; people did not take part in the forming of institutions or society in general. Sometimes the choice was voluntary, but until the 1970s the discrimination against the Catholics also excluded them from most decision-making processes within society. From the late 1930s, more violent forms of resistance were introduced, such as the IRA's campaign in mainland Britain, the IRA Border Campaign in the 1950s, the "no-go" areas in the late 1960s and provocative civil unrest in many localities during the last 30 years time.

The Catholics resisted discrimination, subordination and Northern Ireland's connection to Britain. They wanted to have equal rights with the Protestant majority and to have their place within the society acknowledged. The forms of Protestant resistance and place identity are based on a more political understanding of place and territory, whereas Catholic resistance is based on an emotionally charged sense of place. In both communities local territories are an essential part of the communal identity project, but the *legitimation of the territorial ownership* derives from different sources; for the one it is based on a political claim to place and for the other on the historical narratives of nativeness. Moreover, in the Northern Irish case the conflict over territory has become one of the main disputes both locally and nationally. Hence, the basic differences in spatial orientation between the local communities are embedded in all scales of place politics in Northern Ireland. The local differences and frontlines are found in the national spatial politics and in the attitudes in the international realm of action.

The Catholic and Protestant representative landscapes embody the public memory and places with several historical layers, and therefore play an important role in identity construction. They are the source of cultural identification, but also the target to identify with. Place–community relations reflect the territorial order, cultural distinctiveness and unity, tensions in community-relations and transformations in spatial politics. Even though the ways to legitimate the sense of place are different between the Catholic and Protestant communities, it all comes down to the question of the politics of place: “our place” and “their space.” Understanding the realities existing in Northern Ireland requires the acceptance of competing and often contradictory senses of place. Thus, attention needs to be paid both to internal and inter-communal socio-spatial relations.

Divide and Conquer – the Tradition of Segregation in Northern Ireland

Segregation as a social and physical phenomenon has a longer history in Northern Ireland than is often acknowledged. The physical segregation has reached its highest level during the last thirty years or so of the modern conflict. People in Northern Ireland are born into communities that are often structurally and residentially divided. The roots of this division reach as far back as the Plantation (Darby 1997: 66). The Plantation introduced to Ulster a community of strangers who spoke a different language (most of the locals then spoke Gaelic), practiced a different form of Christianity, and adhered to a distinct culture and way of life. The deep distrust between the Irish and the settlers lies at the root of contemporary tensions. Moreover, Darby (1997: 21) argues that within 50 years after the Plantation many of the contemporary patterns of conflict could be found: “the same territory was occupied by two hostile groups, one believing the land had been usurped and the other fearing that its tenure was constantly under threat of rebellion; the two communities identified their differences in religious and cultural as well as territorial terms; sometimes they lived in separate quarters and, even if they did not, mutual suspicion reinforced their distinctiveness.” These facts played crucial role in establishing the sectarian geography and demography which

have become rooted in Northern Ireland. The following centuries witnessed much conflict and tension, and rebellious activities divided these communities even furthermore.

The sectarian violence, which on many occasions has propagated the segregated living, has been present in some form or another since the 1780s. In the Armagh troubles the most intense phase was between 1795 and 1796, when the Protestant organisation called the Peep O'Day Boys and the Catholic Defenders engaged in open warfare. Altogether four to five thousand Catholics left Mid-Ulster during the two-year period (Farrell 2000: 10–12). The Armagh troubles were the first documented sectarian confrontations to result in large-scale movements of people. The political and economic situation changed radically in the late 18th century due to the advent of industrialisation. For example, the growth of the linen industry meant more social mobility and the breakdown of the old dominant rural economy. The religious and economic hegemonies changed in the North of Ireland (Farrell 2000: 30), which in fact created more instability and increased tension between the two communities. In the 19th century growing urbanisation meant that clashes between Catholic and Protestant crowds occurred frequently in both rural and urban settings.

The first signs of serious urban conflict were seen in Belfast during the early 1830s. Between 1800 and 1830 the Catholic population in the city had risen from ten to thirty percent, which of course created a new situation in the urban demography. The first serious communal rioting in Belfast occurred on the 12th of July 1835 and ended with one woman killed (Darby 1997: 23). However, some organised fighting had taken place two decades previously in 1813, when a sectarian clash between Orange (Protestants) and Green (Catholics) took place in Belfast. Two people were killed in this incident. Many more riots took place during the 19th century. The atmosphere was tense especially around the 12th of July commemorations. As a result of these hostilities both Protestants and Catholics created sectarian organisations, the Loyal Orange Order and Catholic Ribbon societies. These societies enhanced the organised and structured nature of sectarian violence. Most notably, the sectarian riots in pre-famine Ulster occurred usually as a result of provocations either by the Orange Order or its Catholic counterparts (Farrell 2000: 32–33). Another effect of the rioting and the increasing distrust was that the expanding population in the Belfast area was separated into sectarian areas. This meant that the communal differences between the Protestants and Catholics increased further (Darby 1997: 24) and the spatial polarisation of everyday practices began to appear. A resistance movement was also created in mainland Britain where many Irish migrants lived. Known as the Fenians, they had by the 1860s developed an interest in the revolutionary Irish Republican movement. Demonstrations, violence and explosives were used in the streets of London and Manchester (Hartigan & O'Day & Quinault 1986; Poole 1997).

Urban segregation in the 19th century was concentrated in two areas in Northern Ireland: the cities of Belfast and L/Derry. In Belfast the competition over jobs and houses aggravated the already tense atmosphere. At an early stage of the city's growth, two distinctive housing developments were formed west of the city centre. West Belfast, especially the Shankill district, was a mainly Protestant working-class housing estate, whereas the Falls Road and the district south of it was Catholic-dominated. In

1886 the Belfast Riot Commissioner described the divided reality and expressed concern over some localities, which at the time had been the scenes of some of the worst riots (Commissioners of Inquiry 1887 in Boal 1978: 68). Unfortunately, a similar description of sectarian territoriality is valid in contemporary Belfast, where the peace wall (built in September 1969) separates these two localities (Boal 1978: 67–77). The wall was supposed to be a temporary structure for easing security operations, but it still exists today in the very same location. Due to the extensive growth of the city of Belfast the population has moved also to other areas surrounding the city centre, but the divisive patterns have remained. The contemporary sectarian geography in Belfast can be described roughly with a line drawn between West and East Belfast. The former is mainly a Catholic and the latter predominantly a Protestant area.

In L/Derry the dynamics of the local sectarian demography has gradually changed the situation from one extreme to another. The plantation city of Londonderry was colonised by British Protestants in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but in the nineteenth century Irish Catholics began to arrive. In the beginning, the Protestant population was concentrated within the city walls and in fact living outside the wall was viewed as not respectable. The influx of Catholics to the fringes of the city and the Protestant siege mentality, fearing a take-over by the Catholics, changed the residential patterns and more Protestant people deliberately moved out of the walled city to the areas facing the walls, such as the Fountain or even further away to Waterside. The first move (in 1815) towards new residential tactics was the decision to build a new military barracks in Ebrington, which was in Waterside. At the time many Protestant leaders opposed this plan because the barracks were considered to be on the wrong side of the river (Lacy 1990: 167).

In the early 19th century middle-class people tended to move out of the city to Waterside and to the new suburbs founded in the James Street and Queens Street areas to the north of the walled city. The working-class areas also began to take shape as did the concentration of the people according to the denominational division. Catholics resided in the Bogside and the Protestant working-class in the Fountain area (Lacy 1990: 167). Both have retained their sectarian character to the present day, with the distinction that the Fountain has decreased both in population and geographical area, whereas the Bogside has grown massively and other Catholic housing estates were built on Cityside. The main dividing line in the sectarian demography was formed along the River Foyle, which from being a natural boundary has been transformed into a socio-spatial construct as well. The growth of the Catholic community over the centuries has changed the small Protestant colonial town into one of the most densely populated Catholic districts in Northern Ireland. This development, which began in the late 17th century, and the insecurity created by the modern-day conflict have formed the contemporary urban cityscape with multiple segregated areas and enclaves in L/Derry²⁸.

Local segregation has become an escape practice, a must, and sometimes a necessity for survival in Northern Ireland. In both cities the segregation patterns started to form

28 Recent developments as well as the local experience of the sectarian geography in L/Derry are further discussed in Chapter Five.

a long time ago and have remained largely fixed conceptions till today. On a micro-level the territories have certainly evolved due to the constant confrontations on their boundaries and the large-scale movements of people. The dynamics and rules of urban ethnic segregation are still comprised of the spatial and social categorisation of “others” and “us”, attaining security and comfort in everyday life, and strengthening the communal identity in the situation where it is often contested.

The hegemonic territorial discourse reinforcing segregated living and sectarian societal divisions draws its constituents and legitimacy from the long and thorough construction process of communal identity stretching over the past four centuries. It gained a further boost from the national territorial discourses, i.e. Irish and British nationalism, in the late 19th century. Thus, parallel with the local developments there is a need to discuss the national situation, which began to develop dramatically in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The changing national conditions were simultaneously reflected in the local social and spatial processes and behaviour. In 1801, the Act of Union, aiming to integrate Ireland with England, Scotland and Wales came into force. The 19th century witnessed a growing separation between Ulster and the rest of Ireland. The effects of the industrial revolution in Ireland were mainly confined to the northern parts of the island, leading to the closer industrial and commercial dependence of the northern areas on Britain. The greater prosperity of the North, its economic structure, even its physical appearance all increased its alienation from the rest of Ireland (Darby 1997). The Home Rule campaign in the 1880s was very important for the future development of the (economically) divided island. In the Home Rule campaign some aspects of the rigid political division between Nationalists and Unionists surfaced for the first time. In general, the first part of the 20th century was a time of turbulence in Ireland: the rise of nationalistic aspirations, the civil war and finally the partition of the island (Lee 1989). The struggle for national independence was seen to come to an end with the passing of the Government of Ireland Act (1920). This created a separate Northern Irish Parliament and Government to rule the six counties in the North and led to the establishment of the new Irish Free State in the south in late 1921 (Bardon 1992: 467). Consequently, an actual border appeared between the North and South of Ireland. The Anglo-Irish Treaty (1921) gave dominion status to the 26 counties of southern Ireland, while six of the nine counties of Ulster remained part of the United Kingdom. One island was now divided into two separate territories. The boundary between south and north divided the Catholic Irish community, but a number of Protestants found themselves living in the new Irish Free State, which was predominantly Catholic. Irish nationalists in the South had, indeed, achieved one of their goals, a largely independent Ireland, this was not enough. Moreover, the idea of the Irish nation did not cohere with the national territory achieved through the treaty (on the resistance see e.g. Bardon 1997: 482–509; Bew et al. 1996: 21–50).

A crucial point should be made in relation to the boundary drawing between the South and North of Ireland. Before the partition the Unionist community had feared becoming a minority in a Catholic state if it had covered the whole island. This would have meant to the Protestant community, particularly the Unionist wing, the loss of their privileged status, as they had majority rule in many local administrative districts in the North. They also formed a majority of the economic elite because several

industrial companies in Northern Ireland were owned by the Protestants. Thus, the division of the island was an extremely sensitive political question, but also important in terms of security for the Unionist community. In fact it has been claimed that the creation of a permanent border between the North and South was Britain's answer to Unionist demands (Doumitt 1985: 33). Where the border was laid clearly illustrated the national territorial desires of the Unionists.

The synonym for Northern Ireland often is Ulster. The original Irish province of Ulster consisted of nine counties, whereas contemporary Northern Ireland is formed of six counties. Before partition, the nine county Ulster had about 900 000 Protestants, most of whom supported the British connection, and about 700 000 Catholics, who wanted to end it (Darby 1997: 27). The two territorial units came to consist of 26 counties in the South and six (out of nine original) Ulster counties in the North. Partly, this division was made because of the reluctance of the South to give three of the Ulster counties away. Furthermore, it can only be speculated if the Unionists or the United Kingdom even really wanted the nine-county Ulster. This would have weakened their majority power. In the new Northern Ireland, the religious breakdown was 820 000 Protestants and 430 000 Catholics (Darby 1997: 27), creating a clear majority of Protestants.

The Government of Ireland Act had created two new jurisdictions with one parliament in the South and the other in the North. The Northern Irish government was given the general power to make laws for peace, order and good government, but the actual power remained in the hands of Westminster, i.e. the British government, in issues, such as the armed forces, the Crown, imperial and foreign affairs. The fiscal powers of Northern Parliament were also restricted and it was not allowed to make any laws or take administrative actions on issues other than those relating to religious equality (Hennessey 1997: 9). The early years of the new Province of Northern Ireland were difficult. The Catholic community refused to accept the political union (the UK) in which they were living. Northern Ireland was born amidst bloodshed and communal disorder. When new institutional structures were established, the minority Nationalist community refused to co-operate and participate in the committees and, in general, did not take part in any activity that might lend support to British authority (Darby 1983: 21). Local resistance developed in many forms: self-imposed exclusion, anti-social behaviour and violence. The legitimacy of the partition was constantly questioned and, for example, in 1949 the IRA declared war on the administration in Northern Ireland (Kennedy-Pipe 1997: 29). Partly this was a consequence of the birth of the Republic of Ireland in the same year and its resignation from the British Commonwealth (the southern Irish state was first called the Irish Free State and from 1937 to 1949 Éire).

The decades after partition witnessed several turbulent periods, for example in the 1950s when the IRA was waging its border campaign. By the early 1960s the situation had begun to calm down again (Bell 1978, 1979). It was even thought that the Catholic population had finally adjusted to the system. This soon proved to be just a moment of peace before the societal situation began to slide down to the worst-ever conflict experienced in Northern Irish history.

The national developments since the late 19th century meant that also the local confrontation lines hardened into more fixed positions. The geographically restricted way of life had become dominant. However, especially during the more peaceful periods social interaction was frequent. According to older people in the L/Derry area, young people went out to dances together, and most often these events were organised across the national border in the Irish Republic side. People would have dated across the communal division and in general mingling was not socially disapproved of at the time, whereas later on it did become so. Thus, it is often argued that prior to the modern-day conflict the *activity segregation*²⁹ (Boal 1978: 59) was not as high as it is currently in Northern Ireland, even though the patterns of social segregation were to be found and at tense times they rose to the surface.

Divisions Deepen

The modern armed conflict in Northern Ireland began in 1968. Many Catholics were tired of being discriminated against by the Protestant majority. Discrimination was most visible in such areas as employment markets, education, housing and access to political power in society (Ruanne & Todd 1996: 120). Between 1968 and 1969, there was a series of civil rights demonstrations (Doumitt 1985: 34). Usually, the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association has been connected to Republicans and Nationalists but in fact some Unionist supporters were involved as well. The Catholics demanded improvements to their living conditions. At first the dissatisfaction with Prime Minister O'Neill's reforms grew slowly in the Catholic community. Later the Catholics became more vocal due to only minimal improvements as well as massive unemployment, especially within the Catholic areas, resulting from economic restructuring and other reforms in the early 1960s (Kennedy-Pipe 1997: 32–33, 38).

The civil rights demonstrations and unrest led to the Downing Street Declaration in 1969. The Declaration included reforms to the electoral system, local government, the police force, the Northern Ireland Government and several other areas in an attempt to end the discrimination against the Catholic minority (Doumitt 1985: 34). Nevertheless, during 1969, many marches were arranged not only by Catholics but also by Protestants. There were also several confrontations during the year, some involving the IRA, which was then much weaker than it is currently. Despite its weakness, the IRA was seen as a great threat to peace in Northern Ireland. The crucial point in the Northern Ireland conflict came in August of 1969. August has always been a sensitive month in Northern Ireland, marked by tribal and ritualistic marches and counter-marches. At the time, the increase in violent acts committed by both sides finally led to the deployment of British troops in Northern Ireland, once again to shore up a contested regime (Kennedy-Pipe 1997: 44–48). This was not something extraordinary: it is rarely remembered that British troops have been stationed in the island for centuries, not just for the last 30 years. For example, throughout the nineteenth

29 Activity segregation means that different groups not only live in segregated areas, but they do not either interact with each other (Boal 1978: 59).

century there were 15 000–30 000 British soldiers in Ireland. However, the role of the military has changed significantly since 1969. The military's initially neutral role has changed so that it has become part of the conflict (Kennedy-Pipe 1997: 10, 169–170).

From 1969 onwards, the Province was to become increasingly divided into two communities. Importantly, this was true not only geographically, but also socially (e.g. Hughes 1994; Ruane & Todd 1996). Catholics and Protestants had their own areas, which they protected with guns and bombs if necessary. The division between majority and minority became increasingly sharp and bitter. In general Northern Ireland was moving towards a high-intensity phase of strong categorising of space, which still prevails today.

British troops were deployed in Northern Ireland because the local police forces could not suppress the violence and maintain order. After 1969, the role of the military changed. The new role was to protect the Catholic areas against Unionists (Kennedy-Pipe 1997: 49). Later its position became more difficult. The Army became a target of both communities, all the while trying to serve its task of protecting the Catholic minority.

At the beginning of the contemporary conflict in Northern Ireland the IRA was weak, but by the early 1970s, the Provisional IRA (The PIRA, the main Republican dissident paramilitary group) was constituted. The first radical governmental attempt by Britain to end the violence was internment without a trial in 1971 (Hadden 1994: 28). People who were suspected of illegal activities were arrested. The British government hoped that this would end the violence but the actual effect was rather the opposite. After the internment process Northern Ireland was racked by one bloody crisis after another (Kennedy-Pipe 1997: 52–55).

One of the most significant factors inflaming the conflict was "Bloody Sunday," occurring on 30th of January in 1972. Even today the discussion continues about what really happened during that dramatic day, when fourteen men died in a Catholic civil rights march in L/Derry (Kennedy-Pipe 1997: 60). The day has become mystified. The significance of "Bloody Sunday" can still be seen after three decades. Investigations into the events of that day have been restarted in order to resolve what happened. The new Tribunal began the hearings of eyewitnesses in 1999³⁰.

In the 1970s, a considerable amount of special legislation was implemented in Northern Ireland. The British Army wanted to end the conflict by arresting people and thereby aiming to find the supporters of paramilitaries. The Emergency Provision Act (1973) gave the Army the power to stop and question any person to establish his/her identity, and to arrest and detain for four hours any person suspected of criminal activity (Kennedy-Pipe 1997: 65).

In 1977, there was yet another change in the role of the British Army. The Army would act in co-operation with the local police. This period was called "police primacy." At the time, the goal was to reduce the military's activities and reduce the visible presence of the Army (Kennedy-Pipe 1997: 77–82). Throughout the years of conflict, the policies of the British government have varied, but during the 1970s there was no consistent strategy to respond to the crisis.

30 The inquiry and hearings are still taking place at the Guildhall in L/Derry. Lord Saville and the Commonwealth judges who comprise the inquiry are not expected to report until 2004.

From the late 1970s to the early 1980s, Westminster attempted to normalise the situation in Northern Ireland. At the same time, when the Army reduced its presence, the PIRA began a more militant and violent campaign. However, the IRA had also developed new ways of demonstrating its power: not only violence, but also political means were seen as necessary in the campaign to reunite Ireland. During this new phase, the key actor was Gerry Adams, the current leader of Sinn Féin. Up to the early 1980s the situation was not even close to normal. The alienation of the two communities increased and the Army maintained its own secret war against the PIRA, especially in the border regions (Kennedy-Pipe 1997: 84–88).

The polarisation of Northern Irish society is evident on the local and the national scale. The dialectic pattern in segregation is that after a serious incident between the communities, the level of physical and social segregation tends to increase. This is an understandable safety measure taken by individuals and local communities. Another unfortunate tendency in the increase of the segregation is that even a good while after any incident the level of segregation does not decline to the previous level. This has meant that the trend in terms of segregation is towards a more divided society rather than a pluralist one. In other words, strong categorisation evolved into territorial inertia. Here inertia refers to the cultural territorial logic dependent on the context and people that constantly reproduce it.

The escalation of the Northern Irish conflict in the early 1970s meant that the peaceful demonstrations became a thing of the past. Both the local communities and the security apparatus responded with more force to safeguard their own positions and to make end of the violence and revenge attacks. Soon it was realised that there were no easy resolutions nor any common understanding between the conflicting parties as to what this solution might be. The local communities were driven more deeply into territorial politics, which meant that the geographical segregation was supported by physical wall construction in most high-intensity conflict areas. Peace walls were put up in Belfast and some localities also (mainly the IRA in the Catholic estates) built barricades and established patrols to make security checks on people coming in and going out of the area. These “no-go” areas were mostly created at the end of the 1960s and the beginning of early 1970s in Catholic working-class estates, but the same form of local territorial politics appeared in the mid-1980s in Protestant working-class areas as well.

Spatial restrictions were applied in many forms and several settings, including even the institutional sphere. For example the Maze prison had two wings (also called H-blocks); one for Loyalist and the other for Republican inmates. Arrangements like these are of course made as safety measures, because during the high-intensity years of the conflict the prison was full of inmates sentenced for “terrorist activity.” However, sometimes even these safety measures were not enough and many political murders and revenge attacks were conducted within the prison walls.

The years from 1969 until the beginning of the 1990s were extremely violent, and over 3000 people were killed. Peace did not seem to be a viable alternative. Only after twenty years of violence did the peace process begin to take shape (Kennedy-Pipe 1997: 147) (for more on the peace developments, see chapter VI). During the years of sectarian conflict the divisions have indeed deepened, widened and numerically

increased. This has taken shape through multiple borderland constructions. The conflict over national or local territories in Northern Ireland has also always been a confrontation of identities. Uncertainty, mistrust, anxiety and insecurity make people seek support from their local community: place, community and territorial identities have become inseparable.

Safeguarding the Territorial Identity

Territorial identities in Northern Ireland can be divided, roughly at least, in a similar fashion as the whole of Northern Irish society into Catholics and Protestants and the people in between. On the local scale, the object to identify with is estate, town or county. At this level of identification it is mainly about being Catholic or Protestant. At the national level identity groups are formed on the basis of being Irish or British, Nationalist or Unionist, Republican or Loyalist. Sometimes these attributes of collective identification do not fit individuals with alternative opinions. These people, whether actively claiming themselves to be outside the fixed social categories, or put there by others, have been referred into this study as “the people in between.” The collective identification of these people does not rely on historical loyalties and legacies to anything like the same extent with the traditional identities.

Territorial identity is one form of collective social identity (for the nature of collective social identities see e.g. Jenkins 1996). In this study territorial identity is understood as people’s sense of belonging to a specific territory (also Paasi 1984: 66). This connection is conceptualised with the term *place* in distinction from awareness and distancing from the others’ territory, here conceptualised as space. The feeling of belonging can be based on: (1) people living in specific named territory; (2) people sharing a distinct culture or some other features; and/or, (3) people’s identity being based on awareness of the territory’s natural or cultural heritage (Paasi 1984: 71). All these characteristics are found in local territorial behaviour and identification in Northern Ireland: Protestant people in Waterside Londonderry, “our place”, distinguish themselves from their Catholic counterparts in Cityside Derry, “their space.” In the Northern Irish case territorial identification reveals much about individual’s cultural, political and religious preferences. Some assumptions about social and educational background can also be made. Territorial identification creates security for people, but simultaneously it has become a highly stigmatising feature as well.

As is characteristic for all social collective identities, also territorial identity must be established for others to see and recognise. People must have knowledge about other territories and other people’s territorial identities in order to see differences (Paasi 1984: 72). The characteristics on which territorial identification is based depend on the geographical scale of the territory. In a small territory, identification is more easily based on everyday interaction and communication, but already at the provincial level, identification must be something more abstract and symbolic (Paasi 1984: 72–73).

Identities expressed through territorial entities are constructed against the backdrop of an external other (Harle 1993: 10; Paasi 1996: 12). There must also be something

else other than “us” before we can collectively identify ourselves as “us”. That other is external, different from “us”. This dualism between “us” and “them” also encompasses the places of good and evil, friend and enemy (see Harle 1991: 26). The manner in which the concept of territory is understood means that social and spatial worlds are inseparably intertwined. Territorial identities exist in physical space, but this space is constantly being re-formed and renewed by social identities resulting in spatial ramifications as well as vice versa. Territorial identity defines people’s collective place in the society. It differentiates between “us” and “them” in historical, political, social, economic, cultural, religious and territorial terms. However, territorial identity is also integration among “us” in “our place”. People identify with and are spatially-socialised in historically-defined territories. Through these two processes our places (here) and their spaces (there) are founded.

Territorial systems are continually transformed in the course of history, reflecting economic, political, military and administrative desires. Territories are historical products, but not eternal units (Paasi 1996: 3). In Ireland, the physical territory (as well as political territory) at both the local and national levels has experienced profound changes. From the island of Ireland to a part of the British Empire and then to the politically divided island: the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. These changes have taken place only at the national scale. Significantly, the fluctuation at the local scale is even greater. Territorial changes have affected people’s territorial identities, territorial awareness of space, and sense of belonging to place.

Frequently, communities, territories and their boundaries are convergent and territorial identities can be constructed without conflict. Even in these situations territorial identity is, of course, built in relation to an external other who lives on the “other side” of the territorial border. However, there should be no reason for resistance or violence as long as the “other” stays on the “other side”. In real life this may not often be the case. Thus, there are still many occasions where peaceful co-existence is not possible, even though the actual communal boundaries are respected. In these cases, territorial identity is used as a source of resistance. The other is seen as hostile and the exclusion of the other and the securing of a community’s own territory becomes a solution to the problem of sharing the physical and social space. This is often the case when viewing local territorial identities in Northern Ireland. As seen in areas where the geopolitical situation is not stable, the boundaries and their locations are typically potential sources of territorial conflict (Paasi 1996: 3; Brunn 1991: 269). According to Paasi (1996: 28) boundaries not only separate groups and social communities from each other, but also mediate contacts between them. However, in the Northern Irish case, territorial boundaries have, until the beginning of the peace process, mainly separated the two communities. Certainly, boundaries have effectively communicated the social order and acted as symbols that unite those who know how to read them, but interaction, at least friendly interaction is rare. Too often, the local boundaries and territories have been reproduced through violence, intimidation, rumours and suspicion. This is the reality where two different traditions of the politics of place function. Occasionally, and particularly in pluralist environments, identity boundaries have blurred and become more permeable.

In Northern Ireland territorial identification has become strong and significant. The conflict in Northern Ireland is often described as identity-driven, as sectarian differences are accompanied by socio-political divisions. Therefore, no common (combining Catholic and Protestant communities) national identity exists (Trew 1996)³¹. In order to feel secure, people need segregated collective identification and a collective feeling of belonging. Thus, local territorial identity needs to be constantly defended and reconstructed. Cultural celebrations, communal symbols, and representative landscapes have to be safeguarded against intrusions by the others. If one of the corner stones of communal territorial identity is being attacked or even challenged whether by marching or flying the national flag (Irish or British), angry and emotional responses arise. Effective socialisation guarantees that the traditions and resistance are an inherited part of the communal identity for future generations as well. In Northern Ireland the problem of territorial identities is that they are not able to adjust to the changing conditions in the overall society. The old traditions and practices are clung onto, even though the communities are aware of the problems and tensions that may arise out of this stubbornness. In fact, many times it seems that resistance, protesting and rioting have become an intimate part of a process where the territorial identification and sense of unity among the community is the single significant goal.

Territoriality is not just an abstract concept in academic literature, but rather territorial identification has many practical implications. The sense of place or placelessness necessarily affects the forms and nature of spatial control. People are both producers of and controlled by this order. Territoriality as a spatial phenomena is an experienced socio-historical construct. After setting the theoretical framework and introduction to the complexities of Northern Irish situation, we need to ask what is urban territoriality like in real life and how is it experienced by the local people.

31 Some traces of “project identity” is currently found in Northern Ireland. This idea of project identity relates particularly on the challengers of the contemporary territorial way of life. According to Castells (1997) in project identity social actors built a new identity that redefines their position in society and seek the transformation of overall social structures. (Castells, M. (1997). *The Power of Identity*. Oxford: Blackwell.)

V

LIFE IN THE CONTESTED TERRITORY OF L/DERRY

The *lived experience* of the Northern Irish conflict is too often overlooked and undervalued in academic research. In particular, the analysis of spatial organisation of Northern Irish society has treated individuals and communities as mere objects under territorial rule, rather than as subjects who simultaneously experience and reproduce this order in their everyday life and within the local contexts (see e.g. Boal 1982; Douglas 1982; Murray 1982; Poole 1982; Doherty & Poole 1995). In my study the latter, *experiential* approach is applied to the urban context of L/Derry.

City as a lived space is formed of pockets of comfort and fear. Sometimes this complexity is called the *urban borderland*, due to its divisive nature (Kaplan & Häkli 2002: 6–9; Kuusisto-Arponen 2002b). Urban environment is constructed by many agents, institutions, and in structures across various geographical scales. Thus, the metaphor of city as an urban mosaic denotes the interconnections of socio-cultural, economic, political and spatial processes in a particular time and space (Dear & Häkli 1998). Here this urban and multiscaled living environment is analysed from the perspective of the local politics of lived place and territoriality. The *politics of place* offers a flexible but focused framework, through which the relationship between collective identity, place, and the us/them confrontation can be examined. Comparisons between different local groups and their competing territorial discourses are also made. Thus, both hegemonic territorial discourses and counter-hegemonic pluralistic discourses are analysed here. The former refers to the normativeness of the contemporary prevailing order, which the latter aims to challenge. *Discursive reading* and *constructionist methodology* frame and guide the argumentation in the following analysis. The stories of the inhabitants of L/Derry are analysed as real constructs that

inform and make meaningful the life worlds. The discourses and narratives analysed are based on the “storied lives” of people in L/Derry, which are then interpreted and reconstructed by the researcher (see e.g. Clandinin & Connelly 1994).

In Northern Ireland the urban way of life illustrates well the multiple complexities of (conflictual) identity construction. The construction of collective identity and communal security takes place within set frameworks, where historical institutions and loyalties are mixed with national and international pressures for peaceful development, and further stirred by feelings of mistrust, alienation, discrimination and fear among the local Protestant and Catholic communities. In this kind of situation causal explanations do not apply. It cannot be assumed, for example, that a political peace treaty will guarantee sustainable peace in all parts of Northern Ireland. This is because not all local communities and paramilitary groups are in favour of peace developments. Moreover, local confrontations can create a tense atmosphere in cross-community relations, which is not easily ameliorated by the political talks and promises. Thus, understanding life in contested territories requires sensitive analysis of the *settings, processes and experiences* present in this context. Moreover, it is clear that change in dynamics in one part of the urban complexity affects to the stability of the whole system. In a negative sense, this is often seen in the escalation of sectarian violence during the summer’s marching season. However, similarly confidence and trust among the communities have increased and spread out after the latest paramilitary cease-fires, which were announced in 1997. This dualistic characteristic of the urban dynamic should be borne in mind when viewing life in L/Derry.

The *living environment* in Northern Ireland is often defined by binary oppositions such as “us” and “them,” our place and their space, comfort and fear, and native and settler. Spatial and social segregation is apparent, and competing everyday realities exist. Thus, local categorisation, boundary processes and a symbolic environment are very much part of people’s urban experience. In this research the focus is on the significance of such experience in a conflict-divided society. Individual and collective experiences construct meaningful places (Entrikin 1991). Experience is also a crucial factor in place politics, which relies on contextual sensitivity in the relationships between people and place, and is a component in people’s feeling of unity and belonging. A sense of belonging is often a dualistic concept, as it often, although not necessarily always, leads to distinctions between “us” and “others.” In Northern Irish society social and physical segregation plays a crucial role in securing one’s place and identity but it also constructs distinctive communities and a categorical sense of belonging. Empirical data, based on seven focus groups, illustrates well how spatial identity politics is practised in everyday life. Further I discuss what it means to be a Catholic or Protestant living in a particular area, how boundary-drawing takes place in everyday practices and how the territorially restricted way of life is experienced in L/Derry.

Territorial restrictions, hostile community relations and the burden of a long-lasting conflict are visible in urban structures and people’s behaviour. Many coping strategies have been developed among the people in order to ease life in the contested territory (see e.g. Boal 1994: 34–36). These strategies are based on social norms, rules and modes of territorial organisation. In this sense living in a particular area, for example,

does not necessarily reflect the exercise of an individual's free will, but rather loyalty to her or his communal background and cultural identity. Decisions like this and other mechanisms of social control equally enable and restrict life in the urban borderlands. For many people in Northern Ireland this has led to the adaptation of a strict territorial discourse: a homogeneous living environment with restrictive social rules for interaction, and politicised territories with effectively guarded boundaries. This fixity is viewed as security. For some people, though, the local territorial trap is too oppressive and emancipation is sought by questioning the dominant perceptions of security in segregated society. These two basic ideas of socio-spatial organisation construct different life histories. In Northern Ireland, as in any other conflict society, the construction of narrated reality is a fascinating subject for research due to the various oppositional views. In my empirical analysis these different voices in society are made equally visible.

In this study the narrated nature of territorial experience is illustrated in an analysis of seven focus group interviews conducted in the city of L/Derry in early 2000 (for the practicalities, see p. 37–41). The stories shared with the researcher provide glimpses of the picture and the life-worlds of the people. Each focus group interview includes several stories and experiences. Discursive reading is applied in the analysis. This means that the stories are viewed as reflecting not only the real experiences of individuals, but also a socially constructed reality. Therefore, the analysis does not seek to evaluate what is true or false, or right or wrong, but to understand these intersubjective stories told about the life in the divided city (Dowler 2001: 161–162). My research also comes close to the ethnographic approach and therefore the role of group is the fundamental unit in the analysis (e.g. Morgan 1988: 64–65). Group-to-group (Catholic, Protestant and Mixed groups) comparisons are made, and also individual respondents as part of the group dynamics are identified in the conclusion. Several quotes from the focus group discussions are presented in order to clarify the narrated reality and processual discovery of analysis. The latter refers to the analysis that was guided by the focus groups discussions and by the use of coding categories (for a similar approach e.g. Crang 2001: 229–231).

Coding categories were determined largely through a theoretically informed reading of the focus group interviews, while some were taken directly from theoretical literature, such as the nature and the role of boundaries, the sense of belonging, and “our place” vs. “their space” (e.g. Relph 1976; Sack 1983, 1986; Paasi 1986, 1996; Agnew 1987; Donnan & Wilson 1999; Kaplan & Häkli 2002). These categories aim to capture the physical, social as well as symbolic elements of *local territoriality*. All seven focus group interviews were coded according to the following categories, after which cross-communal similarities and differences were sought.

Coding categories:

1. Sense of Belonging
 2. What Is Us?
 - Us Different from Other
 - Differences within Us
 - Other Same as Us
 3. Fear
 4. Loyalty/ Rules
 5. Social Distinction Due to Physical Segregation
 6. Spaces of Fear = Their Space
 7. Physical Restriction
 8. Cultural and Political Symbolism
 9. The Role of Institutions (such as School, Church, Loyal Orders, Police and Army)
 10. Effects of the Politics of Place Practised through Scales (i.e. national political reforms, international mediation)
 11. Challenge to Current Way of Life
 12. History/ Tradition
 13. Images of Our Place
-
-

One part of each of the focus group interviews was conducted with six photographs. This material was analysed according to descriptions of the feelings the interviewees marked on the answer sheet. Typical answers were selected and comparisons were then made between the Protestant, Catholic and Mixed groups. This analysis sought to illustrate communally stereotypical images and the power of banal symbolism in the contested construction of territory and identity (Billig 1995; see also Kuusisto 2001a). The analysis shows how territoriality is a visually and emotionally highly charged phenomenon. The same symbolic images or ritualised practices can raise quite contradictory responses depending on people's communal background. Symbols of territoriality are presented in six picture frames located as part of the empirical discussions in the following chapters.

The categorised materials were organised under three major themes, which form the basic structure of this chapter: **Settings and Players in the Borderlands** focuses on the contextual description of scenes and agents in the urban dynamic. It defines the urban borderland at the level of everyday experience. Further, the importance of (exclusive) identity categories and one-sided world views in borderland construction is clarified. **Urban Territoriality as a Process** illustrates the construction of social space and the discourses of territorial behaviour. The intimate connection between a community and its place creates a sense of unity and ownership. The means by which the sense of belonging is reproduced, such as socialisation, stereotypisation, and categorisation are discussed. While viewing territoriality as a process and cultural logic, attention is paid to two particularly interesting and highly politicised spatial practices: claiming territory and boundary construction, i.e. the distinction between "our place" and "their space". Experiences of **Being Part of Categorisation** points to the multidimensional ways through which territoriality is locally communicated and

signified among communities. Being forced into a categorised way of life has meant that coping strategies of many kinds have been developed. These socially constructed coping mechanisms ease the life in contested territories, but not all people want to adjust to the dominant societal discourse. Thus, the prevailing socio-spatial order is also challenged and ways are sought to overcome such a categorised reality. An attempt to move beyond the local territorial trap is based on, and produces, a counter-hegemonic discourse, which contradicts the taken-for-granted communal practices. Thus, it is precisely these contradictions, oppositions, and transformations that constitute the stories and experiences of conflict and territorial order in L/Derry. The concluding remarks on the empirical materials are presented in three narratives that are typifications made from the stories of all the respondents: *Activist*, *Acquiescent* and *Visionaries*. These narratives are jointly personal and inter-subjective. Moreover, they reveal the ways in which territorial order is embedded into people's everyday life and experience.

KEY TO EMPIRICAL MATERIAL:

For example,

C, M, 15 = Catholic respondent, Male, age 15

P, F, 20 = Protestant respondent, Female, age 20

M, F, 15 = Mixed focus group, Female, age 15. In the case of two mixed focus groups, the ethnic background is not revealed unless it clearly reflects in the person's opinion. In the latter case respondents are referred to as Catholic, Protestant, or No Religion, but the title of the discussion shows that the respondent was part of a mixed group.

K-A = researcher's question or [comment]

The title *Discussion* is used if the quote refers to a discussion of two or more respondents within one focus group. Otherwise quotes are individual responses taken from several focus group interviews.

Settings and Players in the Borderlands

"Indeed, it is one of the more ironic aspects of a study of the city's [L/Derry] past that the least complicated part is its geology (Lacy 1990: 3)."

Lacy's (1990) ironic notion, even though taken out of context, illuminates the urban complexity in L/Derry. L/Derry as an urban borderland is a setting that is socially and geographically ever-evolving. Not even the past, the narrated history of L/Derry, is static or upheld by one legitimate perspective. Collective identification with a community and place have served as tools in the construction of the crucial local sense of security. Unfortunately, in the divided city of L/Derry socialisation processes and identity categories have created an environment that is filled with one-sided and conflictual ideas of society. Institutions have an important role in constructing this borderland and specifically its territorial organisation. Thus, it is useful to view the local context and institutional settings where this territorially divided and contested ground is formed and gets its strength. In this way it is possible to analyse the mechanisms

and processes in L/Derry that produce otherness and divisions (cf. Harle 1991; Woodward 1997).

Borderlands in the City

Usually the concept of borderland describes areas located on the both sides of a national border between two nation-states (Donnan & Wilson 1999: 61–62). Some scholars such as Minghi (1991) have focused on the geographies of scale in borderlands between states. More recent works have paid attention particularly to the scale problem in identity construction, but have adopted a more constructivist view (see e.g. Paasi 1996, 2002; Shapiro & Alker 1996; Donnan & Wilson 1999; Häkli 2001a, 2002; Herb & Kaplan 1999; Kepka & Murphy 2002; Minghi 2002; Raento 2002). Scales of interaction in borderlands vary greatly according to the particular case. This denotes the simultaneous appearance of several geographical divisions, actors, and furthermore negotiation processes in which these borderlands are reconstructed (Häkli & Kaplan 2002: 7). In this research the borderland concept is applied to an urban context, that of the city of L/Derry³². In L/Derry the borderland is both national and local. Since the peace process the role of the national border between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland has changed radically. The city centre is located some ten kilometres from the national border, which nowadays is open for traffic and not guarded by the security forces as it was during the high intensity years of the Troubles. The Army checkpoints have been removed and currently the state border is subject to much daily crossing, as many people from the Republic of Ireland commute to work in Northern Ireland. Lower petrol prices also attract motorists from Northern Ireland to fill their tanks on the Irish side of the border. In the formal sphere various institutional border-crossing projects and new cross-border bodies have been set up since the peace process began. Some of the new (inter-state) governmental bodies were established on the basis of the Belfast Agreement signed in 1998 (Kuusisto-Arponen 2001b). The changing nature of the national border affects everyday life in L/Derry. For many decades, the border was often targeted in acts of political violence and the strict security control made everyday interactions across the border difficult. In the contemporary situation the close geographical proximity of L/Derry to the border is viewed in a more relaxed way than it was a few years back. However, while crossing the state boundary has become part of everyday life, this appears to have no direct relations on the persisting territorially guided boundary-maintenance on the local neighbourhood level. Even the state boundary is often crossed just for economic reasons, whether cheaper petrol, or EU funding for a youth programme requiring a cross-border element. Boundary-crossing as a learning experience, or for achieving better mutual respect, is

32 Borderlands in all contexts refer to an area divided with physical or mental boundary lines. The borderlands in the city function in the same way as in larger contexts, but with the distinction that physical boundary construction is perhaps surpassed in importance by mental boundaries. The separating element of these mental boundaries is as high as with national frontiers.

still quite rare, even though it often is a pronounced goal in national policy-making (Kuusisto-Arponen 2002b).

Locally there are different ways in which the national border is perceived in the communal imagination³³. For L/Derry's Catholic population the close distance to the border has always meant a special sense of security and comfort, as the "other Ireland" they feel they also belong to is not far away. Especially now that the border can be freely crossed, most of the negative associations have vanished from people's everyday imagination. However, for the Protestant community the national border feeds a sense of insecurity, which was not felt when the border was formally guarded in all situations. Now that this mechanism is lacking, they feel more exposed to threats, such as Republican violence conducted from the Irish side of the border. Fortunately, the latter fear has not been realised. When listening to the stories of the Protestant minority in L/Derry, it seems that, after all, the greatest threat is seen to come from the other side of the River Foyle rather than from the other side of national border. Moreover, this perceived threat is based on mental pressures and not so much on actual acts of violence. This threat experienced by the Protestant community is as much self-imposed as it is the result of actions taken by the Catholic community in the city.

In the Northern Irish situation borderland identities and local boundary construction are the key element in the continuation of the conflict and communal segregation. The local borderlands in L/Derry are formed out of overlapping *local* ("us" vs. "them"), *national* (British, Irish, Ulster, Northern Irish), *physical* (peace walls, the River Foyle, the national border), *mental* ("no-go" areas, safe havens), *political* (Unionist, Loyalist, Nationalist, Republican, Women's Coalition, Independents), *economic* (deprived, middle ground, wealthy), *social* (working-class, middle-class, upper-class, employed, unemployed) *cultural* (Orange, Green and the people between), and *religious* (Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Church of Ireland, Methodist, No religion) boundaries. This variety forms a complex system of allegiances and loyalties. The long-lasting conflict has, of course, affected these patterns and thus phenomena such as Orangeism and Loyalism or Irishness and Republicanism tend to be seen as exclusive blocs. However, combinations such as "working-class" and "deprived", creates a line of division that cuts across the Protestant and Catholic dichotomy. Every locality is formed out of a particular set of divisions. L/Derry is undoubtedly a city of multiple borderlands, where similarities and differences interplay.

The dynamic of the cityscape of borderlands is interesting. The institutions, structures and processes which support these divisions reach into almost every field of society. The nature of the contested territories and interface zones between them has a tendency to change rapidly according to the prevailing socio-political situation.

33 In contemporary L/Derry the mental effect of the national border is less pronounced than in some other counties of Northern Ireland, such as South Armagh, where the border still is a highly politicised concept in people's everyday life. There are also regional variations in the presence of the security forces in the border areas (some counties are perceived as being more dangerous than others by the state apparatus) which also affect the degree of symbolising and politicising of the national borderline. L/Derry is one of the areas where the British military presence has been reduced since the peace process, while South Armagh still has Army patrols walking on the streets.

If more tensions are experienced in the political peace process or due to local troubles, a change in social atmosphere in localities can soon be noticed: strict rules are again enforced. In the borderland context, proclaiming her or his loyalty to the community one feels belonging to, is an essential part of the survival strategy. Spatial reading skills help in the orientation in the contested territory by giving indications as to where the boundaries between “friends and enemies” lie, and by marking “our” places from “their” spaces. These coping strategies construct one part of the special borderland experience. Other borderland characteristics in L/Derry are the culture of violence, the claiming of territory and the politics of control and restrictions.

Players and One-sided Truths

Locally several formal and informal institutions influence how the communities are organised. The *education system* in Northern Ireland ignores the wide cultural diversity on the ground. Children attend schools that reflect only one part of the divided society. The problem of a segregated school system is widely acknowledged but little improvement has been achieved. It is the adult population’s suspicion of mixed education that has kept these two school systems apart so far. Certainly, the role of the Catholic and Protestant Churches is crucial, and especially the Roman Catholic Church claims that children’s religious learning has to take place in schools as well as in church. State-maintained schools (the majority of Protestant children attend these schools) do not support this view.

Education being one of the most important features in socialisation and especially spatial socialisation (Paasi 1996), it is often referred to as the key to the future as well. Moreover, it transfers the history, practices, old legacies of the past and models of thinking from one generation to the next. Segregated education has been one of the main institutional settings where the norms of the divided society are openly taught. The segregated school system is in itself a difficult setting for learning things about the other community, and the gap between the local communities is not adequately approached in the teaching itself. There is not enough time, resources, or sometimes even willingness to deal with the issues in the classroom. This is not to say that attempts are non-existent, but the work is quite small-scale even locally viewed. However, national objectives for cross-cultural learning were set in 1989 when the programme “Education for Mutual Understanding” (EMU) was launched in Northern Ireland (Smith & Robinson 1996). While EMU is now part of the curriculum for all grant-aided schools (i.e. state-maintained schools and many Catholic schools also get this grant from the state), the programme is still often run with a minimum budget because other subjects in school are considered more important. The lack of adequate funding for the programme reduces the number of students who are able to take part. Most often these courses are targeted at young teenagers from 10–14 years of age. At this age young people tend to be in their most radical phase and against inter-communal mixing, at least if they have been brought up in a single-identity housing estate, like many children in L/Derry. If worthwhile results are to be achieved, children should have the possibility to meet across the division already in their first years at school,

which would mean at the age of five or six years. Furthermore, in the contemporary situation the projects are short-term and hardly ever bring about concrete results. This was also emphasised in two focus groups discussions:

Discussion I:

Protestant, Female, age 14: In the first year [of secondary school] we went to have a weekend with a Catholic school. First we just played games and talked and all. Just to get to know them.

[...] We started writing as pen pals first and take pictures and all. Then we met in the weekend. We noticed that we are just the same.

K-A: Have you kept in touch since then?

P, F, 14: No.

P, F, 14: No.

K-A: Do you think any of your classmates did?

P, F, 14: No.

Discussion II:

C, F, 16: We went to Scotland with Protestants and we learned a lot about them.

K-A: What did you learn?

C, F, 16: They are same as us!

C, M, 29: There you learn that they are not different from you.

C, F, 16: Auch, no different.

[...]

C, M, 15: We did things together.

C, F, 16: And they ask you questions what do you think about Protestants and like? And we answer them.

[my note] All speaking at the same time about a Catholic girl and a Protestant boy who met on the course and were attracted to each other but never met again after the course.

Some of the youths have clearly experienced the power of learning from each other. Even though these opportunities might be rare, the fact is that the number of youths involved in these projects is gradually increasing. Unfortunately, the institutional setting, i.e. school, which serves as the venue for these “one-off” boundary crossings, is simultaneously a major factor in disabling the everyday contacts between young people. The contemporary school system reproduces social segregation and no short-term solution can be expected to this situation. In L/Derry area there are only two integrated schools to which both Catholic and Protestant children go. In the Oakgrove primary and secondary schools the demographic division is fifty/fifty. Both schools are state-owned and children from all social classes attend. Due to the limited number of places available, only a few L/Derry children can attend this school. Clearly, there is an effort to overcome some of the everyday categories and view difference as a positive resource, but diversity and heterogeneity of this kind does not easily fit into the dominant societal culture where “us” and “others” are kept apart and the construction of otherness is viewed in connection with enemy or evil positions (Aho 1994; Woodward 1997).

Another issue which is not often publicly discussed is the education system’s ignorance of contemporary reality and developments in Northern Ireland. Several focus

group participants argued that they are taught nothing about the contemporary political situation around them. Sometimes the teachers would not answer even direct questions about these issues, one youth claimed.

Discussion:

P, F, 26: I think they are more interested in teaching about the potato famine than what is going on out there... than your own culture, Irish culture [sic]... that is the way it is. You know what I mean. In geography we don't learn anything about Northern Ireland. You are not taught about where you live.

K-A: Do they teach about the political situation in school?

P, F, 26: Auch god, no!

K-A: They did not tell you anything about the Assembly?

P, F, 16: No

As similar opinion was put forward by a Protestant community worker in an interview:

“Protestants in the schools they are being taught the British history and nothing else. We were told about the country that we never lived. In Catholic schools they have Irish history. So, we have this situation where on the other side (sic) community identity is strong and on the other it is not.”

As the above quote implies, the education system as one of the central institutional settings for socialisation has extensive and cross-generational impacts. Segregated education allows children to be educated mostly among their kind. It also seems to offer the ultimate feeling of security for parents when deciding in which school to enrol their children. For security reasons this might have been desirable during the most intense years of the Troubles, but this practice has many negative side-effects. In fact, the feeling of security among the local communities has not grown even though this was one of goals of the exclusivist community politics and segregated settings for education (Kuusisto 1998). Particularly before the EMU was established in the schools, it was not exceptional that students did not meet people from the other community until they reached the age of 18 and got into higher education. Obviously, the school environment in Northern Ireland is not a venue in which to meet people from a different cultural background and this way to learn to co-exist. It also seems that on a communal level school education cannot attain one of its basic functions, to socialise children by giving them a secure sense of identity and sense of belonging. Instead of reinforcing segregated structures and spheres for socialisation, concern for shared interests and commonalities in identity politics may provide a new way forward. A crucial question is whether there is a strong enough desire on both sides to see these common possibilities. The practicalities of territorial politics – places vs. spaces – are hard to overcome even in social interaction. Major barriers to the finding of common ground for socialisation are also formed by the distinct historical narratives, attitudes towards cultural conflict, and lack of shared (informal and formal) institutional settings for co-operation.

Affiliation with a nation-state (the United Kingdom or the Irish Republic) is a well-known problem in the Northern Irish context. People identify themselves as British or Irish, but categories such as Northern Irish and Ulster are used as well. In everyday

language the Catholic community is most often unanimously associated with Irish culture and identity, but for the Protestant community the source of national identity is viewed as being more fragmented: most often it comes down to being “British.” However, identifying with England and the English is quite rare. The Protestant community associates itself with an (abstract) British heritage (formed by the unity of the English, Welsh and Scots) but not with England, even though originally one part of the Planters came from there. Often the Protestants’ national preference is personalised in the loyalty they proclaim to the Queen. It is sometimes said that some members of the Protestant community identify themselves as being Ulster Protestants or Northern Irish.

M, M, 17: Catholics would associate themselves as Irish and then Protestants would associate themselves with the Queen and England.

These stereotypical images of national preference live steadfastly among the local communities. Therefore, it is quite surprising to learn what single individuals claim to prefer according to studies on affiliation. In a recent “Life & Times” survey conducted in 2000 (sampling from all of Northern Ireland), there was a question about people’s preference as to their national identity (Table 6).

Table 6. National identities in Northern Ireland in 2000 (Life & Times survey/ variable NINATID).

	Catholic %	Protestant %	No religion %
British	9	72	45
Irish	59	3	13
Ulster	1	7	6
Northern Irish	28	15	24
Other answer	2	3	10
Don’t know	1	1	1
	100 %	100 %	99 % *

* percentages according to original source

The British state in Northern Ireland has never reached an undisputedly legitimate position among the Catholic minority. For this section of the population the British state represents the colonial legacy in Ireland, which needs to be resisted and protested against (at least in ideological discussions). The other position, mainly that of the Protestant community, acknowledges the state as a legitimate source of power and force. For these people national security is achieved through control and restrictions imposed by the state apparatus. It would be far too simplistic to argue that this national division equals exactly the Catholic and Protestant boundary. Some Protestants have turned against the state apparatus, especially in times when they have perceived that the British state, which they have almost unanimously trusted, sought accommodation by means of sacrificing Protestant principles. “The Life and Times” survey shows

that among the Catholic respondents more variation in choosing one's national identity occurs, and on the other hand that the Protestant respondents seem to be somewhat more unanimous in their choice. This result contradicts the simplistic images upheld by the communities. However, the larger pattern, the overall tendency to claim loyalty to either Britain or Ireland, still prevails.

Interesting conclusions can also be drawn from the results of a survey questionnaire charting peoples' opinions towards the long-term policy for Northern Ireland (see Table 7). The belief that the Catholic population is extremely rigid in its demands for reunification seems to be a myth from the past. Forty-two percent of the Catholic community wants to see the future of Northern Ireland in an all-Ireland context, while one-fifth feels that the most preferable option for Northern Ireland is to stay as part of the UK. Also, the share of undecided respondents is noticeably high. Overall, there is a greater plurality of opinion among the Catholic population. The majority of the Protestant community (83 %) stands behind the option of remaining part of the UK. Only four percent of Protestants support a united Ireland. The national borderland seems to have become even more fragmented than a few years ago when the positions were still quite fixed. Nowadays the question is not so much about resisting Britain or Ireland as such, but rather the focus in everyday communal identity politics is on cultural survival and power within the territory of Northern Ireland.

Table 7. Opinions of the long-term policy in Northern Ireland by religious affiliation (Life & Times Survey 2000/ variable NIRELAND).

	Catholic %	Protestant %	No religion %
To remain part of the United Kingdom	20	83	53
To reunify with the rest of Ireland	42	4	15
Independent state	15	6	10
Other answer	4	2	4
Don't know	19	6	18
	100 %	101 % *	100 %

* percentages according to original source

The issue of identity and affiliation within a specific nation-state context surfaced frequently in the focus group discussions. The confusion surrounding the issue was well expressed by one of the respondents:

M, M, 19: Catholics...it is difficult to say because it varies from person to person. You got people who are like Republicans, you know, and have all that Irish thing going on and whatever. Then you have Protestants who want to be the whole British thing but then you also have Protestants who want to have the Irish thing and Catholics who just want to be the British thing and it doesn't really matter [to me what other people want].

Another example of national borderland construction in Northern Ireland is related to the violence experienced still today in many localities in Northern Ireland. When the state apparatus and other institutions closely related to it (such as the *British Army* and the *Police*) are acceptable only for one part of society, alternative ways to *achieve law and order* in the localities are used. Then the production of order is connected to being in opposition to the state-led order and to reinforcing local territoriality through a paramilitary presence. *Paramilitary organisations* should be seen as institutions which are just as influential as the state-related organisations in the construction of borderland experience. Both Republican and Loyalist paramilitaries have become local substitutes for the official security apparatus. The practices by which security against external threats is actually constituted are based on fear. Historically the IRA has controlled anti-social behaviour in the Catholic-dominated estates they occupy by punishing the perpetrators. Sometimes young males are expelled from their home area by paramilitary organisations because of constant mis-behaviour such as joyriding or drug-dealing. Ironically, this kind of anti-social behaviour is also practised by the paramilitaries themselves.

In the early years of the modern armed conflict in Northern Ireland, the IRA was highly visible in Catholic localities and conducted “security operations.” In the 1970s the paramilitary presence in the localities was an important part of the symbolism of the struggle, one which created coherence among the Catholic community but simultaneously annoyed the official security apparatus. In the city of L/Derry this kind of resistance was seen in the form of Catholic “no-go” areas, of which the most famous and largest was the Bogside housing estate near the city centre.

The biggest no-go area was, I think, in Derry. All the time when there was a no-go area obviously the Unionist politicians in Stormont who were supposed to have the control over security in Northern Ireland were outraged that the rule of law did not outreach to these Catholic areas. They wanted the Army to go in even at an earlier point. The fact that the IRA was patrolling openly was embarrassment to the British government and to the British Army. They did not want to see it, that was one of the reasons for the Bloody Sunday as well. [...] At that time (1971–72) the IRA would have been patrolling the area (the Bogside estate in L/Derry), both wings of the IRA. They filled their cars with IRA men and guns. They would often set up checkpoints to check the cars, but I don't think anything came out of that. These were done because the Army tried to gather intelligence and were putting undercover units in the area. (Catholic, Male, academic, lived in the Bogside in the early 1970s)

The Bogside was a *site of resistance*, where effective community control was imposed on a self-defined territory. As a site of resistance it also was a battle field of power (see e.g. Routledge 1994). Both the local community and the state apparatus had their own ideas of who the legitimate authority to rule and conduct security operations in the area was. Moreover, the “no-go” areas took a stance on the question of national identity by claiming to be free zones for Irish Catholics and not part of the British-led state-centric system. “No-go” areas are, indeed, sophisticated illustrations of territorial organisation reinforced by informal institutions, in this case, the local Catholic community and the IRA.

In the contemporary situation the paramilitary presence is no longer so visible but it remains as effective as thirty years ago. The new features in the local community order are confrontations between paramilitary splinter groups. These conflicts have influenced the territorial dynamics by bringing intra-community warfare to the territories. Particularly after the cease-fire of 1997, the Protestant paramilitary groups have, at times, waged open war with each other. This has led to a situation where the local communities are terrified because they have been left in the middle of the semi-militant struggle conducted by their fellow community members. It sometimes happens that locals are wrongly targeted because someone suspects they are involved with a competing paramilitary organisation. Since this trend has only appeared recently there is no statistical information about the exact numbers of victims of this kind of violence but the number of attacks has increased, the interviewed group-leaders in both communities claim. What also seems to influence the amount of these intra-communal paramilitary feuds is the situation in the overall community-relations.

Whereas in summer 2000 there was a large measure of peace between the Catholic and Protestant communities, the opposite was the case with the intra-communal relations. For example in the Shankill Road area in Belfast, a series of revenge killings took place between the Loyalist UFF (Ulster Freedom Fighters) / UDA (Ulster Defence Association) and the UVF (Ulster Volunteer Force) in mid-August 2000 (BBC News 20.8.2000, 21.8.2000, 23.8.2000). The feuding was concentrated in the Loyalist housing estates and intimidated people in the area, which led to some families fleeing from their homes (Lahtinen 25.8.2000). The commentators on the feuding argued that it was part of struggle to gain control over the Loyalist community. Controlling the local community may have been one of the reasons, but a more realistic cause for feuding was to gain control of drug distribution in particular areas of the city. Whatever the case, the intra-communal warfare has indeed become a new form of violence related to the changing power positions and dominance amongst the Loyalist communities. Summer 2001, again, was highly tense between the Catholic and Protestant communities, and a lot of rioting occurred between the police and Protestants crowds, especially in connection with the right to march. In addition, violence involving Catholic youths and the police often occurred during the nights after Loyal Order marches. As a result of inter-communal conflict the intra-communal violence and feuding played a minor role that summer. Illegal paramilitary organisations are important players in borderland security and in the construction of places of comfort and fear. In the construction of local borderland also the formal security institutions have had a major effect on the setting.

The presence of the security forces, i.e. the RUC (Royal Ulster Constabulary) and the British Army, is highly visible in the urban borderlands (see Figures 14 and 15). They too reinforce the divided reality and are highly contested locally in Northern Ireland. Since the mid-1980s the acceptability of the RUC has changed radically. In the borderland context where the RUC was previously accepted by the Unionist community and opposed by the Nationalist community, the acceptance by the former has, in the contemporary situation, evolved into conditional trust. The Nationalist community views the RUC as still part of the Unionist-led institutional hegemony. However, they concede that the police has become somewhat more approachable than

previously. Whereas for example the Drumcree marching disputes from 1995 to 1997 have showed, the Protestant community's trust in British state and the police force (as the superior authority of law and order) has weakened (Bryan 2001).

In general, the contemporary peace process has introduced a new societal situation in which the sources of authority are fragmenting and more competition over the power to control local communities has grown. This has meant that the police and the Army are tackling more "in between" fighting Catholic and Protestant communities than previously. It might be expected that a position like this – being in the middle – opens up better possibilities for listening to both communities, but in fact it has created a trap, where the angry reactions on both sides have found a new target, the police. What often happens in Northern Ireland is that these exclusive communities seek acceptance and acknowledgement for their own views and if they do not get an appropriate response from the security forces, people easily turn their back on any further co-operation.

In recent years the police has confronted major difficulties in maintaining public order. Its role is to protect the communities (mostly from each other's violent activity) and simultaneously uphold national security (a particularly controversial issue in Northern Ireland), but in carrying out these duties assigned by the state apparatus, the security forces are often blamed for the whole situation (see Frame I and Figure 16). Problems of authority have often been experienced. For example, in the autumn of 1999 L/Derry experienced a wave of late-night violence, which some claimed to be sectarian-related. This being true at least in some cases, the media coverage of these attacks created an illusion that all fights in the city during the weekends were sectarian. Mostly, however, the violent acts happened in the city centre after the pubs were closed, when hundreds of people were on the streets on their way home. The local media pointed an accusing finger at the police because they had not increased the number of patrols in the city centre, even though this had been requested by the local community groups on both sides. *Derry Journal* and *Londonderry Sentinel* published many articles on the city centre violence during September and October of 1999:

Derry Journal, e.g.
Sectarian gangs in the city centre
Attacks against innocent youths
City centre a no-go area

Londonderry Sentinel, e.g.
Young Protestants do not feel safe in the city centre
City no-go area for Protestants
City centre becoming too dangerous – even for police.

From the point of view of the police there was a genuine threat that these incidents would grow into large scale riots if a larger police presence was introduced. Physical attacks against the police had also increased in the city centre. In the pages of *Derry Journal* an RUC Superintendent said: "Ideally I would like to put high visibility policing into the city centre. But the reality is that it is not possible to do that. Just few weeks ago one of my officers was stabbed in the back while trying to help an ambulance

crew dealing with another person who had been assaulted. (21.9.1999)” Because this kind of authority problem was experienced, local community-leaders on both sides took the lead on the issue. Eventually, the solution to late-night violence was found through mediation among the perpetrators and the victims (*Derry Journal* 21.9.1999, 24.9.1999; *Londonderry Sentinel* 22.9.1999, 13.10.1999).



Figure 14. Police landrovers parked in police station in L/Derry.



Figure 15. Army barracks in the city centre of L/Derry.

FRAME I:
INTRODUCTION: SYMBOLS SIGNIFY TERRITORIALITY

Symbolic images awake a variety of reactions, which are often more radical than might be expected. Symbols effectively bind like-minded people together and draw the lines of loyalties, but they also evoke controversy. People in Northern Ireland are very sensitive about community symbols, especially when viewed as threatening or insulting. Yet the two communities criticise the “others” for their territorial marking and flagging (about flagging one’s nation see Billig 1995), while turning a blind eye to their own practices (Kuusisto 2001a: 63).

The symbolised urban environment in L/Derry is part of the bigger picture of the still ongoing nationalistic struggle in Northern Ireland. The role of banal nationalism grows especially in a conflict situation. Nationalistic ideology does not disappear after the “nation” has been created: rather the ideology remains (see Billig 1995). When active nationalism has nearly ceased to exist, or the nationalistic struggle has become part of everyday life, these signs of banal nationalism often go unrecognised. In Northern Ireland, the bloody and violent forms of nationalism have not vanished. Nationalism exists as a structural part of Northern Irish society, but in this context “structural” also means “active.” The constant marking of communal territories and other such territorial behaviour partly manifest the nationalistic legacy. The following pictures point at the ever important role of visual landscape in the territorial identity construction. In fact symbolism is a spatial practice and it creates territorial awareness. Symbols are omnipresent and have their own place in the collective construction of belonging and sense of place. Whereas the effects of this symbolic construction are often viewed as negative (e.g. further polarisation) by outsiders, members of the community experience it as comforting. Thus it is easy to understand why, for example some of the peace reforms, such as reforming the police force, its name and symbols, have awoken very emotional pleas either for or against.

The six FRAMES included in this research describe the experiences of 36 people in L/Derry. These pictures from L/Derry were selected from the collection of photographer **Hugh Callagher**, who works for the voluntary organisation Holywell Trust. The selection of pictures was guided by my intuition at first, when I looked through hundreds of suitable pictures. Finally fourteen very telling pictures were selected and these were put in order. My aim was that two pictures clearly illustrate Protestant culture, two pictures the Catholic tradition and two should be more or less community-free images. Reduction from fourteen to the six most suitable pictures was aided by five academic colleagues, who all voted on the pictures. Collegial help was appreciated but the final selection was made by me. All pictures illustrate some aspects of territoriality, whether stressing the prevailing order or aiming to challenge it. Photography is a powerful way of capturing events, atmosphere, images and symbols. It also served as a valuable research tool for studying the symbolic dimensions of the narrated realities in Northern Ireland.

The collection of empirical material proceeded as follows: participants were shown the image, after which they had to write down what the picture was about and what it made them feel. They were also asked to set out some reasons for their feelings. The same image was often interpreted very differently by the individuals, but collective patterns could also be easily identified in the responses. The material was organised according to sub-categories arising from the answers. Finally, typical answers were selected from the descriptions of the respondents and some of these answers are quoted in the frames.



Figure 16. Police with riot gear in the city centre of L/Derry (Hugh Callagher).

The answers describing the police barricade show considerable similarities. The general assumption, which most respondents made, was that the police were there because of an Orange Order march. This, however, was not in any way indicated in the picture. What followed was the assumption that the policemen formed a blockage between the Catholic and Protestant crowds, in order to prevent fighting and rioting. The threat of violence was also mentioned by the respondents. “[I am] Afraid. It looks like violence is about to start (M, F, 19).” “Disappointed that there is going to be violence on our streets and town (C, M, 16).” Violence was expected to occur between the two communities, but the respondents also expected the police to be involved. Police violence was suggested by respondents saying that they were surprised that the picture did not show the police hitting people. Community based opinions on the police were expressed as well. “I don’t see them as a police force, I see them as a more of an enemy (Mixed group, C, M, 17).”

Whatever respondents’ opinion on policing, similar views on blocking off the streets were found in both communities. The blocking was seen as an annoyance. Restrictions on people’s free movement in the city at the time of marching, disturbed everyday business. “It shows the contrast to the normal everyday life. It makes me feel sad that we have to come to police blockages to control people (M, F, 16).” It seems that people in general do not accept that their freedom should be restricted by the police or any other formal institution on any occasion. However, they do not acknowledge that the same kind of invisible blocking is taking place everyday in their own communities. With a different set of rules and codes of conduct, the interactions across the invisible community boundaries are restricted. Often these kinds of communal restrictions have an even greater effect than the police barricades.

Characteristic for borderland security operations is the *use of force* in controlling people. The culture of violence, which usually refers to the frequent aggressive and violent behaviour in the localities, is, I argue, one factor behind the security force attitudes as well. Certainly, the police as an institution use force in particularly threatening situations on the basis of law, but simultaneously somewhat aggressive methods might occur due to the conflict mentality in the area. A mentality like this in a way allows people to act more radically than would be acceptable in stable societies, without being accused of mis-behaviour either by their community or the legal system. However, the police is not to be blamed alone, as people involved in anti-social behaviour also use methods that would not be tolerated in peaceful societies, such as stone-throwing and petrol bombs. This is not to say that people or the security forces use force only because the overall societal situation allows it; underlying such acts is usually the question of personal and communal safety. Fear and anxiety lead to more radical acts than might otherwise be expected. Thus, in a context where legitimate authority and the law of the land are continuously confronted, opinions on institutional law and order enforcement are also often contradictory.

Discussion I:

K-A: What about the police then?

C, M, 29: It is something very crafty [looks very serious].

In the public eye they are all nice and nice but whenever you are walking home alone they are not the same...they are back to the old tradition.

C, M, 15: It is the verbal abuse again. I think foreign people don't notice it. They think that the people themselves start the troubles and in fact police force is as responsible as the people.

[...]

C, F, 16: They try to irritate.

C, M, 16: Annoy, so you would do something.

C, M, 15: So that they can lift you to the police headquarters.

Discussion II:

P, M, 15: They (police) have stranded here...

P, F, 26: Yes, they did that for a wee while that they walked in the area. It was nice to see.

P, M, 15: I hate them...

K-A: Why do you think they still come here?

P, F, 14: To make sure that there is no fighting or anything.

P, M, 15: They have nothing to do. They just cruise about. That is what I think at least.

Discussion III:

M, M, 19: How many experiences you have with the police like?

M, F, 19: Personally nothing like but I have heard from other people.

M, M, 19: There you go—that is exactly what I am talking about. That is second-hand information. You can't believe everything you hear.

M, F, 19: I don't say that I am believing it but that is just the impression that has been put into me, you know what I mean.

M, M, 19: That's [false images] the exact thing stopping people to...move on.

The first and second discussions illustrate the stereotypical opinions on the police, which are highly community-bound phenomena in Northern Ireland. The Catholic respondents expressed the fear related to the police being in their area: the verbal abuse if left alone with the police, or the threat of being taken to the police station. Overall, it seems that even the presence of security forces, which is still visible daily in many localities, contributes to the borderland atmosphere in which one has to take a stance in relation to these organisations and to the threat or security they represent for a community. The second extract shows also the contradictions that appear among the Protestant respondents. In the last discussion the traditional and the new ideas clash. In general, mixed groups were quite open-minded in their views and challenging within the group took place in many parts of the discussion. This kind of analytical and critical discussion culture was rarely found in the single-identity groups. Nonetheless, new and competing narratives about formal institutions are beginning to win recognition on the ground. However, these narratives in the contemporary situation, exist without the institutional support that would be required in order to establish them more widely. The old and established institutional settings are too rigid to accommodate these new narratives without suppressing them. Moreover, majority opinion would also oppose thinking which challenges the rationality of the current territorially aware institutions.

Normative control, specific aims for socialisation, law enforcement and disciplinary actions taken by the formal institutions construct the territorialised social and spatial order. In a divided city such as L/Derry institutions are often perceived as favouring one section of the community. People tend to take exclusive positions in relation to formal institutions, which mean that they are either strictly for or against them. Anger and desperation are expressed both in verbal and physical attacks. This behaviour is, of course, not just concentrated in the localities in L/Derry, but is found all over Northern Ireland, in both urban and rural environments.

Discussion:

C, F, 15: If police come down in the fronts and people would still throw things at them, stones and things like that.

C, M, 15: Aye, people get mad.

C, F, 15: Like bottles and bricks and when they (police) are seen in the streets people are calling names...

In the borderland context the institutions that aim to create social coherence and security may in fact produce instability and confusion. Moreover, the institutions are frequently accused of being segregative and divisive by nature. I agree with this claim to some degree, but the formal institutions certainly do not form the only realm which ends up naturalising the territorially controlled society. Often, as my field work illustrated, the territorial experiences described by the local people are in the first instance reflected through the formal institutions which are present in their everyday life. In people's minds control and restrictions are imposed on them by formal institutional practices. Only after direct reference (by the researcher) to the communal practices, are some considerations of the role of their particular community expressed. In fact, I am prepared

to argue that this everyday communality constructs majority of the borderland mentality and its strict territorial rules.

Local community as an institution refers to the idea of legitimate agency in the borderland context. The local community is a crucial agent in the processual construction of the territorial way of life. Communities have their own goals, ambitions and means to fulfil these aims. Whereas the school as an institution aims to educate, the police and the Army to keep public order and the Churches maintain the religious element in people's lives, the community as an institution constructs (in a reciprocal relationship) communality, belonging and collective identity. Community level social systems draw boundaries between the included (i.e. community members) and the excluded (i.e. the outsiders), who do not belong to the defined social community and particular place (Sibley 1995: 79; Paasi 1996: 14). They also construct the feeling of belonging to a particular territory and emphasise the sense of place, order, security, tradition and cultural unity (Relph 1976; Tuan 1977; Oakes 1997).

Everyday socio-spatial order in the communities is based on social rules and the unwritten but normative territorial behaviour that individuals have acquired through socialisation. The local community as an institution is often more dynamic but also more conflict-inclined than the formal institutions. Hierarchies, "pecking orders," competing goals and sub-groups exist in this informal institutional setting as well. It is important to recognise the heterogeneity of opinions and identity traditions existing within the communities, especially in the Northern Irish context.

In everyday life hierarchies based on, for example, education level, social class or the level of social welfare/ deprivation define the power relations within community:

C, M, 52: Look, there are so many different pockets in this area. There's so many communities within communities. You have area A which is middle-class, again B Road area would be upper-middle-class and then you would have C area, which would be classified as working-class. That is how people still look at things. That is still very much here.

The following quote illustrates the appearance of subgroups who have similar goals but different means to get there:

Discussion:

C, M, 29: Nationalist want a united Ireland, right. Republican use force.

C, F, 16: Aye, I know that there.

C, M, 29: Nationalist want that legitimately.

C, F, 16: I know that there.

C, M, 29: Republicans use violence or they are more militant.

C, M, 15: Republican want to get more people to join in...and they break...[the community]...so they get what they want...do you know what I am saying.

C, M, 29: This is what you are saying: Republicans would like Nationalists to join in.

C, M, 15: Yeah...

K-A: And what do they want?

C, M, 29: United democratic Ireland.

In the Catholic community the above situation has meant that tensions and competition between political supporters appear in intra-communal relations between Nationalists and Republicans. In order to get a hearing and greater acceptance among the local people, some of the most radical ideological foundations, for example the use of political violence by the Republican movement, had to be altered. This so-called peace rhetoric and political re-direction has been fairly successful in many localities (Shirlow & McGovern 1998: 176–180).

Re-consideration of the community's ideological foundations has raised another set of questions: whether wider popular support can and should be attained through selling one's principles. This has led to an ironic situation where the communal characteristics defining a particular identity category have become somewhat blurred. Exclusive identity politics is combined with conditional boundaries where the conditions for inclusion and exclusion depend on the time and spatial context. Simultaneously with the inner polarisation of the Catholic community, a similar development has occurred in the Protestant community. This has meant that for example a person's political views, and especially the approval of paramilitary violence, determine whether she or he is allowed to live in or visit a particular housing estate: identity category has become a territorial qualifier.

K-A: Would all Protestants be welcomed?

P, F, 26: Depending on their political views. They are alright as long as they match with the people here on the ground. [...] In this estate you are not welcome if you are part of Ulster Defence Association.

Discussion I:

K-A: What is an important part of your culture in this estate?

P, M, 15: UDA.

K-A: What is that?

P, M, 15: Ulster Defence Association.

P, M, 17: Sectarian group...

P, M, 15: to kill Taigs!

P, M, 16: to kill Catholic.

P, M, 15 yes sorry...Catholics [laughs].

In general, the range of loyalties among both local communities has become more heterogeneous during the last ten years. The setting where community politics is practised and loyalties constructed is dependent on several issues, such as communal institutional structures, communication culture, desire for categorisation and exclusive/inclusive space politics, opinion leaders, community activists, popular support and so forth. In the contemporary setting, where the social, political and cultural competition within and between the Protestant and Catholic communities is almost the norm, it seems that also polarisation and radicalisation within Northern Irish society are increasing. Both communities form their own distinct institutions, which are usually mutually exclusive. Still, the quest for collective identity, security and bounded territory form the existential goals for both communities. Even though cross-communal similarities in identity politics, can be pointed out, the different institutional cultures

where these are applied give dissimilar results. This has evidently been the case in the creation of representative landscapes, signifying territory and communal identity.

In contemporary Northern Ireland the majority of Catholic and Protestant communities tend to reproduce the dominant spatial order, i.e., strictly based territorial rule. However, amongst the local communities the counter-hegemonic discourses are also winning their first supporters, as the example of attitudes toward policing illustrated. The order that the local community institutions are trying to emphasise is based on an illusion similar to the one prevailing in the practices of formal institutions: that of the effectiveness of categorising. By categorising security and fear, insiders and outsiders, anti-social and social, “our” territory and “their” territory, “our” cultural heritage and “theirs”, the communities gain confidence. Such confidence, as often witnessed in Northern Ireland, is fickle (Graham 1994: 261; Duffy 1997). The means to impose these categories, the unwritten social rules and codes of conduct, are so embedded in communal everyday life that they are seldom challenged. The local community constructs everyday social space, in which both the territorial process and its results are effectively regulated. Too often this regulation is based on the fear of punishment, whether by fellow community members or outsiders.

L/Derry is indeed a city with many faces. After this mainly descriptive section on the contested territory and its players, I shall present a closer analysis of the empirical materials. Understanding the complex web of territorial discourse construction requires a deeper examination of the real-life and the conceptualisation of practical situations. Territoriality is not just an outcome or achieved condition, rather it is being constantly transformed and is reconstructed. Thus, the process and cultural logic of dividing practices play a crucial role in understanding the territorial order in L/Derry.

Urban Territoriality as a Process

To better understand the current dynamics of peace and conflict in Northern Ireland, it is necessary to illustrate the community-based *processes* reproducing social space and the discourses of territorial behaviour. In other words, attention should be paid to the geographies of territoriality, in which territory becomes the symbol of political domination and politicised practices (Shirlow 2001: 69). Formal institutions are here left outside the analysis (their role is widely studied in other academic works), even though they have direct and indirect effects on the formation and the structure of experiential stories in the localities. In this study I shall concentrate on the individuals, sub-groups and the broader communities of Catholics and of Protestants as agents in the *social categorisation of local space* and the production of a *sense of place*.

Social processes found in the localities have the tendency to either isolate the communities and the sub-groups from each other – and this most often occurs in L/Derry – or connect communities through some shared concerns. The latter development has been occasionally witnessed on the local scale, such as in the joint efforts to resolve the issue of late-night violence in L/Derry. However, the contested ground of L/Derry is a setting where the processes of *re-territorialisation* and *de-territorialisation*

are in constant interplay³⁴. In local communities these two opposite processes are communicated through the quest for security and comfort, claiming space or the search for a way out of the trap.

Constructing a Sense of Belonging

As Relph (1976: 34) pointed out “*people are their place and a place is its people,*” the intimate relationship between place and community is a crucial building block for meaningful living environments. These signified places embody comfort and a sense of community, which in a divided society have become important social resources for survival. In general in Northern Ireland the sense of community is high. The local housing estates have in the course of the conflict become places of safety for the members of the community residing in the territory. In addition, self-help networks and community care systems are highly developed, particularly in the Catholic areas. This has to do with the history of (ethnically-based) social and legal discrimination. Partly by their own choice the Catholic community was left out of the mainstream Northern Irish society in the early 20th century, and thus was forced to develop ways to survive on its own. It has been argued that the strength of the Catholic community derives from the confidence it has been able to create in the localities (e.g. Graham 1994). A shared narrative of territorial belonging and ownership also justifies the community’s cultural and political identity (Shirlow 2001: 67). This was clearly reflected in the discussions with the Catholic groups when they described their own community and the area they lived in:

Discussion:

C, M, 16: We have a great community here.

C, M, 15: Everybody stays together, if you know what I mean. And we look over each other.

C, M, 16: ...lend money and things...

C, M, 29: We would help each other around. We go out together.

C, F, 31: Have fun together.

C, M, 15: Socialising.

C, M, 29: We are small, very tight, you know.

C, F, 31: We have also very big sense of community safe in the area as people would watch out each other.

34 The ideas of de-territorialisation and re-territorialisation are extensively discussed by Deleuze and Guattari (1980/1988; translated by Massumi) in *A Thousand Plateaus. Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Their work utilises various examples taken from art, literature, nomadic tribes, Jewish history etc., to illustrate territorial processes, but it is the philosophical discussions on de- and re-territorialisation that construct the state, which are especially interesting. State as a war machine, or regime of capitalist system (taxation, fiscal power, public work, maintenance of army, landownership etc.) or any other territorial system is constructed in a constant interplay of de-territorialisation and re-territorialisation (Deleuze & Guattari 1988: 419, 508–510). In fact, the relationship between these two territorial processes is always relative: prevailing practice is always dependent on the milieu.

- C, M, 15: Auch, we would look after all these pensioners and all...
C, M, 16: Help them in shopping and things.

The sense of closeness in the community is viewed as one of the cornerstones of communal security. It makes strangers more noticeable and keeps the feeling of security in the locality at a high level. The mutual support and coherence among the community members guarantees that in difficult times no one is left alone. This view was presented in the stories of the individuals, but one should, borne in mind that in today's society social welfare is not as dependent on the local self-help structures as it was in the early 1970s. Yet, self-help definitely continues to characterise the local Catholic communities. These social networks have become part of the way of life.

The Protestant groups described their home territories in a totally different manner. The first thing that the Protestant single-identity groups argued for was how their area was different from any other area nearby. This again reveals the Protestant community's different manner of constructing a sense of place. Their definition of place is built on primarily on a sense of being in opposition to something; the significant characteristics of their home place are of secondary importance. Close relationships between community members in Protestant localities were less central in identity politics if compared with the Catholic localities. This also appeared frequently in focus group discussions:

Discussion:

- P, F, 26: It is not too bad, it is much better than other estates, so it is. There is not as much fighting in this estate.
P, M, 15: Because everybody knows each other.
P, F, 26: We don't have a strong sense of community. Well everybody are always looking only for themselves. They are too busy in looking after themselves rather than coming together and do something for everybody. You know what I mean, you have one set of people doing things and you have another set of people doing other things instead that all people coming together and doing one thing.

For the Protestant respondents locality is the place where they feel safe. Security is achieved through a similar mechanism to that used in the Catholic community, that of knowing everybody in the area. A comparison between the "*Catholic Derry City*", where "*we are seen as second-class citizens*" and Waterside in which "*we all are Protestants*" was made. Here again the spatial distinctiveness is clearly illustrated through boundary drawing between "their space" and "our place." The sense of belonging was often reinforced through the distinctive nature of the Protestant community from the "others," i.e. the Catholic community.

Interestingly, identity politics was heavily loaded with stereotypical claims made by both communities. As is widely known, the construction of an us/other- dichotomy often includes images of dirty or clean people (Douglas 1970; Sibley 1995). Otherness is connected to dirt and unpleasant things which cannot be found in one's own community. While these associations may be laughed at in discussions, they still live on among the local communities as part of the stories told about us and others. Negative *stereotypes* about others are maintained with great conviction but when similar negative

claims are made about one's own community, contextualisation as an explanatory strategy seems to appear. For example, for one Catholic respondent the clean home of Protestant implies that these people do not really enjoy normal family life, which in large Catholic families would mean a comfortable mess. This way untidiness becomes a positive resource in the identity process.

P, M, 17: We are cleaner. They [Catholics] don't wash themselves as we do.

Discussion:

C, M, 52: We were told that Protestant was a white blue fish...

C, F, 34: Protestant is orange...educated

C, M, 52: We were told that Protestant homes were always classified with very clean and tidy and Catholic homes as untidy...[laughs] well what else you could expect.

C, M, 70: They said that Protestant house was not lived in and Catholic was.

As Jarman (2001: 36) points out, individuals' life stories and understanding of place are always marked by their ethnic background. The means of awaking the sense of belonging typically stress cultural heritage, political loyalties or ideology, religious denominations and symbolism. An assault, whether verbal or physical, against an individual upholding one's identity is judged as an insult against the whole community. Commemorations, marches and protests are cultural features mentioned by most of the focus group respondents. All these practices have a tendency to create local confrontations, which can at times spread to other parts of Northern Ireland. None of the respondents mentioned less conflict-prone ways of celebrating one's cultural heritage and communal identity. Therefore, it is not surprising that violence was mentioned by many respondents as a way of raising the community spirit.

The constant search for security by all available means, and often this includes the use of violence, has created place-centred and politicised local communities who actively resist "others" (Shirlow 2001: 67). These cultural others and otherness take many forms in the Northern Irish context. Protesting against the presence of the British Army or rioting against the police in order to gain the right to march in a particular area, as well as territorial gang fights between Catholic and Protestant neighbourhoods were measures taken to protect the community and the territory. The culture of violence was explicit in several focus group discussions:

P, M, 15: There were lads coming from school and they got wheeling and all, some [teenagers] with baseball bats were giving them a wheel and they had to go to hospital. It is ironic that you are walking home from school and someone is waiting for you around the corner with a baseball bat.

Discussion:

M, M, 20: Young people just get too much drinking and start to fight

M, F, 19: You get too many people hanging around rather than going home

M, M, 19: That is the problem in Derry, just too many people are violent in Derry. It is just any excuse to start a fight, just any excuse.

Discussion:

C, M, 15: I think that Catholics on the other side of the water [river Foyle] would fight more like, against the Protestants, than the Catholics on this side of the river.

C, M, 29: Why do you think so?

C, M, 15: Like there is this Protestant area and this Catholic area, there is always fighting. There is always arranged fighting.

Acts of resistance, the use of force and violence have become part of the territorial politics in L/Derry. In a cruel way these controversial practices create *unity* and uphold categorical identity structures among the local communities. Moreover, violence and anti-social behaviour have extended beyond the tension-laden commemoration days and the marching season. Particularly in some working-class areas street violence occurs on a daily basis. Even the often veiled issue of the so-called silent supporters of violence was raised in one of the discussions:

Discussion:

P, M, 15: Petrol bombs and burning cars and stuff like that.

P, M, 17: Not the majority would support...

P, M, 15: What majority...if you look at the riots in this area... a lot of people come.

P, M, 17: But when it comes to the petrol bombs and stuff like that

P, M, 17: There would be only 20 or 30 who actually throw them

P, M, 17: We have something like 1000 houses

P, M, 15: But most of them would come down and watch it...

McEvoy-Levy's (2001) study on "*Youths, Violence and Conflict Transformation*" takes up the question of how the culture of violence is learned. She points out that it is not necessarily the direct experience, but parents' or relatives' experience (social memory) of violence and victimhood that constitutes this legacy. Even during formal ceasefires and the peace process, violence remains an immediate experience for many young people; equally, they experience the threat of violence (McEvoy-Levy 2001: 92–93). The findings of my research also support these conclusions. However, not all local communities accept the use of violence in their streets. From the seven focus groups organised in six different locations in L/Derry, only two groups from two different localities openly discussed the street disturbances and the support it had on the ground, especially among young people. Clearly, the sense of place and culture of violence are tightly connected. These two localities had suffered from plenty of anti-social activity which often involved their own youths. Furthermore, these localities had a bad reputation in the eyes of people living in L/Derry. However, as the experience in the focus group discussions showed, the culture of violence was not just an image, but something lived and reconstructed daily. Particularly, the youths in these localities glorified the image of violence deriving from earlier generations.

Revealing the practices that construct the sense of community and of place is indeed difficult, but the situation gets even more complex when analysing the cultural contexts of a segregated society. The idea that positive social practices result in a positive sense of place, and that negative practices construct sense of placelessness, does not necessarily work. In fact, sometimes controversial practices might create a feeling of ownership and unity in a particular place:

Discussion:

C, M, 16: This is the best [place]

C, M, 15: Why?

C, M, 16: I don't know

C, F, 15: It is just safe

C, M, 15: Because if one is fighting all the rest of them...

C, F, 15: ...are helping

C, M, 15: ...helps.

As the above quotation illustrates, place can be experienced as a safe haven, even if it is violence that is sometimes used in upholding communal unity. This is, however, only one part of the whole picture. Violence constructs “us” and “other” boundaries, but is also used against fellow-community members. Localities as places of comfort can in fact evolve from emancipatory to insecure and fluctuate (Oakes 1997). When this occurs, not even membership in the same identity category may guarantee security. Thus, the feeling of security and belonging even within one particular community (and geographically defined place) may be only partial.

Discussion:

(Mixed group)

C, F, 19: I live beside this place X [Catholic area] and it is alright in certain areas but around the top of the area it is very rough and there is often fights started. It is a really rough place.

C, M, 20: So it is a dodgy place...you don't go there to walk in the night time.

When discussing the use of force and violence in identity politics, it should be remembered that inter-communal violence is only one form, and intra-communal violence most often takes a marginal position in the discussions (e.g. McEvoy-Levy 2001), even though in the contemporary ceasefire period punishment attacks and internal gang feuding have continued (e.g. Darby 2000). In the focus groups not much was said about internal violence. Probably this silence is due to the fear of criticising one's own community and what might result of that.

M, M, 16: More Catholics are beaten up by their fellow Catholics than Protestants.

Discussion:

P, M, 17: It is not just guns anymore, it is baseball bats and punishment beatings. You don't do so much shootings in Northern Ireland anymore than punishment beatings.

P, M, 17: You can still get a bullet in your knee...

[silence]

The culture of violence raises up the general question of the importance of socialisation in a particular community and the cultural identity tradition. Only the mixed groups agreed that the both traditions of socialisation were valid. Respondents in the mixed groups argued that due to living in a particular area they had adopted a specific set of values, and people with another background had their own set of values. Furthermore, they pointed out that neither tradition is supposed to be superior. The mixed groups

stressed the one-sidedness of these images and the traditions that one is socialised to, as well as the fact that the possibility of seeing the other side of the story hardly exists. The single-identity groups usually argued that being brought up in their area meant that they had learnt not to trust on the other community:

C, M, 19: You could not trust them [Protestants].

C, M, 15: They are not your friends.

P, M, 17: If you have been brought up in [the name of local housing estate] you have learnt that Catholics are bitter people. Even though you are five years old you know that. That is the way we have been brought up.

P, M, 15: Brought up in a Protestant area seeing rioting and what is in the news, marching and stuff like that.

Generally, the respondents in single-identity groups did not feel any respect for the essence of the traditions and cultural socialisation among the other community. Further, two of the five single-identity focus groups totally ignored the right of the other community to practice their culture (see also Frame II and III). Because this recognition is lacking, most of the time, the blame for friction in the community relations is put on the shoulders of the other community by arguing: “*You cannot do anything, it is just the way they are.*” This assumption often functions as an easy way to legitimise divided reality and confrontations between exclusive identity categories. The above argument illustrates the fixity of dualistic categories. For the sake of communal and personal security, friends and enemies, safe havens and places of fear, “our cultural heritage” and “their cultural impotence” need to be constantly defined. This kind of exclusiveness in local identity politics aims to control and keep “otherness” outside the community’s social and physical territory. Whereas distinctive identity politics is indeed actively practiced among both the local communities, in some sense it also has become a must, an achieved condition, to which people have to resign themselves. In Northern Ireland cultural practices show the importance of effective socialisation: the more unity and support for the community’s own tradition is expressed, the more visible is the boundary between “us” and the “others.”

Furthermore, one of the major results of the sectarian conflict and the aim to preserve the territorial status quo, is the *ghetto mentality* found in many localities in Northern Ireland, but it is particularly intense in the most segregated single-identity areas. The ghetto mentality consists of fear of difference, the experience of alienation from mainstream society (whatever that is) and also a withdrawal into isolation by the community itself. The ghetto mentality is a spatial and social phenomenon as my analysis of the focus group discussions shows. As a spatial phenomenon the ghetto mentality is expressed in the geographical and historical trap which is continuously relived in localities. As a social phenomenon the ghetto mentality creates distinctiveness, mistrust, hatred and, moreover, apathy. One community worker said to me once that “*apathy is frozen anger*”, which illustrates the Northern Irish situation extremely well. This frozen anger is not just a working-class phenomenon, but exists in the middle-class communities as well. The underlying attitudes often have greater

influence than the ones which are publicly proclaimed, meaning that the anger is often labelled only as a working-class phenomenon because rioting and territorial marking is concentrated in working-class communities. In middle-class communities apathy flourishes but is not transformed into active opposition while there is another group of people expressing the same frustration.

FRAME II:



Figure 17. Ian Paisley marching with the “Apprentice Boys of Derry” (Hugh Callagher).

Marching reinforces territorial boundaries. Even though in L/Derry physical territories have changed a good deal as the Protestant community has mostly left the inner-city for other areas such as Waterside, mental boundaries are still stressed particularly when the yearly Apprentice Boys march takes place in central L/Derry. Marching is one of the most influential ways of socialising people into a specific social community and territorial order. Bands, flags, banners, and the route that the marchers use all symbolise the distinctions between “our place” and “their space.”

In the Catholic groups this picture provoked angry responses. People felt that the march should have not taken place because “*They get to march whenever they want and Catholics don’t (C, F, 15).*” They also pointed out that the Protestant march was on this (Catholic) side of the River, and this was unacceptable for them. As one of the respondents said: “*They should march in their own areas (C, F, 16).*”

The Protestant groups felt that the picture expressed a core community issue. They felt happy and proud about the fact that the marchers were there doing something for their country and “*fighting for their rights (P, M, 15).*” However, one contradictory opinion was found as well: “[I feel] *that I am looking at N Ireland’s past, trapped in a siege mentality, forcing an opinion on others (P, M, 29).*”

Feelings among the mixed groups were different from the two denominational groups. No categorical loyalties were claimed to either side, even though most respondents claimed either a Catholic or Protestant religious background. The mixed groups felt pity, embarrassment and anger when describing the picture. They argued that Ian Paisley was a ridiculous person, a bigot and triumphalist, and only in search of glory. As one of the respondents expressed it: “*I pity his narrow-mindedness (M, F, 17).*”

FRAME III:



Figure 18. Republican march to commemorate the Easter rising (Hugh Callagher).

The Catholic respondents identified strongly with this picture. The march and the symbolism connected memories of suffering, identity and conflict. *“This symbolises my cultural identity and traditions and that there is a sense of ownership within this (C, F, 31).”* More importantly, the argument was that it honoured the members of the community who had died during the conflict. This treatment of the dead as heroes was also found in the mixed group by respondents with Catholic background. Some also claimed to feel a direct identification with the crowds shown in the picture: *“I feel comfortable, I am familiar with these people (Mixed group, C, F, 19).”* Again, the traditional loyalty structures began to appear even within the mixed groups. However, there was a difference in opinions between the respondents in a fully Catholic group and the Catholics in the mixed group. In the mixed group the loyalties and identification were not emphasised with defiance. The deceased members of the community were discussed also in a negative tone, by arguing that too many have already died and the heroism in this issue is wrong.

The military appearance of the marchers was opposed and challenged by some Catholic respondents. *“Why have those men in the front have to dress up in a military style uniform – should people have not marched without them (C, M, 52).”* *“These people are so bitter that they parade about the people who have died, although they also kill people (Mixed group, C, F, 16).”*

Most of the Protestant respondents opposed the very idea of Catholics marching. There were, however, two exceptions: *“Catholics have rights to have their celebrations just like the Protestants (P, F, 19).”* *“People having a say on what they believe in (P, F, 26).”* The age of the respondents clearly influenced the opinion they had. In general, the older the respondents were, the less idealistic and radical were the opinions they had.

The argument made by a young male summarises the whole marching issue in Northern Ireland: *“I feel angry. This is as bad as the Orange marching. I think marches on the whole are bad as they stir up naturalistic [sic] feelings (M, M, 16).”* Atavistic feelings such as claiming space, enforcing identity, structuring loyalties are found in many societies, however, in the Northern Irish context to achieve these, the use of force and violence is often required.

In all focus group discussions socialisation into a particular community and place were strongly emphasised. Upbringing in certain areas within the city of L/Derry is connected to a specific political ideology, attitudes and sometimes even behaviour. The sense of place and the identity of the local territory are essential parts in the construction of the communal experience. Identity, tradition, ethnicity, landscape and security are all components of the sense of place. Smyth (1985: 6) however, makes, an important distinction between “full sense of place” and ethnicity. The latter, ethnic definition abstracts a few key symbols of communal identity and then presents them as markers of the whole community. These ethnic markers are often used, for example, in the urban space in Northern Ireland, where they function as symbols of the underlying territorial order. These ethnic markers construct only part, the visible surface, of the sense of place. Symbolic images are indeed crucial features in distinguishing of “our place” from “their space.” Marking occurs in both local communities. It is precisely in this way that the urban territorial order is constructed and communicated.

Ethnic symbols illustrate the ownership of a place and direct the sense of belonging to a particular ethnic community. In this way sense of place becomes almost like an image that people present for other people to see, and thus the complexities of everyday life are reduced to binary oppositions between “us” and “them.” The “full sense of place” implies the cultural contextuality in which a variety of social transformations occur. It is this social dynamics that gives strength and power to sense of place. Thus, sense of place is much more than just the symbolic landscape. It is the intersubjective “felt world of place” (cf. Smyth 1985: 4). In fact both an ethnically symbolised and a culturally experienced “felt world of place” is illustrated in Northern Ireland. As the following quote shows, it is the symbolic markers, sense of place and categorisation that together form the experiential contested urban territorialities:

Mixed group, C, M, 17: I feel free here, because I can wear my Ireland or Celtic top and my bracelet [colours of Irish flag with shamrocks] without the fear to be beaten up. As if I went to Waterside with this on, they would not let me go with it.

Symbols, images, social status and political loyalty also have a great effect on people’s experience of the sense of place:

Discussion I:

[Does religion matter:]

C, M, 52: It depends where you are. If you are in a hospital setting, you won’t ask the doctor, nurse or social worker about what religion you are. But when you are in a place which is clearly labelled or marked. [...] If you get an young people from a ghetto-mentality it will always be there.

C, F, 34: Auch.

C, M, 52: In a reasonable setting it is not an issue.

Discussion II:

M, M, 20: It depends on where you live in Derry, because everything come down to that I think.

M, F, 19: It just depends where you live and what kind of area.

M, M, 19: It has nothing to do with areas, just the people.

M, F, 19: It does really. When you have people in [name of Catholic estate] where you have very high depression and the whole Protestant thing and then you have people who don’t just care...[and therefore cause trouble].

In an everyday understanding the sense of place is foremost an intimate experience of the unity of self, the community and the territory. Sometimes, as Discussion II illustrates, the connection between this intimate experience and the conflict creates confusion. It may not be clear whether the Troubles and multiple division lines occur because of the people only, or because of a combination of socialisation, place identity and sense of place. My own view is that confrontations in urban borderlands always arise from complex socio-spatial dynamics, in which communities and spatial order are both constituents in the societal conflict.

Finally, it must be pointed out that even though the sense of place might easily be seen as enabling the identity politics, something that provides a framework and

supporting environment for communal behaviour, in a segregated conflict society *compulsion* is often present. For example, if a person does not have enough money to live in an area of private housing, he or she has to take sides: to live in a council owned house in an area dominated by the Protestant or the Catholic community. Such dualistic categories force people to choose either-or positions, i.e., either one is part of this local community or not. Obviously, dualistic categories always leave some people outside the defined sense of place. It is partly this exclusion which creates the experiences of rootlessness and placelessness. Such experiences are found particularly among the mixed families (one parent from a Catholic and the other from a Protestant background), as well as among the people who aim to challenge the contemporary restricted way of life. For these people the local place with historical and cultural features is more like a territorial trap than a safe haven. Even though many of these people are prominent in their community, often in a very positive manner, they would hardly endorse the optimism of a young girl interviewed in L/Derry:

M, F, 17: People don't live here [L/Derry] because they have to or anything, but because they want to live here.

Images of “us” and “others” embedded in socialisation are largely stereotypical and not grounded in real-life experiences or the grounding is highly politicised and one-sided. The sense of belonging of one group always reinforces the sense of not belonging for another and sometimes leaves people stuck in between these two poles. However, this is exactly the logic through which socialisation functions and has a normative effect on people's behaviour and opinions. As the L/Derry case illustrates, characteristic in local borderlands are dichotomies through which people view their life. There are either friends or enemies, churches or chapels, masses or services, white-blue-red kerbs or green-white-gold kerbstones, Orangemen or Fenians, “our politicians or theirs,” “our places or their spaces,” “our side of the city or theirs,” and Londonderry or Derry. However, people want to believe in this dualistic vision, because it creates comfort and a sense of control. It is this popular support that gives legitimacy to everyday territorial politics and naturalises divided spaces. Due to this overarching categorisation prevalent in the localities, competition, confrontations, boundary construction and territorial claiming characterise the local borderlands in L/Derry.

Claiming Territory

Territorial claiming, even in contemporary Northern Ireland, is still partially based on competition over physical territories. However, due to the rather fixed territorial settings as reproduced by the socio-spatial dialectic of the conflict, territorial claiming is mostly confined to the social, cultural and political spheres. In other words, the re- and de-territorialisation occurs largely through politicised everyday life practices. It is here that spatial, cultural and political categories are upheld and *territorial otherness* – “us/ here” and “others/there” (see Paasi 1996) – is constructed in L/Derry.

Contests over the legitimate description of reality, identity and territory are an embedded part of community construction in Northern Ireland. The city of L/Derry is

contested through many dimensions. To identify with a particular territory requires a geographical definition and therefore *naming*. Even the name of the city expresses one of the many existing dichotomies. Using either Derry or Londonderry raises different and contradictory reactions among the Protestant and Catholic communities. For the Protestant community the city they live in is called Londonderry, which carries them back to the early 17th century. The renaming of the city was a part of a colonial strategy. The Catholics instead identify with the same territory but with the name Derry. The name of the city has evolved into a political symbol reflecting the main loyalty boundaries existing on the ground (see Figure 19).



Figure 19. A tourist information board in the city centre of L/Derry.

The politics of naming places becomes significant in situations where two groups have competing desires over a place and the name. For the person who scribbles over the London part of the name, the city is not called Londonderry but Derry (see Figure 19). The act itself might seem rather trivial, but in fact it reveals a lot about the loyalties behind the scene. The name of the city is a highly politicised symbol, used very cleverly in daily communication. Moreover, it demarcates local territorial preferences and national desires: Derry or Doire (its Gaelic name) as part of the (all-)Irish nation or Londonderry as a historic Protestant colonial city claiming strong a British connection. “Derry people” as they call themselves are Catholics living mostly on the West bank of the city, and people calling the same city Londonderry are Protestants. This distinctive naming of L/Derry occurs in the wider Northern Ireland context too.

Naming being one of the most obvious symbolic acts in the construction of territorial discourse, it also appeared frequently in all the focus group discussions. As a short extract from a discussion shows, the name a person uses of the city is not trivial. It reveals the speaker’s communal background and sometimes even political opinions, particularly when the Gaelic version is used. Later in this study an example is given of how the use of a particular name for the city can in fact serve as an escape from a

difficult or threatening situation. Naming as a communal practice has become a crucial element in banal nationalism, in which the homelands are constantly re-constructed. Naming together with other forms of flagging one's nation displays the communities' positions and distances them from the neighbouring communities (e.g. Billig 1995: 41, see also Tuan 1991), this being at the heart of territorial politics.

Discussion:

P, M, 15: It has always been Londonderry. Aye, Catholics call it Derry and Protestants Londonderry.

P,M, 17: Down in the maps it is Londonderry.

P, M, 17: If you look at the maps...aye.

An interesting point in the discussion is how the youths legitimise and base their opinion on existing maps, which in their view show the real name of the city. Indeed, the maps of Northern Ireland almost always refer to the city as Londonderry, because this is the name officially acknowledged by the British government. Maps that recognise both names are rare. Sometimes maps printed in the Republic of Ireland use only the name Derry, or its Gaelic version Doire.³⁵ This is the case with road signs in the Republic of Ireland, too.

In following up the conversation described above, it becomes clear how territorial identity politics and naming are intertwined (see also Frame IV). The discussion over the name of the city continues in the group and is heated by an example, told by one of the group members, about a usage of "Derry" in a TV commercial. Even though some of the members in the Protestant group argue that the "*other name*" (participants did not want to say it aloud) is shorter and easier to say, they all concur that the city should only be called Londonderry. It can be said that in all focus group discussions the name of the city was used as a political tool in some part of the conversation, to point out, for example, that it was their city of Derry or Londonderry that we were discussing. By using either name exclusion took place: this particular place was only for "us" not for "them." These few examples of naming illustrate the efforts to find and construct purified categories, in which ritual order is based on hierarchy, dominance and divisive boundary processes (see Sibley 1995; also Bernstein 1967, 1971; for further discussion of the name of the city see e.g. Doherty 1996; Lacey 1996; Wilson 1996)³⁶. Thus, naming is a crucial factor in local territoriality; in particular, it illustrates how the abstract territorial discourse is transformed into mundane daily activity.

35 The very question of power and mapping has been a much researched topic in the recent academic literature. See Jackson (1989); Harley (1992); Pickles (1992); Ferguson (1996); Krishna (1996); Dorling & Fairbairn (1997: 65–81); Häkli (2001b: 412–416).

36 The problem of naming appears in many borderland contexts, such as in Catalonia (Häkli 2001a) and the Basque country (Raento 1997; Raento & Watson 2000).

FRAME IV:



Figure 20. Free Derry Corner in a Catholic Bogside housing estate (Hugh Callagher).

The Free Derry mural is one of the most famous images of the Northern Irish Troubles all over the world. Originally it was painted in the late 1960s when the Catholic Bogside area was one of the “no-go” areas and the heartland of Republican resistance. At the time it marked the checkpoint to enter into the Republican-dominated area. “Free” meant no police and Army patrols, and stressed the desire for a united Ireland, which Derry would be part of.

The old house wall with the slogan: *You are now entering free Derry*, was the picture where the communally based loyalties of the thirty-six interviewees began to take on different shapes than before. This became obvious especially in the mixed groups, which previously had taken a pluralist stance but now expressed views more connected to their own communal background. Therefore, a greater diversity of opinions and even diversity of contradictions appeared. One of the respondents from a mixed group pointed out that he was proud because the wall was a memorial for the people who had fought and died for Ireland. On the other hand it was also argued that: *“I don’t like the way people have to show that they are the victims and that their view is the only view (Mixed group, no religion, M, 16).”*

Interestingly, this picture raised many territorial claims. The descriptions such as *“our town”*, *“totally Catholic area”* were used. The invisible boundary lines also were stressed: *“I feel safe as I can enter that community without fear (C, M, 16).”* The Free Derry Corner was seen as a symbol of “our territory,” a place into which Catholic could enter freely and confidently. Many of the Catholic respondents stressed the history and the remembrance of the victims of the Troubles. Free Derry Corner was something to identify with, part of the Catholic community, mind set and resistance. This kind of inclusion also has the exclusive dimension embedded in it.

The people (mostly Protestants) who felt that this symbol excluded them from the whole place, claimed that no such place even existed. Thus, the reactions among the Protestant respondents were angry and contemptuous. When looking at the picture they felt “*disgusted*” and “*sick*” and argued that the Catholics (or *Taigs*) are bitter people. They felt that it was a symbol of bigoted Catholics. Moreover, they stressed the question of the legitimate name of the city: “*I feel disgusted because there is no such place as Derry, it is Londonderry (P, M, 17).*” Generally speaking the reactions to Free Derry Corner showed how naming is claiming and how much power there is loaded into territorial symbolism.

Claiming territory is *not only a discursive practice*, but it often has *physical forms and results*. Demographic changes in the contemporary territory of L/Derry have been considerable throughout the centuries³⁷. The quest for the control of territory has involved several confrontations between the majority and minority populations in the area. In earlier centuries, and in some cases still at the beginning of the present phase of conflict in Northern Ireland, demographic change was sought by conquering land and pushing the others away to the fringes of the territory. The contemporary territorial divisions in L/Derry have stayed rather fixed since the mid-1970s, but confrontations still occur about the domination of *social space*. Before discussing this dynamic in greater detail, it is important to point out some recent developments in the sectarian demography, which might well have a large impact on the future residential patterns in the L/Derry area.

A case in point is Waterside, which has gradually become more dynamic in terms of segregation. Slowly but surely, more Catholics are moving in, and for this there are two main reasons. First, there are not enough housing developments for the Catholic population in Cityside and Waterside offers more opportunities to find suitably-sized housing. Second, house prices are a bit lower in Waterside³⁸. Therefore, the Protestant majority in Waterside is shrinking and the share of the Catholic population in the area is approaching 40 percent. The consequences of these demographic changes are difficult to foresee. If we look at the history, it can be argued that the Protestant community has a tendency to vote with their feet, i.e. they may leave the area (Smyth 1996a, 1996b). Because the statistical information is not available yet, no definite conclusion can be made. Certainly this issue is something to be monitored in the next census (made during 2001 and available for public use in 2003). It is already possible to argue that some new confrontation lines have appeared in Waterside. For example, the area called the Triangle used to be relatively safe and also a mixed area. It was free from sectarian graffiti as well. From late 1999 on there have been more acts of violence in the area, committed by youths living in Triangle, and it has been used as a meeting venue for

37 First the site of the early 12th century monastery of Doire Cholmcille, Derry, came to be known as Londonderry, which was the largest Protestant colonial city in the North-West of Ireland in the 17th century, whereas in the contemporary situation L/Derry is one of the most Catholic-dominated (over 70 % of the city’s population) areas in the whole of Northern Ireland.

38 Information from two interviews with Local Housing Executive managers in Richmond Chambers and Waterside District Office 2000.

organised fights with the Protestant and Catholic youths from the nearby working-class housing estates. It is difficult to say if these confrontations occur only because of the demographic changes in the area. However, it is safe to argue that the Triangle and some other areas in Waterside have recently become seismic zones. This also supports the hypothesis that local territorial politics reflect a constant negotiation process, which is always culturally and socially contextual.

The *dynamics of claiming the social space* can be seen in the city centre of L/Derry, which illustrates how differently a place can be perceived during different times of the day. Normally in the daytime the city centre is considered to be a neutral area for both communities. During the most tense times in the summer marching season and occasionally outside this period the nature of social space changes even during the daytime. The main reason for these changes relates to the overall fear for one's personal safety. A tense political situation, sectarian attacks or even the threat of violence reinforce the perception of a social environment which is open only for one part of the community and which in effect excludes the other. This is something that actually happens during the night time in the city of L/Derry. For many young Protestants the city centre becomes a "no-go" area during the night, because they are convinced that Catholic youths hanging around the city centre constitute a threat to their safety. At times this fear has been justified because many fights have occurred, especially during the weekends. Despite the sectarian label, most of the weekend violence in L/Derry is actually alcohol-related and often the fights have become an organised amusement or "craic" as the youth call it.

Anyhow, the behaviour of the youths in the city centre changes the nature of social space and closes it from one section of the community. It is obvious that in L/Derry the politics of social space changes more radically depending on the time of the day than for example in the city centre of Belfast today. Two of the main reasons for this are the actual geographical division and the sectarian demography of L/Derry, which follows the River Foyle and leaves the city centre in the Catholic-dominated area. The residential areas begin right outside the city walls, which mean that Catholic youths have easy access to the town and back home. The Protestant youths, if willing to come to the city centre and have a night out by going to discos and pubs, would always have to travel from Waterside and then go back. According to some Protestant youths taking part in focus group interviews, the actual journey was the time when they were scared for their safety. If someone takes a taxi from home to the pub and back, and does not reveal his or her identity or place of residence, most likely no trouble will occur (Kuusisto 1998).

Many divisive boundaries and collective affiliations with defined territories make the situation on the local level normative and volatile. The cultural confrontation is located in the urban environment and in the relationships between the local communities. Several of these confrontations take place in the local interface zones, where the Catholic and Protestant housing estates exist in close geographical proximity. Violence, rioting and vandalism occur more frequently in these areas than in other single-identity estates. This kind of behaviour is not directed against the territory *per se*, but it serves to emphasise people's identity, loyalty to a certain community and cultural heritage.

An interesting example of cross-community confrontations are the celebrations of cultural heritage. Obviously the widely contested tradition of marching in both communities provokes fierce opposition. However, there are many more cultural festivities such as St. Patrick's Day or the Somme commemorations (commemoration of First World War victims), which often are viewed merely as an attempt to claim the city as one community's social space by excluding the other community (see Figures 21 & 22). In order to serve this goal these events are heavily loaded with one-sided symbols, which definitely exclude the other cultural tradition from sharing in the same festivity. For example St. Patrick's Day includes Irish music, traditional Irish dancing, whereas during the Somme commemorations people wear red paper-poppies on their clothes. The Somme commemorations take their special flavour from the fact that most men who fell in the Battle of Somme in 1916 were part of Ulster division formed (mainly) of Protestants. In general, it is the over-politicisation and communal one-sidedness of these symbolic markers that annoy people and prevent both communities from enjoying these cultural festivities and days of remembrance. This way the "ethnic" markers of sense of place are effectively used in claiming space. Interesting point in these above examples is that the claiming takes place in perceivably public space of city centre. To city centre people seem to attach more dynamic and diverse senses of place than to the housing estates for example. The competition over the legitimate sense of place and over the dominance of social space are constantly evolving processes in L/Derry. This clearly shows how claiming space is not a thing in the past but has its daily dynamic on the local level.



Figure 21. St Patrick's Day celebrations in the L/Derry city centre mall in March 2000.



Figure 22. World Wars-statue to which the garlands of poppies are laid on Somme commemoration day.

If social and cultural place politics is constantly contested in L/Derry, so is the *political sphere*. In political discourse(s) claiming territory means a constant search for answers to the following questions: who has the power to rule the localities, through which ways and for what purpose? In Northern Ireland politics is one of the realms in which territorial claiming is constantly practised. Moreover, in Northern Ireland political support is a highly spatial phenomenon. Due to party loyalty many localities can be defined roughly by their political appearance, in other words: Nationalist, Republican, Unionist, Loyalist and mixed localities. This has meant that politics and party support can be approached in a similar manner to any other forms of the territorial ramifications in L/Derry.

The political culture in Northern Ireland has evolved enormously since the end of political discrimination called gerrymandering. Some of the deepest scars in the political power games were, however, left by gerrymandering practices, which meant the deliberate redrawing of electoral districts' boundaries. This was done to prevent the Catholic population from gaining parliamentary or municipal representation that would be an equitable reflection of their number in society (Konarski 1991: 10–11). L/Derry was most seriously affected by this discriminatory practice. In the early 1970s the long-standing gerrymandering and other such practices in local government were abolished through a series of electoral reforms. Even though these reforms removed most of the electoral grievances from the official political arena, still at times among the Catholic community bitterness raises its head and arguments such as being treated

like “second-class” citizens are still heard and commonly used in political rhetoric. The drawing of unfair political boundaries created clear-cut majority vs. minority settings on local level. Segregated communities became distinctive not only due their ethnic composition, but also due to their political appearance. Opportunities to take part in political decision-making have radically changed since those days. Nowadays, although both communities have equal access to resources, the territorial dimension in political opinions can still be discerned on local level. Thus, it is necessary to discuss politics and territoriality together.

In the political arena the new winds of peace have blown after the cease-fires of 1997 and the Belfast agreement of 1998. The local political field in L/Derry has seen some significant developments. Previously the Catholic community had one major political party, which thus represented majority opinion in the city. This was the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) founded by Derryman John Hume in 1970. The SDLP is still the largest party in the area and wins a majority of the Nationalists’ votes, but Sinn Féin (SF) has become a strong opponent, especially because they are competing for the same votes, that of the Nationalist community. Sinn Féin supporters mostly identify with Republicanism, which is more radical in its approach than Nationalist thinking. Previously, Sinn Féin was considered to be an extremist party, but since the peace process they have in fact attracted more supporters from the mainstream Nationalistic bloc. This has been one of the carefully thought out tactics on the part of SF in implementing their peace rhetoric (e.g. Shirlow & McGovern 1998).

In the local council election in May of 2001 it was expected that Sinn Féin would gain more seats than ever before in L/Derry. This did not happen, even though SF campaigned effectively and increased its number of votes. In fact, this illustrates another factor in party loyalty. Personal views and preferences might change over time and become somewhat more radical or mainstream than previously, but still most of the people continue to support the same party they have voted for over many years. This being one of the results of political socialisation in a particular community. Thus, in the May 2001 local council elections the seats were shared out among the parties in similar proportions to the previous election four years ago. In the Derry City Council the dominant party continues to be the SDLP with 14 seats. Sinn Féin has 8 seats, which means that altogether the Catholic community is represented by 22 local councillors. The Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) has 3 seats and the DUP has 4 seats. In addition, the Protestant bloc has one independent Alderman, as the Protestant parties call their council representatives. The representation in the local council is almost equal to the ratio of Catholics and Protestants in the city. For the local people the power-positions in politics become crucial in ruling territorially divided localities, especially, if any social or economic development is desired in the area.

Frustration with the constant political power-struggles has led to a growing tendency towards extremism in both communities. This tendency has intensified since the peace agreement: some moderate Unionists are moving towards Loyalist parties such as the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) and some Nationalists towards Republicanism (Wilson 2001: 5). Furthermore, the division between the Nationalists and Republicans seems to grow wider all the time. For example, the hostility between the two Catholic

parties can be seen locally in the council meetings, where the SDLP and SF are said to be almost at war.

The reasons why SF is increasing its support locally are many. For some ex-SDLP supporters voting for Sinn Féin might express the frustration caused by the Unionists' lack of commitment (as the majority of Catholic community sees it), towards the peace process. In order to get Unionist politicians to discuss "for real" some people think that a vote for a more radical approach will increase the pressure for compromise on the other side. The frustration is illustrated, for example, in the decommissioning dispute. Part of the Republican community believes that decommissioning is just an excuse for Unionists to delay the sharing of power, and thus voting for SF is almost a protest vote, even for some moderate people. The new and more aggressive campaign of Sinn Féin is based on an active presence in the local communities and on youth activities (SF youth centres) which will eventually bring new blood for their ranks. In addition, the presence of two Sinn Féin Ministers in the local Northern Irish Assembly has attracted national and international media coverage and locally the first ever SF mayor was elected in L/Derry for the year 2000–2001, both of which influence the support figures. Mayor Cathal Crumley (SF) was the first elected mayor from Sinn Féin in Northern Ireland and even in the all-Ireland context the previous Republican mayorship was seen in the 1940s.

The minority Protestant community in L/Derry is rather more inclined to support extremist views in formal politics than the Catholics. In the local council the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) has one seat more than the moderate Ulster Unionist Party (UUP). It is this minority position that has increased the support for radical views. The fragmentation of political loyalties, especially within Unionism, is evident (Porter 1998: 22–23). Given that a number of political parties now compete for the support of the Protestants, that Protestant opinion is divided on the degree of allegiance owed to Britain, that polarisation is frequently apparent between the UUP and the DUP, that Anglo-Irish relations have developed since 1985 and that there is international involvement in Northern Irish politics, it is no wonder that there is much confusion in the ranks of the Protestants. This has meant that the role of the Unionists in power-sharing and devolution is being constantly redefined (Miller 1993: 56; Porter 1998: 23–41)³⁹. It is precisely on the local level where these political divisions and internal confusion materialise.

A powerful position in the political field often corresponds with a strong position in local place politics. The relationship between formal politics and party supporters and territoriality is one fascinating feature of the Northern Irish context. However, even though the tendency to claim political loyalties remains strong in Northern Irish politics, relatively moderate attitudes have, at times, enabled discussions across the spatio-political divisions. It might be too optimistic to assume that the new division lines amongst the communities might be transferred to allegiances across the formerly exclusive blocs of Protestants and Catholics, meaning that, for example, the moderate Unionists and Nationalists would co-operate on some common issues and organise

39 There are also Loyalist parties, such as the Ulster Democratic Party (UDP), and the Progressive Unionist Party (PUP).

themselves against the extremists on both sides. However, it does seem that loyalty structures in (territorialised) formal politics are becoming more fragmented than previously. In this development lies both hope for a better future but also fear of constant disagreement and unbridgeably wide contradictions between the different sections.

Territorial claiming or even conquering are embedded in the cultural logic of Northern Irish society. Claiming occurs both in informal and formal settings. In the contemporary situation claiming mostly focuses on the control of social space rather than of physical space. Still the physical boundary drawing, symbolising the divisions and experiences of these visible and invisible boundaries, is crucial in identity and place politics. In a dichotomised society loyalties and positions are most clearly present in the everyday practices through which the purified territories are constructed or when this status quo is challenged.

Boundary Processes

“Boundaries form indispensable protections against violation and violence, but the divisions they sustain in doing so also carry cruelty and violence. Boundaries provide preconditions of identity, individual agency and collective action, but they also close off possibilities of being that might otherwise flourish. Boundaries both foster and inhibit freedom; they both protect and violate life (Connolly 1996: 141).”

Boundaries and particularly the social processes that constitute them have again become one of the major interest areas in many disciplines such as geography (e.g. Paasi 1996; Herb & Kaplan 1999; Newman 1999; Kaplan & Häkli 2002), anthropology (e.g. Cohen 1985; Donnan & Wilson 1999), and international relations (e.g. Shapiro & Alker 1996; Albert & Brock 1996; Connolly 1996). It is the wider contextuality and cultural understanding of boundaries that has made them a fascinating object of study. Newman and Paasi (1998) define the nature of boundary as something which should not be restricted to a border area or landscape only, but which is manifested in various social and cultural narratives (Newman & Paasi 1998; Paasi 1999: 75; also Albert 1999: 63). In understanding the partially hidden nature of boundary construction, it is necessary to point out that “boundaries are not merely lines on the ground but above all manifestations of social practices and discourses (Paasi 1999: 75).” In the works cited above, the role of boundaries has mainly been discussed in the context of state territoriality and national imagination. However, the same definition of boundaries and their narrated nature applies in local level territoriality. Boundaries in local imagination create security, operate as tools for categorising space and controlling interactions, and furthermore they have become crucial elements in upholding the divided reality and conflict-inclined territorial politics. There are various practices through which the social boundary discourses come into existence and are given a legitimate position. Some of these contextually bound processes will now be assessed in the case of L/Derry.

One of the major results of the borderland construction in L/Derry is that spaces of fear and comfort guide social interaction. A person does not go to Waterside because it is not safe, or someone i.e. a Catholic, does not want to spend money in Protestant shops and shops only locally in the Catholic community. Similarly, Protestant people feel that on the “Derryside” they would not be as welcome “here in Waterside.” Going across the town from Waterside is a necessity in order to use the city centre facilities such as shops, cinemas and restaurants, whereas people from the Cityside hardly ever go across the River, unless they are travelling out of town or are sick and need serious healthcare treatment in Altnagelvin area hospital. Thus, it is not surprising to hear a Protestant youth saying that “*we have to go to city centre, there is no other possibility (F, 14)*” or Catholic youth worker saying: “*There are some people in this [youth] centre who have never been in Waterside (M, 52).*” The social rules are tight and most often appreciated. “*You do not go across the water [to the city centre] if you do not want to get your head kicked (P, M, 15).*” This is not to say that people from Waterside would not go across the town at all, but as one of the Catholic respondents commented: “*You would try to stay as much in your own area as you can even if there is not so much to do (M, 16).*”

“*There is always this fact that a person is Catholic like and we are Protestant or vice versa (P, M, 17).*” This claim was frequently used to justify mistrust, actions against the other, and the current divided reality by the respondents in the single-identity groups. Living in small enclaves and single-identity pockets within the city is often seen as the only option guaranteeing safety. All the groups stressed that it would be safer for Catholics to live in Cityside and Protestants in Waterside. The individuals living on the opposite side of this perceived safest zone expressed difficulties they had met:

C, M, 19: Right, I live in Waterside and if I say that in Derryside you would get a kicking because people automatically assume that you are Protestant. But I am a Catholic living in Waterside. And like he [points to other participant] is from the South [Republic of Ireland] and people assume he is Catholic but he is Protestant.

No religion, M, 16: When I moved to England they knew I was Irish and they did not have bother about it. I moved back here and now I don't have religion and I am stuck with both sides. Some people who were Catholics said right you are Protestant and Protestants would say you are a Catholic because I live in Cityside, you know.

Social and often invisible, discursively constructed boundaries need to be guarded just like any other boundaries and borders. The logic is much the same as with national frontiers, the difference being, that on the local scale no official legislative regulations exist and the practices are structured as a part of everyday life; restrictions and possible boundary-crossings directly affect the way of life. Often free movement across the boundary is restricted by rules imposed on inter-communal socialising. For the sake of communal safety “strangers” need to be confronted and questioned as to what they are doing in the area. During the high intensity phase of the conflict, ignoring such communal safety mechanisms might have resulted in a car bomb exploding on the street or a petrol bomb thrown through a window. Therefore, wandering around an

estate still often results in the following question: “*Are you lost dear, are you looking for something dear?*” Such seemingly kind concern is often a hidden safety measure. It is an effective and polite way to check people, but simultaneously one of the social practices that uphold communal integration and that distinguish the “others” from “here.” Thus, local boundaries function as guarantees of safety and as tools of control. As one of the interviewees pointed out: “*Individuals who are not walking in the area with the good intentions are already running away when someone is trying to approach them (P, F, 26).*” The examples interviewees gave about their own experiences of being questioned were sometimes distressing to hear, even though on most of these occasions no physical assault occurred. Still, the anxiety it had left in the mind was still acute for many.

Discussion:

C, M, 16: I was in Protestant area last week and they were not very happy about it.

K-A: Why do you think that?

C, M, 16: They asked which football team I supported.

K-A: And what did you support?

C, M, 16: None. I just said none and walked on.

C, M, 29: Were you scared in that area then?

C, M, 16: Was not, big boy me [is very serious]

C, F, 31: Did you feel intimidated?

C, M, 16: Sure I did! Aaa...aaa...I don't want to talk about it.

Especially the younger generation has developed clever and sophisticated ways of getting information about people's background, drawing the line of distinction, by asking, for example, about a person's favourite football team. Catholic youths support Celtic and Protestant youths Rangers, which both play in the Scottish League. Support for these teams expresses loyalty to either community in general but is also marked in clothing such as football shirts, arm bands, scarves and hats. Football tribalism has become part of the territorial symbolism in the community conflict in Northern Ireland (see Figure 23). Figure 23 illustrates how physical boundaries are often also marked with political symbols that aim to proclaim the local power-relations even more directly. The houses seen in the picture are in the Catholic dominated area, but just few blocks away is a small Protestant enclave. The Celtic-sign also faces the River Foyle and can thus be clearly seen from the East bank, where many Protestants live. Looking closer “IRA” can be seen in the right-hand corner of the picture. This also provides an indication for the viewer about the political ideology of some of the residents of this particular area. Boundary in this case is physical divider, a barrier to trespass and communication, it is symbolically marked and shows some traces of the cultural identity of the community residing in the area. It illustrates unity within the area and distinguishes “our (cultural) place” from “their space”. It is precisely these multidimensional roles of local boundary lines that create the puzzle of borderlands, where, as Connolly has claimed, “both protection and violation of life” is taking place.



Figure 23. Supporting Celtic graffiti in the Catholic/ Protestant interface in L/Derry.

Particularly interesting in a conflict society is the boundary drawing between strangers and friends. It is a necessary social practice when communal security is sought. When asked in the focus groups who would be classified as a stranger in their area and would these strangers be welcomed by the community, the respondents in the single-identity groups always came to similar conclusions. First, strangers were defined as “someone who you do not know,” “a person who does not live or work in the area.” Foreigners would not be strangers because one could easily see if they were tourists or not, at least if one went to talk to them and their accent revealed that these individuals were foreigners. These strangers are welcomed in the community because “*they are more like friends.*” The real strangers actually are the people who one knows by the name of their community, but still they are not really known at all. These strangers are called Catholics or Protestants, depending on which locality one is in. In general, the opinion in single-identity groups was that if one can identify the stranger with the label of Catholic or Protestant, he/she is not your friend but enemy. The most radical views on this issue were expressed by youngsters living in the most segregated areas. These young people had a very clear vision of who their friends and enemies are.

K-A: Who would be a stranger?

Discussion:

C, F, 15: If Protestant would walk down the street someone would know and they would tell the rest of the people then we would stone them and kill them.

C, M, 15: I have punched one before. I asked his driving licence...run after him and punched him.

P, F, 26: I would not think that there was any problems with whatever Americans, Finnish or Swedish or wherever you are coming from as long as you are not from the town or whatever. You are not from Derry or IRA or like that. It depends on which estate you are. In this estate you are not welcome if you are part of UDA (Ulster Defence Association)

The tribalism among the young people is high, which partly explains the tense atmosphere when the question of crossing these cultural and social boundaries was introduced in the focus group discussions. Discussions showed that some breaching and crossing of boundaries was possible when the so-called enemies met in an institutional setting such as organised events in a youth club. Even then the meetings had to be monitored strictly and many rules on behaviour, clothes and suitable vocabulary were discussed prior to meeting with the youths from the other community. The setting in which an attempt is made to breach the boundaries is crucial. For example, visiting a youth club from the other community is tolerated, whereas a stranger on the street may not be.

Discussion:

K-A: What if there would be a group coming from the youth club on the other community? Would it be ok?

P, M, 17: Aye, to the youth club so it is...[ok]

P, F, 19: In an organised project it would be ok

K-A: What about just hanging around?

All together: NO, No way!

P, M, 17: We would just get rid of them...in body bags.

Such a borderland mentality is extremely hard to change, not least because the same security logic may be used in reverse against the other community. The planned paramilitary activity and organised street violence often undermine the illusion of security attained by the boundary (re-)construction. When these security mechanisms are constantly challenged and attacked the sense of security decreases and the local communities feel more vulnerable. A vicious circle ensues: the heightened sense of insecurity strengthens the local boundary lines and increases hostility. These bounding and exclusionary measures do not have long-lasting effects and fear and insecurity soon re-establish themselves in the everyday experience of people, especially in the areas where attacks across the communal boundaries take place almost weekly. L/Derry consists of many boundary lines like this. Sometimes boundary construction has led to the building of “peace walls” as a safety measure. These walls most often are found in the interface zone of Catholic and Protestant working-class estates. In L/Derry one of these seismic zones is found near the city centre.

There are threats all the time because we are physically attacked at least once a week, sometimes if there is political tensions we are attacked 3 or 4 times a week. You learn to live with that and control the risk factor. It is all about identifying hazards and then controlling the hazards. We have a security wall that goes around the estate. So that gives us security. We used to have disorder. People marching in and breaking up the places and therefore now we have a security wall to protect us. (Community worker, P, M)

But the experiences from other parts of Northern Ireland show that peace walls do not offer a permanent solution. During the summer of 2001 rioting and violence occurred in West and East Belfast. These communities have had peace walls since the early 1970s, but because of demographic changes new walls are being built as a security measure. This is how an old woman saw the situation:

“Before we got the peaceline up it was terrible and then the peaceline seemed to give us a break. But now they are doing it over that too.” (BBC 20.7.2001)

Peace walls and CCTV cameras are short term security measures. They can never be the final answer to the tensions in community relations. What often follows from these bounding efforts is the deepening of mistrust and the increase of serious violent attacks across the peace walls. The quest for greater security is then stressed with higher walls and barred windows. This in fact happened in the L/Derry city centre when the nearby Protestant enclave built a new, modern peace wall with security cameras, because the community felt that the old wall was not effective enough (see also Figure 11).

Even though the reality is as described above, it is not the way most of L/Derry people would like it to be. In principle, people on both sides are against this kind of restricted reality and hope that everybody could live together. Still there are very few people who are brave enough to stand up against the system (and particularly their own community) and challenge the way of life in this divided city.

Sharing, i.e. accepting the plurality of cultural identities and blurring exclusive boundaries, is a widely discussed topic locally, but as often in borderland contexts the same issue means different things for different people, thus making any kind of synthesis or compromise difficult. In the interviews people were asked if L/Derry was a shared city in which both Catholics and Protestants could exist equally. Four out of seven groups concluded that the city was not shared at all. L/Derry was viewed as a Catholic city. The two Protestant groups stressed that the city cannot be shared because “*there are a lot of things missing in my area which would be in the Catholic side of the town: recreation facilities, night-life, shops, advising centres and all voluntary things (F, 26).*” These respondents claimed that sharing could become a reality only if there were an equal amount of economic investment and opportunities for both communities. For the Catholic single-identity groups L/Derry would be shared city if there were an equal number of people from both communities. As one of the Catholic groups concluded, the city is not shared for Protestants. They also argued that the opportunities are there but not the numbers yet. Again, the experience of belonging either to the minority or majority defines the dialogue between the social and spatial belonging. Another Catholic group came to the conclusion that L/Derry is not shared, at least not during the marching season, when “*Protestants more or less have the city for themselves (M, 15).*” Actually, in L/Derry there are only two (or occasionally three) days during which the Loyal Orders march in the city centre of L/Derry. However, the image these Catholic youths (living in an extremely Nationalist area) had expresses how they see the Protestant community as competing for the ownership of the city. None of the single-identity groups (with youths) thought that sharing would entail communication, free access to facilities, a friendly and welcoming social environment and so forth.

These were, however, discussed in both mixed focus groups and in one adult Catholic group. Unanimously, the conclusion in all these three focus groups was that the city was not shared, but for them sharing meant respect, change in the mindset and the leaving of history behind, an end to bitterness and bigotry and treating people equally.

The contemporary situation in L/Derry was tellingly put by one of the respondents in a mixed group: *“The city is not really shared, it is just tolerated (F, 17).”* This refers to silent tolerance within the city on issues such as the imbalance of Catholics and Protestants, violence, social insecurity, and physical and mental boundary construction. Moreover, it refers to the static and unchallenged reality which forces people and communities to live apart. Sadly, this tolerance is in many instances taken for the acceptance of the prevailing order, and therefore major restructuring in community relations in L/Derry cannot be expected in the near future. Sharing is something people hope for but do not really believe in (see Frame V).

FRAME V:



Figure 24. The statue “Hands across the divide” in the Cityside of Craigavon Bridge (Hugh Callagher).

The “Hands across the divide” statue was erected by the local Council and is located next to main thoroughway to the city centre, on the waterfront of the River Foyle.

In general, the most positive arguments came from the Catholic and mixed groups. They felt that the statue symbolised peace and coming together. The opinions of mixed groups were, however, more conditional. For them the statue was a sign of what they thought people wanted in Northern Ireland. “*The way it should be, but not for a long time yet (M, M, 16).*” The Catholic groups, instead felt happy about the future, where integration and friendship across the boundaries would be possible. “*Sense of hope that some day we will be joined together as one community and not split down in the middle like we are now (C, F, 34).*” One of the most interesting comments came from a young Catholic male, who said that he is not familiar with where this statue is located. Furthermore, he argued that it must be in the Protestant area in Waterside. Actually this statue was very close to his home, only a few blocks away. This clearly exemplifies what the geographical trap means and how restrictive the local community boundaries are.

The Protestant groups did identify the statue with coming together and hope, but some people also objected to the whole idea of inter-communal friendships, which is the message of this statue. One respondent argued: “*This is a Protestant and Catholic making friends. No chance. (P, M, 17).*” One of the Protestant respondents also mentioned a curious aspect of the statue: the hands are not touching. He argued that they never will or even should.

Many of the respondents claimed that the physical and social boundaries will be and should be crossed in the future. In a way the statue made them imagine a shared future where both communities could live happily together, even though previously in the discussion many respondents claimed quite the reverse. No one stressed any means to achieve this goal and such means are indeed difficult to find. The strict territorial order is based on practices which differentiate people, the communication between the communities is weak and the channels for shared experiences are almost non-existent. Therefore, it is obvious that building a common future will require new structures and models of behavior. Furthermore, old mind sets need to be challenged: sharing does not mean surrender, as is so often claimed, in order to legitimate the overarching territorial system.

The sharing of the social sphere and the leaving of territorial claiming behind seems to be a real obstacle for locals. A lot of effort, education and time will be required to build up the trust that could create bridges between the local communities⁴⁰. The overcoming of the physical territorialities and divisive boundaries remains difficult,

40 The problematic situation of the Protestant minority in the city has been recognised, at least at the official level. The “Shared City” project, funded by the Peace and Reconciliation Fund and District Partnership Board, is one of the initiatives supporting inclusion and a sense of ownership of the city among the Protestant community. Some training and education needs are stressed in order to enable the Protestant communities to take part in community development measures and create their own groups locally. The work done in this field has proved to be useful and it has eased some of the anxieties in the Protestant areas. This official approach, though, has not diffused everywhere on the both sides of the division and therefore many Catholics in the city are still reluctant to accept that there is a real problem in accessing the city both mentally and physically.

even though some studies offer a rather different image. The results of a recent survey (Life & Times 2000) show that people in Northern Ireland are in principle willing to live in a mixed social environment. The study argues that 70 % of the people in Northern Ireland would prefer to live in a mixed neighbourhood and only 22 % claim that they want to live among their co-religionists. Comparison between the Catholic and Protestant respondents illustrates that Catholics would be slightly more willing to live in a mixed neighbourhood (73 %) than Protestants (67 %). The highest desire for mixed housing (82 %) was among the respondents who claimed that they do not belong to either of the two categories and/or do not have a religion. Even the youth survey in 1999 (Young Life & Times 1999) indicates a similar trend. However, youths seem to be slightly more reluctant to mix than adults. Fifty-three percent of the youths said that they would prefer mixed neighbourhoods, whereas thirty percent would like to stay among the people of their own religion only. Seventeen percent did not have a particular preference.

My own research from L/Derry produced somewhat different results in this respect. It seems that it is easy to claim to be in favour of mixing in principle, but if people are expected to move from words to deeds, reluctance appears. In my study the respondents were asked whether, if they had a chance to move, they would prefer living in a mixed, Protestant or Catholic area, or if it made any difference to them (Table 8). The most supported option (15 of 36 respondents) was to live in a single-identity housing estate among one's own community. For 14 respondents, the composition of the people living in the area did not make any difference. Interestingly, the majority of these people had a Catholic background. The demand for personal security for nearly half of the respondents was partly met by living in a segregated estate, but there was willingness to mix as well. Seven participants said they would seek to live in a mixed community as a first option. However, this figure could be a little higher, because the fourteen participants who did not have a strict preference regarding their area of living as long as it was suitable for them in other ways, might include possible mixers as well.

Table 8. Preferred area of living of the focus group participants.

Background of respondent\ preference of area	Mixed area	Protestant area	Catholic area	I don't care	Total
Catholic	1	-	9	12	22
Protestant	6	6	-	-	12
None*	-	-	-	2	2
Total	7 (19.4 %)	6 (16.7 %)	9 (25.0 %)	14 (38.9 %)	36

* None= respondents stated opinion "no religion."

To get an idea of people's territorial preferences in L/Derry I have compared the proportional shares of respondents in each category (no statistical validity). Segregated

living and maintaining strict boundaries between local communities is the most favoured option (41.7 %). It is higher than some other studies suggest. Equally, mixed living (19.4 %) is less favoured than in Northern Ireland in general (Life and Times Survey 2000: adults 70.0 % and youths under 18 year 53.0 %). It seems that according to the respondents in L/Derry the tradition of segregation is more firmly rooted than in some other parts of Northern Ireland. Why is it like this? First, social class cannot explain the reluctance found in L/Derry, as both working-class and lower middle-class people took part in the focus groups (see Table 2) arranged in L/Derry and usually the latter group is more enthusiastic about mixed housing than the former. Thus, the almost equal numbers of participants from these two social communities should have kept the sample balanced.

Another difference from the general trend is found in the opinions of the Protestant respondents. Even though half of the Protestant participants only wanted to live in a single-identity housing estate among their own, the rest of their answers pointed to mixing as the second most preferable option. Yet, Protestants are not necessarily more willing to mix in L/Derry than in the rest of Northern Ireland. Especially the working-class estates, which have continued to experience the effects of the conflict until recently do not want to break down the boundaries of exclusion. In fact, a look behind the statistics above shows that the Protestant respondents who claimed that their first option for housing would be a mixed estate, all came from a lower-middle-class background or from working-class estates which had not experienced a high level of violence and abuse inflicted by the other community. The participants from the most ghettoised estates felt that for the sake of their communal security there was only one option, to stay apart. Furthermore, physical segregation is at present higher than ever in L/Derry and this is often overlooked by those who feel that it has “always” been like that. Desire for segregated housing has increased all the time and in the contemporary situation initiatives to encourage mixed housing developments (made, for example, by the local Housing Executive) have failed because people do not feel comfortable and secure enough in such environments. Moreover, while the statistics drawn from the responses suggest that sharing is supported among the Protestant participants, in the discussion they contradicted themselves. In fact, there were comments to the effect that things should stay the way they are now.

A different trend is found among the Catholic respondents. Catholics with lower-middle-class background argued that they did not mind where they lived, instead of making a point by choosing the option “mixed neighbourhood.” The reason (it was asked for in the questionnaire) for choosing this answer was often left open, but answers such as “*I don't mind if I lived with Catholics or if I lived with Protestants (C, F, 16)*” or “*We as a people must learn to live in peace and religion should not come into it (C, M, 52)*” or “*I don't mind what religion we are as long as we get along (C, F, 19)*” were also given. Overall it seems that only few focus group participants, irrespective of their background, would have enough courage to stand up against their own community and the institutions that are reinforcing the divided reality.

In principle, it seems that some people are willing to reside in a mixed environment but the actual realisation is still far away. This was indicated in focus group discussions where many of these people expressed reluctance about any change in their living

context. It is these fickle, progressive answers given in opinion polls that make the social atmosphere look more open to transformation than it may actually be. This, too, shows that crossing boundaries in everyday life remains a great challenge, and most often people prefer to stay in the current segregated system, because it creates and maintains security. Thus, the desire to overcome and challenge the historical legacy of “us” and “other”, the boundaries in residential segregation, has yet to manifest itself in real-life actions in many parts of L/Derry.

Physical segregation is probably one of the most difficult problems to overcome. However, there are some other problems where boundary crossings and dialogue have been more successful. Boundary crossings require communication and a certain level of trust. This cannot be forced on people. Because a genuine desire for real communication existed between the two working-class communities in L/Derry, a solution was found in high technology. Both the Catholic and Protestant communities were able to choose a trusted individual, who was provided with mobile phone which could be used only for communication between the estates. The problem in these particular estates was that during the night time some anti-social behaviour and, on occasions, outbursts of violence occurred, in which the youths from both communities were involved. Sometimes the triggering factor for rioting was a rumour of possible attacks from the other community. The direct phone connection between the trusted individuals in the communities did serve to decrease the level of violence. In a time of tension the other community was called and asked what was really happening on their side and in this way the rumours were short-lived and information was exchanged directly without third parties being involved⁴¹. Local examples like this prove the importance of genuine dialogue, no matter how banal it might be. It is through these small steps that the strong categorising (of space) with exclusive local boundaries can evolve into cross-boundary dialogue and the re-evaluation of locally normative and restrictive place politics, i.e. a transformation aimed at weakening the categorisation of space (see Sibley 1995; Bernstein 1967, 1971).

Marching is another example from L/Derry that illustrates how the breaching of communal boundaries has led to an improvement in a highly contested situation. In terms of local security and awaking tensions the marching disputes have proved to be one of the major problems that keep shaking the already contested ground every summer in L/Derry. Marching is a real-life example of the territoriality that reinforces the old and naturalised boundaries existing between the communities. Through marching people are socialised into the culture of bounding place and maintaining the boundaries. Marching creates the feeling of belonging to a certain community and to a certain cultural tradition, but it also aggressively identifies those who do not belong there, and where their territorial space lies in relation to the included ones. Moreover, marching often insults the dichotomy of “our place” and “their space,” for the marching routes often goes through “their space.” Obviously, it is exactly these intrusions that give rise to controversy.

In Northern Ireland, over 3 500 parades take place annually. Not all of them are related to the Protestant vs. Catholic division of Northern Ireland. However, the majority

41 Information from interview of local community worker in March 2000.

of the parades are Loyalist (2584 in 1998) and some Nationalist (216 in 1998) parades also take place (Dunn 1999). Most of the parades proceed without problems, but in several locations marching provokes opposition and violence. In late 1997 the Independent Parades Commission was created to negotiate with the conflicting parties: those who wanted to march and those opposed. The Parades Commission has the power to re-route or impose restrictions on the most contentious parades. The parading issue has been widely discussed both on the political and local levels during the 1990s and continues to be highly contentious. Progress in this sensitive issue has been slow. However, recent announcements from the Apprentice Boys of Derry and Bogside Residents' Group indicate that negotiations and communication have led to an improvement in the situation in L/Derry (see Figures 25 & 26).

On 29th of September 1999, the *Londonderry Sentinel* wrote: "*Boys make the first move and change date of commemoration. Lundy's Day parade brought forward (O'Donnell 29.9.1999).*" Lundy's Day parade commemorates the Siege of Derry in 1689. This parade has a history of sending a wave of violence through the city of L/Derry. In earlier years the parade was always scheduled for the last Saturday before Christmas, which meant economic losses for the city's business community because many shops had to be closed due to rioting and vandalism. In 1999, the Lundy parade was rescheduled to take place on 4th of December. This news was happily received among the shopkeepers of the city. Moreover, as the article in the *Londonderry Sentinel* stresses, by this gesture the Apprentice Boys "*hoped to end the harassment of their commemoration day, and that Protestant identity in the city will have its place in a shared city, which is big enough to respect differences and tolerate each other's means of cultural expression (O'Donnell 29.9.1999).*"



Figure 25. Apprentice Boys marching in L/Derry in December 1999.

The response from the Catholic community on the rescheduling of the parade was supportive. SDLP Councillor Mary Bradley described it as “*a very positive step forward*” (Derry Journal 1.10.1999). The Bogside Residents’ Group (BRG) announced that they had no plans to oppose the Lundy’s Day parade. The spokesman of the BRG, Donncha MacNiallais, said that “*the Residents’ Group has acknowledged the right of the Apprentice Boys to commemorate the Siege of Derry through the parade. MacNiallais also acknowledged the steps taken in recent years by the loyal order to engage in dialogue and control their own members (Derry Journal 2.11.1999).*”

These newspaper quotations show only the end result of the hard and sometimes intractable negotiations which have been going on since the 1996. There have been several efforts to find accommodation for the two main parades (in August and December) in the city, but the Lundy’s Day in 1999 was the first time ever when an agreement was reached. The process, which started in the 1996 has taken so long because in the beginning it was impossible even to get the two parties around the same table. Unfortunately, the agreement achieved in December of 1999 cannot guarantee the same result in any of the following marches. These accommodation efforts are one-off matters, but there is no reason to undervalue such achievements. A few years ago it would have been impossible even to think that the Apprentice Boys would lay down rules for their band members about not playing in certain areas and resorting to sanctions against misbehaviour and that the Bogside Residents’ Group would have encouraged their members not to oppose the parade and, finally, that the



Figure 26. Lundy the Traitor hanging during the 1999 march, L/Derry city centre.

policemen would not wear riot gear during the march (see Figure 27). This, however, became possible after the negotiations and the Lundy's Day march went ahead without any major disturbance. Promisingly, the following two Lundy marches have succeeded to pass off without any significant outbreak of violence.



Figure 27. Policemen without riot gear in their bright yellow jackets, guarding the city centre.

The agreement in the marching dispute was based on intense negotiations between both communities during several years, but the effect of other agents and geographical scales cannot be underestimated (more discussion on scaling in the politics of place can be found in Chapter VI). The local agreement between the two communities also demonstrated how the national political goal of controlling parades and the challenged local politics of place achieved a local settlement. International involvement, or more correctly the pressure for solving the marching issue, is mediated through expectations relating to the Northern Irish peace process and especially its overall goal of achieving a shared Northern Ireland in which both cultural traditions are respected. The violent confrontations in certain locations during the last couple of years were not seen acceptable in any respect by the international agents involved in the peace process. To gain support and help from the international level, and most importantly to normalise the situation on the ground, a settlement of the marching dispute had to be found. After the signing of the ceasefires all major disturbances in the localities (which occasionally have spread Province-wide such as Drumcree in 1995 to 1997) have

occurred during the marching season and especially during and after some of the most contested marches in the Province. Future developments of marching disputes in Northern Ireland cannot be predicted on the basis of one settlement, but at least it is possible to say that even the most strictly controlled boundaries can be crossed if the desire is strong enough.

Territoriality and boundary processes are inseparable features of Northern Irish borderlands. The role of these dividing lines is multidimensional as the L/Derry case illustrates (see Frame VI). Boundaries separate and connect, they are (re)constructed and challenged, they ease and restrict everyday life in localities. Neither of these characteristics operate alone, but a complex web of social processes defines the local *borderlands*. The local borderlands of L/Derry accommodates several boundary practices, some of which aim at de-territorialising and others at re-territorialising. It is the everyday practices and speech that construct the boundary narratives and legitimate their role in the local socio-spatial complexity. Moreover, being an embedded part of people's life, these cultural and contextual forms of territoriality and boundary construction are experiential by nature. A description and analysis of these experiences have formed the core of this research. It is also important to discuss the ways by which people cope with these ever-present categorisations and how adaptation to the restricted way of life and place politics has gradually evolved into a search for a way out of the territorial trap.

FRAME VI:



Figure 28. The city walls of L/Derry (Hugh Callagher).

The city walls are seen as a historical monument, which many tourists come to see nowadays, something people could be proud of. However, views concerning the nature of the walls are contradictory. For some it was a shared aspect of our city, something for both

communities, but for others the walls were a symbol of division. “*I think it is good, because it separates the Catholic and Protestants. It is a barrier to them (C, M, 15).*” “*The walls were built by Protestants to keep Catholics out of Londonderry (P, M, 16).*” “*I feel proud to know that our city has still its walls intact, but it is bad in a way because there is still a border (M, F, 16).*” The wall was perceived as a divisive element: a physical boundary loaded with one-sided cultural images. This is somewhat surprising in the contemporary situation. Inside the walls of L/Derry is the business district and there is hardly any residential housing. The Fountain, which is the last enclave of Protestants living in Cityside, faces the walls, but is not located within the walled city centre. The idea of the wall dividing the Protestants and Catholics derives from the history of the city. During the Siege of Derry in the 17th century the people living within the city walls were Protestants and the Catholics lived on the fringes of the city outside the walls. Even though the geographical position of the local communities has changed radically since those days, for some people the walls of the city still symbolise the division. Indeed this picture shows the influence of historical events on the image construction and the creation of an urban cityscape of loyalties.

Some respondents from the Protestant and mixed groups connected the walls to the Apprentice Boys of Derry and in general to the Protestant heritage. Yet there were only five answers stressing these features. It seems, at least from the material I collected, that the walls have mainly become just an old historical monument, even though the history is fraught with conflict. However, this innocuity disappears at times, especially during the commemorations of the shutting of gates and the relief of the city (12th of July and August), which maintains the Protestant heritage. In general, the way in which symbols are perceived in Northern Ireland at specific times varies greatly depending on the point in the *calendar year of the conflict*. Some symbols become more important on certain historical days of remembrance as is in the case of the walls of L/Derry.

The six FRAMES have illustrated that the symbolic aspect of the local territorial politics of place is crucial. Symbols demarcate the lines of loyalty, collective identity and politics of place. The power of banal symbolism in territoriality can be summed up in four assertions, all of which are highly visible in the analysis of these six photographs.

- < Symbols are never neutral
- < Symbols always have several, often contradictory meanings
- < Symbols are a powerful way for people to express their loyalties and sense of belonging
- < Symbols demarcate the politics of place, i.e. they distinguish between our places and their spaces.

Being Part of Categorisation

In Northern Ireland especially, the argument of Oommen (1995) that membership of a solidarity group is still valued in the contemporary world, is a crucial notion. Solidarity creates a feeling of belonging and security. A multicultural Northern Ireland, even though desired, cannot be said to exist at the present moment in time. Thus, the construction of place-bound identity is based on exclusion, and plurality has not evolved into acceptance of several identity traditions. Rather an understanding prevails that there are many competing identity categories. This is illustrated in the way that polarised

positions are upheld in all scales of place and identity politics. In a conflict society the must of identification means that it is safer to be labelled or categorised as belonging to a particular community than to be left outside. People categorise themselves but also become categorised by others (Jenkins 1996). This process of categorising takes place in and through socialisation, communication, and both intra-community and inter-community relations.

The ubiquity of categorisation often means that people have developed extremely sensitive strategies for operating and surviving in these constantly contested social spaces. Conflict and violence have made life in the urban borderlands distressing; safe havens have often evolved into geographical and historical traps.

Coping Strategies

In the urban borderlands boundaries with different exclusivity factors exist. Some boundaries are crossed everyday without any difficulty, others are crossed with greater awareness and fear. The latter require various skills to read the space, make adequate interpretations and act accordingly. The stories people told in the focus group discussions about their everyday life, included several *strategies for survival*. Life in a contested territory means that along with the normal challenges in life, individuals need to cope with additional pressures such as the conflict, terrorism, violence, informal rules, communal loyalties and boundary crossings. Particular *coping mechanisms* help people to orientate when the *local borderlands* creates anxiety. Coping can mean anything from ignoring to adapting, even telling lies. In addition to the coping strategies, there are many conflict-related social practices and habits which some individuals have leant on, to lessen the long-term distress. For example, research has shown that in the areas that are most influenced by the conflict there is a high level of alcohol abuse among both adults and teenagers. Alcohol abuse and other such practices are not really coping mechanisms, but rather the ill effects of the long-term societal conflict.

Communal coping mechanisms are applied in various social situations⁴². They become communally shared through the way they are learned, i.e. in socialisation. Often the coping mechanisms are trivial and banal. *Ignoring* the presence of others is one of the simplest practices. Sometimes people totally refuse to talk to each other after they have discovered that they come from different communities.

42 It is not only divided communities that struggle with the question of coping with strangers.

The mechanisms of categorising strangers, i.e. the others, and excluding them in space is discussed for example in Sibley's (1988, 1992, 1995) studies of Gypsy communities in Europe. Buciek (2001) also focuses on strategies of coping with the ambivalence of strangers in society. In his analysis three coping strategies are present: denying, denigrating and ordering. In Northern Ireland all these operate in the everyday life of the two communities. In my analysis of the focus group discussions four particular practices were found. (for coping strategies in peaceful societies see Buciek, K. (2001). *Crossing Borders as a Way of Life – Vagabonds and Gypsies in Contemporary Social Theory*. In Bucken-Knapp, G. & Schack, M. (eds.). *Borders Matter: Transboundary Regions in Contemporary Europe*. Aabenraa, Danish Institute of Border Region Studies, 45–57.)

C, M, 24: [Protestants] would not be welcomed and they would feel very uncomfortable. It is not that people are going to beat them up every day but it is just that people maybe ignore them or just don't take any notice of them whatsoever and not make them feel welcomed.

Discussion:

M, M, 19: As long as they don't know which religion you are. As soon as you chat with the people in the bar and happen to get along while watching a match or something and suddenly someone discovers that you are the other and it is like that [snaps his fingers]...

M, F, 19: That is not everybody, though.

M, M, 19: That is not everybody but a quite a lot of people do that. I have seen it before, when they discover you, they just watch after you.

While the respondents experienced this kind of behaviour at local level, it has also been seen at the official level. In Northern Irish politics there have often been times when, for example, some Unionist parties refused to talk with the Republican Sinn Féin. Even recently, when the new Northern Irish Assembly was formed in early 2000, the DUP ministers began to boycott the ministerial meetings and, if present, they ignored the Sinn Féin ministers attending the meeting by addressing their speeches or responses to all other representatives except these of Sinn Féin.

The ignoring that is found in all spheres illustrates the difficulty of handling otherness in society, as well as the lack of knowledge of the other community. People's understanding of the others is mostly based on stereotypical images effectively distributed locally. The lack of adequate knowledge about the "other" is supposedly one of the easiest problems to overcome, at least if compared to some contested peace reforms such as decommissioning. The difficulty, however, is to convince people of the importance of being receptive. Not before this is accomplished will progress be possible. One example of the lack of awareness in L/Derry comes from the spring of 1998. The city marketing team, which was mostly comprised of Catholics, had compiled an event calendar for city visitors. On the back page was a map in which all the important places such as museums, hotels, restaurants, historical monuments and so forth should have been included. The brochure came from the printers and was subsequently distributed all over the city and the Province before a noticeable bias was found in the map: it was almost totally blank on the other side of the River Foyle, in other words, the places to visit in Waterside were left out of the guide map. Only the main thoroughfares were marked. The city marketing department withdrew the rest of the city guides from the tourist offices and elsewhere, and a new guide with a more balanced map was printed. In any case the mistake was widely noticed and some angry responses were heard. This exclusion by mapping was most likely not intentional, but it reflects clearly the fact that L/Derry is a divided city with two faces. There is no doubt that situations like this could be prevented if people were more aware of their own one-sidedness (see Kuusisto 1998).

The second coping strategy found in the focus group interviews emphasises the role of *safety nets*. Depending on the situation, safety nets are composed of close family members, circles of friends, residents in the home street, the whole community in the housing estate or other social collectives (such as youth clubs and hobby groups)

and finally, at the macro scale, the national community one feels affiliated to. The latter, at least, provides ideological support, while the micro-scale safety nets operate on a more practical level. The safety net is partly constructed with the notion of larger numbers, however this supremacy varies greatly and sometimes two people together can form the safety net needed. Other features of the safety net include familiarity, unconditional trust, loyalty and availability. Safety nets seem to take visible forms, i.e. people taking public stances, participating in acts of resistance and giving support when individuals are under threat of physical or verbal abuse. Moreover, in particular situations the use of safety nets is consciously applied and thus it enables particular practices such as visiting in certain localities:

P, M, 15: I would never go there [city centre] alone, in case you need backup. If you had Catholic friends with, you could not trust that they would give you backup.

For some respondents the use of safety nets extends across the identity boundaries by creating an environment in which plural ideas, inter-communal friendships and cultural exchange become possible. The reason why these people need the safety net is because the outside world and the rest of the community might not be as open-minded as these challengers are:

M, F, 17: Being part of this group means that no one will get abused because of their opinions or background, we welcome everybody. Though people shout after us, because we are different.

In the borderland the question of safety never disappears. In particular, the coping mechanisms aim to widen the sense of security by responding to threatening or frightening situations with adequate measures. As in any social interaction, situations might appear suddenly and the proper way to react needs to be ready right away. In situations where a person feels he or she is in a wrong place at the wrong time, or the social pressure is otherwise uncomfortable, the easiest way to avoid difficulties is to hide one's communal background or fluently lie about it⁴³. At times, using a *scam* lessens the possibility of conflict.

Discussion:

(Mixed group)

P, M, 20: But we have had people asking where are you from when we have a gig...

C, M, 20: That is true. We play lot in places like Belfast, Newry and Lurgan.

P, M, 20: Lurgan and mid-Ulster [these places are Protestant dominated]

C, M, 20: In Lurgan you might have to say that we all are Protestant like...

The above discussion continues with the comment that one has to know where one is so as to be able to give the right answer. One of the respondents laughs and says: “*You*

43 These kinds of situations might happen to almost anyone living in Northern Ireland, but it is equally wise to maintain a degree of caution if one comes from the mainland UK or Ireland. I do not mean to claim that every passer-by will react with suspicion to an outsider or confront him or her, but at the night-time in the city centre when a lot of alcohol is consumed or in particular localities people need to take extra consideration for safety.

have to look at the colours of pavement stones (M, M, 19).” But this does not always suffice; one’s accent can reveal the truth. The group recalled an incident that happened while they were lost and asked for the way from a pub and one of them had a very strong Donegal [Southern Irish] accent. People in the pub did not look kindly upon their inquiries. Afterwards these incident are laughed at, but people do admit that at the time it was not funny at all.

Sometimes a lot of quick-wittedness is required to *adapt to the law of the land*, which may change from neighbourhood to neighbourhood, from town to town. This is a major problem in the borderlands and requires skill in reading the space and quickly adapting to some elements of the particular place politics (basically symbols) in order to manage the situation. The following example illustrates one of the most striking ways of coping in the midst of socially and physically contested territories.

Discussion:

C, F, 34: That was the night you were taking boys to the airport

C, M, 70: Aye, we have learnt now...

C, M, 52: We had a minibus and we had Londonderry in the side of it. So we wrote the Londonderry out.

C, F, 34: We taped it over...

C, M, 52: ...taped it. So nobody [would see it]...we could not go to Catholic place with Londonderry. We had got this cheap bus, well anyway. It came to that we had to go Larne and there was a riot 20 miles before our stoppage. I said right I’ll take the tape off to read Londonderry again. So, we met the Protestant crowd and these people waved at us. They thought we had come down to support the fight. We eventually got on and when we were stopped by the police we said we are a youth club from Londonderry. “Right you guys go ahead,” they said. We went on and we run into this Orange march. They did not stop us and we drove through.

C, M, 70: It was Drumcree.

C, M, 52: Drumcree. We drove through it. We took a chance. We got to Larne and everybody was waving at us because they thought we were the reinforcements. We waved back and pointed Londonderry on the side. [aggressive tone] So we got to Larne but not back home [is very serious]. We were stuck in the Protestant area and I was afraid for my life. We went to this place and slept over and I said what if they come and cut our throats when we are sleeping. We took a terrible chance even to go out with these 16 youths.

The law of the land and the appropriate politics of place varies greatly due to the complexity of spatial segregation at the local level. In the above example, symbolism functions in two different respects: first the symbol “Londonderry” is a threat and uncomfortable for the people travelling in the minibus, therefore it must be taped over. The social context changes radically in the course of the travel and in fact the importance of the symbol increases. It becomes an advance, a way to get them into a place where they are heading for. Playing with the symbol “Londonderry” becomes a coping strategy. This example contains some other important features of the divided society: how people experience the sense of a place which is hostile for them (stuck in a Protestant area), how symbols are effectively used in adapting to the law of the land, how territorial politics still reinforces the lines of loyalties (reinforcements) and the

role of formal (security) institutions (who are also considered a threat in a particular situation).

Coping strategies, as the term itself suggests, will help the communities to cope with uneasy social situations occurring in their everyday life because of the conflict-prone borderlands they are living in. Hiding one's true identity helps in the situation at hand, but does not change the root causes of the confrontation, nor the responses following from that. Turning from the present to the future of Northern Ireland, it is readily apparent that people need to move beyond coping to managing the situation. One response to future challenges is found in the local level community-relations initiatives.

The new forms of community-relations work are utilising the same logic on which communal coping strategies are based, but do so by broadening the scope of managing the distress of a particular social situation beyond the present time towards the past and the future. Certainly there is a distinction between the means by which these two ways of coping are enabled. The one takes place in monitored situations and the other on the street, "out there." Everyday coping mechanisms are "inherited" through socialisation and are almost reflex-like practices in provocative situations. The skills learnt in and possibilities provided through community-relations work can ease the distress experienced in the everyday situations as well, but the purpose of contemporary community-relations work is to implement a *proactive approach*. Practices such as story-telling, meetings with people who cause feeling of distress, and residential with the young people on both sides all focus on issues such as who are the people on the other side, why do we all have similar feelings of fear and distrust, what can we do to change these feelings.

For example, meetings where ex-paramilitaries, victims of Troubles-related incidents and British soldiers come together have been arranged. The results of these meetings have been powerful. What many people familiar with the Northern Irish situation might expect from these sessions is accusations and hatred, but actually in the end the hurts these people carry inside them are shared and heard with mutual respect. Even some sympathy is experienced. "*The power of the meetings is the face-to-face contact which finally after many years take the people beyond the stereotypical image of the faceless British soldier with a uniform and gun, or the hooded paramilitary person. Now they are there in a same room sitting on the chair and looking as any other person in their early thirties*⁴⁴." This example presents high-level community-relations work requiring a lot of preparation and also risk-taking by both the organisers and the participants. The lower-level community-relations work is by no means any less influential. In a similar fashion it creates awareness and skills applicable to everyday life and seeks alternative solutions to borderland anxieties. Obviously, only a fraction of the people is able or even willing to take part in these community-relations activities. Moreover, the change in attitudes takes time and the transformation from awareness into practice is an even slower process.

The borderlands in L/Derry, like everywhere in Northern Ireland, are constantly shifting. I have already discussed the conditional willingness to overcome the physical territorialities by the majority of the population. However, the voice of opposition is

44 Information from an interview with a community worker in April 2000.

becoming louder all the time and this need to be acknowledged. The crucial question is, when will the constant regulation of everyday life, fear and apathy be transformed into active resistance against the prevailing social, political and spatial order in the localities and by whom will it be done? How is this alternative way visible in L/Derry?

Moving Beyond

In L/Derry, the geographical and historical trap, which has been extensively discussed in the last sixty pages, has become a burden for many individuals and some want to free themselves of the old models of thinking and behaving. Many of these challengers desire inter-communal dialogue, trust the power of learning and education, and have a strong enough will to stand up against the majority opinion. Analysis of the seven focus groups shows that in five groups some desire for “moving beyond” the territorially controlled society was present. Three of these groups argued clearly for change while two remained more tentative. The group level analysis easily creates a false image that all members are either in favour or against the contemporary spatial order. However, opinions vary among the group members. The remaining two groups almost unanimously supported the strict spatial politics in their city, i.e. only one respondent challenged this view. Significantly, in the mixed groups the share of respondents who actively challenge the current way of life is roughly twice as high as in the single-identity groups.

It is often claimed that when an individual leaves the radicalism of the teenage years behind, he or she becomes more open-minded and can utilise the alternative perspectives learnt through life experience. However, the reverse argument can also be made. The focus groups illustrated that in general the adults over 21 year old (N=9) were more tolerant and flexible in their opinions. They saw the restrictions following from the divided reality, supported integrated education, community-relations projects and other such measures to construct common ground, but simultaneously they were very realistic about what could be changed and what not. Sometimes this realism seemed to hinder the adults from even imagining the situation through optimistic eyes. In their wildest future scenario of Northern Ireland was still struggling with the conflict. Another interesting feature came up regarding radicalism and age. The young respondents from the two mixed groups were even less radical or ideological than the adults. The social atmosphere in these mixed groups was different from the other groups. In these mixed groups young people wanted to blur the boundaries between the two exclusive blocs and sought to view the people as individuals and not as members of either religious category. The young respondents in the mixed groups were comfortable expressing their own views even if they contradicted the opinions of the rest of the group. Space for different voices was allowed. Interestingly, the opinions were often contradicted in a positive manner in order to get proper explanations and justifications. Explaining like this rarely took place in the single identity groups, where opinions needed no other explanations than “*it is just the way it is here.*”

Moving beyond contradicts the communal practices that are taken for granted. Opposition like this is not bound to single individuals, but rather a whole narrative

based on plural values is being constructed. In this *alternative narrative* people are treated according to norms and morals that do not distinguish individuals by ethnic or religious background. The claims made by these dissenters differ from those usually heard in Northern Ireland. The plural narrative stresses an awareness of all people being basically the same; an individual's communal background does not make him or her any worse or better; the conflict only continues because there are extremists on both sides and therefore the generalisation that many people condone the use of force is incorrect. Moving beyond emphasises education instead of forcing people into specific modes of action. Moreover, it means carrying responsibility for one's actions and words. The culture of ignoring and excluding is abandoned and replaced with explaining and a desire for mutual understanding.

Characteristic for the plural narrative is its *analytical approach*. People openly analyse the social world around them, but not in a manner that only aims to uphold the contemporary situation in Northern Ireland. A critical and reflective approach was found in many parts of the focus group discussions.

Discussion:

M, M, 20: As long as you are brought up in a certain way [the religion does not matter], but like if you are brought up saying the Catholics and Protestants are doing it wrong, let them believe that. The way myself is being going through life, it [religious background] really doesn't matter in personal level like...

M, M, 19: I think it is the way we have been brought up. When I was younger I did not know that there was difference at all. I just took for granted that everybody is the same.

M, F, 19: You would kind of feel the difference when you were in secondary school and you would meet with an another school of Protestants, you would feel the difference then. But not just because you live in Waterside or you live in Cityside. You would feel a difference when there is a group of people from a school and another group of people from another school.

The above discussion illustrates that perceived differences between the local communities, mostly characterised as cultural features, are indeed learnt through socialisation. However, not everybody fully participates in this *social spatialisation* (see e.g. Shields 1991; Paasi 1996: 7–9). These people feel the pressure to adapt the *social imagery* that reinforces social distinctiveness and the segregated discursive landscape, but have avoided full integration and have developed their own world views. The partial inclusion in social spatialisation is possible only if the close family or the neighbourhood one feels associated with supports this alternative way. In situations where support from the family is absent, people have to deal with double distress: that of challenging one's family as well as one's community structures. "*Like my family is so bigoted and they can't just understand like... (M, M, 20).*" In a situation like this some individuals have developed their ideas further on their own, some others have been lucky to meet other like-minded people to share the journey. These lessons of co-existence have increased awareness and knowledge of how sharing makes a difference.

This is the point where *spatial socialisation* becomes crucial. "Spatial socialisation is the process through which individual actors and collectives are socialised as members

of specific territorially bounded spatial entities and through which they more or less actively internalise collective territorial identities and shared traditions (Paasi 1996: 8).” It is, however, the normative territorial way of life embedded in informal and formal institutional settings that reinforces many moderate families and local communities to adapt the prevailing territorial logic to some degree. Adaptation like this becomes more like a coping strategy, in which one’s territorial identity and cultural tradition can be verified, if necessary. However, in these spatially and socially restricted territories, alternative narratives may gradually evolve and their influence begins to shape the normative social spatialisation as well as spatial socialisation.

The mixed groups also pointed out that the power of speech should be preferred over violence. According to some respondents there are no good excuses for using force. Their view of the youths involved in these illegal activities was that “*young people like Catholics of 14 or 15 year old might have a lot of anger towards the Protestants with the same age, just for the hell of it, without any reason at all (Mixed group, C, M, 20).*” One mixed group discussed the reasons behind the violence and harassment in their city. For them the main reason was the total frustration of some youths, who then channelled this feeling against anyone who seemed a suitable victim. Testing one’s loyalty and appreciation of communal norms and values were also given as reasons behind harassment:

Discussion:

M, M, 17: Like the harassment. I think it is people just testing how strong you are and how will you deal with the situation.

M, M, 16: Maybe but sometimes they are just looking for an scapegoat.

M, M, 16: They don’t have to have reason they just get on everybody no matter where you are from.

Moving beyond the local territorial trap requires changes in people’s attitudes and not in the institutional setting only, as is often publicly claimed. Furthermore, the supporters of the alternative narrative claimed that formal institutions (police, Army, government etc.) are not a threat, but, rather, locals could work with them if local opinions received sufficient respect. The local plural narrative itself is constructed discursively. It creates a different description of the life-world, the people, social practices and spatial order. The narrative emphasises awareness, self-reflection and understanding. This discursive construction may later be transferred into actual practice. Some real-life examples can already be found. There is a growing number of cross-community centres and activities, something which would not have been possible at the height of the Troubles. People cross the mental boundary lines and come together for the sake of common concerns such as child care, teenage mothers, environmental problems, developing tourism and economic investments. However, the hard issues such as the sectarian violence or minority and majority issues are often left intact or the major outcome of the efforts is to conclude: *we agree to disagree.*

Nothing new will appear without compromises that will quite often require personal sacrifice. Challenging the normative attitudes and territorial rule is a time-consuming and slow process. Due to the difficulties occurring frequently along the way, some people have given up trying. Moreover, many pioneers in cross-community dialogue,

especially community activists, have suffered burn-out and sometimes may have turned their back on their earlier valuable work.

Several factors limit the pluralistic narrative construction, one of which is certainly the contemporary social framework. People living in L/Derry and actively realising the plural narrative are part of the divided reality. These people have spaces of fear and comfort, they experience comparable anxiety and pressures as those who live more or less according to the territorial rules. Understandably, challenging the contemporary system needs to occur within the frameworks offered. One needs to be brave but not foolhardy to overcome the restrictive reality. The rules and norms of the prevailing territorial system are appreciated to a certain degree but not accepted as the future of Northern Ireland. To actively realise the plural narrative in one's life requires encouragement. Sometimes the people who are brave enough to challenge the prevailing rules are accused of being traitors. It is these people who do not want to live in social segregation and do not want to claim ultimate loyalty to some of the many social categories that are crucial to the realisation of peace politics in Northern Ireland. Thus, being among the harbingers of a plural spatial and social order is not easy. One has to be prepared to defend one's opinions, but often also be prepared to let go of some of the principles one might have in order to guarantee personal safety.

Other limiting factors in establishing the plural narrative are the lack of trust and dialogue, competing and often contradicting perspectives for the future of Northern Ireland, and the fragmentation of the political sphere. Finally, the legacy of history needs to be mentioned. The problems in L/Derry, as everywhere in the Province, are multigenerational. One generation after another has grown up witnessing hostilities, distrust and violence. It is not easy to challenge the ground in which your own roots are planted. As one of the respondents in a mixed group argued: "*You cannot teach anyone in their elderly stage in their life not to do what they are doing. Education and cross-community work in the primary schools is different because they don't question [you]. They get a wee bit more awareness, it depend on you whether you develop it or not (M, 20).*" Despite these obstacles and the fact that the challengers have been brought up within the same system as the rest of the people, these few have developed a different attitude. It is these narratives that have begun to construct inclusive territorial politics on the local level.

The analysis of local territorial processes in L/Derry proves that at least two alternative ways of viewing the socio-spatial reality exist. The dominating discourse emphasises "the preserving of the monster," i.e. holding on to the strict territorial control of space by categorising and controlling people and their interaction. The counter-discourse is based on the pluralistic ideas and sharing rather than dividing. In the formal peace rhetoric and national politics the latter discourse has already gained a permanent position. However, as the L/Derry case illustrates, the roots of the pluralistic territorial discourse are also spreading locally.

Narratives

Tracing people's experiences in contested territories has been one of the major goals in this research. Living as part of the categorised reality is experienced differently

depending on whether one actively realises it, or has adapted it, or if one aims to challenge the predominant discourse. Three different socio-spatial narratives contextualised in the city of L/Derry are presented here: those of the *Activists*, the *Acquiescent* and the *Visionaries*. These three alternative narratives illustrate the common experiences of borderland citizens in the divided city of L/Derry.

The narratives are formed out of the focus group discussions and the personal information sheets the respondents filled in at the beginning of interview sessions. Attention was paid to opinions about mixing and segregation, suitable social behaviour, communal rules, and boundary construction and crossings. My personal research diary, including the minutes of focus groups sessions, was used as an additional source so that due weight could be given to the group dynamic and social pressure in describing the local communal narratives. Because the categorisation was made by me and it did not include the possibility that participants would have a chance to choose, the criteria for the selection are now presented: 1. general attitude and opinions in the focus group discussion, 2. (from the information sheet) a) living preferences b) number of cross-community contacts c) number of friends in the other community.

The three narratives consist of combinations of the stories included in each agent category: Protestant, Catholic and Mixed groups. Thus, a particular narrative cannot be attributed to any particular person or community. This means that narratives are personally inter-subjective. Living in the divided society means that individuals either categorise themselves or/and are categorised by others in various situations. Moreover, it is necessary to point out that the three narratives are not exclusive but are dependent on the time and situation, and some borrowing and overlapping occurs. For example, an individual mostly living the Acquiescent narrative may in a particular issue have an opinion closer to the Visionaries or Activist. Most importantly the narratives are not fixed. Individuals' changing attitudes are reflected in the narratives as well. The narratives themselves, and the support they gain, are gradually changing. Three narratives are as follows:

Activist: "Get to the fence!"

I have lived in this area all of my life. I like it here. People know each other and there are no strangers. My area is very safe, we only have people with the same religion living in here, well we might have some from the other community, but they don't bother us. They have to keep it quiet, you know. Sometimes we have trouble here and the police come into the estate. We also go to see riots and fights in other places, mostly in town. I don't really like the others, you can't really know them. That's why we need to stay apart. We could not live in the same areas, because there would be constant fights. It is safer, protected and comfortable to live among your own. In this city we always have to struggle for our rights. They don't treat us equally. They would always get the sympathies and we are blamed. That is not right.

Acquiescent: "There is no way out."

This is the way it has been for centuries. They live there and we here. It is hard but there is not much you can do about it. People don't change their mind. You have learnt where you are welcomed and where not. Like in the city you would take your friend with you if you go out in the night. Personally, I don't care where I live, but maybe it

is better this way. My family would like me to mix with the youths from the other community, but that is not really possible here. We would only see them in school. In my school most of the students are from my community, but maybe thirty percent come from the other community. This is not good at times because we might get hassle from the others.

The whole conflict is stupid. I can understand that people will protect their homes and families by any means. I would do it as well, but still sometimes it comes to my mind that it would be nice to move away from here, then I would not have to justify myself all the time.

Visionaries: "People on the other side are just like us."

I would like to live in a mixed environment. Then I wouldn't have to hide where I live and who I go out with as I have to now. I consider myself open-minded. Many people in this city are bitter and prejudiced because of what they have experienced. I have friends from the other community and that is why I often visit areas which claim the opposite religion than me. Usually it does not bother me, but sometimes when there are tensions such as the marching season, I have to be more aware. I think all people in this country should be educated so that they could learn that we all are the same. We can learn a lot from each other.

It is very frustrating to see the youths carrying the hatred in them. They don't know how powerful this hatred is. With that they can do a lot of harm and for them there is nothing wrong in the use of violence, rioting or wrecking down the place. Sometimes it is so hard to think differently because you are put down in so many occasions. But I think that something good has to come out of this, when more people become aware of themselves and their community. Like the peace process is an example. I think at times it is just a fancy name and waste of money but still something is happening all the time. It is a good thing to get people to one table, no harm can come out of that.

When the thirty-six respondents are categorised by these three narratives, it can be seen that the share of individuals in each narrative is surprisingly even: Activist (10), Acquiescent (14) and Visionaries (12). Thus each narrative is justifiable. Equally, the share of Catholics and Protestants is quite even in each narrative. Therefore, no claims that one or the other community has more conflict-inclined or conflict-preventive attitudes can be made on the basis of my research. Because the narratives were constructed directly on the basis of focus group discussions, there were no difficulties in placing people into these narratives. The absence of "left-overs" (uncategorised respondents) clearly shows that the three territorial narratives are well grounded in L/Derry.

In the collective narrative construction the group dynamics and social pressure play an important role. In the focus group sessions, some individuals and views dominated the discussion, and thus some respondents contributed more to the narrative than others. Especially, in the single-identity groups the dominant view was almost unanimously supported and the few divergent views that were given only concerned minor elements of the whole narrative. For example, the Visionaries opposing the

view presented in the single-identity groups, where not actually argued with, rather they were ignored with silence, but most interestingly they were not excluded from the discussion by being told that their opinions were impermissible. Their opinions were not accepted by the group, but neither were they confronted. Some of these people with alternative ideas also expressed their thoughts later on in the form which was distributed after the discussion. One of the questions in the form asked if there were points in the discussion about which the respondent did not agree with the rest of the group:

C, F, 16: The question in relation to early release of prisoners. I believe people are in prison for a reason and they should not be released.

P, F, 19: I felt that some members of the group were saying things which are not totally true. For example not being possible to go to the night clubs and discos in Cityside. They have not went there themselves and they don't know.

P, F, 14: I agreed on everything they said, but I would love to mix.

M, F, 19: The police: I didn't agree that I should totally trust the police. I haven't dealt with them before.

I also analysed these answers in more detailed manner, which provided greater clarity. Half of the people in the Visionaries narrative (six out of twelve) had different opinions from the rest of their group but they had no chance or willingness to express them in the group. The four out of the ten people in the Activist narrative pointed that they did not support some of the claims made in the discussion. Finally, most unity of opinion was found in the Acquiescent narrative, where only three out of fourteen respondents disagreed with some of the views presented.

The group dynamic was clearly illustrated in situations where the discussion on controversial issues were fuelled by one or two forceful group members expressing their uncompromising opinions. These situations led to an increase of radicalism in the groups. Rarely was this seen in reverse: rarely were plural ideas expressed equally enthusiastically. This was the case particularly in the single-identity groups. For example, in one of the Protestant groups during the last part of the discussion when some pictures (see Figure 18) were shown, feelings became very heated. One of the respondents, after seeing a picture he did not like, shaped his fingers like a gun and pretended to shoot the men in the picture. This was followed by curses and accusations about how the "others" were bigoted and useless. Another respondent then wanted to see the picture closer and asked if he could spit on the picture. Predictably, after these episodes the responses to this picture were more radical than before. Other issues, such as the presence of a certain kind of authority, easily guided the discussion in a particular direction. For example, in one of the Catholic groups two of the respondents always sought acceptance and permission to express their views either by asking or making eye contact with one of the members of the group. Such a group dynamic was the precise reason why the focus group interviews offered a suitable methodological framework for my study. They made it possible to monitor the collective narrative formation.

An interesting feature in the Activist and Acquiescent narratives was that in the speech the plural form was used instead of the singular. People's own attitudes and experiences were often hidden behind the collective "we" do it and "we" feel, only on the occasions when "we" had exactly similar opinion as the respondent, did people use "I." Sometimes, however, the "I" referred to an opinion which was in contradiction to the collective narrative; this occurred particularly in the Acquiescent narrative. The singular form was frequently used by the Visionaries. These people as individuals had opinions on peace, symbols, marching, politics and so forth. There was no collective "we" such as in the two other narratives. Therefore, the Visionaries' narrative is also rather different in structure. It contains no strong social pressure according to which the supporters of the narrative should act. The narrative is formed of parallel stories having strong interconnections but still allowing for transformations when new stories, experiences and individuals are introduced as part of the narrative.

The interplay of these three narratives constitutes the experiential environment in the urban borderlands of L/Derry. Individual stories construct the collective narratives of place politics that are finally materialised through multidimensional territorial discourses, in which the ideas of *living with the others* or *living against the others* constantly compete. Not even the peace process has abolished these tendencies in L/Derry, nor has it happened in other parts of Northern Ireland.

I have up till now referred to the peace process as something the majority of local people hope will continue, but equivocal feelings about it are a striking element in the stories of the locals. During the last ten years the peace rhetoric has gradually gained more support on the ground and the social environment has indeed become more open, even though at times the old enmity resurfaces. Seemingly, people long for change, even though not many are yet ready to actively work for it. The territorially restricted way of life has come under great pressure due to the reforms launched in the peace agreement. The analysis of the categorised realities have opened up many questions, one of which focuses on how the peace process became possible in this territorially regulated society and what it means in terms of socio-spatial identity formation. The peace process has become possible through activities and efforts taking place on and across several geographical scales. Thus, the politics of place practiced in various settings is intimate part of contemporary experience in Northern Ireland, where international mediation, the European Union and other international funding, and development in the national political approaches are an embedded part of the framework. The peace-building measures constitute the most prominent example of multi-scaled politics of place in Northern Ireland.

VI

THE PEACE PROCESS AS A CHALLENGE TO CATEGORISED REALITIES

The peace process is the most long-standing and serious challenge to the categorised reality in Northern Ireland. The quest for a peaceful Northern Ireland gradually intensified in the 1980s and 1990s. The hope was that the peace process would bring about a better and safer life for the locals, but it was understood right from the beginning that this condition cannot be achieved without compromises. However, the far-reaching influence of compromising was for a long time underestimated both by the community members and by the few outspoken political leaders who aimed to convince the local communities of the viability of this new road to peace. The old and comfortable community boundaries and loyalties have proven to be difficult to overcome not only on the local but also on the national level. In the beginning even the peace rhetoric met with considerable resistance, but finally many locals adjusted to these ideas. The peace process was born out of political desires sowed in ground where frustration and anxiety over political violence were widely felt. However, the peace process in Northern Ireland can be described as balancing act between compromising and clinging to traditions. The common understanding is that a quantitative guarantee for peace (the number of weapons handed over to authorities or released prisoners etc.) is not enough. The importance of qualitative factors in the peace process (the feeling of security etc.) has increased and gained a central position in the attempts to define whether Northern Ireland is living in peace or not.

The major breakthrough for peace came with the official recognition that the Northern Irish conflict could not be viewed as a national and intra-state problem, as had been the case for many decades (cf. Bew & Patterson 1985). The really significant move according to Kennedy-Pipe (1997: 160) was the pragmatic recognition that Britain could not just leave (nor would it want this) or be pushed aside from Northern Ireland.

Neither could the peace come about without the recognition of the role of the Dublin government, which meant that the Southern Irish dimension had to be included if progress in the peace process was to be attainable. These developments opened up a new approach which included actors and institutions functioning on different geographical scales (on the co-operation in the politics of scales, see e.g. Cox 1998). *Politics of place through scales* has been present in peace-building measures ever since. It consists of the peace reforms and their implementation in government, in varied institutional settings and in local contexts. Moreover, it refers to spatial organisation and experience. The scale approach in the politics of place aims at creating and supporting the construction of peaceful localities, and lessening the role of conflict-inclined and tense boundary lines and territorial segmentation. At the level of the whole Province the image of a post-conflict, stable and progressive society is reinforced. A new image of place and the sense of security are being marketed especially to the international media. Often peace politics is practiced between the scales, but the effects are mostly felt locally⁴⁵.

The politics of place through scales as such is not a new phenomenon, any more than is the notion that national and international developments affect the local way of life and vice versa. The issue that makes scale politics a crucial part of the framework of this research in its striving to understand contemporary Northern Ireland, is its application to conflict-management and peace-building. Several reasons for the importance of scale analysis can be pointed to. Scale politics was the long-missed element in many previous policies and attempts to normalise the situation in Northern Ireland. Sustainable peace was, on the other hand, one of the main topics raised by the locals in the focus group discussions analysed above. In the political sphere the dilemma of peace has also dominated the discussion in the national and international arena since the early 1990s.

Time for Peace and Political Consensus

The numbers of Troubles-related deaths in Northern Ireland vary considerably depending on the source of the statistics. This is due to the different principles in counting what is a “sectarian” or “conflict-related” death and what is not. According to the official Royal Ulster Constabulary statistics, 3321 people have died due to the conflict between 1969 and September 2001 (Deaths due to the Northern Ireland Security Situation 2001). Fay et al. (1998) estimate that over 3600 people have died as a result of the conflict in Northern Ireland in the period 1969 to 1998. In any case the number exceeds 3200 deaths in Northern Ireland and some 230 people outside the Province, i.e., the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom. The worst years in terms of

45 Whereas earlier a distinction was made between *politics of place* and *politics in place*, a similar analogy should be remembered here. However, *politics within scale* and *politics of place through scales* need to be viewed together, particularly when discussing the peace initiatives. Peace politics combines these two analytically distinct ways of constructing social space.

deaths were experienced in the early 1970s, the peak being in 1972 when almost 500 people were reported killed in conflict-related incidents in Northern Ireland (Fay et al. 1998: 17). The year 1972 saw a concentration of many serious violent incidents such as Bloody Sunday in L/Derry, and political developments such as the establishment of internment without trial and the fall of the Stormont government further fuelled the circle of revenge attacks. Since 1972 the number of conflict-related deaths has decreased but in some exceptionally tense years there has been an increase in the number of deaths, such as 1981 and 1982 due to the Hunger Strike, and 1986 and 1987 in the aftermath of the Anglo-Irish Agreement. In the 1990s the number has been radically smaller due to the peace process and the political agreements. For example, during 1997, the year when the latest cease-fire was announced, 23 people died in conflict-related incidents. This is only 0.6 % of the total number of deaths in Northern Ireland, whereas in the 1972 the percentage was as high as 13.8 % of all deaths (Fay et al. 1998: 17).

The effects of political violence have not been restricted to the soil of Northern Ireland, because bombings and political murders have been committed also in mainland Britain and in small numbers in other parts of Europe as well. To understand the whole picture, it is necessary to point that according to RUC statistics 43 200 people have injured in Northern Ireland between 1968 and 2000 (Persons Injured 1968–2000). The use of political violence has caused a lot of suffering and terrorised local people (for more discussion see e.g. Smyth & Fay 2000). Violence and its use for political means by the Loyalist and Republican paramilitary organisations has gradually resulted in a reduction of support for this activity in many localities (Gilligan 1997). These had given the paramilitaries legitimisation for their use of force, and when this was withdrawn the peace discourse gradually began to take shape in the early 1990s. Even though many local people desire an end to the violence, the change from political violence to practical “bread and butter” politics has been a slow process and has required changes in attitudes and institutional settings on all the geographical scales. After the many years of conflict, political mediation had to begin by establishing contacts between the parties involved and by introducing a new culture of political dialogue (McCartney 1999).

Different opinions exist about the actual beginning of the peace process. Some claim that the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985 was the take-off point, while for others the semi-secret talks with Sinn Féin and SDLP representatives in the early 1990s and finally the involvement of the Irish and British governments represents a new turning point in the conflict. Whenever the starting point, the political context has evolved during the last ten years. The cease-fire of 1994 was called off in February 1996 by the IRA, and the peace talks continued without Sinn Féin. In July 1997 the IRA restored the cease-fire and the peace talks could resume with Sinn Féin involvement. The latest cease-fire has held till today with the exception of splinter group activities, some of which have been disastrous, such as the Omagh bombing with twenty-nine dead and over 200 injured in August 1998.

At least three major developments occurring on different geographical scales form the basis of the current political situation in Northern Ireland. *Locally* Sinn Féin adopted a new political strategy in the early 1980s. The new approach of Sinn Féin, which

emphasised the role of peaceful methods in uniting Ireland, was not accepted at first among the Republican community. Eventually, by 1994 the peace rhetoric had gained sustainable support on the ground and Sinn Féin politicians entered the peace talks with the guarantee of an IRA cease-fire.

On the *national* scale the talks between the Irish and British governments led to the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985, which formalised the Irish Republic's influence in Northern Ireland. The Agreement claimed, however, that there could not be any change in the status of Northern Ireland without the consent of the majority. The effects of the Agreement were twofold. It opened up the strictly national conflict resolution approach to include other political agents and scales. On the other hand the level of violence rose after the Agreement. This was due to the insecurity felt particularly in the Loyalist community, who thought that the Anglo-Irish Agreement was a step towards a united Ireland (Bell 1993: 705, 707). The Unionist community felt that they had been betrayed by their fellow British citizens as the Agreement included the Irish dimension and during the negotiations the Unionist community had been totally excluded from the consultations (Bardon 1997: 757). The Anglo-Irish Agreement led to large demonstrations and the Unionists' campaign of non-cooperation in the peace politics (Whyte 1993: 105). Later on, the Agreement proved to be an essential step toward overcoming the national division in the political sphere.

The increasing *international* interest in Northern Irish issues during the 1980s and 1990s supported the positive change in the political climate. In 1986 the Irish and British governments established *The International Fund for Ireland*. It was made possible by international donations from the United States of America, the European Union, Canada and New Zealand (IFI 1998: 4). Also the *European Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the Border Counties of the Republic of Ireland* was founded after the cease-fire in 1994 (European Programme 1999). These two funding bodies aimed at coherent social and political development in the conflict-divided society. The importance of external funding can be seen in the growing volume of single-identity work and cross-community activities, which for their part have established connections on the ground. International interest in Northern Irish issues broadened radically the audience who were aware of the everyday development of the conflict. The problems in Northern Ireland became part of the international political discourse that aimed at balancing and securing democracy. High level international mediation got under way in Northern Ireland, bringing in the Independent Chairs (de Chastelain from Canada, Holkeri from Finland and Mitchell from the USA), the International Commission on Decommissioning, arms inspectors and other consultants working on policing, justice and human rights.

The Northern Irish peace process is full of twists and turns, all of which cannot be discussed in this study, and thus only the main lines to the settlement are presented (for more discussion see e.g. McCartney 1999). In September of 1997 the peace negotiations began after a six-week IRA cease-fire. One of the most difficult obstacles for peace and devolution in Northern Ireland was the decommissioning dispute. A temporary accommodation was found for decommissioning and it was included in the Agreement that within two years from the signing of the peace accord full decommissioning would take place (The Belfast Agreement 1998). (This is yet to

happen.) In April of 1998 the peace negotiations were completed on Good Friday and the Belfast Agreement was signed by all ten political parties involved in the process: the SDLP, Sinn Féin, the UUP, the DUP, the Alliance Party, the Labour Party, the Northern Ireland Women's coalition, the PUP (the Progressive Unionist Party), the UDP (the Ulster Democratic Party) and the United Kingdom Unionist Party. A referendum on the peace agreement was held both in Northern Ireland and in the Republic of Ireland on 22nd May 1998. In Northern Ireland the "Yes" campaign received 71.1 % of all votes and the "No" campaign only 28.9 %. In the Republic of Ireland 94.6 % of the votes were in support of the Belfast Agreement and only 5.4 % against it. The vote showed clearly that a strong aspiration for peace existed among the people. On 25th June, people in Northern Ireland voted again to elect representatives to the new Northern Ireland Assembly. This was a politically important election and local campaigning was aggressive. In order to implement the peace agreement, a majority of the Assembly seats were required for the pro-Agreement parties and their representatives. Out of 108 seats, 20 went to the extremist Unionist party, DUP, whose founder and leader Ian Paisley is well-known for his radical attitudes against power-sharing and the Belfast Agreement in general. Altogether 28 seats were gained by the anti-agreement parties (Wilford 2001: 61). The vast majority of the Assembly seats (80) went to the supporters of the Agreement such as the UUP with 28 seats, the SDLP with 24, Sinn Féin with 18 (Implementing the Good Friday Agreement 3.11.1999). In 1998 it seemed that peace was guaranteed at the political and administrative levels, at least for quite some time. This was soon proved to be an overly optimistic view.

After the Belfast Agreement the historical disagreements between the political parties surfaced time after time and consequently the promising beginning in the multi-party negotiations, and the implementation of the peace reforms agreed in early 1998, seemed to have reached a dead end. It was not until December of 1999 that the Northern Irish Assembly finally assembled and power was devolved from London. Two months later the Assembly was suspended due to the disagreement on decommissioning and reconvened in May 2000. Similar swings of the pendulum have been experienced throughout the peace process. In the national politics summer 2001 witnessed serious setbacks, such as the suspension of the Assembly first for six weeks, and in August the decision was made to continue suspension for another six week period, the First Minister of Northern Ireland Assembly, David Trimble resigned, Deputy First Minister Seamus Mallon announced he was stepping aside, and the leadership of SDLP changed, when John Hume announced that he was quitting his post. On Tuesday 6th of November 2001 David Trimble (UUP) was newly elected as First Minister and Mark Durkan (SDLP) as Deputy First Minister. Still, the political peace process is fragile. The latest setback came when the Assembly and devolved government was for the third time suspended on 14th of October 2002⁴⁶. Even on the local level the peace has been challenged by incidents such as the attacks (August 2001) on the Catholic school children and their parents by Protestant crowds in Belfast, events that attracted media

46 More details on political developments can be found on the CAIN website on the Northern Irish conflict <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/othelem/chron/>

coverage both locally and internationally (BBC NEWS 7.9.2001, 11.10.2001, 9.1.2002, 10.1.2002).

The life of the Northern Irish peace process has been sporadic. After each political battle the time of settlement has been short-lived because the dark shadows of the next crises are already lurking in the background. Nonetheless, it is clear that the peace developments have established a new era in the history of the conflict. Claims of slow progress have often been heard, but in retrospect the positive development of the societal situation is evident. For example, ten years ago it would have seemed an utopian idea if somebody had predicted that by the end of the 20th century Northern Ireland would have had a power-sharing executive, as well as a paramilitary cease-fire for almost three years. This change has become possible through many simultaneous processes and efforts to tackle the historical controversies. Particularly interesting from the point of view of this study and the reconstruction of the spatial order in Northern Ireland is the role of geographical scales. What are the measures taken within different scales of action to attain peace, and how do these activities interact for this common goal?

Scaling the Approach

The birth of scale politics was not a coherent neither planned process. It became possible when the climate of public opinion turned against the politics of violence and began actively to search for new horizons. Earlier attempts at similar models of scale-crossing include the Government of Ireland Act of 1920 and the Sunningdale Agreement of 1973, both of which aimed at establishing a body with representatives from North and South. These attempts were short-lived. Power-sharing was tried by the 1973 Stormont Government, but it collapsed within months. Later still, scale politics was applied in attempts to prevent the escalation of the conflict. For example, it was hoped that local rioting could be suppressed by national emergency legislation and the deployment of the Army. However, hardliners at local level attempted to undermine the credibility and legitimacy of the national political agreements through violent resistance and civil unrest. International agents, such as the USA, became involved in Northern Irish politics as early as the mid-1970s. The level of involvement varied from benign concern to incremental involvement, and was highly dependent on the internal political situation in the USA (Arthur 1993: 218). These earlier attempts at scaling were not successful. Scale politics like this, being mainly based on force, resulted in many negative side effects at all levels of action. Moreover, local, national and international efforts in politics and peace-making were not coherently linked with each other. Politics was practiced *within* scales, not *across* them (on scaling the approach in Northern Ireland peace politics see e.g. Anderson 1994; Anderson and Goodman 1997; Kearney 1997; Anderson and Hamilton 1998; Farren & Mulvihill 2000). However, in the current peace approach these same channels of interaction have been utilised for a different purpose: to create social stability in and through all geographical scales.

Sustainable peace, inclusive governing, societal security and de-territorialisation describe the goals behind the new scale politics. De-territorialisation usually refers to processes such as declining state sovereignty and growing linkages between the states, and, on the other hand, to a growing demand for formally recognising the existence of various ethnic groups within nation-states. In addition to the above definition, de-territorialisation describes the evolving socio-spatial order and boundary processes. Here de-territorialisation is seen as a process challenging the strictly guarded cultural, political and communal divisions; it is also a process that emphasizes communication and dialogue across the (declining) boundaries.

Most importantly, the concept of scale politics in this research focuses on linking together the various efforts and developments aiming at peace. It also clearly carries the idea of a “new Northern Ireland” with plural values and a shared sense of place. Obviously, sometimes these goals are ideological (by aiming to transfer the society from one extreme to the other) but nevertheless necessary for imagining a better future for the area. To get beyond the rhetoric of changing conditions, some practical processes are pointed out, in which scale politics is present in the Northern Ireland experience. Co-operation across geographical scales can be found in many spheres of life, but to keep the discussion focused on spatial organisation and territorial practices, the challenge of the peace settlement to these aspects of urban experience will be analysed. Notably, the scale politics favoured in Northern Ireland today concentrates on the formation of *social* space rather than directly tackling the physical distinctions, which, however, do begin to evolve in the course of the process. Thus, the spatial dimension is of particular importance.

Solution – Crossing Borders

Theoretically the whole business of de-territorialisation sounds like a convenient medicine for any ethno-nationalistic conflict, but often the real life evidence of its effectiveness is lacking. In Northern Ireland the peace process started in the early 1990s and during the last five to six years some prominent evidences of declining boundaries have been seen. However, it is necessary to be critical about this assumption and to remember to question what the reasons behind the decline are (whether ethnic, economic or based on political agreements). Another question is to what degree the boundaries on any geographical scale are really disappearing. Are they just becoming more permeable and transparent? The latter assumption means that in fact the old boundary lines can be easily re-established if the societal situation seems to require it. The re-appearance of boundaries has also been experienced in Northern Ireland. Therefore, it should be born in mind that both de- and re-territorialisation exist simultaneously in Northern Irish society.

International agents, such as the European Union, the United States of America and even individuals such as Senator George Mitchell have made contributions to political mediation in Northern Ireland. In conflict resolution, the involvement of external agents sometimes generates new ideas as how to manage the conflict. Although external agents certainly play a role, it should be remembered that the most drastic

and difficult work is done by the residents of the conflict area. The International Fund for Ireland (1986) was the first major international economic involvement in the Northern Irish conflict. For the first time at international level there was official support for developments which would lead to a lasting peace in Northern Ireland. Simultaneously, the support for economic, social and community development included a new politics of place. To gain funding, people had to begin to think differently about each other and to become more open to cross-border activities. International funding was seen as a symbol of the outside world investing in the future of Northern Ireland. Moreover, international involvement challenged the reality of a divided Ireland by supporting projects which crossed these old community boundaries and lines of mistrust (see Byrne & Ayulo 1998).

In 1994 the European Union launched a special programme called the Peace Package for Northern Ireland to raise the standard of living and to encourage mutual understanding and socio-cultural equality. The Peace Package was launched because the EU wanted to create an impetus for resolving the conflict⁴⁷. It was acknowledged that Northern Ireland had a very serious unemployment problem and suffered from economic underdevelopment because of the long-lasting conflict. The European Union Peace Fund gets its contributions from four EU structural Funds and in this way is part of the cohesion politics of the EU (Berg 1995).

EU funding has provided a possibility for some local groups to deal with their issues and organise community support for their struggle to move away from conflict and deprivation. In a society where ethnic conflict has for long been a dominating element in peoples' lives, the social environment is full of mistrust, hatred, apprehension and fear. Communities are often closed and boundaries are strictly guarded. There is little or no interaction (at least in a positive manner) across these community lines. This is where project funding and social support for communication come into play. Whether organised on a single-identity or cross-community basis, these new community groups have started the process of coming together on the everyday level. Community development is not a new phenomenon in Northern Ireland, but the lack of funding has restricted its effectiveness and the scope of the projects has previously been very modest. The number of those who have taken part in these programmes is quite low compared to the whole population but is gradually growing. More importantly, the results of this kind of activity are starting to show. There are currently more people who have become confident of their own identity as part of either larger community. However, as often in a divided society, belonging to one community means being in conflict with the other. But today being on the opposite side does not necessarily have to mean being in conflict. Especially, among some young people these change in attitudes is remarkable. Through these programmes the youths have found friends among the other community and begun to realise that these so called "others" are quite similar to themselves. However, it has to be said that even if some sections of both communities are prepared to come together more freely than their parents' generation, there are still many obstacles to be overcome, not least the general attitude in single-identity communities, which still does not support mixing and interaction.

47 For more discussion on the role of the EU in Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic see e.g. Anderson 1994; Anderson & Goodman (1997); O'Dowd (2001).

European Union funding has enabled the creation of a number of community projects. These projects support economic growth and social welfare within the communities as well as encourage new levels of communication and co-operation between the communities. The funding has enabled much to happen but it has had its problems. Especially the formal practicalities required to gain funding have proven to be difficult. First, the abilities of local communities to apply for the funding have been weak. There is also a difference between the Catholic and Protestant communities' ability and know-how concerning the practicalities of obtaining funding. In particular, there have been initiatives to encourage Protestant groups to create projects and search for funding. Moreover, for all local communities the bureaucracy that follows the funding has become almost overwhelming. Reporting on the use of money and implementation of the project plan requires skilled office workers or project assistants, but hiring personnel is often too expensive because the funding is quite minimal. Second, the amount of money available per year is small compared to the needs. Competition is tight and often many good and potentially effective local projects are left without funding because of the lack of a supportive lobbying organisation. Third, the funding from the EU is only temporary. The first Peace Package was for five years (from 1994 to the end of 1999) and the second phase started in the 2000 and will last for another five years, after which the funding stops. As often with EU funding, the idea is to get these projects up and running, and eventually the aim is that projects will get other sources of funding. This, however, is rarely possible. Furthermore, in any conflict society the work on community-relations and peace-making should have a much longer time-span than five or even ten years. Results of the work started with external funding will only be seen in the future, when the generation which has experienced cross-community dialogue, gets older. Fourth, understanding of the fragile current state of the community relations in Northern Ireland on the part of the funding organisations has been deficient. Local communities need first to be secure enough in their own identity in order to engage in cross-community dialogue. Yet, most of the funding has been allocated on a cross-community basis, so that if a project plan presents no mix of Catholics and Protestants it will not receive money. Many single-identity projects are therefore seriously under-funded. Locally it has been acknowledged that real cross-community work can only be the second phase in community development. The first phase has to be single-identity work within the communities. In this sense the EU and other external funding bodies may have jumped too far from reality by assuming that mixing will take place in a positive manner without any prior community-awareness work on the ground. Thus, cross-scale co-operation requires sensitivity and recognition of the conditions and resources available also within the scales. Above all, the local conditions need to be understood.

EU intervention in the form of funding delivered to the most deprived areas in Northern Ireland can be viewed as a conditionally positive thing for the region. The awareness among the Northern Irish people that someone else is also concerned about their situation, and that these international agents and other donators and investors aim to ease the tensions and guide the local politicians to the negotiation table, is of major importance. In terms of national and international political involvement, peaceful and democratic development in the territory of Northern Ireland has become an

outspoken goal as part of the development of Europe and the post-cold-war world order. Much effort and money has been expended, but when more interesting developments have occurred in other parts of the world and setbacks in the peace process have been experienced in Northern Ireland, international interest and ideological support has faded. This happened in Northern Ireland in early 2000. After the media hype which was largely focused on former US president Bill Clinton, Northern Ireland has been left alone to deal with the practical issues of structuring a peaceful society. This phase of the process has proven to be the most fraught with difficulty since the first steps taken on the road to peace in the early 1990s. However, despite the difficulties and setbacks the peace process is still progressing slowly and the confidence brought by the international involvement has trickled down and taken strong root across the geographical scales.

*The Belfast Agreement and Stormont Politics in
the Dawn of the New Millennium*

The Northern Ireland multi-party peace talks were held between 1996 and 1998 and the talks were concluded on 10th April 1998 by the signing of the Good Friday Agreement which is also referred as the Belfast Agreement. The negotiation process was very intense and ten political parties were included in the talks. The wide consultation and inclusive approach aimed at the construction of dialogue and understanding in Northern Ireland (O'Dowd 2001: 82–83).

The very structure of the negotiations reveals the importance of cross-scale agency and initiatives. Three Strands were defined. Strand One focused on establishing relationships in the local communities within Northern Ireland. Strand Two addressed the relationships and institutions within the whole island of Ireland. Strand Three meetings were held between the two Governments (Britain and the Republic of Ireland) and the two countries in more general perspective. In Strand One issues the political parties met with the British Government, who acted as a chair in these meetings, the Strand Two negotiations were held under Independent (international) Chairmen with the party committees and the British and Irish governments, in the Strand Three the two Governments met mainly alone (Northern Ireland Office 3.11.1999).

The political peace process adopted a line which exploited positively the problem of divisive boundaries by forming coalitions and institutions connecting the two sides⁴⁸.

48 In McGarry's (2002) article the exploitation of coalitions is discussed under the concept of consociational democracy. Whereas this model of democracy is often criticized for its instability, McGarry points out that the new consociational institutions can be designed in such a way that "they reward any identity group that has democratic support." This way new coalitions can be born and the historical divisions between the two main local communities can be narrowed. (for more on the principle of consociational democracy, see McGarry, J. (2002). 'Democracy' in Northern Ireland: Experiments in Self-rule from the Protestant Ascendancy to the Good Friday Agreement. *Nations and Nationalism* 8 (4), 451–474. Also Smooha, S. (2002). Types of Democracy and Modes of Conflict Management in Ethnically Divided Societies. *Nations and Nationalism* 8 (4), 423–431.)

On political and governmental levels this kind of unity of approaches was not present in previous peace attempts. The institutional development of the devolved government and the principles for the peace agreement illustrate the co-operation of local political parties, their representatives, international mediators, the support of two national governments and the inputs of high-level politicians such as the British Prime Minister Tony Blair, Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern and former President of the USA Bill Clinton. The desire, political willingness and support on the ground was visibly present during these two years. It was therefore possible to maintain the peace process even though incidents such as the exclusion of DUP and Sinn Féin from the talks in early 1998 shook the foundations heavily. The suspension lasted for only a few weeks, after which these parties returned back to the talks again. Many commentators argue that this window in time which was experienced in the late 1990s has been extraordinary, and if compared to the contemporary political climate, it was loaded with much more optimism and an impetus to find real solutions and compromises.

The co-operation of different scales is a structural part of the Belfast Agreement and of the implementation of the peace reforms. The main issue in Strand One was to create democratic institutions based on power-sharing for Northern Ireland. An agreement was reached over a democratically elected Assembly which can exercise executive and legislative authority. Safeguarding the rights and interests of all sides of the community was also defined as the basic principle for the Assembly (The Belfast Agreement 1998). The power-sharing Assembly was a long-awaited reform in Northern Irish politics. Finally, power was to be devolved from Westminster. This new governmental arrangement filled the crucial gap in the governing of Northern Ireland. The real political future was to lie in the hands of local politicians in a similar way as in Scotland and Wales. It was hoped that this reform would increase the sense of ownership in political decision-making, and this indeed occurred. Now, the “bread and butter” issues could be decided on the local level and by people familiar with the context.

The beginning of devolution was rocky. In the time between June 1998 and December 1999 a shadow Assembly was in operation and only preparatory work in committees was possible. The December devolution became possible after an eleven-week review of the implementation of the peace reforms conducted by the US Senator George Mitchell. Devolution was short-lived and the Assembly was suspended in February 2000; the return to devolved government occurred on 29th May 2000 (Wilford 2001: 62–68). Similar temporary suspensions, of shorter duration however, have been witnessed twice in the summer of 2001. These political setbacks have increased restlessness and insecurity in the localities, and shaken the already conditional faith of people in sustainable peace. Thus, as Wilford (2001: 69) correctly concludes “the most benign measure of the assembly’s performance is that to date it has survived, if not entirely unscathed.” The slow-downs in political peace-making have occasionally led to riots and other demonstrations, which again reinforce territorialisation, rather than the de-territorialisation which these formal agreements seek to achieve.

The Belfast Agreement and Stormont Assembly politics have had a crucial role in balancing the political situation on the ground. For the first time since the 1970s there is a power-sharing executive in Northern Ireland, which aims to create a united

governmental context which local people can rely on. The short periods of Assembly politics have demonstrated that the ministers and the Assembly members have enthusiastically worked with themes such as security, social welfare, education, transportation and economic investment. These are the issues that local people have for many years hoped to see being dealt with from a local point of view. Assembly politics also forces the political parties to continue building up trust and meaningful dialogue. This is not easy to accomplish when the traditional political loyalties still exist and receive widespread support, nor is the situation any easier within these traditional loyalty blocs where fragmentation is leading to a heterogeneous range of opinions. Assembly politics, too, shows how slowly the opinion environment is changing and in what framework it can be challenged in first place.

Part of the historical legacy of the conflict in Northern Ireland means that also the institutional setting has to come in terms with the legitimate and sovereign national context and agency. To overcome the difficulties of previous decades the Strand Two in Belfast Agreement dealt with legislative issues and the relationship between the North and South of Ireland. Thus a North/South Ministerial Council was “established to bring together those with executive responsibilities in Northern Ireland and the Irish government, to develop consultation, co-operation and action within the island of Ireland on matters of mutual interest within the competence of Administrations (The Belfast Agreement 1998).” Twelve special areas were defined where co-operation would be most useful in terms of the development of the whole island of Ireland: agriculture (animal and plant health), education (teacher qualification and exchange), transport, environment (protection, pollution, water quality and waste management), inland waterways, tourism, relevant EU programmes (Interreg, Leader II), inland fisheries, aquaculture and marine matters, health (incidents and emergency), urban and rural development (The Belfast Agreement 1998). Three other areas were added later on: food safety, trade and business, and language (Irish and Ulster Scots).

The implementation of this co-operation was dependent on the overall progress of devolution and thus the process could only begin in late 1999. Six cross-border bodies with full-time staff, funding and project implementation responsibilities are now operating (Coakley 2001: 85–93). However, no comprehensive assessment can yet be made of the political significance of the cross-border bodies. First, they have neither been in operation for long enough, nor has full implementation or utilisation taken place yet. Second, the resources (both economic and staff) are restricted at the moment. Third, co-operation like this does not reveal to what degree the new dialogue corresponds with the hopes of the Nationalist community (of acknowledging the all-Ireland context), or the fear of Unionists (of sliding toward a united Ireland) (Coakley 2001: 92–93).

Finally, Strand Three aims at loosely organising British-Irish governmental relations by establishing the British-Irish Council (BIC) with the two governments and the representatives of the devolved institutions in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. The first BIC summit was held in London in December of 1999, but since the suspension of the Assembly no new plans have been made in connection with this consortium (Meehan 2001: 96–98).

As an ideological move towards a multi-scaled and multidimensional conflict resolution all the three Strands have worthwhile roles in the structure. The interplay within and between the political scales is evident, as one of the primary aims of the peace project is the overcoming of boundaries. In this case the crossings have been both physical and ideological. The scale politics supported by and introduced in its current form in the Belfast Agreement, is slow and controversies often further slow-down its development. In retrospect, the institutional and administrative reforms were established with little resistance, whereas their future depends to a large extent on their ability to produce decisions. The problems vary from co-operation in transport planning (where varying policies and political desires restrict the cohesion of the systems), to the difficulty of determining the sanctions to be used against the political parties suspected of being associated with paramilitary organisations.

The organisation of governing according to the model presented in the Belfast Agreement reflects a new contextually sensitive approach within a more inclusive framework than ever before. This seem to have created one possible way out of the divided reality. Administrative scale politics indeed create and widen the idea of place and how it is socially and physically reproduced and signified. The idea of de-territorialisation embedded in the Belfast Agreement challenges strict distinctions between intra- and inter-state agency, communal and national boundaries, and historical loyalties. While this may create stable and democratic institutions and decision-making practices for Northern Ireland, the direction that the process will take cannot be predicted yet.

Localities Confront the Peace Reforms

In the previous sub-chapters I have discussed the forms of de-territorialisation that were influenced by international and national agents, and formal institutional structures. In the following the focus is on local action. The new scale politics has materialised in the new governing and administrative practices and, furthermore, in people's everyday life. The changing social environment has created pressures to re-think communal behaviour and modes of spatio-cultural organisation. Even though the peace settlement in itself is welcomed by most of the people in Northern Ireland, some of the reforms and the degree of compromise are threatening to push many local communities over the edge, to resume to violence. This is probably the most serious threat that may reconstitute violence and reinforce segregation. The critical factors which might negatively contribute to the process need to be discussed from the point of view of local experience.

Political deadlock and pessimism about the sustainability of peace raise the question of whether the peace process has been too ambitious. Has Northern Ireland tried to go too far too quickly? Dissenting voices have been heard among politicians, but even more among ordinary people. It seems that political decision-making has not paid enough attention to local voices and experiences. Peace and politics easily become meaningless empty words without people's support. In this respect, the local hard-line resistance to certain controversial reforms (such as decommissioning, security, policing,

justice and prisoners) is worrying. Politics, even if based on multi-party negotiations but insensitive to everyday realities, cannot lay a basis for a peaceful and successfully shared Northern Ireland.

The vital but rarely asked question is how the political reforms affect the daily lives of ordinary people in Northern Ireland. These people are the ones who have to come to terms with the effects of the political decision-making. They will decide whether their children go to a segregated or an integrated school; they are the ones who continue living in local communities when political prisoners are released; they have been brought up in a way that emphasises the importance of loyalty to one's community; they are the people who want the peace and the cease-fires to last (at least most of them), but still have difficulties in coming to terms with decommissioning, the restructuring of the police force, the presence of the British Army or even the role of Stormont Assembly and the work of their locally-elected representatives. The locals are told almost everyday in the media and elsewhere how they should become more pluralistic in their thinking and more open to difference in society. To be able to understand the varying nature and sudden changes in the political peace process, it is necessary to look at how people themselves think about and see the contemporary situation. I wish to clarify the difference between the two realities: on one hand the reality in which the politicians operate and agree on political reforms, and on the other hand the everyday reality of local people in which these political reforms will be implemented. Sometimes it seems that political decision-making does not take into account the restrictions of everyday realities. These are realities in which the boundaries between the communities often are strictly guarded and reconstructed and in which loyalty to one's collective identity is a structural part of people's life.

The progress in the political peace process has relaxed the local communities. The normalisation of life practices began after the constant threat of bombs and security alerts started to fade away in people's minds. The positive attitudes were reflected in the increase of community-relations activities, hope for better employment prospects and economic investment. The improvement in the political situation has filtered down to the whole community. But expressions of high hopes for a peaceful future are always accompanied by a deep-rooted guardedness. Each outburst of violence reminds people of the past. An atmosphere of distrust still prevails in both communities and across the generations.

P, M, 17: Even if there is peace, there is two or three bombs.

P, M, 15: I think it comes back in the way it was, probably, but that is my view.

C, F, 17: Then we have all these groups fighting each other because they cannot agree...there is never going to be peace...never.

The experiences of powerlessness, frustration, anger and even apathy have enormous effects on people. In times of political crisis, what tends to happen in Northern Ireland is that people become entrenched and go back to their exclusive communities. Only the bravest individuals will stand out in spite of the state of the peace process, but by and large the political situation affects how the communities feel in their enclaves. This majority of people form the critical mass whose experience should be respected

and valued, even though previously their support for the politics of violence partly maintained the conflict. Mistrust and insecurity can easily drive the communities back to the old methods of gaining personal and collective security: violence. Violence often comes into the picture, when no other channels of communication work, and people begin to think that at least with force they will get their point across to a wide audience. This is a matter of prestige, often witnessed in conflict-ridden societies: “at least someone is doing something,” and “the potential sacrifice one has to pay for one’s actions is for the ‘cause’.”

Commitment to the peace process has become crucial in the current situation. If people feel that political decision-making disregards them, they will quickly lose their already contested faith in peaceful politics and begin to actively resist any political reforms. In Northern Ireland the political field could be described as immature due to the lack of dialogue and compromise in the political culture. Often arguments and counter-arguments are heard publicly in the media, but not discussed further. The three-word politics of “no, no, no” has characterised many political parties and not just the Unionist bloc, to which it most often refers. However, now this uncompromising environment is acknowledged and relations in the political sphere are structured around the new communication culture enabled by international political mediation and the peace process. Tensions still arise between the supporters of the old political culture and the more progressive ones, and furthermore between the promises given in the time of the old political system and current local expectations. The political parties have adapted rigid positions on certain issues related to the national struggle, and slogans such as “*Not an inch*,” “*Ulster is right, Ulster will fight*,” “*Free the POWs (prisoners of war)*,” and “*Disband the RUC*” (Royal Ulster Constabulary, the police) are firmly rooted in the minds of the people. These slogans, among others, are expressions of the ideological basis that locals identify with. In the contemporary situation some people mistakenly think that the old ideological promises can be fulfilled without making compromises and that simultaneously the peace reforms which are favoured by one community can be fully implemented.

[Topic: sharing Northern Ireland]

P, M, 15: Auch, Catholics should go down to South [the Republic of Ireland] and leave North to Protestants. It is simple as that.

Discussion:

[Decommissioning]

C, F, 34: Well because of my upbringing I think we should not give anything, we should keep everything until they are going to know if there is permanent peace.

C, M, 52: I say the reason why they don’t decommission because for them [Republicans] it is surrender.

[Policing]

C, M, 29: You cannot just paint the cracks on the wall, you have to sort out the cracks. You have to sort out the Police not just change the name.

The above quotes illustrate how deeply the nationalistic feelings are still present in everyday politics. Territorial preference for Northern Ireland as an “eternal” part of

Britain, or the feeling of surrender in the “fight” for national freedom if decommissioning takes place, or the demand for the scrapping of the current policing system indicate the level of disagreement about what the problem in Northern Ireland is, and how peace should be brought about. Because the future visions for the Protestant and Catholic communities are often contradictory, the co-operation at local level is much harder to attain than the national and international political agreements assume. The different views are publicly proclaimed not only in political speeches but foremost in daily life and the slogans have become part of the symbolism of urban life in Northern Ireland (see Figures 29 & 30).



Figure 29. “Free the POW” banner in the Catholic Bogside estate.



Figure 30. King William III and God Save the Queen.

Current peace reforms challenge the essence of many institutions and practices which have been central in people's orientation in Northern Irish society. Segregated communities are not used to rapid and radical changes, especially when it comes to the security structures of the communities. A major stumbling block in the political peace process is the expectation of straightforward implementation of all reforms. In reality, the communities are as immature as the political system in handling the pressures of transition. A pluralistic society, one of the aims of the current era, will not emerge by force. It can only come about from the initiatives of the local communities because people really want it. Therefore, inclusiveness and a feeling of being part of the peace process are essential, before anyone can realistically talk about the "people's peace process." The feeling that so many people have that they have been left out of their own peace process was apparent in many focus group discussions:

[Local politicians and peace]

C, F, 31: My personal view like. It just get, we get fed up with it. It is the same old story every day. It seems that nothing is getting anywhere or getting any better.

[International involvement and peace]

C, M, 15: I think it has been accepted but it would have been better to do it just by ourselves instead of the Americans. They don't know what it is like here.

The time-scale of the peace process was set during the peace talks. The various parties involved decided that the total implementation of the Belfast Agreement should be achieved within a couple of year from its signing. This schedule soon proved to be totally unrealistic. The strict deadlines, for example in decommissioning and restructuring the police, have generated political crises in Northern Ireland, which

might have been preventable with a different approach. The conflict itself has a history of many hundred years. Everyday life in Northern Ireland is structured within the framework provided by the conflict. Hatred, mistrust and bitterness cannot be wiped off the picture overnight. Moreover, these feelings towards the “others” need to be analysed and explained. This will evidently take time. People’s stories and hurts need to be heard before the reforms of Belfast Agreement can be fully implemented.

Finally, the essence of the cultural borderland in this confrontation of localities and the multi-scaled political interests need to be addressed. In the borderland contexts identity usually forms the ostensible base for cultural survival. Cultural identity is defended against outside influences and possible inner differences. The homogenisation of the society is set as a goal instead of cultural pluralism. The current peace era has placed collective identifications in a new situation. Identity is usually linked with stability and safety, but now it seems that the traditional segregated identities are no longer functional, at least in realising peace politics. This notion in itself has been stressful for the local communities, but the pressure for compromising has increased along with demands for radical changes in communal belief-systems, as required by the political peace process. The boundaries in the urban borderlands are not easily crossed. This is the point where the local communities confront the challenges of political accommodation. The formal rules in society might change rapidly as a consequence of political decision-making or legislation, but the informal habits, traditions, and meaning systems evolve slowly (North 1990 quoted in Paasi 1999: 75). A similar idea was presented also by one of the interviewees:

C, F, 31: I think it will take a lot of time to heal the wounds and build up the trust between the different communities. To get that respect and understanding.

It is obvious that in order to achieve sustainable peace in Northern Ireland the practices of signifying collective identity need to be challenged and changed, but not in a manner which calls for great sacrifices with no guarantee of success. People’s identification with local community and territory have made life in the conflict-divided society bearable. Historical institutions and traditions create a feeling of continuity. Now these sources of identification are becoming more fragmented. In this transformation localities need all the support they can get, whether international funding for projects, initiatives to interact across the communal boundaries, emphasis on plural place politics, or a show of equal respect for different cultural traditions in governing. Obviously, this cannot be done within one geographical scale only. In sensitive situations a multi-scale approach to the social and physical re-organisation of society and its institutions seems to be vital. Without co-operation involving activities and actors in the different scales, I believe that, Northern Ireland would be still more trapped in the past than it currently is.

Conclusions: Learning to Co-exist

Peaceful societal developments have become reality in Northern Ireland with the multi-scaled politics. However, confrontations within, and across, scales of action still occur. Peace is not a mould into which the society can be pressed. Current discussions on the Northern Irish peace process often concentrate too narrowly on the national and international scale agency. In this chapter I have argued that scale politics has indeed brought a new contextually sensitive and inclusive approach to peace efforts in Northern Ireland. The political and governmental reforms are, however, only one part of the whole peace development. The role of popular support for the reforms seems too often to be fading from political decision-making, whereas in the beginning, for example in the peace referendum, it was more visible and more valued among the politicians. This study argues that constructing a peaceful Northern Ireland means listening to local voices and tailoring political decision-making to existing local conditions (Kuusisto 2001b). Scale politics needs to be sensitive not only towards the various agents and scales involved, but also towards the particularity of local conditions.

The most critical question in the localities is still the lack of faith in peaceful politics. Gaining trust and respect can take place simultaneously in two directions: vertically and horizontally. Vertical processes focus on building relationships between political scales. Thus, in political decision-making all scales should be seen as equally important and relevant agents. Establishing connections between scales can take place, for example, through consultative forums with citizens and regional and national officials. In establishing practical relations between individuals and groups, horizontal approaches are essential. Contacts and dialogue within the scales are required before multi-scale politics can be applied. In the current situation, the horizontal process should above all pay more attention to local-level boundary crossings and bridge-building between the Catholic and Protestant communities. This could be achieved, for example, by putting more impetus and resources into cross-community and single-identity work. It is important that both vertical and horizontal approaches should occur simultaneously; they are mutually dependent.

The borderland context, violent conflict, segregated communities and competing cultural traditions, mixed together with nationally contested territory, have created multi-layered problems in Northern Ireland. Resolution and means of accommodation need to be sought from several sources. The response to the cultural conflict can never be only political, as the above illustration of the local difficulties in the peace process showed. Neither can, for example, insecurity or distrust, be eradicated with political decisions. Political accommodation across different geographical scales will create the right environment for shared decision-making. However, politics can only be a tool in the cultural and social transformations; it is not an end in itself.

The peace process and the Belfast Agreement have challenged the conventional politics of territoriality. Strong categorising of places and strict territorial order within communities do not fit in the framework of the pluralist and shared society which these political agreements hope to achieve. In contemporary Northern Ireland, cultural pluralism as a model of mutual respect for different cultural heritages and traditions

can be seen as a goal, at least on paper (see The Belfast Agreement 1998). Whatever the measures to achieve these goals are, I argue here that redressing grievances derived from segregation and communal disorder will not make the original causes disappear. Along with O'Dowd (1998), I also believe that a resolution to the Northern Irish problem means above all creating conditions which marginalise the coercive politics of territorial control and resistance. Therefore, this study has not focused on banal symbols of territoriality only, but rather sought to analyse the significance of territorial practices for the local people and study the reasons why they appear in the first place. "Making" a peaceful Northern Ireland means listening to local voices and making more effort to adjust the political decision-making to the conditions existing on the local level in this particular time and context. Denying the existence of varied territorial divisions will not help in the drive for peace. It is the territorial divisions that define the existence of the two communities and also their urban and rural spaces, in other words, the whole cultural, social, political and geographical context called Northern Ireland.

The current practices of categorising people as "us" and "others" will remain an essential part of contemporary Northern Ireland. However, it is to be hoped that the peaceful development will be channelled through less politicised categories of "us" and "them." Then the boundaries between "us" and "other" would not be communicated violently and the expression of difference would take place through more communicative practises, such as shared community projects, discussion panels and even art (Kuusisto 1999: 26).

The legacy of nationalistic struggle is an embedded feature among the local communities. People have been brought up in a manner which constantly flags the importance of territorial identification, no matter on what geographical scale. While this has been a burden in the one-sided identity politics that materialises in many everyday practices, it does not mean that Northern Irish people are doomed to live in a society of conflict and violence. Many have struggled hard during the last few years to create a more peaceful and shared society. Therefore, I argue that the Northern Irish peace process has been a success despite its ups and downs: they are part of the process. To achieve success in the future, taking it slowly and breaking down the everyday barriers should be valued instead of rushing forward and trying to force all political reforms through community structures which are not flexible and mature enough to handle the pressure.

VII

LIVING WITH THE OTHERS

In this research territoriality has been viewed as an experiential spatial process. The focus has been on urban divisions and segregation in Northern Ireland and particularly on the organisation of everyday life in the city of L/Derry. The quest for communal security and a secure sense of identity are part of the dynamics through which conflict-prone borderlands are created among divided communities. These processes were here analysed from the perspective of the role of place and place-bound identities, along with the categorisation and politics of place. Moreover, it is through these practices that “our places” and “their spaces” take shape.

Because the aim of my research has been to approach experiences of lived territoriality, it was necessary to collect a broad set of empirical material. Altogether thirty-six people took part in seven focus group interviews, three of which were entirely Catholic groups, two entirely Protestant groups and two mixed groups. In addition, twenty-five single interviews were made with key informants from several fields of society. Through this empirical material it was possible to provide answers to the questions posed at the beginning of this research: how are territoriality and local communities bound together? How is territoriality experienced and lived through on the local level? And finally, how has this dominant spatial discourse come to be challenged in recent years?

Territoriality has been a part of Northern Irish society since as long ago as in the 12th century, but its role as a communal practice has grown mainly since the 17th century Plantation. In Northern Ireland affiliation to the Irish or the British nation, or Catholic or Protestant neighborhoods, manifests the collective loyalties and the continuance of cultural traditions. Strict rules are set for social activities and communication. Security, the sense of belonging and the ownership of territory are also reinforced through physical bounding and wall construction. It is crucial to notice

that territoriality is a socio-spatial practice, and neither the social nor the spatial sphere should be underestimated when studying this complex phenomenon.

In spatial terms contemporary Northern Ireland is more segregated than ever before. For example, in the city of L/Derry there are nineteen Catholic single-identity wards, two Protestant single-identity wards, and three mixed wards. In addition, there are three wards on both sides where more than 55 % but not more than 75 % of the population comes from one community. Thus, territoriality as a process and as a collective experience still plays a central role in reproducing and maintaining the conflict-inclined borderlands. Along with physical segregation, social distinctiveness is a particular feature of the Northern Irish society. People tend to socialise among their own community and children are mostly educated among their own kind. This has meant that cross-communal friendships and co-operation are rarely seen. However, as the empirical material illustrated, some people have been willing to cross these communal boundaries and therefore a challenge is laid to the categorical inter-communal relations.

Experiences of territoriality reflect the spatial processes of categorising and the politics of place, as well as their effects. These experiences are exclusively structured in the legacy of spatial bounding, dichotomies, either/or positions, exclusionary practices and one-sided narratives of history and of the contemporary society. For example, when the local people are addressing issues such as the boundary between the Catholic-dominated Cityside and the Protestant dominated Waterside, or safety-net formation or their sense of alienation, they actually describe the institutions, processes and social features that are tightly connected to the construction of territory and collective spatial identities. Often in Northern Ireland the territorial order creates anxiety, fears, frustration and ignorance, just as it also creates feeling of safety, comfort and sometimes a desire to move beyond the restrictive and divisive reality.

In this research the experiences of territoriality have been discussed from three particular viewpoints: that of the **players i.e. the institutions** that are part of the boundary construction process, such as school, the formal security apparatus, and most of all the local community. The second viewpoint is **territoriality as a process**. Here three aspects were seen as particularly important: First, *constructing the sense of belonging*, i.e. defining us and them, where the local sense of place becomes a central characteristic in defining unity among the community. Differences between the Catholic and the Protestant sense of place were found. In general it was argued that the Catholic sense of place is formed on the basis of a strong cultural heritage, whereas the Protestant sense of place has a more political basis. The communities' sense of belonging is created through practices such as stereotyping, violence, cultural commemorations, and compulsion. Generally, in Northern Ireland the sense of belonging is based on exclusive social and spatial categories. There are Catholics, Protestants, and the people in between; there are friends and enemies; our places and their spaces; Derry and Londonderry.

Second, in a conflict-divided society the dichotomised everyday life often takes a territorial form – “us/here” needs to be distinguished from “others/there.” *Territorial claiming* takes place in many spheres: sometimes it relates to the legitimate naming of the territory, equal or restricted possibilities to use public spaces, the guarding of

physical territories and boundaries, or political support in localities. Territorial claiming is part of the cultural logic in Northern Ireland. Most often, however, it concerns the control of social space rather than conquering physical space.

Third, intimately connected to territorial claiming is *boundary-drawing*. The hegemonic strict territorial rule is upheld by boundary construction. For local communities physical boundary-drawing i.e. peace walls, and mental boundary-drawing, i.e. lines that separate places of comfort and spaces of fear, function as safety mechanisms. Boundary formation and guarding takes place in and through everyday activities. In these situations friends are distinguished from enemies, territorial preferences are stated, and sectarian symbols used to flag the lines of distinction. My research has shown that a reluctance to live in mixed housing clearly exists among the respondents. However, many respondents envision the future of Northern Ireland as a shared society. The situation in L/Derry is complex. On the one hand there is a desire to breach boundaries, to overcome the segregated way of life, and challenge the historical legacy of “us” – “other” dichotomies. On the other hand these desires do not often materialise in real-life actions, in which the strict communal rules are still applied. Some promising exceptions have been witnessed even in L/Derry; late-night street violence in the city centre area was tackled with local cross-communal mediation in autumn 1999; the Lundy marching dispute was settled peacefully for the first time in December 1999; and communication between the two “hostile” communities was improved with a mobile phone link. These real-life exceptions and other challenging narratives have indeed created a counter-discourse to the territorially restricted way of life. Furthermore, they have showed that positive communication across locally politicised boundary lines can be possible and fruitful.

Living in a conflict-divided society and thus under constant **categorisation** carried out by one’s own community and by the other community has led to the development and adaptation of several survival strategies. This is the third viewpoint adopted in this study. The fear of violence, constant confrontations, and questioning one’s loyalty or communal background result in communal coping mechanisms that are applied in everyday life. My research revealed four coping strategies: *ignoring*, *forming safety nets*, *lying* and *adapting to the law of the land*. Coping strategies as such are based on the reading of space and social situations. The skills of observing and reacting to small hints, such as symbols in the area, people’s looks, and a general sense of place are crucial. Coping strategies are mostly learned through socialisation in a particular community, but currently a similar logic of easing the distress of cultural confrontation is also used in a somewhat different manner in cross-community work. Cross-community work among the local communities aims at providing a proactive and conflict preventive approach to the problems experienced locally. Knowledge learned from the others and common cross-communal concerns have at times eased the confrontations and created a basis for dialogue. In my view this cross-communal dialogue shows a desire to move beyond the territorial trap.

Even though one of the conclusions in this work is that L/Derry is a borderland which is best described by the concept of *territorial (geographical) trap*, another conclusion relates to the transformations taking place in society today, i.e. the *wish to move beyond*. It is, therefore, important to acknowledge the challenging non-territorial

practices, such as local power-sharing in the Northern Ireland Assembly and the breaching of local conflict-inclined boundaries, which have become an embedded part of the Northern Irish borderland construction. As an empirical conclusion to this thesis I presented three socio-spatial narratives describing three typical life strategies and attitudes. Whereas Activists and Acquiescent mostly reproduce the prevailing territorially divided system, the Visionaries are the mould-breakers challenging norms and conventional practices. It is in the practices of these Visionaries that de-territorialisation, plural values and sharing have taken root as part of the local politics of place. The Visionaries' narrative is often produced discursively, that is in everyday discussions, rather than through strict communal rules, sectarian symbols, or acts of resistance, which again are used in the construction of the Activist and Acquiescent narratives. However, this discursive way of describing the social environment is indeed changing the everyday understanding of the conflict and the desired spatial order in the localities.

Since the early 1990s a positive impetus has driven Northern Irish peace politics forwards. The political peace process and the politics of place through scales have put real pressures on the legacy of strict territoriality. Even though the desire for a peaceful future was made clear by several respondents interviewed for this study, complexities remain. Some of the difficulties relate to the nature of the practices by which the scaling of the politics of place can be achieved, and the others, in fact more serious, relate to the degree of compromise that the local communities are willing to accept. First, the cross-scale dialogue in formal politics does not directly evolve into cross-community dialogue on the local level, as is often proclaimed in the official peace politics. Second, compromising and clinging to tradition need to be in balance. Third, the functional basis for identity politics, the sense of security and spatial organisation do not change rapidly. As witnessed in L/Derry, localities are not ready for radical changes in their own security politics, i.e., exclusive identity categories and effective control of local boundary lines remain the main source for secured identity politics. Using Sibley's (1995) terms, "the fear of other" remains "the fear of place." Put simply this is the outcome of the exclusive territorial politics witnessed in Northern Ireland.

In conclusion some main characteristics of the exclusive territorial discourse and the inclusive challenging discourse are presented in Table 9.

Table 9. Components in exclusive and inclusive spatial discourses.

Exclusive territorial discourse:	Inclusive challenging discourse:
Divisive territorial identity: us/here (= place), others/ there (= space)	Partially integrative territorial identity: We/others, here
Boundary as a separating feature	Boundary as a connecting feature
Memberships in social groups enforcing the segregative structures	Membership in cross-community
Mistrust, fear of difference, stereotypes	Building trust through dialogue and mutual education
Dichotomies & confrontations	Plurality and compromise
Culture of violence	Culture of dialogue
Normative community rules	Blurred community rules
Political ideology dominates	Personal choices dominate
Politicised everyday life	Actively challenging the legacy of divisive politicised practices
Sectarian symbols of conflict	Shared symbols of peace and co-existence
Social exclusion	Social inclusion
Re-territorialising	De-territorialising

Territorial order in Northern Ireland is going through a transformation. However, nothing certain can be said about whether the weak categorisation of space and plural politics of place will attain permanence. Peace politics, the end of large-scale paramilitary violence and the attitude environment among some local communities are signs of the pluralistic territorial discourse. However, no great changes can be expected if a strictly territorial sense of belonging remains the only significant way of achieving security. Thus, a more realistic assumption may be that physical segregation, “our places” and “their spaces,” will not necessarily disappear even after several years of peace. These dichotomies and confrontations might be alleviated to some degree. The most prominent boundary-crossings are made in the social sphere. This evidently means that a part of the Northern Irish society supports the idea of *living with the others rather than against them*.

EPILOGUE

Northern Ireland became part of my everyday life in the summer of 1997. This PhD reflects only one part of the journey I have travelled due to my increasing interest in Northern Irish issues, the way of life there and the people. In my journeys during the length of this research (and hopefully the many more coming in the future) I have tried to remind myself to ask questions and to be critical of my own ideas and opinions, so that I could never say that I know everything I need about Northern Ireland. I am grateful to all of you who shared experiences and ideas with me during these four years. I must have been a pain in the neck for many of you, when every second sentence from me began with WHY? I can make two excuses: first, the little girl inside me has never quite grown out of the questioning stage and I think that is why I became an academic; second, the warning of what might happen if one does not remember to ask enough questions is hanging on the notice board in my office. This is what it says:

People who don't have to ask questions

In this world we have too many people
who are so sure of what they know.
They are the ones
who know for sure.
People who don't have to question,
what is right and what is wrong,
who is a friend and who is an enemy,
and how one should act in particular situations.
These people with their unchangeable attitudes
are always present
when societal conflicts are heated up
and when the ever-incomplete wars continue.
(Aikalainen, January 29th 2001, my own translation)

Some of the questions occupying my mind have now been answered but there are many more left unanswered, to which I shall return in the future. I think I will be haunted by Northern Ireland for a long time to come...

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9. Would you prefer to live in a mixed, Protestant or Catholic area only?

- Mixed
- Protestant
- Catholic
- Don't Care

Please give a reason for your answer.

10. How many of your friends are of a different religion? _____ **out of** _____.

11. Do you often travel into areas which are perceived to have opposite religion than yours?

- Very often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

Thank you!

The material collected will be handled **confidentially**, and analysed in a manner which does not reveal the identity of the respondent. The results of the research will **not** be used for commercial or governmental purposes.

Questions for focus groups

(This list was only for researcher)

(I have created a few claims which I would like you to think about: do you agree or disagree and give reasons for your answers)

12. How do you find living here in _____?
13. Would you say this area has a strong sense of communality? How does it appear?
What kind of common characteristics do people in this area share with each other?

Claims:

14. Strangers are not welcome to this area.
 - Why?
15. We, here in _____ are different from those who live on the other side of Foyle river?
 - How?
 - How would you characterise Catholics/ Protestants?
16. It is safer for Catholics to live in Cityside?/ It is safer for Protestants to live in Waterside?
 - Why?
17. The use of violence is acceptable when protecting my area or community.
18. Segregation will always be part of our culture here in Northern Ireland.
19. Do you ever see the integration of all communities here in Northern Ireland?
20. Would you like integration?
 - How it could be achieved?
21. Currently, it is easier to have friends from the other community than 20 years ago.
22. Northern Irish situation has changed a lot during the last 10 years.
 - How?
23. Now Derry/ Londonderry is a shared city.
 - Where can you see this?
24. People do not trust each other?

25. Segregated schooling should be an option.

- Why?

26. Peace has had an impact on my community.

- How?

27. Cross-community/ community-relations projects have made the two communities closer.

28. International involvement (EU, Mitchell) has been supported in Derry/ Londonderry.

29. What do you think about decommissioning?

- Early release of prisoners?
- Patten's commission?
- How have these affected you and your community's everyday life.

30. Because Northern Ireland has its own Assembly the future looks bright.

Questionnaire II:

University of Joensuu, Finland
Anna-Kaisa Kuusisto (MSc)
Field work 1999-2000

CONFIDENTIAL
(II)

First name: _____

31. In the following you will see six pictures from the city of Derry/ Londonderry. Please **describe what it is you see** in the picture **and what kind of feelings or thoughts it awakes** in you?

Picture 1.

This is a picture of: _____

It makes me feel: _____

Picture 2.

This is a picture of: _____

It makes me feel: _____

Picture 3.

This is a picture of: _____

It makes me feel: _____

Picture 4.

This is a picture of: _____

It makes me feel: _____

Picture 5.

This is a picture of: _____

It makes me feel: _____

Picture 6.

This is a picture of: _____

It makes me feel: _____

32. During the discussion did you find any questions or any issues on which you did not agree with the rest of the group? Please write them here and give your real opinion about the issue. **(Your answer will be handled confidentially)**

33. Northern Ireland has lived through many important days during the last couple of years. How do you see the future of Northern Ireland?

34. If there are any other comments you would like to make, please include below.

Thank you for answering!

The material collected will be handled **confidentially**, and analysed in a manner which does not reveal the identity of the respondent. The results of the research will **not** be used for commercial or governmental purposes.

APPENDIX II

Interview sources:

Community Groups:

Waterside Development Trust
– Information Technology Project
– Child Care Unit
– Columbus- Project

Bogside Residents' Group

Shared City Project

Top of the Hill 2010

St. Columb's Park House

Fountain Area Partnership

REACH Across

Tullyally Development Group

Apprentice Boys of Derry

Focus group interviews where hosted by following organisations :

Pennyburn Youth Club
– Two sessions (young people, 6 participants)
(adults, 5 participants)

Caw Community and Activity Centre
– One session (young people, 4 participants)

Newbuildings community association
– One session (young people, 6 participants)

Mixed group (in Catholic primary school in West bank of the city)
– One session (young people, 4 participants)

R.E.A.C.H. Across
– One session (young people, 6 participants)

Dove House
– One session (young people, 5 participants)

Governmental organisations or their representatives:

Northern Ireland Housing Executive

- Richmond Chambers
- Waterside District Office

RUC (Royal Ulster Constabulary)

- Two policemen (note: they were interviewed as individual policemen not as representatives of the RUC)

Mayor of the city of Derry/ Londonderry 1999-2000

Community Relations Officer Derry city council

District Partnership (Derry City Council)

Local politicians:

From the DUP

From the SDLP

From Sinn Féin

Individuals:

Cain-project leader

Community arts facilitator

Community and peace activist

All together 61 people interviewed