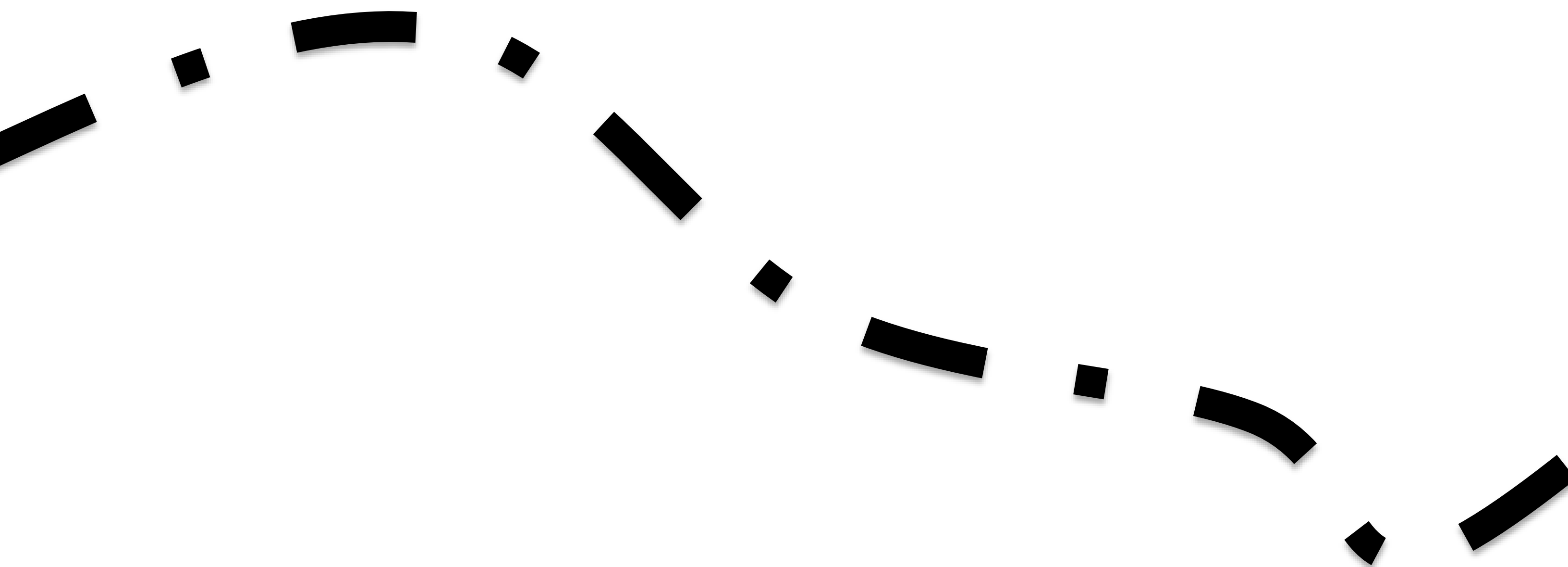
BORDERS ON THE GROUND AND IN THE MIND

Processes of Bordermaking in Contemporary Belfast



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Processes of bordermaking in contemporary Belfast

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Abbreviations

CNR	Catholic/nationalist/republican
DUP	Democratic Unionist Party
EU	European Union
GFA	Good Friday Agreement
IRA	Irish Republican Army
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
PSNI	Police Service of Northern Ireland
PTSD	Posttraumatic stress disorder
PUL	Protestant/unionist/loyalist
PUP	Progressive Unionist Party
RUC	Royal Ulster Constabulary
UDA	Ulster Defence Association
UFF	Ulster Freedom Fighters
UK	United Kingdom
UVF	Ulster Volunteer Force

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Introduction

A band consisting of three is playing in the corner of the hall. One woman is playing the violin, the other woman is fingerpicking on a mandolin. The man sitting on the left plays the concertina. They seem to be improvising, playing traditional Irish and English music. They look a bit bored, and nobody in the dining hall seems to really pay attention to them. A red carpet covers the floor. Tall white pillars proudly stand next to the big leaded glass windows. A woman wearing a turquoise dress and a big layer of make-up fondly says: “it’s like we’re in the Titanic!”. Ten round tables are scattered around the hall. The distinct circles of people are chatting and enjoying their meal. Some people made an effort to dress nicely for the occasion, whilst others are wearing a tracksuit. Next to the plates of food lay some of the diplomas that the people have just received. It states “Promoting positive change, this is to certify that [name of person] took part in our *challenging conversations - exploring cultural identities and allegiances* course”. A happy and positive atmosphere is running through the hall. However, when I get to talk with a man next to me he seems less optimistic. “See all these tables over here? Nobody is mixed. Everybody is sitting with their own group”. I ask him if that means that the project has failed. “Well, not completely. I’ve been to some places I had never been before, which was interesting to see. And more importantly, this gave us the chance to introduce them to our positive Irish politics”. But what about their points of view? Did you not learn anything from them? “It just confirmed their racist and bigot negative politics. They want to maintain inequality, refuse same sex marriage. Luckily however, demographics are changing, and within ten years we will probably have more positive politics within a united Ireland”.

In 1969 the first so called “peace wall” was constructed in Belfast (Byrne and Gormley-Heenan 2014). These walls were established as a temporary policy response to the sectarian violence and disorder that were tormenting Northern Ireland. Ironically however, a large amount of these walls have been erected or strengthened after the signing of the peace agreement of the thirty year lasting war mostly referred to as The Troubles. How is it possible that these are built after the peace agreement? What do these borders or barriers mean? Are they a reflection of divisions within society or are they actors enforcing divisions? Since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 within the European Union and Schengen Area about a thousand kilometres of walls have

been built (Benedicto and Brunet 2018). Could these peace walls be a reflection of a global trend of building walls and isolating societies or communities?

One thing we do know is that borders - both physical walls or entities as barriers between people constituted in the mind - come and go, and their meaning and interpretation might change over time. Many scholars argue that borders are not static entities, but are always changing. Their fluid nature comes from the argument that borders are the result of human activities, and borders should therefore be seen as both a process and a product. Therefore, we refer to *bordermaking* when talking about borders (Jansen 2013; Wilson and Donnan 2016).

We are interested in how bordermaking takes place in contemporary Belfast. In other words, how are physical and mental barriers or borders between people in Belfast either maintained or contested? The conversation above took place in Belfast's City Hall. It was the celebration of a successfully ended cross-community project between "Catholic" and "Protestant" neighbourhoods in North Belfast. The people at the presentation of the diplomas are celebrating their participation in a cross-community project, talking about the differences between their communities for a couple of weeks to overcome the mental and eventually physical barriers that divide their society. Yet, at the celebration itself nobody seemed to mix. Also, the man who expressed his feelings did not seem to have created a better understanding for "the other". What can the paradoxes of that night tell us about contemporary bordermaking in Belfast?

Hence, the main question of this research will be: *How does bordermaking take place in contemporary Belfast?* When speaking of 'bordermaking' we refer to all the practices that produce, reproduce or modify borders. Bordermaking should be seen as a process that can be fuelled by many things, such as human activities, but can also be influenced by already existing physical entities like the walls in Belfast that separate "Catholic" and "Protestant" neighbourhoods. Although much has been written about borders in Belfast or Northern Ireland, this research will focus on some contemporary issues making it socially relevant. One of these issues is Brexit, which was supposed to take place on the 29th of March, but has now been extended to the 31th of October. At the moment it is still unclear what Brexit will eventually look like, or even mean. One thing that is clear however, is that Brexit is related to bordermaking in Northern Ireland. The border between Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic has been open and almost invisible since the Good Friday Agreement (GFA) in 1998, which is the peace agreement that officially ended The Troubles. Recently however, issues have arisen concerning the future of this border because of

Brexit. Northern Ireland will leave the European Union and some people fear that a return of a 'hard border' might revive old tensions (IJzendoorn 2019). Brexit seems to create tensions because it affects people's sense of identity and notions of the future of their home country (Gormley-Heenan and Aughey 2017). Besides Brexit it has now been twenty years since the conflict has ended. How are the memories of this past related to bordermaking? Are younger generations moving on or still heavily burdened by Northern Ireland's past? Do the walls and murals still have the same meaning? Lastly, how do peace organisations try to overcome the divisions within society? And how effective are they? These are the questions we have tried to answer, and the questions that make our research socially relevant today.

Our main research methods were participant observation and (semi-)structured interviews. Participant observation gave us the possibility to better understand Belfast's social life, and thus gave us the possibility to place our data in its fitting context. By understanding people's perspectives through interviews and regular meetings, we obtained a better understanding of processes around bordermaking, for it gave us an insight into how borders are both explicitly and implicitly interpreted and performed (Johnson and Jones 2011). Our intent was to conduct a complementary research to avoid reducing society into different simplistic categories and to try and get a holistic understanding of bordermaking and the processes that are involved. However, we did make a distinction between our research populations, with Almaz focussing on Protestant/unionist/loyalist (PUL) communities, and Gijs on the Catholic/nationalist/republican (CNR) population. This distinction within Belfast's society could not be ignored. This also made it easier to maintain contact with our informants, because our networks would mostly exist within these communities and because it would decrease possible suspicions. We expected to recover much of the same sort of stories concerning bordermaking and its connected themes. However we uncovered many considerable differences that have to be addressed to get an understanding of the different communities and their intricate layers of complexities, insecurities and concerns. Our research therefore has both complementary and comparative characteristics, for this turned out the be the only way to achieve a holistic understanding of bordermaking in Belfast. Some downsides to these methods are that we have not achieved any quantitative data that can support some of the arguments people gave us. Also, participant observations and qualitative data can give very detailed information about certain subjects, but it is hard to draw a generalising conclusion from qualitative data. Within these research methods it is inevitable and rather logical that our own role

as researcher and us as a person plays a large role in what data is collected and how this is collected. For example, our gender differences made a distinction in how people perceived us and where we could get access to. For instance, Almaz was able to obtain a lot more perspectives from women participating in communal projects. One should therefore keep in mind that what data is collected and how this is perceived depends very much on us as researchers. An ethical dilemma we both encountered was first of all the question "who we are" to go to Belfast and ask people about possible problems from their society. What gives us the right to ask these questions about perhaps a painful past or present, and who are we to interpret their stories and write a thesis about it? Luckily the people from Belfast have been absolutely accepting, welcoming and friendly, making us both very grateful.

Our thesis will start with a literature review about how identity, nationalism, and globalisation are intertwined and can create politics of belonging, which can be referred to as the core concept related to separating the world into "us" and "them", and thus bordermaking. Then, we will review some of the literature that is related to bordermaking, and how it can be seen as an always active process. Lastly, we will review some of the literature related to post-conflict societies, and how residues of conflict can create issues within societies that might both explicitly and implicitly maintain divisions. In chapter two we will provide some of Northern Ireland's and Belfast's context, by giving a summary of its past and reviewing some of the literature that has been written about contemporary Northern Ireland and Belfast. In the following four chapters we will represent our empirical data. Chapter three and four will highlight some of the encounters we had within CNR and PUL areas. We will show how politics of belonging can be created within these communities in contemporary Belfast, and how this constitutes to bordermaking. We argue that CNRs mainly perceive a barrier between them and Britain. Therefore they express their Irish culture and perceive themselves as Irish citizens. Irish politics try to achieve a united Ireland. PULs feel that they are British, and a notion that Britishness should be defended is widespread. However, what exactly this Britishness entails seems to be a topic of discussion. The divisions within its community create uncertainties of how and what to protect, resulting in votes for political parties that do not necessarily represent its people and their social needs, but provide the biggest voice to remain part of the UK and have a defensive nature through tactics like Brexit. In our fifth chapter Almaz illustrates the influence the physical and mental barriers in Belfast have on bordermaking. These include walls, infrastructure, public transport and schooling systems. We argue that these

barriers have changed in function and nature, where they once started as safety measures they now also represent national territories of Ireland and Britain within Belfast. Further, the barriers have become a normal part of daily life, making it hard to overcome the segregation in society. Lastly, in chapter six Gijs highlights some of the stumbling blocks that still exist, which can make it difficult to overcome borders and barriers. The chapter ends by examining what NGOs or peacebuilding organisations do to overcome these stumbling blocks. In our conclusion we will answer the question how bordermaking takes place in contemporary Belfast. We will do this by keeping in mind the interconnected themes of *place, performance* and *perspective* of borders (Johnson and Jones 2011). We argue that bordermaking in contemporary Belfast has its roots in two different analytical perspectives. One has its roots in politics of belonging, where bordermaking is the result of imaginings about what the nation state should look like, resulting is different "Irish" and "British" territories. The other way of bordermaking in contemporary Belfast has its roots cultural, social and physical silences, which are methods to prevent any form of conflict. These silences however, constitute and routinise fear in society (McCormack 2017). Because of this, Belfast's society becomes unable to tackle problems that go beyond societal divisions. This in return creates tensions and uncertainties, which reinforce Belfast's segregation. Although the many difficulties Belfast and its people seem to face, we argue that breaking the silence is the way forward and Belfast is headed in the right direction.

CHAPTER ONE

Belonging, Borders and Residues of Conflict

IDENTITY, NATIONALISM, AND POLITICS OF BELONGING IN AN AGE OF GLOBALISATION

To understand how identity, nationalism, globalisation and politics of belonging are intertwined, we must first understand what they mean. The literature on social identity is too broad to completely discuss here, but some important key points are highlighted. Individuals possess multiple identities, in which different contexts make different identities more prominent (e.g. male, Christian and father). Identities imply both sameness and uniqueness. Identity (or identities) gives a person the sensations of the unique sense of self, being different than anyone else. However, identity also places someone in a category or group. Social identity is therefore about the relationship between the individual and the social environment, and thus about categories and relationships. This relational aspect entails that social identities are limited: we are what we are not (e.g. Protestant not Catholic, female not male etcetera). Social identities are by definition divisive (although not necessarily antagonistic) (Demmers 2016). Given this contextual and subjective nature of identity, the answer to "who" is "what" seems to depend on who you ask. However, as Demmers mentions, some groups in society have more 'power to define' than others, meaning that social identities are formed by its social and political contexts and their definitional powers. The biggest authority on categorisation, classification and identification is often ascribed to the state. As indicated by multiple scholars, the state does not only seek to monopolise the legitimate use of physical force, but also the legitimate use of symbolic force, which includes the power to name, identify, categorise and 'to state what is what and who is who' (Demmers 2016, 24; Brubaker 2010; Ferguson and Gupta 2002).

Since identity is (also) about group formation, and the state plays a major role in identification processes, the emergence of an image of the nation-state is not surprising. The nation is, as presumably the most quoted definition by Anderson states: 'an imagined political community - and as both inherently limited and sovereign' ([2006] 2016, 6). It is referred to as imagined, because most people of the same nation will never see or know each other. Yet they feel an allegiance, even to those who have passed away before they were born. It is imagined as limited,

meaning that even the biggest nations with billions of people being part of them have, even though fluid, boundaries. Outside of these boundaries other nations exist, and as with identity, you are part of *this* nation because you are not part of *that* nation. Lastly it is imagined as a community, because even though inequalities exist, the nation is imagined as a horizontal comradeship. This can eventually explain why people are not only willing to kill, but ultimately are willing to die for such bounded sentiments. This definition expresses that nation-states create a feeling of where people do and do not belong. Yuval-Davis (2006) argues that belonging refers to emotional attachment, the feeling 'at home', and feeling 'safe'. However, when belonging is threatened in some way, it tends to be naturalised, and becomes articulated and politicised. A clear example is given by McCormack, who writes (2017, 54):

> I did not realize I was Catholic until I was five. This realization was not in the least spiritual. Rather, it was experienced as a bodily shock. I was skipping along behind an Orange parade, becoming immersed in a carnival-like event that re-performed almost daily in my estate during the summer months. In a pause between the booms of the Lambeg (a large drum, the shell of which is made with oak and the drum head with goat skin), my best friend and neighbour, looking troubled but somehow also triumphant, announced that she pitied my religious misfortune, which, unlike the fate of everyone else present would result in a deep pit in a scorching hell. From that point on, Orange parades assumed a demonic presence, an event to be feared, an event around which a whole physical and social transformation occurred yearly in my estate.

This example illustrates how her belonging was naturalised and articulated: she from then on knew she was a Catholic and Irish. This refers to the concept of politics of belonging, which according to Yuval-Davis is one of the concepts responsible for creating processes of boundaries or border maintenance. She explains that 'the boundaries that the politics of belonging is concerned with are the boundaries of the political community of belonging, the boundaries that separate the world population into "us" and "them"' (ibid., 204). Brubaker (2010) asserts that politics of belonging are for a large, if not the most, part constituted through idealised notions of what the 'nation-state' should look like. The idealised form of the nation-state has within its territory the 'imagined community', as explained above. Within that territory, polity and culture should be congruent,

which means cultural homogeneity within states, and sharp boundaries between them. State territory and citizenry should also be compatible, meaning that permanent residents of the state should be citizens, and all citizens should be residents. Lastly, cultural nationality and legal citizenship should be coextensive; ‘all ethnocultural nationals should be citizens, and all citizens should be nationals’ (ibid., 63). Within these nation-states mobility of its citizens and all forms of capital is considered normal, even desirable, whilst mobility between nation-states is considered deviant (when it does not support the nation-state).

Politics of belonging can be illuminated by this idealised concept of the nation-state, especially by how it is contested and which situations derive from them in practice. Brubaker argues that the biggest threat to the idealised notion of the state, which causes the different forms of politics of belonging, is migration. Gusterson (2017) suggests that migration is a consequence of neoliberalism. Although we agree with both Brubaker and Gusterson, we suggest that the overarching phenomenon is globalisation. The migration that stems from this does not only involve the migration of people, but also the migration of borders. Brubaker clarifies this argument by illustrating how ethnic Russians had been migrating for centuries, but kept within the Soviet Union. When the Soviet Union collapsed, borders moved over people, ‘thus creating the post-Soviet internal and external membership politics in Russia and the other successor states’ (2010, 69). This migration of the border has also taken place – and perhaps will take place – in Northern Ireland. It has been of great impact on the politics of belonging in (Northern) Ireland in 1920 when the partition took place (Wilson and Donnan 2016, 29). Currently, the movement – or fear of movement – of the border because of Brexit also highly influences the politics of belonging, and thus the borders in the mind (Gormley-Heenan and Aughey 2017).

However, globalisation does involve migration of people and ethnic groups. Appadurai (2006) has written about the darker sides of globalisation. He asserts that the modern nation, despite the public voices talking about tolerance, multiculturalism and inclusion, is laden with ‘the idea that its national sovereignty is built on some sort of ethnic genius’ (ibid., 3). Because of this ethnocentrism, the idea of a singular national ethnos has been produced and naturalised at great costs. In this current age the high quantity of ethnic groups and their movements, mixtures, cultural styles and media representations create profound doubts about where the lines between “us” and “them” are situated. When these kind of uncertainties come into play, people are tended to emphasise the distinctions between “us” and “them”, and it depends on this social uncertainty in

social life whether a nation would become aggressive, or even violent (Appadurai 2006; Demmers 2016).

We mentioned before that the state's goal is not only to achieve a monopoly on legitimate use of violence, but also a monopoly on the legitimate use of symbolic force, which includes the power to name, identify, and categorise (Demmers 2016). Ferguson and Gupta (2002) argue that the state's authority is 'imagined', and that the state uses specific images, metaphors, and representational practices that represent the state as a concrete, overarching, spatially encompassing reality. However, globalisation leads to an emerging system of transnational governmentality which means a rethinking of ideas about the nation-state, its communities and the "local", which can be laden with nostalgia and the aura of authenticity. Hence, globalisation can question the state's authority, for example in its monopoly on legitimate symbolic force, threatening the existing identity (and identities) of the "nation-state".

We explained how identity, nationalism and globalisation are all connected and play a prominent role in drawing lines between different groups. Social identity is divisive, and group formation stems from it. The nation-state plays a prominent role in identity formation and creates feelings of belonging. However, the idealised notion of the nation-state hardly seems to exist in reality, creating all kinds of uncertainties and turning belonging in politics of belonging. Globalisation is a leading factor in creating uncertainties. Migration is part of it, both of borders and of people. Also, it can delegitimize the state's power to define and represent. All these processes create uncertainties about who belongs to "us" and who belongs to "them", constructing a longing for clear boundary maintenance. And where boundaries exist, borders exist.

BORDERS

As mentioned, nationalism, globalisation and politics of belonging evoke processes centred around drawing lines between "us" and "them". Borders are created, but what exactly do we know about borders? In this section we discuss the current literature about borders, how borders can be interpreted and what effects they might have. Then, we will provide a summary about the context of Northern Ireland and connect what we know about borders to the specific situation there, for as Wilson and Donnan (2016, 14) mention, a general theory for borders should be no objective given the need to understand borders contextually.

Once understood as geographical lines that mark the territory of a political autonomous entity, borders are now considered not to be looked at as 'things', but as practises 'that produce, reproduce or modify degrees of borderness' (Jansen 2013, 23). Borders are therefore seen as a process as much as a product (Wilson and Donnan 2016, 13). Besides, *bordering* does not have to take place at the border itself. Borders are considered to be everywhere, meaning that for example the sovereign state's loci of border practices can no longer be isolated to a specific place on the map (Johnson and Jones 2011, 61). Where then, do these bordering processes exist?

To find out, one should keep in mind the interconnected themes of *place, performance,* and *perspective* (ibid., 62). The *place* is where you look for evidence of bordering practices, and try to assess their impact. This could still be the borderline of a state, but it could also be somewhere in cyberspace, within the state itself, monitoring who could be considered a citizen or a threat through security events like surveillance (Graham 2011), or a border could exist as 'a border in the mind' (this refers to the fact that borders can be seen as a social construct that always stands in relation to a certain context, and are therefore fluid) (Gormley-Heenan and Aughey 2017). Gieryn (2000) highlights the importance of recognizing place within any research for it can, among other things, bolster inequalities, difference, power, politics, interaction, community, social movements, identity, memory, and history. According to Gieryn, place always consists of a geographic location, a material form, and of an investment with meaning and value. Hence, place answers the question "where?" related to bordermaking.

Borders are achieved, materialised and performed in a variety of ways. *Performative* aspects of borders can be provided by both state and non-state actors (Johnson and Jones 2011, 62). Military action, political negotiation, the building of infrastructure or the cultivation of senses of belonging can for example all be considered as performative acts (Jansen 2013, 23). Also, specific murals in different neighbourhoods have a performative aspect, for they can tell you whether you are on the right side of the border (see image[1]). Thus, performance answers the question "how?". Lastly, it is important to understand the *perspectives* of borders, for they tell us not only the possible locations of borders, but also how to gain access to them. Perspectives answer the question "why?". Just like it is difficult to answer the seemingly simple question *where* borders are, the question '*who borders?*' is also complex since the activities related to bordering can be done by almost everyone and even *everything* (Johnson and Jones 2011, 62).

[1]UVF Mural, East Belfast. Photo taken 13-02-2019.

As mentioned, it is important to keep in mind that the processes of bordering are not only the result of human agency. Jansen (2013, 24) refers to a trend within the literature of borders as *thingism*. This trend considers things not merely as objects that people use and represent in their practice, but argues that non-human 'actants' deserve an equal analytical status in the events of bordermaking. Although he does not completely agree, his study of the Sarajevo border in a post-conflict context does provide an illustration of how borders were once designed for a specific reason, but can over time change in meaning, and ultimately in effect. Donnan recognises that borderlands must be seen not just as a context or setting, but 'as a space that generates particular kinds of social relations in which the border and its transformations become an instrument (as well as a reflection) of different forms of power and conflict as these emerge and mutate' (2010, 254).

Narrowing down to a more contextual way of bordermaking, the case where Northern Ireland was separated from the rest of Ireland in 1920 could be what O'Leary refers to as 'partition' (*in* Wilson and Donnan 2016, 29), which is a fresh border cut through at least one community's national homeland, creating at least two separate political units under different sovereigns or authorities. These partitions are intended to regulate or resolve national, ethnic or communal

conflicts, in this case between people who feel they belong to the UK - refered to as PULs - and people who feel they belong to the Irish Republic - referred to as CNRs. Most justifications for partitionists, as they explain the motives as the result of their ethical and practical beliefs, exist according to O'Leary mainly because of pressures that flow from democratisation. We argue that this democratisation is also an aspect of globalisation, generating uncertainties within the nation-state, as explained in the previous section. O'Leary's hypothesis is that democratisation encourages party formation around existing national, ethnic, or communal cleavages, 'thereby making the conciliation of competing demands more difficult, and the formation of "a common demos" problematic' (ibid., 36). Donnan (2010, 254) mentions how the Irish border created substantial ethno-political minorities on both of its sides, leaving a legacy of provocation and frustration. For the CNR minority in Northern Ireland, it felt like they had lost a part of their nation, and the border was seen as politically unacceptable and morally unjustifiable for it felt like a continuation of British imperialism in their homeland. For Northern Ireland's pro-British PUL majority, this separation felt as a securitisation of their economy, polity, religion and culture. This very much resembles what Gormley-Heenan and Aughey (2017) write about Brexit's influence on the borders in the mind of Northern Ireland's inhabitants, where for the PUL side it felt like they had their country back, and for the CNR it felt like they woke up in a different country. Borders can thus be the result of uncertainties, but often do not generate the outcome people wish for, only creating a downward spiral of uncertainties.

In short, borders are often seen as static entities, yet the opposite is true. Borders are a result of human practises, that constantly change the border's nature. Bordering or bordermaking therefore not only refers to the (physical) products, but also to the always active processes involved, which can take place everywhere. Because this process can take place everywhere, and can be done be everyone and everything, and thus be interpreted by everyone in a different way, it is important to always keep in mind the concepts of place, performance and perspective when studying specific borders. Lastly, borders are often the result of processes involving nationalism, globalisation and identity formations. As Donnan argues, 'when borders ease and open up, identity anxieties proliferate and small differences become accentuated, generating increased tension around divisions that were expected to disappear once the border itself was removed' (2010, 265). However, when borders are drawn to achieve a more idealised (homogenous) nation, they often have a counterproductive outcome when it comes to creating peace. Still, a single theory involving

all borders does not exist, hence borders should always be studied in their context (Wilson and Donnan 2016).

POST CONFLICT SOCIETY

The Northern Ireland conflict officially ended in 1998 with the signing of the GFA (McCormack 2017). Now, twenty years later, the country is still healing from its wounds inflicted during the three decades of war. Bunting et al. (2013) examined the impact of the civil conflict on the mental health of Northern Ireland's inhabitants. They estimate that 60.6 percent of the people experienced a lifetime traumatic event, of which 39.0 percent would be related to the conflict. Measuring posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) within society, on twelve month and lifetime rates, the outcomes were 5.1 percent and 8.8 percent. These numbers are very high in relation to comparable studies in other countries, even compared with other countries that recently experienced a civil conflict. Weingarten (2004) reveals how victims of political violence can transfer the residues of that trauma to family members who did not directly experience the violence. She describes how especially children of traumatised parents are at risk of inheriting the traumatic wounds of the past. This can happen through biological, psychological, familial and societal mechanisms. Interesting is how she describes that through familial and societal mechanisms *silence* can be a key mechanism through which trauma in one generation in communicated to the next. Silence is more than the absence of sound, it can communicate a wealth of meanings, like where not to go, or what not to touch or say. It operates within the individuals, familial and national level.

McCormack (2017) argues that in the case of ethnic conflict silence is a way of negotiating violence, and in this sense becomes a vital part of the toolkit necessary for survival. She argues that silence is a culturally learned strategy through which socially experienced fear can be normalised, routinised and negotiated. Examining forms of silence within Northern Ireland, both during and after the conflict, she gives multiple insights of what they may look like. She explains that it can be approached as coercion, cultural censorship, as embodied, and as an integral component of a diasporic identity and consciousness. She gives examples of silence through symbolic violence as certain colours painted to curbstones or through parades. Alternative memories and histories can be silenced, and ethnic identities or territory can be rooted through forms of silence. However, silence also suggests agency. It can be a cultural strategy to cope with mechanisms of violence, and it can be used to mask the existence of anti-hegemonic knowledge.

McCormack questions the institutions that try to create peace or justice by breaking the silence. Truth commissions might exclude certain types of violence and subjectivities, hence only creating new forms of silence. Also, individual narratives might be subsumed and a new national narrative on the actualities might emerge. Lastly, it is questionable if the social and political conditions that make silence a cultural necessity have been removed once the silence is broken. However, Woon (2014) argues that talking might be the nonviolent way to social change. According to him, 'the recognition of shared vulnerability can be used to mobilize various emotional impetuses for the formation of nonviolent coalitional exchanges towards peaceful outcomes' (2014, 666-667).

In short, even when a violent conflict has ended, it might take years for a society to recover from the psychological wounds within society. Traumatic events can be passed on through generations, and statistics indicate that Northern Ireland has a relatively large number of people affected by the civil conflict. A way of coping with violent conflict can be through silence. Silence is not just the absence of words, it can exist in many forms. Whether dealing with the past and ongoing problems within society is done by breaking silence, is still being debated.

In this chapter we have discussed some of the relevant theories for our research. Politics of belonging are at the core of separating the world into "us" and "them". This happens when someone's belonging or idealised notion of the nation-state is threatened. One of the biggest threats is globalisation and its consequences like migration, transnational governmentality or democratisation. The resulting borders should not be seen as static entities but both as a product and a process. Bordering can be done by both human and non-human actors. One should keep in mind the place, perspective and performance when studying borders. Lastly, Northern Ireland is a post conflict society. The literature suggests trauma is still prevalent in Northern Ireland, and can be passed on through generations. People adapt within society, and silence can be a way to cope with ongoing mechanisms of conflict. Now that we have discussed the literature about bordermaking and post conflict society, we will provide more contextual information about Northern Ireland and Belfast.

CHAPTER TWO

War and Walls in Belfast

NORTHERN IRELAND: A BRIEF HISTORY

This year counts the fiftieth anniversary of the construction of the first peace wall in Northern Ireland. It was built in Belfast in 1969 to separate the CNR Falls Road and the PUL Shankill Road (Gormley-Heenan, Byrne and Robinson 2013). This structure was requested by residents that lived at the heart of the combat. It was constructed as a temporary protective measure. However, it still exists today and it is complemented by at least one hundred additional walls and barriers. Peace walls have become iconic emblems of Belfast's past and ongoing conflicts (Byrne and Gormley-Heenan 2014), they institutionalised the separation of two dominant communities, the Irish CNRs and the British PULs. These communities are commonly referred to by their religious affiliations. The Irish nationalists/republicans as Catholics and the British unionists/loyalists as Protestants (Bryan 2004). This however is an oversimplification of the actual duality, hence we refer to CNR and PUL. Segregation has taken place since Northern Ireland's partition from the Republic of Ireland in 1920. However, to the untrained eye their differences appear to be minimal. The separation of these communities has reinforced different cultural identities and the barriers represent the deep seeded hostility that exist between them. Moreover, not only neighbourhoods, but schools and politics have been separate domains for decades (ibid., 237).

Before the Anglo-Irish treaty partitioning Ireland into North and South there had been revolutions, colonialism and oppression, leaving scars on both CNR and PUL communities. The separation created substantial ethno-political minorities on both sides (Donnan 2010), resulting in a PUL majority in Northern Ireland, that exercised economic, cultural and political power. This prevailed until the realisation of the GFA on the 10th of April 1998. PUL dominance was possible through state power and control, which resulted in the marginalisation of minority CNRs, affirming some groups possess more 'power to define' the other, as social identities are formed by its social and political context (Demmers 2016). The experienced marginalisation according to many was the primary catalyst for the violent thirty-year struggle that erupted in 1969, commonly known as "The Troubles" (McCormack 2017).

At the end of the sixties many civil rights marches arose, campaigning against the established inequalities which disadvantaged CNR communities. These marches often led to violent responses. Many believe the 1968 Catholic civil rights march in (London)derry to be the initial start of The Troubles. It was met by harsh (re)actions from the PUL opposition and anger provoking mediation by the British military. The Troubles comprised of hostages, murders, bombings and many violent attacks by both CNR (mainly the Irish Republican Army, IRA) and PUL (such as the Ulster Volunteer Force, UVF) paramilitaries, costing the lives of 3725 people in a population of 1.5 million. Another 107,000 people were physically injured, and 500,000 were identified as victims of the conflict. This illustrates how migration of borders causes a threat to the notion of an idealised nation-state, which led to an aggressive and violent response (Brubaker 2010; Appadurai 2006). The Troubles ceased after the GFA and civil and cultural rights were institutionalised for equal opportunity (McCormack 2017, 52). A process of demilitarisation and reforming justice and policing was planned. Nevertheless, the separate existence of PUL and CNR communities persisted thereafter and was embodied and performed through symbols, like murals, parades, peace walls and other barriers (Bryan 2004).

The majority of the PUL population see the borders as a material marker of difference and anything that weakens it would cause uncertainty and anxiety (Donnan 2005, 72). Their sense of British belonging is threatened, as a threat to the border means a threat to their notion of the idealised nation-state. The border secured feelings of safety and being ‘at home’, but also created ideas of “us” and “them” (Yuval-Davis 2006). As there was a sense of threat to the existing border, fear of extinction of one’s social identity increased. However, for the CNR community removal of the national border is desired as the border itself is a threat to their feelings of safety and being “at home”. The border symbolised a barrier against encroachment by ‘the Republic’ for PULs (Donnan 2010) and an accumulation of fear, threat and loss of belonging legitimised thirty years of investing heavily to uphold it during The Troubles. For CNRs however it legitimised the struggle to break it down and it symbolised being entrapped in a state in which they don’t belong, yet an invasion into their “home” at the same time.

CONTEMPORARY NORTHERN IRELAND

Sectarian segregation has shown itself remarkably resilient in the face of formal and informal efforts to soften its impact and manifestations. Many organisations have sought to bring the

opposing sides together. Successive political initiatives have also sought resolution, most recently the GFA, and recent evidence suggests that ethnic polarisation is increasing, rather than declining (Donnan 2005).

Belfast today is divided into areas that are considered distinctly PUL, CNR or "neutral". West Belfast is considered a predominantly CNR area, East Belfast is largely populated by PUL communities, the North is a patchwork of different gated communities and the South is considered a gentrified area which is populated by a mix of students, immigrants and locals. Peace walls have become part of the fabric of the Belfast area, with different political murals that have been part of the cityscape since the beginning of the twentieth century. These murals are drawn and drawn over by both CNR and PUL artists propagating their political affiliations, adopting a performative role and functioning as a demarcation of territory (Hill 2012). Though the murals have softened in tone through community action or government planning, the walls have gotten higher over the decades. According to a survey on sectarian violence in Belfast in 2005, a high percentage of young people feel threatened or intimidated by murals and other visual displays, especially those of the other community (20 to 26 percent, depending on community background). More than half of young people do not feel safe in areas dominated by the opposite community, thus are not willing to enter them out of fear of getting hurt. A high percentage of them favour segregated living (35 percent), schooling (42 percent) and work environment (17 percent) (Jarman 2005). Thus, the peace walls are not simply a symbol of the historical conflict, nor a reminder of the peace-building challenges that remain. For the post-ceasefire generation has not known differently, the 'abnormal has become normal' and their understanding of what constitutes peace is viewed very much through a lens that is defined by physical division and permanent segregation (Byrne and Gormley-Heenan 2014). However, a draft government report, leaked in January 2013, suggests that peace walls should be brought down by 2022, because some recent thinking in government policy circles suggests that the building of walls as a viable policy response to the conflict is now over. Most recently, this has meant the removal of security gates in (London)derry (Nolan 2014). Byrne and Gormley-Heenan (2014) conducted research that measured public attitudes towards such structures among the people living near the peace walls. They concluded that the majority (69 percent) still felt the walls are necessary as protection for potential violence, but more than halve (58 percent) indicated that they would like to see the peace walls go down now or somewhere in the future.

Northern Ireland after the partition was left with a PUL/CNR ratio of 67:33. More recently this has shifted to 60:40 and might even move past 55:45 (O'Leary *in* Wilson and Donnan 2016, 45) changing the historically familiar distribution of the two communities and creating an extra layer of threat to the PUL idealised nation-state (Brubaker 2010). However, for CNR members, this creates a sense of hope for the future, as the prospect of a united Ireland seems more feasible, further reinforcing PULs sense of threat. This knowledge of numbers amplifies uncertainties and anxieties over who has access to state provided goods, such as distribution of housing. These uncertainties tend to emphasize distinctions between "us" and "them", as can be seen by PUL area's abundance of agressieve murals, flags and other emblems, compared to CNR areas (Appadurai 2006).

The most recent evidence of feelings of "us" and "them" is Britain's current political climate and Brexit's pivotal role. The majority of Northern Ireland voted 'remain'. Upon closer examination the vote was mainly among CNR/PUL lines, confirming an old division, where majority PUL with a sense of 'British' identity voted 'leave' and majority CNR with a sense of Irish identity voted 'remain'. The UK was due to leave the EU on March 29th 2019, however this was extended to October 31st, causing persistent uncertainties. One stumbling point has been the border between Northern Ireland and the rest of Ireland (and thus the EU). Brexit illuminates differences, resulting in a shift in thinking and creating 'borders in the mind'. Consequently, Brexit's politics can give rise to deep seated feelings of fear and threat (Gormley-Heenan and Aughey 2017). Political divide becomes even more evident through Northern Ireland's two largest parties, The Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), which is predominantly supported by PULs and wants to stay with the UK and its opponent Sinn Féin, which is mostly supported by CNRs and wants a united Ireland. Not just Brexit, but almost every political aspect seems to be divided. This seems to correspond with O'Leary's (*in* Wilson and Donnan 2016) hypothesis that democratisation encourages party formation around existing national, ethnic, or communal cleavages. According to Bryan (2004) conflicts in Northern Ireland steer up during parades, commemorations and other recollective and thought provoking events. The most recent conflicting incident was the killing of a twenty nine year old journalist, Lyra Mckee, by the New IRA during the (London)derry riots on April 19th of this year. Her passing was met with several forms of protest against the violent

conflicts that persist.[1] Brexit too has the potential to stir up conflicts, leaving Northern Ireland's future unclear and maintaining ambivalence among its inhabitants.

[1] https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-48018615

CHAPTER THREE

A Sense of Irish Belonging

Even though spring has arrived and the sun is shining at its fullest, only a few rays are allowed to pass the window film and the wee curtains in front of it. The lack of light makes the two television screens shine even brighter. Three men stand in front of one screen, shouting at a horse who does not seem to be winning the race. One man wearing a Celtic F.C. shirt leans over the pool table, which is still mostly covered with red and yellow balls. In the corner of the room a man stands in front of the jukebox, tapping and scrolling through the touch screen. His arms are covered with tattoos, and some grey hairs are visible under his black hat. He is wearing a white shirt with red letters on the back saying ‘justice for my son DJ Leo’. All others present in the room are seated at the bar. On its marble top stand ten pints filled with lagers and ciders. DJ Leo’s father turns around as a house track with heavy bass starts playing. He smiles and holds his right hand in the air making his index finger touch his thumb and says: “George! Leo used to love this track!”. Somebody replies: “Hey George, isn’t today his anniversary or something?”
“Aye, today would’ve been his 39th birthday”.
At the corner of the bar two men are having a conversation. One of them wears a blue Adidas cap. He tips over the bar and shovels some ice cubes in his glass. He then takes his bottle of *Bulmers* and mixes it with the ice. He continues his conversation with the younger looking bloke sitting on a barstool. “It’s not that I have anything against them, it’s just that I don’t think it’ll be a good idea if they come here. We can’t even take care of ourselves. We have a shortage of houses, shortage of jobs, and our society is so divided, Catholics and Protestants and all that, and we’re even from the same ethnicity! Imagine how complex this place would become with so many new religions and colours?”. He nods at DJ Leo’s father, “George, don’t you think that immigration does bring some problems with it to society?”
“Only in Protestant areas”, Leo’s dad replies. “They are welcome over here, no problem”.
The man with the blue cap takes a sip from his cider. “Aye, they’re welcome over here”.

Anyone from Belfast knows that wearing a Celtic F.C. football shirt is only possible in certain areas and bars, for it explicitly expresses your Irish/Catholic background. DJ Leo’s father, Leo,

wore a shirt calling for justice to the murder of his son, who died three years earlier during a police arrest. According to Leo this was “because he was a Catholic”, although in later conversations he admitted that his own criminal past might have played a role in the police’s use of violence during the arrest. Inquiries into his son’s death are still being held. Peter was talking about possible issues that migrants could bring to the area. When he asked Leo – who fought alongside his dad in the IRA – about his view on immigrants, his answer strikingly resembled an Irish thought and an attitude of progressiveness that I have heard many times during my stay in Belfast, and almost felt like it was part of expressing Irish identity.

This chapter will focus on possible expressions of Irish identity and culture that I have encountered during my fieldwork. Specifically, this chapter will have its emphasis on the notions of politics of belonging as explained by Yural-Davis (2006) and Brubaker (2010). We argue that understanding Irish belonging will give a better understanding of how from a CNR point of view bordermaking takes place in contemporary Belfast. We demonstrate that the CNR populations draws a line between them and Britain, naturalising their Irish citizenship, articulating their identity and ideals, and pursuing them through politics.

THREATS TO IRISH BELONGING

Irish belonging can quite easily be seen as threatened because many Irish feel that they are still being oppressed or colonised. An often mentioned problem is the fact that the GFA has not been fully implemented yet, even though this would have been part of the peace agreement. For example, the Irish Language Act in the GFA would give Irish an equal status to English. It is being blocked by the DUP till this day. Andrew, a former political prisoner who fought for the IRA, asked me at the beginning why he spoke English. He continued:

> It’s like I say to you, is my English good, right? And then I will explain why I’m speaking English. Just because I’m white, that doesn’t mean I haven’t been colonised. And I think colonisation is theft. So, it doesn’t matter when we were colonised, a theft is still a theft, so it should be returned. Governance, should be returned. It may be a little simplistic, but as a young man I thought the only way to resolve it was use of force. Now I know, you don’t need to use force.

Many CNRs I spoke felt neglected by the government because it seems their rights in the peace agreement are being ignored.

Besides the feeling that the GFA agreement is blocked by the DUP, I would often hear that inquiries to war crimes of the British state are being blocked. This makes them feel that their rights to truth and justice are being withheld. Edward, a professor at the local university, explained:

> What in fact you have here is what people call a meta-conflict, a conflict about what the conflict was about. So that means that when you say prosecute that soldier / don't prosecute that soldier, have an inquiry / don't have an inquiry - all these things don't get articulated as justice issues they get articulated as political rivalry issues. The problem is that by design or by default the state takes sides in that meta-conflict. When you have Theresa May standing up saying that when groups like CHA, Relatives for Justice, Pat Finucane Centre, call for soldiers in Bloody Sunday to be investigated and prosecuted if necessary, that that is a politically motivated witch hunt… They're taking sides.

The issue described here often returned in conversations I had with people working for peace organisations. The fact that the past is insufficiently dealt with feels like an ongoing attack from the state on one's people.

Although it is normal to go to statutory agencies, an echo of mistrust and fear from the past can still be heard. For example, most people I spoke would go to the police if something had happened, but during the Troubles this would not have been an option. Either because the police were not trusted, or because "you wouldn't squeal", in fear that the local paramilitaries would punish you for your betrayal. Some murals reflect this, as one on the Falls Road reads "PSNI/MI5/BRITISH ARMY NOT WELCOME IN THIS AREA". Although my contacts made clear that these murals do not necessarily reflect the will of the people, they do show an existing narrative that lives within the community. One of my friends, Connor, told me how when he was five and British soldiers were still walking the streets, one of the soldiers pushed him on his tricycle:

Connor:	I look at that like that was a person that had kids at home, probably missed his kids and that's why he started pushing me. But whenever it happened my dad was up like what's happening?! He started shitting himself he was really scared.
Gijs:	What was he scared of?
Connor:	The British army were known to have… Bloody Sunday had happened and attacks had happened.
Gijs:	But this was twenty years later right?
Connor:	Yeah, but the fear is still there.

Leo, a man in his sixties I would often speak in a local pub, told me how he joined the IRA when he was fifteen after he saw his father getting beat up by the RUC and the British army. Three years ago, his son had died from injuries sustained during a police arrest. He told me that going to the police was no option. When I asked him in a later conversation where he would go if for example his car was stolen, he admitted that he would let his other son go to the police. Here I use attitudes towards the police or army as an example, but suspicions towards other statutory bodies were widespread.

Lastly, Brexit also conflicts with people's trust in the state. One argument quite often represented was the fact that Northern Ireland voted remain, but as an Ardoyne resident told me: "it's sort of like, tough luck, you're coming with us". Another illustration was given to me by Andrew:

> This part of Ireland voted to stay within the EU. I want a united Ireland. The Good Friday Agreement, which was an international agreement, guarantees my Irishness. But yet I am being pulled out by Britain. I've been denied my rights on the Good Friday Agreement. I'm opposed to Brexit because we're being forced to being British.

The examples given here illustrate how belonging can be threatened for CNR communities. This is through a sense of negligence of rights from the GFA, justice from the past or Brexit, or still existing narratives of mistrust from the past. These threats result in a naturalising, articulating, and politicising of the "us" versus "them", which I shall illustrate in the following paragraphs.

IRISH NATURALISATION AND ARTICULATION

> I think when it was all back in the sixties before it all kicked off, it was a Protestant state for Protestant people, that was what it was kind of seen as. So there was a unionist government here and Catholics weren't allowed to be a part of that. So Catholics didn't have a vote, Catholics had very little options in terms of jobs and stuff. So Catholics had to fight for what they have now (Aoife, Falls Women's Centre).

Because of the history where CNRs did not feel like they could rely on the state, many seem to take care of their issues through their own community centres or political parties. When I talked about this with Kean and Quinn who work at the Short Strand community centre, they compared themselves to their PUL neighbours. Kean said:

> I mean, we're quite fortunate around here we have one community organisation. One main Roman Catholic church. But if you go into East Belfast there's so many churches so many community organisations, even the fact that so many paramilitary organisations are fighting for territory and control. Historically within nationalist/republican areas it hasn't been that fragmented.

I witnessed how CNR neighbourhood Short Strand is a very tight community. It is surrounded by walls and defensive infrastructure, making it feel like either "an island or a prison", according to one of its inhabitants. As I walked the streets with Kean and Quinn - they were looking for local youths to participate in a project - it was quite clear that everybody knew each other, and each other's families. Also, when I had a cup of coffee with Nuala, a lady in her eighties who has lived in Short Strand her whole life, I noticed how her front door was open and neighbours randomly walked in. It is obvious how the community feeling is very strong within CNR neighbourhoods, creating a sense of "us" which are "the Irish".

Articulation of Irishness can for example be seen in murals and memorials scattered around Belfast. They are mostly funded by the local community. These memorials and murals reflect a massive pride within the CNR community. They are for people of the area who have died as a result of the conflict. Regularly, they also refer to the Easter Risings of 1916, or to the Hunger Strikers of 1981 (see image[2]). These people are seen as heroes who fought and died for what they believe republicanism embodies, (mostly summarised as freedom or equality). As Nuala once

mockingly said: “the loyalist prisoners tried a hunger strike too but got hungry after three days”. Kevin and Steve, two brothers in their twenties from Ardoyne answered this to the question to what Irishness meant to them:

> Also the whole historical thing, that you’ve been sort of oppressed makes you more patriotic. Makes you more sort of cling to that Irishness. But also the music, the art, everything. Makes you sort of proud. And its recent history of the Easter Risings.

[2]Mural of funeral local hunger striker Kieran Doherty, Andersonstown. Photo taken 18-04-2019.

On and around Saint Patrick’s Day this expression of Irish culture was clearly visible in the city, as there was much traditional Irish music and dancing going on, performed by the younger generation.

This paragraph illustrates how the sense of an “us” is created. Naturalisation becomes evident as the UK has no legitimacy in their eyes, and they perceive themselves as Irish citizens. It also shows how pride of their identity and culture is articulated. The last paragraph will focus on how belonging is politicised.

POLITICISED IRISHNESS

Though when and how is debated, almost everyone I spoke from CNR communities hoped that a united Ireland would eventually be reality. This is best summarised in a conversation I had with George, a former political prisoner who fought for the IRA:

George:	But ultimately we believe the border is the most obvious aspect of the effects of British imperialism, and colonialism in our country. And we think that ending that is the one sure way of establishing a national democracy on which all the issues of peace, inequality and justice can be established. And that would be the thing that I would want to really emphasise.
Gijs:	So could you say that united Ireland is not necessarily *the* goal, your goal would be equality and that's only possible with a united Ireland?
George:	That would be my firm belief yes.

In the first quote of this chapter Andrew mentions: "as a young man I thought the only way to resolve it was use of force**.** Now I know, you don't need to use force". This reflects that most people I spoke feel that their idealised state can be achieved through politics. Repeated arguments were pointing at the changing demographics (as described by O'Leary 2016), or that Brexit might actually show the benefits of a united Ireland to PULs. Edward described it best by saying:

> A really interesting thing of the last two years has been that Brexit made it possible in polite society to have a discussion about the possibility of a united Ireland. Even two or three years ago, that was not easy.

He continued about the West Belfast festival, in which panels are being held:

> The last two years we've had three events in each of the years where the issue of a united Ireland has been at the forefront. The panels, some of them contained unionists. And the really interesting thing is in those two years, everybody agreed that a united Ireland was coming. Now, they disagreed on two things: one, when? and two, whether they liked it or not.

As explained in our context, the politics seem to be very divided throughout the two major political parties, representing either the CNR or the PUL population. Quite often people would say something along the lines of "I'm proud to represent the opposite of the DUP, which is still trying to hold on to the status quo of inequality". Someone else mentioned how she saw the DUP as "dinosaurs", hinting at their conservative ideas. Edward mentioned when he talked about inquiries of the conflict: "[…] they don't get articulated as justice issues they get articulated as political rivalry issues". This emphasises how societal divisions are mirrored in politics.

Political parties seemed to play a large role in expressing Irish culture. They often finance murals and memorials, often resulting in murals stating "VOTE SINN FÉIN" or "JOIN SAORADH". Certain commemorations would also be organised by political parties. This was evident during the parades commemorating the Easter Risings in West Belfast. Earlier in the morning there was a smaller parade linked to the smaller republican party Saoradh. Later that day the large parade was being held, with Sinn Féin political members walking along. We argue that murals and memorials are both political propaganda and a reflection of public support.

In this chapter I have explained how politics of belonging can exist within the CNR communities in contemporary Belfast. Because threats mostly come from Britain, or parties that represent Britain, CNRs place the border where it distincts them from these British representatives (Johnson and Jones 2011). Consequently, CNRs perceive themselves as Irish citizens and a united Ireland is desired, hence the naturalisation of Irish belonging. Their Irish culture and ideals are explicitly articulated, and are greatly intertwined with politics.

To illustrate how politics of belonging are naturalised, articulated and politicised, I shall conclude with a description of my last week in Belfast. Steve and Kevin had invited me to join the parade in Ardoyne, commemorating the 1916 Easter Risings. After walking past different murals and memorials, the march ended at presumably their biggest memorial garden. Here a speech was being held in honour of the dead, and the proclamation of the Republic was read out. Local Sinn Féin members used this moment to express their visions on the future in a united Ireland, and to explicitly dissent from current paramilitaries as the New-IRA who had been in the news since the murder of Lyra McKee one week earlier. After the commemoration there was a celebration in the local pub. People were drinking and live music was played. When they sang *The Fields of Athenry*

- an Irish folk ballad about the potato famine - the crowd of the pub sang along adding lyrics to the original chorus (added in italic):

Low lie the fields of Athenry
Where once we watched the small free birds fly

Oh baby let your free birds fly!

Our love was on the wing

Sinn Féin!

We had dreams and songs to sing

IRA!

It's so lonely round the fields of Athenry.

CHAPTER FOUR

A Sense of British Belonging

During my time in the field I learned notions of belonging are not shared similarly and are negotiated differently among PULs. There are many uncertainties regarding British identity. To get a better understanding of how bordermaking takes place I will explore PUL belonging by considering these in-group divides, its effect on out-groups threats and how this is expressed through naturalisation and articulation of Britishness. We argue that in-group divides and perceived national threats as an effect of globalisation are at the heart of insecurities and aggressive resistance as described by Appadurai (2006).

IN-GROUP DIVIDE

Different layers and different ideas of "Britishness" seem to exist among PULs. "I'm an Ulster man", "I'm British" and "I'm Northern Irish" are different, but common representations of national identity I came upon. Some would add "I am Irish only outside of Northern Ireland", which adds an extra layer of confusion. Northern Ireland's layout is not widely agreed upon either. Many saw Northern Ireland as undoubtedly belonging to the UK, some believed it should acquire its own sovereignty in the future and other already saw it as a separate state. However, none believed it should be part of the Irish Republic. Thus, the notion of an idealised nation-state is not equally shared (Brubaker 2010), however, the notion of the adversary nation-state is. Not only ideas of national identity divert. PULs scattering is evident in many institutional divides, which is not surprising considering its historic background. At a Shankill women's centre Marie, a woman in her sixties explained how Protestant churches are traditionally divided:

> So you know there's always a fractured community within Protestantism, it goes back centuries. Because when you live here there's different faiths, people who practice the Catholic faith all go to the one parish. That doesn't happen within the Protestant community. We have so many different churches, so we're divided before we even start. We're not even together in faith.

Striking however is the comparison Marie makes with the CNR community when describing the divides within her own community. CNRs unitedness was often set off against PUL disparities. This reflects an element which was regularly brought up in my conversations when discussing PUL identity. Besides religion, PUL fracturing is further evident in its historic and current splintering paramilitary organisations. Again, paramilitarism would be explained by setting it off against the IRA, that is considered more united. Different PUL areas in Belfast are associated with different paramilitary groups. At a local pub a great sense of pride was expressed when spoken of the UDA (Ulster Defence Association), which was established in the pub's street. The UVF and UFF (Ulster Freedom Fighters) however were not approved of. Neil, a researcher of the Northern Irish conflict I spoke to explained:

> Attitudes differ locally. In the loyalist areas you have organisations involved in criminality and paramilitary activities, on their own territory against each other. The images you see in loyalist areas tend to be more aggressive reasserting their presence.

Though paramilitary organisations are considered to fight for the same cause, rivalry exists among them and many people I spoke to have ambiguous relationship with paramilitarism. Paramilitaries are viewed as a necessary evil, as is reflected again in relation to CNR communities, in my conversation with Ellie, a community worker at the Shankill women's centre:

Ellie: It doesn't happen in all communities that the people in them communities have a say. We would have a dictatorship, I like to call them gatekeepers, deciding on what happens in most communities.

Almaz: Are those the paramilitary organisations that still exist?

Ellie: Yes. They're community workers you know. The dogs in the street know what they're doing. We still have paramilitarism within the Protestant community, still have them within nationalist areas too, but they don't have the same stronghold. The women in the centre would say to me that they fear their own now more than they fear the other.

At a weekly women's crochet meeting in East Belfast I asked one woman what would happen if the paramilitaries were challenged. An older woman put her index finger along her throat "dead" she whispered, affirming the fear of "her own". However, on my visit to another community centre the women I spoke to said they hated current paramilitaries, their involvement with drugs and the threat they posed to their children. Nonetheless, they believed it was a necessary form of protection, as they "don't trust the other side of the peace wall".

After increasingly interacting with PUL women from different age groups one thing stood out, the connection between involvement in sectarianism and gender. As repeated in my conversation with Ellie, who has worked with many PUL women, women are less inclined to involve themselves with the politics of the conflict:

Ellie: Women within the nationalist community would be more active within their communities you know. Men don't seem to have the same control in the nationalist community.

Almaz: Do you know where that stems from?

Ellie: Well I think that comes back from Protestantism and that women should be in the kitchen, minding the kids, making the tea. You don't have that same outlook within a nationalist community because nationalist communities had to fight for everything that they got. Protestant communities were sort of like "we'll look after yous.

The same sentiment was reflected in my conversations with seven young mothers. Concerning my questions about sectarianism, their responses were generally "I don't really understand it, my daddy always talked about that stuff." Concurring an attitude I noticed multiple times. However, such as Ellie, people seemed to actively want to break through this idea. Like her, many actively engage in spreading knowledge about the past and existing conflicts. Yet, contemporary politics were still emphasized more in male dominated settings, making political fragmentations within PUL communities evident. An overarching sentiment however was distrust of political leadership.

PUL politics is often viewed as one sided and not representative of the PUL community as a whole. It was often compared to Sinn Féin MPs, who are considered to represent all their community members. Time and time again people spoke of politics and its quest for power by actively keeping communities divided from top-down, as their main political agenda is the border struggle. Especially working class residents felt disregarded, creating a disconnect between PUL politics and its supporters. As Michael, a young man in his twenties said about the DUP:

> They only attend to good Christian middle class Protestants, they are not there for us. The only political party that catered to all Protestants was the PUP [Progressive Unionist Party]. David Ervine [PUP's political leader] died too young. If he would have been alive today we would have been a strong community.

After displaying his lack of connection to the party he later said he would support it, as it would ensure Northern Ireland under UK leadership. National security seems to largely transcends other socially relevant matters, which mirrors the voting patterns of many. The argument more often than not being resistance to a united Ireland. Hence, the solidification of Northern Ireland under British rule to try and minimize insecurities. This exposes the importance of the politics of belonging by pursuing the idealised notion of the nation-state, however dispersed this notion may be (Brubaker 2010). As one woman working for the Community Relations Council said "you would call negative voting, voting out of fear."

Our aim with this paragraph was to showcase the different levels of in-group separation of Belfast's PUL areas. Uncertainties and fear of outside threats are further enforced as the experienced scattering within PUL communities creates an extra layer of uncertainty, which comes from a lesser sense of unification to form a strong packed against the outside world. This has produced a rhetoric of comparison with CNR communities, creating a sense of "us" versus "them" (Appadurai 2006; McCormack 2017; Demmers 2016), which has been possible through one unifying concept which is widely agreed upon, a sense of "we are British" and "we are not Irish", the latter being more adamantly pursued, which is in accordance with Demmers (2016) who says identity is divisive, because you are what you are not and it places people in categories.

OUT-GROUP THREAT

At his desk in East Belfast sits William, a twenty-seven-year-old community worker. He is wearing sneakers, jogging pants and a T-shirt. "You see that picture" he points at an old photo mounted above his desk, portraying three men wearing a military uniform.

> That is my grant father with his two brothers. They all fought and died to protect the United Kingdom. I hope I would make him proud today. They did not die for nothing, they fought for my right to be British. We have been demonised as the oppressors by the media for so long by Sinn Fein's propaganda, but now I want to tell my story. We were just protecting ourselves. They attacked us and if they did it again I would protect my community. They did not achieve their goal with violence, but I'm sure if they knew they could they'd still use violence. The IRA still exists and I'm sure they still have plenty of weapons hanging around.

William explained his communities' actions as actions of defence and protection, a worldview which helps a group make sense of their lives and the conflict they themselves or their surroundings have inflicted. Such sentiments are abundantly displayed in PUL areas, as one of the UVF murals I would regularly pass in East Belfast exhibited the text: "We seek nothing but the elementary right implanted in every man: THE RIGHT IF YOU ARE ATTACKED TO DEFEND YOURSELF." (see image[3]) Among many informants, statements were regularly made such as, "they're breeding like rabbits" and "they know what they're doing. They do it on purpose to get the majority.", so the expansion of the CNR population was widely recognized. Many believe CNRs still actively fight for a united Ireland, be it with or without force. Great suspicion exists toward Sinn Féin's agenda, as many believed them to use progressive views as a way to access the support of CNRs and the rest of the world in their goal to achieve a united Ireland. These perceived threats to British identity and belonging justify aggressive and sometimes even violent actions and performances (Appadurai 2006). However, these threats are not exclusively perceived to come from CNRs. In today's globalising world a sense of threat from non-Irish "outsiders" is evident. When discussing Brexit I would come upon two main arguments. One can be illustrated by something Sam, a man in his forties who grew up in East Belfast, explained:

> I think within the respected communities there is this idea Protestants would want to leave. I never wanted to join in the first place. I've always seen it as a back door to a united Ireland, if a united Ireland would happen it would form a united Europe. I just think the bigger a bureaucracy gets, the worse for the little person. A smaller

> government is a better idea. I think really what to do is honour what the people voted for and leave.

Sam reflected a broadly shared sentiment, where the EU's control over and lack of care of Northern Ireland was the main reason for voting leave. Here insecurities, because of globalisation, are reflected, as it leads to rethinking practices of vertical inclusion and the "local". Sam seems to prefer a time before the UK ever entered the EU, which seems laden with nostalgia (Ferguson and Gupta 2002; Gusterson 2017). Another logic for leaving the EU became apparent in a "very loyalist" pub, as said by Shawn, an ex-paramilitary local. The pub's exterior clearly represented its PUL affiliation, as a crown and the star of Judas were painted on a barrel, displaying affiliations with the British monarchy and reflecting support of Israel, who are perceived to be in a similar position, as I was told repeatedly. The interior was painted blue, British flags were present and football memorabilia belonging to PUL teams hung everywhere. Here I heard the same argument for Brexit a lot. Mike, a bar man in his thirties gave this explanation on my first visit, which was often echoed during the remainder of my fieldwork:

> It's just the Romanians. I voted leave because they come here, get jobs and when they have their visas they get our social benefits and send it back to Romania to build houses there, so the money doesn't stay in Britain. I saw it in a documentary.

Thus, the migration stream that started coming to Northern Ireland after the Troubles has increased anxieties over social benefits and others taking away what is yours. Subsequently controlling immigration became crucial and controlling immigration means controlling your borders.

[3]Mural in East Belfast. Photo taken on 02-03-2019.

BRITISH NATURALISATION AND ARTICULATION

However different the arguments, resistance of EU's control and the rise in migration flows are used to solidify the Northern Irish border, which secures Northern Ireland's position within the UK. PUL communities are currently not violent from day-to-day. However, they express aggressiveness through symbolic proclamations of Britishness, displaying British flags and aggressive texts and murals. The increasing amount of flags during the marching season was discussed often. Shawn, a local at the pub would very often invite me to join him on the Twelfth of July, a PUL celebration. "It gets mad, everyone wears orange and the streets outside are full of people, you would love it." he would later go on to say "St. Patrick's day only celebrates a fake character, king Billy was real", as he would often carry out his love for "British" King William of Orange. The Twelfth was argued to be an ordinary celebration by the men in the pub. However, some said it functions as a reminder of the current British ruled state, demarcating territory (Jarman 2005) and intimidating "the other", to secure one's own identity (Gormley-Heenan and Aughey 2017).

As aforementioned, there is a search and an ongoing construction of what it means to be British in Northern Ireland. William, the twenty-seven-year-old community worker that explained

his allegiance to his ancestors, made it clear that many PULs don't explicitly think of their identity and history. He believed PULs are not fighting for a national desire, because their desired nation already exists. Consequently they don't have to consider identity as much. However, he did believe many PULs feel threatened by the idea that CNRs still fight for a united Ireland. When asked why they did not unite and resist, his response was:

> We're just thick aren't we. I bet you when you go up to a Catholic kid he would know how to express his history and why he feels Irish. If you ask a kid in East Belfast he wouldn't know. Or he wouldn't be able to articulate it. We don't get our history taught at school.

Despite William's statement, I noticed a PUL strategy of studying their history to straighten out a sense of shared identity among many PULs, which reinforced legitimisation to protect oneself. I also noticed how this strategy created a public shift in identity, history and legacies toward a positive expression of being PUL that stood on its own, not necessarily experienced as defensive acts towards CNRs or outside threats. Changing the expressions of parades and bonfires, as for example one community worker said, "last year was the first year without violence during the Orange Parades, maybe this says something for the future." A non-violent re-imaging through murals and new set regulations on parades and commemorations occured. Although the PUL narrative has been recast, there has been a struggle over who gets to express PULs cultural identity and there are differently imagined futures, again producing in-group divides. Mark, a PUL mural painter explained how he tried to educate his community through murals:

> I decided to paint things about Protestant history, cause we were never taught any of that in school. I had to speak to older people, and they were telling me things were I thought 'nobody knows that.' So I made a painting about it to prick curiosity with people. We were told constantly that we were people without a history and people without a culture, almost as though we didn't have a right to exist." I was trying to counter that idea, because that would breed insecurity, insecurity breeds fear, fear breeds hatred, hatred breeds violence.

Another shift in PUL expression can be seen with Emma, a Protestant woman that taught herself Irish, as she believes its part of her identity. However, she got a lot of backlash from her community:

> I was told there were a number of people that walked out of the building when they found out there was Irish classes going on in here and they said they wouldn't be back. I've had people who I would have called friends who don't speak to me anymore. I've had family members who've attacked me over it.

In this chapter I have explained how politics of belonging play a role in Belfast's PUL communities. In-group divide reinforces out-group threat, causing aggressive performances to further solidify the existing borders. Because of uncertainties, Britishness is explored and naturalised and articulated differently by different people within PUL communities, further exposing in-group splintering, which adds on to the fears of outside.

CHAPTER FIVE

Physical and Mental Border Structures

Now that we have discussed the naturalisation and politicisation of belonging in both PUL and CNR communities, our focus will be on current border structures in contemporary Belfast, set in place as a conscious or unconscious measure of separation. In this chapter I will discuss how visible and invisible separating structures exist as toolkits necessary for survival (McCormack 2017) and how physical and mental barriers reinforce each other, as the process of producing and reproducing bordermaking becomes more salient. Barriers include peace walls, public transport and education. According to Johnson and Jones (2011), place is where you look for evidence of bordermaking, however, on further exploration we have come across acts of evasion in time and space as border practices.

PHYSICAL STRUCTURES

I had been in Belfast for only a couple of days when I sat in an office in the city centre where I spoke to Jill, a woman in her sixties who grew up in Belfast and lived through the Troubles. She has a religiously mixed background and she never fully understood the conflict. Her whole adult working life has been in peace building and today she works for a cross community funder. During our conversation she explained:

> So the earliest peace walls emerged actually out of safety and security issues.. They were only meant to be very very temporary and of course they were not, so forty years later here they still are. They look pretty permanent. They are quite varied. Some of them look absolutely like walls, some of them look like fenced of areas. It is a wall dividing two sections of a community from each other.

This conversation led me to my first trip to West Belfast, where I came upon a tall wall comprised of three layers, the first one made of concrete, than metal and a fence like structure on top, which stuck out between the houses of a residential area. As Jill described, "the city should be viewed

more as a series of small towns separated by barriers, where everybody knows everybody." The city is comprised of many different physical borders, however this one was the first and is most striking with its five and a half metre height separating the CNR Falls road and the PUL Shankill road. Walking along it, every other couple of hundred metres a gate appears, which opens during the day and closes every evening at 7 p.m., a precautionary measure faithfully adhered to everyday (see image[4)]. The first peace wall was put in place at the demand of local residents living right at the heart of the conflict, where a CNR and PUL neighbourhood intersected. Residents felt endangered as there was fear and threat of violence. However, on further analysis, historic violence, threat and fear have become part of the city in the form of not only walls, gates and fences, but other additional separating physical structures. Beyond walls, there are less salient interface structures, which are often invisible to all but the finely attuned local eye. These structures do not only exist at the boundaries of segregated working class residential areas, they consist of barriers including fortified houses, dead end streets, bridges, highways, industrial no man's lands and bus routes all designed to separate different communities. The interface today is a residue of the conflict. However it is not purely a historical legacy of The Troubles, as it has acquired new meaning. As Jansen (2013) explained, borders should not be considered 'things', but practices that produce, reproduce, and modify degrees of borderness. Today's borders still function as a means to reduce fear and threat. However, there is also a strong link between territory and ethno-political identity in the reproduction of borders. According to Neil, who studies the Northern Irish conflict, peace walls function like a national border, as they define "our" territory and "their" territory, be it PUL areas considered British ground opposite CNR areas as Irish ground. Harry, an ex-UVF member, explained that today's physical barriers for many living adjacent to them are a "security blanket", something they have lived with all their lives, and something that has become a normal element in daily practice. This sentiment I came across a lot. A good example is my visit to a community centre in North-West Belfast, where I spoke to seven women, who were in their late twenties and early thirties, at a weekly moms and toddlers meeting. Some children were on their mother's lap, others were running around, playing with the many toys that lay at their disposal. The conversations I had did not flow easily as I felt the women's indifference towards the subjects I wanted to discuss. One of my conversations that day went as followed:

Almaz: What do you think of the peace walls?

Shannon: They're just there aren't they. They've always been there. I don't really think about it.

Almaz: What would happen if the peace walls would suddenly disappear?

Shannon: I think people would die. The peace walls are there for protection.

This attitude corresponds with Harry's explanation, as Shannon lives next to a gate separating her from a CNR area. However, she did say she had "Catholic" friends that crossed the barriers to visit the community centre and sometimes the same happened the other way around. Here a contrast in gender was very evident. For men these movements were difficult. However, women travel from one area into another commonly without apprehension. Arguments for their crossing were "we have to do our grocery shopping there", and "they have a nicer shopping mall". As one man I spoke to would illustrate "women feel safer in parts of the town where men don't feel safe, because women are less likely to be attacked than men." He added that not all women in the city acted and felt the same way. His comment reflects a widely shared attitude of avoidance, which applies more to some than others, as there is a general awareness of potential threat that determines people's crossing or non-crossing of a border.

Public transport

These same evasions of potential threat can be recognized in Belfast's public transport. On our stay in Belfast Gijs and I travelled to areas where the majority of our respected populations resided. We found that we rarely saw the same things, as my busses mainly crossed PUL neighbourhoods and Gijs' busses went through CNR areas. One informant would explain to me how and why public transport was set in place to split these communities:

> Even things like busses take different routes. The busses come down that road, through the Protestant area, then turn and go one way into town. So there is a Protestant route from coming down further up the road and there's a Catholic route from coming down further up the road. It's primarily about not having too much mixing on the busses and providing people with a safer route.

Busses often go from one area into the city centre and back, which can make travel between the two areas less convenient, as a changeover in the city centre is required. Many friends of mine

would joke about the “crap” public transport system. They saw it is a remnant of the Troubles. However, Maggy, a forty something year old woman that has lived in Belfast for the past twenty five years pointed out how a new bus system, which was constructed one year ago, was set up the same way, proving its contemporary function of separation:

> The city centre is seen as a neutral area. I think it still needs to sort out infrastructure and access. Not just the centre but access to the centre. There is this new glider scheme that goes from east to west, but you have to get off in the centre and get not one bus, but two, which is strange.

Educational divide

Another separating institutional structure is Belfast’s educational system, ensuring a lack of interaction between CNRs and PULs from a young age. Although today integrated schools exist, schools are mostly segregated spaces, divided by religious lines, because of the church’s continual influence in Northern Ireland’s society. According to proponents of the segregated system, people have the right to proclaim their own (religious) identity. However, Maggy, who fights for integrated schooling, believed there is a fear of neutralising identity through integration.

At a pub, going out with a group of friends, I met James and Luke, two guys in their early thirties who became friends in college. Before their college experience they both did not have friends from the other community, as one grew up with Catholic schooling and the other had a Protestant educational upbringing. This system lessens the chance of interaction between CNR and PUL young people, upholding a sense of the unknown, having to assume what is told about “the other side”, rather than experiencing it. James and Luke attested that only after segregated schooling did they challenge their own ideas about their knowledge of “the other”. However, within their friendship discussions relating to the conflict are avoided, as it has the potential to get heated. This is a strategy of silence, which according to McCormack (2017) is a mechanism for survival. This example demonstrates how when physical proximity is reduced, challenges of mental divides still persist, which are endured through silence.

TIME AND SPACE

Having demonstrated physical forms of separation, which are in some ways imposed from top-down, I will now examine movement through space and time, a strategy of evasion of threat by individuals. People's movement around the city determines who they interact with and who they avoid. These patterns of movement are yet again tactics to avoid putting people at potential risk. The concept of "shared space" can be interpreted very differently by different people. One space can be shared, but can be divided through time, thus a border in time arises. Community members from both CNR and PUL areas will be aware of the "appropriate" times for visiting one space or another. I spoke to Cieran, a CNR Theatre Producer who has done a lot of research among Belfast's youth for his cross sectional plays. His aim is to express youths' daily lives on both sides of the community through theatre. He gave the example of a park as a creatively shared space, as CNR youth will hang out in the park at specific times and PUL youth hanging out at the same place at other times. Both sides are well aware of their "time slot" and they never interact because of it. Another example I encountered was the use of shopping centres, particularly one shopping centre located in North Belfast. Through awareness of use of space, threat could be minimized, as one informant explained a pattern of movement used by both communities:

> There's a shopping centre over there. There is one entrance that is used entirely by Catholics, because it's closer to that area, it is much less likely to be used by Protestants. So everyone would use the shopping area and they would go into it and out of it, but they would use different entrances. Sometimes if you go there by car you could drive to them and there is limited risk of having to walk through communities and areas.

This use of place contradicts with Gieryn's (2000) believe that borders in the mind are to inevitably materialize in a material form. Borders should be seen as a process through time and space as much as a product (Wilson and Donnan 2016, 13). Therefore, we argue that mental separations can also emerge in space and time, contributing to acts of avoidance as a form of silence (McCormack 2017), as seen in the examples of parks and shopping centres. This is in accordance with Donnan (2010, 254), as borders should be seen as space that generates particular kinds of social relations, in which the border becomes a reflection of different forms of conflict.

MENTAL BORDERS

> Everyone has that interface in the mind. I live in North Belfast and there's twenty six interfaces and not a wall. One wall and the rest are a roundabout or corner of the street, they're all interfaces and they don't all have barriers. The biggest barrier we have here is the mental barrier.

Ellie said this during one of my visits to the Shankill women's centre. Her job is to connect people on both sides of the wall, get them to talk to each other and create mutual respect. According to her, and according to many, physical barriers cannot come down, unless the mental barriers are dealt with. However, physical barriers, which we have seen in explicit and less visible forms, decrease the chance for interaction and thus uphold these mental barriers. This corresponds with Jansen's (2013) notion of *thingism*, where the border has become an actant in bordermaking, reinforcing mental borders. Mark, a forty-seven-year-old PUL mural painter and artist, told me his view on the future of peace walls and how mistrust and fear still play a big part in their contemporary existence:

> I can't ever see the walls... I don't think I will ever see the walls come down. It will be my children or their children. I think my generation will have to die out in order for that to happen. Because we're still sort of carrying the past with us. Because of what we've experienced in some cases. It sort of stays with you. You know anyone that has lived in that time or was affected by it, it's gonna sort of affect how they view the walls, the future of our society and I think the walls are sort of a prominent feature in their mind for that future. There's not the trust. What would happen if we would bring them down? Would they remain peaceful on the other side? Or would there be all chaos? So there's that fear.

Most notably the potential risk, fear of change and a fear of the unknown have normalised the peace walls over time, as a general consensus of "why change something that does not need to be fixed" exists.

A man in his fifties with a CNR background told me he used to throw stones over the walls. He saw it as harmless and as good fun. He did it as a pass time, but didn't think of it any further.

However, reflecting back on it he understood how these actions may have reinforced already existing fears and how it hardened the borders in people's mind, making it harder for the peace walls to come down. These "harmless" acts, by many living near the peace lines would be closely associated with the conflict, confirming the ideas they already had about the existing threat.

As Shannon explained about the peace walls earlier "they are just there", reflecting their place in people's daily lives and how they have become something considered natural. This however further normalises the ideas that are constructed of a society existing of "us" and "them", preserving mental barriers. The conflict itself at some point and to a specific generation was normalised as well, such as these peace walls are today. Getting adjusted to "peace" was more difficult for some than others. Mark explained how the conflict had become his normal daily life, he did not want it to change as changing it meant disrupting his world and his comfort, as he did not know what peace would look like, he did not trust any CNRs, which caused anxiety:

> We called it an unsolvable problem you know what I mean. I never envisaged it, I never ever thought there would be peace. We didn't want there to be peace. It was normal. I was born in 1972 so it had all already started, so for my whole life I didn't know anything else.

This same argument is used for the barriers upholding segregation in Belfast, further developing borders as physical embodiments of mental barriers. Creating barriers means solidifying fear, and by normalising barriers, subsequently fear is normalised. Normalisation creates a lack of interaction and understanding, which preserves fears. In the end this bolsters mental barriers as much as mental barriers materialize in physical form and in acts of evasion as could be seen in this chapter. We argue an interplay of the mental and physical borders conserves a vicious cycle of segregation.

[4]Gate in West Belfast which closes at 7 p.m. everyday. Photo taken on 06-04-2019.

CHAPTER SIX

Pitfalls and Possibilities For Uniting Society

It's a beautiful Sunday. The sky is at its bluest, and the sunlight is blinding. The first week of Spring has been good so far. It's a little past noon, but the men standing outside have almost finished their first pint already. Many wear the same white and green horizontal stripes, with on the left chest a badge of a four leaf clover. The pub behind them paradoxically says "The Rose & Crown", which stands in sharp contrast with the colours the men are wearing and the fact that it is situated in Lower Ormeau. Inside of the pub all the television screens show the same field of grass. Most people are chatting and laughing, whilst others are not really interacting and stare nervously at the screen. The referee blows his whistle and the Celtic versus Rangers match has begun.

During the first break the score is 1-0 for Celtic, the Rangers have one red card. Optimism runs through the pub. As I stand outside I ask some questions. Why is Scottish football such a thing here? "Well the Celtics are actually Irish, they had to flee to Scotland during the Great Famine. There, they donated their income to the poor Irish Catholic population". But what is bad about the Rangers then? "They represent Protestant bigotry! For a long time they would not even sign Catholic players!". Why are Celtic fans watching the game in a pub called The Rose & Crown? "This used to be a Protestant area, they never changed its name. We just call it the Rosie though". I get into a conversation with Scot from Scotland. He has been living in Belfast for a couple of years now. "When I first got to Belfast I thought it was extremely segregated, with people not talking to each other at all. Now I'm here I must say all those things I read and saw were actually very exaggerated, it's not that bad at all. The only thing that is a little bit in the back of my head right now is that I will have to take a taxi home to East Belfast, and the taxi driver might tell people I just watched the match in this bar".

This chapter will focus on the stumbling blocks and possibilities for the removal of mental and physical barriers. The football match describes once more how many things are intertwined with politics and divisions within Northern Ireland. To prevent riots or violence, the match is only shown in distinct CNR or PUL neighbourhoods and pubs. The example also illustrates the language that is used, for denying the pub the name "rose" or "crown", which refer to Britain. Lastly, the conversation I had with Scot illustrates a phenomenon Almaz and I would often

encounter. People of different communities do mix and for the majority someone's background does not seem to matter (see also Jarman 2005). Scot for example lives in East Belfast whilst being Catholic. Yet, many people do have this thing in the back of their heads that warns them of certain situations, like Scot's fear that the taxi driver might tell where he watched the football match. This is a form of silence, which according to McCormack (2017) is a way of negotiating violence and the toolkit necessary for survival. This strategy normalises, routinises and negotiates socially experienced fear. The following paragraphs will look at forms of silence we have stumbled upon (besides some of the borders Almaz mentioned in the previous chapter), and what their effects might be related to bordermaking. We argue that societal divisions or silences have become so natural that a proportion has become implicit in Belfast's social life. We assert that these silences or divisions create a society incapable of dealing with issues that go beyond Belfast's segregation, which in turn reinforces segregation. Also, I will discuss the roles of peacebuilding organisations. We argue that breaking the silence is difficult for it does surface tensions, but eventually is the way to nonviolent social change (Woon 2014).

IT JUST TAKES ONE PERSON

Connor has an Irish background but, just as Scot, lives in East Belfast "because of cheap housing". When I told him about Scot's worry that the taxi driver might tell people in East Belfast where he watched the match, his answer was:

> I'll be honest, I used to have that fear whenever I first moved to East Belfast to the Protestant area. I would have really limited what I said. But that was for the first year. You realise the longer you're here they don't care.

He continued that he would sometimes still lie about where he is from, because people might be his neighbours. When I asked him what he says if people ask his name in East Belfast (his name reveals his Irish identity), he replied:

Connor: I wouldn't give them my real name.

Gijs: No? What would you say?

Connor: My alias is Robert. Robert Anderson. Honestly the thing is, 99.9 percent of people do not care, and would be absolutely fine. But it's that one person that I would say it to that would care. And that to me is a realistic fear.

This narrative that probably nobody would care, but it just takes that one person is something I would hear over and over again. Steve and Kevin had participated in a cross-community project. They said that one advantage was that if now someone in the other area would ask them who they are they now would know people in the neighbourhood. When I asked them if this had actually ever occurred, they responded:

Kevin: Probably wouldn't put ourselves in that situation. I still wouldn't go to a bar.

Steve: You can walk through a street I'm sure but you wouldn't go in their bars, people probably would ask you. Like recently I spoke with Paul. He was a local in a bar at the Shankill, but hadn't been for a while, and there was a guy going up to him like "who the fuck are you?"

Gijs: Would the same thing happen if a unionist would enter a bar in Ardoyne?

Kevin: See, I know people would say it wouldn't, and I hope that it wouldn't. But it only takes one idiot...

We argue that these preventive adaptations are what McCormack refers to as silence. Silence, which communicates many things like where (not) to go, what (not) to touch or say, seems to be a part of ordinary life in Belfast, both explicitly and implicitly. McCormack explains that silence is necessary for survival. Here it is legitimised because "it only takes one idiot". It also supports her argument that silence might normalise and routinise fear. However, we argue that even though these silences are legit, the fear that is constituted with it makes it harder to build bridges. Besides, according to Weingarten (2004), trauma can be passed on through silence, which might keep society in an unhealthy state. The downsides of this 'toolkid necessary for survival', especially in its implicit forms, are illustrated in the following paragraphs.

SECTARIAN LABEL

An issue that might keep mental and physical barriers in place is the fact that many things are labelled sectarian rather quickly. Most people said this is done by the media for a large part, turning for example a story of two people having a fight into a story about a Catholic and a Protestant having a fight. Also, in interface areas youths would sometimes organise fights with each other. According to some of the youth workers or community workers, and also some younger people, these fights are a form of hooliganism. They are not based on religious or ideological sentiments. However, especially older people might interpret these fights as sectarian. Kevin and Steve told me about a conversation they had during a cross-community talking project. Apparently, a taxi driver from the PUL Shankill would always get eggs thrown at his car when he would drive past a certain point.

Kevin: He's like "every time I drive past there my car gets thrown eggs at it". And he said they must see the sign for his taxi depo which is down at the Shankill. And I was like wow, because when I drive past it I get eggs thrown at me. Don't take it too hard everybody gets it.

Steve: And he said the name of the taxi place and I thought I would never have even known that that was a Protestant taxi depo.

Kevin: It's indiscriminate, it's just younger ones throwing eggs at cars. It's not just cause it's you.

This example illustrates that people might think too quickly that they are attacked because of their background. We argue that because these fears for sectarianism are normalised and silenced, they will not explicitly be countered, keeping the status quo of normalised fear unharmed. This reinforces segregation, because 'feeling safe' is threatened, which results in politics of belonging (Yuval-Davis 2006). This also explains why "safety" is the most often used argument for the peace walls (Byrne and Gormley-Heenan 2014; Jarman 2005), as also explained in Almaz's chapter.

LAYERS

> I think it's about educating young people. Giving them the confidence to create opportunities and educate themselves. But it's quite attractive I must say to offer a

> sixteen-year-old 500 pounds a week to sell drugs. I don't blame that on the young person I blame that on society in general that they don't have the opportunities to inspire to be anything else. You know I was in Liverpool recently and you could see there is no difference between working class communities in Liverpool than there is in Belfast (Kean, Short Strand Community Centre).

Kean, a youth worker at the community centre in Short Strand explained how Belfast faces difficulties most cities face and the divisions might not even be their biggest problem. However, the divisions make these problems more difficult to deal with. The political discord about Northern Ireland's future for example, makes it challenging to deal with more pressing problems. This was best echoed by Sean, who works for the peace organisation Belfast Interface Network:

> I think the interests, the hopes, the fears, the aspirations, concerns, the thoughts of people here are being ignored. And Sinn Féin are beating the drum of remain, remain, remain [related to Brexit]. But it's basically, see whatever the DUP says, they'll say the opposite. And whatever Sinn Féin says, DUP will say the opposite. There's that continual barrage of mixed messages. But that's politics.

Sean continued about the polarised politics:

> Even how The Troubles began is a huge debate. How The Troubles ended, is a huge debate. Who's in power, is a huge debate. Brexit, massive debate. And that's what I'm saying loads of layers, layers, layers. And if you pick a topic or a subject quite often there is a division. And because of the delays, and the uncertainty, it's causing tension and unrest. And because of the tension and unrest, you have community relations that are not ideal. They're a bit tense.

O'Leary explains that democratic party formations tend to form around existing national, ethnic or communal cleavages (Wilson and Donnan 2016). We argue that when these cleavages (i.e. segregation and bordermaking) are as explicit as in Belfast it leads to incapable polarised politics.

Bordermaking has its roots in uncertainties (Brubaker 2010; Yural-Davis 2006), but the resulting polarised politics are unable to resolve any of the issues. This creates layers of issues and uncertainties, which in return catalyse processes of bordermaking.

An example of underlying issues we stumbled upon were mental health issues, often revealed in drug addiction and suicide. Oscar, who works for Belfast Interface Project explained that people in interface areas might suffer from stress:

> Quite often we would talk to people around interfaces and they would tell us that it doesn't matter if the violence is every night or once a week, or once a month, or once every six months. The constant tension and stress of waiting on the next attack on the home is problematic and difficult, no matter the frequency.

Mental health issues could also be the result of trauma, or a form of transgenerational trauma (Bunting et al. 2013; Weingarten 2004). For example, one night I was invited to the City Hall, where the ending of a cross-community peace building project was being celebrated. At the end of the night we were sitting at a table with the last six people present. When we talked about the past one woman eventually asked the others: "but do you also have that when you see images or videos of the conflict, it suddenly grabs your throat and it becomes hard to breathe? It's like I'm only starting to realise now that it could have been me you know?". This 'it could have been me' sentiment occasionally returned. Nuala told me a story of how she and her husband walked back from the city one night and were followed by a group of men. When they walked past the Catholic neighbourhood the men stopped following them, but "God knows what would have happened if we had entered that street".

In short, layers of different issues can be the result of - or cannot be rectified because of - bordermaking. In return all these complexities and uncertainties result into bordermaking.

POSSIBILITIES

Donnan (2005) speaks of a possible increase in ethnic polarisation, but despite the difficulties for uniting society we encountered, in general we saw a positive shift in Belfast. According to most people we spoke progression is slower than hoped and expected, but still being made. Especially

the younger generations seem to care less than their parents and grandparents. In general, most peacebuilding organisations mention positive results from their projects. When I talked to Quinn from the Short Strand community centre about their projects where younger people from different areas meet, he said:

> We tend to find that when the funding stops and them groups can't be provided anymore, them young people don't let that stop them. They're meeting up in town, they're active on social media together, they have each other's mobile numbers. They socialise without the youth workers facilitating it. Which is a brilliant, brilliant, brilliant thing to see for me as a youth worker.

Some of the people I spoke, however, were sceptical. According to some the conflict is not over, only its nature has changed. Peace organisations tend to focus on mutual issues or commonalities. However, when it comes to talking about differences it is a lot more difficult. Keiran, a social worker in the Ardoyne Community Hub who promotes cross community relationships describes: "we are not post-conflict. I still want my Ireland unified. I want my Ireland a new socialist republic. I don't simply want to erase the border." Here the discussion between McCormack (2017) and Woon (2014) becomes visible, whether breaking the silence is effective for building peace. Aoife, who participated in cross community talking sessions between the Falls and the Shankill area, told me:

> So in the past I would've dehumanised the British soldiers, and the RUC [Royal Ulster Constabulary]. To me they were just a uniform, who came into your house and raided your house and arrested your father, they were the enemy. So actually doing this program made me realise that I dehumanised people in the past. I believed they dehumanised us, but I did the same thing.

This corresponds with Woon's perspective that showing the human side of each other and the shared vulnerability can result in nonviolent peaceful outcomes (2014). Whether this will be the case, only time will tell.

The goal of this chapter was to highlight some of the mechanisms that keep both physical as mental barriers and borders in place, even when people try or society tries to overcome them. Forms of silence are legitimised, but as a result fear is normalised. Because many forms of silence seem to be implicit, it is more difficult to contrast them. According to McCormack breaking silences might not be the way for peace building. However, we argue that not breaking these silences might have more negative impacts. Things might be labelled sectarian too quickly because they are silenced. (Transgenerational)trauma might be constituted through silence. Divisive politics might silence important issues within society. Some mention how cross-community projects gave the other a face. We believe McCormack's critique is just, but not breaking the silence might be worse. The difficulty that lays ahead is how this silence can best be broken.

Discussion and Conclusion

In this research we have explained the processes of bordermaking in the city of Belfast by addressing politics of belonging in both CNR and PUL communities and the strategies that limit threat and ensure safety. In chapter three we have discussed CNRs notions of belonging, which is seen through a sense of threat they experience as they still feel oppressed and colonised. They feel the GFA has not fully been implemented and past issues have been dealt with insufficiently, producing mistrust and a lack of legitimacy of the British state. Therefore they see themselves as Irish citizens. This has consequently meant that CNR communities take care of their own issues through their own community centres and political parties. Most people still hope for a united Irish state in the future. Therefore many explicitly express their cultural and ideological beliefs, which is often intertwined with politics.

In chapter four we have described British notions of belonging, which are not similar within PUL communities. These notions of belonging are expressed differently through ideas of British national identity, religious affiliations within Protestantism, paramilitary groups which fight for British rights, but have rivalry among them, gender distributions, and politics. In-group divides enforce comparisons to CNRs, which are seen as a united front, which further contributes to in-group insecurities and creates a sense of out-group threat, which are expressed through aggressive proclamations of Britishness through murals and parades. Globalisation also contributed to uncertainties and a sense of threat, which is today expressed through Brexit's politics, as PULs vast majority voted 'leave'. Out-group threat and in-groups divides have led to a production and reproduction of British history and identity by separate actors within PUL communities, as a means to solidify politics of belonging, further adding to in-group divides. Chapter three and four have demonstrated how politics of belonging have drawn a line between "us" and "them" for both CNRs and PULs. Where CNRs place a line between themselves and Britain, PULs place a line between Britain and the rest of the world through naturalisation, articulation and politicisation of either Irish of British belonging.

Chapter five describes how the lines between "us" and "them" are placed and how they are constructed. We have discussed the different physical structures of separation, as evasions of potential threat, such as peace walls, public transport and the educational system. These separations however have acquired new meaning over time, where they now represent lines

between national territory and are in place to prevent neutralisation of identity. However, we also came upon less salient strategies of separation, such as borders through space and time. We further elaborated how mental borders and physical borders enforce and reinforce each other over time. In chapter six we have focussed on the stumbling blocks and possibilities for the removal of mental and physical barriers. We discussed how daily activities which can be considered as "silence" can normalise, routinise and negotiate socially experienced fears. We discussed how it only takes one person to commit a violent or aggressive act to enforce fears and how social issues and conflicts are readily classified as sectarian, reinforcing segregation, because feelings of safety are threatened. We further displayed lingering feelings of trauma and how layers of different issues can be amended because of bordermaking. Lastly, we have discussed how people try to overcome barriers, for example through peacebuilding organisations. However, others still remain sceptical and mention how the conflict is not over, only its nature has changed. In chapter five and six we argued that preventative measures within Belfast's society are a form of silence which stiffen the possibilities for uniting society.

These insights made it possible for us to answer the question how bordermaking takes place in contemporary Belfast. In answering this question we use Johnson and Jones' (2011) interconnected notions of place, performance and perspective. We argue that bordermaking in contemporary Belfast has its roots in two different analytical perspectives. Although they do overlap in certain elements, the role they play in Belfast's bordermaking can be distinguished.

First, bordermaking in Belfast (and perhaps the rest of Northern Ireland) has its roots in politics of belonging. Communities ideologically place the border on macro-level, somewhere where they perceive the border of their idealised notion of the state exists or should be. However, the perspectives and performances become evident in Belfast's meso- or even micro-level. This shows that bordermaking is a constant interaction between places, performances and perspectives on macro and micro-level, and everything in between. When we look at place – where you look for evidence of bordermaking and assess its impact – we uncover some interesting paradoxes between where borders are placed in the mind, and how this results in actual physical borders. The CNR population feels that its belonging is mostly threatened by the UK and any parties that represent the UK. Logically, the border becomes placed between them as Irish citizens, and the UK. The border between Northern Ireland and the Republic is not legitimised in their eyes, hence they often speak of "the North of Ireland" instead of "Northern Ireland". Interestingly, the PUL

population would also place the border between the UK and all outside threats. The issue between the two communities is where exactly the border of the UK should be placed. For PULs in Northern Ireland however, they share a sense of Britishness and a worry of becoming part of Ireland, hence making the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic a securitisation of their identity and sense of belonging (Gormley-Heenan and Aughey 2017). Strikingly, both communities seem to place to border in the mind somewhere on macro-level, yet its physical impact is clearly visible in Belfast's micro-level. Walls split communities, infrastructure keeps communities divided, education divides society and raises people differently.

When analysing bordermaking in Belfast from a perspective of politics of belonging the placement of the borders has its emphasis on marking territory. Within these marked territories the communities can represent their idealised nation state, meaning that in some areas you are walking on Irish grounds and in some on British grounds. Everything within these areas represents its country. Schools teach children their Irish or British identity, and their Protestant or Catholic religion. This explains why mixed and integrated schools are feared, for they possibly neutralise someone's identity.

Since there are different perspectives on borders, it is of no surprise that borders are being performed differently. Within the Irish community a great sense of the "us" seems to be prevalent and people seem to take care of things through their own community. They express their Irish culture, and through many ways they legitimise their Irish citizenship whilst delegitimising British presence in Northern Ireland. Their rhetoric and belongings are expressed through politics and a united Ireland still is being fought for (in a nonviolent way). The PUL communities have a much different perspective and thus performance on bordermaking. They arguably already live in their idealised notion of the nation state, except for the fact that its future is insecure. Although different ideas exist on what Britishness exactly entails, it is a shared belief that it should be defended and protected. This is seen in PULs perspective and performative aspects of bordermaking. Murals reflect the right to defend themselves, and often reveal aggressive symbols or local paramilitaries. There are a lot of comparisons with CNR populations, and how they form a threat to Northern Ireland's future as being part of the UK. A result is that people vote for political parties that have the biggest chance or voice in remaining part of the UK, even though these parties might additionally not reflect the voices of the people. Brexit is a logical vote, for isolating the UK from outside threats of globalisation and the CNR population's ideals reflects how Northern Ireland's

PUL populations feel a need to protect their Britishness. The biggest difference seems to be that globalisation, as explained in our theoretical framework, does indeed foster politics of belonging, which can reinforce (aggressive) defensive behaviour. However, this applies to a country's majority. In the case of Northern Ireland, all these forms of change only seem to threaten the PUL population, for they are in a position that only they have something to lose. For CNRs, every change can be a possible step in their favoured direction. This becomes most evident with Brexit. Although mostly voted for as a securitisation of Britishness in Northern Ireland and a protection from outside threats, it now seems that the insecurities it is causing are actually doing the CNR population a favour, as it is suddenly possible to have conversations about a united Ireland and many see this prospect as inevitable. Gormley-Heenan and Aughey (2017) explain how the Brexit referendum felt either like getting their 'own country back' (for PULs) or 'waking up in a different country' (for CNRs) in Northern Ireland. These notions seem to have slightly changed, for waking up in a different country might for CNRs currently be interpreted both as being pulled out of Ireland as being offered a path to Ireland. In short, the placements, performances, and perspectives on bordermaking related to politics of belonging still play a major role in contemporary Belfast. Although this is largely based on macro-level imaginings, placements, performances and perspectives express themselves on the streets and in the social lives of Belfast.

The other roots of bordermaking lay within society's forms of silence, which are according to McCormack the toolkits necessary for survival. Belfast's (and in general Northern Ireland's) past and present of violence and fears of violence result in coping mechanisms that prevent any form of conflict. These coping mechanisms are both where bordermaking is placed and performed. This can be through things people (do not) say or (do not) do, or by physical structures and usage of space that keep society divided. Hence, the perspectives (i.e. why border?) can be summarised in one word: safety. Even when the majority of people in Belfast do not seem to care about someone's background, there always seems to be the fear that it just takes one extremist that might get them into trouble. A result of these silences however, is that fear becomes normalised and routinised. Physical structures keep people away from areas that become "the unknown", or thoughts or perspectives do not get contradicted because they are silenced. This can for example be assumptions that an incident had been based on sectarian elements, whilst in reality this was not necessarily the case.

We argue that now, twenty years after the signing of the peace agreement, physical and mental borders have changed in performance and have gained a prominent role in silencing. They exist with the intention to provide security, but we argue that they mostly keep fears intact. We argue that the physical borders like walls and murals have changed in meaning. Walls originated as a means of security, but have become the most explicit hotspot of Belfast's concerns. As Donnan (2010) and O'Leary (2016) argue that the partition of 1920 only resulted in provocation and frustration - we argue that these walls have a similar effect. They do not simply provide security, but silence the possibilities of a united country or less segregated society. And whilst providing security is their main objective, constituting fear seems to be their major outcome.

A result of the cleavages in society is that politics are formed according to these divisions (O'Leary in Wilson and Donnan 2016). This creates a society that is only focussed on its idealised notions of the nation state on macro-level, seemingly incapable of dealing with presumably bigger problems within society. We argue that neglecting certain issues is also a form of silence, and is done by both by politicians and society. Politicians might only focus on either staying in or leaving the UK, simply to gain votes and support. Society in return maintains these tactics by voting on the biggest "stay" or "leave" party without agreeing with the rest of their political agenda. All these factors create a downward spiral with a society unable to cope with different layers of issues and uncertainties like housing, employment or mental health issues. Hence, divisions lead to silences, which create different layers of issues and uncertainties. These layers of complexities bolster politics of belonging in return, and thus create divisions.

McCormack questions NGOs and peacebuilding organisations that try to make progression through breaking the silence. We believe that her critique is legitimate, but what we encountered was that breaking the silence is still the best option to a more united and functioning society. She explains that certain types of violence and subjectivities might be excluded, creating new forms of silence. This indeed is a possibility that should be considered. Also individual narratives might be subsumed and a different national narrative of the facts might be created. This is also a risk that has to be prevented as much as possible. Lastly, she wonders if the social and political conditions that make silence a requirement for society have been removed. We argue that this will partly be the case. Idealised notions of the nation state will still exist, and therefore people will still have a certain feeling of belonging, claiming "national" territory and trying to achieve their goal through politics. However, we witnessed how through breaking the silence certain fears were contradicted,

like wrongly having the idea that something happens on sectarian grounds. We also witnessed how people were able to give the other a face, which corresponds with Woon's (2014) argument that recognising each other's shared vulnerability can mobilise people to the formation of nonviolent coalitional exchanges towards peaceful outcomes. Younger generations seemed to keep in touch after cross community projects, ignoring the silence that would normally separate them. During our stay in Belfast we have experienced that breaking the silence through peacebuilding organisations works. This is especially the case for younger generations who did not not experience the conflict or violence, but would otherwise still have grown up with normalised and routinised fears because of societal silences. This maintains divisions, might pass on fear or even trauma (Weingarten 2004). For younger generations to grow up beyond the borders, breaking the silence seems to be the way forward.

Recommendations

After concluding our findings on bordermaking in contemporary Northern Ireland, we would like to reflect on some of our findings and give some suggestions for further research. Within our research we have seen improvements toward unification of society and we have spoken of breaking the silence that upholds fear, threats and uncertainties. However, during our time in the field we have spoken to many NGOs and organisations actively fighting to unite CNR and PUL communities, to give each other a face and to create mutual respect. They try to achieve this by breaking the silence and by encouraging engagements and conversations about the underlying tensions. Talking to organisation that actively promote unification and break the silence could have influenced our findings, as we have perhaps come across a narrative that is too positive and which does not reflect Belfast's society completely. Additionally our findings may have been more positive compared to our theoretical studies, as Belfast's society may differ from other parts of Northern Ireland. Many researcher conducted research at the borderlands, where tensions may be higher, as bordermaking on a national level has greater implication for people's day-to-day lives. Further, our findings were limited to only two and a half months of fieldwork, thus our research population was limited. During our time in the field Belfast's political context, with Brexit and a lack of Northern Irish government, created a political context which caused insecurities, but also hopes for the future. For this reason we believe it would be interesting to focus on the politics of belonging and breaking the silence in a post-Brexit Belfast, but also outside of the Belfast area.

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