

PhD thesis title: Spatialising Antagonism: A post-foundational analysis of space, violence and the political in Derry City.

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Spatialising Antagonism:

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Abstract

By spatialising Ernesto Laclau's theoretical-philosophical concept of 'antagonism', this thesis offers a post-foundational analysis of the conflictual articulation of space in Derry, a city located in the north-west of Ireland. Antagonism, as first developed by Laclau and Chantal Mouffe in *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, is one of the most decisive and radical contributions to contemporary social and political theory. Not only does antagonism render the social in a much more political light, it also, as recently suggested by Oliver Marchart (2018) in *Thinking Antagonism*, carries the potential to reimagine the spatial in critical political and social inquiry. This thesis, at both a theoretical and empirical level, takes up this challenge. First, in a more theoretical register, the Laclauian iteration of antagonism is mobilised to develop a post-foundational and antagonistic account of space. While Laclau has a particular understanding of the spatial, (re)foregrounding the constitutive role of antagonism in his account of space recasts it in much more political light. Space, then, is understood as *politically instituted* and *antagonistically constituted*. That is, spatial formations are the product of contingent political institution and are defined by constitutive exclusions. This introduces a radical negativity into the heart of our spatial thinking as there is always an outside that both sustains and threatens political articulations of space. Stressing the ontological violence that is implicated in the 'original' institution of social-spatial formations, however, tells us little of the 'concrete' spatial dynamics of violence in contested spaces. As such, this thesis asks the question, 'what happens between the antagonistic constitution of space and the expression of spatially structured modes of violence?' That is the puzzle. Secondly, then, and in a more empirical vein, this thesis interrogates ways through which antagonism was spatially articulated in Derry city during key historical moments of intercommunal tension and conflict. Specifically, the thesis examines the conflictual performance of space in mid to late-Victorian Derry, and the serious moment of political violence that engulfed the city in June 1920. In each of these episodes, the conflictual inscription of spatial boundaries, that is, the antagonistic performance of space, both generated and structured the dynamics of inter-communal violence in Derry. Spatialising antagonism, then, in the study of contested spaces casts a productive light on the spatial dynamics of violence.

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Noémi, ezt a disszertációt Neked ajánlom, mert mindent Neked köszönhetek.

To Noémi Farkas, for everything. This is dedicated to you

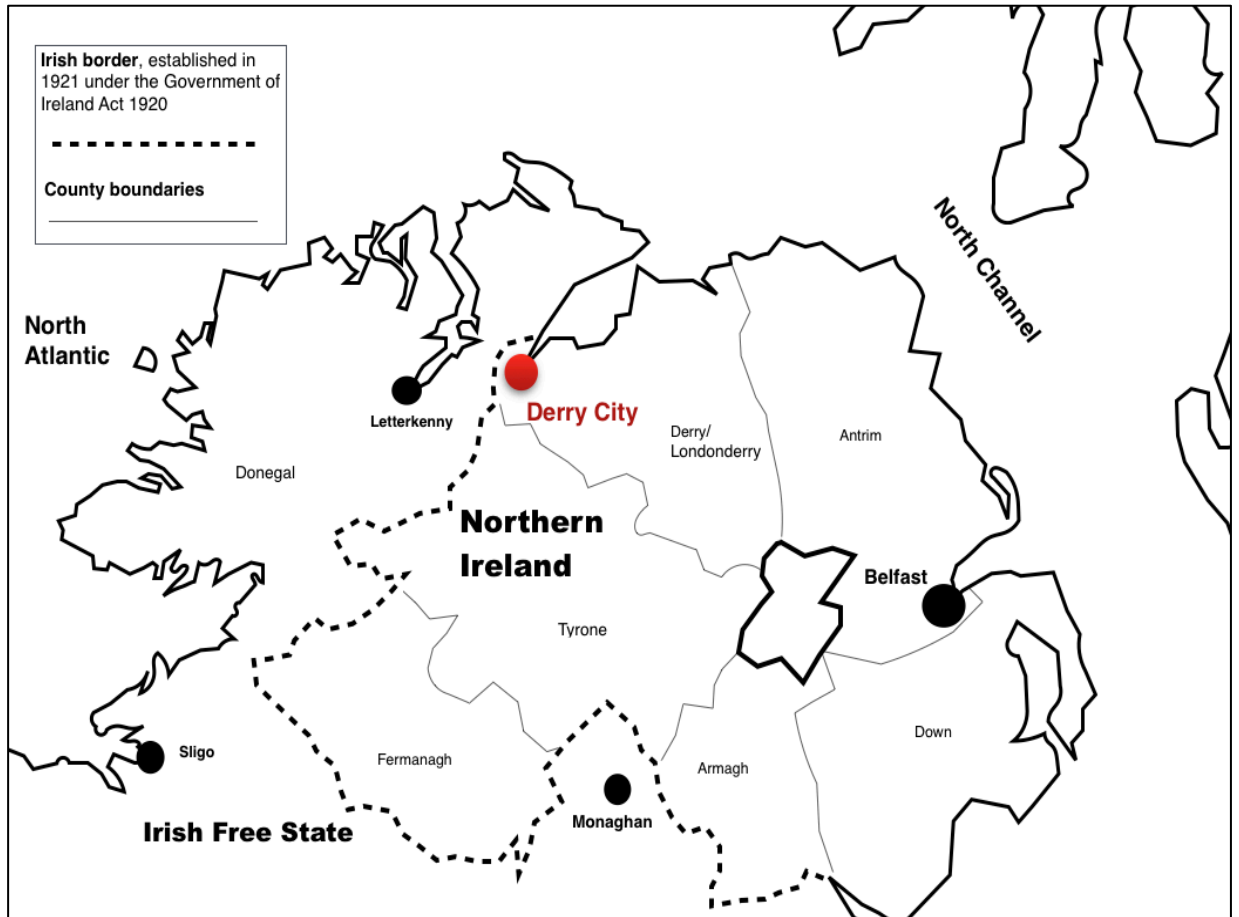


Fig. 1. Map of Northern Ireland.

Introduction

Spatialising Antagonism

In its spatialisation of Ernesto Laclau's philosophical-theoretical category of antagonism, this thesis offers a post-foundational analysis of the conflictual articulation and performance of space in Derry, a city located in the north-west of Ireland. The concept of antagonism, one of the most radical contributions to contemporary political theory, not only re-thinks how social objectivity is constituted, but also, as recently suggested by Oliver Marchart (2018) in *Thinking Antagonism*, carries the potential to reimagine the spatial in critical political and social inquiry (*see* Chap. 1). This thesis, at both a theoretical and empirical level, takes up this challenge. In thinking antagonism spatially this research makes two interrelated contributions. First, in a more strictly theoretical register, the Laclauian iteration of antagonism, along with other key categories of Political Discourse Theory (PDT), is mobilised to develop a post-foundational and antagonistic account of space. While Laclau has a particular and according to some spatial theorists a depoliticised understanding of the spatial (Massey, 2008; 1992), (re)foregrounding the constitutive role of antagonism in his account of space recasts it in much more political light (Marchart, 2014; Howarth, 2006). Drawing on the work of Laclau, and others, space is understood as *politically instituted* and *antagonistically constituted*. That is, spatial configurations as the contingent outcome of power and decision, are inaugurated through political logics. Political logics speak to the moments where social formations are instituted, upheld, and contested. Space is antagonistically constituted, as spatial configurations are defined through exclusion, that is, the inscription of a radical frontier. This introduces a radical negativity into the heart of our spatial thinking, as the reproduction of space remains 'haunted' or frustrated by that which it seeks to exclude. The contingent, politically instituted

character, or 'originary violence', of space can be reactivated through political struggle. A contested space, therefore, is where an articulation of space continually encounters its own radical limit.

The category of antagonism helps to better account for the conflictual reproduction of space, and thus can shed a productive light on the dynamics of violence and conflict in contested spaces. In keeping with the epistemological recalibration of the so-called 'spatial turn', space rather than being some extra-discursive real or a neutral substratum for agency, is instead socially reproduced. As Mustafa Dikeç (2016, p. 5) suggests, given that space and social formations are mutually constitutive, space will reflect the tension it is imbued with and its reproduction will be necessarily conflicted. However, to simply suggest that space is socially (re)produced and contested risks trading in a banal constructivism. It also risks asserting that space is unequivocally political. Instead, in this antagonistic account, space is political in so far as it is the outcome and instantiation of antagonistic configurations of social objectivity. It is the primacy of radical negativity *vis-à-vis* the constitution of social objectivity, that allows for a truly post-foundational and radically political understanding of space.

Secondly, and in a more empirical vein, this thesis interrogates ways through which antagonism was spatially articulated in Derry city during key historical moments of intercommunal tension and conflict. The thesis examines the conflictual performance of space in mid to late-Victorian Derry, and the serious moment of political violence that engulfed the city in June 1920. In each of these episodes the conflictual inscription of spatial boundaries, that is, the antagonistic performance of space, both generated and structured the dynamics of violence in Derry. For this thesis, these case studies are critical in thinking the spatialisation of antagonism empirically. While in each of these periods of violence there was always a complex coalescing of forces over-determining the fraught political and social relationships in Derry, the articulation of exclusive conceptions of space was a significant conduit through which tension could concretise as violence. In other words, the spatial articulation of antagonism was one way through which ontological or originary violence could translate into modes of physical violence. To stress the contingent antagonistic constitution of social objectivity tells us little of the dynamics of concrete violence. That is, as Johanna Okasala (2012) insists, while ontological violence has been long and variously emphasised by thinkers such as Nietzsche, Heidegger, Derrida, and

beyond, it is a 'serious mistake' to conflate such foundational violence with practices of physical violence as iterations of the same phenomenon. While ontological violence certainly sustains modes of physical violence, there is no necessary translation between them. Still, the spatialising of antagonism is at least one way through which such foundational violence may manifest as direct modes of 'subjective' violence (Žižek, 2008). Accordingly, much of the empirical focus of this research (re)constructs the various practices through which competing configurations of space were enacted, defended, or contested, as well as the fantasmatic spatial visions that underpinned and drove these practices.

In Derry, throughout the moments examined in this thesis, political-communal being was articulated spatially. That is, such spaces were articulated as belonging to a particular community, such as the Catholic Bogside area in Derry city. Of course, such spatialisations of communal subjectivity are antagonistically constituted. To lose one's space, then, was to risk losing the very ground of one's communal spatial being. The spatialisation of overtly antagonistic identities could structure the dynamics of conflict and violence in key ways. The defence or transgression of spatial codifications was a means to express political agency. Also, the spatialisation of the political could engender wider patterns of violence as an attack on or violation of a particular space could be deemed an attack on that entire community.

At stake in Derry's often violent articulation of spatial configurations and frontiers was not only the defence, contestation and transgression of pre-constituted space. That is, these conflicts were not just struggles over space as such, but what was to be constituted as social objectivity through space. Spatial struggles, then, were not simply about who would ultimately prevail in Derry. Instead, it was radically opposed and competing visions of the city that were at stake. That is to say, rather than understanding a contested site as one where social actors violently engage each-other, as in some iteration of the gladiatorial arena, a bounded space wherein agency takes place, instead it is competing (spatial) visions of the social, the very arena itself, which is the object of contention. This marks a departure from much of the literature on civil war, political violence, *etc.*, studies that are largely concerned with the more *ontic* category of conflict, rather than the much more radical *onto-political* category of antagonism.

As Niall Ó Dochartaigh (2015, p. 115) writes, 'spatial contexts are not just a backdrop to violence', but rather, 'they are linked to political violence at a much deeper

level and the penetration and defence of territorial boundaries is at the heart of organised violence and struggles for political control.’ Despite the recognition that spatial contexts of political violence impose their own contingencies on the structure and trajectory of organised violence (Bosi *et al*, 2015), until recently the political violence literature largely neglected the spatial aspects of violence. That is, the ‘spatial turn’ did not make the same in-roads into studies of political violence as it did in other domains in the social sciences and humanities. According to Ó Dochartaigh (2015, p 115), the reasons for this comparative neglect are numerous, and stem from the epistemological commitments of much of the mainstream political violence literature. Studies of violence have tended to treat the nation-state as an ‘unproblematic unit of analysis’ (Ó Dochartaigh, 2015; Uitermark, 2015; Agnew, 1994). Rather than being a mere context for violence, the modern nation-state exists only through its monopoly and uniform projection of violence across its territory (Weber, 2015 [1919]). Where the state encounters spaces of resistance it meets its own ontological or objective limit. All forms of political violence that in some way contest the state’s monopoly of ‘legitimate’ violence necessarily frustrates the spatial reproduction of the state. Political violence studies that are grounded in various iterations of positivism, such as rational choice theory and strictly quantitative analyses, tend to demote the spatial contexts of violence in the attempted extrapolation of general laws. As Goodin and Tilly (2006, p. 7) argue, such approaches to political and social inquiry understand context as noise that distorts the signal they are searching for.

Despite this relative neglect of the spatial *vis-à-vis* the dynamics of violence, recent years have nonetheless seen an increase in spatial sensitivity within the political violence literatures (Springer & Le Billon, 2016). For example, more fine grained regional studies map how violence is variously distributed across space (Raleigh, *et al*, 2009; O’ Loughlin, 2008), others focus on the role of territorial borders, or on the impact of the role of terrain in shaping civil war (Linke, *et al*, 2017), or the dynamics of urban violence (Rokem *et al*, 2018) have led to a more spatially aware understanding of violence. More critical geographic literature charts the spatial manifestations and implications for new forms of imperialism, and how other modes of structural violence are concretised through space, such as the modes of violence implicated in borders (Springer & Le Billon, 2016, pp.1-3; Pavoni & Tulumello, 2020). Still, while some of the mainstream political violence literature might pursue a more spatially sensitive analysis of violence, it largely has yet to make a decisive epistemological break with

studies that posit a neutral account of space. The picture of violence *vis-à-vis* space may have become fine-grained, but space still remains a neutral backdrop where positively constituted actors violently engage each-other. The more critical literature may have a more sophisticated account of space as socially produced, but neglects the dynamics of violence. What is more, while space is deemed inherently political in the critical geographic literature, space is not posited as antagonistically constituted, and thus the radical negativity of the spatial, and the radically negative nature of political violence is often only partially grasped. Though this research project is firmly located within PDT rather than in the mainstream of political violence studies or critical geography, spatialising antagonism does offer a more theoretically rigorous analysis of the spatial dynamics of violence.

To summarise, the contribution of this thesis is found in the two key ways it spatialises antagonism. The first of these is its spatialisation of Laclau's understanding of antagonism. This involves (re)foregrounding antagonism in his account of the spatial. Spatialising antagonism then offers a post-foundational and fundamentally political understanding of space that underlines the radical negativity that is constitutive of spatial formations. Secondly, at a more empirical level, the ways through which antagonism was articulated spatially in Derry city is interrogated. To solely stress the antagonistic character of spatial formations does not explain the relationships between space, the political, and violence. The empirical task, therefore, is to study the concrete practices through which antagonistic configurations of space are articulated. This can shed a productive light on spatial dynamics of violence in contested spaces more generally, and in Derry in particular. All of which complexifies our understanding of Ulster's histories of violence. Truly spatialising the theoretical insights of PDT can significantly reconfigure how space is understood in political and social inquiry. This thesis, outside of a few previous theoretical discussions (Marchart 2018; 2014; Howarth, 2006; Stavrakakis, 2011), is one of the first steps in this direction.

Why Derry?

Derry city is located on a political-spatial fault-line, along the outer-most frontier of the historic Plantation of Ulster (Stewart, 1989). The history of Derry is intimately tied to the histories of colonial violence that have shaped the island of Ireland (O'Leary, 2019; Tonge 2002, p. 4). During moments of political tension and conflict, this spatial-political boundary, as well as the political-communal-spatial frontiers within the city

itself, had a tendency to become reactivated. Intercommunal conflict was often expressed and structured around the defence and contestation of these spatial frontiers. As such, Derry presents an ideal context to study the spatial articulation of antagonism.

Though it is by now fairly hackneyed to point to the politics of naming Derry city, it nonetheless remains illustrative, especially for the uninitiated. Conflictual articulations of the city are betrayed in the choice to call the city ‘Derry’ or ‘Londonderry.’ As Gearóid Ó Tuathail (1996, p. 3) writes, the ‘prefix “London” revealed whether one acknowledged the legitimacy of the British writing of Irish space, a historically significant writing/righting of Irish space around the capital of the British empire.’ Derry was, and remains, not only a contested ‘ground’, but more accurately there are antagonistic articulations of the city, which express conflictual (spatialised) modes of being in the world.

With the early-seventeenth century Plantation of Ulster, a process of colonisation where settlers from Scotland and England supplanted the native Irish, Derry became what was essentially a Protestant fortress. Given that the settlers were Protestant, or various denominations of Protestant, and the natives were Catholic, religion became a marker or an integral aspect of the antagonistic conceptions of social objectivity articulated by the settlers and the dispossessed. As such, the common assertion that the north’s histories of violence are simply epiphenomenal of or can be reduced to religious hatred - that is, an essentially sectarian conflict- is to truly misunderstand these histories (Ruane & Todd, 1996, pp. 10-11).

The walls of the city were built in order to withstand the attacks against the settlers, and as such the city became a bulwark against the Gaelic and Catholic Ireland that lay beyond it. The city walls became sanctified in later loyalist political discourse, as they ensured that the city’s Protestant inhabitants withstood the historic siege of the city by the Jacobite Army in 1688. During this key episode of the Williamite Wars in Ireland, where the deposed king James II struggled against his successor William III for control of Ireland and Britain, the city’s ‘Apprentice Boys’ closed the city’s gates, just in time to lock out the advancing Jacobite army. Derry was a key site in the wars of the late-seventeenth century that saw the victory of the Ascendancy regime and with it Protestant dominance in Ireland. The Siege of Derry is a critical moment in loyalist political discourse and features heavily throughout this thesis. It is an event that is celebrated every year since the early nineteenth-century by Derry’s Apprentice Boys

clubs (McBride, 1997). Derry, then, is where two worlds collided; a geopolitical interface where the loyal and Protestant Ulster clashed with the rebellious and Catholic north-west and south of the country (Ozseker, 2019).

Though Catholics had not been allowed to settle within the walls of Derry, by the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, Catholic migrants, largely from Donegal, began to settle around, or more so beneath, the walls of the city. Areas such as the Bogside, just outside the western portion of the city walls became identifiably Catholic spaces. Protestants also eventually settled beyond the walls, such as in the Waterside, which is on the eastern side of the Foyle river. As such, the walls of Derry, in Catholic political discourse signified a material and symbolic boundary that underlined their status of being locked-out of the centres of political and social power. As the nineteenth-century progressed, Derry Catholics were growing in both number and political clout and started to break through these barriers. Catholics had come to Derry from the rural areas such as Inishowen in north Donegal in order to find work in the city's expanding industries, such as the linen factories. This influx meant that in Derry city, which was overwhelmingly Protestant in the early nineteenth-century, by the 1851 census Catholics were in a clear majority. Derry's population distribution by the mid-nineteenth century, then, had changed quite radically. By the 1851 census, Catholics numbered 12,036 to 8,838 Protestants of all denominations. This was somewhat anomalous, as throughout the rest of Co. Londonderry, the Protestant population outnumbered Catholics by five to one. While in Co. Donegal, just a few miles beyond Derry, Catholics outnumbered Protestants by three to one (Murphy, 1981; Lacy, 1990). The historian, A.T.Q Stewart (1989, p. 59) in his history of Ulster's violence remarked that a 'curious aspect' of the town as an 'outwork of the plantation' is that it lies on the 'wrong side' of the river. With the change in population throughout the nineteenth-century, Derry as a Protestant city looked increasingly precarious. The Commission of Inquiry, established in 1869 to investigate the nature of Derry's intercommunal unrest, suggested that Derry perhaps better belonged to Catholic Donegal

The portion of the city and liberties comprising as we have pointed out, by far the principal part, on the left bank of the Foyle, would seem properly to belong to the county of Donegal, the river being the natural boundary between that county and the county of Londonderry. Now, Donegal is with the exception of Cavan the most

Catholic county of the nine Ulster Counties, while Londonderry is one of the most Protestant' (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p. 6).

As the penal laws were relaxed- laws which placed religious and political restrictions on Catholics- the growing power of Catholics was made manifest in Derry through the building of Catholic infrastructures, such as St. Eugene's Cathedral built from 1851-1873, and other places of worship, the founding of Catholic charities, as well as educational institutions (Thomas, 2005). If space and relations of power are co-constitutive, the slow material reconfiguration of parts of the city into identifiable Catholic sites was an index of changing relations of power in the city. Though it would still take more than a century for this Catholic majority to properly translate into political power, initially due to the restricted franchise, and later through gerrymandering practices that ensured a Unionist majority.

From the mid-nineteenth century, unionist power was seriously contested in the city. As Catholics gained in political strength, politics in Derry city was increasingly organised around two antagonistic poles. On one side were Catholics, nationalists, and republicans, who rejected the political status-quo and sought to end the union with Britain. On the other side were Protestants, unionists, and loyalists who sought to uphold British rule in Ireland and their place within it. With the partition of Ireland in 1921 after the Irish War of Independence, Derry was kept just inside the boundary of the new Northern Irish state. Derry was then a Catholic and nationalist majority city in a Unionist dominated state.¹

Colonial histories of violence and settlement patterns saw the spatial arrangement of Derry into distinct ethnic, or more accurately, political-communal areas. Over time, these communities, be they in the Waterside, the Bogside, the Fountain, amongst other areas, developed a deep sense of place. Political communal subjectivity was then articulated spatially. That is, the political was spatialised. As Protestant power in Derry was increasingly contested in the city, especially from the mid-Victorian period, Protestant performances of space, such as Apprentice Boy parades, sought to reassert the city as a Protestant space. That is, they tried to rearticulate spatial-political boundaries. This, however, rather than secure the city, only brought into discursive relief the foundational violence through which the city and its

¹ 'Unionist' with a capital 'U' signals organised political unionism, such as the Ulster Unionist Party, while 'unionist' or 'unionism' names a broader political identity and ideology.

relations of power were instituted. Political struggle in Derry, then, was often articulated spatially.

It is little surprise, then, that ‘the Troubles’, a thirty year conflict that ostensibly came to an end in 1998, began in Derry (Ó Dochartaigh, 2005). On the 12-14 of August 1969 the tensions in the north ignited in Derry along a long-standing spatial frontier, after a Protestant Apprentice Boys march numbering upwards of fifteen-thousand to commemorate the historic siege passed by a Catholic area (Hamill, 1986). Political tensions in the north were mounting as Catholics in the late-1960s had mobilised for equal rights. Derry Catholics saw the march as a display of Protestant supremacy, and feared that the Bogside would come under attack. Violence in the north erupted through the political performance of space. As Desmond Hamill writes

Towards the end of the celebrations the Protestant crowds came up on the ramparts of the ancient city of Londonderry where towering walls brushed against the edge of Catholic Bogside. Here they stood and gazed down at the Bogside below. A few pennies were tossed down. It was a traditionally arrogant gesture, and those below knew quite well what it meant. The smouldering antagonism of years burst into flames as they answered back. Stones, bricks, and even marbles fired from catapults came soaring up against the Protestant watchers (Hamill, 1986, p. 1).

Catholic Derry was now in revolt. The Belfast MP, and Orange Order member, William Stratton Mills, visited Derry for the Apprentice Boy march (Mills, Scarman Tribunal). He went onto the walls near Walkers’ Monument (*see* Chap. 1, *fig.* 3), and against the advice of the police, looked down into the Bogside. There he saw Catholics frantically gathering material for missiles and the construction of barricades. Catholic Derry was effectively seceding from Northern Ireland. This repudiation was expressed through the forceful articulation of antagonistic spatial boundaries.

The fracturing of the north into antagonistic communal spaces during the Troubles is fairly well-known, at least in comparison to the violence of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. But, as developed in this thesis, the political articulation of space, that is, the spatial articulation of antagonism, has been a long-standing feature of intercommunal conflict and violence in Ulster. In particular, the empirical focus of this thesis is on the ways through which antagonism was spatially articulated in mid-to-late-Victorian Derry, where Protestant power was facing serious challenges, and in June 1920, where looming partition drove violent space-claiming practices in the city.

These cases demonstrate that wider political struggles, both at the national and imperial level, can reactivate intimately local spatial-political boundaries, which in turn structures the dynamics of violence. Thinking antagonism spatially, then, sheds a productive light on the reproduction of space in deeply contested societies. What is more, it offers a truly post-foundational perspective, one that refuses to defer to the essentialism that often mars explanations of conflict which elide the radically antagonistic nature of political violence.

While the historical background detailed above is quite minimal, each empirical chapter of the thesis provides the fuller context that is necessary to understand each moment of conflict that is interrogated in the thesis. Given that this additional contextual material is quite substantial and deals with a considerable period in time, from about 1867 to 1920, it makes more sense to discuss these contexts when explaining the spatial struggles that are detailed in each chapter.

Structure of the thesis

In Chapter 1, a post-foundational and antagonistic account of space is developed, by drawing on Political Discourse Theory (PDT), most notably the theoretical-philosophical work of Ernesto Laclau. In order to develop this antagonistic account of space, it is necessary to explicate the theoretical categories that inform it. As such, the theoretical foundations of the thesis are developed in the process. In particular, Laclau and Chantal Mouffe's understanding of discourse, as developed first in *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, is critical to understanding antagonism as it is developed here, as well as the account of space informed by it. The potential pitfalls of a discursive account of space are thought through by examining some of the critiques advanced by spatial theorists against the Laclauian understanding of space as well as the spatial 'aporias' that blight *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*.

Chapter 2 offers a set of methodological reflections around the challenges and possibilities posed by conducting historical and spatial research from a PDT perspective. Without such methodological reflection, the thesis risks advancing a fairly theoretically abstract account of space, with little thought of how it might consistently translate into empirical research of contested space. The chapter draws upon the methodological approach developed by Jason Glynos and David Howarth (2007) in *The Logics of Critical Explanation*. As such, the 'methodological framework' of the thesis

is developed. The immediate benefit of this methodological approach is that it emerges out of and is consistent with the ontological priors of PDT. The chapter also thinks through the questions posed by doing history as a poststructuralist social theorist, and how this theoretical orientation might inform the researcher's approach to the archive. The various sources used to construct the empirical corpus mobilised in this thesis, such as archival sources and newspapers, are discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 3, the first empirical chapter of the thesis, examines how the political performance of space in Derry reactivated the originary violence and contingent foundations of the city. The chapter examines episodes of space claiming that occurred in and around Derry from 1867 to 1869. While the conflictual performances of space reactivated Derry's 'ground', the spatial performance of the political was both a serious driver of, and tightly structured, the dynamics of intercommunal confrontation and violence. That is, the recovery of ontological violence can concretise through the spatialisation of antagonistic configurations of space. The spatial articulation of communal political subjectivity can generate, structure, and proliferate patterns of violence as it articulates an area that must be defended if communal-being is to be upheld.

Chapter 4 explores how in Derry, modes of political thinking were at once modes of spatial-thinking. In particular, how the Siege of Derry featured in the conservative Protestant spatial-political discourse is interrogated. This spatial-political discourse provided the fantasmatic force that drove Derry's loyalists' spatial practices. The power of this sense of space is empirically detailed in a study of two riots which occurred in the city centre in 1868 and 1883.

Chapter 5 interrogates the most significant episode of political violence studied in this thesis. In June 1920, Derry descended into a week-long period of serious violence as armed paramilitaries, as well as civilians, fought to control the city and impose their vision of order on the local space. This moment of political violence was tied to the looming partitioning of the island. In June 1920, the exact shape of the future border had yet to be determined. As such, both of Derry's communities feared being left on the 'wrong-side' of the border. That is, unionists feared being forced into an Irish Republic and Derry's nationalist community feared that they would be cut off from the rest of the country and forced into a Unionist controlled northern state. The spatial practices examined in this chapter, are deeply tied to the struggle over the future territorial arrangement of the island. While, arguably, much of the conflict studied

throughout this thesis could be deemed as instances of territorial violence in that they inscribe spatial frontiers, the violence of 1920 was explicitly linked to territorial practices at the national and imperial level. For the first time in the thesis, then, the concept of territoriality is introduced. What is more, territoriality is framed as political logic as it is implicated in the spatial institution of new political regimes.

The conclusion extrapolates the main theoretical threads of the argument, and summarises the contributions of the research. The conclusion then offers some critical reflections on the limitations of this research, as well as suggesting how this research's insights might be further developed.

1. A post-foundational *and* antagonistic account of the spatial

In this chapter a distinctly post-foundational account of space is developed through an engagement with Post-structuralist Discourse Theory (PDT)², most notably, the philosophical-theoretical work of Ernesto Laclau. In developing this account of space it is necessary to explicate the theoretical categories that inform it. As such, the theoretical foundations of the thesis are outlined in the process. By drawing on the theoretical category of antagonism, developed by Laclau, amongst other post-foundational thinkers of the political, an account of space as politically instituted as well as antagonistically constituted is advanced. It is an account of the spatial that asserts that the political dimension of spatial configurations stems from an ‘original’ act of institution. Taken as the outcome of foundational acts that inaugurate space, the inherently contingent and thus contestable nature of the spatial is rendered intelligible. Spatial formations are antagonistically constituted, that is, they are defined through a radical exclusion or a ‘constitutive outside.’ This introduces a radical negativity into the heart of our spatial thinking as there is always an outside that haunts and threatens established codifications of space. That is, the contingent and political nature of the spatial never quite-fully fades from view. It is a contingency which can be reactivated through political struggle. Thinking space antagonistically offers a performative and truly post-foundational account of space; a theorisation of the spatial that allows for a rethinking of the imbrications between space and the political. It is a theoretical orientation that will shed a productive light on this thesis’ empirical studies of the spatial articulation of antagonism.

² Throughout this thesis, the understanding of the discursive associated with the Essex School and Laclau and Mouffe is referred to as Post-Structuralist Discourse Theory (PDT). It is also often termed Post-Marxist Discourse Theory, Political Discourse Theory, or Post-Foundational Discourse Theory.

In explicating and spatialising the category of antagonism, it is necessary to elaborate the theoretical underpinnings of this thesis. The understanding of antagonism at work here is premised upon a post-Saussurian conception of discourse, specifically the understanding of discourse associated with what is known as the Essex School of discourse theory. Therefore, in order to mobilise antagonism theoretically, Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe's conception of discourse is explicated. From there, antagonism as it has come to be understood in the work of Laclau, amongst other theorists, is examined. As it happens, Laclau has a particular, and in some quarters, controversial, view of the spatial which is couched in his discursive understanding of social objectivity. It is argued in this chapter, that Laclau's pithy definition of space is often miss-apprehended, and that foregrounding the category of antagonism in Laclau's understanding of the spatial renders it in a much more political, as well as productive, light.

What is more, the exegesis of the key terms of post-structuralist discourse theory, and how they might relate to and invigorate our spatial thinking, is to necessarily run against some of the major criticisms levelled at post-structuralism writ large, and PDT in particular. Such criticisms, if accepted, would debar the mobilisation of PDT in the interrogation of the spatial. Some of the charges that are regularly levelled PDT suggest that its post-structuralist conception of discourse is a form of idealism, which ultimately results in a diminishing of the material. In contradistinction to such claims, this chapter argues that PDT is grounded in a radically materialist understanding of discourse, one that is well placed to grasp the spatial. Of greater significance here, however, are the criticisms of Laclau's understanding of space put forward by post-structuralist spatial theorists. It has been forcibly argued by theorists such as Doreen Massey (1992; 2008) that Laclau has a politically impoverished account of space. As such, Massey's objections to Laclau's 'spatial thinking' are considered. Mathew Sparke (2005) also critiques the 'spatial assumptions' at work in Laclau and Mouffe's *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (2014 [1985]). As Sparke's analysis is distinctly spatial in its focus it will be considered in some detail.

On questionable grounds

It is by now fairly uncontroversial, and in many quarters axiomatic, to assert that space is political (Hubbard & Kitchin, 2011, pp. 1-16). Through the influence of critical and post-structuralist thought on spatial thinking, and, of course, *vice versa*, neutral absolute

understandings of space have largely been banished from all but the most doggedly positivistic silos of political and social inquiry (Dear & Flutsy, 2002; Murdoch, 2006; Hillier, 2005). Still, when we ask ‘in what way is space political?’, the answers to this question are as wide-ranging and as idiosyncratic as the various thinkers and modes of thought which have insisted upon the political character of the spatial. This theoretical diversity can be traced through Marxist accounts that have interrogated the spatial dynamics of capitalism and how its attendant inequalities are manifested through space (e.g. Harvey, 1973; 1985; 1989), to more recent anarchist scholarship (Springer, 2016; 2014); to spatial thought whose influence is felt in most studies that take the social production of space as a starting point (Lefebvre, 1991; 2014; Soja, 1989); to others that have stressed the co-constitution of space and power from a more post-structuralist perspective (Massey, 2005; Allen, 2003; Sparke, 2005; Sharp *et al*, 2000; Dikeç, 2016; Harrison, 2015, pp.132-146), as well as the critical feminist scholarship that has had a marked influence on contemporary understandings of the spatial (e.g. Groz, 1995; 2001). The understanding of space *vis-à-vis* the political or antagonism pursued here, while sharing a certain affinity with many post-foundational analyses of space, has its own distinct reasons as to why space is political. Thinking space antagonistically offers a theoretical lens that renders intelligible both the contingency and the foundational violence implicated in the institution of space.

An illustrative comparison of the fate of two monuments is helpful in thinking the political spatially from a post-foundational perspective. The first relates to the Paris Commune of 1871, one of modernity’s most dramatic and ruptural spatialisations of political power. Radical Parisians through the establishment of the Commune briefly managed to secede from the French Second Empire, de-structuring and expelling state power from the capital through erecting barricades, a staple item in the Parisian insurgent repertoire (Hazen, 2016). Through all the tumult of this episode, the fate of the Vendôme Column, a monument that commemorated Napoleon’s pivotal victory at the Battle of Austerlitz, which stood proud at Place de la Concorde, underlines explicitly the political character of space. Paris’s new radical legislators decreed that the column was obnoxious to the principles of the Commune, being a ‘monument to barbarism, a symbol to brute force [...] a permanent insult to the vanquished by the victors’ (Ross, 2008, p. 5) Accordingly, it was declared that the monument must be destroyed. The monument fell to cheering crowds as its levelling signalled the inauguration of a new trajectory of history, a prefigurative moment where a new more

egalitarian social order confirmed itself in the breaking of space. On the demise of the monument, the anti-communard poet, Catulle Mendés, raged

it wasn't enough for you, in a word, to have destroyed the present and compromised the future, you still want to annihilate the past! An ominous youthful prank. But the Vendôme Column is France, the France of yesteryear that we no longer are, alas! It's really about Napoleon, all this is about our victorious, superb fathers moving across the world (Ross, 2008, pp. 5-6).

Reactionary hysteria aside, the disgruntled poet's remarks, as well as the Communards' declaration, evidence a crucial recognition. That is, that space is the product of power and victory. The poet knew only too well that the significance of the obliteration of the towering monument was not confined to the gesture's undoubted propagandistic value. For him its felling was an *event*, a moment of radical rupture – akin to the opening of an apocalyptic seal, being a harbinger of the horizontalization of the hitherto assured vertical relations of power. It was to blot out the historic victories through which the old order was established; victories which were materialised through space.

When the Commune finally fell, writer and probable participant in the revolution Prosper Oliver Lissagaray, despaired that its demise was followed by the reinstatement of the Vendôme Column, which paralleled the re-inscription of the differential codifications of power that many who joined the uprising took aim at. 'One of the first acts of the victorious bourgeoisie', Lissagaray lamented, 'was to again raise this enormous block, the symbol of their sovereignty. To lift Caesar on his pedestal they needed a scaffolding of 30,000 corpses' (2012 [1876], p. 232).

Despite the ultimate failure of the Commune to inaugurate a new order of things, Karl Marx enthusiastically remarked it would be 'forever celebrated as a glorious harbinger of a new society' (Marx 1871, cited in Badiou, 2015, p. 272). Perhaps on this count Marx was prophetic. The momentary and tantalising spatialisation of the Commune, though ultimately crushed, continues to return as a spectral remainder that still informs radical emancipatory spatial and political practices and imaginaries, modes of spatial and political thinking which refuse to concede legitimacy to the established codifications of space (Ross, 2015).

The second illustrative moment brings us to Derry city. Derry had something of its own Vendôme Column, The Walker monument erected in 1828 by the city's Apprentice Boys to celebrate the historic siege of 1668-69, from which their ancestors

emerged victorious (McBride, 1997). The monument stood tall on the same city walls that had afforded their forebears protection. The column that commemorated the deliverance of Derry as well as the victory of the Ascendancy regime and the continuation of imperial domination, loomed large, casting its shadow over the Bogside community beneath it, a Catholic quarter where the descendants of the vanquished resided. To the people of the Bogside, Walker's Pillar was a flagrant symbol of supremacy, and proved doubly contentious as it served as the meeting point for Orangemen and Apprentice Boy gatherings when celebrating historic victories of Protestants *over* Catholics. However, just a few moments before midnight on 27th August 1973, the ninety-six foot column's 145 year reign of 'looking down' on the Bogside came to an abrupt end. A PIRA (Provisional Irish Republican Army) 100lb bomb was detonated, in an explosion that rocked the city, and launched the statue of Rev. George Walker, the siege hero who crowned the monument, into the air with chunks of the column following after him (*DJ*, 3 Sept. 2018). In the cold light of morning a cherished symbol of unionist victory lay strewn on the ground. A Catholic nationalist M.P, Eddie MacAteer, who believed he spoke for the Catholics of Derry, who constituted the majority of the city's inhabitants, stated that, while he had reservations as to the means of the column's demise, he had 'no regrets that it is gone.' Indeed, some of the debris from the monument found its way into the pockets of Derry's citizens as souvenirs of its destruction.³ In a statement following the blast, the IRA declared that '[T]he monument was built in defiance of the nationally-minded people of Derry and served as a symbol of unionist domination. Once again we have demonstrated our ability to strike at the enemy when we chose' (*DJ*, 3 Sept. 2018).

The dramatic destruction of these two monuments signal a radical repudiation of the established regimes of power that they celebrate. These attacks, however paltry they might be deemed, through the destruction of totemic spatial manifestations of power, are a *de facto* attack on the very foundations or 'ground' of those orders. For in these moments of levelling, the contingency and power-saturated nature of space is asserted. To refuse the established orderings of space is to assert that things could always be otherwise. Such moments underline in an unusually dramatic fashion, that the foundations of the spatial are 'questionable', which is to say that they are intimately tied to the political and are premised on certain foundational exclusions.

³The author's supervisor Prof. Niall Ó Dochartaigh, recalls seeing a piece of Walker's Column on proud display on a Derry mantle-piece, resting its own custom made mini-coffin!

The understanding of space as political here, then, is intimately bound up with the question of foundation. Space is that through which power is made manifest (space as social objectivity *is* power), through which order is installed, as well as contested (Allen, 2003). Space is political as it is both the outcome and site of competing political projects that seek to inaugurate configurations of the social through spatialisation. Space is, then, the outcome of what we term ‘political logics.’ These are the practices that inaugurate or contest social configurations (Howarth & Glynos, 2007). As this analysis progresses, the concept of a political logic will be brought into greater relief (*see* Chap. 2). For now, to insist upon the politically instituted origins of spatial configurations is to stress the active, contingent, and power-saturated and, thus, at root, the decidedly political character of space.

[image removed]

*Fig 2. (above) Vendôme Column,
Paris. Destroyed by the
Communards.*

[image removed]

*Fig 3. Walker's Column, Derry.
Destroyed by the IRA in 1973.*

If space is the outcome of political institution, its foundations will necessarily be contingent (Butler, 1992). As Oliver Marchart (2007) demonstrates, drawing on Martin Heidegger's thought, it is the lack of a final ground that allows for the contingent (re)grounding(s) of the social. It is precisely on account of the inability to fully instantiate the social, to institute foundations once-and-for-all that space's contingent and contestable character is open to reactivation. While this understanding of space may echo the understanding of structure in structuralist thought, the locus of political possibility *vis-à-vis* the spatial resides within this lack of total closure (thus *post-structuralist*). To be clear, what is being stressed here is not the absence or rejection of foundations *tout court*, but the impossibility of a total or a final foundation (after all, this analysis is post-foundationalist, not anti-foundationalist). As Oliver Marchart puts it

The ontological weakening of ground does not lead to the assumption of the total absence of all grounds, but rather the assumption of the impossibility of a final *ground*, which is something completely different as it implies an increased awareness of, on the one hand, contingency and, on the other, the political as the moment of partial and always, in the last instance, unsuccessful grounding (Marchart, 2007, p. 2)

The political character of space, and therefore, the contingency of its foundations is brought into view through the conflictual, or antagonistic, enactments of social order. As Laclau discusses

This visibility is only obtained in so far as opposite forms of institution (of the social) are possible, and this possibility is revealed when those forms are actually postulated and fought for in the historical arena. For it is only in their antagonistic relation to other projects that the contingency of particular acts of institution are shown, and it is this contingency that gives them their political character discusses (Laclau, 1994, p. 4; *see also* Stavrakakis, 1999, p. 135)

Political order as Carl Schmitt insisted, is *grounded* through space (Schmitt, 2003; Minca & Rowan, 2015, p. 281). Not only is order grounded through spatialisation, it also necessarily entails spatial differentiation (Schmitt, 2003; *see also* Chap. 3). The histories of any given place, then, will present the genealogical excavator with histories of struggle in which rival modes of objectivity were installed, defended and contested. History, when we recalibrate towards the spatial (Soja, 1989; Foucault, 1980), becomes less about the unfolding of temporal trajectories, but rather, the making and breaking of space. That is, the spatial inauguration, contestation, and ultimate failure, of order. To modify or invert Hegel's (1975) remarks, it is space and not time that is the ultimate slaughter-bench of history.

Here a significant theoretical difference emerges between the analysis of space pursued here and some of work of the 'spatial turn' (Massey, 2008; Nieuwenhuis & Crouch, 2017, pp. xi-xxvii; Arias, 2010). This difference is found in how space is understood as political. Here, space is not deemed unequivocally political (or at least not in the same manner that is asserted by some critical geographers). Space as the outcome of political logics of institution is the site of attempted closure and fixity. As Mustafa Dikeç details

Space is not political in a univocal sense. It is as much about inauguration of politics as it is about containment; it is as much about openings as it is about closings; it is as much about ruptural as it is governmental (Dikeç, 2016, p. 3).

The political aspect of space is then located in its contingency and impossibility of total closure. So, rather than simply deriving a post-foundational and political account of space from understanding space as dynamic and irruptive (Massey 2008),

the theorisation of space developed here through PDT is a ‘quasi-transcendental’ account of space, an account that is alert to the political moments in which spatial configurations are instituted and contested.

The discursive constitution of objectivity

Nico Carpentier suggests that Laclau and Mouffe’s work can be read on three interconnected levels (2017, p. 18; Carpentier *et al.* 2019, p. 5; Smith 1999). These layers, broadly put, can be organised as follows: First of these is Laclau and Mouffe’s social ontology, that is, their particular account of discourse. Secondly, and deeply interconnected to their discursive understanding of objectivity, are the key concepts of antagonism and hegemony, which relate to the construction, stabilisation, and, crucially, the contestability of identity/meaning. The third moment in Laclau and Mouffe’s analysis as put forward in *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* is their call for the advancement of a radical democratic politics, as subsequently developed further in Laclau’s as well as Mouffe’s work on populism (Laclau 2005; Mouffe, 2018; 2019), on the nature of the political (Mouffe, 2000; 2005) and Mouffe’s work on ‘agonism’ (2013). The analysis pursued here is more concerned with the first two ‘layers’ of Laclau and Mouffe’s analysis, namely their understanding of the political-discursive constitution of social objectivity.

Along with PDT, various approaches to discourse analysis have in recent years exercised significant influence on critical studies of political, social and cultural phenomena (Glynos *et al.*, 2009, 7; Torfing, 2005, p. 5; 1999). What unites these approaches is a focus on how subjects construct meaning (Glynos *et al.*, 2009, p. 8), and, with a more political-critical inflection, how systems and relations of power are sustained and/or contested (Jørgensen & Philips, 2002, p. 2). An initial and necessarily broad outline of discourse is captured in John Dryzek’s (1997, p. 8) summation that a discourse ‘is a shared way of apprehending the world’ which ‘enables those who subscribe to it to interpret bits of information and put them together into coherent stories or accounts.’ Still, despite a notional affinity between various discourse analytical perspectives, the primacy and status afforded to the category of discourse *vis-à-vis* the constitution of social objectivity varies considerably across these different approaches (Glynos *et al.*, 2009). As Laclau discusses (1993, p. 541), ‘discourse’ as it variously features in post-structuralist approaches has its distant roots in the

‘transcendental turn’ in modern philosophy (Marchart, 2007). In such approaches the objects of study are less facts as such, but rather, their very conditions of possibility. ‘The basic hypothesis of a discursive approach’ according to Laclau, ‘is that the very possibility of perception, thought and action depends on the structuration of a certain meaningful field which pre-exists any factual immediacy’ (Laclau, 1993, p. 541). What is more, Laclau makes a clarifying distinction between various theories of discourse, bifurcating them between those that find their origins in, and are closely tied to, transformations in the field of structural linguistics, that is, those that pass through Ferdinand de Saussure’s analysis of the sign, and those that do not (Laclau, 2003; de Saussure, 1959 [1916]: Howarth, 2013, p. 25).⁴ Saussure’s startlingly revolutionary insistence on the ‘arbitrary nature of the sign’ (Howarth, 2000, p. 19: 2013, pp. 24-28) and his relational understanding of meaning grounded in a conception of language as a system, paved the way for a distinctly structuralist analysis in the humanities and social sciences (Rasiński, 2011; Lévi-Strauss, 1949; Barthes, 1957). Still, language or discourse in its Saussurian iteration as a system is a closed totality and is marked by a ‘structuralist essentialism’ (Laclau & Mouffe, 2014; Derrida, 2001).⁵

Laclau and Mouffe (2014 [1985]) in *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, developed a more radical post-Saussurian formulation of discourse that is now associated with the Essex School (Dean & Manguerra, 2020; Jacobs, 2018; Howarth, 2018). Therein, discourse was no longer confined to purely linguistic phenomena, but rather their particular conception of discourse embraced all social relations and practices. It was a theoretical innovation that sparked intense debate, defence and in some cases hostile repudiation (Laclau & Mouffe 1987; Geras 1987; 1988; Willmott, 2005).⁶ The ‘field of discursivity’, as Nico Carpentier (2017, p. 18) summates, is not delimited to a particular domain of the social world, but is instead co-extensive with it (Laclau 2006, p. 106).

⁴ The approaches to discourse whose Saussurian inheritance is pronounced can be considered post-structuralism writ large, while the second contemporary broad approach to discourse is represented by Michel Foucault and those operating within a Foucauldian paradigm.

⁵ Here I cannot treat in substantive detail Derrida’s critique of Saussure. But, very briefly, some of Derrida’s main objections are aimed at Saussure’s strict separation between the signifier and the signified, which as Howarth details, implies that there could be a signifier without a signified and *vice versa*. Within the order of the signifier, Saussure privileges speech over writing, as he posits that speech is closer to thought. Again, this assertion runs against Saussure’s insistence that language is a form and not a substance.

⁶ Much of this criticism resulted from, as Hugh Willmott (2005) suggests, a mis-reading of the concept of discourse as it features in *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*. The post-foundationalist formulation of discourse and its resultant understanding of the construction of social and political identity was an affront to many more orthodox Marxist scholarship. In *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* gone was the privileged category, or ‘ontological centrality’ of the working class (or any positively constituted social identity), as an *a priori* revolutionary subject.

Therefore, in this view ‘distinctions between political, economic, and ideological practices are pragmatic and analytical, and strictly internal to the category of discourse’ (Howarth *et al*, 2000, p. 4). Discourses are social, and, at root, political constructions. As essentially incomplete frameworks of intelligibility, discourses render meaning and our social reality possible. Laclau and Mouffe’s particular positing of discourse insists that all objects and practices are meaningful in so far as every object is constituted as an object of discourse. That is, the particular *being* of any ‘thing’ is conferred upon it only through its articulation into a relational discursive complex; its meaning, just as in Saussure’s understanding of the sign, depends on the system of relations. In this conception of discourse, objectivity and discourse are inseparable. As Laclau (2005, p. 68; *see also* Laclau 2006, p. 106) put it, drawing on Saussure, stressing both the discursive and the relational constitution of social objectivity

Discourse is the primary terrain of the constitution of objectivity as such. By discourse, as I have attempted to make clear several times, I do not mean something that is essentially restricted to the areas of speech and writing, but any complex of elements in which *relations* play the constitute role. This means that elements do not pre-exist the relational complex but are constituted through it. Thus ‘relation’ and ‘objectivity’ are synonymous.

As Laclau and Mouffe (1987) detail in the defence of their iteration of discourse, a stone though it exists independent of thought, or a system of social relations, becomes ‘either a projectile or an object of aesthetic contemplation only within a specific discursive configurations.’ They add the further example of the diamond, which may lay hidden at the bottom of the mine or circulate through the commodity market. It is the same physical object, yet it only becomes meaningful and valuable once it become an object of discourse, articulated into a differential-relational system of meaning – in other words a discourse. A proposed motorway, to take a more overtly political and conflictual illustration offered by Laclau and Mouffe (1987), if it goes ahead will cut through a forest. Here the being of the forest, depending on the discourse it is articulated within may represent an obstacle to progress, to profit, an unfortunate though necessary cost towards greater economic growth, etc. Conversely, for environmentalists and others, the forest’s identity might be constituted as an irreplaceable eco-system, aesthetic object, have intrinsic worth, and so on. Here, we

have antagonistic discourses which articulate opposed conceptions of the forest and indeed we may presume they are grounded in alternative political visions.

The understanding of discourse advanced here, then, relies on and presumes the concept of articulation. As Laclau and Mouffe (2014, pp. 91-101) outline, *articulatory practices* establish relations amongst elements, and in doing so modify the identity of those elements (Glynos & Howarth, 2007). The resulting ‘structured totality’ that is a product of these articulatory practices is what we have termed a discourse (Laclau & Mouffe, 2014). ‘Elements’, that is, available signifiers, as they are articulated together into differential positions become internal ‘moments’ within a discourse. Thus, meaning is partially fixed or stabilised. This quilting or structuring of a discourse requires the introduction of privileged signifiers or nodal points or *points de capiton* in Jacques Lacan’s work (Laclau & Mouffe, 2014, p.99). These nodal points hold the discursive ensemble together. In Slavoj Žižek’s example of communist discourse, the already available signifiers of ‘democracy’ and ‘freedom’ are imbued with new meaning, modified through their articulation with the privileged signifier ‘communism’. Democracy, then, within communist discourse acquires a new meaning, signifying the real or true realisation of democracy, as opposed to bourgeois democracy (Howarth *et al.*, 2000, p. 8).

This partial fixity of meaning through the introduction of nodal points is of key significance. Nodal points are necessary in order to somewhat arrest the flow of meaning. Without at least some degree of fixity, meaning would be impossible (Carpentier 2017, p. 20). As Laclau and Mouffe (2014) suggest, a discourse that cannot attain any stability of meaning is the ‘discourse of the psychotic’. However, this necessary fixity is not a given, it requires social intervention, that is to say, articulation. The category of articulation, then, discloses the contingent, and thus at root political character of discourses, as they are the product of attempts to ‘arrest the flow of differences’ and ‘dominate the field of discursivity.’ What is more, it is crucial that articulatory practices are not held as epiphenomenal or an expression of a more fundamental underlying reality. For example, in Laclau’s (2005; *see also* Mouffe, 2018) analysis of populism, the practices that articulate ‘the people’ do not give expression to a pre-existing people as such, but rather construct it. For example, in their deconstructive reading of Marxism in *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, political identities do not arise from an underlying economic reality, a reality which is ‘determinate in the

last instance' of the social superstructure (Laclau, 1990). But rather political identities and interests are discursively articulated.

Articulatory practices, then, are 'not the superstructure of anything.' To take seriously the assertion that 'every object is an object of discourse', there can be no transcendental or *a priori* determining principle (be it the meaning-giving subject, or the economy, or History). That a discourse, or the social world, is the product of articulatory practices attests at once to the contingency of the social, that discourses can be modified or contested, and that discourses require a degree of stability in order for meaning to be possible. The task of the discourse theorist, then, is always bound up with the questions of how discourses become institutionalised, sedimented or are contested.

Integral to this understanding of discourse, is Laclau's and Mouffe's reformulation of the concept of hegemony. Radicalising the Gramscian understanding of hegemony Laclau and Mouffe suggest that hegemonic practices are the exemplary political practices that link together available elements and impose order and stability on the discursive field (Laclau & Mouffe 2014; Laclau; Howarth, 2000, p. 109). Of course the field of discursivity will always exceed any discourse that tries to dominate it. The social orders, then, that emerge through hegemonic struggles can never fully instantiate themselves, as they can never fully arrest the flow of meaning. There is always an outside through which society is defined, a limit that imposes order, yet at the same time prevents the full realisation of society. This, as will be further developed below, is the antagonistic constitution of the social, and indeed objectivity itself.

Antagonism

Now that that a rudimentary outline PDT's understanding of discourse has been given, we can move towards an explication of the political-philosophical category of antagonism. From there, an antagonistic understanding of the spatial can be developed. Oliver Marchart (2018) suggests that antagonism as first put forward in *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* and subsequently further developed in later works is the most decisive of Laclau's contributions to political theory (Žižek, 1989). Afforded a primacy in the theoretical work of Laclau and Mouffe (2014; Laclau 1990; 1996) and in Post-structuralist Discourse Theory writ large, antagonism introduces a *radical* negativity into the very centre of political and social analysis and the being of all social formations (Laclau & Mouffe, 2014; Laclau 1990; 1996; Marchart, 2018, pp. 20-23;

2014; Dyer-Hanson, 2014; *for critique see* Thomassen, 2005; Norris, 2002). Again, in keeping with the post-structuralist re-reading of de Saussure, all identity/social formations are constructed through relational difference. The relative stability or systematicity of these social formations/identity is, then, united by what is excluded. Crucially, this difference, or exclusion, cannot simply be another difference within the discursive formation. Instead, this difference is radical in nature. That is, it is a radical or 'constitutive outside' that imposes an unstable unicity which partially fixes meaning. All identity, or social objectivity, is defined by what it excludes, through the inscription of a frontier or a limit. All of which necessitates the construction of radical frontiers as the very conditions of possibility for the instituting and maintaining of social objectivity. Take Laclau's use of Saint-Just's rather belligerent comment that the unity of the republic is found only the destruction of what it is opposed to it (Laclau, 2014, p. 141). Or as Laclau develops in more formal terms

if the systematicity of the system is a direct result of the exclusionary limit, it is only that exclusion that grounds the system as such [...] The condition, of course, for this operation to be possible is that what is beyond the frontier of exclusion is reduced to pure negativity- that is the pure threat what is beyond poses to the system (constituting it in that way) (Laclau, 1996, p. 38; Marchart, 2018, p. 21).

Marchart further describes the necessity of this imposition of a limit *vis-à-vis* constitution of order

All social order, to the extent that it is symbolically structured (and if it is not it is not an order), is orientated to some degree towards such a radical outside. Every effect of meaning relies if only to a minimal degree, on some form of antagonisation. This is because signification [...] is in need of a certain degree of systematicity; every system- by virtue of being one- is in need of a limit and, thus, a constitutive outside (Marchart, 2018, p. 21).

This radical outside, however, is precisely what introduces a negativity into PDT's understanding of the political and social objectivity itself

Antagonism and exclusion are constitutive of all identity. Without the limits through which a (non-dialectical) negativity is constructed we would have an indefinite dispersion of differences whose absence of systemic limits would make any differential identity impossible. But this very function of constituting differential identities through antagonistic limits is what, at the same time, destabilises and subverts those differences, it makes them all equivalent to each other, interchangeable with each other as far as the limit is concerned. [...] The system is what is required for the differential identities to be constituted, but the only thing-exclusion- what can constitute the system and thus makes possible those identities, is also what subverts them. (Laclau, 1996, pp. 52-3).

Antagonisms then, as Howarth *et al.* (2000, p. 10) detail ‘disclose the *lack* at the heart of all social identity and objectivity [...] the social is thus revealed as a field that can never be closed or constituted as an objective full presence.’ As Laclau and Mouffe (2014 [1985], p. 111) put it ‘in the case of antagonism [...] the presence of an ‘Other’ prevents me from being totally myself. The relation arises not out of totalities, but from the impossibility of their constitution.’ So, this radical outside through which objectivity is constituted at the very same time prevents the full-instantiation or positive realisation of that order. Antagonism in its most radical formulation, then, provides for the contingent grounding of the social, yet at the same time subverts it. This non-dialectical analysis of antagonism then reveals a ‘constitutive impossibility’ of society, and as per this study, spatial formations. Rather than antagonisms signalling contradictions within the social, they signal competing and ultimately failed attempts to fully realise certain configurations of social objectivity. As Laclau (1996, p. 53) develops the nature of this impossibility

The limit of the social must be given within the social itself as something subverting it, destroying its ambition to constitute a full presence. Society never manages to be a society, because everything in it is penetrated by its limits, which prevents it from constituting itself as an objective reality

There is always a constitutive blockage which makes both the articulation of society, or in this case spatialised configurations of it, both possible and at the same time prevents its full realization. Which, ordinarily may not pose a problem or jeopardise the routinisation of the social, but in intensely contested sites such as Derry, where decidedly antagonistic visions of space/society constantly dislocate each other,

the unstable and inherently political nature space is continually made to re-manifest itself.

Antagonism: Neither Real Opposition nor Logical Contradiction

It is worth briefly re-stating the negative character of antagonism as it features within this post-foundational theoretical horizon, and how it differs from many other social phenomena that may *prima facie* be understood as instances of antagonism. Antagonisms, strictly speaking, cannot be contained within shared ground, cannot be inscribed *within* a transcendent structure that stands above and contains the antagonisms, be it society, history, and so on. As Marchart (2018, p. 63) writes, antagonism ‘is much more demanding than any conventional idea of social conflicts’ as it might feature in political science and sociological literatures. Antagonism, then, ‘cannot be absorbed into the image of two opposing camps’ with positively given identities as per the class struggle as it appears in orthodox Marxist accounts, nor as the struggle between two conflicting parties in violent struggle. Laclau and Mouffe (2014; Laclau, 2006, p. 104; Marchart, 2018; Camargo, 2013) employ Kant’s categories of *real opposition*, or *Realpugnanz*, and *contradiction* in order to illustrate precisely what antagonism is not (Colletti, 1975). A *real opposition*, as detailed by the Italian Marxist Lucio Colletti and drawn upon by Laclau and Mouffe (2014), is a relation between positively given objects whose objectivity is independent of that relation (Camargo 2013, p. 171). They conclude that a *real opposition*, a clash between two opposing forces cannot be deemed antagonistic. For example a clash between two objects, be it two stones or a car collision in no way could be considered a case of antagonism, at least as it has been theorised above. Secondly, a *logical contradiction* is present when within a proposition mutually contradictory statements exist, which may seem equally valid. Thus, for Kant logical contradictions take place at the level of the concept (Colletti, 1975; Camargo, 2013). Colletti employed these Kantian distinctions in order to take aim at Hegel, whom Colletti accused of incorrectly introducing logical contradictions into reality, as Hegel conflates reality with the concept. Colletti’s task was to rid Marxism, a supposedly materialist philosophy, of understanding social antagonisms as idealist logical contradictions. Therefore, the only option for Marxists by Colletti’s reckoning was to view antagonism as real oppositions. Laclau and Mouffe, however sympathetic to this puncturing of the Hegelian inflected understanding of antagonism,

nonetheless reject any notion of antagonism as real opposition. They refute the false binary choice that Colletti posits between real oppositions and logical contradictions. As Ricardo Camargo (2013, p. 172) details Colletti's analysis suggests that only two distinct type of entities exist, that is 'real objects or concepts.' Such a bifurcation would, at any rate, be at odds with the post-Saussurian understanding of discourse advanced above. Of course we could, and do, understand class struggle and other clashes between opposed collectives as antagonistic. But, again, this not on account of any essence or naturally given interests of such identities (Laclau, 1990). These forces antagonise each other through their antagonistic constitution, having their positive realisation inhibited through the presence of a constitutive blockage. In keeping with the anti-essentialist and post-foundational thrust of the conception of antagonism at work here, it is their inability to achieve their full identity, and not their epiphenomenal interests which is frustrated (Laclau, 1990). As Marchart (2018) argues, quite provocatively, if antagonism is our name for the political, and if antagonism is necessary for the temporary stabilisation of meaning as such, then *all* meaning is, at its root, political. Thus at stake, then, in thinking antagonism, is an ontology of the political.

Ernesto Laclau's 'spatial thinking'

Now that an outline of some of the core theoretical categories of political discourse theory has been provided, antagonism can be discussed in terms of its spatial implications. Though evidently indebted to the theoretical legacy of Ernesto Laclau, among others, the fidelity of this analysis is to think antagonism spatially, and not, strictly speaking, to think Laclau spatially. Nonetheless, Laclau does have an account of the spatial. Arguably, Laclau's distinct contribution to spatial thinking could be deemed rather meagre, especially in light of his overall contributions to political theory. What is more, though Laclau's insights, as argued here, can help in re-thinking the relationships between the political and space, in no real sense can Laclau be considered a distinctly spatial thinker. That is, his theoretical efforts were not spent in the pursuit of a more political understanding of space, as is the case with post-structuralist inflected geographical thought. What little Laclau did write concerning the spatial, however, very much mobilises the full-heft of his philosophical-theoretical thought, including antagonism. Therefore in order to think antagonism spatially, an outline of Laclau's understanding of space will be developed.

In *New Reflections on the Revolution of our Time*, Laclau (1990, pp. 41-42) quite pithily and as it transpired, quite provocatively defined space as ‘any repetition that is governed by a structural law of succession.’ Such a definition appeared to run contrary to many of the advances made by the ‘spatial turn’, interventions that sought to develop a more fecund notion of space, and, as a result, Laclau’s understanding of space has been the subject of controversy, debate, and defence (Massey 1992, 2005; Howarth, 2006; Marchart, 2014). Doreen Massey, taking umbrage at Laclau’s seemingly outmoded notion of the spatial, mounted the most noteworthy critique (1992; 2008).⁷ For Massey, Laclau’s framing of space in *New Reflections* was an altogether de-politized vision, one that was couched in by then passé binary distinctions, and recast space once more as the ‘realm of stasis’ and passivity (1992, p. 67). Massey lamented that in Laclau’s formulation, any ‘closed’ and ‘self-determining’ system may be deemed spatial (1992, p. 68), and given that space is understood here as that which is ‘governed by a successive law of repetition’ (that is, displaying/evidencing causal predictability), it therefore offers ‘no surprises.’ In such a (quasi) teleological framing of the spatial (teleological on account of it obeying a ‘structural law’ of repetitive succession expressing a determined pattern) temporal moments are reduced to space, being internal to it, as fore-coming events are ‘foreseen’ as something ‘already present, already presentable; it has arrived or happened and is thus neutralized of its irruption’ (Derrida, 2005, p. 143 in Stavrakakis, 2011, p. 303; Laclau, 1990, p. 42) (*e.g. next week I’ll take the train, or celebrate my birthday*).

Laclau’s distinction between time and the temporal here is telling. As Laclau (1990, p. 41) put it ‘any teleological conception of change is therefore essentially spatialist. Certain forms of time, as in the cyclical time that governs peasant communities, to take Laclau’s example, are spatial in the sense that they conform to established or ‘sedimented’ rhythms, and are therefore divested of temporality as a dislocationary force. Laclau, then, makes an analytical distinction between the temporal and time. The temporal being an *event* that disrupts, time is that which beats to a predictable rhythm. This is to stress that the banal moments that (re)structure our lives are not strictly speaking the unfolding of the temporal, but the repetition of a structure.

⁷ Discussing Laclau and Mouffe’s overall theoretical enterprise, namely the deconstruction of Marxism, and their project of radical democracy, Massey, however, insists that such projects are ‘absolutely in tune’ with the arguments she was putting forward in *For Space* (2008, p. 42). For sure, Massey’s shared theoretical and political sympathy with the iteration of post-structuralism found in Laclau and Mouffe’s efforts is evident, and it is Laclau’s framing of space that is the locus of disagreement rather than any *tout court* rejection of his political philosophical oeuvre.

Time as it is governed by or conforming to predictable rhythms remains internal to the order that it reproduces.

Laclau discusses the temporal in relation to dislocation. Dislocation of a structure, or space, is the mark of contingency and thus possibility. It is not quite the spatial that is the source of possibility, but rather possibility is found in that which disrupts the spatial (as a sedimented social pattern). This dislocation, the temporal event, is then the locus of an ‘authentic possibility’ – and thus, we might presume, politics in the radical sense (Laclau 1990, p. 42). It is, then, the temporal that is the harbinger of politics, through rupture and dislocation, and is, as Massey insists, ample evidence of Laclau’s privileging of the temporal as a ‘dynamic which disrupts the predefined terms of any system of causality. The spatial, because it lacks dislocation, is devoid of the possibility of politics’ (1992, p. 68; *see also* 2008). In the apparent privileging of the temporal, Laclau retained ‘a language of space and spatialisation which is unaltered from the earliest structuralism’ (Massey, 2008, p. 38). Laclau’s formulation of the spatial, then, according to Massey, betrays structuralism’s residual diminishing of our spatial imagination, despite the ostensible spatiality of many of its categories and terms, such as ‘structure’ and ‘synchrony.’ Its legacy *vis-à-vis* an analysis of space is therefore the equation of atemporal closed structures with space, and space with the absolute negation of time (Massey, 2008, p. 38). Crucially for Massey, this anaemic understanding of the spatial evacuates space of its dynamism as the product of inter-relations and as that which is always in the process of being-made, and thereby its political character is also obscured. It is this openness of space that is the locus and promise of political possibility, and is itself what Massey seems to posit as the political.

Laclau’s conception of space, then, at first glance may seem apolitical, or at the very least de-politicised (Marchart, 2014). And to a certain extent, such a view can be sustained. For many theorists of the spatial, such as those who subscribe to Massey’s understanding of the political, any Laclauian treatment of the spatial will undoubtedly be politically impoverished. So be it. Such a reading, however, risks neglecting that space (as discursively constructed social objectivity) is, as previously detailed, both the product of political institution, and is antagonistically constituted.

The political and antagonistic character of the spatial may be re-activated. As Oliver Marchart (2014; Laclau, 1990, p. 36; Glynos & Howarth. 2007, p. 116) details, Laclau makes the Husserlian distinction between *original institution/reactivation* and *sedimentation* or routinisation, which both complexifies and politicises his formulation

of space as that which is governed by a structural law of succession. Political logics are those that institute, uphold, or contest configurations of the social, distinct from social logics that sediment the social (Glynos & Howarth, 2007). Space, or social objectivity, has a history, and social practices as quotidian reproductive rhythms that are repeated to (re)produce space can be traced back to a 'moment' of 'original institution.' Of course, there are no pure beginnings (hence original is caveated by way of inverted commas), as social and political practices always takes place within sedimented discursive formations. Any ensemble of social practices, then, was brought into being through political logics, and is therefore a contingent outcome. This also underlines the inherently political nature of social formations/space, because as the outcome of contingent political decision, social objectivity is constituted through power. As Laclau states, 'as undecidability is the very ground of the social, objectivity and power become indistinguishable' (1993, p. 435; Laclau and Zac 1994, pp. 17-23).

As Laclau (1990, p. 34) details, the successful routinisation of space/social objectivity requires a certain amount of 'forgetting' of the arbitrary or contingent origins of the social:

In so far as an act of institution has been successful, a 'forgetting of the origins' tends to occur; the system of possible alternatives tends to vanish and traces of original contingency fades. In this way, the instituted tends to assume the form of mere objective presence. This is the moment of sedimentation. It is important to realise that this fading entails a concealment.

What is concealed in this 'forgetting' is the contingency of the social order. It is not that the instituting of the social entails an over-writing of just any set of possibilities, but alternatives that were possible or articulated. As Claude Lefort (1988, p. 11) put it, 'the political is thus revealed, not by what we call political activity, but in a double movement whereby the mode of institution of society appears and is obscured'. Therefore, the instituting of the social entails an 'impossible attempt to erase the political ontology of the social' (Stravakakis, 1999, p. 72). In Derrida, as in other contested spaces, the contingency of space/social objectivity is not allowed to retreat from view. That is, in Husserlian terms, the constructed nature of social reality is continually 'reactivated.' In Derrida, practices that contest space and/or defend certain configurations of it, (re)foreground more nakedly the power relations constitutive of

that city-space, as these articulations of space antagonise each-other and put in jeopardy the sedimentation of the social.

Arguably, the understanding of the temporal as being the source of political possibility and space as that which negates it, has yet to be departed from. Such an understanding of the political - couched in a stark opposition between space and the temporal - risks, as Stavrakakis (2011, p. 303) warns, a fetishizing of the political as pure rupture, as a radical act that completely regrounds the social order. Rather, the spatial and the temporal are co-constitutive, and contaminated by each-other. For example, the mark of the temporal remains and haunts spatial rhythms. That is, as Howarth reminds us, in Laclau's formulation of space, drawing on Derrida, 'concrete space is never purely repetitious' as it is marked by iterability. (Howarth, 2006; Marchart 2014, p. 275). That is, while each act is repetitive in character, they are never exactly the same, and thus each act is in a sense 'unique' even while conforming to a sedimented pattern. Each act is partially dislocated and therefore a trace of the temporal remains. Again, while space is the (attempted) negation of the temporal, it is always doomed to fail as spatial repetition cannot evacuate the trace of contingency completely. If it could, society would become co-extensive with its own self-image, without remainders or exclusions. Such a world is one without the possibility of contest or politics. This can be pushed a little further, as Marchart does in his suggestion that the social as the product of political institution, is the political 'in another mode.'

Whither the material?

Given that an account of space is being developed here, post-structuralist theory that is concerned with *discourse* might seem a poor place to start from. In other words, with an air of protest one might ask 'whither the material?' How can a discursive approach, especially one that insists that discursive construction of reality grasp the materiality of the spatial? Of course, such a protest would be grounded in a misreading of PDT's understanding of discourse. As mentioned above, discourse in this analysis encompasses both the linguistic *and* the material. Still, it is worth lending this question further, though brief, attention given the frequency of the charge of linguistic determinism that has been made against PDT. Indeed, when *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* was first published it was immediately charged with being a work of unashamed idealism (Geras, 1987; 1988). Such criticisms, however, neglect that, in this iteration of

discourse, the term discourse is not exhausted in the linguistic. Discourse as it features in PDT retains the materialist core of its Marxist origins (Howarth, 2018). In their conception of discourse Laclau and Mouffe (2014) reject the distinction between discursive and non-discursive practices that is found in the work of Foucault, to take their example. A particular discourse, or social reality as we know it, is constructed through practices that are both linguistic and material. Furthermore, in this approach, as Laclau insists, ‘the fact that every object is constituted as an object of discourse has *nothing to do* with whether there is a world external to thought, or with realism/idealism opposition’. As Laclau and Mouffe (1987, p. 85) further insist ‘I will never encounter the object in its naked existence—such a notion is a mere abstraction; rather that existence will always be given as articulated within discursive totalities.’

As previously stated, that an object exists in the world is not in doubt, but it only gets its *being* when it is articulated discursively. In fact it would be idealist to insist that an object through some essence expresses its own identity prior to its discursive constitution. The argument can be made, admittedly, that PDT’s focus has often tended towards the study of political discourses in the traditional sense of speeches, ideologies, etc., to the neglect of material practices. This neglect, however, is not borne out of a philosophical inability to appreciate the material but a matter of emphasis (Carpentier, 2017). To give Laclau and Mouffe (2014, p. 94) the ‘last word’ when it comes to how materiality features in their discursive approach to objectivity

The fact that every object is constituted as an object of discourse has *nothing to do* with whether there is world external to thought, or with the realism idealism opposition. An earthquake or the falling of a brick is an event that certainly exists, in the sense that it occurs here and now, independent of my will. But whether their specificity as objects is constructed in terms of a ‘natural phenomenon’ or ‘expression of the wrath of God’, depends upon the structuring of the discursive field. What is denied is not that such objects exist externally to thought, but rather different assertion that they could constitute themselves as objects outside any discursive condition of emergence.

Laclau and Mouffe’s ‘anaemic geographies’?

In Mathew Sparke's (2005) *In the Space of Theory: Post-foundational Geographies of the Nation-State*, the author tackles and critiques the spatial assumptions that inform the thought

of contemporary social and political theorists, among them Laclau and Mouffe.⁸ Adopting a post-foundational geographic sensitivity, Sparke attempts to shed a light on the spatial-fetishism, however muted, that stubbornly haunts the work of the otherwise anti-essentialist post-foundational thought of the likes of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri (2000), Homi K. Bhabha (1994), Laclau and Mouffe (2014), and others (Sparke, 2005, p. *xiv*). Sparke's criticisms of Laclau and Mouffe's *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, are worth considering at some length here, as, unlike some other noted critiques of the text, his argument is explicitly concerned with the spatial. The 'geographies' of Laclau and Mouffe's thought as elaborated in *Hegemony*, Sparke suggests, are at once both anaemic and all-too-present. They are anaemic on account of their intangible and indeterminate symbolic nature, and all too-present as Laclau and Mouffe's overall vision and analysis of the political and politics remains caught in the 'territorial trap' (Agnew, 1994) of the nation-state, which constitutes the unthought spatial backdrop to their text. His argument, as it pertains to Laclau and Mouffe's (mis)treatment of the spatial, is multifaceted and far-reaching.

The first of Sparke's spatial critiques of *Hegemony* stresses that Laclau and Mouffe's, as with some other post-foundational works, for all the emphases on contingency still assumes 'either explicitly or implicitly, a bounded territorial arena in which the flux and unfinished negotiations of post-foundational politics can be played out' (Sparke, 2005, p. 176). This unthought spatial backdrop is the nation-state. This results in a certain aporia that blights such analyses, as it amounts to an inherent incapacity to interrogate the various transformations that nation-state territoriality has undergone. Laclau and Mouffe in their radical re-theorisation of Antonio Gramsci's concept of hegemony, divested hegemony of the geographic awareness that informed it (2005: *see also* Jessop, 2005; Siad, 2001).⁹ In *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, hegemony sheds its placed-ness and instead becomes solely 'a political relation, a form, if one wishes, of politics, but not a determinable location within a topography of the social' (Sparke, 2005, p. 176). Furthermore, in their re-working of hegemony through a

⁸ I do not seek to evaluate the merits of, or reject *tout court*, the insights of Sparke's text, but rather the focus, here, is largely confined to his analysis of Laclau and Mouffe (2005, pp. 177-87). Nor do I evaluate how he mobilises aspects of Laclau and Mouffe's thought in his treatment of other political and social theorists.

⁹ Though Gramsci was not, strictly speaking, a spatial thinker, there was still a geographic sensitivity and significance to much of his thought. His theorisation of hegemony, for example, was influenced by internal spatial power dynamics of Italy, or the 'Southern Question', that is, the domination by the northern Italian bourgeoisie of the south of the country through alliances with the southern landlord classes.

'historicist genealogy' they inherit the spatial assumptions, of not only Gramsci's formulation, but also of others.¹⁰ Thereby, Laclau and Mouffe's *Hegemony* betrays a certain attachment to the nation-state, and an 'investment in the terrain of liberal democracy, along with the attendant vocabularies of state, civil society, and citizenship, remains haunted by the hyphen in nation state' (Sparke, 2005, note 18, p. 177/p. 347).

The nation-state, according to Sparke, further exercises its presence on Laclau and Mouffe's work, not only through their inheritance of others' spatial framework, but is also written in to their rethinking of left-wing political strategy, which is the *modus operandi* of *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*. In *Hegemony*, when writing on the prospects and aims of a renewed emancipatory politics, Laclau and Mouffe insisted that the tasks for the left was not to be found 'in the abandonment of the democratic terrain, but on the contrary, in the extension of the field of democratic struggles to the whole of civil society and the state'. For Sparke, the 'whole of civil society and the state' is a terrain that is essentially co-terminus or at least co-extensive with the nation-state. Again, this is a consequence of the inherited spatial assumptions of their reworking of the theoretical category of hegemony (Sparke, 2005, p. 183). The rethinking of left-wing political strategy then, as developed throughout *Hegemony*, is one that is still 'only ever imagined in territorialised nation-state terms' (Sparke, 2005, 183)¹¹. What is more, though this is not tackled by Sparke, is the influence of Laclau's experience of Perónism in Argentina on his political thought (Laclau, p. 2005, pp. 214-221; see also Derbyshire, 2014: *for criticism* Beasley-Murray 1998; 2003).¹² 'Peronism' said Laclau, 'made me understand Gramsci' (Petitjean, 2014). And of course, the varieties of Peronism signified political struggles largely contained within and seeking to hegemonise the 'territorial ground' of the Argentinian state. At any rate, all of which underlines, according to Sparke, the in-built territorialization of the political' that often goes un-thought and imposes an arbitrary 'territorial limit' on the political thought of Laclau and Mouffe as explicated in *Hegemony* (Sparke, 2005, p. 187).

¹⁰ As Sparke (2005, p. 187) concludes, stating '[d]espite the abstraction [of their theoretical argument], but also in part because of it, Laclau and Mouffe's account never therefore leaves the national territorial grounds presupposed in the accounts of Gramsci and all the others whose arguments they seek to renovate.'

¹¹ Further to this, Sparke notes that the actual empirical examples in *Hegemony* of democratic hegemonic struggles are 'situated in particular countries such as France, Italy, Nicaragua, and the United States'

¹² A prominent criticism of the influence of Peronism on the re-thinking of hegemony in cultural studies, is Jon Beasley Murray's claim that such approaches, notably Laclau's merely reproduce the populism/Perónism they study.

The second broad criticism relates to how spatial terms are mobilised by Laclau and Mouffe. *Hegemony*, writes Sparke, is ‘remarkably full’ of ‘auto-negating’ ‘spatial concept metaphors’. These spectral geographic references that liberally litter *Hegemony* Sparke lists (2005, p. 178): “‘Locations’, ‘terrains’, ‘fields’, ‘areas’, ‘frontiers’, ‘boundaries’, ‘planes’, ‘surfaces’, ‘positions’, ‘regions’, ‘topographies’, even a ‘no-man’s land’, fill the book and references to ‘space’ and ‘spaces’ themselves are ubiquitous”. Sparke laments that such spatial-geographic terms that exercise a ‘haunting omnipresence’ on Laclau and Mouffe’s text, tend to slip away and retreat into a ‘fog of symbolic indeterminacy’, and with them the more tangible ‘consequential geographies’ which such signifiers might suggest. What emerges here, is Sparke’s suspicion of aspects of Laclau and Mouffe’s understanding of objectivity as discursively constituted. Their resulting account of politics and political struggle, an approach which Sparke argues is couched, (somewhat incorrectly, or at least partially grasped) in the ‘indeterminacy of meaning in symbolic regimes’, and thus, the analysis of the ‘tangible’ or ‘anything so seemingly material as national frontiers and territories would appear to be remote’ (Sparke, 2005, p. 178)’

Sparke hints - and perhaps he does not follow all the way through with this assertion - that the discursive approach conceived in *Hegemony* is fundamentally ill-suited to grasp the materiality (or the ‘tangible’) of spatial configurations of power, such as the territorial border, etc. Here, Sparke follows the line of many well-worn criticisms which have misread *Hegemony*, along with the PDT writ large, as idealist, where the contextual, the material, the concrete, all slip away into vague discussions of the symbolic. Of course, such readings risk, as they often do, conflating the linguistic with discourse, with the former exhausted in the latter. A closer reading of *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, as well as Laclau, and Mouffe’s subsequent work, demonstrates, as outlined above, that the discursive as understood in the PDT is radically materialist. The charge issued by Sparke is that Laclau and Mouffe, owing to their understanding of meaning, are subsequently free to adopt a much looser, more metaphorical, and abstract notion of the spatial. Hence, the spatial signifiers abound without much pause or consideration. Sparke goes further. The high-levels of abstraction that characterise *Hegemony* and its key theoretical categories such as ‘the political’ and ‘the social’, have a deleterious flattening effect, which empties and decontextualises a reality constituted by dynamic and heterogenous social and political processes. If everything is reduced to the discursive field dominated by articulatory practices, Laclau and Mouffe’s

‘theoretical bottom-line’, then, as Sparke suggests, the specificity of each ‘field’ is obliterated. Again, the plethora of imprecise spatial terms that pepper *Hegemony*, are, then, epiphenomenal of the more foundational problem that is a consequence of their discursive understanding of objectivity.

Much of the weakness of Sparke’s interrogation of the spatial contours of *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, is, perhaps, that he tends to conflate Laclau and Mouffe’s thinking around political strategy with the more onto-political aspects of their analysis. That is not to suggest that the onto-political dimension of their thought can be totally disentangled from their project of a radical democracy. For sure, Laclau and Mouffe’s political thought as articulated in *Hegemony*, is couched in the spatial mould of territorial nation-states. However, rather than bringing into relief some dangerous aporia in their thought, this is instead a reflection of the specific political and historic conjuncture in which the text was written and sought to intervene.¹³ That moment is one which is still largely with us, the radical neo-liberal re-ordering of the state. Also, according the post-foundational theoretical understanding of objectivity as a space of sedimented social practices, national states are very much deeply sedimented (though of course still contingent and contestable) contexts of political action.

Political violence, the subject of this study, is most often tightly structured by the national borders and frontiers. After all, as Laclau (1990, p. 35) reminds us, the social, as in sedimented practices, remains the backdrop for political action. The post-foundational mode of inquiry pursued here does not disregard or deny the foundations of deeply routinised social formations, be they states, borders, institutions, and so on. But rather, part of our task is to underline the partiality of their institution, and how their contingent and antagonistic character can be recovered through struggle. Still, Sparke’s analyses does raise important questions regarding how the nation state features (or doesn’t) in post-foundational political inquiry. A more profitable spatial interrogation of *Hegemony* is not to be found in the spatial silences, or, conversely, the ‘ambiguous’ spatial signifiers that pepper Laclau and Mouffe’s text. Instead, the potential *vis-à-vis* a post-foundational analysis of the spatial resides in their discursive political ontology. That is, the constitutive role of antagonism in relation to the grounding of social objectivity. It is the radical negativity, the very constitutive impossibility of the full-instantiation of the spatial, and the reactivation of its

¹³ A related, though still distinct criticism which Sparke posits, is that for all the ambiguity of their use of spatial terms, Laclau and Mouffe’s political thinking is bound up in an all-too-definite and problematic temporality. That is, the temporality and teleology of modernity.

contingent power saturated origins, no-matter how deeply routinised a spatial context may be, is precisely where the radical potential of a spatial analysis is to be found. Furthermore, regarding Sparke's criticism of *Hegemony* for all its abundance of slippery spatial terms, it could be countered that all thinking is in some sense spatial or at least topographical. In keeping with the account of space outlined above, any system, be it a pattern of thought or otherwise, will be spatial in the sense that elements are articulated in relation to each-other, and can thereby be mapped cognitively. At any rate, the purpose here is not to advance a defence of a lack of spatial rigour in the thought of Laclau and Mouffe's thought, especially *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*. Instead, it is to mobilise (and spatialise) the insights of PDT, especially those afforded by the category of antagonism, in our analysis of the spatial.

Conclusions

Antagonism as it has featured in the work of Laclau and Mouffe and beyond, is one of the most significant and radical contributions to contemporary political and social thought. Not only does thinking the world antagonistically help re-invigorate our understanding of the political, and re-politicise our view of the social, it also helps us to develop a post-foundational and thoroughly political account of the spatial. As such, thinking antagonism spatially helps to render intelligible the relationships or the co-constitution of space and the political. Here, the potential of properly spatialising antagonism in our analysis of contested spaces such as Derry comes to the fore. In these contexts, the political is often explicitly spatialised; where political identity is expressed through the articulation of antagonistic configurations of space. Furthermore, these sites remain conflicted or contested as they remain 'haunted' by their own constitutive and antagonistic exclusions. However, while stressing the antagonistic grounding of the social is to an extent enlightening, this alone would tell us little of the contextual specificities of the contested spaces under study here. Our empirical burden is then to think antagonism spatially in part by demonstrating the ways through which the political is spatially articulated in Derry and how this in turn reactivates and renders intelligible the antagonistic political constitution of these spatial contexts.

The next task is to give an account of how this project's theoretical commitment to Post-Structuralist Discourse Theory informs the approach and translates into empirical research. That is, how do we think antagonism empirically? The next chapter offers a set of methodological reflections on the challenges and possibilities of conducting empirical research from a PDT perspective.

2. Methodological Reflections

The discursive political ontology that forms the theoretical foundation of this research very much shapes the understanding of social objectivity, space, and antagonism advanced in this thesis. Furthermore, these theoretical foundations necessarily inform the approach to the methodological questions prompted by the challenges of conducting deeply contextual as well as historical research from the perspective of Post-structuralist Discourse Theory. The question of method *vis-à-vis* post-structuralism in general, and PDT in particular, is at times quite vexed. To foreground the problem of method from a PDT perspective is to bring into relief a series of challenges and objections that may bring into question the methodological viability of PDT when it comes to empirical research. That is, there is a perceived chasm that separates the ‘high theory’ of PDT from the ‘real’ concrete social and political contexts we may choose to study. The charge of PDT’s alleged ‘methodological deficit’ is often levelled by those hostile to PDT but also by some who are deeply committed to this theoretical idiom. Ultimately, such diagnoses are overblown. Still, affording sustained attention to the question of method helps to clarify the methodological approach of this thesis and promotes a greater consistency and more robust translation of the theoretical strengths and insights of PDT into empirical research. Such a focus also prompts a clarification of how the historical might be understood in a PDT perspective and what it means to do historical research in light of those theoretical commitments. This theoretical and methodological reflection on the historical is crucial in identifying and avoiding pitfalls when navigating through archival material (broadly defined) that constitutes the empirical corpus of this research, be it official state archives, or newspaper collections, etc.

The discursive political ontology that underpins PDT already orients the researcher in a certain methodological direction. For example, an understanding of the political institution of the social brings into relief the political practices that institute, contest, and naturalise the social order. The well-developed and philosophical sophistication of PDT's insights will debar an 'anything goes' approach to method. The task, then, in methodological terms, is to foreground how the theoretical categories developed in PDT already begin to organise and inform our approach to empirical research. This chapter mobilises what is now known as the 'logics' approach developed by Jason Glynos and David Howarth (2007; *see also* 2019; 2008a; 2008b) in *The Logics of Critical Explanation* (2007). Both scholars work within the Essex School of discourse theory. Glynos and Howarth advance a methodological approach that emerges from, and is consistent with, and deeply committed to, PDT. What is required of a PDT approach to method as Glynos and Howarth (2007, p. 7) summarise it, the development of 'an ontological stance and a grammar of concepts, together with a particular research ethos, which makes it possible to construct and to furnish answers to empirical problems that can withstand the charges of methodological arbitrariness, historical particularism, and idealism.' The onto-political foundations of this research have already been outlined in the previous chapter. Glynos and Howarth's work renders more explicit how these theoretical priors can be translated into an explanatory approach to empirical questions.

This chapter progresses as follows: First, the charge of the methodological deficit of PDT is considered, providing the context for Glynos and Howarth's text. Secondly, the core 'logics' that constitute Glynos and Howarth's intervention are detailed. Thirdly, how the question of history might be approached from a PDT perspective is addressed. From this, the approach to the archive in the construction of the empirical corpus of this research is discussed.

Post-Structuralist Discourse Theory and question of method

A frequent charge against Post-Structuralist Discourse Theory is that it suffers from a 'methodological deficit' (Glynos and Howarth, 2007; Martilla, 2015; Keller, 2013; Torfing, 2005). Unsurprisingly, this criticism has been made by scholars hostile to post-structuralism writ large. Some of the most fervent repudiations of post-structuralist

theory when applied to the doing of empirical research have come from historians who expressed deep concern as ‘post-modernism’ trespassed the disciplinary boundaries of history in the latter part of the twentieth-century (Evans, 1997; Thompson, 2000; Daddow, 2004). The encroachment of post-structuralist theory into the fields of history, the more positivistic quarters of the social sciences, and the conservative end of the humanities, was often taken as a general assault on the value of truth and objectivity in scholarship. Such a view generally miscasts post-structuralist theory as opening up the way towards a hyper-relativist ‘anything goes’ approach to academic inquiry, where academic rigour is sacrificed in the pursuit of disclosing power dynamics (cf. Foucault, 1980), or infinite deconstructions (Derrida, 2001). Such conclusions neglect that much of what has been labelled as ‘post-modernism’ and post-structuralism is grounded in careful close readings of ‘texts’, be these texts the canon of western philosophy, literature, or political and social phenomena such as the construction and destabilisation of hegemonic regimes and political identities. Glynos and Howarth recount some of the well-worn criticisms of post-structuralism and PDT that are found throughout the social sciences

These [criticisms] pertain mainly to its alleged incapacity to explain phenomena, where explanation is usually couched in causal terms, and to develop meaningful research strategies that can justify the accounts it puts forward. At best, poststructuralist discourse theory can re-describe phenomena with its own categories, or at worst it is concerned to develop ‘high theory’ which does not connect easily to the empirical world (Howarth & Glynos, 2019, p. 1).

The rejection of post-structuralism by those wedded to various iterations of positivism (however denied) is hardly a surprise. But the ‘methodological deficit’ that allegedly marks PDT has also been raised by some scholars who are deeply committed to the ontological foundations of PDT and happily work within its boundaries. These scholars very much recognise and value the contribution of PDT and discourse theory in general across a range of academic disciplines (Glynos and Howarth, 2007; Martilla, 2015; Keller, 2013; Torfing, 2005). Such self-critique suggests that while PDT has developed a sophisticated theoretical vocabulary, taken as a whole PDT has been relatively silent on the question of method. Laclau’s (1991; Jacobs, 2018) comments on method have only added to the impression that not only is PDT scholarship indifferent to

method, but that it is outright hostile to the idea of a methodology. Laclau referred to both the notion of a case study as well as the application of a methodology as a ‘myth.’ Here, Laclau is taking issue with the prevalent idea that a theoretical framework, methodology or a case study can stand apart from each-other. The onto-political underpinnings of an approach cannot be disentangled from the other dimensions of research.

As Marttila (2015, p. 3) observes, PDT’s ‘methodological deficit’ results from a general absence of systematic elaborations of the relation between the discourse theoretical framework and the design and conduct of empirical inquiries. At first, this methodological deficit may seem an ill-founded or at least an exaggerated concern as there have been many, even seminal, studies grounded in PDT that have convincingly brought ‘high theory’ to the study of a diverse range of ‘concrete’ empirical contexts, such as the areas of policy analysis (Remling, 2018a; 2018b; Glynos & Howarth, 2008; Glynos *et al.*, 2014), immigration and racism (Yilmaz, 2016), cultural studies (Hoedemaekers, 2018), apartheid (Norval, 1996; Howarth, 2007), and, most notably in recent years, populism (Stavrakakis, 2018; Stavrakakis & Jäger, 2018; Laclau, 2005). What is more, those operating within PDT, studying a diverse spectrum of political and social phenomena across a range of empirical contexts, encounter little difficulty in detailing how their theoretical commitments inform and shape their approach to these contexts and empirical material, as evidenced by the robust engagements that characterise PDT academic conferences. Still, the claim that PDT writ large has mostly channelled its efforts in directions other than method remains true (Howarth & Glynos, p. 6; Torfing, 2005, p. 5). It rings especially true in light of other discursive approaches that have historically given much more attention to method, such as Critical Discourse Theory.

The advantages of PDT over other discursive approaches are its philosophically sophisticated and well-developed theoretical underpinnings. Recent years, however, have seen a steadily increasing and explicit focus on the place of method in PDT, and the translation of its onto-political priors into consistent research strategies. For Tomas Marttila (2015) much of the motivation in developing research strategies that overcome the supposed methodological deficit of post-foundational discourse theory is derived from a fear its theoretical insights may remain underexploited unless mobilised in more

methodologically systematic fashion. As Marttila (2015, p. 6) states, ‘it would mean an outright waste of intellectual efforts already invested in post-foundational discourse theory if these should remain without any systematic utilization in empirical research.’ Though there are now numerous articles that reflect on method *vis-à-vis* PDT, there are two major interventions that will be considered here. These are David Howarth and Jason Glynos’ (2007) seminal work *The Logics of Critical Explanation* and, to a much lesser extent, Tomas Marttila’s (2015) *Post-Foundational Discourse Theory: From political difference to empirical research*. Ultimately, the ‘logics approach’ to problem of method is much more attractive, and their work from the outset has very much informed this research project. Before moving on to detail the core ‘logics’ that constitute Howarth and Glynos’ intervention, it is worth briefly interrogating some of Marttila’s statements around method, as doing so underlines the potential risks in suggesting ‘the method’ through which empirical research should be conducted in a PDT vein.

Martilla (2015, p. 169) states explicitly that the aim of his work is to (no less than) ‘solve’ the methodological deficit of post-foundational discourse theory (2015, p. 169). In places Martilla (2015, p. 6) concedes that his intervention might not ‘solve all the aforementioned methodological deficits and shortcomings that burden PDA.’ Nonetheless, this promise or even attempt to ‘solve’ this methodological lacuna is troubling. Not least as the desire to ‘solve’ something has a ring of *once-and-for-all*. It is a promise that may even run counter to the onto-political premises of PDT (the notion that closure is never quite-fully achieved). This notion of ‘solving’, it could be argued, is governed by an almost teleological logic. That, is cumulative efforts will finally solve this methodological blind-spot of PDT. A problem is designated unsolved and then it is solved. There is a distinct before and after. Such a disposition towards the question of method risks the mortification of both our theoretical and methodological thinking. It might be asked, then, does such an approach risk the re-introduction of a certain presence in our post-foundational thinking through the will to legislate ‘the method’ through which we conduct our research. Potentially nestled within this desire to plug this ‘gap’ or methodological lacuna is a will towards closure. In place of ‘methodological deficit’ it is perhaps more helpful to conceive of an ‘empty place of method.’

That is, the place of method remains an open question, a space that is continually and contingently filled.

Martilla takes issue with and ultimately rejects the approach advanced by Glynos and Howarth. This rejection is largely couched in the assertion that their approach is under-specified, that its key tenets do not constitute a set of ‘instructions’ that can consistently be applied to empirical inquiry. Yet, it must be said, for all of Martilla’s insistence that previous attempts at operationalising PDT methodologically have come up short, including the logics approach, his own efforts have, arguably, been less than convincing. Martilla spends much energy on delimiting idiosyncratic highly overly-specified typologies that he contends will help the researcher navigate empirical contexts. Though the act of naming phenomena is unavoidable, his typology of ‘discursive identities’ for example– which names the types of actors and their relation to discursive formations – risks an impoverishment of PDT by becoming a form of nominalism (Martilla, 2015, p. 133). This shortcoming is in keeping with the broad thrust of Martilla’s attempt to ‘fully solve’ the methodological deficit of PDT, which tends towards the fossilisation of PDT through the fairly intensive legislating of how our theoretical categories ought to translate into empirical research. Arguably, a more successful aspect of Martilla’s contribution is his formal sequencing of the steps involved in empirical PDT research, such as those concerned with the gathering and generating of data. Still, these research steps will be imposed on most PDT researchers conducting empirical research by the very theoretical categories they mobilise. Therefore, in terms of advancing PDT methodologically, such a formalisation of these steps adds little, however helpful it may be in reminding us of our own research processes. The majority of Martilla’s steps of operationalisation never stray far from the axiomatic. In the context of conducting historical empirical research, many of these moments of analysis are unavoidable, be it the definition of the ‘spatial temporal coordinates of the research object’ (indeed, what could constitute a research project without such a step?), to deconstruction (which is already latent within, and forms an influential current in, PDT research), to the synchronic and diachronic aspects of (re)constructing an empirical corpus/context – which again is an already integral part of discourse analysis (Martilla, 2015, pp. 144–145). What we are left with is the burden of intensive over-formalisation with

little in terms of theoretical innovation. The broader middle-range approach of Howarth and Glynos, in its challenge to the positivistic paradigms of social and political inquiry and their defence and advancement of the explanatory power of PDT is a more attractive methodological option for this research project – not least as the logics approach leaves room for a kernel of vitality within our theoretical horizon and empirical research.

The logics of critical explanation

Glynos and Howarth (2007; *see also* 2008; 2019) in *Logics of Critical Explanation* also acknowledge the relative methodological deficit of post-structuralist discourse theory. They suggest, however, that the problem of method must be construed ‘in the widest possible sense’ and not be exhausted in the necessary reflections on processes, techniques, and questions around research strategies, or questions concerning data gathering and analysis (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, p. 6). The authors insist that in addressing the comparative methodological lacuna of post-structuralist theory, and PDT in particular, methodological questions must ‘focus on the *full* range of theoretical issues that arise in social sciences, from the activities of describing, explaining, evaluating and criticising’ (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, p. 6). That is, methodological questions and techniques will always be grounded in ontological and epistemological priors. Therefore, as per Marttila’s work on method, Glynos and Howarth refuse to bracket the ontological dimensions of PDT in their efforts to develop a methodological stance. This methodological pursuit, then, is not an attempt to capture social phenomena in an ‘objective’ or ‘value free’ manner, but instead is an internal moment that arises from and takes place *within* the theoretical paradigm of PDT. The ‘logics’ approach aims to avoid two potential pitfalls. Firstly, given that any methodological approach will be grounded in ontological priors, they aim to resist advancing a purely method driven solutions. Secondly, they reject any hyper-relativist approach to critical explanation. That is, post-structuralist theory does not suggest an ‘anything goes’ stance to the question of method. The task then is to develop ontological categories with a consistent and robust methodological stance that can advance answers to empirical problems (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, p. 7).

The logics approach is deeply grounded in the theoretical foundations of the Essex School of Discourse Theory. Given that these categories also form the theoretical core of this thesis, the logics approach remains consistent with the

theoretical priors of this research. Furthermore, given that the theoretical foundations of this research have already been explicated, there is no need to recount the shared ontological underpinnings of this approach. The ‘added value’ of the logics approach it sharpens these theoretical categories so that they can be more readily translated into empirical research.

Here, it is worth briefly clarifying the status of a ‘logic’. Glynos and Howarth employ the concept of a logic in three related ways. Firstly, at its most general, they tease out the logics or the various processes implicated in theory construction and explanation in social sciences. Here the term logic captures the ‘modes of reasoning’ that undergird various explanatory approaches, such as inductive, deductive, or retroductive reasoning (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, p. 8). Secondly, the concept of a logic captures the ‘styles of reasoning’ that characterise different paradigms of social science explanation, such as positivist, hermeneutical, critical realist approaches, and speaks to the ontological assumptions upon which they rest. Finally, and more substantively, and of direct relevance here, a logic constitutes the basic explanatory unit of the logics approach. A ‘logic’ contrasts with the search for general laws or mechanisms in positivist or post-positivistic paradigms, and the emphasis on self-interpretations found in hermeneutical approaches (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, p. 8). Couched in a post-foundational theoretical orientation, Howarth and Glynos (2007, p. 8) ‘construct an explanatory logic, together with a grammar of concepts [...] which can serve to characterise, explain, and criticise social phenomena.’ To this end, they advance a typology of logics. These are *social*, *political*, and *fantasmatic* logics. These logics aim to capture different aspects of social reality. Social logics speak to and allow us to render explicit the practices that constitute a particular social domains. Political logics bring into relief the political, and thus, antagonistic, dimension of the social, that is, the contingent power saturated origins of social practices and how they were made possible, are contested and defended (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, p. 14). The fantasmatic, broadly speaking, underlines the ideological dimensions that makes a practice ‘tick’, which accounts for how subjects invest and are ‘gripped’ by particular practices. Howarth and Glynos summarise these logics as follows

If social logics assist in the process of characterising *what* a practice is, and political logics show *how* it is challenged and defended, then fantasmatic logics can be said to generate reasons *why* practices are maintained or transformed. All are necessary in any account of a problematised phenomenon and thus mutually implicate one another. It is, however,

heuristically helpful sometimes to think of them as picking out different aspects of a critical explanation (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, p. 108).

Social Logics

Here, it is necessary to further elaborate on the three logics that organise this approach. The concept of a social logic enables us to make sense of the practices that pattern social life. *Social practices* are the ‘ongoing, routinized forms of human and societal reproduction’ (Howarth & Glynos, 2007, p. 104). These are the quotidian rhythms and social patterns that structure every-day life, and thus constitute social objectivity. Here, we arrive back at the account of the spatial developed in the previous chapter. As per the Laclauian analysis of space, social practices are governed by a logic of repetition which sediments social life. Practices are therefore the ‘principal objects of investigation’ in the ‘logics’ based approach’ where the aim of the researcher is to ‘critically explain their transformation, stabilisation, and maintenance’ (Howarth & Glynos, 2007, pp. 14-15). As Glynos and Howarth suggest, social practices normally do not entail a strong self-consciousness or reflexivity. Social practices, be they, for example, the delivering of children to school or making breakfast, are embedded within and reproduce wider systems of social relations- such as the family, education systems, and so on. Furthermore, social practices, as discursive practices, are articulatory as they link various elements of social life together. However, as detailed in the account of social objectivity/space developed in the previous chapter, the trace of contingency remains within social practices.

Social practices add up to what Howarth and Glynos term *regimes*. Regimes in turn structure and order social practices. A regime, then, is ‘always a regime of practices’ (Howarth & Glynos, 2007, p. 106). This distinction between practices and regimes is key. Characterising regimes helps in making sense of social practices. Regimes are negatively constituted, that is, they are defined through a radical exclusion. To take the example used by Howarth and Glynos, the Thatcher regime was defined in opposition to the Keynesian model of the welfare state. The various practices that comprised Thatcherism as a regime such as anti-trade-unionism practise or the emphasis on the market, only make sense within that wider regime and what it is antagonistically constituted against. The concept of a social logic therefore seeks to capture the rules and ontological presuppositions that make these practices both

possible and intelligible (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, p. 15). Furthermore, the category of logic seeks to ‘capture the various conditions that make a practice ‘work’ or ‘tick’

Social logics comprise the substantive grammar of rules of a practice or regime, which enables us to distil their purpose, form and content. Moreover, in characterising a regime, we also derive the context of the practices under study, since a regime is always a regime of practices (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, p. 106)

Social practices are always contextual entities arising in specific historical and political circumstances (Howarth, 2018). Any social context, historical or contemporary, is a context of social practices.

Political Logics

In contrast to social practices that routinise the social order, *political practices* inaugurate, defend, or contest social configurations. This understanding of political practices is critical to the post-foundational understanding of space developed in the previous chapter. Space derives its political character as it is the outcome of contingent political practices, and the product of radical constitutive exclusions. Political logics, then, speak to how a regime is instituted or contested. Analytically, the concept of a political logic helps to capture the practices through which a regime is contested or inaugurated, and therefore renders the foundational violence, the ‘ignoble origins’ of the social practices that sediment social objectivity more visible. In other words political logics ‘assist in the characterisation of a practice or a regime by showing how they emerge and are sedimented’ (Howarth & Glynos, 2007, p. 106).

This understanding of political logics (and the political itself) is grounded in the concept of discourse that provides the ontological foundations of this thesis. The post-Saussurian ontology of signification developed by Laclau and Mouffe (2014 [1985]) rearticulates in a much more politically inflected manner the associative and the syntagmatic relations in language. These relations are transformed into the logics of equivalence and difference. These political logics are bound up with the drawing and redrawing of frontiers. As Howarth and Glynos summarise

Inssofar as political practices entail the construction of new frontiers to challenge the old social structures in the name of an ideal or principle (thus implying a new set of

inclusions or exclusions), one can say that the political logic of equivalence predominates. But in so far as there is a breaking down of those frontiers as to maintain existing social structures (thus retaining the old distributions of inclusions and exclusions) we say that the logic of difference predominates (Howarth & Glynos, 2007, p.106).

Here, it worth briefly restating how the political is understood here. The political is not confined to institutional modes of politics (Schmitt, 2007; Marchart, 2018; 2007). Therefore, this conception of the political is not exhausted by any particular social domain. Instead, the political concerns the ‘radical institution’ of social relations through acts or decisions’ (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, p. 113). In other words, through political logics. Again, this is critical in this research as political practices both inaugurate spatial configurations, as well as having the tendency to reactive the contingent grounds—the histories of violence—of the social order. No longer tied to any social space in particular, the political, as it is understood here, takes on an ontological status. As such, we can distinguish between the political and the social. Without this ontological understanding of the political we would risk an absolute conflation of the political with the social. Having said that, from our perspective at least, we cannot disentangle the political from the social entirely. Given the contingency of the social, traces of radical negativity remains. Therefore, the spectre of the political constitution of objectivity haunts and disrupts the social. For Marchart (2018), while the difference between social and the political can be understood as that between the ontic and the ontological, the social is still the political ‘in another mode.’ It is the antagonistic constitution of the social that recasts the social in a much more political light.

In light of this understanding of a political logic, it is worth mentioning Marttila’s critical appraisal of the concept of a ‘social logic’ as it features in Glynos and Howarth’s interventions. For Marttila the understanding of a social logic is coterminous with the conceptualisation of discourse in PDT. Therefore, in Marttila’s estimation, little additional analytical or methodological purchase is derived from thinking the social through the lens of ‘social logics.’ As Marttila outlines in a self-admittedly polemical register

polemically put: we have little reason to analyze social logics in place of discourses because discourse – the arguably single-most important term of PDA – can also serve

the purpose of rendering visibility to relatively coherent patterns of social practices. Moreover, and in comparison to social logics, discourse is phenomenally elaborate enough to allow for its empirical observation in various socio-historical contexts (Marttila, 2015, p. 120).

However, here, Marttila misses the point. The analytical distinction of social from political logics is key. Teasing out political practices from social practices is helpful for rendering intelligible the ways in which discourses are instituted, contested, and defended. That is, while all practices are discursive there are different kinds of practices that sediment, institute, disrupt, or contest the social.

Fantasmatic logics

As Jason Glynos details (2011, p. 69; *see also* 2008), in political and social analyses there is a tendency to understand fantasy in epistemological terms. Fantasy often features in critical inquiry as a synonym for ‘myth or illusion’ or a form of ‘false consciousness.’ It is a force that distorts or obscures ‘true’ reality. In contradistinction to such conceptualisation, fantasy is implicated in the very constitution of identity, being bound up with the grounding of the subject (Zerilli, 2006, p. 479; Glynos, 2011, p. 66). Slavoj Žižek (1989, p. 47), drawing on Lacan, insists that appealing to fantasy in critical analysis need not equate to the hackneyed innovations of ‘what we call reality is just an illusion’ or ‘life is but a dream.’ But rather fantasy provides the very support that sustains our reality. As such, ‘there is no way of understanding political identities and desires without letting fantasy into the frame’ (Rose, 1996, p. 4 quoted in Glynos, 2011, p. 66). Perennially deferring back to the contingency of social and political structures tells us little about *why* social practices remain durable and resistant to change; or conversely tell us little about the pace of change when it does occur (Howarth & Glynos, 2007, p. 145). Here, the question of fantasy enters. The purpose of fantasmatic logics, the third logic in the threefold typology of critical explanation, is to ‘furnish us with the means to account for the *grip* of an existing or anticipated social practice or regime’ (Howarth & Glynos 2007, p. 107).

Fantasmatic logics are implicated in the concealment of the radical contingency of the social order. As Glynos suggests, the role of fantasy *vis-à-vis* the subject is protective. When confronted with the radical contingency of one’s identity and social relations, fantasy offers a certain foundational guarantee (Glynos, 2011; Howarth &

Glynos, 2007, p. 145). The social practices and relations that routinise social objectivity are continually interrupted by ‘mishaps, tragedies, and the contingencies of everyday life’ (Howarth & Glynos, 2007, p. 145). Yet, despite these intrusions, the social relations and the quotidian rhythms that constitute social objectivity largely remain taken-for-granted. The contingency (and ultimately political origin) of these social practices remains in the background. In this regard fantasies are ‘the support that give consistency to what we call reality’ (Žižek, 1989, p 44). In more Freudian terms, fantasy is a framing device ‘subjects use to protect themselves from the anxiety associated with the idea that there is no ultimate guarantee or law underlying our social existence’ (Glynos, 2011, p. 70).

The logic of the political as that which ruptures or institutes configurations of social relations, potentially disclosing their radical contingency, would seem at odds with the logic of fantasy *as concealment*. Fantasy, however, is also implicated in political practices. That is, the constructing and challenging of antagonistic frontiers. Fantasmatic logics are grounded within a ‘Lacanian ontology of *enjoyment*’ (2007, p. 107). Identities are defined through a series of exclusions, an antagonistic frontier which stabilises an identity. The constitutive outside then is posited as hindering the full attainment of identity (e.g. in Republican discourse, unionists and the British state impede the full realisation of Irish identity). Where the Lacanian category of enjoyment comes into play, is that this obstacle, somewhat contradictorily, sustains a mode of identification. Here, enjoyment does not simply equate to pleasure, but also unease, dissatisfaction and so on. This speaks to a fundamental alienation or *lack* in being itself as identification is sustained by desiring that which is outside the subject. The antagonistic dimension of being sustained by fantasy, then, underlines the radical impossibility of being. As Glynos (2011, p. 72) puts it

Realizing one’s fantasy is impossible in the sense that the subject (as a subject of desire) survives only insofar as its desires remains *unsatisfied*. Rather than *satisfying* desire, fantasy structures desire. It does do, usually through a narrative that promises fullness-to-come once a named or implied obstacle is overcome, or foretells disaster if the obstacle proves too threatening or insurmountable. But the obstacle which often comes in the form of a prohibition or threatening Other, transforms impossibility into a ‘mere difficulty’, thereby creating the impression that its realization is at least potentially possible.

All of which is directly relevant to social conflict. Yannis Stavrakakis put it quite bluntly, ‘we are always bound to those we hate’

We need enemies to keep our treasured – and idealised – selves intact’ (Post, 1996, p. 28-29) [...] The fantasy of attaining a perfect harmonious world, or realising the universal, can only be sustained through the construction/localisation of a certain particularity which cannot be assimilated but, instead, has to be eliminated. There exists a crucial dialectic between the universal fantasy of utopia and the particularity of the – always local-enemy who is posited as negating it (1999, p. 108).

Žižek discusses how this construction of a necessary obstacle to full positivity may translate into inter-communal or ethnic tension

What is at stake in ethnic tensions is always the possession of the national Thing: the “other” wants to steal our enjoyment (by ruining our “way of life”) and/or it has access to some secret, perverse enjoyment. In short, what gets on our nerves, what really bothers us about the “other”, is the peculiar way he organises his enjoyment, precisely the surplus that pertains to it (the smell of his food, his ‘noisy’ songs and dances, his strange manners, his attitude to work – in the racist perspective, the “other” is either a workaholic stealing our jobs or an idler living on our labour). The basic paradox is that our Thing is conceived as something inaccessible to the other and at the same time threatened by him (Žižek, 1991, p. 193-194).

What is crucial here is the beatific and horrific dimensions of fantasy (Glynos, 2011, p. 72). At work in the political discourses studied throughout this thesis is a promise of fullness to come, say the utopian promise that undergirds republicanism, as well as the implicit promise of ruin if the republican project should fail. This beatific and horrific dichotomy is very much evident in unionist/loyalist discourse, where the security of the union is perpetually under attack, and political desire is bound up with securing the union (and thus unionist identity) once-and-for-all. As such, the role of fantasy is key in accounting for the durability of social practices and the force of political practices. To think social and political logics without considering the fantasmatic would be to neglect the ideological glue that holds the assemblage of these practices together.

Before moving on, it is worth very briefly considering the tension and debates around how Lacanian theoretical terms might relate to the Laclauian understanding of

discourse and its attendant categories, such as antagonism. One of the most profitable, and indeed exciting, developments in PDT has been the cross reading between the work of Lacan and Laclau (Glynos, 2009; 2011; Stavrakakis 1999; 2007; Glynos & Stavrakakis, 2010; 2003). There is certainly an affinity between many of Laclau's theoretical concepts and Lacan's, such as discourse, 'nodal points', etc. Here, the concern is how *jouissance* might relate to fantasy. For Laclau, enjoyment or *jouissance* is already a constitutive element of his understanding of discourse. But, here, *jouissance* is not understood as an extra-discursive force that stands out of the relational ensemble of a discourse. But rather, it is inscribed within the discursive. This has raised questions around enjoyment and how it relates to and presupposes the body. However, for Laclau, stressing the materiality (in the Real sense) of the body is, again, to retreat to some extra-discursive terrain. As Laclau (2004, p. 304) states, 'the body itself is not a biological datum opaque to language but it is written with signifiers.' Of course, this in no way exhausts the complexities of the discussion around Laclau's encounter with Lacan.

Rather than fully incorporating Lacan's problematic of enjoyment, here, the question of desire is simplified, pared back to the horrific and beatific dimensions that organise and sustain political identities and desire. That is, *jouissance* is located in the antagonistic dimension of being, where the radically other, the constitutive outside, robs one of the fullness of being. Or, to put it in more Lacanian terms, 'the idea of a "theft of enjoyment" finds its parallel in antagonism (Laclau, 2004, p. 300). The category of the 'empty signifier' as discussed in Chapter 4, speaks to a desire for fullness of identity, as well as its very (constitutive) impossibility. The simplification of desire in this thesis amounts to a decision to leave the question of desire somewhat open. At present, at least for this research project, I am reluctant to fully engage with Lacanian categories, lest a primacy be inadvertently afforded to an extra-discursive notion of *jouissance*. This pitfall is exemplified by a psychoanalytic study of the Northern Ireland conflict, Adrian Millar's (2006) *Sociological fantasy and the Northern Ireland conflict*, where the dynamics of conflict are explained solely, however illuminating, in terms of *jouissance*, and the unconscious is granted a determinate role. The category of fantasy will be revisited in Chapter 4.

Articulation

Central to the discursive political ontology that provides the foundations of this thesis, is the concept of articulation. Here, articulation features as a ‘double hermeneutic’ (Glynos & Howarth, p. 180). Firstly, as detailed in Chapter 1, in Laclau and Mouffe’s (1985) understanding of social objectivity, subjects articulate discursive elements together which in turn constitute the contexts of social reality. All of which stresses the contingent and contestable character of the social. Secondly, the practice of the researcher is also an articulatory practice. That is, social science is conceived as articulatory because it entails the linking together of heterogenous elements to form a critical explanation. This privileged position of articulation in the logics approach to critical explanation is in contrast to the extremes of ‘pure universalism’ that characterises the search for universal laws, mechanisms and so on, or a ‘pure particularism’ that would stress the inescapability of context (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, p. 166; Tilly & Goodin, 2006). Instead, within the PDT theoretical framework, research is characterised by a continual cycling theory to context.

Within the logics approach, the object of study is understood as constructed, again, through the articulation of elements together to form a research ‘problem’ (Glynos & Howarth, 2007). Not only is an object of investigation constructed, it must also be considered how a phenomena has been previously problematised by researchers, by social and governmental actors, and so on. Furthermore, to foreground articulatory processes of research is at once to bring into relief the centrality of *practices of judgement* that are implicated in research. Here, Glynos and Howarth invoke the Kantian understanding of *reflective judgement*, which contrasts with *determinate judgement* which subsumes different instances of a phenomenon under a universal concept (laws, mechanisms, *etc.*). Rather than a social phenomenon being derived from a universal concept, here, through reflective judgement, elements are linked together constituting a singularity. All of which stresses the role of the researcher who exercises and possesses a *situated judgement*, and articulates the object of study within ‘a contingent and contestable theoretical framework’ (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, p. 184). The process of situated judgement, then, necessitates that the researcher is immersed in the discursive field of the texts, documents, and social practices that constitute the context under study. This immersion involves the identifying or *naming* of patterns or practices—social, political, fantasmatic, *etc.* What is critical at this juncture in the research process is that we do not get trapped in context, falling into a form of ‘thick description’ which

does not transcend the particularity of a context. Here, the constant dialogue between the ontological concepts of theoretical frame and the particularity of the case study will mitigate against myopic tendencies and facilitate some generalisations ‘beyond the confines’ of a given context (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, p. 189). Again, the articulatory process of the research within a post-foundational theoretical framework allows for a ‘simultaneous singularity *and* generalisability’ (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, p. 189). All of which, from problem construction to the practices of judgement, stresses the contingency as well as the role of judgement and interpretation in social science explanation. In this thesis, it is the middle-range categories of the logics approach that facilitate the identification of various logics, such as the political logics of territoriality, and allows the insights of the research to transcend the context of Derry.

Impossible histories

Doing historical research with a commitment to post-structuralist discourse theory raises some significant methodological as well as theoretical questions. It is critical that PDT’s ontological priors and insights are not bracketed when conducting historical empirical research. The post-foundational sensitivity that characterises PDT, must also be reflected in the research approach to the historical material that is mobilised in the construction of the thesis’ empirical corpus. This material may be the historiographies that the researcher must engage with, the historical ‘event’ under study, or the interrogation of the archive - be it official repositories, newspapers, or cultural artefacts such as songs and so on - the entire discursive field we situate ourselves in as researchers. What is crucial here, is that we do not lose sight of the understanding of radical contingency that informs our theoretical foundations, and allow an essentialism, a ‘metaphysics of presence’, to slip into the research. This is most likely to occur if we adopt a more ‘method driven’ approach to the historical material, which would entail a problematic disentangling of theory from method.

The public discussion around the Northern Irish conflict from 1969-1998, both journalistic commentary and sometimes academic work, is often peppered with essentialising tropes, coupled with problematic notions of history. These interpretations of ‘The Troubles’ are significant here as the conflict provides the interpretive frame for earlier episodes of Ulster’s violence. The violent struggles of the past are often understood (especially by contemporary participants) as earlier iterations of the same-old-struggle. Such accounts tend to be grounded in essentialising

discourses that posit fixed ethnic and political identities. In some influential histories of Ulster's earlier periods of violence such as Andrew Boyd's *Holy War in Belfast* (1969; Doyle 2009), written on the eve of 'the Troubles' and therefore taken as a timely explanatory intervention, and A.T.Q Stewart's *The Narrow Ground* (1989 [1977]) suggested that the violence that blighted nineteenth-century Ulster, as, again, earlier iterations of a long standing feud; that of Catholic and Protestant locked in an intractable, cyclical, and perennial struggle. The opening lines of Boyd's text are telling: '[r]eligious bigotry in Ulster is not hard to understand [...] explanation lies in the history of the province where for centuries Catholics and Protestants have fought an endless war of words and politics and at, at times, have recourse to the utmost armed violence' (1969, p. 1). Or also, 'Northern Ireland has been known for a long time as a place where Catholics and Protestants- in political terms Nationalists and Unionists- cannot live together in peace' (Boyd 1969, p. *n*). Other narratives, while less fatalistic, are often couched in an implicit liberal teleological vision of history. That is, the Northern Ireland conflict is a function of a stubborn and puzzling clinging to outmoded atavistic attachments. Such explanations echo some of the portrayals of the outbreak of the Yugoslav Wars of the 1990s where conflict is driven by 'ancient ethnic hatreds.' The implicit premise of such interpretations is that the spectre of ethnic conflict has no place at the 'end of history.' Instead of relying on essentialised identities or dubious teleological accounts of history, the task here is to examine how these contingent antagonistic political identities are rearticulated, and reproduced and what makes such modes of identification stubborn. Here, the imperative is to weaken the essentialised understanding of identity, unless we wish to reproduce common misapprehensions of the conflict. Indeed, a properly ethical analysis can only commence with a recognition of the contingency of identity, and a critique of the essentialism which supports such dominant narratives.

Bringing a post-foundational sensitivity to historical research, then, is crucial to this study. Yet such a theoretical orientation to the historical is often met with resistance. As the twentieth century drew to a close, what was loosely termed 'post-modernism' (meaning the disparate intellectual trends of the linguistic and cultural turns, post-structuralism, deconstruction, to Foucauldian inspired insistences on the relations between truth and power, etc.) was making some inroads into most quarters of the humanities and the social sciences- despite the still hegemonic position of positivism (Evans, 1997; Tosh, 2015). History as a discipline, for the most part, saw

the arrival of ‘postmodernism’ as an unwelcome guest. While some historians proclaimed that post-modernism presented nothing less than an ‘epistemological crises’ that brought the foundations of the discipline of history into question and undermined its very *raison d’être*- that is, the pursuit of more or less accurately recovering the past. Others, conversely, lamented that historians were failing to truly grapple with the intellectual breakthroughs of their time (Joyce, 1991). Of course, there are historians whose work is very much influenced by post-structuralism writ large, nonetheless, history as a discipline has largely ignored such wider theoretical-philosophical currents. This remains especially true in the fields of Irish history, partly because radical historians of Irish history have tended towards variants of social and labour history; sub-fields that are guided by the radical impulse of giving voice to and rendering visible the struggles of those marginalised within traditional historiography, namely the struggles of the working class, women, the poor, and so on. Despite such commitments to disturb settled narratives, these studies remain epistemologically conservative. That is, the nature of truth *vis-à-vis* historical research is rarely brought into question. Still, there are studies that concern Irish history such as cultural, feminist, and post-colonial studies that do challenge the epistemological assumptions that have largely informed Irish historiography.

Still, few modern historians remain wedded to the most hardened notion of objectivity that informed earlier generations of historians (Evans, 2004). That is, few historians subscribe in a straightforward manner to the assertion that ‘there is a past and we have access to it’ (Kleinberg, 2017, p. 2). The historian generally admits that there is an epistemological uncertainty in doing history- in rendering the past intelligible. This epistemological uncertainty, however, is often undergirded by an ‘ontological certainty’ of the past event that is being studied. The ontological status of the event itself is seldom brought into question, and instead the difficulty resides in the limitations of our own interpretations which will always to a greater or lesser degree remain incomplete. ‘Historiography’ as the writing of history already signifies a certain gap or a distance between the historical ‘event’ and the formal practice of the historian, as well as the public presentation and reception of their work (Thompson, 2004). Thus, the difficulty here, the gap, is couched in notions of immediacy. The past is no longer immediate, and is thus obscured by the passage of time, the dearth of empirical material, interpretative biases, and so on. But nonetheless, the event itself is not in question. A certain event did happen in a certain location at a certain time. It is

distance that renders the past somewhat opaque. The question then becomes one of method, where lost immediacy can be (partially) recovered and we can see the ‘event’ more or less as it was (or at least that is the ambition that organises such studies, however admittedly remote such goals are). Thus, the ontological is bracketed. As Ethan Kleinberg in *Haunting History* (2017, p. 2) asks, what guarantees the ontological certainty of a past event ‘given the epistemological uncertainty in recounting that event?’ This is *the* question Kleinberg suggests is largely ignored or deferred by the historian. Post-structuralists ‘doing history’ must resist falling into the trap of the ‘ontological realism’ that characterises much historical research. To defer to PDT’s discursive understanding of objectivity, the historical event is always-already discursive. The *being* of a historical phenomenon is attained through its discursive articulation into a system of differences. There is no ‘event’ as such outside of discourse (again, that is not to doubt the materiality of an event). Therefore, the being of an event is contingent, contestable, and the product of and open to various interpretative struggles. There is no pure extra-discursive origin; we cannot apprehend the ‘thing in itself.’ Indeed, there are only historical events on account of their recording in some form (which again underlines their discursive character). If the events we study were not inscribed within discourse they would literally leave nothing to study. It is this awareness of the contingency of the event that we must bring to the archive.

The Archive

As a deeply contextual and historical study, various archival collections are critical to the construction of the empirical corpus mobilised in this research. The empirical aspect of the research draws on official state archives, on national, and especially, local newspaper archives, and on government reports on social and political unrest that disturbed Derry during critical moments in the city’s history. Given that the contextual focus of the research is on Derry city, and its near surrounds, the project, spatially speaking, is fairly tightly bounded. This tightly delimited nature of the study (its ‘archaeological’ bracketing in more Foucauldian terms), then, allows for a fairly deep immersion in the discursive field that constitutes this research. This deep situated position within this empirical corpus facilitates the researcher’s *practices of judgement* when navigating the self-interpretations of social actors, identifying and naming patterns, practices, and the logics that constitute the context being studied, as well as negotiate

the prior problematisations of social and political conflict in Derry (be it academic, popular, or governmental interpretations).

The theoretical and methodological challenges posed by post-structuralist approaches to the historical is felt most keenly when facing the archive. When confronted by the archive, the uninitiated social theorist may risk succumbing to the pitfalls of cliché and parody, adopting an ‘anything goes’ approach, conforming to popular misreadings of Derrida that any reading of a ‘text’ is as justified as any other. Conversely, the theorist may retreat to the safety of a methodologically driven approach, where onto-political commitments are bracketed in the pursuit of raw data to be gleaned from the archive, which in practice mirrors the most conservative pursuit of some extra-discursive historical real. There are, however, certain interpretative limits that will be imposed by the context that is studied and by the theoretical approach to the archive.

As discussed above, social objectivity *is* power (Laclau & Zac, 2003). Therefore, we must bring to light and remain cognisant of the constellations of political and social forces that structure any given context we study. In keeping with a discursive political ontology, political practices and logics and their attendant ideological content, always attempt to set limits on what is possible, seeking to dominate and arrest the flow of meaning. As Saul Cornell (1995) submits, while it may be possible for a prisoner to read his death sentence in his own idiosyncratic fashion—say, as a poem, that does not mean he has the power to enforce his reading. A judicious reading of the archive within a PDT theoretical perspective, then, will be alive to networks of power which are the very conditions of possibility from which the texts of the archive (as well as the archive itself) emerge. Or more specifically still, as political discourse theorists, the core theoretical categories which help the researcher navigate the messiness and serendipity that so often characterises archival research are the aforementioned logics of critical explanation; these are, again, social, political, and fantasmatic logics. That is, careful, at times painstaking, reading of the archive may bring into further relief the social practices that structure a given context or the modes of political conflict which betray the antagonistic constitution of the social. The archive, especially official state archives and reports explicitly concerned with security, tend to privilege political moments, that is, events that more or less disrupt the social order and its relations of power. The task then becomes—in order to fully grasp the significance of these political moments where the limit of the social reveals itself—to

study closely *what* is being disturbed. This requires us to ‘dig deep’ into the contextual layers, the sedimented social practices that constitute the social order. Such an approach to the archive, be it newspaper collections or state repositories, will debar any attempt to hastily extract singular disembodied pieces of data.

Archives, however, are not neutral repositories or storehouses of empirical data. They are, instead, sites of power. Archival research is both to step in to and to exercise power. Official State archival collections, such as the *Chief Secretary’s Office Registered Papers* (CSORP) held in the National Archives of Ireland (NAI), Dublin, and consulted in this study, betray the concerns and imperatives of colonial state power, amongst other forces. The CSORP is made up of communications to Dublin Castle, the seat of imperial power in Ireland (Griffin, 2005). What often characterises these correspondences, and the archives they constitute, as well as the government reports consulted in this thesis, is what Guha (1983) recognises in the official discourses from colonial India: a sense of both *alarm* and *intervention*. These communications to and from Dublin castle often concern social and political unrest happening throughout the country. As such, reports from magistrates, the military, as well as other officials, and informers feature heavily in the collection. Such correspondence to Dublin Castle, then, become a certain political technology, that allows the state to render its claimed spaces more intelligible to itself. In this sense, such official repositories, and especially government reports concerned with security are deeply spatial in that they aid the forces of the state to impose its own vision of order more uniformly across state territory (*c.f.* Guha, 1983). This spatial and explicitly disciplinary aspect of the official archives, is more immediately evident in the index of the earlier *State of the Country Papers* collection which was superseded by the CSORP. This is because in the time-span of this earlier collection the state is weaker in terms of its infrastructural power and encounters greater difficulty imposing its monopoly of violence over its territory. The index of the *State of the Country Papers*, often organised by county, states whether an area is tranquil (i.e. no evidence of social unrest)—peasants might be described as quiet and industrious, or conversely a region might be described as ‘disturbed.’ The logic of the CSORP, though less organised and much more difficult to navigate, is identical. Through these archives the state assembled its own institutional memory, which is tied to (re)instituting and upholding of order. For example, for the inquiry report into Derry’s unrest, there is a bundle titled ‘Derry papers’ which brings as much information as possible, such as letters to Dublin castle about Derry’s unrest. While all

the pertinent material is synthesized in the final report (*Inquiry Report*, 1869), it is nonetheless interesting to note how the state ‘remembers’ through the archive, and it is critical to its problematisation of Derry’s inter-communal conflicts.

While this study makes use of much more extensive use of mid-Victorian and early twentieth century state reports into Derry’s unrest, the logic and concerns that animate state archives and these government reports, such as the CSORP, remain in essence the same. Though the CSORP were extensively consulted in the development of this research, as the project took on its final shape, this archival collection became less prominent. This was largely due to the emphasis of the thesis shifting towards the more local interpretations of Derry’s violence that are evident in the city’s newspapers. Nonetheless, the CSROP archival collection was helpful in informing the decisions around what empirical episodes to focus on.

This research makes extensive use of two government inquiries into Derry’s unrest. These reports are explicitly political, both in their content as well in their motivation. On account of the serious rioting in the city, government inquiries were held in Derry in 1869 and 1883. The inquires’ reports offer the researcher extensive information and insight into the city’s social life and political antagonisms. Both reports give the full transcripts of the witnesses’ evidence. In themselves, the holding of commissions of inquiry, were acts of politicking, responding to political pressures in Derry that called on the government to play a more active role in curbing the unrest. They were also a response to political embarrassment, such as that caused by the rioting that marred the visit of Prince Arthur to the city in 1869. It must also be recognised that the archive is a site of silence, as it one of statement. The voices of the privileged and relatively privileged feature a lot more prevalently than voices of the marginalised groups such as the urban poor, working class men, women, and children. Still, archival collections often allow the voices of the dispossessed, the marginal, and those most subject to regimes of power, to speak, albeit often through a narrowed aperture. Reports on riots, political displays, even the singing of political songs and the shouting of political slogans on the street can betray an entire *weltanschauung*, and a series of political identifications and motivations.

Other significant archival collections held in the Public Records Office in Belfast Northern Ireland were also consulted. These collections, such as the ‘Carson Papers’, are made up of private correspondence between senior unionist political figures and security personnel. The letters used here discuss the crises facing unionism

in 1920, and give a glimpse into elite discourse around the drawing of the new territorial frontier that would partition the country and inaugurate a new northern Protestant regime.

Newspapers

Newspaper sources are an indispensable component of the empirical aspect of this research. Every period examined in this thesis makes extensive use of local newspaper sources. Indeed, written into the design of this research, and to a large extent, its very viability as a historical and contextual study, is the availability of provincial or local newspaper archives. The decision to ultimately settle on Derry as the site of interrogation, was very much informed by the abundance of historical empirical material made available to the researcher through local Derry newspapers that devoted extensive attention to events that were shaping the city's political antagonisms. What is more, these newspapers fell on opposite sides of the political divide and thus more often than not articulated political events in Derry in diametrically opposed, indeed antagonistic, interpretations. In light of the PDT underpinnings of this research, such obviously conflictual political articulations of the same phenomena in Derry in no way poses an epistemological or methodological problem as might be understood within the discipline of history, where the immediacy of the event is partially lost to human biases. Within a post-structuralist and post-Saussurian understanding, the event is only rendered intelligible and constituted through its discursive articulation. Therefore, rather than obscuring social objectivity, such conflicting interpretations of the city's social reality underline the very antagonistic constitution of objectivity itself.

Given the status afforded to newspaper material, the research has benefitted enormously from the digitisation of newspaper archives. In recent years the trend towards the digitisation and the increasing online availability of newspaper repositories as per other archival bodies slowly revolutionised historical research (Bingham, 2010). This abundance of material made more readily available has greatly impacted the work of the historian, but also yields great opportunities for the post-structuralist social theorist doing historical/contextual work. The local newspapers studied in this research, namely the *Londonderry Sentinel*, *Derry Journal*, and the *Londonderry Standard*, among other papers, are available online through the British Newspaper Archive, a subscription service (I will discuss these papers in greater detail below). The additional benefits of this online repository, is that it keeps track of the newspaper article

consulted by the researcher, thereby reducing some of the additional record keeping burdens usually imposed on historical research. The research also makes use of the Irish Newspaper Archive, though to a lesser extent than the British Newspaper Archive. The Irish Newspaper Archive is also available online.

As Andrew Jackson (2010) details, provincial newspaper presses proliferated during the nineteenth-century. In contrast to metropole presses, provincial newspapers can convey the rich sense of cultural and political identity at the local level, and, crucially, how wider political forces and events are articulated within, and shaped, such local contexts (Jackson, 2010, p. 103). As such, a welcome development in historical research in the last decade is that research has become less reliant on national level presses, with more attention granted to provincial newspapers. Significantly, regional newspapers, as well as some other archival bodies, allow for the voices and concerns of often marginalised groups to emerge, such as working class and female participation in local political struggles. This is especially pertinent in the study of political violence, as it gives an insight into the motivations of local participants' conflictual and often violent interactions (Subotić, 2020). Furthermore, the insights afforded by local presses in the study of political violence demonstrate that 'macro-level' cleavages do not always neatly map onto antagonisms at the local level (Kalyvas, 2006). At the least, national and indeed imperial level political discourses are grafted onto and articulated through local concerns. Regional presses, then, give a discourse theorist a unique aperture to witness how political identities and hegemonies are shaped, modified, and contested at an intensely local level. Indeed, given the spatial focus of this research, the analysis in many instances goes down to the level of Derry's streets. Such empirical data gained from newspapers, and to a lesser extent, state archives, give further insight how the spatial imaginary of the state and empire is criss-crossed with antagonisms at the local scale, often betraying the limits of official power.

The newspaper sources mobilised here, as per other archives, are not merely data sources to be mined (Jackson, 2010, p. 3). These newspaper presses were themselves active participants, rather than just passive witnesses, in the political struggles of their time. The *Londonderry Sentinel* and *Derry Journal* to take the prominent examples used extensively in this research, certainly understood themselves as advancing the political interests and identities of the communities they represented. As Okan Ozserker (2019, p. 21-22) suggests, these papers understood themselves as

‘tribunes of the people’. Of course, ‘the people’ each press appeals to are antagonistic configurations of the people.

In 1829 the *Derry Journal*, a hitherto Protestant organ, backed Catholic Emancipation, and eventually became the city’s Catholic, and later, staunchly nationalist paper. The *Journal* and the *Sentinel*, by the time of the events examined in this thesis in the mid-Victorian period into the twentieth-century, were deeply hostile to each other, often accusing the other paper of stoking intolerance and strife in the city (Ozserker, 2019). The *Derry Journal* remains an essential source for researchers studying nationalist opinion and community relations and violence in Derry, from the nineteenth-century right through the Troubles, and up until the present day (e.g. Ó Dochartaigh, 2005).

The *Londonderry Sentinel* was first published in 1829 a mere six months after the historic Catholic Emancipation act came into force which lifted some of the formal restrictions on Catholics. As a staunchly Protestant, unionist, and conservative paper, the *Sentinel* viewed any such concessions granted to Catholics with deep suspicion and anxiety, seeing such measures as a slippery slope towards the end of the union and the death of the Protestant Ascendancy. As historian Brian Lacy (1990, p. 23) details, the first editorial of the *Sentinel* betrays a certain political perspective, establishing the editorial line which informed the paper throughout its subsequent history. It is worth quoting this editorial at some length

The state of Ireland is pregnant with alarm. Ill-timed and timid concession has borne its natural fruits – discontent has ripened into disloyalty- turbulence into open sedition- and the men who promised the most unreserved submission to gain their favourite end, now loudly complain, that Emancipation has been but an empty boon, that they have got only ashes out of bread.

We judge men by their actions, and unstudied declarations; and taking these as our guide, we do not hesitate to say, that there is a large party in Ireland, who in return for sacrifice of the Constitution to their views, are determined to separate this country from England. Agitation, disturbance, and intimidation are kept up as a means of serving their object, and they already fancy the Protestants of Ireland at the tender mercies of a Popish Parliament sitting in Dublin...

The Protestants have been deceived, not only by the open-enemy, for then we could have borne it, nor by the anniversary that did magnify himself against us, but by friends and guides in whom we trusted. We will learn wisdom from the past; and WE have formed no bargain with, or sought no protection from, public men, and have moreover little confidence in them, we will fearlessly exact from them the penalty of their station, and bring them, no matter who they may be, to the bar of public opinion, whenever we deem their conduct worthy of reproof.- If the Schoolmaster is abroad the PROTESTANT SENTINEL is at his post (Lacy, 1990, p.23).

In this selection, we glimpse not only a distinct political vision but also an entire conception of history where Irish Protestants are perennially besieged by Catholics, while suffering the betrayals of London. Conservative Protestant unionist identity is antagonistically constituted and opposed to Catholicism, and Irish Catholics in particular. Irish Catholics, are the implacable enemy, being of a disloyal and seditious disposition. In this political discourse, political concessions to Catholics invariably risk ruin. Fantasmatically, this is the horrific vision that sustains conservative Protestant identity. This catastrophic vision is a key recurrent theme that undergirds and organises unionist and loyalist discourse throughout the periods examined in this thesis. Protestant newspapers, then, reveal how this horrific vision is rearticulated and remains durable and potent through each successive political and social crisis faced by the Protestant communities in Derry. The Catholic struggle for emancipation, as per the above passage, in such conservative discourse, is merely the latest manifestation of Catholic duplicity, a cover for their rebellious intent to undo the union. Protestant survival, then, necessitates a perpetual vigilance against Catholic mobilisation. In nineteenth-century Derry, such a political vision becomes ever-more antagonistic in a city that is becoming increasingly Catholic.

As Lacy further (1990, p. 179) details, Derry acquired another newspaper in 1836, the *Londonderry Standard*, a liberal organ which was the paper of the city's Presbyterian community. Like its contemporary the *Sentinel*, the *Standard* was a Protestant paper, though it exhibited more tolerance towards Catholics, especially in key crises such as that precipitated by the disestablishment of the

Irish Church (*see* Chap. 3). Liberal in its politics, the *Standard* also celebrated and expressed a fidelity to the historic victories of Protestantism such as Derry's siege. But the paper's interpretation of these events was more liberal – at least in the mid-Victorian period. As a liberal paper, the *Standard* disavowed sectarianism, expressed loyalty to the state and Empire, and free-trade, while also advocating for the progression of civil and religious liberties. The paper ceased production in the 1950s, which testifies to the relative decline of liberal Protestantism in Derry.

The availability of newspaper and other archives online has eased many of the obstacles encountered in conducting archival research, such as travel, cost, time restrictions and other difficulties around archival access. Still, the challenge of working through such material is considerable. Initially, I trialled various coding techniques, identifying key themes and signifiers, especially those relating to the claiming of space and territorial behaviour, and so on. Such methods certainly alert the researcher to the frequency of such themes, and quickly 'saturation' is reached. Still, this empirical saturation does not necessarily mean depth. As a research project that is very much grounded in Post-Structuralist Discourse Theory, there is little substitute for close readings of the texts of the archives. That is, the *situated judgement* of the researcher, especially in this historical study, requires deep immersion in the discursive field mobilised in the project. Though immensely time-heavy (indeed, this has been the most challenging aspect of this research), going through the self-explanations of actors, identifying the social and political practices and the spatial dynamics of violence, all within the context of, and in continual negotiation with, the theoretical frame of PDT requires 'living with' the research's constitutive texts.

Conclusion

As discussed, any methodological reflection will take place in the context of the researcher's onto-political commitments. Furthermore, in contradistinction to the relatively common assertion that PDT offers us little in the way of methodological potential, here, it is claimed that the insights of PDT when translated into empirical research are highly productive. The strength of thinking PDT in terms of method and

research strategies, is that the ontological is not bracketed in the pursuit of a ‘method driven’ approach. As such, the logics based approach, has allowed for this conceptual translation, through the development of an articulatory approach grounded in PDT, based around the mid-range categories of social, political, and fantasmatic logics. What is more, the logics approach to critical explanation avoids naive empiricism, problematic universalism, as well hyper-particularism that mars many contextual studies. Furthermore, it is worth stressing here that the logics approach discussed in this chapter has not provided a list of instructions that must be followed. In the following chapters, the logics approach is not so much mobilised in an intensive attempt to determine whether a practice can be described as a political or a social practice, etc., but rather the question is how can these categories inform and sharpen our approach to the empirical material? At any rate, in such a highly conflicted society as Derry, where the contingency of the social is continually reactivated, the trace of antagonism can often be readily discerned even in the banal rhythms that constitute social life. This makes a total bifurcation between social and political practices more difficult- of course, this could also be on account of this thesis’ focus on moments concerned with the conflictual articulation of space. The benefit of the logics approach here is that its middle-range categories allow the translation of PDT’s theoretical categories into empirical research. Without this intervening step, on one side of the project there would be an abstract theoretical approach and on the other a highly particular case study. Of course, the thinking of any social and political phenomena through the categories of PDT will generate insights- such is the strength of the PDT paradigm. The identifying of the various logics that structure the spatial dynamics of violence, however, is a critical step that allows for a certain generalisability beyond Derry

3. Unsettled City: Reactivation, antagonism, and space in mid-Victorian Derry

Unsettled city

A frontier is where a society meets its ontological limit. It is where a vision of a society is potentially disturbed by what it seeks to exclude. Mid-Victorian Derry, as a frontier city, was an unsettled city. In Derry, competing visions of social objectivity, that is antagonistic articulations of society, its peoples, its past, and its future regularly came into direct and violent conflict. For Frank Wright (1987, p. 1), ethnic frontiers are places where the populations of settlers, and their descendants, versus the 'native' are 'fairly evenly balanced numerically.' While this was approximately the case in Derry, antagonism was not epiphenomenal of any demographic arrangement. But rather, as per a discursive articulatory conception of the social, communal tensions and violence in Derry spoke to the continual rearticulation of antagonistically constituted identities and enduring fidelities to radically opposed political visions.

In mid-Victorian Derry, local electoral and intercommunal tensions were expressed through the conflictual performance of space, which in turn drove violent clashes and riots around the city. Local factions, namely Derry's Catholics who sought to assert themselves and increasingly repudiated the established order, and the city's Protestant loyalists who sought to maintain the status-quo and their position within it, came into conflict as they performed opposed visions of the city (Farrell, 2000). At stake, then, in these spatial performances was not merely the upholding or contesting of informal but hardening communal-ethnic boundaries in the city. Rather, these political spatial practices in their upholding of such boundaries proclaimed a fidelity to and sought to enact, that is, to spatially instantiate, these antagonistic configurations

of the social. The performance and spatial inscription of these limits, these frontiers, in Derry betrays a city whose reproduction is continually frustrated as these performances underline the ‘hauntological’ dimensions of the spatial (Derrida, 1993: Marchart, 2018. p. 42; Evershed, 2018; Fisher, 2012).¹⁴ As such, these spatial performances tended to reactivate and disturb not only Derry and its constitutive relations of power, but also they brought into discursive relief the contingent histories of violence of the state itself. Haunting Derry, then, is the knowledge that things could always have been otherwise. Catholic oppositional marches, for example, gave witness to not only the past but futures that might have been. What is more, while the conflictual performances of space reactivated the original violence of Derry’s ‘ground’, the spatial performance of the political was both a serious driver of, and tightly structured, the dynamics of intercommunal confrontation and violence.

This chapter proceeds as follows: Firstly, the historiography of intercommunal violence in nineteenth-century Ulster is considered, especially in terms of its spatial significance. Then, the analysis of Derry begins with reactivation. That is, from a political discursive perspective, the ways through which the contingent foundations of the social order were recovered in nineteenth-century Derry are interrogated. This recovery saw Catholics rearticulate their position in Derry as a function of oppression, and not just subordination. This reactivation of the originary violence of the social order, however, does not equate to or necessarily translate into direct modes of physical violence. What is required, therefore, is an understanding of how this originary violence, this foundational antagonism, can concretise as physical confrontation and violence. In nineteenth-century Derry, as developed through this chapter’s empirical cases, ontological violence is made material through the spatialisation of the political. That is, the spatial articulation of antagonism.

This chapter then interrogates three main episodes of inter-communal conflict. These cases have been chosen as each episode moves closer to the city centre, each shedding a light on various dynamics of confrontation and violence and the spatial articulation of antagonism. The first example is a conflict around a communal interface at Muff Glen, a rural area a few miles outside Derry which saw repeated clashes between Catholics and Protestants in 1867 and 1868. The second case concerns an oppositional Catholic procession on St. Stephen’s Day 1868, which violated an

¹⁴ ‘Hauntology’, a neologism that plays on the French pronunciation of ontology, was introduced by Jacques Derrida in *Spectres of Marx* (1993). Others such as Mark Fisher (2012) have developed the concept in relation to lost futures.

informal boundary, trespassing into a predominantly Protestant area, the Waterside on the eastern flank of the Foyle river. The third and final case is a riot that took place in the city centre, as Catholic and Protestant rivals clashed violently on the occasion of a royal visit to Derry. This last episode is the most serious of the three, as it led to the deaths of three individuals. The chapter concludes with some theoretical reflections on how the chapter has developed the central concern of the thesis, that is, the spatialisation of antagonism.

Space and inter-communal tension and violence in the north of Ireland

The dynamics of intercommunal violence in mid-Victorian Ulster often had a strong spatial dimension. This spatial structuring of violence was in part due to the informal segregation of Catholic and Protestant districts. Violence was regularly expressed through the upholding or trespassing of spatial-communal boundaries. Segregated neighbourhoods provided concrete places to defend or attack, and these largely homogenous areas could facilitate the mobilisation of opposed communities. In Belfast city, throughout the nineteenth-century, serious inter-communal violence in the form of street rioting was nearly endemic (Doyle, 2009; Farrell, 2000). Amongst the most notorious examples of Belfast's Victorian violence were the riots of 1857, 1864, and 1886. On Tuesday 14th July 1857, Protestants from Sandy Row and Catholics from the Pound engaged each other in five days of rioting, as well as wrecking the homes of members of the opposite faith in their districts (Doyle, 2009). In September of the same year more intense riots occurred. These riots hardened spatial segregation in the city. Also, in June 1886 Belfast city was disturbed by serious rioting largely sparked by the tensions of the Home Rule bill.¹⁵ Amid these tensions a Protestant procession led by the evangelical anti-Catholic preacher, Hugh Hanna, through a Catholic area provoked conflict which culminated in the deaths of 31 people (Doyle, 2009, p. 243). Spatial transgression in the context of wider political crises, then, proved a potentially serious catalyst for deadly violence. The same dynamic is evident in Derry in the cases studied here.

Historians have identified several factors that drove such intercommunal political tensions and violence throughout the north of Ireland during the latter half

¹⁵ For information on the Home Rule, see Chap. 4.

of the nineteenth century. For example, Mark Doyle (2009, pp. 7-9; 2010; 2008) in his study of the violent riots in mid-Victorian Belfast stresses the importance of the anti-Catholicism of militant Protestant evangelicalism, which drove sectarian violence in the city (Doyle, 2009, pp. 7-9; 2010; 2008). This is somewhat of a contrast to scholarship that stresses the power and pull of competing political visions that coalesced around the antagonistic poles of those who sought to uphold the Union vs. various iterations of Irish nationalism (Farrell, 2000; Hirst, 1996; Wright, 1987; 1996; Holmes, 2002; Boal, 2002; Hirst, 2005; Hepburn, 1983; Radford, 2007; Krystal, 1979; Boyd, 1987). Other related factors shaping communal political animosities were Protestant fears of a more assertive Catholic Church, both in Ireland and abroad (Paz, 1992), coupled with the growing political clout of Irish Catholics throughout the nineteenth century. Immigration to the cities driven by industrialisation, and its unsettling of local demographics spurred fears of competition for employment (Hepburn, 1996; Barker, 1973). And of course, the periodic assertion of revolutionary Irish Republicanism in armed rebellions in 1848 and 1867 amongst other causes, all conspired to deepen suspicion and division amongst the north's peoples. Doyle (2009, p. 8) fears that concentrating on the grander antagonistic visions of society, and the structural and ideological forces that unsettled mid-Victorian northern society, may stand in place of a more nuanced interrogation of the everyday practices of violence in their specificity, and how the use of violence 'structures social relationships' and deepens polarisation (Wright, 1987). What is more, Doyle argues, reliance on these factors says little about the future motivations towards violence, and how patterns of intercommunal conflict can become embedded. To understand the violence that marked mid-Victorian Derry, however, is not a matter of adjudicating between and granting priority to various local causes and dynamics over the conflicting visions of the social. That is, we need not and ought not to discount how competing visions of social objectivity antagonised each-other, in favour of a more micro-level study which contextualises practices of violence. Instead, the various local issues and dynamics that drove tension in Derry, and elsewhere in the north of Ireland, only make-sense as part of the opposing discourses vying for hegemony in Ireland and the United Kingdom as a whole. In antagonistic spatial performances the inseparability of the concrete practices of contestation and the wider political discourses is evident. Indeed, these practices are also constitutive of these political discourses. For example, as Doyle (2009, p. 88) notes, the Saltwater bridge in Belfast which was located at a communal

interface, had become a hotspot for violent clashes and was known as ‘Boyne bridge.’¹⁶ That is, spatial struggles in Ulster were readily mapped onto the histories of violence that shaped the political arrangement of Ireland and the communal divisions between Protestants and Catholics in the north of Ireland.

Reactivating the ‘original feud’

‘The social’, writes Oliver Marchart, is the ‘political in another mode’ (2018, p. 96-98). The product of political logics of institution, and thus contingent, the inauguration of the social entails a certain ‘originary violence’ (Laclau, 1990), ‘machineries of exclusion’ (Hägglund, 2008) through which other possible social possibilities were denied and over-written. Things could always be otherwise. The social is ultimately a ‘failed objectivity’, as it cannot reach full objective presence as it is at once grounded and haunted by a *radical* negativity, a ‘constitutive outside’ which threatens it. This trace of antagonism cannot be evacuated entirely from the social, no matter how sedimented it is. Thus, the ‘social trembles’ as its ultimately groundless nature is rendered intelligible through a presence of antagonising force which interrupts its full-realisation. The social cannot become isomorphic with its own self-image. ‘Antagonism’, then, as Laclau writes, has a ‘revelatory function’ (1990, p. 18; *see also* Marchart 2018; 2014; Dryer-Hanson, 2011). Again, what is revealed through antagonism, which is the experience of the limit of objectivity itself, is the ‘radical contingency of the social’ (Laclau, 1990, p. 183; 2014, pp. 100-114). Antagonism then has the potential to disrupt the sedimented routines of the social (Dryer-Hanson & Sonnichsen, 2014), reactivating its ‘sleeping violence’, bringing into relief its political, and therefore contingent and contestable character. Crucially, as Laclau suggests, ‘if the force that antagonizes me negates my identity, the maintenance of that identity depends on the result of a struggle’ (Laclau, 1990, p. 183). This is precisely the case in mid-Victorian Derry, where the politically instituted character of the social was being reactivated through the performance of competing modes of social objectivity.

At the behest of Lord Lieutenant and Governor General in Ireland, the Earl of Spenser, on 17 August 1869, a public Court of Inquiry opened in Derry city. The commission was led by two of Her Majesty’s Counsel, William Allen Exham and James Murphy, who were tasked with reporting to Dublin Castle on the causes and

¹⁶ The Battle of the Boyne in 1690 was a decisive episode in the Williamite Wars, a victory which ensured the Ascendancy regime.

circumstances of the riots that had recently disturbed the city (Radford, 2009; Maddox, 2005; Doak, 1978)¹⁷. Violent inter-communal clashes between Protestant and Catholic factions in Derry had been increasing in both frequency and intensity since at least 1867. This strife came to a bloody, and in the eyes of local authorities an embarrassing, crescendo with the deaths of three Derry citizens during the royal visit of Prince Arthur in April 1869 (Maddox, 2005; MacDonagh, 1974, p. 141). To make matters worse, they died at the hands of the city's police who had lost control of a deteriorating situation (*Inquiry Report*, 1869). It was clear that Derry was settling into a pattern of near-ritualised violent interaction, which showed no signs of abating. Indeed, word on the city's streets, rumours which found their way into the commission's courtroom, was that the opposed parties were frantically arming themselves for a serious show-down at the annual 'Closing of the Gates' celebrations, held each year on the 18th of December in Derry (*Inquiry Report*, 1869). This ongoing situation begged serious questions regarding the effectiveness of all vested with the power to ensure the preservation of the peace, including the city's magistrates and the police. These questions posed by Dublin Castle, the locus of colonial power in Ireland, betray a central authority's concern with disciplining the space it claims as its own.

The commission's findings regarding the inadequacy of the police, both in number and ability, was damning (*Inquiry Report*, 1869). Other dimensions of local power were also found wanting. Still, despite these obvious deficiencies, in their final report Exham and Murphy found that the proper governance of Derry, a municipality 'numbering under 30,000 souls would seem an easy problem' (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p. 15). In a remarkably frank admission, in comments which they recognised may have exceeded the scope of their investigation, Exham and Murphy suggested that the problem of ensuring peace went beyond the buttressing of the state's coercive apparatuses in the city. The taming of Derry's ongoing afflictions, though exacerbated by various expressions of local incompetence, proved difficult on account of the noxious entanglements of violence, history, and space. In short, the foundational violence implicated in the original institution of the state itself was being reactivated. As the Commission of Inquiry found

¹⁷ Doak's (1978) unpublished M.A. thesis, a historical study of intercommunal violence in Derry during much of the same period as this current study is well-worth consulting for its fine-grained empirical analyses of the city's violence.

Unhappily, these causes are not easily modified in their mischievous force, consisting as they do, in the presence side by side of two sections of a community, inheriting traditions of animosity, which engaged the remoter ancestors in civil conflict, and placed those of a more recent time in the standing relation to each other of a dominant and subject caste; while to heighten the difficulty of the case, the city of their common inhabitation is one, whose heroic defence, at a time of that civil conflict, is the proudest recollection of one section, while its celebration, for the other, is identified with the memory of not only the reverses and the ruin which befell their side in the struggle, but with that of long histories of bitter humiliation (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p. 15).

The political performance, or re-articulation, of these histories of violence in mid-Victorian Derry was disturbing the social and recovering its contingent character. One of the foremost catalysts of reactivation of these fraught histories in Derry were the parades of the city's Apprentice Boys. Many of the commission's witnesses, though not the commissioners themselves, laid the blame for the city's recent unrest squarely at the feet of the Apprentice Boys (*Inquiry Report*, 1869; Lacy, 1990). The Apprentice Boys club held bi-annual parades in order to commemorate the historic Siege of Derry of 1688, namely the Closing of the Gates on the 18th of December which marks the beginning of the siege, and the Relief of Derry on the 12th August which marks its eventual lifting. In the 1688-89 Siege of Derry, the city's population withstood the assaults of the Jacobite army, the city walls remaining unbreeched- hence the name 'Maiden City.' The Siege of Derry, as historian Ian McBride (1997, p. 10) notes is perhaps the key episode in the loyalist calendar, carrying an emotional heft greater than the other dates in the Orange year, including 'the Twelfth' celebrations in July (Cohen, 2007, p. 956).¹⁸ A key 'moment' within Ulster Protestant discourse, the lessons of the episode stressed political vigilance against all those who run contrary to the interests of Ulster Protestants and the continuance of the Union. The Siege narrative at once depicts a vision of messianic deliverance (by King William), and what MacBride (1997, p. 11) terms a 'bleak vision' of being assailed by implacably hostile enemies. Hence, the watchwords of Ulster Loyalism bequeathed by 'the Siege' are 'No Surrender!' For

¹⁸ On the 12th of July each year, Orange marches commemorate the victory of King William of Orange at the battle of the Boyne in 1690.

many Catholics, however, the siege commemorations, along with the Orangemen's 'Twelfth' celebration were flagrant celebrations of the Ascendancy regime.¹⁹

Political parading in Ulster was often a driver of notorious incidents of inter-communal violence (Farrell, 2000; Maddox, 2005). The Siege celebrations have had, since their inception, a deeply political kernel. This political aspect, no matter how latent, has tended to emerge more forcefully in periods of crisis and challenges to the dominant position of Protestantism and perceived threats to the Union (Desmond-McGovern, 1994). Thus, Loyalist parading for all its appeal to tradition, expressed concerns that were invariably contemporary (Bryan 2000a; 2000b; Frazer 2000). It is an appeal to tradition that at once articulates the continuity and unity of a Ulster Protestant identity and community, and yet at the same time obfuscates the contingency of its history (Bryan, 2006). Though the parades were at times disruptive, they are themselves a response to Protestant dislocation (Jarman, 1997; Frazer, 2000). While Apprentice Boy celebrations were reportedly attended by local Catholic Clergy in 1788—the centenary celebration of 1688—with the push for Catholic emancipation and political reform from the 1790s onwards this apparent ecumenicism fractured. As the early nineteenth-century wore on, further Catholic agitation saw the parades take on a more overtly political hue (McBride, 1997). The modern incarnation of the Apprentice Boys can be traced by its establishment in 1835, a few years after Catholic emancipation had been achieved (McBride, 1997, p. 33).

In the mid to late 1860s in face of mounting local electoral challenges to the conservative status-quo in Derry, the electoral alliance between Presbyterians and Catholics, the growing power of Catholics, and the much hated prospect of the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland, the Apprentice Boy demonstrations took on an even more overtly political aspect (Lacy 1990; Desmond-McGovern, 1994; *see* Chap. 4).²⁰ The parades, while conveying political messages also marked out and re-asserted ethnoterritorial boundaries (Cohen, 2007), and thus they sought to re-inscribe the relationships and codifications of power that were constitutive of those spaces. In doing so, they had a tendency to reactivate the histories of violence that instituted those power relations.

¹⁹ For a more detailed discussion of the legacy of the Derry Siege *vis-à-vis* conservative Ulster Protestant political discourse, see Chapter 4.

²⁰ This shift was also on account of changing leadership in the Apprentice Boys, who became closely identified with the conservative M.P. for Derry, Lord Claude John Hamilton (Lacy, 1990)

Walking the walls

As the Apprentice Boys paraded along Derry's walls, the histories of those walls were re-articulated. Indeed, such was the intent of these displays. Adrian Kerr, local author and curator of the Free Derry Museum states that from the 'very beginning' the people of the Bogside's relationship with Derry's historic walls was 'antagonistic' (Kerr, 2013, p. 18). He relates in its own terms the spatial history of the Bogside (a Catholic quarter outside the city walls)

The history of the Bogside is one characterised by two communities- one within the Walls, safe, secure, and powerful, the other without, powerless dispossessed and oppressed. From the 1600s-1990s it was a place apart, looked down at from a height by those with power and privilege (Kerr, 2013, p. 18).

The walls of the city featured in the spatial-political discourse of Catholics who lived below them as a material-symbolic boundary that signified originary dispossession and loss, rather than being the site of divine favour and delivery as they were in the Protestant siege mythology. Thus the very walls of the city mark an unbridgeable divide between two conflicting historical and political visions. John O'Donnell, secretary of the Londonderry Working Men's Defence Association (Lacy, 1990, p. 202), a group which formed in 1869 to resist further siege celebrations, recounted how the walls of Derry were inextricably bound up with histories of humiliation, stating that '[t]here are still many men, and not very old men either, who remember the very first Catholic who had ever been allowed to occupy a dwelling within the Walls of Derry' (*DJ*, 2 Nov. 1869).

Therefore, parading along Derry's walls as the Apprentice Boys did, confronted Derry's Catholics with the materiality of Ascendancy, and their diminished position within the regime. Much of the parades' offensive power, as well as their political effectiveness, emanated from the particular site of articulation. For example, Walker's column, which stood looming over the Bogside, was often chosen as the gathering point for the Apprentice Boy parades (Maddox, 2010; *see also* Chap. 1). For a notable example, the famous nineteenth-century Irish nationalist, Charles Gavin Duffy, remembered bitterly the parades of the Orange Order and was in no doubt of their political and triumphalist character. Recounting the deeply politicising effect of witnessing Orange marches, Duffy wrote 'the Orange processions forbade us to forget

the past, and there was a history transacted under our eyes of which it was impossible to be ignorant' (Gavin Duffy, 1898; *see also* Farrell 2000, p. 102).²¹ Parading, then, was refusal to forget. The power-saturated origins of the social was disallowed to slip from immediate discursive availability. It perpetuated the cycle of reactivation. The more Derry Catholics asserted claims to political and social equality, the more they brought into question the foundations of the established order. The more those loyal to that order sought to reassert the bounds of the social the more they revealed its antagonistically constituted character.

In the account of space that has been developed here, for space to become mere background, its antagonistic character needs to be largely obscured under the concatenation of the rhythms of everyday life. That is, as Laclau suggests (1990; *see also* Marchart, 2014), the successful routinisation, or sedimentation, of the social relies to a great extent on the relative forgetting of its power-saturated origins. Laclau elaborates

In so far as an act of institution has been successful, a 'forgetting of the origins' tends to occur, the system of possible alternatives tends to vanish and the traces of original contingency to fade. In this way, the instituted tends to assume the form of mere objective presence. This is the moment of sedimentation. It is important to realize that this fading entails a concealment. If objectivity is based on exclusion, the traces of that exclusion will always be somehow present. What happens is that sedimentation can be so complete, the influence of one of the dichotomous relationship's pole so strong, that the contingent nature of that influence, its original dimension of power, do not prove immediately visible. Objectivity is thus constituted merely as presence (Laclau, 1990, p. 34).

Evidently, social objectivity in Derry never acquired the status of mere 'objective presence.' A contested space is one where the originary violence implicated in the political institution of the social refuses to altogether fade, and therefore such space remains frustrated in its social reproduction. That is, antagonistic configurations of space dislocate each other. As per the 1869 inquiry report's problematisation of Derry's afflictions that presented the communal conflict as something of an intractable

²¹ Charles Gavin Duffy, an Ulster Catholic, and a prominent figure in Irish political life, was the founder and editor of *The Nation* newspaper. Duffy, who served time in prison for his political activities, advocated for the repeal of the Act of Union, tenant's rights, and advanced an egalitarian and non-sectarian iteration of nationalism. For a short biography published on the centenary of his death see *Irish Times* 7th Feb. 2003.

puzzle given the histories that have shaped the communities who live ‘side by side.’ Of course, it is not just the same old feud playing out as history unfolds, but rather the antagonistically constituted and contingent nature of the social is continually revealed through the emergence of social antagonisms. The political potency of the ‘recovery’ of the ‘power relations through which the instituting act took place’, that is, the founding acts of the contemporary order of things, does not lie in its merely dragging up inconvenient histories. It sheds a new light on the contemporary political arrangement, revealing it to be fundamentally contestable. Here, then, in evidence is not merely a re-iteration of the struggles of the past, but a renewal.

Stasis in the city

The Commission of Inquiry’s report attributed a great deal of weight to the statements of Dr James McKnight, a doctor who was also a well-known newspaper editor as well as Liberal in politics (Lacy, 1990, p. 199-200).²² McKnight proclaimed a fidelity to what he saw as the heroism and the principles of the siege of 1688. Its remembrance and political mobilisation through contentious marches, however, according to McKnight, imperilled not only peace in Derry, but presented something of an existential threat to the nation itself. Such displays brought back into naked relief the divisions that ought to have been wiped away from public consciousness by the passage of time. Instead, history was not allowed to sleep, and the ‘original feud’, continued to solicit ever-new combatants. As Dr McKnight expounded to the commission

Commemoration of the victories of one political party in the State over another tend inevitably to perpetuate the original feud, and wherever there are parties who fancy themselves, or happen to be representatives of the original party to the quarrel, that then the effect is to create a periodical violence and animosity which is totally inconsistent with the safety of the State, and is, in fact a species of suicidal policy directed against the life of a nation, as a unity, with respect to any armed movement from abroad (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p. 169).

²² McKnight, who was according to historian Brian Lacy, the ‘very personification of Presbyterian Liberalism’ became editor of *Londonderry Standard* in 1848, and was a previous editor of the Belfast Newsletter.

He continued further, betraying his incredulity at the evident recklessness of allowing such demonstrations to take place

so far as my own knowledge either of ancient or modern history extends, there is not and never has been any civilized state or government under the sun, ancient or modern, in which the victories of any party over another in a civil war was allowed, with the exception of poor Ireland itself.

In McKnight's estimation it was unwise to celebrate even the historic victories over enemy states, never-mind the celebration of victories *within* the state, and as such, he pointed to the discontinuing of the Battle of Waterloo commemorations as a noteworthy exercise of caution. If the victories of William the Conqueror were celebrated in the same vein as the Williamite victories were in Derry, according to McKnight, England would 'have been broken into factions, and never have been united nationally' (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p. 171). Unity, then, entails a forgetting. McKnight's analysis found an attentive ear within the inquiry precisely on account of his desire to preserve the unity of the state above all else. Thus his concerns chime with those of the state itself. His understanding of internal division as decidedly dangerous and pathological corresponds with the long held elite fear of *stasis*, that is conflict within the city. This Greek notion of *stasis*, the unnatural disruption of unity, finds its legitimate opposite in *polemos*, which is a war between states or cities, a form of conflict between natural enemies (Agamben, 2015; Schmitt, 2007; Kissane, 2016). This fear of relationships of antagonism emerging within the given unity of the body politic, is borne out of the fear that such forms of conflict jeopardise the very grounds of the established order. That is, in these conflicts, through the reactivation of the original violence of spatial-social institution, the contingency of the state itself is potentially rendered intelligible and thus renegotiable. So rather than just being conflicts within a transcendental horizon between positive entities, as per the Kantian '*real oppositions*', these conflicts are instances of radical negativity that betray the ontological limit of the state itself (Laclau & Mouffe 2014 [1985]; Marchart, 2018). Again, these are not conflicts within the state as such, but rather competing modes of social objectivity antagonising each other.

It is little wonder, then, given his concern with preserving the state, that McKnight appeals to the categories of unity such as the 'nation' or the 'state', which

was an attempt at re-inscribing these antagonisms within a transcendental ground, which ultimately obscures the radical nature of such clashes. All of which echoes the rationale behind the state's strategy. For example, in legislation designed to curb these party demonstrations we have both the recognition of dangerous divisions, yet at the same time the appeal to transcendental unity of the state ('her majesty's subjects'). As the Party Processions Act (1850) reads

Whereas Numbers of People have been in the Practice of assembling and marching together in procession in Ireland in a Manner calculated to create and perpetuate Animositities between classes of her Majesty's Subjects, and endanger the public Peace

Some conservative Protestants warned liberals, and other would-be reformers of the state, that their policies of reform, especially vis-à-vis the Church of Ireland, for example, brought into question the very legitimacy of the regime they all claimed a shared fidelity to. Conservatives knew only too well that to question some aspect of the established order was to bring into question all that which has been secured by violence. They were implicitly aware that rather than emergent antagonisms being a conflict between competing classes or peoples, which could be located within the shared frame of 'Her Majesty's Subjects', such conflicts were much more radical in nature.

Despite the propensity for episodic street violence to break out, many of the commission witnesses were at pains to stress how the people of Derry, across the religious and political divide, were ordinarily well-disposed to each-other. This good-will, it was frequently claimed, would reign supreme only for the intrusion of the siege celebrations. William Magerr, a printer by trade for the *Londonderry Journal*, and a Catholic as well as Liberal, drawing upon his twenty-years living in Derry, stated that '[t]here is not a better community in the world I believe, nor a people more well-disposed, and more civil towards each-other- taking away the offensive demonstrations' (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p. 90).²³ Many witnesses advocated the suppression of all demonstrations and held them as the major source of Derry's division. It is conceivable, however, that they were not over-stating either the

²³ The Commission of Inquiry (1869, p. 15), in the final report also came to the same conclusion that the people of Derry 'apart from exciting special causes- are an orderly, quiet, well-conducted, neighbourly population, and kindly and considerate towards each other.'

impact of the partisan displays or the general good terms on which Derry's people lived. To return to Marchart's suggestion that the social in so far as it is the product of political institution is the 'political in another mode' (Marchart 2018; Laclau 1990, p. 35). While the trace of antagonism cannot be completely evacuated from the social, in order for social objectivity to be somewhat stable it requires a fairly high degree of routinisation. Therefore, it should come as little surprise that Derry's citizen did not, even in such turbulent moments, live in a state of total antagonization, the empirical impossibility of Hobbes' 'war of all against all.' Even in contexts of more internecine violence such as the later Troubles, most social interaction was non-violent (*cf.* Kalyvas, 2006). Instead it is in moments when the 'sleeping' antagonism of the social is reactivated revealing the retreating grounds of the social, that social cleavages are antagonistically (re)articulated in an effort to reassert/context the social order- this is when violence occurs.

From relations of subordination to relations of oppression

Dr Barenwall White (*Inquiry Report*, 1869), another of the inquiry's witnesses, gave testimony on how Derry Catholics came to re-articulate their own history as one of subjugation, and thus their position within society as one of oppression rather than subordination. It is this key transition that underlines a shift from relatively recent acquiescence or perhaps reluctant acceptance of the status-quo, to a discursively-available near-open repudiation of the established order. This re-articulation then (re)introduces the political into these relationships. As Laclau and Mouffe detail (2014, pp. 136-139; *see also* Marchart 2018; Snir 2017, p. 352), a relation of subordination is

that in which an agent is subjected to the decisions of another- an employee with respect to an employer, for example, or in certain forms of family organisation the woman with respect to the man, and so on. We shall call relations of oppression, in contrast, those relations of subordination which have *transformed themselves into sites of antagonism*.

What is clear from Laclau and Mouffe's (2014, p. 13-139) analysis is that relationships of subordination are not *essentially* antagonistic. In order for

relationships of subordination to become antagonistic relations, they require re-articulation. White, on account of his profession as a medical doctor suggested that he was well-acquainted with all classes of the population within a thirty mile radius of Derry (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p. 113). White echoed the opinion of other witnesses who insisted upon the divisive and provocative nature of the bi-annual siege celebrations. Though reluctant to state it emphatically himself, he acknowledged the prevailing opinion among Derry's Catholics that in days prior to the celebrations they could detect a difference- a malevolence in their neighbours (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p. 90). From the position of an educated middle-class Catholic, and a Liberal in politics, White offers a damning history of siege celebrations. When asked if the siege commemorations caused offense to Catholics, White was unequivocal, stating that 'they do so and they always have done.' James McKnight also asserted that the celebrations were linked to the upholding of relations of superiority, initially provoked only by the mobilisation of Catholics to achieve equality. As McKnight stated

These displays as I understand, did not commence until towards the end of the last century- the centenary of the siege of '88. At that time there began a struggle to get civil rights for the Catholics and Catholic emancipation, and they (the celebrations) have been kept up from that time to the present. I looked over the file of the *Derry Journal* through curiosity one time, from '72-'78, and I could see no mention of it; so for a century after the siege there was no such thing (*Inquiry Report*, 1869. p. 169)

As White further elaborated in his testimony, he insisted that any educated Catholic could only view the siege celebrations as a triumphal celebration of histories of violence against Catholics: 'These displays are intended to commemorate events that put the Roman Catholic population of Ireland for more than a century as the most degraded Christian population in Europe' (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p. 114). When questioned as to the general view of working-class Catholics in Derry, White opined that they had arrived at similar conclusions. That conclusion was that the celebration's express purpose was to 'crow over them', and 'make them feel that they were not on an equality with others; that they are beneath them in every way' (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p. 114). The Catholic re-articulation of the history of the state as a history of oppression, marks a repudiation of the codifications of

power established by those histories. While Catholics would have scarcely understood their comparatively diminished position in society as one of mere subordination, the rearticulation of the social's founding violence forcibly reinscribed and foregrounded the political. Loyalist performances of the city and its histories, then, rather than buttressing the order they proclaimed a loyalty to, only further underlined the foundational violence implicated in its original institution. Of key significance, then, is how the transformation of these relations of subordination and the recovery of antagonism translates spatially into 'sites of antagonism.'

The spatialisation of the political

The recovery of the ontological violence of being is not sufficient to drive the physical violence of the community clashes that sometimes disturbed Derry in this period (*see* Oksala 2011; Žižek 2008). That is, it would be a mistake to automatically conflate the ontological violence that grounds objectivity with the concrete practices or 'repertoires' of physical violence that may shape the dynamics of violent and conflictual interaction in a given historical-spatial context. Reactivation of ontological violence is not enough. What is more, to conflate the ontological violence of being, to see it as merely unfolding itself in the direct modes of violence of a given struggle would be to risk obscuring the contextual specificity of those practices of violence. One significant conduit through which such ontological violence of being may be concretised, however, especially in the contexts of nineteenth and twentieth-century north of Ireland, was through spatialisation. The parades of Derry's Apprentice Boys along the walls of Derry confronted the city's Catholics with the materiality of the Ascendancy regime and their diminished position within that codification of power. Such performances united ordinary violence with concrete social practices and rituals. By performing space politically, they spatialised the political.

Antagonism is our name for the political (Marchart, 2018). As already detailed, antagonism both grounds social objectivity, and yet disturbs and threatens through the presence of a 'constitutive outside.' So, here, antagonism does not straightforwardly map on to the political—understood as the ever-present possibility of violence as featured in studies inspired by Chantal Mouffe's critical engagement with the work of Carl Schmitt (Mouffe, 1995; 1999; 2014; *see also* Marchart 2007; Featherstone, 2007;

Disch, 2019). Rather than violence and conflict as seen through the lens of the friend-enemy binary of the Schmittian political as a synonym for antagonism, it is instead a marker for antagonism. That is, the *very impossibility* of being itself. As Oliver Marchart (2018, p. 63) summarises, ‘As a name for the absence of any final ground of the social, antagonism is not conflict, it is that which engenders conflict.’ Still, when it comes to thinking the political spatially, Carl Schmitt’s work is at times deeply insightful (Schmitt, 2006; 2007; Marchart 2018, pp. 63-64; Minca & Rowan, 2017; 2015).²⁴ For Schmitt, the political, the non-reducible relation of hostility between friend and enemy, the us *vs.* them, is grounded in spatial differentiation.²⁵ As outlined by Minca and Rowan (2015), for Schmitt the political is always spatialised along the lines of a ‘concrete’ division between inside and outside, and this spatial division is embedded in the very structural foundations of political relations of such. Relations of the political, then, are situated and concrete, which is to say, they are spatial. Here, we do not attribute any *necessary* relation between the political, violence, and the spatial. In Derry, however, the spatial performance of communal identity, which is to say the inscription of a frontier or limit—the re-articulation of a certain codifications of social objectivity—generates, structures, deepens, and propels the dynamics of conflictual interaction, which habitually threatened to spill over in to serious episodes of wider violence.

Muff Glen

Muff Glen, a site in the open countryside a few miles north east of Derry city saw repeated clashes in 1867 and 1868. Crucially, it was within walking distance of the city, and local railway stations, which, due to the expansion of the railway network, made the site accessible to non-local Orangemen who sought to ‘defend’ Derry (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p. 17). As detailed, the high-dates in the loyalist year, namely the Siege celebrations in Derry, and ‘the Twelfth’ in July often heightened tensions between Catholic and Protestant communities, and served as a catalyst for violence (Farrell, 2000). It is little surprise, then, that the clashes at Muff Glen coincided with ‘the Twelfth’ celebrations, as it lay along the route of the Orange procession that day. The

²⁴ Schmitt is insightful once we bracket the ‘bellicism’ that underlies his thought, and the potential positivity attributed to identities which are in conflict (Marchart 2018, pp. 63-64)

²⁵ Here, however, the political is not primarily spatial. For Schmitt this spatial distinction was between states, and not relations within the state. Though, for Schmitt this was the aporia in pluralistic thinking on liberalism, as liberalism failed to see the risk of the political emerging within the state.

exact point of conflict was the small Tamnaherin Bridge, which functioned as a symbolic-material boundary that separated predominantly Catholic and Protestant rural districts. Like their city-dwelling peers, local Catholics in the rural hinterland took umbrage at Orange marches, deeming them offensive and triumphalist in character, and vowed not to let the Orangemen march through their area. There are reports that the first occurrence of note during this period at Muff Glen was in 1867 when a ‘few dozen’ parading Orangemen were ambushed by group of Catholics at the bridge (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p. 102; p. 111). The Orangemen were beaten back, their lodge instruments and decorations also broken and scattered along the road. This left the Orangemen festering with a ‘spirit of revenge’ (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p. 102), and, as the commissioners reported, the ‘Glen folk’ anticipated that on the following anniversary the Orangemen would once again ‘try and violate their territory’ in much larger numbers (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p. 15). These suspicions proved correct as the following year, 1868, brought a repeated and potentially much more serious showdown at the site.

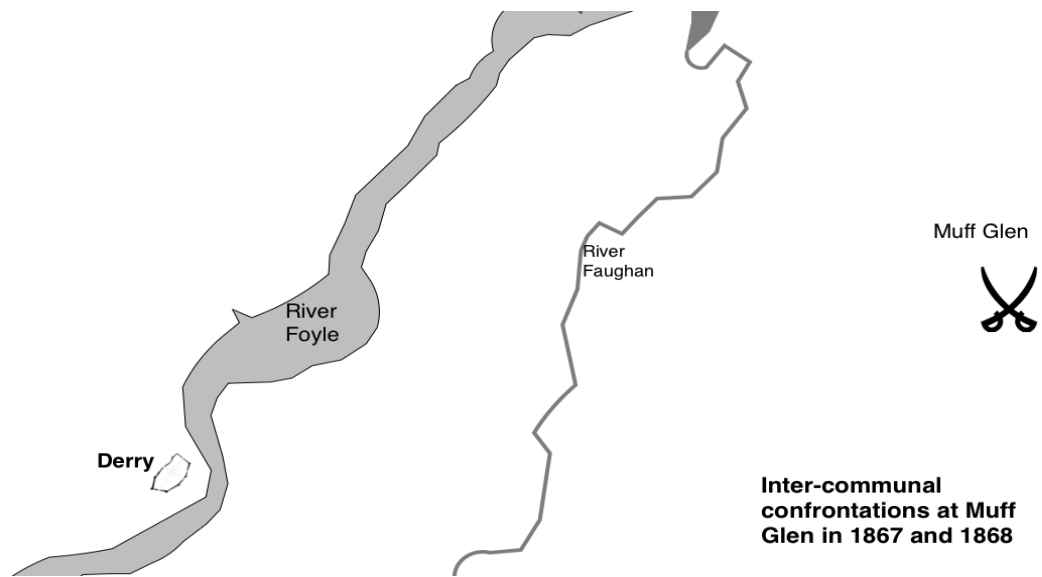


Fig 4. Muff Glen

The *Northern Whig's* Derry correspondent was happy to report that the 12th of July 1868 in Derry had passed off without incident. The ‘only thing to mark the Twelfth’ was the ‘display of orange and purple flags, and four bannerettes from Walker’s

Monument, on the City Wall' (*NW*, 13 July 1868). Such a picture of Derry at this moment, if taken as an accurate reading of the political temperature in the city, gives an altogether too tranquil image, and proved a premature conclusion. As 'the Twelfth' fell on a Sunday, devout Protestants wished to uphold the sanctity of the Sabbath, and therefore hostilities were postponed until the following day, Monday 13th of July. In contrast to the easy quiet that characterised the Sunday in Derry, scenes at Muff Glen on the Monday, the *Londonderry Sentinel* lamented, were 'warlike' in appearance (*LD Sent.*, 14 July 1868). Owing to the previous year's incident at Muff Glen, opposing parties, numbering in excess of 1000 people from Derry and beyond according to reports, headed to Muff Glen. Local Catholics had taken up 'military like' secured positions around the vicinity of the Tamnaherin Bridge, some waiting since the previous night. The Catholic body numbering around 500 or more, were reportedly well-armed with 'reaping hooks [...] pieces of scythes, others with guns and pistols' (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p. 77). They also displayed green flags and banners. Constable Patrick Duffy was informed that morning that over 500 men from the Bogside had left Derry in a single body, proceeding to Muff Glen to do battle (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p. 128). The travelling of significant numbers of Bogside to Muff Glen in order to 'defend' or uphold the integrity of a Catholic area from the incursion of Orangemen, again underlines precisely how the political was increasingly becoming spatial in Derry, with struggle orientating around the articulation of exclusive configurations of space. This area, though not part of the city itself, still solicited the support of Derry Catholics, as *Catholic space*, thereby underlining the spatial articulation of a communal political subject. The transgression of Catholic space, then, throughout the region was held as an affront to *all* Catholics. As such, the Catholic crowd at Muff Glen displayed an intense commitment to upholding the bridge as an inviolable frontier. Constable Michael Reilly, who was at the site, was informed and was given reassurances by the crowd that if the Orangemen retreated trouble would be avoided. If the processionists persisted in their advance, however, he was told that they would be 'cut down' (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p. 110).

A similar dynamic was at work with the Protestant would-be defenders of their space. The Orange processionists were equally if not more well-armed than their Catholic counterparts, and marched determinedly towards Muff Glen in anticipation of violence. Catastrophic loss of life was a real possibility and was only narrowly averted. It was only through the efforts of the constabulary, though they initially

misread the seriousness of the situation, that saw the day pass off without significant bloodshed. Stafford, along with a small contingent of constabulary, interceded with and at times forcibly blocked the advance of the Orange procession towards the Glen. Interestingly, Stafford suggested to the commissioners that while the procession was indeed large to begin with, these numbers dwindled as local Orangemen were dissuaded by 'their friends' from continuing with the march. It was therefore mostly 'strangers' who insisted on going ahead with the procession (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p. 77).

The presence of strangers, or non-locals, is not insignificant in such episodes of contention in Derry and the surrounding areas. The city, which had once been 'geographically cut off from the strictly Protestant districts of Ulster', was brought into 'rapid communication' with staunchly Orange areas through the advance of the railroad (*Inquiry Report* 1869, 17). Furthermore, as remarked upon by the commissioners, railway companies scheduled special excursion trains to Derry on the two historic anniversary dates, resulting in a large influx of strangers into the city (1869, p. 17). This increasing participation by outsiders in Derry's Orange celebrations, not only posed a security problem for the city's authorities who struggled to regulate the space that it governed, but for Catholics fostered deep anxieties and hostility towards the Orange events. The railway, and its accessibility, made Derry, already a spatial frontier and sacred ground in the Protestant imaginary, more readily available for Ulster's loyalists to 'defend.' While the state seeks to flatten the space it claims as its own, in Derry hardening communal boundaries, facilitated by the very technologies usually credited with the flattening of time and space, e.g. the railway, ruptured this 'neutral' strategic cartography of authority. The local Protestant processionists were ultimately turned away quite literally from the path of violence. This was presumably on account of many local factors which may induce restraint, such as the fact they were known in the community, and therefore, to the law, and perhaps, they did not want to take responsibility for sparking serious violence. The strangers, however, proceeded further even though their connection to the space was ostensibly more tenuous. Again, the site at Muff Glen, as a gateway into Protestant space was in that moment a radical frontier of Ulster Protestantism as an identity.

Furthermore, the more belligerent portion of the Orange party that did proceed some bit further in their advance towards the bridge, displayed a hostility towards both the police force (of about 10 or so who confronted them), as well as

Orangemen in positions of authority. As Constable Reilly reported, the marchers who determined to go on ‘turned on their masters’, refusing to heed their advice to give up, creating commotion amongst the Orange party (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, pp. 110-111). Violence and spatial antagonisation, then, was a mode of political participation in an era of restricted (though increasing) franchise and mass politicisation. Such insistence, at such potential cost, and the rejection of figures of authority, as per the Catholic determination to defend *their* space, gives a glimpse of how fierce commitment over fraught spatial boundaries could be. At any rate, though some shots were fired on the day, the bellicose posturing at Muff Glen did not lead to serious violence as all the Orange marchers eventually abandoned course, though some minor rioting was reported in Derry that night. The following year, 1869, the commissioners detail that Catholics once again took up defensive positions at Muff Glen, yet no showdown took place as their Protestant counterparts opted not to parade through the area.

The *Londonderry Standard* reporting in the aftermath of the ‘unfortunate spectacle’ at Muff Glen (*LD Stan.*, 15 July 1868), declared that the majority of people in Derry sought only to live in peace with one another, yet still conceded that major bloodshed has been barely forestalled, as the potentially warring parties had been bent on violence. Such declarations of general goodwill alongside the disclosing of a strong propensity towards inter-communal violence appear contradictory. As Frank Wright’s (1987; Wilson, 2011) work on divided societies demonstrate such protestations of well-established good will often get louder and serve as omens of coming violence. While such an assessment is bleak, it is nonetheless deeply insightful with respect to the nature of antagonism in conflicted societies. Regardless of the genuine acclamations of goodwill towards the other, and the peaceful interactions that characterise the everyday, the processes that harden ethnic and political boundaries have enormous gravitational pull, and may transcend any individual feelings of magnanimity. Though Muff Glen is a footnote of little consequence in the histories of violence that have played out in Derry, it nonetheless gives a fleeting glimpse of dangers of the spatial performance of the political, as both a response to reactivation and itself as an antagonising force, and how such performances had the potential to sweep others into the vortex of cyclical violence. Though major violence did not occur at Muff Glen, in later episodes of conflict in Derry, however, the same twinned logics of the spatialising of the political and the spatial defence of communal identity that structured the dynamics of confrontation at Muff Glen drove serious episodes of violence.

Performing the political, spatially

The clashes at Muff Glen betray the performative character of not only the political, but also its spatialisation. It may appear that since these political processions conform to well-established repertoires and patterns and are organised according to the predictable beat of the Orange calendar their dislocationary or antagonistic force should be demoted. The confrontations that they engender, though they may seem truly disruptive, are also highly ritualised and scripted modes of admittedly boisterous communal interaction, which is to say they are very much routinised social patterns (Farrell, 2000). Therefore, from this vantage point, the marches can hardly be thought of as the interruption of the temporal, or an *event*, in a true sense. This assessment, however, is only in partial keeping with the account of space that is at work here, and is to somewhat miss the point.

The marches at once perform the political as well as space. According to Judith Butler's (1993, p. 2) radical re-thinking of performativity, following Derrida, 'performativity must be understood not as a singular or deliberate "act", but, rather, as the reiterative and citational practices by which discourse produces the effects that it names' (Gregson & Rose, 2000, p. 434).²⁶ Butler's post-structuralist account of the performative, speaks precisely to the Laclauian conceptualisation of space advanced here. To remind ourselves, Laclau's (1990, pp. 41-42) definition of the spatial is 'any repetition that is governed by a structural law of succession.' Space is, then, the sedimentation of social practices through the quotidian rhythms that produce social objectivity. So, then, the marches perform and seek to reground the spatial through ritual repetition. That is, these marches re-enact the 'contingent foundations' of a spatialised configuration of social being. By bounding a space as belonging to one communal group or another, they spatialise 'the people' of that community. These practices that spatially perform 'the people', be they Catholic, Protestant, Presbyterian, or whoever, are not epiphenomenal of a pre-existing communal identity as such. But rather, these practices are themselves constitutive of the spatial identities which they

²⁶ As Gregson and Rose (2000, p. 434) insist 'space [...] needs to be thought of as brought into being through performances and as a performative articulation of power'.

perform. Again, in Butler's terms, they produce the thing they name. If Protestant or Catholic space was *essentially* Protestant or Catholic it would not need to be performed. Its being would not be dependent on any social practice. Here lies a critique of not just social objectivity or 'the given' but also of the sovereign subject. The doing is everything, as the act is constitutive of the subject, and not *vice versa*. The 'doer', as Nietzsche insists, is merely added to the deed after the fact (Nietzsche, 2008, p. 29; *see also* Feldman 1991, p. 3).

Given that we do not ascribe any necessary or essential character to these communal spaces, that is, they are not *essentially* anything outside of or prior to their discursive articulation, as spatialised configurations of social being that they continually need to be re-performed. While in less nakedly divided societies, where the originary violence of objectivity has been more or less forgotten, the banal rhythms of the everyday will quietly reproduce spatial identities (e.g. banal nationalism). In frontier/colonial societies where division is very much to the surface this may not always be the case (Wright, 1987; Wilson, 2011; 2010). Spatial performances such as the processions through Muff Glen given that they spatialise communal subjectivities, inaugurate and reproduce antagonistic configurations of social objectivity. They are politically instituted and antagonistically constituted social-spatial configurations in so far as they inscribe a limit, presenced/concretised here as a hardened ethnic-political boundary. Therefore, while these practices are iterative they nonetheless disturb the social through the spatialisation of antagonism.

In order to maintain the 'integrity' of this spatialised subjectivity this boundary needs to be continually articulated, upheld, and defended. Again, here Schmitt's account of the political may be helpful. For Schmitt the political is not concerned with private enmity towards the other, indeed, one can be on cordial terms with one's implacable adversary (Schmitt, 2007). Instead, the political is a public relation. It is a group relation. When the very ontological limit of the spatialised communal identity is trespassed, it has the potential to solicit the defence of many members who identify as belonging in some way to that group. To trespass against such codifications of space is in this sense an act of spatial representative violence. It may be an isolated incident of violence, but the entire group has the potential to feel threatened. Space and its upholding in this way can serve as a measure of the security of 'the people.' It becomes the arbiter of victory and loss itself. Thereby the spatialisation of the political once embedded can generate serious episodes of wider proliferating violence, as it may

enable people to transcend the usual bonds of restraint, even affections, in the public defence or attack of a spatialised configuration of *their* 'people.' The repetitive character of Ulster's political marches then, do not necessarily act as a release valve for the non-violent or at least controlled violent expression of antagonism (though that possibility is not denied here). Instead the spatialisation of the political confronts the people of that society with the contingency of the social and the ultimately groundless nature of their identity. The spatial experience of antagonism, then, through the spatialisation of the political, which demands defence and deterrence, is a hugely powerful force that can shape the logics of inter-communal violence (Wright, 1987). The embedding of these dynamics, that is the spatialisation of the political, and its attendant logics of spatial defence/deterrence are especially evident in the standoff at Muff Glen 1868. Through these practices, social antagonism translates into spatial sites of antagonism.

To reiterate; the spatialisation of the political in Derry is how ontological or originary violence translates as concrete violence. Thus, there are two intertwined logics that help account for how the spatial articulation of antagonism generated violence in Derry. These are the spatialisation of the political, and the spatialisation of logics of defence /deterrence. The spatialisation of the political is deemed a political logic as it involves the spatial articulation of antagonistically constituted social and political identities. To spatialise the political is to (re)institute or uphold antagonistic configurations of the social. Of course, these practices are tied to the reproduction of the political regimes they are embedded within (this comes into stark relief in Chapter 5). The spatialisation of the political prompts an intertwined social/spatial logic of defence and deterrence. Once the political is (re)articulated spatially, which in Derry is the spatialisation of communal identity, it communicates an area to defend or attack. If communal being is spatialised, then to lose or concede 'ground' in some instances is to bring into question the very being of that community. To defend one's space then, is to defend one's being. This can set in train a pattern of spatial deterrence where the boundaries of an antagonistically configured space are aggressively upheld. Furthermore, if a communal being is spatially inscribed this could solicit wider social support in the defence of these threatened spaces. Thus, violence risks spilling beyond a mere few violent actors, and with embedded patterns of violence comes ever-deepening polarisation. The logic of deterrence structures and reproduces everyday social relationships between individuals and communities. It engenders social

dynamics of suspicion, where simply being in the wrong place could be deemed provocative. In a conflicted city such as Derry the political origin of such social practices rarely entirely retreats from view.

Haunting the city

The incidents at Muff Glen in 1867 and 1868 have been examined as moments of spatial transgression, where the upholding of a spatial frontier was to uphold and perform a certain modes of spatialised community. Still, some of the precise practices that made up an antagonistic spatial performance in mid-Victorian Derry have yet to be interrogated. Examined here is a Catholic procession, which gives a sense of the unique ‘spatial cultures’ in mid-Victorian Derry (Griffiths, 2016). These spatial practices betray a local Catholic refusal to concede legitimacy to the established order of things. Taken together they underline a city ‘haunted’ by the spectre of the past, a past which Derry’s Catholic parades demonstrate a refusal to forget. In this episode an alternative Catholic, conceivably republican, vision of Derry is articulated through the political mobilisation of song and colour. In particular, the performance of the republican tune *The Wearing of the Green* is detailed. Through intense historical-political condensation around the colour green, Catholic demonstrators flaunted growing Catholic political assertiveness. Spatially transgressive parades, with their contentious sounds and colours, illustrate the boisterous and vibrant practices through which Derry’s working-classes exercised political agency.

On St. Stephen’s Day, 26th December 1868, some of Derry’s Catholics mobilised in the Catholic Bogside district of the city, outside the western portion of Derry’s walls, and proceeded to parade around the city, and eventually into the Waterside, a staunchly Protestant district, with a Catholic minority (*Inquiry Report*, 1869: Doak 1978). In trespassing into the Waterside, the crowd consciously violated one of the city’s informal ethnic frontiers. The parade itself was something of a counter-demonstration, motivated in part at least by the recently held Closing of the Gates celebration on the 18th of December, where the Apprentice Boys marched along Derry’s walls and fired canons over the Bogside. Furthermore, the local peculiarities of the day added to the combustible atmosphere. As St. Stephen’s Day in the city, much to the dismay of the commissioners who reported on Derry’s unrest, was marked by the ‘firing of butts, for amusement’, and as a ‘natural result the disposition to use firearms becomes general’ (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p. 11). In fact, so liberal was the use of firearms in the city on St.

Stephen's Day, the one man arrested in connection with firing a pistol during the demonstration was not charged partly on account of the day that it was (*LD Sent.*, 29 Dec. 1868).

At about 1.30 pm in the afternoon, a large gathering of reportedly 200-300 people, accompanied by a Bogside band, the Hibernia Flute Band, marched through the city, eventually coming to the toll bridge that linked the city to the Waterside district (*LD Sent.*, 29 Dec. 1868; *LD Stan.*, 30 Dec. 1868). The gathering then 'forcibly crossed' into the Waterside, allegedly harassing the toll-keepers stationed at the bridge, as well as a passing mail-car driver (*LD Sent.* 29 Dec., 1868). The band played offensive airs, or 'party tunes', such as the Irish Republican anthem, that is to say, the revolutionary, *The Wearing of the Green*, and carried a flag. This flag, would later become notorious as it appeared in more serious subsequent confrontations, was deemed offensive and treasonous because it bore a 'harp without a crown' (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p. 11). That is, a symbol of Ireland de-linked from the monarchy. Sgt Stafford who was notified of the in-progress transgression by a policeman, met and remonstrated with the crowd at the Waterside end of the bridge, imploring them to turn back, and put away their contentious flag. Some of the processionists were persuaded to turn back across the bridge. Escorted by Sgt Stafford, they progressed outside the city walls, along Foyle St., onto Waterloo Place, Shipquay Place, William St, and then back to Abbey St. in the Bogside quarter. All the while, the band continued to play airs, and some fired shots. Shots were also fired by a gathering who were still on the bridge. The firing from the bridge is comparable to the Apprentice Boys' firing from the walls over the Bogside. In order to defuse the offensive potential of the parade, it seems, the police were intent on not allowing the Catholic demonstration through the city. The mobilisation of the crowd took place in the Bogside, which was also the site of return for the gathering. This underlines that even in this earlier period of conflict, the Bogside was something of a 'counter-space' facilitating forms of collective action. That the Bogside was a 'place apart', and viewed with a degree of suspicion, was relayed in the somewhat condescending evidence of a constable, Thomas Kennedy, to the commissioners

Where did they all go then? They scattered down into whatever place or room they used to codge their little affairs in, but I know they broke up these. Have they a place of meeting? They have a place from where they leave and return to. A sort of

society-room or place? I think so. Is it inside or outside the wall? Outside the wall, at the Bogside they call it (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p 103).

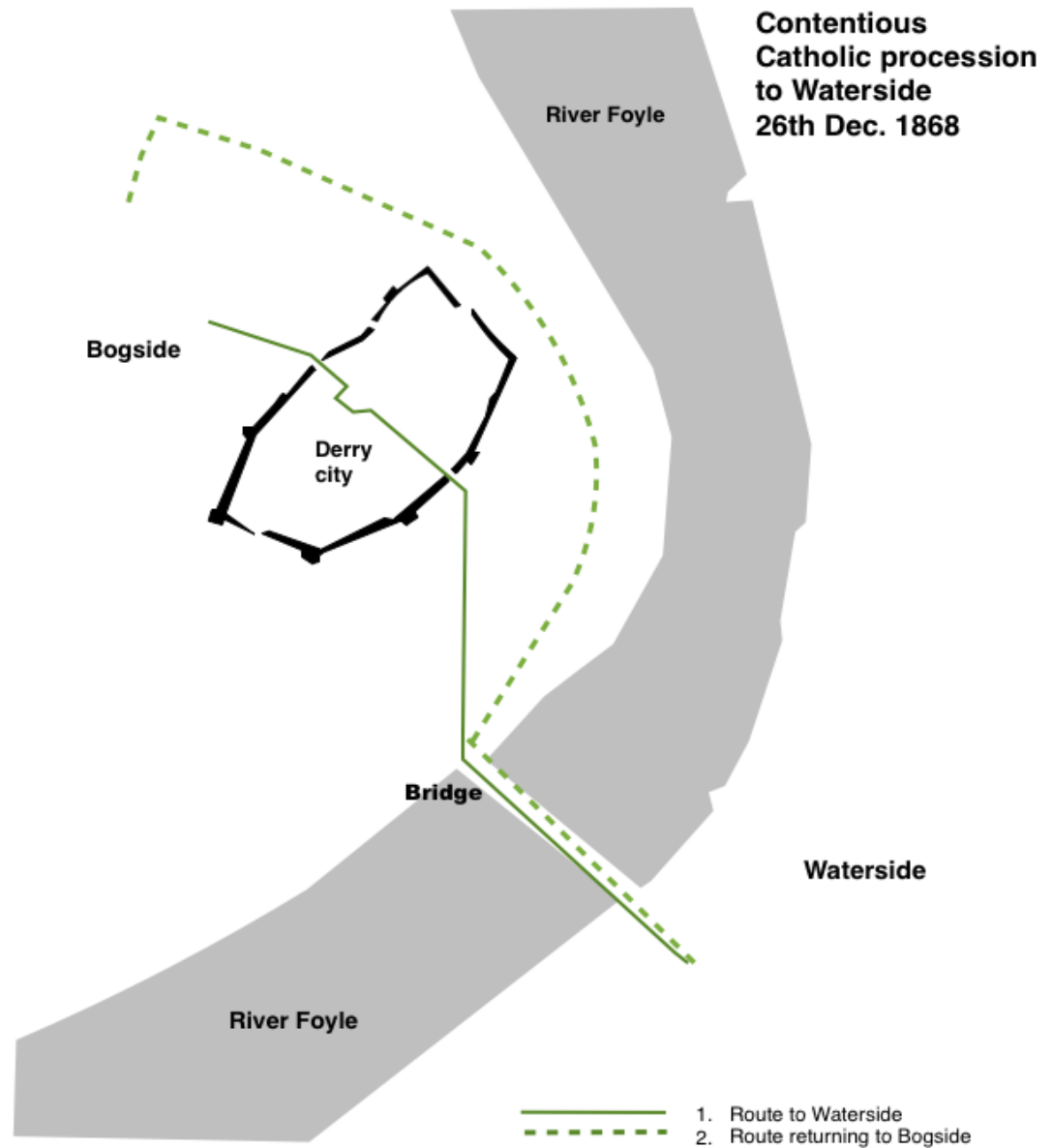


Fig. 5 Route of catholic procession, 26 Dec. 1869

The parade was, according to the conservative and Protestant *Londonderry Sentinel*, of a ‘disloyal character’ comprised of Catholics from the ‘disorderly classes’,

and solicited the ire and offense of Derry's 'loyal' subjects (*LD Sent.*, 29 Dec. 1868). The conservative organ complained that the shouts heard from the processionists betrayed the treasonous disposition of its participants, with cries such as 'Down with the Orange, Up with the Green!' being heard on the streets (*LD Sent.*, 29 Dec. 1868). Again, wider violence, it seems, was narrowly averted through the intervention of Stafford and with the aid of some constabulary. The *Derry Journal*, a Catholic paper, conceded that the actions of the crowd were 'very foolish' (*DJ*, 30 Dec. 1868). The actions of the crowd were deemed foolhardy primarily due to their transgressing of the city's hardening spatial boundaries. However, it was not that they simply crossed a political-communal-ethnic frontier, it was *how* they did it that was the source of provocation.

Grammars of spatial antagonism

The playing of 'party tunes' and the political articulation of colour were stable practices in the repertoire of inter-communal provocation and the antagonistic spatial performances. The playing of tunes had the remarkable capacity to signify an entire conception of the social. Similarly, the mobilisation of colour through intense condensation could also betray political loyalties, communal ties, as well as an interpretation of Ireland's complex colonial histories, and could even signal a view on contemporary political events.

In Derry, as elsewhere in Ulster, 'party' or partisan tunes were a stable item in the repertoire of inter-communal provocation. The playing of party tunes especially with marching parades were a way of enacting claims on the local space. In Derry, however, as the 1869 inquiry noted, it was anything but a straightforward task determining exactly what might be deemed a 'party tune.' An air often became partisan by mere association, especially if played by a particular band. The Commissioners lamented that the 'most innocent of airs if played by a particular band, assume at once, for another section of the people, a party character' (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p. 17). One witness confessed that in Derry 'if an old woman blew her nose here it would be turned into a party tune.' To play a tune then was to literally wear one's colours, to perform a collective political subjectivity. Therefore, if a band had preferred tunes, these same tunes came to signal the political loyalties and religious orientations of the community to which that band belonged. This is of spatial significance. If a band, say as in this case the Hibernia Flute Band which came from the Bogside and therefore a Catholic

neighbourhood, marched through the city, this was the performance of Catholic assertion and confidence, mobilising from their neighbourhoods outside the walls to claim the city as also belonging to them. Secondly, playing any tune associated with that band, through association could be seen as provocative. If played at interfaces or contested sites such as the city centre, the playing of such tunes could be read as claiming that space.

The Wearing of the Green

Some party tunes, it seems, were more offensive than others. The Wearing of the Green played by parading Bog-siders on St. Stephen's Day was one such air (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p. 102). Though not singular in its capacity to offend, Derry's 'loyal' Protestants appeared to find the tune particularly obnoxious. The ballad was, by this time, understood to be a 'Fenian' tune, thereby animating conservative fears of rebellion through the conspicuous display of disloyalty. The Fenian Rising of 1867 was put down just the year before, and many loyalists were appalled by what they saw as a widespread Catholic sympathy with the rebels. Which, in the eyes of those who sought to maintain the Union with Britain, was tantamount to a tacit, or perhaps not so tacit, approval of violent revolution. In its original iteration, The Wearing of the Green was a political street ballad written in the immediate aftermath of the failed republican uprising of 1798, which was led by the revolutionary United Irishmen (Zimmerman, 1967, p. 39). The United Irish rebellion served as a symbolic well-spring from which ballad-makers drew (Zimmerman, 1967). Like many popular republican songs, The Wearing of the Green articulates longstanding emblems of Irish culture, political aspirations, resistance and lamentations, and grafts these elements to those of radical republicanism. The ballad makes use of both revolutionary sentiment and the political mobilisation of colour.

The colour green, by the eighteenth-century had come to connote sedition and revolutionary intent through its appropriation by the revolutionary organisation the United Irishmen. While green had long denoted Irish religious devotion, its re-articulation by the United Irishmen baptized it in new radical political significance (Ó Cuiv, 1994). As *The Press* newspaper detailed in 1797, if green was worn it would be taken as a token of 'affection for Ireland' and may lead to transportation, the bayonet or the rope (quoted in Zimmerman 1967, p. 47). Indeed, the ballad remembers these events where men were reportedly summarily executed for the 'wearing of the green',

be it in the form of green cockades or scarfs. This foundational violence implicated in the upholding of the Ascendancy regime, and the attempted erasure of Irish modes-of-being is precisely what the ballad remembers. As such, the ballad speaks to a refusal of the established order, but also a refusal to forget. In Derry, performing an alternative vision of the city-space through playing 'disloyal' tunes, de-legitimises the codifications of power in the city, bringing their contingency into relief. As such, an alternative landscape comes into view, a landscape shaped by trauma, dispossession, and loss, that vexed and haunt the spatial reproduction of the dominant order. Significantly, such landscapes give meaning to the present, and past, but also frame the desire for an alternative political future.

The now better known rendition of *The Wearing of the Green*, written in 1864 by Dion Boucicault (Sparling, 1888), is largely faithful in content and sentiment to earlier versions, conjuring notions of oppression, exile, and a past to be redeemed by posterity. In the ballad's refrain, an exiled radical émigré, fleeing the put-down of the rebellion laments the state of Ireland

Oh, Paddy dear, did you hear the news that's going 'round?
The shamrock is forbid by law to grow on Irish ground
Saint Patrick's Day no more to keep, his color can't be seen
For there's a bloody law again' the Wearing of the Green

The shamrock, again an emblem of 'Irish-ness' and of Irish religious devotion, is uprooted from the earth. A synecdoche for a people usurped from the land, the shamrock torn from the soil speaks to the attempted erasure of a more 'legitimate' alternative sovereignty. To be Irish then, in this idiom, and to express it, is to be marked by an unassuageable guilt in the eyes of officialdom. The ballad continues with the well-worn trope of meeting a figure or hope, in this case the prominent republican leader Napper Tandy. In other ballads this messianic position might be occupied by Napoleon, a potential liberator in the popular imagination, given the French support of the 1798 rebellion, and thereby giving voice to a desire for the over-turning of history

I met with Napper Tandy and he took me by the hand
And he said "How's poor old Ireland and how does she stand?"
"She's the most distressful country that ever yet was seen

For they're hanging men and women there for Wearing of the
Green."

The Wearing of the Green as per many republican songs holds out the prospect of equality. Indeed, 'equality' it could be argued is the long-term 'empty signifier' of republican discourse, the locus of the power of republican discourse to adapt and to be re-articulated in subsequent struggles (Closhey, 2000). However, equality acquires its full messianic and ruptural force, as the claim of equality de-naturalizes the status quo. Equality would undo past victories, and therefore would be profoundly levelling. Playing these tunes in Derry then, flaunted growing Catholic power in hitherto near-exclusively Protestant space. It also underlines how the performance of space through nationalist/republican tunes gives voice to the spectral remainders of conquest that still condition political desire

I've heard a whisper of a land that lies beyond the sea
Where rich and poor stand equal in the light of Freedom's day.
Ah, Erin, must we leave you, driven by a tyrant's hand
Must we seek a mother's blessing from a strange and distant land
Where the cruel cross of England shall never more be seen
And where, please God, we'll live and die, still Wearing of the Green.

As suggested above, much of 'The Wearing of the Green's symbolic force was derived from how green as a colour had come to signal fidelity to radical political projects. As found in many ballads of its ilk there is a political articulation of colours. Green, signifying Ireland and republicanism, is juxtaposed to the 'bloody red' of England, or the Orange of the Orangemen (*see also* Ó Cuiv 1994)²⁷

Then since the color we must wear is England's cruel red
Sure Ireland's sons will never forget the blood that they have shed

²⁷ A United-Irish leader, Dr William Drennan, in his poem 'Erin' (a name for Ireland), promises the green will outlast the orange and blue of England (presumably on account of justness of its cause) :

When Erin first rose from the dark-swelling flood,
God bless'd the green island, He saw it was good
[...]
The cause is good, and the men are true;
And the green shall outlive both the orange and blue.

You may pull the shamrock from your hat and cast it on the sod
But 'twill take root and flourish there, though underfoot 'tis trod.

Green denoted a debarred, more righteous form of sovereignty, one that still commands loyalty, despite the claims of officialdom:

When laws can stop the blades of grass for growing as they grow
And when the leaves in summertime their verdure dare not show
Then I will change the color too I wear in my caubeen²⁸

In Derry, Green was in opposition to the crimson of the Apprentice Boys, as well as the orange of the Orange Order. Victory and spatial struggle was often presented in terms of colour, as exemplified by the following Apprentice Boy promise to hoist their colours in Derry, presumably at the necessary expense of the green: ‘with God’s help, and the assistance of Protestant Ulster, the Crimson Banner will be found floating in Derry on the 12th of August next; and come Law or No Law; the Derry celebrations will be observed [*sic.*]’ (NAI CSORP 19 July 1870, *see Fig. 6*). The political articulation of colour, then, was significant in the performing of space in Derry. Not only did colours serve as markers signalling different communities and their spatial boundaries, when paraded within the city, or at interface sites, the articulation of orange, crimson, or green, politically was to re-articulate that space as belonging to political projects associated with those colours. To take a speech at an Orange demonstration at Newtownards in July 1868 as an illustrative example of how Derry, as a frontier city in the Protestant imaginary, in all its historical complexities could be expressed through rhetorical mobilisation of colour. The walls of Derry were articulated as a spatial boundary between the loyal orange and crimson, from the machinations of ‘papist’ plots and revolution. As such, recognizing or naming an area as green or orange was a means of spatializing the enemy, conferring an artificial unity on a community and a threat. As one public speaker addressed his audience at rally in Newtownards

Should they once more try to make Rome dominant in our nation,
hundreds of good, and true, and trusty men will rally round the *crimson*
flag that waves on the Derry walls, and bid the foe defiance. Ulster will

²⁸ Caubeen, an Irish beret.

send forth thousands of *Orange* and *Purple* men, and will teach Fenian conspirators and Popish revolutionists the lesson their fathers so dearly bought at Derry, Boyne, and Aughrim [*emphasis added*]' (NW, 14 July 1868).

As such, the wearing of colours was deemed the outward expression of an inner *political* being. The *Sentinel* noted that some of the processionists on St. Stephen's Day, wore green neckties, as well as caps with harp emblems, which the paper seems to imply were evidence of disloyalty (*LD Sent.*, 29 Dec. 1868). By articulating these items politically Catholic marchers not only enacted a claim on the local space, they constituted themselves as political agents, but also as objects of suspicion in the eyes of loyalists. The wearing of green, then, was a promise to *spatialise* the green, to reproduce a different codification of that space. While orange celebrations generally celebrated victories of the past, and mobilized to reassert those victories, 'green' demonstrations as displays of catholic assertion, were perhaps celebrations of victories that were yet to come. The political articulation of colour, then, served as a spatial lens that rendered visible the shifting dynamics of power in the city.

LONDONDERRY WORKING MEN'S
LIBERAL DEFENCE ASSOCIATION.
 TO THE CATHOLICS OF ULSTER.

FELLOW CATHOLICS—On the last 18th of December a strong and determined protest was made by the Catholics of Derry and Donegal against the intolerant and fanatical displays of the Apprentice Boys of the City of Londonderry. That protest was made after a manner most creditable to yourselves, while your presence on the occasion spread a terror amongst the enemies of your religion that all their efforts at bravado but ill disguised. On several occasions since that event, both in connection with the City Election and the 17th of March, (the anniversary of your Patron Saint) the Catholics of Derry forbore making any display, lest it should be construed into an offence by those of a different communion, at the same time fondly hoping that ere another anniversary came round her Majesty's Government would have taken such decided steps as would for ever have rid us of the insults and annoyances we have been subjected to for a long series of years. Recent events in the House of Commons show us that we have been bitterly disappointed, and that in spite of all our forbearance, and our desire to live on terms of amity and good-will with our fellow-citizens of a different creed, we are to be again subjected, on the approaching 12th of August, to another of those No Popery orgies; so insulting and degrading to every man who bears the name of Catholic. On the last 12th of July, at an Orange Demonstration held in Lisburn, JOHN GUY FERGUSON, Governor of the Apprentice Boys of Londonderry, made use of the following expressions:—

“With God's help, and the assistance of the Protestants of Ulster, the Crimson Banner will be found floating in Derry on the 12th of August next; and COME LAW OR NO LAW, the Derry Celebrations shall be observed.”

Catholics of Londonderry, will you allow yourselves any longer to be outraged and insulted at the beck and nod of JOHN GUY FERGUSON? Will 13,000 Catholics (who desire to live on terms of friendship and good-will with all men) any longer tamely submit to be trodden over by such arrogant intolerance? Will you any longer submit to the insults from a despicable minority that you have hitherto so long and patiently borne, without making an effort to shake off, at once and for ever, the obloquy and degradation you are subjected to twice each year in the City of Derry?

Meet, then, in your thousands on the approaching 12th of August, in the City of Derry. Show by your manly undaunted bearing that you will no longer allow feelings you hold most dear to be outraged and trampled on with impunity.

Violate no law. Pay every deference to the counsels of the constituted authorities, and neither by word nor deed demean yourselves in the eyes of the community; at the same time, make it known to all concerned, that as you have studiously avoided giving offence to any of your fellow-citizens, you will no longer tamely submit to the No Popery displays so long fostered and encouraged by a handful of bigots in Londonderry.

(ON BEHALF OF THE COMMITTEE.)

Londonderry, 19th July, 1870.

Fig. 6 Londonderry Working Men's Liberal Defence Association notice (NAI CSORP 19 July 1870)

Two cities, one soil

Queen Victoria's son, Prince Arthur, paid a visit to Derry on 28 April 1869, on his royal tour of Ireland (Radford, 2009; Farrell, 2000; Lacy 1990, p. 201; Doak, 1978). His visit, however, was marred by serious rioting which saw the deaths of three of Derry's citizens at the hands of the city constabulary (*NW*, 29 April 1869). It was this loss of life that got the attention of Dublin castle, prompting the establishment of the commission of inquiry into the events. On the occasion of the royal visit the two competing, and antagonistic, configurations of Derry directly collide. The clashes between opposed parties on this occasion takes place within the city walls. Given the noxious political environment in Derry at the time, with electoral tensions running high, there could be no shared ground. That is, Derry as a transcendental ground could not accommodate two conflict groups coming together to offer even separate welcomes to the prince. While there were two dominant visions of Derry, there was only one city centre. As the commissioners noted

both parties were likely to offer him a welcome, each was likely to attempt to turn the welcome, so given, into a party demonstration, from its own point of view. If the Apprentice Boys were to fire a royal salute in honour, and parade their Britannia Band, it was improbable that the Bog-side people with the Hibernia Band, would not attempt something of a counter-move. Imminent risk of mutual annoyance and offense was probable (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p. 15)

The prospect of Catholics along with their 'disloyal' Hibernia Flute band parading in a key site of Protestant power, Derry city centre, was too much for some of the city's conservative Protestant's to accept (Farrell 2000, p. 152). As reported by the *Londonderry Standard*, for example, the leader of the Apprentice Boys, whom the paper suggested moved the association in a much more bellicose direction, had said openly 'that if the Hibernia Flute Band should come out and play on Wednesday [*the day of the prince's visit*], they might bring their coffins with them' (*LD Stan.*, 1 May 1869). Such 'advice' was not heeded by the Hibernia Band. It was unlikely that Catholic parades would forgo the opportunity to march in the city, especially as the Apprentice Boys and other loyal bands would be out in force playing the tunes which Catholics found offensive.

The prince arrived in Derry at 3pm, and was escorted by the town dignitaries and a welcome party, and brought to the Corporation Hall in the central square, or ‘the Diamond’, where he was to be given a formal welcome. As Prince Arthur entered the hall, the Apprentice Boys fired a twenty-one gun salute from the walls, repeating the salute after the address had finished. Again, firing from the walls was understood as provocative by Catholics. The *Freeman’s Journal*, an Irish nationalist newspaper, lambasted the affair as an ‘unseemly display of orangeism’, reporting that ‘scarcely had the municipal address been presented and replied to than the shout of “No Surrender” was raised [*sic.*]’ (*Freeman’s Journal* reported in *NW* 30 April, 1869). The prince then retired for some time to the Imperial Hotel in Bishop street, where parading Apprentice Boys registered both loyalty to the prince, and their disaffections with both local and imperial politics. Cheers for ‘the Queen, for the Prince, for the Duke of Abercorn, for Lord Claud John Hamilton (Derry’s conservative political candidate, *see* Chapter 4), and for the union of Church and State’ were aired by the Apprentice Boys and other loyalists. While they jeered ‘Gladstone the Traitor’ and the Liberal Richard Dowse, Derry’s Gladstonian who forged an alliance with Catholics and supported the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland (*LD Sent.*, 30 April 1869; *see* Chap. 4). These shouts were countered by Derry’s Catholic citizens with cheers for Dowse and ‘equality’ (*NW*, 30 April 1869). One individual, George Gallagher, was later charged for shouting party slogans at the centre of a crowd in Bishop’s Street, allegedly shouting during a speech he made to the gathering, ‘down with tyranny’ and to ‘hell with the English Ascendancy’ (*LD Stan.*, 1 May 1869).

The Bogside party also paraded in the city with the Hibernia Flute Band, playing tunes such as the aforementioned ‘The Wearing of the Green’ and ‘St. Patrick’s Day’ (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, pp. 12-13). Interestingly, they also played ‘God Save the Queen’ in honour of the royal visitor. One witness, in his evidence to the commissioners, and no fan of the Hibernia Band, suggested that the band lacked sincerity, declaring that the band ‘murdered it [God Save the Queen] they played as though it were a tune they had not practiced much’ (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p. 190). Again, the performance of Catholics was taken as betraying a fundamental disloyalty. Whether or not they intentionally ‘butchered’ the tune is, perhaps, speculation. What is not in doubt, however, is that the playing of revolutionary tunes inside the walls on the occasion of the Prince’s visit was flagrantly antagonistic in the eyes (and ears) of Derry’s Protestants as well as some ‘respectable’ Catholics. The *Londonderry Sentinel*

also noted, as a marker of disloyalty, that the Hibernia Band failed to come to a halt outside the hotel (*LD Sent.*, 30 April 1869). The Protestant Britannia Band, however, played what Constable Kennedy described as ‘opposite tunes’ to the Catholics, such as ‘Derry Walls Away’ and ‘Protestant Boys’ (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p. 103). The notorious flag of St. Stephen’s Day, bearing a harp without a crown, was reportedly ‘flaunted’ at the prince’s carriage, with shouts of ‘Up the Republic!’ (a Fenian slogan) being heard on the streets later that evening (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p. 12).

From provocation to deadly violence

At around 8pm, the turbulent atmosphere of the day took a turn, with disturbances in Society Street and Butcher Street. Butcher Street links the Diamond and the city centre to the Bogside, with houses in the vicinity of Butcher Street being Catholic dwellings. The struggle in Derry’s central civic space that blighted the day, was starting to boil over into a direct confrontation. There was a series of arrests made early in the night. Constable Kennedy with the help of other constabulary, apprehended a Catholic man, Hugh Toland who had wrested a cannon ramrod from the Apprentice Boys and made off with it (*LD Stan.*, , 1 May 1869). It was reported that Toland, who was drunk on the occasion, and a ring leader of some rioters, was acting ‘very violently’ striking people first with a stick, and then with the cannon ramrod he had stolen (*LD Stan.*, 8 May 1869). A large crowd, numbering over one hundred, had by then gathered on the city walls, down as far as Butcher’s Gate, which was an interface site, as it led into the Bogside. Those gathered on the walls were Apprentice Boys, who were opposed by a ‘bog-side party’ below. Stones were thrown from the walls, and also rained down on Catholic homes in the area. Gunshots were eventually fired. The Constabulary in the city responded by fixing bayonets, and yet struggled to keep the factions apart. In the meantime, Derry’s mayor, reluctant to create an even greater spectacle in the presence of the prince, refused to call out the military.

This rioting was a direct battle over Derry's central civic space. Later that night, the constabulary implored the Bogside faction to go home. The Bogside party’s response to such requests insisted that if the constabulary ‘chased the Apprentice Boy party they would go home, but they would not leave their ground until they were put away’ (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p. 104). The Catholic crowd told Stafford that if they went near Butcher’s Gate, ‘they would be murdered’ by the Apprentice Boy gathering on the wall (*Inquiry Report*. 1869, p. 14). Still, the Bogsiders refused to take an alternative

safer route home through Ship-Quay street, which the Commissioners noted would be by a considerable distance a longer route home (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p. 14). The Catholic crowd feared that if they left the scene, especially if they took the longer road, they were conceding defeat, being driven out of the city by their foes. Again, here, as per Muff Glen, space was the arbiter of victory and defeat.

Later, a Protestant crowd who were occupying Bishop St., rushed towards the Bogside gathering who fled down through Shipquay St.. Shots were fired from the approaching crowd. It was then that the Constabulary fired into the riotous assembly, fatally wounding three. William Craig, a twenty-year-old Presbyterian rope spinner, was shot in the head, and lay writhing on the ground for some time, 'his head tossing in such a manner that it required two men to hold it down.' Eighteen-year-old mechanic, Robert Moncrief, also lay dead, with reports of his blood flowing freely along the street (both men were reportedly not part of any conflicting faction). A Catholic, William Murphy, was seriously wounded by gunshot, and later died from his injuries (*LD Stand.*, 1 May 1869). Many others were also injured, though less seriously. It was also reported that many houses in the vicinity of Butcher's Gate had suffered damage during the riot, with their windows broken in by stones thrown by the gatherings on the wall. Tension in the following days did not abate. The *Northern Whig's* correspondent reported that as the funeral procession of Robert Moncrief was passing through Fahan street in the Bogside 'some foolish woman incited little boys to groan and throw stones at the mourners' (*NW.*, 4 May 1869). That is, antagonism reverberated through the social, or as Marchart puts it, invoking Jean-Luc Nancy, 'the social trembles.' The struggle within the central civic space of Derry betrays that occupation of the city centre was understood as decidedly zero-sum by those who participated in the violence. In this period, however, violence tended to subside once opposed parties retreated to their own neighbourhoods.

Conclusions

At the very beginning of the chapter, mid-Victorian Derry was described as an unsettled city. It was unsettled because the city kept brushing up against its own radical impossibility. That is, the antagonistic political institution of the social was continually reactivated through the political performance of space. By examining these moments of conflictual spatial performance, we have begun in earnest to (empirically) think antagonism spatially. The chapter detailed how the 'revelatory' function of antagonism

discloses the power-saturated and thus contingent origins of the social order. This revelation then brings into question the very foundations of that order, in this case the state. While the original violence implicated in the antagonistic constitution of social objectivity is certainly significant, especially in the contexts of divided societies and contested spaces where the social constantly encounters its own radical limit, this violence of being is not sufficient to explain the actual dynamics of violence that may play out and shape any given struggle. There is no necessary translation between the ontological violence of radical negativity and physical modes and practices of violence. Conflating the specific repertoires of physical violence of a given context with ontological violence risks erasing the historical and contextual specificity of those modes of violence. Furthermore such a conflation risks essentialising violence. That is, as per the worst examples of the historiography of Ulster's violent histories, each episode of violence becomes the mere unfolding or iteration of a primary violence. Given that the antagonistic constitution of social objectivity does not readily translate to concrete practices of violence, in order to think antagonism spatially, the specific logics through which antagonism was spatialised need to be identified.

The two co-imbricated processes identified here, in the context of mid-late nineteenth-century Derry, are the spatialisation of the political, and the spatialisation of logics of defence and deterrence. In Derry, a key driver and shaper of the dynamics of intercommunal violence was the political performance of space. The spatialisation of the political spatialises not only an antagonistic vision of the social, but an antagonistic vision of communal-political being itself. That is, spatialising the political spatialises a conception of 'the people.' Thus, this at once concretises and bounds one's own community but also spatialises the enemy. These spaces, then, solicit the defence of those who wish to protect these spatial identities. Political agency is then asserted in the defence or conversely the trespassing of these spatial frontiers. The upholding or transgression of space in such moments of inter-communal conflict can become the very arbiter of victory and loss. These twinned logics of spatialising the political and upholding or attacking these boundaries underline the serious potential for patterns of violence to become embedded.

Another key aspect of thinking space antagonistically in the context of mid-Victorian Derry, is how social objectivity remains 'haunted' by its own radical exclusions. The histories of violence will not fade. As such, evident in Derry's Catholic spatial performances, and the trespassing of spatial boundaries in the city, is the

proclaiming of a fidelity to a vision of the social that essentially repudiates the established order, its codifications of power, and of course, the histories of violence through which that order was inaugurated. Such refusal underlines the radical impossibility of the established order, antagonising Derry's citizens who wish to uphold that order, and their place within it. Thus the cycle of spatialising the political, that is, rebounding the limits of the social, continued.

The final empirical moment of the chapter, which looked at the violence that marked Derry during the visit of Prince Arthur in April 1869, is illustrative. Unlike the other episodes which are oriented around the upholding of a boundary (though such behaviour features in this episode too), violence took place within the walls of the city itself. The material arrangement of the city allows for the turning of the city centre into a violent agora, where there is literally no room for such antagonistic performances. There is no shared ground, only radically opposed visions of the social (and the city) performed on top of each other. In the other moments ground could be conceded. That is, a conflicting party could recognise that a certain space 'belongs' to the other, and their own identity need not be overtly negated by acknowledging such spaces. When funnelled into the city centre however, in such conflictual moments the very nature of city itself is at stake. The spatialisation of the political has more catastrophic consequences in later episodes of violence, where the bounds of restraint are loosened on account of the wider political conflicts such intercommunal violence is embedded within (*see* Chap. 5).

Though it was glimpsed here, especially in the Catholic performance of space, and the subject of the next chapter, are the spatial imaginaries, the fantasmatic force, that drives the spatial articulation of the political. Without the fantasmatic contexts of these spatial practices, a critical explanatory layer is absent.

4. The spatialisation of the political imagination

A return to fantasy

This chapter interrogates how in nineteenth-century Derry the political imagination is at the same time a spatial imaginary. If communal-political being is articulated spatially, space becomes the measure of security. In this way, space is a ‘mode of political thinking’ (Dikeç, 2016; 2012). Spatial imaginaries, far from being unproblematic ‘representations of the places of yesterday, today or tomorrow’, are, as Davoudi writes, ‘deeply implicated in power struggles over those places and spaces that constitute the sites of struggle’ (Davoudi, 2018, pp. 97-98). In the vernacular of this analysis, then, spatial imaginaries are antagonistic in character. Political visions of space are both constituted and disturbed by the outside that threatens it. Here, the logic of fantasy enters. The utopian aspect of the spatial-political imaginary promises a fullness-to-come if the outside threat is neutralised. While, conversely, the horrific dimension of the spatial-political imaginary foretells ruin if a collective-political articulation of space is not upheld. When the political is articulated spatially, to concede space is to risk undoing the very ground of communal-political being. The spatial practices examined in this thesis would be scarcely intelligible without reference to the spatial fantasies that drive them. The appeal to fantasmatic logics, therefore, provides a critical explanatory layer in understanding how antagonism is spatialised in Derry.

The focus of this chapter is primarily concerned with conservative Derry Protestants’ distinctive political-spatial imaginary. The political imaginary of Ulster’s loyalists is often referred to as a ‘siege mentality’ (Follis, 1995; Govern 1994). In the political discourses of loyalism, Protestants are a beleaguered people, perennially besieged by forces that are implacably hostile to the continuation of the Union with Britain and the Protestant character of Ulster. It is a political vision that mobilises the

Derry Siege of 1689, where Derry's Protestants refused to capitulate to their enemies outside the city's walls. The siege then, far from being a mere metaphor, was (and to a large extent still is) a critical dimension of conservative Ulster Protestant political discourse. It provides the spatial-political prism through which past, present, and future political struggles are located and made sense of.

The empirical focus of this chapter is on two riots that occurred in the city centre. These are the Corporation Hall riots of 1868 and 1883. Though separated by fifteen years these riots share a striking symmetry. On both occasions, the Corporation Hall located in the city centre or 'the Diamond' was the object of struggle. During these events, conservative Protestants were outraged that their political opponents had been granted use of the hall for political speeches. According to Derry's loyalists, the speakers at these events expressed views that were anathema to the preservation of the Union and Protestant power in Derry. The espousal of such political views in the heart of Derry city, a key site in Ulster Protestant discourse, was deeply antagonistic to the conservative Derry Protestant's sense of place. Derry's loyalists, then, felt compelled to uphold the integrity of the city centre as Protestant space. What is more, much of the conservative discourse around these events mobilised the image of the Siege of Derry in articulating the threat that Derry's loyal Protestants were facing.

The chapter progresses as follows: Firstly, in more broad terms, the chapter details how thinking in terms of place is to think politically. Then, in a more theoretical register the concept of the spatial imaginary is thought through the category of fantasy. Thirdly, the riots of 1868 and 1883 are detailed. The political contexts of these events are briefly recounted. Throughout the narratives of the riots, their spatial and fantasmatic aspects are underlined. Fuller theoretical commentary, however, is saved for the final section of the chapter which interrogates the loyalist spatial imaginary as a political discourse. This provides the fuller fantasmatic context for these riots, and indeed much of the other spatial and political practices that feature throughout this thesis.

Thinking space, thinking politically

Edward S. Casey, opening his *Being before Place*, poses a question: 'Can you imagine what it would be like if there were no places in the world? None whatsoever! An utter placeless void!' (Casey, 1993, p. ix). In prompting the reader to engage in what is surely

an impossible thought experiment, Casey is underlining that we can scarcely think at all evacuated from all ‘traces of place.’ Here, Casey has departed from any understanding of place as a parcel of absolute space, or a mere location within it. Instead, Casey is positing place as something much more fundamental to human being, and not something which provides the mere site of being (Casey, 1993; 2013). Such a disposition towards the spatial *vis-à-vis* human *being*, echoes the work of spatial theorists, most obviously human geographers since the 1970s who sought to resist the subordination of place to abstract space (e.g. Relph, 1976; Tuan 1974; 1977; Cresswell, 2015; Malpas, 1999).

At times, philosophy has taken note of the spatial. Notably, for Heidegger (1971), too, place was afforded something of a primacy in relation to human existence. His understanding of being, or *Dasein*, is literally being-there or there-being. That is, man is a ‘place-being and not a being in a place’ (Buchanan & Lambert, 2005, p. 3). Furthermore, place in Heidegger’s thought is an integral fundament of *Eigentlichkeit*, or living authentically. Other phenomenologists, such as Merleau-Ponty, further signal the importance of place vis-à-vis human being. As Merleau-Ponty put it ‘the world is wholly inside and I am wholly outside myself’, hinting at how place is in some way the spatialisation of the subject (quoted in Malpas 1999, 5; *see also* Bachelard, 2014).²⁹

Thinking space (or place) philosophically, however, does not necessarily shed light on the political/antagonistic dimensions of the spatial. If communal-political being is spatialised as it is in Derry, the upholding of one’s space is to uphold one’s very being, and one’s political-communal subjectivity. This aspect of the spatialisation of the political subject, as detailed in the previous chapter, drives the dynamics of defence and deterrence in the maintenance of the power relations which constitute a given space. Space, then, in Derry is a mode of political thinking (Dikeç, 2012; 2016). The loss or keeping of one’s space becomes a mode of measuring political success or failure.

The holding of Derry is a longstanding feature in loyalist political discourse. On the western flank of the Foyle River, nestled under the shadow of St. Columb’s Cathedral and Derry’s historic walls, lies the staunchly Protestant and Loyalist estate, the Fountain (Hansson & McLaughlin 2018; McKay, 2000). The neighbourhood is an

²⁹ For Gaston Bachelard (2014 [1955]) in his seminal *Poetics of Space* gets at something that might be considered similar. To explore one’s space, to conduct a ‘*topoanalysis*,’ say, of the space of one’s house, is by extension to explore oneself.

interface site, sharing a boundary with Bishop Street, a Catholic area, with the Nationalist and Republican ‘no-go’ area of the late-1960s ‘Free Derry’ once extending as far as here (Ó Dochartaigh, 2005). As ‘the Troubles’ advanced many of the Fountain’s inhabitants made their way across the river, settling in what they understood as the comparative safety of the other Protestant districts, such as the Waterside. Accordingly, the estate’s population fell dramatically during the course of the conflict, from a bustling 1,500 to about 300 or so residents today (*BT*, 10 July 2018; *IN*, 10 July 2018). Now, access to the Fountain is through a closely watched security gate, which closes at 9pm (*IT*, 9 July 2018), with Derry’s last remaining ‘peace wall’ towering over the enclave for further protection. As such, some Protestants hold the Fountain as a beleaguered outpost on the west bank of the Foyle, a tenuous lynchpin that stubbornly clings to a once-key site of Protestant hegemony. A famous, if drab, political mural in the Fountain, one of Derry’s many, betrays this sense of both being under siege and a lasting resistance to it. A stark piece in white lettering set against a black background reads: ‘Londonderry West Bank Loyalists, Still Under Siege’, which is followed by the watchwords of Ulster loyalism, ‘No Surrender’ (*fig. 7*). The mural speaks to the remarkable durability of the Protestant siege myth as an enduring political discourse. One-hundred years before the start of the Northern Irish conflict, for Derry’s loyalists the Siege was a mode of thinking politically. It was the interpretive frame through which Derry’s Protestants assessed the relative spatial-political security of Derry as a Protestant city.

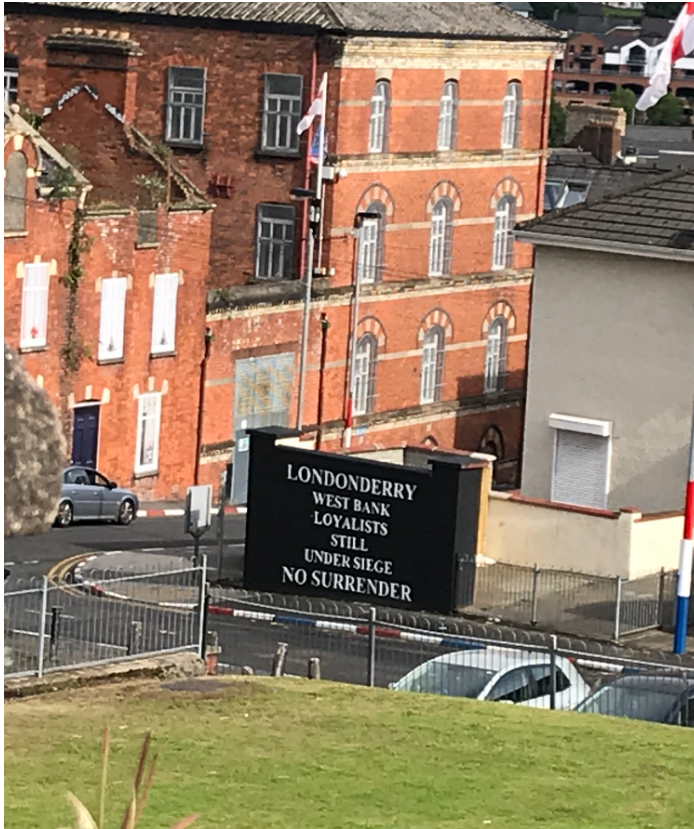


Fig. 7. A view from the city walls of a loyalist mural in the Fountain estate. Curbs are painted in the colours of the Union Jack, and the Northern Ireland flag can be seen in the middle and on the left side of the picture. Photo taken by author 14 August 2018.

Spatial imaginary / spatial fantasy

Josh Watkins (2015) details that for over two decades geographers have grappled with and theorised the concept of the spatial imaginary (O'Brien, 2019; Gregory, 1995).³⁰ These various conceptualisations of spatial imaginaries are grounded in varying ontological presuppositions. Critical political geographers have largely understood spatial imaginaries as discursive, though generally in a more circumscribed understanding of discourse as it features in this analysis. Spatial imaginaries as representations of spaces and places 'are socially created ideas structuring how certain topics are understood and talked about, knowledges and notions of what counts as knowledge' (Watkins, 2015, p. 508; Said, 2003). Other scholars have adopted a more explicitly performative discursive understanding of spatial imaginaries (Gregson & Rose, 2000). In such performative accounts, spatial imaginaries organise the political

³⁰ Much of the work of cultural and critical geography on spatial imaginaries has focused on broader conceptualisations of space, such as 'the Orient' as it features in work inspired by Edward Said, 'the West' or the spatial imaginaries of globalisation, or categories of scale, and so on. For an overview, see Watkins (2015).

and social practices that (re)produce configurations of space, as well as their attendant imaginaries.

Though much of contemporary conceptions of the ‘imaginary’ in social and political theory has its origins in Lacan’s work, the concept of the ‘imaginary’ has been employed in various, often conflicting, ways by a range of scholars. Notable amongst these influential theoretical iterations of the imaginary are Benedict Anderson’s (1993) ‘imagined community’, the imaginary as it features in the work of Cornelius Castoriadis (1975), and Charles Taylor’s (2004) concept of a ‘social imaginary.’ These understandings refer, respectively, to the imagined community of the nation, the imaginary foundations of a society, and signal a shift from thinking in hierarchal to more egalitarian horizontal and communal terms. Of more immediate relevance here, Ernesto Laclau also has a distinct conception of the *imaginary* as well as *myth* (Laclau, 1992; Dobbernack, 2010; Rear, 2013). In many respects, the siege though it is a key aspect of loyalist political discourse, is closer to the Laclauian understanding of myth. Though, it must be said, the theorisation of myth and the transition to the imaginary and *vice versa* is anything but straightforward (Norval, 2000, p. 227-228).³¹ A myth emerges as a response to structural dislocation, that is, when a social formation encounters its own radical impossibility. As Howarth *et al* (2015, p. 15; Laclau 1992. P. 61) suggest, myths create new spaces of representation that seek to absorb or negate such dislocations. As such myths negate the intrusion of the temporal, that which disrupts, by subordinating the event to the spatial. Which is to say, they rob events of their historicity. The siege myth serves precisely this function. The myth as a spatial-political discourse negates the trauma of the radical contingency of the social by already predicting dislocations. The threat of Catholics and nationalists, or internal traitors, are key structural features of the siege myth and thus new threats can be located with these already given internal moments within the discourse. As Howarth *et al* (2000, p. 15) summarise, ‘from their emergence to their dissolution, myths can function as a surface of inscription for a variety of social demands and dislocations.’

Imaginaries in Laclau’s work are myths that have become sufficiently naturalised or sedimented, that is, where the antagonistic character of the social formation the

³¹ As Norval (2000, p. 228) suggests the distinction between myth and imaginaries ‘stands in need of further refinement’ and Laclau’s concept of the imaginary requires ‘theoretical clarification.’ Arguably, at least at the more empirical level this is still the case. At any rate, it is perhaps beyond the remit of this study to fully work out these distinctions. Though myths and imaginaries are key aspects of the Laclauian conception of discourse, thinking objectivity in terms of discourse and its sedimentation/reactivation, etc., is sufficient for the purposes of the analysis pursued here.

myth sutures retreats from view. Imaginaries, then, become a ‘horizon.’ Though the siege myth is indeed durable, it nonetheless never achieves the status of a horizon, and is therefore not an imaginary in Laclauian terms. It may at times have served as hegemonic frame through which many of Ulster’s Protestants understood their social and political realities, though it remained contested even within the various strands of political Protestantism. Given that the antagonistic constitution of the social was continually reactivated in Derry, and the siege myth is a response to these dislocations, it can only exist as an overtly antagonistic political discourse. The Laclauian conception of imaginaries is therefore quite distinct from the understanding of ‘spatial imaginary’ as it variously features in spatial theory. Nonetheless, the concept of a spatial imaginary is still drawn upon here, albeit more loosely and refracted through a post-structuralist discourse theory, as it helps to foreground the spatial aspects of a political discourse.

Spatial imaginaries, in Wendy Wolford’s definition, are the ‘cognitive frameworks, both collective and individual, constituted through the lived experiences, perceptions, and conceptions of space itself.’ Spatial imaginaries then are not merely narratives about certain places, they are constitutive of the experience of space (Watkins, 2015). Davoudi in his definition puts the accent on political aspects of spatial imaginaries, stressing that spatial imaginaries as the product of relations of power are the

deeply held, collective understandings of socio-spatial relations that are performed by, give sense to, make possible and change collective socio-spatial practices. They are produced through political struggles over conceptions, perceptions and lived experience of place. They are circulated and propagated through images, stories, texts, data, algorithms and performances. They are infused by relations of power in which contestation and resistance are ever present (Davoudi, 2018, pp. 97-98).

The focus here is less on the ways spatial imaginaries have been conceptualised in the disciplines of critical and cultural geography. Though, evidently Davoudi’s and Wolford’s conceptions of the spatial imaginary could be deemed approximate to the PDT understanding of discourse (or at least could be made so), though the inflection is on the contested articulation of the space. Rather, of concern here is the antagonistic, conflictual, and fantasmatic dimensions of spatial imaginaries.

The German word *Unheimlichkeit*, as Edward S. Casey details, denotes a sense of being afflicted by an ‘uncanny anxiety of not feeling “at home”’ (Casey, 1993, p. x). This sense of separation from home, this being out-of- kilter assails us even in the most familiar of our places. This gap, this separation, speaks to a fundamental, or a constitutive impossibility that is the very possibility of spatial articulation. That is, the trace of antagonism cannot be entirely erased from social objectivity. In more obviously conflicted spaces, the antagonistic constitution is more readily discernible. Here enters the concept of fantasy.

Again, rather than incorporating a fully-fledged Lacanian problematic of enjoyment (*jouissance*) into the understanding of the discursive at work here, fantasy relates to antagonism in two key ways (Stavrakakis, 2007, p. 71; Stavrakakis & Glynos, 2010; Laclau, 2004). Both of which speak to the radical impossibility of identity. These aspects are distilled here as the horrific and beatific dimensions of fantasy. Here, the antagonising force broadly corresponds to the Lacanian notion of the ‘theft of enjoyment.’ Though, as discussed in Chapter 2, I am reluctant for theoretical reasons *vis-à-vis* the role of *jouissance* to posit these Lacanian categories as isomorphic with the modified understanding of fantasy that is mobilised here. This ‘theft’ is the presence of the racial other is held as that which seeks to deny the full attainment of one’s being. It is what robs being of its fullness. Again, when this source of antagonisation is registered spatially, it is to physically locate a threat that poses a risk to one’s space. Given the spatial articulation of communal being in Derry, to concede space is to undo the ground of that spatialised collective subjectivity. As Casey suggests place is, again, much more than mere location, as sense of place provides a sense of ontological security. This is most explicitly evident when under threat

Even when we are displaced, we continue to count on some reliable space, if not our present precarious perch then a place-to-come or a place-that-was. Bereft of such an imaginary, is to auger the ‘deepest anxiety’ (Casey, 1993, p. ix)

The horrific dimension of the Ulster Protestant spatial imaginary is a vision where their long-standing enemy, the Irish Catholic and all those hostile to British rule, overwhelm them politically and the Protestant character of the established order is

overturned. For conservative Derry Protestants, the horrific vision is one where Catholics finally breach Derry's walls, and Derry city as a Protestant city is lost. Of course, Derry Catholics by the 1860s are already within-the-walls. But the walls as a material-symbolic boundary, are a frontier that signals the political exclusion of Catholics, and thus their trespassing of the long-standing boundary underlines the threat to the Protestant order. As Catholics become more assertive and mobilise politically within the walls with overt political displays that communicate a repudiation of the Union, for conservative Protestants this is evidence enough that they are about to be overwhelmed. The integrity of the Union, in this political-spatial imaginary means holding the ground of Derry as a Protestant space. The future of Derry is not only at stake, but the political future of Ireland, and even the empire. The beatific dimension of the spatial imaginary as a political discourse, is the promise of a fullness-to-come which in this case means the exclusion of the eternal threat of Catholicism from the city. It is a vision of an undivided city, a space without antagonism, where Protestant ground is secured once-and-for-all. As Ronald Van Kempen (2007, p. 15) puts it, 'the undivided city is a myth and a utopia at the same time.'

Contingent occupations: A tale of two riots

The Corporation Hall which was located in 'the diamond' at the heart of the walled city was both Derry's symbolic and literal seat of power. The building was where the official political life of Derry was transacted, and was a hive of local government business (*Inquiry Report* 1883, p. v). As the Corporation Hall was in the very heart of the walled city, near-sacred ground in Ulster Protestant discourse, the building itself became an index of power relations in the city. That is, whoever occupied the Corporation Hall be they elected officials, the city mayor, or as per the moments considered below, visiting speakers or the riotous crowd, reflected the shifting local power dynamics. In a city that was until recently predominantly Protestant, the sight of local Catholic officials and others who were deemed to pose a threat to the upholding of a Protestant Derry and the union itself, was a spatial concretisation of the challenges Protestant power faced in Ireland. Whoever occupied the Corporation Hall, however fleetingly, could be seen to be laying claim to Derry's proverbial throne. In this way, the Corporation Hall itself became a measure of Protestant security. To concede the central civic space of Derry, then, in Protestant loyalist discourse, was to let their enemies inside the city walls. For conservative Protestants in the city, then, the

Corporation Hall, depending who occupied the building, was either a bulwark against forces hostile to the Union, or it could be seen as a Trojan horse that prefigured the ruin of Derry.

The Corporation Hall was the object of struggle in riots in 1868 and 1883. Conservative Derry Protestants fiercely objected to the use of the hall being granted to political speakers whose views they deemed anathema to the interests of Irish Protestants. The presence of local Catholics, Liberal speakers in 1868, or Irish nationalist speakers in 1883, deeply antagonised the Derry Protestant sense of space. The riots that ensued from these political events in the Hall, then, underline a sense of spatial violation. The riotous crowd has often been deemed beneath politics as such, hardly constituting a political collective subjectivity (Dean, 2018). The rioting crowd is seen as reactive, fleeting, 'spasmodic' and once dispersed the crowd ceases to be (*c.f.* Thompson, 1971). The nomadic riotous assembles, then, would appear at odds with spatialised political-communal identity. On the contrary, not only does the riot constitute a mode of political subjectivity, here, the crowd is motivated to uphold the 'integrity' of Protestant space (a spatialised political subjectivity). The fantasmatic dimensions of these riots, that which gives them their force and direction, is the horrific (spatial) vision of losing one's space, which is to lose one's being, and erase the political future of Protestantism in Derry.

The first riot examined here took place in 1868, amidst the context of a deeply fraught election (Walker, 1989). The contest in Derry was between two candidates, Richard Dowse, a Gladstonian Liberal, and Lord Claude John Hamilton, a conservative. Dowse was backed by Derry's Catholics, wealthy Presbyterians, as well as more liberal Protestants. Hamilton solicited strong support from the city's conservative Protestants, and was staunchly backed by the Apprentice Boys (Maddox, 2005). The 1868 election was a watershed moment in Ulster. Hitherto, the Irish Conservative Party had been dominant from 1852 to 1865 (Walker, 1989; Shields, 2007).³² The party represented the interests of the landed classes and sought to maintain the Protestant Church of Ireland as the official state church. The 1868 election saw a serious challenge to the pan-Protestant alliance, as liberal Protestants, Catholics and Presbyterians forged an electoral alliance. As a Gladstonian Liberal, Dowse was in favour of the disestablishment of the Irish Church as part of Gladstone's

³² In 1865 election, Ulster returned twenty-seven Conservative M.P.s, and only two Liberals, while the rest of the Ireland voted twenty Conservatives and fifty-six Liberals to parliament

policies to pacify Ireland's social and political unrest (George-Boyce, 2010: Steele, 1970). In itself, the prospect of the Irish Church losing its official status was for conservative Protestants a threat to the Union (Shields, 2007, p 162-206).³³ The foundations of church were intimately interwoven with those of state and its attendant relations of property, and to uproot one was to risk undermining the ontological ground of the regime in its entirety. The newspaper the *Ulster Examiner* summarised the views of Irish Catholics of the Church of Ireland: 'Every Protestant church is looked upon by the catholic peasant as a monument of former tyranny; every glebe land he regards as a badge of conquest' (quoted in Walker, 1989, p. 49). Lord Crichton, a conservative speaker, during an open-air mass rally in Enniskillen in 1868 expressed the fear that the attack on the Church was an attack on the institution of private property: 'the Church held here property by the same right as Lord Lansborough or Lord Erne held them, and he who plundered the church paved the way for indiscriminate spoliation of all classes of property' (*LDSent.*, 24 July 1868).

Gladstone's Irish policy was doubly contentious for conservatives, as it seemed to placate militant Irish nationalism. The Fenian rebellion of 1867 occurred just the year before (Stephens, 2009).³⁴ While Fenianism did not gain a stronghold in Ulster, there appeared widespread Catholic sympathy for Fenian prisoners. And throughout the events in Derry in the late-1860s Fenian slogans such as 'Up the Republic!' were heard on the city's streets. Dowse ultimately proved victorious, declared duly elected on 23rd July 1868 (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p. 13). The election of Dowse was a keenly felt blow to conservatism in Derry.

By 1883, the year of the second riot, Irish political Protestantism faced a much great threat than that which was posed by disestablishment of the Irish Church. Irish nationalism was now largely unified with the aim of achieving 'Home Rule' (George-Boyce, 2005). The demand for Home Rule, was the demand for the Irish to be largely self-governing, with the establishment of a parliament in Dublin. Under this arrangement, however, Ireland would still remain within the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. Home Rule was on the political agenda since 1870, with Isaac Butt, an Irish politician advocating for it in Westminster. By the 1880s, however, Irish Nationalism's push for Home Rule had a renewed energy. The Home Rule movement

³³ As Shields (2007, p. 163) writes 'the Church of Ireland had been used as a political instrument, a buttress for the power of the ruling elite in the country, rather than as a vehicle for disseminating religious truth.'

³⁴ The 1867 uprising was a failed rebellion organised by the clandestine Irish Republican Brotherhood. The rebellion was poorly organised and easily put down by the authorities.

left Irish unionists doubly anxious. First, a Home Rule parliament in Dublin would invariably mean rule by majority, that is, in the eyes of unionists, rule by Catholics. This fear is captured in the unionist slogan ‘Home Rule is Rome rule!’ Secondly, the demand for Home Rule left unionists vulnerable to shifting political dynamics in Westminster, as a government that was sympathetic to the nationalist demand or a government that relied on the support of Irish MPs, might be persuaded to pass a Home Rule Bill. Indeed, an ultimately defeated Home Rule bill was passed in 1886. Home Rule would be the most pressing issue in Irish politics until at least 1918, where it was superseded by more radical nationalist aspirations for full independence from British rule. In 1882, Charles Stewart Parnell, the major figure in Irish nationalist politics and leader of the Irish Parliamentary Party, set up the Irish National League which mobilised for Home Rule (Bew, 2012). Parnell curried favour with the British by distancing official Irish nationalism from the militant agrarianism that was widespread (Marley, 2010).³⁵ Parnell also garnered the support of the Catholic Church. Thus, Irish Protestant fears were materialising as political nationalism, however moderate, was now openly working with (or conspiring with in Derry Protestant discourse) the Catholic Church. The Riot of 1883 in Derry, was sparked by the visit of Dublin’s Lord Mayor to the city. The mayor was a nationalist, and was invited to give a lecture in the Corporation Hall by Derry’s nationalists. This inflamed Derry’s Protestants, as the mayor would espouse views that essentially repudiated the Union.

I. Corporation Hall Riot, 1868: The Richard Dowse Lecture

In anticipation of the upcoming election Dowse and his supporters obtained use of the Corporation Hall for a public lecture where the candidate would ‘expound his political principles’ and secure electoral support (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p. 8). Dowse was scheduled to give his lecture on the evening of 20th July 1868. The use of the hall for such occasions was considered ‘customary’ (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p.8). Still, any public partisan political activity in the centre of Derry in the fraught moment was bound to be seen as provocative. The organisers of the event were well aware of the potential for disturbance and therefore sought to regulate public access to the event by means

³⁵ The Land War 1879-1882 saw significant unrest in rural Ireland, as the peasantry mobilised for better conditions in terms of rent, and ultimately tenant proprietorship.

of issuing non-transferable tickets (*LD Stand.*, 22 July 1868; *LD Sent.*, 21 July 1868). For some officials, the issuing of tickets was deemed essential in ensuring the candidate got ‘a fair and uninterrupted hearing’ (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p. 8). The granting of tickets to ‘the friends of Dowse’ for the exclusive use of Derry’s central civic space of the city was seen as flagrantly antagonistic to the city’s conservative Protestants (CSORP 1868/10486). While tickets are usually banal artifacts of spatial regulation, here, they were held as a means of territorialising the Corporation Hall, and therefore locking Derry’s ‘loyal citizens’ out of the centre of power in the city. The *Sentinel* decried the use of tickets as a flagrant effort calculated to ‘stifle free discussion’ (*LD Sent.* 21 July 1868). Nonetheless, the organisers were steadfast in their commitment to the use of the tickets, and access to the lecture was firmly policed.

A prominent Dowse supporter, Mr. Hogg, with the assistance of the foreman printer of the *Londonderry Standard*, carefully scrutinised each ticket for forgery (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p. 53). The printer from the *Standard* was enlisted because the sympathetic newspaper had printed the items. Indeed, two potential attendees were refused admittance on account of suspect-looking tickets, whilst others were physically removed from the premises by Hogg. A Mr. Ross, from Foyle Street who refused to show his ticket and sought to brush past Hogg, was taken by the arms and shoved out the door (*DJ*, 5 August 1868). The sight of Hogg along with an employee of a liberal newspaper forcibly regulating access to the Corporation Hall was an affront to conservative Derry. The *Sentinel* lamented that some of Derry’s ‘respectable citizens’ were refused entry to the lecture, while one-hundred-and-fifty working class (and Catholic) quay labourers were admitted to the evening’s proceedings (*LD Sent.*, 21 July 1868). The *Sentinel* took this as an ominous portent of things to come, as the political mobilisation of the Catholic working classes and the lowering of the franchise posed an existential threat to Protestant political power in Derry and Ireland.

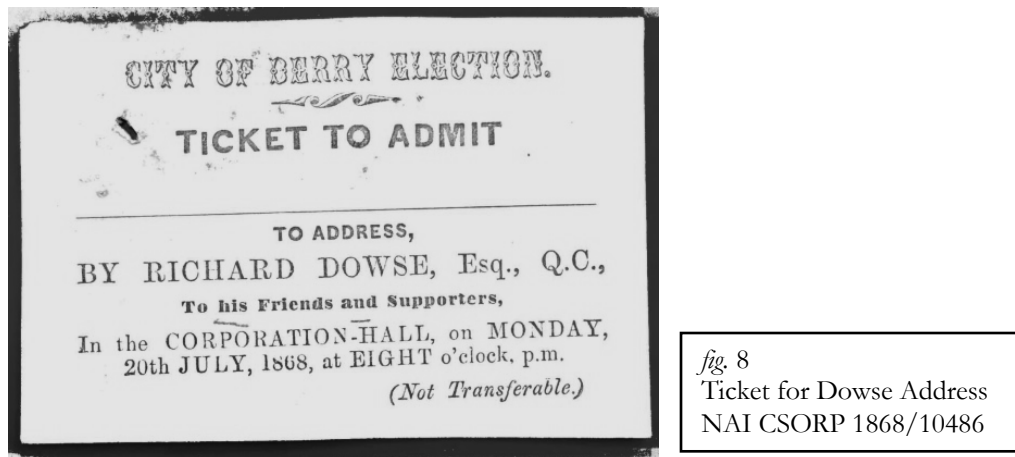
The rumour-mill was churning throughout the day of the talk. News reached the organisers that the Corporation Hall would be attacked during Dowse’s lecture (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p. 53). Derry’s mayor promised that the hall would be adequately protected. Organisers took the additional precaution of fortifying the hall with the aforementioned quay labourers, though these would-be-defenders were unarmed. Eight borough police were stationed outside the hall, with the constabulary waiting nearby if needed. The spatial division of the hall on the evening is worth nothing. The

men of no property packed out the hallways and stairs as defenders, while the various iterations of propertied men took their seats for the lecture.

The *Derry Journal* reported that shortly before Dowse was due to commence his talk at 8pm, a ‘dangerous and rough looking mob’ was gathering in the Diamond. At about 7.45 pm a body of about fifty men, that had arrived in the Diamond from the Apprentice Boy’s Society Room in London St., started to move towards the Corporation Hall. The men reportedly marched in military-like formation (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p. 54; *DJ*, 5 August 1868). When their approach was imminent they broke into a run, taking bludgeons and sticks from under their jackets. The crowd then proceeded in their attempt to forcibly enter into the hall. Their entrance was denied, blocked by Hogg, his assistant, and the quay labourers. The police who were outside the hall had stepped aside. Though they were poorly armed, the actions of the police were seen as partisan by some Catholics, as the police were deemed an ‘adjunct for Derry’s Protestant Corporation’ (Radford, 2009, p. 353).

For his efforts in manning the door, Hogg received a severe blow on the head from a member of the rioting party, resulting in a deep cut. The labourers who occupied the building’s hall, realising they were under attack, improvised weapons by breaking the hall’s stair bannisters into bludgeons of their own. The hall remained largely un-breached on that evening, save from one rioter who managed to break through the entrance with his bludgeon, which was taken from him (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p. 54). The riot itself, however, was still gathering momentum. A larger ‘turbulent’ crowd was growing around the Diamond. The rioters ‘backed up’ the halls’ attackers and rained volleys of stones and sticks on the hall.

Intercommunal violence on the evening was structured spatially. Again, the upholding or trespassing of the spatial frontier of the Corporation Hall, was the measure of success or failure. While the event itself was a spatial transgression in the symbolic heart of Protestant Ulster, in the ensuing riot the political was spatialised as the hall became the radical frontier of communal-political being.



Spatial usurpation

Dowse's lecture was repeatedly interrupted by the commotion outside the hall (*DJ*, 22 July 1968). The 'disgraceful exhibition' for Dowse and his supporters provided ample evidence that the issuing of tickets was necessary. As Dowse's lecture continued he mobilised the bounded space of the Corporation Hall as a frontier, demarcating those within from those outside the building. Those within, who listened to his discourse on his brand of Protestant Liberalism, were marked by tolerance and 'enlightened opinion.' The many of his co-religionists in the room who shared his politics deemed by Dowse as living proof of a tolerant Protestantism. Dowse extended the liberal 'chain of equivalence', appealing to the 'hard handed sons of labour' who defended the hall against the ongoing attack (Laclau & Mouffe, 2014). Dowse's Gladstonian Liberalism united a range of demands, from the Irish Catholic demand for equality, to openly welcoming those newly enfranchised by the latest Reform Act, to the petit-bourgeois demand to curb the power of the landed aristocracy.

Those outside the hall, according to Dowse were the forces of ultra-Protestantism and intolerant Toryism; forces that strove to uphold inequality and aristocratic privilege (*DJ*, 22 July 1869: *LD. Sent.*, 21 July, 1868). As the riot forced another pause in his delivery, Dowse remarked to great laughter in the hall, betraying the Liberal commitment to Empire, if one was to look outside the window they would think they were in Otaheite [Tahiti] and that Dowse was Captain Cook. Dowse was appealing to the notion of an enlightened and expanding Empire. In doing so, he was redrawing an antagonistic frontier. Those outside the hall were the forces of barbarism, and as such were outside the bounds of civilization. The *Sentinel* remarked that those

who were outside the hall, that is ‘respectable citizens’, were referred to as a ‘mob’ by Dowse (*LD Sent.* 21 July 1868). Those inside represented an enlightened future. The message was clear; the Protestants who rioted outside were no longer the defenders of the Union or empire. Local Catholics who supported Dowse were welcomed within the bounds of the civilised. Dowse posed the rhetorical litany to his audience:

Who struck the shackles of the slave? The Liberal Party. [...] Who repealed the Tests and Corporations Acts, and allowed everyman to take his sacraments of his church as his conscience approved? The Liberal Party. Who enabled the Catholic to come within the bounds of the constitution, and exercise the privileges of a freeman? The Liberal Party (*DJ*, 22 July 1868).

While the *Sentinel* cast Dowse as a leveller, he cast those outside the Corporation Hall as the true wreckers. As the *Derry Journal* reported, as the windows of the Hall were being broken by stones and other missiles, ‘Mr Dowse continued to remark that while he was advocating the claims for Ireland for a share in the national expenditure, those outside the Hall were determined there should be great expenditure of local money on the building in which they were assembled’ (*DJ*, 22 July 1868).

Dowse’s speech in the heart of Derry was profoundly dislocating for the city’s conservatives. Here, dislocation is meant in its full spatial sense. Dowse’s lecture and the regulated access to the hall, put Derry Catholics in the centre of Derry’s political life. They were welcomed within the bounds of Dowse’s understanding of civilisation and empire, and their concerns seemed very much part of his political priorities. Derry Catholics were in the hall because they belonged there. Those outside, by definition, were deemed not to belong in Derry’s primary political space (even if this exile was only for a night). The Corporation Hall in that moment was a radical spatial frontier, a flashpoint where antagonistic visions of the future clashed. That is, the political was spatialised at the very door of the hall. The bounding of the hall mapped onto the redrawing of political frontiers in the city. For conservative Protestants in the city, the Dowse lecture was the spatial manifestation of the Liberal-Catholic threat. The city’s loyalists knew only too well that space is power. In this light, there could be no shared space. The dislocatory force of the Dowse lecture was that it confirmed the horrific dimension of the Derry Protestant political-spatial imaginary. The granting of the Corporation Hall for such an occasion was not a routine momentary conceding of

Derry's central civic space. But rather, the event signalled the usurpation of Protestant power in the key symbolic site of Ulster Protestantism.

Protestant anxieties were further exasperated by the actions of John O'Neill, a Catholic magistrate. O'Neill was inside the Corporation Hall during the attack. When he looked out the window overlooking Bishop St. he surveyed a growing riotous crowd and the authorities struggling to contain it. He shouted to Sgt Lockhart who was beneath the window "Lockhart I think you have not sufficient force to preserve the peace" "I agree with you sir", said Lockhart (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, p. 60). Believing the situation was deteriorating and that the mayor was out of town, O'Neill took it upon himself to summon one-hundred soldiers who were stationed in the nearby barracks.

In the meantime the mayor, who was in fact in town, read the 'Riot Act' in the Diamond. O'Neill went and met the military who were waiting for him on the bridge, and on the authority bestowed on him as a magistrate he took charge and proceeded to the Diamond. The disturbance was soon quelled, and there were no reports of further violence that night.

The sight of O'Neill calling up and taking charge of the military in the city solicited a lot of ire and he was accordingly pilloried in the local press (*LD Sent.*, 24 July 1968). As a Catholic and a supporter of Dowse, his actions were seen as decidedly partisan (*Inquiry Report*, 1869, pp. 51-52; p. 72). A Catholic magistrate mobilising the coercive apparatus of the law against loyalists in the symbolic heart of Protestant Ulster was taken as further concretization of growing Catholic power in the city, and the continued displacement of Protestant power at the local level. After all, until relatively recently such a sight in Derry city would have been unthinkable. For this, O'Neill was deemed an unjustified 'usurper' of the authority of the mayor. The *Sentinel* decried his actions which it suggested gave the impression that the city was under martial law and Habeas Corpus had been suspended in Derry (*LD Sent.*, 24 July 1868). The paper then called on the city's magistrates to ensure the legitimate use of power, and to remain vigilant against the installing of a 'dictatorship' in Derry.

In light of the events, the *Sentinel* declared that for Derry 'battle has fairly begun. An adventurer seeks place at the expense of the honour of Derry. He hoists the banner of "religious equality" and revolution"' (*LD Sent.*, 21 July 1868). A poster celebrating the victory of Dowse stated as much (NAI LO 4051/119). The election of the Liberal candidate was seen as the beginning of the end for the status quo:

The lofty wheel is going round
The side that's up will soon be down

Furthermore, the election victory was articulated as a crucial moment in long standing and ongoing struggle for greater Catholic emancipation, with Dowse being presented as an heir to Daniel O'Connell, a major figure in Irish Catholic political struggle. Liberal politics were grafted onto and served as a vehicle to re-articulate Irish Catholic political demands and aspirations:

He'll break the chains & and free the yoke
That Erin's Son's have so long bore
Like Daniel in the days of yore
When tyrants had opposed him
[...]
Look to the year of twenty eight
When brave O'Connell took his seat
His foes in Parliament were great
They thought they could oppose him

Again, it was a victory presented in stark terms. This was the forces of 'liberty' over those of oppression in Derry city.

Hurra my boys for liberty
Richard Dowse will set us free
Our city member he has been
In spite of all opposers

This battle for Derry was rendered intelligible in spatial terms. The Catholics were within the walls. What is more, they were unapologetically advocating for the overthrow of traditional Protestant power in the most significant space of the loyalist political imaginary.

II. Corporation Hall Riot, 1883: The nationalist Lord Mayor of Dublin visits Derry

The Lord Mayor of Dublin and Parnellite, Charles Dawson, was invited by local nationalists to give a lecture in Derry's Corporation Hall. The talk was due to take place on the 1st November 1883 (*Inquiry Report*, 1883). On the 26th October an application was made by two prominent Nationalist figures in Derry, Thomas O'Hanlon and McCloskey, for use of the assembly room of the Corporation Hall. Use of the hall for the Nationalist meeting was granted reluctantly (*Inquiry Report*, 1883, p. v.), to much controversy in the local press. As news began to build of a 'monster demonstration' of nationalists welcoming Dublin's Mayor under the auspices of the National League to the Maiden City, the 'majority of the Corporation' according to the commissioners' report on the matter, 'strongly disapproved' of 'their hall' being made available for such political (that is, explicitly nationalist) purposes.

The *Sentinel's* reporting on Dawson's scheduled visit to Derry, glimpses how a nationalist speaker would be received by the city's loyalists. Two days before the lecture the *Sentinel* detailed that a proclamation had been issued by the Protestants of Co. Fermanagh, and 'extensively posted' throughout the county. The proclamation called upon loyalists to 'assemble in their thousands' to protest against the invasion of nationalist agitators (*LD Sent.* 30 Oct. 1883). In another illustrative example, the *Sentinel* looked worryingly at a meeting with two leading Parnellites in Garrison, Co. Fermanagh. Garrison was a remote town on the border with the western province of Connacht, along a 'frontier of the North' that had 'hitherto been free from the turmoil that distracted other parts of our island where the spouters of disloyalty have appeared' (*LD Sent.*, 30 Oct. 1883). The battle was on, yet again, not only for the future of the island, but specifically the loyal and true character of Derry and Ulster. Key to preserving the north, then, in loyalist discourse, was the upholding of the frontiers of Ulster from the degradations coming from the rest of the island. Derry was cast as tenuous lynchpin that held the Union together. Mobilising the grammars of siege, the *Sentinel* declared that on the 1st November the 'City of Derry' was to be the site of an invasion by an 'uncompromising agitator' and agent of separation, Charles Dawson (*LD Sent.* 30 Oct. 1883). The *Sentinel* warned that Ulster unlike the other provinces would not be a place of 'injudicious toleration' and that 'the hireling demagogues are

warned to beware and told that patience of the loyal populace is exhausted and that the actions of heroic forefathers is appealed to as an incentive to tread in their footsteps by declaring on the forthcoming occasion that the North will have no connection to Parnellism' (*LD Sent.*, 30 Oct. 1883)

A 'Loyal Proclamation' was circulated in the town in advance of Dawson's visit, decrying what it saw as a violation of Derry. The 'Men of Derry' were warned that through 'crafty subterfuge' and 'Jesuitry' there was an attempt to connect their city with the Parnellite National League, 'a foul nursery of murder and rebellion, treachery and crime', which had been driven from 'every spot in Ulster' by the shouts of 'loyal men' (*LD Sent.* 30 Oct. 1883). Now 'the rebels' had invited in 'Dawson, the brummagem Lord Mayor' into the heart of Derry city. Sedition was in full swing according to the loyalist proclamation, with torches already purchased, 'the bands prepared, the rebel flags of "disgrace and infamy" ready to be flaunted *when he arrives within your walls*' [*emphasis added*]. The loyalists of Derry were summoned to defend their town

By the memories of a glorious past and great cause [...] mount guard on Wednesday night and in the cause of loyalty and law meet in your thousands at Walker's Pillar on Thursday, 1st of November, at twelve o'clock noon, to raise your protest by declaring for Queen and Constitution in the face of sedition mongers and "veiled rebels". Remember your watchword "No Surrender" (*LD Sent.*, 30 October 1883)

Pressure, then, was mounting on the city's officials to rescind the granting of the hall. The *Sentinel* had admonished the corporation for granting the use of the Corporation Hall for a meeting in which 'free scope will be given for the indulgence in the usual disloyal, seditious, and anti-English oratory' (*LD Sent.* 30 Oct. 1883). The conservative Rev. Richard Babington on the day of the talk, protested from a podium, giving voice to much of the Protestant anger roused by the town hall being handed over to Nationalists: 'This meeting hereby protests against the actions of the Corporation in permitting a meeting to be held in the public hall of this loyal city by men who have insulted our Queen, and are now endeavouring to sever the union between Great Britain and Ireland' (*LD Sent.* 3 Nov. 1883). Permission to use the hall, however, was rescinded by the Corporation on the day of the talk during their quarterly meeting at 12 pm. This was a humiliating gesture towards the city's Catholic and nationalist population, with the mayor of Dublin being only a few hours away from

his anticipated arrival time at 2pm. Though the Commissioners of Inquiry who subsequently investigated these events suggested, quite improbably, that ample time remained for proper notification to be given to the organisers of the cancellation (*Inquiry Report*, 1883, p. vi.).

Preparations for a loyalist counter-demonstration were underway. A large gathering of Apprentice Boys, some ‘influential gentlemen’, loyalist demonstrators from Derry and ‘surrounding districts’ were set to assemble at Walker’s Pillar on the morning of the event (*Inquiry Report*, 1883, p. vi). The meeting at Walker’s Pillar, organised chiefly by Derry’s Apprentice Boys did not take place. Instead, the Apprentice Boys on the orders of their president, John Guy Ferguson, formed a procession with their usual banners and Union Jacks, and marched towards Bishop-street’ and the Diamond. They were determined to ‘pre-occupy’ the Corporation Hall, in order to prevent any possibility of it being the site of a Nationalist gathering (*Inquiry Report*, 1883, p. vii). As the Apprentice Boys’ procession, estimated anywhere between 200 and 500, approached the Corporation Hall they quickened into a run. The police in the vicinity of the building watched as the crowd forced their way into the hall, taking full occupation of the Assembly Room upstairs. At the same time the meeting of the Corporation was still in session in the Council Chamber, a room adjoining the Assembly Room. As the Commissioners noted, it seems improbable that the plan to occupy the hall was not known in advance by members of the Corporation, as ‘no member [...] appears to have made any observation, inquiry, or complaint in reference to the forcible occupation of the hall’ (*Inquiry Report*, 1883, p. vii). This is remarkable given the boisterous nature of the occupation, with loud cheers plainly audible coming from the next room.

As the *Journal* reported, shortly after gaining possession of the building, the Apprentice Boys flaunting their successes ‘planted their colours’ on the roof (*DJ*, 2 Nov. 1883). Ferguson told the Apprentice Boys gathered in the hall that he was glad that the Union Jack was flying, and was equally pleased to see a mingling of the loyal crimson and orange in the hall (*LD Sent.*, 3 Nov. 1883). The Apprentice Boy president mobilised the usual tropes of siege, cautioning the crowd not to ‘wander out of garrison’ as it would be necessary to hold the hall until late into the night. He continued, ‘prepare yourselves for a state of siege and we will send you refreshments.’ Another speaker, Lord Ernest Hamilton, brother of Claud Hamilton, addressing the congregation reinforced the vision of invasion and being besieged by nationalism: ‘We

hereby protest against the insidious attempt of the so-called National party to enter Ulster through the gates of our city [...] and we emphatically declare our attachment to the Union, and our determination to maintain the connection between Great Britain and Ireland as at present established' (*LD Sent.*, 3 Nov. 1883.)

Meanwhile, in the Diamond the heavy contingent of military and police force waited in anticipation of the arrival of the Nationalist procession accompanying the Lord Mayor through the city. The security forces arranged themselves in a diagonal formation, stretching from 'the south-eastern corner of Bishop-Street to the junction of Butcher-Street with the Diamond. The object of such measures were to divert the course of the expected procession away from the Corporation Hall and the eastern part of the city, and instead route the crowd towards the Bogside' (*Inquiry Report*, 1883, p. viii).

As anticipated, at around 2.00 pm, the Dublin mayor's train arrived in Derry's Great Northern Railway terminus, and was met with a rapturous reception by a crowd of several thousands who had been waiting at the station. The crowd with their nationalist flags and banners, were accompanied by several bands, including St. Columb's Band, the Hibernian Band, St. Patrick's, and the Young Bloods. By about 2.30 pm, Dawson, in an open carriage accompanied by Cox, a nationalist organiser from Dublin, and two of Derry's notable nationalist figures Hanlon and MacLoughlin, heading the large procession, entered the city's walls at Butcher's Gate (*DJ*, 2 Nov. 1883). The procession had made its way from the station via John Street, through Abercorn road, and then onto and up-through Bishop's Street through the gate. Along the route, as the *Journal* reported, Dublin's Mayor was greeted with the enthusiastic waving of handkerchiefs from spectators who had gathered along the route. When the Mayor's carriage came to a halt outside Roddy's Hotel, where the Mayor was staying, which, as the Commissioners note, was just fifty to sixty yards away from the Hall, scenes of great commotion commenced.

In the Corporation Hall, the Apprentice Boys were in 'occupation of the five windows looking into Bishop-Street' and some of the occupiers took up positions on the building's roof. When the full body of the nationalist procession arrived outside Roddy's Hotel, cheers and counter cheers were exchanged between the rival factions. A sash was raised from one of the windows over-looking Bishop-Street and the large crowd gathered there. Revolver shots were discharged through the window. Roof slates and other improvised missiles leveraged from the Corporation Hall also rained

down on the Mayor's procession (*Inquiry Report*, 1883, p. 55). One man named Kelly, and a nationalist, who was standing in the Diamond at the time of the furore was shot in the temple, the shot coming from the Corporation Hall. His injuries, though critical, were not fatal. Another serious casualty of the affray was a fifteen-year-old boy, named Durnian, a Catholic, who was shot in the face, just beneath the eye, but again, his injuries were not fatal. A third person was also shot, but did not sustain any serious wounds, as the man's clothing proved remarkably sufficient in stopping the bullet (*DJ*, 2 Nov. 1883; *Inquiry Report*, 1883). There were reports of other less serious injuries as a result of the throwing of stones and other missiles. The commotion somewhat subsided after the march was rerouted through Butcher's Street, towards the direction of the Bogside. Following the passing of the procession, the Orange demonstrators in the Corporation Hall were persuaded to leave the building, on the 'express condition' that no Nationalist meeting would be held in the hall (*DJ*, 2 Nov. 1883). In order to meet this condition the Corporation Hall was then occupied exclusively by the city's police. Content in the knowledge that they had achieved their aim of excluding Nationalists from Derry's city hall, the Apprentice Boys and Orangemen left the building. They then accompanied those who had travelled to Derry to aid their fellow loyalists to the city's two railway stations, and waved them farewell.

The Nationalist meeting was rescheduled, held later that evening at the National League rooms on William Street. Dawson addressed his Derry supporters in a widely circulated notice, that both admonished loyalist violence, and promised that nationalists would ultimately secure victory:

Fellow-Countrymen- Owing to the ascendance tactics of the few who still hold power in Derry to crush civil liberty, the programme arranged to be carried out this evening must be altered. But let nothing induce you, the vast majority of the people of Derry, to lose your temper, and distract from the National victory, all but gained in the North. It is only those who are losing become desperate. We are winning, let us be calm. Leave violence and outrage to the expiring faction. Let calmness and firmness distinguish the party which is contending for civil and religious liberty in their own land.- I am, your faithful servant. Charles Dawson, M.P. (*DJ*, 2 Nov. 1883).

In the speeches at the National League's meeting house it was clear that nationalists understood the violence that had marked the day as a function of the

established order. Therefore, the entire apparatus of the state, including Derry's authorities were seen as implicated in its perpetuation. That is, the violence on the street was nothing more than a particular form of feedback from the violence of the system itself. As J. Coll MacLoughlin declared in his speech

I publicly charge the magistrates, the Corporation, and those in authority with conniving with the blood-stained Apprentice Boys at the raid on the Hall (Loud cheers). The Corporation during the holding of their meeting were apprised of the illegal seizure of the Hall, did they take steps to remove them. No, they allowed them to remain there, and shoot from that Hall over the heads of England's troops, on our men. Ah these cowards can only shoot from behind the backs of soldiers. [Loud cheers] (DJ, 2 Nov. 1883).

MacLoughlin's speech suggested that the political and spatial battle for Ulster was well under-way

Let us bear well in mind this, that no matter what step the miserable minority take we will hold our meetings, we will bring public opinion to bear on them, and prove that gallant Derry will keep the flag of Irish Nationality planted in Ulster at all costs

He continued

Your troops with fixed bayonets faced the Catholic people upon whose heads rained down the murderous shower from the roof. You turned your backs to the Orange desperadoes, and had the cold steel and the suggestions of ball cartridge to confront the Nationalist ranks' (DJ, 2 Nov. 1883).

These sentiments were shared by nationalist organiser Thomas O'Hanlon, who in his introductory remarks at the meeting stated that 'cowardly murder or attempted murder had been perpetuated and that innocent blood was shed under the scarlet uniform of England.' He continued, 'Aye, if there was no uniform there would have been no bloodshed.' The security forces in nationalist discourse, then, were not the agents of peace, but rather, they were the agents of failing Orange hegemony. In the aftermath of the violence, the city's Catholics were deeply critical of Derry's authorities. The *Derry Journal*, for example, saw the stationing of the 2nd Battalion Welsh Regiment at Bishop Street, as little more than a transparent attempt to stymie

the Nationalist determination to hold their meeting (*DJ*, 5 Nov. 1883). The days following the riot were marked by tension and violence. A Catholic man, Samuel McNulty who lived on Albert-Street received a severe beating by ‘Orangemen’ and had his home wrecked (*DJ*, 5 Nov. 1883).

What is striking about these riots around the use of the Corporation Hall, is that use of the hall in itself was fairly mundane. The Inquiry Report of 1883 reported that there was a standard application form for use of the hall. The riots demonstrated that the routines that usually highly sediment and naturalise the social were constantly dislocated as the antagonistic constitution of the social was prone to regular reactivation. Also of interest in spatial terms, is that there was no real objection to the meeting being held outside the walls. When the nationalist meeting was rescheduled to local nationalist headquarters in the Bogside, there was no protest from loyalists. Neither was the mayor’s entourage attacked as they were leaving the city. Conflict, therefore, was still centred around the central civic space of the city. This is in marked contrast to later periods of violence, such as in 1920 (see Chapter 5), where violence is not so much confined to key sites in the city and the entire city became the battlefield.

Spatial (in)securities

What is termed the ‘siege mentality’ of Ulster Protestants ultimately speaks to a deeply felt lack of security. Here *lack* acquires a radical constitutive and, thus, ontological, status. The political discourse of Ulster Protestants and, indeed, the spatial-political imaginary of the siege is hardly intelligible without reference to the notion of security which animates it. ‘Security’, then, is a privileged signifier, or ‘nodal point’, in conservative Ulster Protestant political discourse. That is, security is a key reference point which coheres other elements of the discourse together. In the post-foundational political understanding of discourse, nodal points are the signifiers that help structure elements into a discourse (Laclau & Mouffe, 2014 [1985], p. 99). Without such nodal points a discourse could not achieve its partial fixity and durability.

Ernesto Laclau (2014 [1996], pp. 36-46) later introduced the concept of an ‘empty signifier’ into his understanding of discourse, further complexifying nodal points. As per nodal points, empty signifiers are crucial to the construction of political discourses. Empty signifiers emerge out of the very impossibility of society. Given the antagonistic discursive constitution of the social, the social can never acquire full closure. There is a radical outside preventing an articulation of society being fully

realised (that is, the antagonising force that gives a discourse its systematicity at once threatens and undermines it). Yet this impossibility, as detailed in Chapter 1, is precisely what makes articulations of the social possible. Still, the need for fullness remains. As Laclau suggests ‘although the fullness of society is unachievable, its need does not disappear: it will always show itself through the presence of its absence’ (Laclau, 1996; Howarth *et al*, 2000, p. 8). Or as Howarth *et al* (2000, p. 8) clarify, while the full closure of society is not realisable ‘the ideal of closure and fullness still functions as an (impossible) ideal.’ Laclau (2014 [1996], p. 45) invokes Hobbes’ use of the empty signifier ‘order.’ ‘In a situation of radical disorder’ writes Laclau, ‘order is present as that which is absent.’ The empty signifier becomes the nodal point that presences what is missing, and in turn this emptiness becomes critical to structuring the discourse. For example, in Andrew Closhey’s (2000, pp. 53-69) analysis of Irish republican discourse, ‘justice’ functions as the empty signifier that presences what is absent. It is the absence of justice that gives Republicanism its force and vitality, and allows it to adapt to changing political landscapes as justice is always to come.

The articulation of an ‘impossible ideal’ is where fantasy is evident. The presence of an antagonistic limit debars the possibility of the full attainment of a positive identity. Both the beatific and horrific dimensions of fantasy reside in this radical impossibility. The promise of attaining full positivity, that is, the erasing of fundamental negativity is the beatific ideal that sustains identification. The horrific dimension, as discussed, promises ruin if this obstacle is not kept at bay or overcome.

The Siege as a ‘mode of political thinking’

Given the sense of Protestant political and spatial insecurity, it is little surprise that the Siege of Derry featured so prominently in the political imaginary of the city’s Protestants. The political-spatial imaginary of the Siege is not a mere rhetorical trope (not that there is any such thing as mere rhetoric), but rather it organised the spatial practices of Derry’s Protestants, such as the marches of the Apprentice Boys along the city’s walls, or rioters defending the city’s central civic space against ‘seditious agitators.’ The Siege of Derry 1668-1689, writes historian Ian McBride (1997, p. 10), is perhaps the key episode in the cycle of Ulster Protestant foundation myths. It compares with other sieges endured by Protestants in sixteenth-century Europe, such as Leiden and La Rochelle (Haddick-Flynn, 1999, p. 43). As McBride continues, the

siege of the 'Maiden City' carries with it far more emotional heft than the much more famous Battle of the Boyne of 1690. This is largely due to spatial location and arrangement of the city, as Derry lies at the outermost frontier of the historic plantation of Ulster (Stewart, 1997). The emotional power of the siege endures today, as since partition Derry lies precariously just inside the very territorial limit of Northern Ireland (McBride 1997, p. 10). Whenever the status of Derry as a key site of Protestant power was challenged, this antagonisation reverberated throughout Protestant Ulster.

The Siege 'presents in dramatic form a series of lessons regarding the relationship between Ulster Protestants and their traditional enemies' (McBride, 1997, p. 11). These lessons are to steadfastly uphold the spatial boundaries of Protestant Ulster, to remain vigilant against hostile forces, namely Irish Catholicism and nationalism, and to remain wary of traitors within. While the terming of the Protestant political vision as a 'siege mentality' may seem derogatory, signifying a form of hyper-vigilance bordering on political paranoia, Protestants have regularly articulated themselves as being under siege (Follis, 1995). In the Siege narrative the fate of Protestant Ireland as well as Britain was bound up with the fate of Derry city. If Derry was to fall then so too would the entire kingdom. As per McKenzie's account of the Siege

Had Derry been surrendered it is considered that the whole Kingdom of Ireland would have been lost, after which James would probably have embroiled Scotland and disturbed the peace of England. But "the defence of Derry obviated all these dismal evils, blasted, in a great measure, all other designs of the Popish faction against Britain, and facilitated the reduction of Ireland, the very flower of King James' army having perished, and the courage of such as survived sank before the walls of Derry" (*LD Sent.* 14 Aug. 1868)

In loyalist political discourse, Derry features less as city, but as, in the words of Charlotte Elizabeth (1846, p. iv) in her mid-nineteenth century narrative of the siege, a 'Protestant fortress.' The security of Derry, as a tenuous lynchpin, then, was an index for the security of the Union.

‘A plurality of Lundies’

Another critical lesson that the Siege bestowed on Derry Protestants was that loyalism would always face internal betrayals. Robert Lundy, the Governor of Derry during the Siege, who through either military incompetence, fatalism, or as Derry’s loyalists see it, treachery, was willing to surrender the city. As such ‘Lundy’ is a key signifier in loyalist political discourse, becoming a sobriquet for traitors. In the Siege narrative Derry was almost lost, not only due to the efforts of its enemies beyond its walls, but through internal enemies disguised as friends. As a character in Elizabeth’s account of the Siege reflects ‘Derry men had a greater spite to traitors within than with foes without (Elizabeth, 1839, p. 200). Here, Nico Carpentier’s analysis of the traitor signifier in nationalistic discourse is illuminating

In antagonistic nationalisms, the self becomes articulated through the solidified chain of equivalence that homogenises the self, also by defining enemies within, which then needs to be purged for that nationalist chain of equivalence, e.g., through the traitor signifier which aligns the traitor with the other-foreigner (Carpentier, 2017, p. 231)

A highlight of the annual Closing of the Gates celebrations is when the city’s Apprentice Boys take an effigy of Lundy and burn it on the Derry walls. It is a ritual that purges Derry of its internal traitors. As McBride details

Each year, on the 18 December the internal differences are symbolically resolved as the Apprentice Boys Clubs re-enact the shutting of the gates. The climax of the day is the burning of the traitor Robert Lundy in what A.T.Q Stewart has described as an ‘act of ritual purgation’ (McBride, 1997, p. 13)

McBride (1997, p. 13) continues that Lundy is a part of a ‘schizophrenic memory of the siege’ that co-articulates an intense fear of betrayal along with the ‘triumph of liberation.’

The *Londonderry Sentinel’s* reportage of the 1868 Closing of the Gates celebrations suggests that Derry loyalists were once again under siege, and that internal traitors were actively undermining Ulster Protestantism. Derry conservatives had suffered the blows of Dowse’s election victory and the Disestablishment of the Irish Church. Worse again was that these political defeats were largely realised through the

support of liberal Protestants and Presbyterians, who had made political alliances with Catholics. The *Sentinel* reported that the ‘grim spectacle’ of Lundy hung on Walker’s pillar until 4 pm, where it burned for a mere ten minutes. Given the political adversity conservative Protestantism in Derry was facing, the *Sentinel* suggested that ‘not a few thought that there should have been placed upon it [Walker’s Monument] a plurality of “Lundies”, and that the Apprentice Boys should not, in this part of their arrangement, have merely confined their attention to the Lundy of the Siege’ (*LD Sent.* 22 Dec, 1868).

As Carpentier (2017, p. 174) details ‘the creation of [the] solidified chain of equivalence, with the enemy as the constitutive outside, little room is left for internal differences.’ The presence of internal others, e.g. liberal Protestants, confronts loyalism with its own contingency. That is, rather than Derry loyalism expressing a universalised Ulster Protestant self, it becomes a particular Protestant mode of being in the world. Designating those ‘within the walls’ (the bounded frontier of Ulster Protestantism) who do not conform to this essentialised identity as traitors is a mechanism through which a homogenous Protestant political identity is sustained. That is, internal heterogeneity is denied. The fixity of Lundy in Derry Protestant discourse thus serves to routinise the dislocatory force of ‘traitors’ by divesting their presence of its temporality and their disruptive potential. The traitor then is not the advent of something new, as he was always-already expected. The casting out of traitors is equivalential in character, which is to say rebounds the social by rearticulating the political. It unites those within walls, against enemies both internal and external.

In a speech during at the December celebrations, the editor of the *Sentinel*, J.E Finlay, suggested that those who voted for Dowse were Lundies and therefore non-Protestants, thus upholding the internal homogeneity of Derry Protestantism

There were traitors at work, but they were not in the Protestant camp- I say “Protestant” deliberately, for it requires too great a stretch of charity to concede the term to men who are in league with Rome, and labouring to damage a Protestant church, and to promote the interests of Popery. There were traitors at work – Lundies as they are called in these parts (*LD Sent.* 22 Dec. 1868)

He added that on this year ‘it would require a large fire to burn all the Lundies’. In Finlay’s speech, Dowse and his supporters were cast as traitors, as a trojan horse that was within the walls that threatened to ruin the city: ‘the huge wooden horse -Dowse

– has been admitted within the walls, and it remains to be seen [...] whether the city is to be set on fire, or whether the wooden horse is to be thrown into the Foyle’ (*LD Sent.* 22 Dec. 1868).

In summary, the spatialisation of the political, as the spatialisation of a communal political self, cannot tolerate internal differences that may disrupt it. In the spatial political imaginary of Derry internal differences shattered the myth of a pure internal (and Protestant) space. Or as Carpentier puts it ‘the diversity that characterises the self is most likely to eventually dislocate the (construction of the) homogenous self’ (Carpentier, 2017, p. 174). The figure of the traitor then is a decidedly fantasmatic one, located in the very impossibility of the full positivity of identity. The presence of a traitor inside the walls is a traumatic kernel, a spectre of the horrific vision that threatens the loyalist political identity. Lundy is the traumatic trace of a radical negativity that cannot be ultimately overcome, but nonetheless helps sustain loyalist identity. In Derry, the traitor within the walls is not just a topographical metaphor. As per the Dowse riot, the presence of the usual enemy of loyalism (Irish Catholics) within the walls of Derry welcomed by Dowse, a ‘Lundy’ was decidedly antagonistic to the loyalist articulation of the city as near-sacred Protestant ground. With the spatialisation of the political self (which is a source of potent political mobilisation) comes a material vulnerability of that identity. To concede that space is to lose one’s communal political being. The Dowse lecture was in this sense, for conservatives the materialisation of a horrific vision within the city.

In the 1883 riot on the occasion of the visit of the Dublin Lord Mayor, the violation of the city centre was also deeply felt by conservatives in Derry. While Catholic nationalists were understood as traitors in loyalist/unionist discourse, their ‘treachery’ was of a different order than the internal ‘Lundies.’ Catholic and Irish nationalists, as enemies outside the walls were seen as disloyal by their nature in their non-pledging of allegiance to the Crown, and the Union, as well as their supposed fidelity to Rome. In the 1883 riot it was not so much that ‘Lundies’ let the enemies within the walls, it was that a resurgent Irish nationalism that confidently repudiated the established order was inside the city walls- they had pushed their way through previous structural barriers. Therefore, by 1883 Ulster’s Protestants were more united as they faced the threat of Irish nationalism, therefore the figure of Lundy featured less in loyalist public discourse in that moment. With the deepening polarisation between Catholic nationalists and those who supported the Union, social antagonisms

became even more simplified. The social space was cleft between those who repudiated the political status quo and those who sought to uphold it.

The Catholic threat

The ‘constitutive outside’, the enemy at the gates, of loyalist discourse was the Irish Catholic. If Ulster Protestants were under continual siege it was the Irish Catholic that was their perennial besieger. It was this spectre of the Catholic that demanded a pan-Protestant unity. The walls of Derry were a radical frontier, an unbridgeable chasm, that separated those within the walls from the Catholics outside. In the political vision of loyalism, the figure of the Catholic was a figure evacuated of history. The essential character of the Catholic remained the same. Thus, the Catholic threat remained the same. The Irish Catholic lay behind every historical threat to the Protestant order in Ireland, be it the 1641 uprising, the Siege of 1689, the 1798 rebellion, Fenianism, and as per the case in the riots detailed here, the Disestablishment of the Irish Church and Irish nationalism. These episodes, according to loyalist discourse, were less about political struggles engendered by histories of colonial violence and dispossession, but rather they betray an unfolding teleology of essential Catholic being.

The *Sentinel* published some of the historian, John Mackenzie's (1861; *LD Sent.* 14 Aug. 1968) account of the Siege as a timely reminder to Derry's Presbyterians and liberal Protestants of the enemy that they all faced *as* Protestants. The *Sentinel* generally stopped short of publicly denouncing all of Derry's Catholics as disloyal and violent, and so on. Instead, it relied on narratives of the Siege to point towards the fundamental disorder that marked Irish Catholics. According to Mackenzie's narrative the Siege and the turmoil of the events it is located within, was a result of essential Catholic malevolence. It was ‘general design of the Irish Papists against the British Protestants, and particularly the Ultoghs, who had given the earliest demonstration of their cruel disposition in the Rebellion of '41³⁶, and engraven it in the most bloody characters.’ The *Sentinel* further quotes Mackenzie's assertion that the men who served under Lord Antrim, a Jacobite leader during the siege, were descended from the Irish rebels of 1641. Such anti-Catholic tropes were frequent in nineteenth-century militant Protestant discourse in England, though in Ulster they were particularly fierce (Gibney, 2008, p. 14; Paz, 1992). John Temple's *Irish Rebellion* (1646, quoted in Gibney, 2008, p.

³⁶ Ultoghs, meaning settlers in Ulster. In the 1641 rebellion native dispossessed Catholics revolted against Protestant settlers.

14) published a few years after the 1641 rebellion evidences how the figure of the Irish Catholic was a long-standing trope in Protestant political discourse. As Temple summated the nature of the Irish Catholic

Rough rebellious disposition of the people, their hatred so implacable, their malice so unappeasable to all the English Nation, as no laws or gentle constitution would work, no publick benefits, temper, or any tract of time reconcile and draw them to the tolerable patience of cohabitation

Again the rebellion in 1641 was not on account of colonial dispossession but Catholic bloodlust

All this wicknedness they exercised upon the English, without any provocation given them. Alas! Who can comprehend the fears, terrors, anguish, bitterness and perplexity that seized upon the poor Protestants, finding themselves so suddenly surprised without remedy, and rapt in up in all kinds of outward miseries which could possibly by man be inflicted upon human kind (quoted Gibney, 2008, p. 14)

In loyalist political discourse it was not individual Catholics who were violent and disloyal and so on, but rather it was all Catholics. As the extract of Mackenzie's text published in the *Sentinel* continues

A mischievous project was hatching among the Irish Papists against the whole body of British Protestants 'that priests had told their people that some great design was at hand, and that they should provide weapons; "that not *only the men, but the women and boys* too, began to furnish themselves with skeanes³⁷ and half-pikes" and that a friar had preached a sermon about "Saul's destroying of the Amalekites" [emphasis added] (*LD Sent.* 14 Aug. 1868).

Here, the Catholic priest features as a dangerous provocateur, constantly goading their Irish flock into rebellion. Irish Catholics were often cast as 'dupes' of priests who were advancing the imperial designs of Rome. A large public advertisement addressed to 'The Protestants Generally of Ballymena', though some distance from Derry, serves as

³⁷ Meaning dagger, perhaps from the Irish word '*scian*' meaning knife.

an example of how militant evangelicalism perceived the threat of a hidden Popish agenda. Two open air religious addresses were to be held in Town Hall Square in Ballymena, given by Rev. M. Gallagher, formally of the 'Romish Church', and therefore privy to its conspiratorial machinations. Attendees were also given notice that a collection would be made after the lecture 'to enable the preacher to continue in his labours in exposing the abominations of Romanism' (NAI CSRPO). Irish Catholics, then, were the foot soldiers of an imperial Catholic Church. This allowed loyalists to maintain a sense of being besieged. Though Ulster's Protestants had more favour with the state, and could expect that its coercive apparatuses would ultimately uphold their interests, they were being threatened by servants of the Church of Rome. Here, it is worth noting the fixity of the figure of the Irish Catholic as a servant of imperialist Catholicism in loyalist discourse. An Orange Order pamphlet published in 1972, in the midst of the early years of the Troubles titled *The Battle for Northern Ireland*, saw the violence engulfing Northern Ireland as a function of Rome's interference

The manipulating hand of Romanism can be seem altering the course of the nation to suit her own imperialistic ideas. From the time of Pope Adrian granted Ireland to Henry II of England, on the condition that he subjugated the ancient Celtic Church to the see of Rome, until now, the Church of Rome has mislead the people

And again, the duplicity of the priest is detailed

This is why the ordinary people are so confused. On one hand they hear the priest denouncing the I.R.A. and on the other they see the church granting not only consolation to the bereaved but her complete services to the burial of allegedly excommunicated person without any evidence of or even time for repentance (Smyth 1972, p. 2).

Ian Paisley, a loyalist leader who came to prominence at the beginning of the Troubles, mobilised the same trope. Speaking on the burning down of Catholics' homes Paisley stated: 'Catholic homes caught fire because they were loaded with petrol bombs; Catholic churches were attacked and burned because they were arsenals and priests handed out sub-machine guns to parishioners' (*IT*, 5 Mar, 2008). Evidently, the essential nature of the Irish Catholic in loyalist discourse, is a long-standing trope that sustains the political-spatial imaginary of the siege.

Conclusion

As this chapter has demonstrated, in nineteenth-century Derry the political imagination is at once a spatial imagination. Interrogating the conservative Ulster Protestant siege myth as a spatial-political discourse brings into relief the fantasmatic force that helps sustain Derry Protestants' communal-political identity. This fantasmatic element of the siege as a spatial imaginary not only structured Protestant thinking-about-space, as a discourse (in PDT terms), it also sustained the material practices of spatial performance and the spatialisation of the political. This is readily discernible in the riots of 1868 and 1883. Of course, the fantasmatic force behind these material practices is what propels the space claiming practices examined throughout this thesis. That is, beatific and horrific spectres that haunt and structure spatial-political visions and practices is what sustains the logics of spatial defence and attack. It is also that which drives the logics of spatialised representational violence. As such, fantasy (whether it is couched in strict Lacanian terms or not) provides a critical explanatory layer in understanding the dynamics of antagonism in Derry. What is more, and in more general terms, fantasy is critical in understanding the imbrications of space and antagonism, and is therefore crucial to the task of this thesis.

The siege myth, as detailed above, as a political discourse is remarkably durable. It continued to be the broad interpretative frame of Ulster's Protestants as they faced the renewed challenges posed by a resurgent Irish Nationalism throughout the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. The core 'moments' of the discourse remained the same, structured through the empty signifier of 'security', and the figure of the implacably hostile Catholic, as well as the traitor within. While this spatial-political discourse seems to a large extent fairly rigid, in another sense it is remarkable flexible. New crises would always throw up new internal traitors, and whatever iteration of nationalism was ascendant, be it constitutional nationalism or the more revolutionary and conspiratorial variety, it could always be understood as the latest manifestation of perennial Catholic duplicity. These internal 'moments' that constituted conservative Protestant discourse were structural positions, which could always be refilled. Given Derry's position on the very frontier of Protestant Ulster, the spatial aspects of the siege myth ensured that it would remain a political as well as spatial imaginary.

5. Derry's 'Civil War', June 1920: The political logics of territoriality

In 1920 Ireland was in the throes of war. The Irish Republican Army's campaign was slowly but steadily prising British control from much of the island. Prior to 1920, the north-west remained relatively quiet. As the War of Independence (1919-1921) wore on, however, the territorial future of Derry looked uncertain. Unionists feared that Derry, a nationalist majority city, was precariously perched just within the proposed boundaries of the nascent northern state. If nationalists leveraged Derry out of any northern arrangement the very viability of a unionist state could be brought into question. Conversely, Derry's nationalists hoped that they could secure the city within an emerging Irish Republic. Recent nationalist election victories in Derry grounded such hopes in the city's political realities. Derry's rival political communities, already deeply antagonised by a conflict over the political future of Ireland, feared being left on the 'wrong side' of the emerging border. Once again, Derry's position along a historic political fault-line, where the nationalist majority collided with unionist Ulster, exacerbated polarisation in the city.

What is more, the post-war Great War moment was one of profound territorial recalibration, both in Ireland and abroad. European powers were realigning borders to the new post-war realities. As Wilson (2010, p. 1) notes, from Belfast to Bagdad 'stretched a vast zone of compromised or collapsed states.' Ulster, a disputed borderland on the western periphery of a major imperial power, took its place amongst other contested regions that were undergoing territorial changes, for example Upper Silesia, or areas formerly part of the Austro-Hungarian empire. Lloyd George remarked that he was confronted with 'series of Ulsters all over Europe' (quoted in Wilson, 2010, p. 1). Though Derry's tensions were driven by the Irish War of

Independence, the changing and retreating of Britain's imperial frontiers compounded the sense of dis-location for unionists looking to secure a Protestant state.

In June 1920, Derry experienced the worst episode of political violence the city had seen since the historic siege of 1688-89. This violence was strikingly territorial in character. Armed unionists mobilised in Derry in order to forcibly keep the city within the northern state. Furthermore, fighting in the city was structured around the taking, holding, and re-ordering of space in the city. Such space-claiming violence was directly tied to the inauguration and territorial bounding of new political regimes. That is, this territorial violence was at once state-making violence. These territorial-political practices, then, at both the intimately local and state, even, imperial scale constituted political logics as they were implicated in the inauguration and contestation of new political regimes.

In a moment of political crises, when the contingency of the social order was rendered more visible, its ultimate groundlessness more apparent, territorial practices were modes of structuring out this contingency by fixing space. Still, a question lingers. What was different about this moment of violence and space-claiming in Derry? The violence of June 1920 was certainly more deadly than any episode of violence in the city well beyond living memory. Yet, it not only this intensity that distinguishes it from other moments of violence. But rather, it is that this violence and territoriality was, as already suggested, intimately tied to the inauguration of new political, and territorial, orders. That is, while all the spatial practices studied throughout this thesis could be considered territorial in that they articulate spatial frontiers at the local level and betray the antagonistic limit of social objectivity, in 1920, however, the territorial practices are explicitly implicated in the inscription and contestation of an emerging state border.

This chapter proceeds as follows: First, the fuller context of the major political events and forces that were shaping Derry's tensions in 1920 is detailed. Secondly, the concept of 'territoriality' is interrogated theoretically. This is crucial in articulating territoriality as a political logic, which, in turn, is critical in understanding the (re)spatialising of antagonism that structured Derry's violence in 1920. In particular the work of spatial theorist Robert Sack, and to a lesser degree, that of post-structuralist geographer Claude Raffestin, is marshalled in thinking territoriality antagonistically. Thirdly, an account of the political violence that played out in Derry is detailed with an emphasis on its spatial dimensions. Though this narrative is fairly extensive in its details, it is nonetheless worthwhile as it illustrates the dynamics of

spatial antagonism at an intensely local level. Fourth, from this, the various constituents of a distinct republican territoriality are examined. Finally, the chapter concludes with summary reflections on how thinking territoriality as a political logic renders intelligible the imbrications of local territorial practices with the territorial logics at a much wider scale.

Territorial anxieties

The political violence that occurred in Derry in June 1920 must be located within the wider shifting territorial dynamics at local, regional, and, indeed, imperial levels. In mid-1920 Derry's territorial future remained uncertain. Derry was a majority Catholic and nationalist city, and had elected a nationalist mayor in the recent municipal elections of January 1920. Derry's nationalists reasonably hoped that in the event of partition, the city would fall outside the still speculative border of the newly emerging northern state and be part of an Irish Republic. For unionists, Derry as the second largest city in the north of Ireland, was critical to the viability of any northern state. In 1920 the precarious position of Derry was all the more obvious to the city's loyalists. The city clung tenuously to Protestant Ulster by a single bridge connected to the Waterside. The western portion of the city, or city-side, looked even less secure, with a lattice-work of backroads connecting Derry to the overwhelmingly Catholic and nationalist Donegal. Unionist anxieties deepened as the Irish War of Independence wore on. As IRA's military campaign intensified, Unionists could reasonably fear that Westminster may concede some potential border areas, such as Derry, to ensure a cessation of hostilities. Precisely where Derry featured within the imperial territorial calculus of Westminster was unclear. The battle of Derry in June 1920 occurred within this nexus of profound political dislocation and spatial uncertainty. The territorial practices that characterised the violence of June 1920 constitute a struggle to secure the future of Derry through the violent claiming and reordering of the local space.

In recent years prior to 1920, Irish unionists had suffered a series of political shocks and territorial compromises. For decades unionists had vehemently opposed the imposition of any form of Home Rule for Ireland, in the belief that any divergence from Westminster would ultimately threaten the Union. Eight years previously, in 1912, Ulster unionists mobilised *en masse* to defeat the third Home Rule Bill that had been introduced by a Liberal British Government under Prime Minister Herbert Asquith. The bill made provision for the creation of parliament in Dublin which would

take responsibility for most of domestic Irish affairs, though Ireland would remain part of the Union and would be ultimately answerable to London. Upwards of 500,000 unionists had signed the Solemn League and Covenant as a protest against the establishment of an Irish parliament (Mansergh, 2017, pp. 159-161). A unionist militia, the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) was organised in 1913 to forcibly resist the imposition of any form of Home Rule on Ulster (Lee, 1989, p. 17).³⁸ The irony was that Ulster's loyalists threatened rebellion against Westminster if Home Rule was implemented (McGaughey, 2012, p. 10). In 1914, the UVF, in what became known as the 'Larne gun running', smuggled upwards of twenty-five thousand rifles into Ulster in anticipation of Home Rule (Jackson, 1992). In response to the formation of the UVF, the nationalist Irish Volunteers were formed to ensure the enacting Home Rule. Irish society had become highly militarised. A civil war looked possible, or even likely. With the outbreak of the First World War, however, Home Rule was momentarily taken off the immediate political agenda. But by the time the issue once again came to political prominence with the end of the war in November 1918, Irish nationalism had advanced beyond advocating for mere Home Rule.

In Easter 1916, Irish nationalists and socialists waged an armed insurrection against British rule in Ireland (Townshend, 2015). After a week of intense fighting in Dublin city, and some comparatively minor affrays elsewhere (McNamara, 2018), the rebellion was crushed. The revolutionaries initially enjoyed little popular support owing to the destruction of Dublin city centre, and that such actions might scupper the chances of Home Rule, amongst other factors (Pierce, 2006).³⁹ The subsequent execution of the leaders of the Rising, and the arresting and interning of Irish nationalists, however, garnered widespread sympathy. By 1918 the Irish political tide had turned towards revolutionary separatist nationalism. Sinn Féin, a political party that advocated for the establishment of an Irish Republic, won a landslide victory in the 1918 General Election (de Bromhead et al., 2020).⁴⁰ The hegemony of the Irish Parliamentary Party (IPP), the moderate constitutional nationalist party led by John

³⁸ In January 1913 the Ulster protestant militia, the Ulster Volunteers, was reorganised as the Ulster Volunteer Force by the two major Unionist leaders, James Craig and Edward Carson. This re-organisation of the force, as Lee (1989, p. 17) suggests, was an effort to bring all of unionism's 'physical force elements under political control.' The force was commanded by General Sir George Richardson, a military veteran.

³⁹ Thousands of Irish men had enlisted in the British army, and the army was therefore a major employer. Also, the wives of men who served in the British army were in receipt of a 'separation allowance.' Some feared that the actions of the Easter rebels put this payment in jeopardy.

⁴⁰ Electoral reforms in 1918 nearly tripled the franchise in Ireland. This also helps to account for the dramatic rise of Sinn Féin.

Redmond, a party that had pushed for Home Rule since the 1880s was shattered (Meleady, 2013 p. 467).⁴¹ Sinn Féin, its first time standing in a general election, won seventy-three seats, while the IPP won a paltry six seats. In total, Unionists parties won 25 seats.

While Republicanism had eclipsed the IPP throughout the country, constitutional nationalism remained relatively strong in Derry. Historian Adrian Grant (2019, p. 78-79) describes the growth of Derry Sinn Féin from 1916 to 1918 as nothing less than ‘stunning’, with the rapid expansion of party membership and the holding of high profile republican public meetings in the city. Despite the failings of the IPP and the rise of Sinn Féin, there was genuine support for constitutional nationalism in Derry. As Farrell (1983, p. 11) notes, the Catholic minority were somewhat demoralised in the north, and preferred the cautious approach of the IPP. Also, Sinn Féin were reluctant to challenge the IPP head-on out of fear that the nationalist vote might be split. Home Rule nationalists in the north-west and in Derry city initially opposed Sinn Féin’s willingness to use physical force. Nationalism in Derry, then, was a divided house (Ozserker, 2019, pp. 84-86). The divisions in northern nationalism, were such that in south Derry in 1918-1919 members of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, a conservative Catholic society that was strong in Ulster, feuded with local Sinn Féin. The feud resulted in violent clashes at two football matches (Ozseker, 2019, p. 89). Still, when it mattered, Derry’s nationalists were able to work together, forming electoral pacts in the general election of 1918 and the municipal election in 1920 (Grant, 2018). And most notably, nationalists of all stripes came together to oppose the imposition of conscription in Ireland (Grant, 2018, p. 81).⁴² In the face of the conscription crisis and looming partition, conservative nationalists in Derry and the north-west were beginning to row behind the separatist zeitgeist that was prevailing throughout the rest of the island. Yet, due to the power of constitutional nationalism in Derry, the IRA were comparatively weak in the city (McMahon, p. 109). During the early days of the Irish War of independence, so quiet was Derry in terms of overt militant republican activity, the IRA GHQ in Dublin were happy for activists in the

⁴¹ As Dermot Meleady writes, with the 1918 General election result the political philosophy of John Redmond, the towering figure of Irish constitutional nationalism and leader of the IPP, was dead.

⁴² The British government, faced with a shortage of troops on the western front, sought to impose the draft in Ireland. This move prompted a mass movement in the country to oppose any such measures. Nationalists including Sinn Féiners as well as the more conservative Irish Parliamentary Party who had initially supported the war effort in the hope that Irish support would hold the British government to their promise of Home Rule, all implacably opposed conscription. Unionists in Derry were generally in favour of conscription.

city to keep a low profile as the city was an ideal hideout for on-the-run IRA activists (Ozseker, 2019, p. 89).

After the 1918 election result, Sinn Féin refused to take their seats at the Westminster parliament in London. In an act of total repudiation of the legitimacy of British Rule in Ireland, Sinn Féin declared an Irish Republic and set up an alternative parliament, Dáil Eireann, in Dublin on January 21st 1919 (Murphy, 1994). This new insurgent parliament was not recognised by the British and utterly rejected by northern unionists. The first shots of the Irish War of Independence were fired on the same day as the first meeting of the Dáil, with the killing of two Royal Irish Constabulary during an ambush in Soloheadbeg, Co. Tipperary. With the declaring of an Irish Republic a radical counter-state had been inaugurated, and the undermining of British control in most parts of the island was underway with the commencement of the war.

With the onward march of militant Irish nationalism, unionism underwent a series of both political and territorial retreats. Historically, unionism was steadfastly opposed to any form of Home Rule, no matter how limited. Even the prospect of a Home Rule parliament for the northern counties was initially rejected by political unionism. With the electoral rise of militant nationalism in Sinn Féin from 1917, however, a northern state with its own parliament looked ever-more attractive. Such an arrangement could serve as a bulwark against Irish nationalism as well as resisting any concessions Westminster might be tempted to grant to Irish republicanism *vis-à-vis* the territorial boundaries of the northern state. In the face of stark political realities, this still prospective northern state shrank from a nine-county Ulster state, to a six-county arrangement. A nine-county Northern Ireland with a much larger proportion of Irish Catholics would bring the viability of the state into question. Still, the loss of large areas of Ulster was a bitter pill to swallow, even if such a territorial compromise better guaranteed the future northern state. Joseph Fisher, the Unionist representative on the Boundary Commission, a body established to determine the final shape of the Northern Irish border, complained bitterly to the Unionist leader and politician James Craig in 1922 about the territorial losses a northern state was facing

Ulster can never be complete without Donegal. Donegal belongs to Derry, and Derry to Donegal. With north Monaghan [Protestant area] *in* Ulster and South Armagh *out* [Catholic area]... we should have a solid ethnographic and strategic frontier to the south, and a hostile 'Afghanistan' on our north-west frontier would be placed in safe keeping (Joseph Fisher to James Craig 1922, Robert Lynch 2019, p. 206)

Nonetheless, the pragmatic position of the Unionist leadership was that a six-county state was the only sustainable long-term option. Walter Long, a former leader of the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP), proposed the establishment of two Home Rule jurisdictions with two Home Rule parliaments, one in Dublin for the southern state and one in Belfast for the northern state (Farrell, 1983, p. 9).⁴³ Though nationalists now repudiated any such arrangement for the south, advocating instead total separation, northern unionists were by now in favour of their own parliament.

As such, by 1919 Unionists were channelling their political efforts towards the securing of partition and thus a northern unionist regime (Farrell 1983, p. 8). These efforts looked promising with a sympathetic Conservative government in Westminster and some key unionist figures in the higher echelons of the Irish Administration, coupled with an ability of Unionists to exercise an influence ‘out of all proportion to their numbers’ in the conservative party (Farrell 1983, pp. 8-9). But as the Irish War of Independence wore on, political Unionism grew restless. While Unionist prospects in Westminster had looked secure enough, the situation in Ireland was starting to look more troubling. Throughout 1919 republican activity had been largely confined to south-west and eastern portions of the island. As the early months of 1920 progressed IRA activity inside the six-county area was more conspicuous (O’Neill, HC Deb., 22 June 1920; Grant, 2018; Gallagher, 2003).⁴⁴ In light of electoral losses in Derry, and elsewhere inside the prospective six-county state, and a deteriorating security situation throughout Ireland, by the spring of 1920 Unionist leaders were deeply anxious about the security of the emerging Ulster state. As Farrell summarises

The escalation of the conflict in Ireland, and especially in the North, seriously worried the Unionist leaders. They were distrustful of the British government and feared that the IRA successes might persuade them to scrap the Government of Ireland Bill, with its safeguards for the Unionist position. Even if the Government went ahead with the Partition scheme, Unionists in Fermanagh, Tyrone, Derry city, and other Catholic majority areas near the proposed border felt particularly vulnerable (Farrell, 1983, p. 12).

⁴³ Long was the chair of the British government’s Committee for Ireland which advocated for partition.

⁴⁴ Major O’Neill, in the House of Commons, stated that Derry’s violence was sparked by increased IRA activity, stating that ‘the increasing frequency, during the last few weeks and months, of the incursions of Sinn Fein into the North-East of Ulster. These riots in Derry began in that way.’

A letter from Col. Frederick Hugh Crawford, a major figure in Ulster loyalism (Farrell, 1983, p. 5), to James Craig in late 1921 betrays unionist anxiety around the uncertain final shape of the northern frontier: 'I do not trust Lloyd George or Chamberlain, and that I believe they would give way to the Sinn Féiners if by doing they could come to terms with them. In fact their policy is 'peace at any price', and let honour hang' (Crawford, 7 Nov. 1921 PRONI D640/7/14).⁴⁵ The correspondence continues

It is quite possible that the Sinn Feiners in Tyrone will try and be cut out by a corridor similar to what the Allies have arranged in Siliesa. Of course this will be a most difficult point to settle, even if it not be quite impossible.

Crawford's letter goes on to underline the logic that underpinned the formation of the emerging Protestant state, namely the homogenisation of space through the exclusion (and or suppression) of its internal Catholic threat.

If an arrangement of the exchange of Roman Catholics for Protestants can be made by an alteration of the boundaries it will thereby strengthen Ulster's position enormously, and make her government much easier and less expensive. If this principle of exchanging a Roman Catholic for a Protestant is pursued Ulster will back it to man

Though Crawford's comments betray a will to spatially reorganise the northern social space, they also could suggest that some unionist leaders might be concede Catholic majority areas, such as Derry, to fully secure the new state. This will to reorganise the social space of Ulster is readily discernible in the territorial actions of loyalists in Derry 1920. It was driven by a beatific spatial vision, a vision that promised a fully reconciled Protestant space, a space without internal divisions. The reverse side of this is, again, the horrific vision of losing a Protestant Ulster if its internal and external obstacles and threats were not eradicated, or, at least, greatly tamed.

⁴⁵ As Farrell (1983, p.5) details, Crawford organised the Larne gun running in 1914.

Municipal Elections, 1920

In the municipal elections in January 1920, for the first time a nationalist majority as well as a nationalist mayor was returned to Derry's corporation (*LD Sent.*, 20 Jan. 1920; *DJ*, 21 Jan. 1920). This was a seismic blow not just to unionism in Derry, but to the entire Ulster unionist project (Gallagher, 2003, p. 43; Dineen, 2019; Prince and Warner 2011, p. 5). Proportional representation had been adopted for the election in order to ensure some representation for unionists in the south of Ireland. Such measures, however, had the unintended consequence of putting unionist controlled areas in the north in jeopardy (McCabe, 2010). At a pivotal moment, Derry was slipping away from unionist political control, and potentially out of the union. The unionist fears of losing Derry were not unfounded. Later, in 1921 when the Anglo-Irish Treaty established the Boundary Commission to determine the exact border, Irish nationalists were optimistic that Derry would be returned to the new Irish state. The loss of Derry would be a serious economic dent in a new northern state, but also as Gallagher (2003, p. 43) further ventures, 'if unionism lost the city now, the moral justification for having a six-county state would have little foundation.'

The electoral triumph of nationalism in Derry, then, raised serious doubts about the city's future. Derry's ever-more assertive nationalists saw their electoral successes in historic terms. It was the over-turning of the old-regime and Protestant dominance in Derry. Nationalists saw the election result as securing an 'undivided Ireland.' A local religious figure, Rev. Walker O'Neil, as reported in the *Sentinel*, declared that the election result was a 'victory in a fight of centuries.' He continued

the joybells were silent that night, and they were eloquent in their silence, for the Nationalists had breached the Walls of Derry [...] That was a victory for an undivided Ireland. Having secured a glorious victory they should set themselves making their position impregnable against the assaults to dislodge them (*LD Sent.*, 22 Jan 1920).

The *Derry Journal* was equally unambiguous in its interpretation of election result with its headlines reading: "No Surrender" Citadel - Conquered after Struggle for Centuries – Overthrow of Ascendancy.' The *Journal* also held the victory as the culmination of long histories of struggle 'There will be great jubilation everywhere at the victory which gives the majority of the population a proper voice in the control of the city's affairs,

a right which for centuries was denied to them' (*DJ*, 21 Jan.1920). Referring to the deeply polarised situation in Derry, Conservative MP Colonel Ashley in the House of Commons described the city as a 'powder magazine that might set alight.' For Col. Ashley the blame of the June violence was to be laid on Derry's nationalists, stating that 'the primary cause of this deplorable outbreak is, undoubtedly, the determined attempt to oust from the industrial mainstay of that town all those who are loyalists and wish to maintain the connection with this country' (Ashley, HC deb., 22 June 1920). In other words, this was nationalist violence calculated to leverage Derry out of the prospective northern state and the Union. If the 'citadel' had in fact been conquered, it was imperative for the city's loyalists to recapture it if it was to remain within the bounds of the union.

Securing the future

With the start of the Irish War of Independence, influential Unionist figures expressed, both in private and sometimes publicly, a desire to see the formation of a Protestant paramilitary force. In other words, they wanted a remobilisation of the Ulster Volunteer Force, the pre-war paramilitary force that formed in order to resist the imposition of Home Rule on Ulster (Farrell, 1983). That is, in order to defeat nationalism and secure the founding of a new Protestant state they required a dependable coercive apparatus, one that was committed to the political project of Unionism. As Farrell (1983, p. 11) details

They wanted tougher policies and stronger forces to defeat the IRA, more especially within the six-county area, so that the Partition scheme could be easily implemented. The demand was loudest from Unionist in areas like Fermanagh, Tyrone, Derry city and county and parts of Co. Armagh, who felt vulnerable

Edward Carson, the Ulster Unionist leader, wrote to Bonar Law, a leading conservative sympathetic to unionism, and described deepening unionist anxieties as well as exaggerating the threat of republicanism in the northern six-counties

The Loyalist portion are becoming daily more restive and apprehensive of what may happen and we have grave anxiety that Sinn Feiners may begin to attempt on a

considerable scale, activities which might cause our people to retaliate and if they once go out hand a disastrous position would arise which would probably bring our own friends into collision with the authorities [...] Should a conflict break out between our people and the Sinn Feiners we would be at a great disadvantage, as the latter are so completely organised and supplied with arms and ammunition, bombs, etc. [...] I believe if some method could be found of assisting men who are willing could help the government to put down organised crime with the forces under the control of the government (PRONI D1507/A/35/15)

During the troubled period prior to out-break of the First World War, Carson in same later stated that Belfast did not experience any ‘untoward incident.’ This, he ventured, was on account of the discipline of the UVF in the city. Therefore, the raising of the volunteers should be considered again to prevent seditious activity.

One of the anomalies of policing in Ulster was that many protestant Unionists distrusted the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) a police force who were objectively the enforcers of British rule in Ireland (Farrell, 1983). This distrust resided in the fact a large portion of the police force in Ulster were Catholic. For example, as Farrell notes, in Belfast the RIC were fifty percent Catholic. While the War of Independence raged the staunchly loyal members of the northern force were moved to the more hostile regions in the south of the island. Many of the RIC men who remained in Ulster were suspected of nationalist and Sinn Féin sympathies. Indeed, some Catholic members resigned from the force in Derry following June’s violence in protest at the authorities handling of the events. Two difficulties for Unionists, then, from the perspective of security was that they doubted the ability of the RIC to ensure the preservation of order and uphold what was effectively an emerging Protestant state, and the British government were reluctant to send substantial reinforcements to a relatively quiet north.

The following resolution of the Ulster Ex-Service Men’s Association passed at a meeting in Belfast on the 17th June, a day before the violence in Derry commenced underlines both the desire and readiness of unionists to enforce what they termed as ‘law and order’

We, the members of the ulster ex-Service Men’s Association, hereby pledge ourselves to assist his Majesty’s Government by all means in our power to restore law and order in Ulster.

We further beg to inform the government that if they consider to utilise our services, there are 3,000 trained ex-service officers [...] ready to obey any order upon which the Government may decide (Ulster Ex-Service Men Association, 19 June 1920, (PRONI D1507/A/35/33))

Though it was widely believed that the UVF instigated the violence in Derry, the task here is not to determine whether or not the UVF were properly reformed and to what extent, and how successful or unsuccessful such a reformation was (Bowman, 2012).⁴⁶ Still, the old the UVF networks were still in place, and many of their members now had extensive military experience from the Great War. Armed unionists in Derry (under the appellation of the UVF or otherwise) mobilised to secure the future of the city within the boundaries of the northern state. In this, the territorial practices of these armed actors were fully aligned with the territorial logics of unionism and, ultimately, the government in London.

Attorney General for Ireland, Dennis Henry, was effectively the government's spokesperson on Derry's troubles. When asked during a House of Commons discussion on the violence that had engulfed Derry if the security measure of disarming of Derry's population by the military had commenced, Henry replied with something of a vague though still decidedly partisan statement: 'The disarmament of the disloyal portion of the population has always been proceeding in Derry' (Henry, HC Deb, 24 June 1920). Indeed, it was becoming ever-more clear that loyalists could depend upon coercive arm of the state, and that the state could depend on loyalists as a coercive bulwark if needed. As further evidenced by the Unionist MP for mid-Antrim, Major Robert William Hugh O' Neill's, extensive contribution in the House of Commons debate on Derry. For O' Neill, Derry's nationalists were blame for the unrest. He described republican political activity as 'the kind of thing creates an atmosphere of terrible provocation to those who constitute the great majority of the population in that area. There is a great incentive to the loyal majority to adopt measures of retaliation.' He continued further, speculating that if the government required it, they would have little trouble in soliciting the support of the 'loyal population' in the suppression of the region's Catholic

⁴⁶ That is not to that this question around the status of the UVF is insignificant, as the violence in June 1920 Derry was a precursor to the major organised violence against Catholics that would take place in Belfast a few weeks later.

if the Government cannot produce sufficient troops, which seems almost incredible, I suggest to them that they should adopt some means of organising in order to help them, the majority of the loyal population in those parts of the country. I am perfectly certain, if the Government were to issue an appeal for help, if they really have reached such a terrible state that they, as representing the British Empire, have not got the forces with which to maintain order, there would be a very fine response (O' Neill, HC Deb 22 June 1920).

The mobilisation of armed unionists in Derry was part of the foundational violence of the emerging northern state. Critical to this state was the fixing of its boundaries and securing an internal unionist monopoly on violence. The correspondences between Unionist politicians and conservatives betray how senior figures were willing to rely on paramilitary violence to secure their state if necessary. Again, the territorial practices of loyalist gunmen on Derry's streets traversed the territorial ambitions of unionist authorities.

Territoriality

The political violence that erupted in Derry in June 1920 was intensely territorial in character, consisting of a very clear struggle to secure territorial control over strategically important local spaces. As the fighting started in the city, paramilitary forces, political activists, and civilians frantically worked to impose their control on the local space through the violent articulation of spatial boundaries in the city. As such, violence was tightly structured around the defence of existing ethno-political frontiers and the internal policing of these bounded spaces. More ominously, however, was the attempted violent reordering of mixed areas where minorities were targeted either as individuals, or their homes and businesses were attacked. These practices constituting territorial-political logics were not just concerned with the reconstitution of power dynamics in the local space, but, crucially were tied to the territorial re-ordering of the island.

Before proceeding to interrogate the territorial aspects of violence in Derry, it is necessary to discuss territoriality theoretically. Robert Sack's widely influential study, *Human territoriality: Its theory and history* (1986), is decidedly helpful in thinking through the dynamics of territoriality. One of great merits of Sack's theorisation of territoriality is that he moved beyond equating territoriality with an animal instinct (e.g. Ardrey, 1966).⁴⁷ In this, Sack's work is in keeping with the more critical theorisations of territoriality by human geographers in the 1970s and 1980s (Gottmann, 1973; Soja, 1971; Malmberg, 1980; Murphy, 2012, pp. 159-160).⁴⁸ For Sack, territoriality is 'a primary expression of social power (1986, p. 5). It is 'the attempt by an individual or group to affect, influence, or control people, phenomenon, and relationships, by delimiting control over a geographic area' (1986, p. 19). Territoriality is therefore 'a powerful geographic strategy' of control. This controlled bounded space Sack calls the territory. Sack's analysis helps to bring into relief how individuals, communities, organisations, and states pursue political and social goals through territoriality.

Sack identifies several key elements and tendencies that constitute territoriality. Territorially for Sack is premised upon three entangled moments, namely *classification*, *communication*, and *enforcement* (Sack 1986, pp. 31-32). Territoriality's potency is found in its efficiency, as territoriality primarily classifies by area rather than type, and thus helps to avoid the difficulties of exhaustively enumerating and legislating for each 'thing' that is or is not allowed in a particular location. It is a highly effective division of social space; 'this place is ours not yours; you do not belong here.' In PDT terms, territoriality is articulatory. Territories do not speak for themselves. Territorial boundaries require communication. What is more, territorial practices are inherently antagonistic as they are constituted through radical negativity. They are defined according to inside/outside demarcations. Also critical to territoriality is enforcement. Without enforcement of its boundaries a territory ceases to exist.

Sack details many more aspects of territoriality (1986, pp. 32-34). One of the most important of these is that territorially reifies relations of power by displacing attention away from power dynamics that constitute and reproduce a territorial

⁴⁷ Ardrey's (1966) work on the 'territorial imperative' is a notable example of the potential conflation of animal territoriality with human political territoriality. Still, Sack makes reference to the animal territorial behaviour in his analysis

⁴⁸ As Murphy (2012) details, the work of Gottmann (1973) and the earlier work of Soja (1971) on territoriality and space departed from thinking territory in terms of environment or terrain and instead analysed the territorial in terms of power relations, the ideological, and the philosophical, as well as the historical forces that shaped modern territoriality. It was Sack's work in the mid-1980s, however, that 'truly put territoriality on the political-geographic agenda' (Murphy, 2012, p. 160)

configuration. Once established and accepted a territory is no longer conspicuously about the nexus between the controller and the controlled, but rather power seems to emanate from the territory itself. This is expressed in the often-touted justification for the exercise of power particular to a location as merely following ‘the law of the land’ (Sack, 1986, p. 33). Of course, this dimension of territoriality, in Laclauian terms, depends on a high degree of sedimentation or routinisation. Though quite not teased out in Sack’s analysis of territoriality, is that territoriality as a political logic, has the potential to de-reify power. Space-claiming practices bring into relief the contested, contingent, power-saturated origins of the spatial ordering of the social. That is, territorial practices can re-foreground the co-imbrications of space and power.

There are a few potential shortcomings in Sack’s theorisation of territoriality. First, is that his *territoriality-as-a-spatial-strategy* approach risks forwarding an ahistorical account of territoriality where it becomes a timeless strategy (Elden, 2013, p. 5). This problem is largely mitigated if territoriality is understood as an ensemble of concrete, situated, and historically contingent practices of space claiming. Not all territorial practices are identical. For example local territorial practices and that of the state, though they may be tightly interconnected they may be informed by different goals and rationalities that are informed by different, even competing, conceptions of space. For example, the territorial practices of loyalists in early 1920s Derry may be driven to secure Derry within the emerging northern state and keep the city within the union and empire; the territorial calculus of the metropole government in London could be different. The task then is to determine how these territorial practices interact and reinforce or complicate each-other.

Sack’s strategic understanding of territoriality elides other significant aspects of territorial practices. Territoriality is not exhausted in the control of space. Territoriality, David Delany suggests

is much more than a strategy for the control of space. It is better understood as implicating and being implicated in ways of thinking, acting, and being in the world- ways of world-making informed by beliefs, and desires, and culturally and historically contingent ways of knowing. It is much a metaphysical phenomenon as a material one (Delany, 2005, p.12).

Anni Passi points to something similar

Territory as a component of power is not only a medium for creating and reproducing social order, but is also a medium to create and maintain much of the geographic context through which we experience the world and give it meaning (Passi, 2008, p. 112).

Territoriality, then is not just a strategy of control, though that is a critical and constitutive component of the territorial. When cast as a political logic, territoriality concerns the inauguration/upholding of social-spatial order and its constitutive relations of power, and spatial modes of being and understanding the world.

In this respect, the work of Swiss critical geographer Claude Raffestin, though highly idiosyncratic, is illuminating (Raffestin, 2012; 1980). Raffestin's conceptualisation of territoriality goes beyond any strategic understanding. He is less concerned with the upholding of borders and frontiers, and more so with the spatial practices that constitute everyday life (Klauser, 2012; Murphy, 2012; Lefebvre, 2014). In his interrogation of 'territoriality', then, Raffestin is in pursuit of an everyday geography of power (Klauser 2012; Fall, 2007; Soja 1973; 1989; Foucault, 1976). Betraying his Deleuzian influences, space is that which becomes territorialised through the 'projection of human labour', labour being comprised of both 'energy and information.' Space is an exterior, 'the real' if we wish, which in the Deleuzian terms which inform Raffestin's account, is territorialized, deterritorialized, and reterritorialized (Raffestin, 2012, p. 122; Klauser 2012, p. 111; Deleuze & Guattari, 1981). Raffestin asks 'how, in fact can we observe, grasp and study human territoriality? Through everyday life... everyday life, construed and lived through the mode of concatenation and repetition, is underpinned by the network of relationships that constitute human territoriality' (Klauser, 2012, p. 113).

The point here is not to adjudicate between the more behaviourist strategic analysis of Sack's understanding of territoriality and a Raffestinian-like account that is couched in a more processual, unbounded, and radically immanent understanding of human territoriality (Murphy, 2012). But rather, it is to underline how the significance of territorial practices is not exhausted in their strategic power. Understanding territoriality through the concept of a political logic brings together the strategic aspects of territoriality as that which inaugurates and upholds spatialised configurations of objectivity which are reproduced through an ensemble of social

practices. That is, territoriality institutes configurations of space which are then reproduced and naturalised through social practices. Critically, and largely absent in both Sack's and Raffestin's account, is the radical antagonistic dimension of territoriality. Theorising territoriality as a political logic is to understand territoriality in onto-political terms, foregrounding the radical negativity implicated in territorial practices.

The final potential shortcoming of Sack's conceptualisation of territoriality concerns the role of violence. Sack's insights have been mobilised in the study of the spatial and territorial dynamics of violence (e.g. Ó Dochartaigh 2013; 2015; Adebani, 2007; Doboš, 2016; Wahman and Goldring, 2020). Still, in Sack's analysis, violence is relatively downplayed. William Connolly's (1996, pp. 144) etymological speculations on the term 'territory' are quite useful. The origins of word 'territory' as Connolly speculates may stem from the word 'terrere, meaning to frighten, to terrorize' instead of the more obvious association with land. And a 'territorium is a place from which people have been warned.' Connolly summates that 'to occupy a territory is to receive sustenance and exercise violence.' Connolly's brief conjecture manages to efficiently capture and render explicit the primary and defining aspects of territory – the reliance on some mode of violence. Territory itself is the promise of violence. The violation of a territorial boundary, the challenging of its internal workings of power, is to risk violence on oneself. This violence may be realised through direct physical corporal violence, carceral violence, or some other form of legal violence abstracted and codified into a fine or sanction.

Territoriality as a political logic traverses several forms of violence, many of which are evident in Derry in June 1920. The first of these is 'originary' or ontological violence. Territoriality spatialises antagonistic configurations of being. That is, territoriality spatialises the political. Secondly, as a political logic, territoriality is implicated in the inauguration and maintenance of modes of structural violence (Galtung, 1969; Žižek, 2008). The territorialisation of space codifies inegalitarian relations of power and who has access to a given space and who does not. It codifies who truly belongs, at the exclusion of others. Territoriality establishes what modes of being in the world are privileged. Thirdly, the upholding of a territorial frontier involves practices of concrete or subjective violence. Above all, and plainly discernible in Derry's violence, is that territoriality mobilises spatial violence in order to regulate

the possible. That is, the violent bounding of space is the attempt to forcefully structure out the contingencies that disturb the social.

‘Sinn Feiners ... will be shot on sight’

Less than a week before the outbreak of armed clashes in Derry, Prehen Woods, an area on the eastern side of the Foyle, was the site of serious violent interaction. Armed unionist ex-servicemen and local youths sought to claim Prehen as an exclusively Protestant space and forcibly prevent nationalists and Catholics from entering the area. The incidents at Prehen Wood betray a moment of complex spatial contestation and presents in condensed form the logic of territorial violence that would play out in the city from the 18th of June.

The Prehen Wood area lies on the eastern flank of the Foyle river, south of the Waterside district and on the main road from Derry to Strabane, an overwhelmingly Catholic town approximately fourteen miles south of Derry. Though the Waterside was considered a Protestant area, a substantial minority of Catholics lived on that side of the river. The wood was a popular amenity amongst Derry’s locals, many of whom took leisurely strolls through the area. Prehen was a shared space, enjoyed by both Catholics and Protestants from both sides of the river. The *Derry Journal* reported that Prehen was also a popular haunt for unemployed unionist ex-servicemen, claiming that upwards of fifty ex-servicemen visited the area daily (*DJ*, 16 June 1920; *DJ*, 18 June 1920).

On Sunday evening, 13th June 1920, Prehen’s tranquillity was disturbed, when it was the scene of ‘lively revolver firing’ (*LD Sent*, 14 June, 1920). Though the details of the incident were initially scant, the *Sentinel* blamed a Sinn Féin entourage who were passing through the area, coming from Strabane. A group of Sinn Féin supporters numbering forty to fifty were visiting Derry city earlier in the day. The republican party drove through Prehen that morning in a boisterous motorcade. Those in the procession, according to the *Sentinel*, sang republican songs, such as the ‘Soldier’s Song’ (Sherry, 1996; Moylan, 2016) along with shouting political slogans such as ‘Up the rebels!’⁴⁹ When the party were leaving the city that evening, they took the same route

⁴⁹ The Soldier’s Song, first written in 1909 by Peadar Kearney, would later be adopted as the Irish National Anthem, came to prominence as a nationalist song, used in internment camps following the 1916 Rising.

home, making their way back through the Prehen area. This time, however, they were met with resistance. The convoy was stoned by Protestant youths who resented the morning's intrusion. More seriously, this stoning was then followed by gunfire, by armed unionists. One of the Sinn Féin members was seriously wounded. Following the perceived Sinn Féin transgression, public proclamations were posted in the area. Written in red lettering the notices warned: 'Notice is hereby given that any Sinn Féiners found in Prehen or Prehen Wood after this date will be shot at sight by order of the Red Hand' (*DJ*, 18 June, 1920).

Interesting in this moment, is that Protestant locals sought to territorialise what was a shared space. While unionists may have taken offense at Sinn Féiners passing through the area, Catholics would not have seen their actions as spatially transgressive given that the road going through Prehen was the main road to Catholic Strabane. To block access to that road was to deny access to any nationalist supporters from entering the city via that route. It was an attempt to re-articulate this space, this key entry point to Derry, as exclusively Protestant.

Critical to the communication and enforcement of the newly bounded space (*c.f.* Sack, 1986), the threatening notices' promise of violence was not idle. After the attack on the Sinn Féin tour, two young Catholic men were violently assaulted at Prehen. Gerald MacLaren and James McGrory were walking through the area when they were accosted by a group of unionist men. They were identified as Catholics as one was wearing an oak leaf, a symbol for Saint Columba (*DJ*, 14 June 1920). One of the unionist party reportedly declared 'here are two more of the ____ Papists [*sic.*]' (*DJ*, 16 June 1920). One of the unionists put his revolver to the chest of McGrory, and fortunately, the gun failed to fire after two pulls of the trigger. McGrory knocked his assailant to the ground and managed to scramble to an escape and ran to the nearby police station. MacLaren, however, was not so lucky. He received a severe beating at the hands of the gang. A local girl who happened upon the badly beaten MacLaren making his way from the scene, reported that she was fired upon from the bushes when she went to the site of the assault to retrieve the man's cap.

The identities of the culprits were well-known in Derry. It was claimed they were Protestant locals from the Fountain, Wapping Lane, and Barry Street, all Protestant areas on the mainly Catholic western side of the river (*DJ*, 16 June 1920). The men were known to cross the river to hang around at Prehen. It is worth noting here that these men, though their neighbourhood was on the western side of the river,

felt they had a claim to Prehen as a Protestant space. One man who was accused of being involved in the Prehen assault was recognised and assailed by an angry crowd of Catholics. He was forced to take refuge in a local pub until the crowd was dispersed by police (DJ, 16 June 1920).

These events at Prehen were overshadowed by the week of violence that followed it. Still, the Prehen incidents illustrate clearly that the dynamics of space claiming had shifted. Of particular importance here, is the ferocity of ‘representational violence’ (Wright, 1987, pp. 11-20). As detailed in Chapter 3, representational violence occurs when individuals are attacked as representatives of their community. That is, they lose their particularity and stand in for the entirety of the ‘other’. As Frank Wright details in his account of representational violence

If anyone of a great number of people can be ‘punished’ for something done by the community they come from, and if the communities are sufficiently clearly defined, there is a risk that anyone attacking a member of the other community can set in motion an endless chain of violence. Even if few aspects of representative violence enjoy widespread support [...] it is only necessary for people to understand what is happening for it to create a generalised danger. (Wright, 1987, p. 11)

In the case of the Prehen attacks, both republican activists and Catholic civilians were targeted for simply *being* in the ‘wrong’ place, that is, in a (re)territorialised space. The violent bounding of space by loyalists at Prehen, again, aggressively spatialised an antagonistic political-communal subjectivity. Though the threatening notice warned-off ‘Sinn Feiners’, it was clear that any Catholic was a potential target. That is, the limits of this territorialised space were defined through the exclusion of all Catholics. In the reterritorialisation of Prehen, the spatial inscription of an antagonistic frontier is much more forceful than in many of the other examples of space-claiming practices examined throughout this thesis. Previously, what mattered in terms of trespassing spatial boundaries in Derry, was how such a boundary was crossed. Political parades through the city, for example, were offensive as they articulated partisan claims on the city, etc. In the earlier periods of inter-communal tension in Derry it was unlikely that a member of the opposite community would be targeted solely for being in the ‘wrong place’ outside of moments of direct

intercommunal confrontation. At Prehen, however, there is little differentiation made around how a boundary was violated. Here, the political motorcade as well as locals taking a stroll were all targets, *as* Catholics. In terms of the dynamics of spatial violence, then, the emphasis had shifted from *how* someone was being in a space to *who* was being in a space.

This spatialised dynamic of representational violence risks catastrophic conflagration, as people could be targeted for merely being in a space. This could be particularly dangerous for minorities who lived in areas that predominantly belong to the opposite group. Spaces that are identified as belonging to the other community could be targeted indiscriminately, as an attack on such a space is an attack on a spatialised configuration of political-communal being. As Tim Wilson discusses representational violence and its dangers

everyone in such a divided frontier society is, by default, a representative of either one community or the other, everyone is a potential victim and has good reason to be afraid: a dangerous situation that facilitates the emergence of paramilitary 'defenders'. The result is that this 'representative violence' acts as a totalising vortex, trapping everyone within its lethal and circular implication (Wilson, 2011, p. 279)

The violence used in Prehen to carve out an exclusively Protestant space in response to perceived advances by republicans foreshadowed the much larger-scale violence that would break out in the city just ten days later - and which was driven by the same (spatial) logic.

Derry's 'Civil War'

Derry's 'civil war' began on the night of Friday 18th June 1920. At about 10pm serious rioting was reported in the Waterside district. (*LD Sent.*, 19 June 1920). The *Sentinel* termed the violence a 'pitched battle' between Catholics and Protestants. The *Derry Journal*, however, unambiguously described it as a serious outbreak of sectarian violence aimed at Catholics living in the Waterside. According to the *Journal* armed unionists had mobilised to drive Catholics from a predominantly Protestant district. Union Street and Cross Street were the object of attack. These streets formed part of a long-standing Catholic area of the Waterside known as 'The Triangle'. Some Catholic homes and business were wrecked. Such was the destruction that Union Street and

Cross Street were described the following day as ‘having the appearance as if a avenging army passed through’ (*DJ*, 21 June 1920). Remarkably only two Catholics were injured, with one man shot in the arm, and a young girl also wounded by gunfire. It was reported that many of the Catholic residents had fled ‘terror stricken’ to the safety of other areas of the city or to the surrounding rural hinterland.

The ostensible cause of the outbreak, the ‘spark to the powder-mine’, was a clash between youths at Cross Street and Glendermott Road, over the ‘holding up’ of a Protestant at Cross Street the previous night (*DJ*, 21 June 1920). Given the highly organised unionist armed actions on Friday night and throughout the following days, the accosting of a Protestant in a Catholic area cannot be held as a root cause of the violence. Still, the response to Catholics (youths presumably) policing the boundaries of their district is spatially significant. Union Street and Cross Street as Catholic areas formed part of a nationalist ‘counter territory’, an oppositional space where Catholics could politically, and potentially militarily, organise and mobilise. In order to fully secure the Waterside as a homogenous Protestant space, unionist gunmen would need to clear the area of Catholics- or at least bring it under full unionist control. This is in keeping with the violence at Prehen, where access to the Waterside from nearby Catholic areas was regulated by armed unionists. Thus, the Waterside was articulated as Protestant territory with its outer frontiers tightly guarded and its internal threats in the form of a resident Catholic minority kept under control.

As the night progressed, it was clear that Protestant militants were moving to control large portions of the city. Unionist gunmen secured the Carlisle Bridge, the only bridge linking the two sides of the city, as well as the bridgehead area on the city side of the river. Taking control of access to the bridge established a continuous Protestant space linking the Waterside to the Protestant areas on the city side that lay outside the southern and eastern portions of the city walls. Once the Carlisle Bridge was taken by unionists, gunmen could move freely from the Waterside to Protestant areas such as the Fountain and up to the city walls. A ‘safe space’ was, then, established for armed unionists to operate within. Such spaces, along with support communities, are critical for militants to operate. These safe spaces, however, need to be effectively upheld (*c.f.* O’ Connor 2019; Ó Dochartaigh 2013; Bosi, 2013; Polletta, 1999; Malthaner & Waldmann, 2014). Derry’s armed unionists being deeply embedded within their local community, coupled with their intimate knowledge of the city’s

terrain were well-placed and had the capacity to mount an effective campaign of violence (Ó Dochartaigh and Bosi 2010; Carapic, 2015; Nicholls 2008; Sewell, 2001).

Later that night, when nationalists mobilised on the city-side to defend Catholics under attack in the Waterside they found that access to the bridge was sealed by unionists who had taken up positions at Wapping Lane and Carlisle Square, which were loyalist strongholds at the edges of the Fountain district on the city side. The effectiveness of unionist territorial control had been clearly demonstrated. Instead, the nationalists were forced to take boats across the Foyle. As Protestants from the city side returned from the attack on the Triangle area of the Waterside, they marched back along the Carlisle Bridge signing loyalist songs such as 'Rule Britannia' and 'Dolly's Brae' (*DJ*, 21 June 1920).

On this first night of the week of fighting, the already antagonistically constituted ethno-political spaces of the city were being re-articulated, being violently territorialised through the aggressive upholding of these space's boundaries. That is, informal boundaries were hardening into violent frontiers. The territorial actions in these first few hours of violence, were not exclusively strategic. Or, at least, the significance of these spatial practices cannot be entirely grasped by appealing to their obvious strategic character. For sure, the securing and linking of Protestant areas through territorial control was critical in the carrying out of future attacks in terms of the ability to operate freely, logistical support, and the maintenance of communication lines between the city and the Waterside. But also, through these territorial practices unionist volunteers, sought to inscribe new orderings of space and codifications of local power.

The material configuration of the city compounded the potential for serious violence. The compact nature of the divided city, the existence of tight networks of streets which led on to multiple community interfaces and the strategic height advantage afforded by the city walls, all facilitated both easy attack and retreat. As summarised by Denis Henry, the Attorney General of Ireland and government spokesperson on Derry's unrest, in a House of Commons speech:

The House perhaps will know that in Derry the streets are extremely steep and old and narrow. It is, I say, extremely difficult to deal with that kind of situation, for the soldiers cannot pursue a straggler as in an ordinary way he might be pursued. They have taken precautions at points where it is essential, but the peculiarity of the city is this: that there is no point at which a disturbance might not break out at any moment.

Hon. Members who know the city and know the highly-spotted variety of these streets will realise the truth of what I am saying. You may have a disturbance at one side of the Foyle, and while you are dealing with that another will break out on the other side; while you are dealing with the two, a third may break out. It may be impossible to be in all these places at once. We are, however, doing everything that can possibly be thought of with tanks and armoured cars to keep order (Henry, HC Deb., 24 June 1920)

Hottest fighting since the days of the Boer War

On the following night, Saturday 19th June 1920, Derry descended into a serious episode of deadly paramilitary violence as armed unionists mobilised to forcibly take control of the city. By the end this week of violence at least twenty Derry citizens, the vast majority of them Catholic, were killed and scores were seriously injured. This was the most deadly moment of violence in Derry since the siege of 1688-89. This is quite remarkable given the conflicted nature of the city, which underlines, again, that antagonism does not straightforwardly equate to violence. Like the historic siege, this period of fighting was a struggle over the future of the city, embedded within a wider violent struggle over the political future of the island. In this moment of highly organised political violence, unionist paramilitaries moved to secure the city within the nascent northern state by asserting territorial control of key areas of Derry. This violent (re)territorialising involved unionists mobilising from the safety of the Protestant quarters such as the Fountain just outside the south-eastern side of the walls, and moving into the city centre and taking the walls of the city. They then attempted to secure key interfaces in the city such as Butcher's gate which led directly onto the Bogside, a Catholic district. Unionists leveraged their superior firepower, in a provocative display of force, to push Catholics back inside the boundaries of traditional Catholic quarters and once again enforced the central space of the city as a Protestant space. These territorial actions were directly tied to the previous night's violence. Unionist gunmen could now operate more freely with the bridge and bridgehead areas fully secured, connecting the main Protestant areas of the city on both sides of the river. This allowed unionists from the Waterside area safe access to the city right up to the walls, and make their bid for the city with the safety of secure ground behind them.

By 8pm on Saturday night there was a charged atmosphere in the city. A drunken fracas broke out at the usual flashpoint of Butcher's gate, with a crowd of largely women and children gathering to watch. As feelings ran high, a revolver was drawn by one of the fighting men, though, it seems, without violent consequence. Though this was a minor prelude, it showed that the social was trembling as the violence of the previous night had restirred the city's antagonisms.

Given this deteriorating and combustible atmosphere, police took up positions in the city in the recently troubled hotspots of Carlisle Square, Carlisle Road, Bridge St. with an armoured car stationed at the eastern end of Fountain St. These were all at the boundaries of Protestant areas where the armed loyalists operated from. Therefore, it was either police inability to control the situation or tacit police approval and support of unionist actions that facilitated the violence. Still, it was at the other end of Fountain St., around Bishop's Gate where the night's events took a serious turn. The Fountain was the only area on the city-side of Derry where a Protestant working-class residential space shared an interface with a Catholic working-class area.

At about 9pm, unionist gunmen, numbering about twenty according to one account, armed with service rifles and revolvers took up positions around the Fountain area and Albert Street, fired onto the Long Tower area. For the next two hours Derry city centre as reported by the *Journal* was a veritable 'no man's land' as a barrage of 'murderous fire' assailed those on its streets. The firing on the Long Tower was described by one witness as being of an 'intensity unequalled in the hottest encounters of the Boer War' in which he fought. Throughout this time the Catholic areas of Bishop Street and Long Tower were under sustained heavy gunfire.

It was little surprise, then, that the first of the early casualties happened on Long Tower Street. Harrowing accounts emerged of the shooting of John McVeigh, an elderly man who was shot in the throat as he made his way to a Butcher's shop on Long Tower St., where it meets Bishop St. That is, he was shot as he walked towards the edge of the catholic Long Tower area and approached the interface with the fountain. The man lay on the ground, bleeding profusely for ten minutes, as two men struggled through a barrage of bullets to come to his aid. McVeigh was pronounced dead a short time later. A witness reported that McVeigh was shot by one of a number of men in the fountain area who were kneeling and taking aim with their rifles (*DJ*, 21June 1920). The second fatal casualty in Long Tower was John Farren, who was shot in the stomach and hand as he tried to get to the house he was lodging at in the area.

A call was made to bring an ambulance to the man's aid, but giving the intensity of sniper fire no attempt could be made. Farren soon bled to death on the pavement. Later in the episode at 5:30am on Sunday morning other individual was killed by sniper fire as he was leaving the wake of John Farren. The targeting and killing of Catholic civilians from this area, again, underlines explicitly the intense (re)spatialisation of the political in this moment. In the violent rearticulation of antagonistic spatial boundaries all Catholics *as* Catholics could be targeted- as was the case in Prehen. With the spatialisation of the enemy, the enemy becomes spatially homogenised. Any victim of that space then will do. The killing of civilians was a violent territorial maker, an attempt at fundamentally recodifying the dynamics of power in the city. The *Journal* reported that during the night a Union Jack was hoisted on an electricity pole at the interface of the Fountain St. looking on to Long Tower St (*DJ* 21 June 1920). The message was clear; loyalists were taking back 'their' city.

As the night progressed Derry descended into a state of rioting on a 'general scale' (*LD Sent.*, 22 June 1920). Soon after the shooting outside the walls started, angry crowds gathered around the Diamond. Nationalist and unionist crowds engaged in angry exchanges. At the end of Ferryquay St. groups of women attacked each-other in 'hand-to hand combat' and tore each-others hair out. Men also engaged in fist-fighting. The *Journal* also reported that a man who allegedly punched a child during this generalised melee was pursued by a crowd of nationalist women and youths (*DJ*, 21 June 1920). He was forced to take refuge in the kitchen of City Club on Ship-quay St, a commercial street within the city walls. The infuriated crowd demonstrating outside the building for quarter of an hour, demanding that the man be handed over to them in order to receive his due punishment. This enforcing of the justice of the crowd showed that for now nationalist civilians had control of the city centre. Their demands came to naught. Instead they smashed the windows of the building. These violent interactions betrays a spontaneous struggle to control the city centre. These unarmed citizens, who were not organised in their violence, knew that at stake in the violence that was now underway was the political future of Derry. The violent reactivation of the city's antagonisms, prompted Derry's citizen's to uphold their space and not to concede ground. Again, the spatialisation of the political, of communal being, demands defence. It is remarkable how powerfully this antagonism reverberated through the social. Even as obviously lethal fire was happening just outside the walls, Derry's citizens remained dangerously exposed in open-ground to do battle over the heart of

the city. Armed violence soon made its way into the city centre as nationalist and unionists exchanged fire (*DJ*, 21 June 1920; *LD Sent.*, 22 June 1920). In these exchanges unionists soon got the upper-hand. The nationalist crowd ran for cover, and were eventually cleared from the city centre and pushed outside the walls. Despite the areas around the city's walls being overwhelmingly Catholic and Catholics constituting a large majority of those who lived within the city walls, unionist gunmen had won the first large-scale violent contest for control of the city since the siege.

The four armed policemen who were stationed around the Diamond when the violence commenced, left the area without protest (Brady, BMH WS 676, p. 48). With little opposition in the Diamond, the unionists took up key positions to secure the area. They maintained heavy fire. More fatalities ensued (*DJ*, 23 June 1920). One man, Edward Price, was killed in the Diamond in the initial firing, though who was responsible was disputed. Thomas McLaughlin was shot and killed at Butcher's Gate as the hail of bullets continued down Butcher's St. A nearby woman vainly waving a white apron and running to McLaughlin's assistance was also shot and seriously wounded. Butcher's gate was the entrance to the major Catholic area. In terms of enforcing an absolute antagonistic spatial frontier, anyone fleeing or entering the city centre through Butcher's Gate was a potential target.

A full two hours after the violence had begun, and an hour of unionist occupation of the Diamond, the Dorset Regiment finally appeared on the scene. The gunmen before retreating from the Diamond back towards the Fountain, sang loyalist songs such as 'Dolly's Brae' and 'God Save the King' (*DJ*, 21 June 1920; Grant 2018, p. 98). These were songs of victory as Derry loyalists had finally retaken the citadel. The relationship between armed loyalists and the security forces of the state is noteworthy. When the Dorsets arrived, unionists left the area willingly. They were not harassed or arrested as they exited the Diamond. The loyalists are happy to leave as they see the area inside the walls as being secured by the coercive arm of the state. That is, it was captured by forces of the state, a state unionists proclaimed loyalty to. Derry Catholics believed that this relationship between loyalism and the state security apparatuses allowed armed loyalists to operate pretty much unhindered.

The violence of Saturday night was not confined to gun battles and street fighting. Burnings and lootings were widespread. Like the previous night, different communities aggressively 'policed' their own areas. At Waterloo Square, a major commercial thoroughfare that meets the Bogside, local Catholics held up unionist

men who were returning to their homes. Cars were stopped and searched for weapons. At these ad hoc checkpoints shots were fired and some individuals were badly beaten (*LD Sent.*, 22 June 1920). Bogside Catholics, then, in the middle of an armed struggle for Derry, extended and asserted a territorial claim over a significant quarter of the city centre. Likewise, in the Waterside area, Catholics were subjected to similar treatment as they returned home from the city. The reactivation and rearticulation of Derry's communal-political spatial fault-lines shattered the city into various zones of control (*c.f.* Kalyvas, 2006).

In the William St. area, looters smashed the windows of shops belonging to unionists. The shop of James Moore, a draper, was burned. When the fire brigade arrived to put out the burning buildings in William St., the firemen were met with hostility by the crowd (*LD Sent.*, 22 June 1920; *DJ.*, 21 June 1920). A military escort was requested, but was not available. The firemen instead were chaperoned through the area by two nationalist Aldermen, underlining that nationalist community leaders were not quite in control of their neighbourhoods. Two of the firemen were accosted, and the revolvers they had on their person were confiscated. It is difficult to ascertain the precise motivation of attacks on the firemen. It may have been that they were Protestant in a catholic area, or because they were Protestant and carrying weapons, or because in their efforts to stop the blaze they were undoing the crowd's handiwork and rescuing protestant premises. It was probably the latter. On the following day, Sunday 20th June, firemen attending to the same area, received similar treatment. Some of the firemen were chased by angry crowds, and they sought safety in a nearby house. The crowd promised to wreck the dwelling if the firemen refused to vacate (*LD Sent.* 22 June 1920). What is more, so antagonised were the crowds by the renewed presence of the fire brigade, the fire engine was dragged down Lecky Road and destroyed leaving Derry without the means of addressing serious fires in the city. This incursion of officialdom, however warranted, into a space where rioting nationalists were asserting fierce control was thoroughly repudiated.

The territorial assertions of Derry's citizens were at once spontaneous as well as strategic. The territorial claiming of these local spaces was motivated by the will to negate any threat to that community. The re-articulation of these spatial configurations as belonging exclusively to one group, marked out the other in that space as a potential threat and target. If victory was measured spatially, this could drive the homogenisation of space through the exclusion of these internal others. In this moment in Derry, a

moment of profound political crises, the spatialisation of representational violence becomes a key dynamic of violence. Much of Derry's violence then was structured through these modes of representational violence (burnings, lootings, etc.). What is more, the material structure of the city, with its segregated neighbourhoods, interfaces, as well as key access points to the city centre which were connected to segregated communities all facilitated such spatialised representational violence. These spatial dynamics around 'vicarious punishment' and the targeting of individuals also structured much of the intercommunal violence that played out in Belfast city during the same period (Glennon, 2013).

Nationalist counter-mobilisation

As historian Adrian Grant (2018, pp. 98-100) details the initial IRA and nationalist countermeasures were quite meagre. As discussed, the IRA was relatively weak in Derry, hampered by the strength of more moderate constitutional nationalism and the presence of a hostile unionist community. When the shooting started, the IRA were both caught off guard (Lynch 2003, p. 47). Michael Sheeran, a Derry IRA member, recalled later how his unit lacked motivation and was held together by threats (Sheeran, BMH WS 846). Derry's IRA did mobilise, however, on the Saturday night of the attacks marched from the Bogside to St. Columb's College off Bishop St. outside the city walls and close to the interface with the Fountain, where they established an improvised nationalist headquarters. They were soon joined by nationalist ex-servicemen, as well as members of Cumman na mBan, a women's nationalist organisation (Grant, 2018). A pan-nationalist effort to defend Catholic areas was underway (Sheeran, BMH WS 846). By Monday, rifles were in the hands of Derry's nationalists (Grant 2018; *LD. Sent.* 24 June 1920). In order to police their areas effectively, republican courts were established. The nationalists eventually worked their way along Bishop's St and to the interface with the Fountain area. These actions were largely defensive, aimed at stopping the sniping and securing nationalist areas from potential incursions.

Fighting recommenced on Monday, after the relative calm of Sunday. By now it was evident that unionists no longer had a 'strict monopoly of arms.' The conflict playing out in Derry had moved into a phase of 'guerrilla warfare' (*DJ* 23 June 1920). As the early week progressed, gun battles raged between unionists around Carlisle

square, who had taken up positions on flat rooftops, and nationalists who had ‘dug in’ in Bridge Street, which was a Sinn Féin stronghold. From Monday evening, though the nationalist headquarters was under heavy fire by snipers, the nationalist counter-offensive effort pushed unionists back to their strongholds. The fierce counter attack from nationalists led to speculation that IRA gunmen from other counties had made their way to Derry (*LD Sent.* June 1920). By Wednesday the nationalists had two colt machine guns at their service. This additional nationalist strength, gave credence to the fear of a nationalist invasion (Grant 2018, p. 100).

The imagined IRA reinforcements connected the fight in Derry directly to the wider war in Ireland. The city was being cleaved into two territories, divided between nationalists who were starting to make inroads into re-taking the city, and unionists who held the areas outside the south-eastern portion of the walls and the waterside. This splitting of the city, where the Foyle was the chasm separated the fighting factions, mapped onto the already existing political-spatial division of the city. If armed nationalists were flocking to Derry, the risk of losing the portion of Derry west of the Foyle was a possibility. If Derry could be forcibly kept inside the boundaries of the nascent northern state, force could also, potentially, keep it within the emerging Irish state.

On Wednesday, the *Freeman's Journal* reported that the ‘civil war in Derry’ was increasingly taking on the ‘complexion of a sectarian war’ (*FJ*, 23 June 1920). Accounts of sectarian targeting of civilians, assault, and ominously, forced evictions were reported in the papers (*DJ* 25 June 1920). As the fighting continued, on Wednesday two companies of the Norfolk, Northumberland and King’s Own Yorkshire Light Company arrived in Derry. A destroyer gunship docked in the Foyle River. Martial Law and a military curfew were established. With more increases in troop presence in the city, though sniper fire and other exchanges continued well into Thursday night, the fighting eventually petered out. In the face of such military reinforcements IRA volunteers opted to vacate their temporary headquarters at St. Columb’s College and dumped arms in William St. According to some nationalist participants in the fighting, the military showed up in Derry only when the nationalist fighters were achieving real successes against the unionists. Such speculation gave further weight to the claim that earlier government inaction was *de facto* support for the unionists. It was claimed, and not altogether idly that some of the military and the police supported the unionists (*DJ*, 23 June 1920; *DJ*, 25 June 1920). Indeed, the territorial claims enacted by

nationalists during the fighting challenged the official territorial claim of the state to nationalist-controlled areas of the city. When the military smashed through the boundaries of these temporary Catholic counter-territories (Sheeran, BMH WS 846), and retook the city in the name of the law, it re-articulated those spaces as belonging to the state and the union, and indeed, the empire. In this light, there was no *radical* conflict between armed unionists in Derry and the coercive apparatuses of the state. That is the demands of Derry's unionists and those of the state were easily articulated into the same equivalential chain. As such, the territorial actions of the loyalist militants neatly connected with both the territorial logic of the state and the emerging territorial unit of Northern Ireland.

The political logics of territoriality

The spatial practices that characterised much of the violence in Derry in June 1920 constituted territorial-political logics. These political spatial-practices were tied to reconfiguration of the local space and to the spatial institution and contestation of new political regimes. Also, the territorial practices of opposed factions in Derry re-articulated already long-established political-communal spaces as political-communal territories. Within these territories, those who uphold the spatial frontier and internal order lay claim to a monopoly of violence in that space. In antagonistically constituted spaces, this is not necessarily the case. Say, for example, the Bogside throughout the period this thesis examines was an identifiably Catholic area. Its antagonistically constituted character was sometimes reactivated in moments of political struggle. However, while in some instances, Bogsidiers may uphold a spatial boundary in the antagonistic articulation of space, they would not claim a monopoly of violence in their area. The transition from space to territory in Derry in June 1920, saw the recodification of power in these spaces through the spatial inscription of a hardened spatial boundary. These boundaries are decidedly more inflexible, as they were upheld through the total spatial repudiation of the other. Again, in such instances, it is *who* one is and not necessarily *what* one does that marks out the other as suspicious or a 'legitimate target' in such territorialised spaces. To restate, it is the other's being that is offensive, and what is considered in itself a form spatial violation in these moments. Therefore, the spatial articulation of antagonism is much more intense than in previous periods. These spatial practices only make sense as part of the wider territorial struggles over the political futures of Ireland.

As a political logic, territoriality simplifies the social space in the re-spatialisation of the political. Such territorial practices are decidedly equivalential in character. As per the nationalist counter-mobilisation to defend and retake their space, each nationalist faction, both moderate constitutional nationalists and republicans, lost their particularity and worked together against a common outside who was encroaching on their neighbourhoods. Again, this marks another distinction between the forms of territoriality examined here from earlier moments of space-claiming violence. In 1920 these modes of political violence have a degree of support across all sections of each community. To spatialise antagonism, is at once to employ and spatialise the logic of equivalence. As a reminder, Howarth and Glynos (2007, p. 144) summarise the logic of equivalence

the logic of equivalence entails the construction and privileging of antagonistic relations, which means that the dimension of each side of the frontier is weakened, whether differences are understood as a function of demands or identities. For instance, a national liberation struggle against an occupying colonial power will typically attempt to cancel out the particular differences of class, ethnicity, region, or religion in the name of a universal nationalism that can serve as a common reference point for all the oppressed; indeed its identity may be virtually exhausted in its opposition to the oppressive regime.

In Derry's week of fighting there was a will towards the homogenisation of space. This dynamic takes on a much darker aspect with the targeting of members of political-ethnic communities that are in a minority in these territorialised spaces. This was clearly evident in the actions of armed loyalists, and in the actions of rioting crowds across the city, with attacks on citizens, the burning and or looting of commercial premises, and the threatening of individuals to vacate their homes. The *Journal* reported that a 'systematic campaign' was underway against Catholic residents in Carlisle Road, Abercorn Road, and Barding Street. These areas were mixed but predominantly unionist and located on the fringes of the Fountain area. It was reported that inhabitants were giving a few minutes notice to clear out of their premises (*DJ*, 25 June 1920). The *Sentinel* also reported that some Protestant residents were forced out of the Bishop Street area (*LD Sent.*, 24 June 1920). With the forceful spatial rearticulation of communal subjectivity, the other within these spaces becomes conspicuous. The other

could be targeted as a threat to that space due to political sympathies and so on, or their mere presence antagonises these spatial formations.

These acts of the spatial cleansing of the other were not an anomaly that was particular to the eruption of inter communal hostilities in Derry. But rather, they too are to be located within the wider logics of re-territorialisation. The most violent instances of spatial cleansing happened later that summer in Belfast as loyalists drove thousands of Catholic workers from their place of employment such as the city's shipyards and textile factories (Glennon, 2020: Parkinson, 2004: Cunningham, 2013). Hundreds of Catholic families were also driven from their homes in the city. This violent spatial re-ordering dovetailed with the concerns of elite unionists. As Col. Frederick Crawford's letter correspondence to Unionist leader James Craig underlines, betraying a deep concern with securing their emerging state through the exclusion of as many Catholics as possible

Boundary drawing is always the most difficult of jobs [...] I am inclined to think that the ideal plan after all might have been to take Ulster as a whole and then cast out therefrom as many Catholic districts, unions and parishes as could possibly be eliminated, subject to the absolute and imperative anti-island rule. In other words, avoiding insularity one would cut out every district in which there was a catholic majority of over say 60%, provided it was always co-terminus with some portion of the non-Protestant segment of Ireland. But even if that were ideal I am sure that it couldn't be done now. (letter from Crawford to Craig, received 12 Nov. 1921 PRONI D640/7/16).

Therefore, while these acts may appear spontaneous (and sometimes they were) they were constituent parts of the wider territorial struggles and can only be made sense of as part of longstanding political discourses. As such, these territorial practices even at the intensely local level were performative acts of state-making violence (Vulović, 2020)

Republican Territoriality

In spatial terms, some of more striking aspects of Derry's week of fighting was how nationalists and IRA activists took control of their neighbourhoods and key areas of

the city (Sheeran, BMH WS 846, p. 8).⁵⁰ Through practices of territorial bounding, nationalist areas effectively seceded from official control. The territorial practices of nationalists, then, effectively disrupted the official codification of space, and for a fleeting moment a nationalist counter-territory existed in Derry. The nationalists zones of control, were modes of spatialised repudiation of the established order, and Derry briefly joined the revolutionary counter-state of the insurgent Irish Republic. As an IRA publication declared just a week after the cessation of Derry's violence; 'The Irish Republican Government is now the de facto as well as de jure authority in the greater part of this country' (*An tÓlgach*, 1 July 1920). Derry was now within the bounds of the nascent Irish state. Ironically enough, it was the violent actions of loyalists that re-activated Derry's nationalist areas, which were then rearticulated as hardened frontiers. This is precisely the fear that had driven loyalist to take such 'preventative' measures in the first instance.

Again, the re-articulation of the political spatially through territorial practices marked the transition of nationalist areas from counter-spaces to counter-territories. Nationalists areas were already antagonistically constituted against the official space of the state and unionist areas. They were spaces where nationalist political activists could organise. Liam Brady, a Derry IRA volunteer, discusses how in early 1919 he attended Irish language classes in the Sinn Féin building on Richmond St. The resurgence of the Irish language as part of the wider 'Gaelic Revival', however, was thoroughly political as it brought into the relief the violent histories of the state. During one class Brady details (BMS WS 0676, p. 45) that a grenade was thrown through the window, though it failed cause any damage. Though Sinn Féin and the IRA were comparatively weak in Derry, they still garnered a good degree of support in the nationalist quarters of the city. As such, nationalist homes were frequently searched for arms, and indeed there were arms dumps in these areas. Thus, nationalist areas were spaces where nationalists and republicans had a high degree of political and logistical support from the local community. These everyday acts were the iterative practices of 'concatenation and repetition' (Raffestin, 2012) that reproduced nationalist areas as oppositional spaces. The territorial bounding of these spaces by nationalist activists and IRA insurgents, then, sought to uphold these areas and at the same time re-articulated nationalist areas as belonging to an alternative order. In the violence of June 1920, the

⁵⁰ Sheeran, for example, recounts how nationalists had managed to control much of the city west of the Foyle river.

boundaries of nationalist-space in Derry hardened, expelling momentarily official power.

The territorial practices of nationalists disrupted and inverted the official dynamics of power in these forcibly claimed spaces. This inversion of local order perturbed unionist commentators in the city. The *Derry Sentinel* (*LD Sent.* 22 June 1920) betrayed alarm in its reportage of how nationalist volunteers had taken charge of their areas. One report tells of well-known local unionist figure who was driving along Butcher street in the vicinity of St. Columb's, where his vehicle was flagged down by a prominent Derry nationalist who was brandishing a revolver. A rope was drawn across the road to doubly ensure the motorcar came to a halt. The unionist was ordered out of the car while it was searched for weapons by several nationalist volunteers. The *Sentinel* was dismayed, that a 'leading unionist' could be treated in in such a fashion, even in a nationalist area, and underlines how power dynamics were challenged and disrupted through such territorial actions. Asserting a spatial and political boundary is to delimit who is answerable to who in that space.

Republican Law

A crucial dimension of nationalist territoriality was the inscribing of an alternative 'law' on the local spaces which nationalists temporarily governed. Derry's IRA and nationalist volunteers established a 'republican court' within the nationalist districts under their control. As the Irish War of Independence wore on, Irish republicans slowly prised the grip of British authority from local spaces all across Ireland. One of the key mechanisms that contested and de-structured official power at the local level was the establishing of an alternative revolutionary judicial system, the republican or Dáil courts (Kotsonouris, 1994; Murray, 2016) . Derry's IRA may have justifiably construed their putting in place a republican court as a prosaic means of enforcing order where it had all but collapsed. To take such a view, however, negates the revolutionary and fully political character of the republican court system. As James Casey (1970, p. 321) writes, the history of the Irish Revolution is often written in terms of ambushes, attacks on police barracks, and the exploits of 'flying columns', yet the establishing of an alternative administrative system was critical in the inauguration of a new political order and a repudiation of the old. In asymmetric warfare, successful insurgents can often defeat the stronger military power by out-governing rather than out-fighting (Ledewidge, 2017). In the establishing of the republican court, Derry's

nationalist areas joined the ranks of much of country, where British power had largely been usurped. In one sense, perhaps, the proclaiming of a republican court in Derry in this moment underlines the comparative weakness of the IRA in the city, for if it was stronger it would have already been in fairly open operation.

With the assertion of an alternative ‘law of the land’, Derry’s republicans claimed sole legitimate authority and a monopoly on the use of violence within their controlled areas. These courts were a direct affront to British rule on the island, and the radical significance of this alternative law was not lost on the authorities. The Sinn Féin courts were as Col. Ashley put it to the Chief Secretary for Ireland in the House of Commons

assuming the duties of police officers in arresting people, keeping individuals in custody, holding land courts, both primary and secondary, arresting and imprisoning persons for a breach of Sinn Fein land court findings, inflicting terms of imprisonment in republican prisons, and deporting people from the districts in which they live; and will he state what steps, if any, the Government have taken to deal with this assumption of power by a seditious organisation, and what has been done to restore the authority of the King's courts and that of the civil authorities?
(Ashley, HC Deb, 17 June 1920)

An article published in the *Derry Journal* shortly after Derry’s week of violence speaks to how these courts were embedded within and were concerned with the banal occurrences of every-day local life. In Cloughnaeely, a parish in the far north-western reaches of Donegal and about 70 kilometres from Derry, a dance was interrupted as local republican volunteers confiscated a batch of *poitín*, a traditional home-distilled alcohol of high concentration. A non-local man was attempting to sell his illicit wares at the event. With the man’s merchandise seized, he was promised by the IRA that if continued in his trade he would be court martialled in a republican court and face a ‘more stringent’ punishment. In Derry, it seems the week saw only one arrest by republicans, who stated that the offending individual would be later tried by court martial.

The propaganda value of the Sinn Féin courts can hardly be over stated. As the *Journal* suggested ‘Nothing has served the Irish people so well as the establishment of the Republican Courts and the maintenance of public order by the Republican police.’ These ‘Courts of the Republic,’ the report continues, give greater justice than

‘those of English usurpation.’ Not only, in eyes of nationalists, did these courts offer justice, they demonstrated the readiness of the Irish for self-government

The Sinn Fein Courts are steadily extending their jurisdiction and dispensing justice even handed between man and man, Catholic and Protestant. Farmer and shop keeper, grazier and cattle driver, landlord and tenant. The Sinn Fein police are arresting burglars, punish cattle-drivers, patrolling the streets, controlling the drink trade [...] It shows also the growing and remarkable capacity of the Irish for self-government

Derry’s IRA pledged that those who were found contravening republican decrees would suffer consequences. As such, an IRA proclamation was issued by republicans warning that anyone caught looting in their districts would be ‘shot on sight.’ Other measures were taken by the volunteers to establish and maintain order, such as forcing publicans to close their doors during certain specified times. This internal policing was intended to prevent a wider conflagration and open sectarian warfare in the city. Liam Brady, an IRA volunteer, details in his recollection of the week how republicans policed their areas through the enforcement of the republican court: ‘A police force was also formed with a head constable in charge. This group carried out the normal duties of policemen, keeping the peace of the city, detecting crime and arresting criminals and seeing that the decrees of the Republican Courts were carried out’ (BMH WS0676, p. 54). To aid their efforts in upholding order, nationalists also imposed a curfew.

Other incidents underline how the nationalist volunteers in the regulation of the areas grounded the legitimacy of their actions in communal understandings of justice. One example tells of a cow was seized at a slaughterhouse in the city, with 2lbs of meat subsequently delivered to ‘poor families’ in Derry’s in hotspots most afflicted by the fighting. Such commandeering of supplies were done with the promise that the full market price would be paid in due course (*DJ*, 25 June 1920).

Republican territoriality: prefiguring the Republic?

In the aftermath of the violence, the *Derry Journal*, as a nationalist newspaper, suggested that the actions of nationalist volunteers were prefigurative gestures that gave a glimpse of the Irish Republic that was now potentially within reach. That is, these acts

performed and sought to enact an alternative configuration of social relations within the shell of the old order of things, and at least made the claim to be grounded in a deeper sense of democracy and equality (Ince, 2010; Yates, 2015, p. 1). The *Journal* pretty much echoed the rhetoric and justifications of the volunteers. ‘The events of the past week’, opined the *Journal*, ‘are those which could only have occurred in a nation under alien domination.’ The divided nature of Ireland, Ulster, and Derry city in particular in the analysis of the paper was the latest consequence of the long-standing policy of British imperialism to pursue its own interests, which divided the Irish nation against itself.

In contrast to the actions of state authorities, the *Journal* viewed the actions of republicans as transcending any sectarian divisions as they acted as representatives of the ‘whole nation.’ Indeed, nationalist volunteers were at pains to insist their actions were not motivated by partisan interests, and that they stood above any sectarian affray (*DJ*, 2 July 1920; *DJ*, 9 July 1920). The enforcing of order by republicans in the areas under their control, in the nationalist interpretation pursued by the *Journal*, opened a chink through which a utopian vision of a fully reconciled nation revealed itself. This Republic was a space without internal frontiers; it was a space without antagonism. The volunteers’ actions of defending the property of unionists from looting in particular were taken as emblematic of the potential Republican future. Here, republican actions are not merely non-partisan, they articulate an understanding of ‘the whole Irish people’ beyond the co-articulations of Catholic and nationalist. In this, the *Journal* mobilised the well-worn rhetoric of Irish Republicanism as transcending both class and creed

Acting as representatives of the whole Irish Nation, they protected the lives and property of the Derry citizens irrespective of their creed. This is the only way in which Republicans can act if they wish to bring honour to a Republic. Fate and circumstances have decreed that Ireland shall contain people of different religious persuasions, and it is for Ireland as represented by all her inhabitants and not by any one class or sect among them that Patrick Pearse sought independence; and those who have lived to carry on his work now seek it. Our opponents as well as ourselves have the right of all free born men- the right to their own opinions. This the Volunteers in Derry have splendidly recognised, and have made it clear to all Irishmen that a Republic stands for one thing only, and that is the whole Irish people (*DJ*, 2 July 1920).

This appeal to the ‘whole Irish people’, the Republic, and indeed republican or ‘true’ justice, in Derry was interrupted by the more concrete spatial boundaries of the city. Derry’s nationalist mobilisation to defend the frontiers of nationalist quarters momentarily re-articulated those spaces and inaugurated a republican order. Yet, in their inscribing and reasserting of these frontiers they re-spatialised the political and re-underlined the antagonistically constituted character of these spaces. Again, such practices spatially articulated a subversive communal-political subjectivity. To unionist onlookers, these nationalist quarters were also a glimpse into a potential Republican future. But rather than presenting a vision of a reconciled society, what they saw were radical counter-spaces where the regime they were loyal to met its very ontological limit. Nationalist areas were spaces of infidelity to the British order, where the overt or at least tacit approval of republican militants ensured the reproduction of a counter-order that posed a continued threat to Unionism’s cherished ties to Britain. Therefore, the Republican strategy of rhetorically displacing the antagonistic limit, re-inscribing it between the British empire and the ‘whole Irish people’ was unlikely to gain traction. Indeed, it met its own limit within the pages of the *Derry Journal*, where Unionism was habitually portrayed as an implacable enemy. In other words, through republican territorial practices a new disruptive order could be glimpsed. Yet given that these practices spatially rearticulated the political this gesture towards transcendence immediately encountered their own antagonistic *and* spatial limit.

Conclusion

For Derry as well as Ireland, June 1920 was a moment of profound political dislocation. The ultimately groundless nature of the social was revealed as the foundations of the old order were crumbling. Yet, the precise nature of the new had yet to be determined. As war raged, Ireland as a whole was facing a void, and Derry city faced an abyss of its own. Both of the city’s ethno-political communities were left with the horrific spectre (in fantasmatic terms) of being forced into a political order that was not their own. They risked losing the very spatial ground of their communal being. The violence of 1920 in Derry was not just set apart by its lethality. Though its ferocity was certainly a radical departure in terms of inter-communal violence in the city, with the flagrant targeting of civilians, paramilitary mobilisation, and so on. The question posed by June’s violence is not ‘how did things descend into such violence?’,

but rather it is ‘Why was it not more violent?’ What truly sets Derry’s (spatial) violence in June 1920 apart from previous episodes, is that it was a moment of foundational violence, being implicated in the inauguration of new social formations. The other episodes examined in this thesis, in the spatialisation of the antagonism, largely recovered and rendered explicit the modes of originary and structural violence through which the established order of things was instituted. The violence of June 1920 was itself originary. Out of the void of June 1920, territorial logics constituted though an ensemble of spatial political practices were concerned with the grounding of new political regimes, which of course meant new territorial arrangements. The long-standing political antagonisms in Derry were re-articulated with a new intensity through the political spatial logics of territoriality. This (re)spatialisation of antagonism in the streets of Derry was connected to the wider (re)spatialisation of antagonism through the partitioning of the country through the imposition of an international border. That is, the intensely local modes of spatial violence, were nestled within the territorial political discourses and struggles at larger scales, from the national to the imperial. It was a moment of originary violence, that subsequently could not conceal itself. The antagonistic and spatial constitution of the new political formations, both north and south of the border, continued to vex the routinisation of the social, especially in Northern Ireland.

In terms of thinking antagonism spatially, territoriality is another more intensive mode of spatialising antagonism. In previous episodes, the dynamics of violence were regularly spatially structured, with the struggles over Derry’s city central civic space, and trespassing of spatial boundaries, etc. These earlier moments certainly had an identifiably territorial aspect, again, with the upholding and transgressing of spatial frontiers. With territorial practices, which are set apart by their connection to wider territorial conflict the institution of antagonistic spatial boundaries is much more intensive. The brutal efficiency of the territorial boundary, communicated through violence, as seen in Derry in 1920 can set in motion highly serious forms of representational violence. The political logics of territoriality in Derry re-articulated antagonistically constituted spaces as antagonistically constituted territories. Antagonistically constituted communal spaces may structure violence as their boundaries are flagrantly trespassed. However, once the obvious provocation subsides, the hard boundary softens. For example, minorities in such a space are probably not at risk. Violence at these interfaces is often ritualistic, as seen through partisan marches.

The territorialisation of these spaces, however, is of a different order of magnitude. The frontier must be upheld. The integrity of communal spatial being depends on the integrity of a more absolute and violent frontier. The territorialisation of space is deeply equivalential, and cleaves the social space into those who belong within the bounds of a spatialised order, and those who do not. The spatial repudiation of the other is more unequivocal, more unrelenting. Of course, the territorial boundaries of such spaces can be overwhelmed, as per the state's smashing of the barricades in nationalist spaces in Derry. That is, they revert back into antagonistically constituted spaces rather being overtly territorialised. Further political dislocation and the rearticulation of antagonism, can see these spaces once again become articulated territorially. This is precisely what happened in Derry 1969, as the Catholics in the Bogside repudiated and expelled the state from their portion of the city through the erection of barricades and the enforcing of boundaries. Through territorial practices the main Catholic areas in Derry, became a radical counter-territories, where the Northern Ireland regime met its own antagonistic spatial limit. Though largely forgotten, this Catholic counter-territory, was at least a partial echo of the territorial practices of Derry's 'Civil War' in June 1920. Indeed, the spatialisation of antagonism in Derry continued to haunt the established order, constantly pointing to the contingency of its own ground.

Conclusion: What has been gained by thinking antagonism spatially?

This chapter offers a set of concluding reflections on both the contributions as well as the limitations of this thesis. It asks what has been gained by thinking antagonism spatially at both a theoretical as well as an empirical level. What potential light has spatialising antagonism cast on the dynamics of inter-communal violence in Derry? But, also, it must be asked, what has been sacrificed in this thesis' emphasis on the spatial articulation of antagonism? What has remained under-developed? And, crucially, how can the contributions of this thesis be developed further?

Antagonism, as developed by Laclau and Mouffe in *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* and beyond, is the most decisive and radical of contributions to contemporary social and political theory. As Oliver Marchart (2018) suggests, to think the world in light of antagonism is to think in an '*ontologico-political register*.' It is to reflect on the political constitution of social being. Antagonism as a name for the political, underlines the double movement of both the political institution and de-institution of the social. This pointing towards the political and antagonistic constitution of the social is not to fall back into a lazy assertion that 'everything is political', but rather it is to insist that 'social affairs are grounded in the political' (Marchart, 2018, p. 12). As such, the social, when thought through the lens of antagonism, starts to appear in a much more political light. As Marchart suggests, and I think, grappling with the truly radical nature of antagonism, all things social must pass through antagonism. Political and social analysis, then, starts to pivot towards reflecting on the how the social's contingent grounds are continually reinstated and contested. What is more, the trace of the political, the abyssal grounding of order, can never be fully evacuated from the social as it remains haunted, and its reproduction vexed by its own constitutive radical negativity. This mode of onto-political reflection on the nature of the social, allows a move away from the analytical *cul-de-sac* of thinking social conflict exclusively in terms of *politics*- that is, how actors in a particular social or institutional domain engage in

conflict. Such a focus would, potentially, leave the more fundamental and ontological aspect of conflict untouched. That is, what is often at stake in serious social conflict are radically opposed competing visions of social being itself. The contention and conviction that has animated this thesis is that the theoretical category antagonism could also cast the spatial and its reproduction, as well as the spatial dynamics of conflict, in a much more political light. Rather than understanding the spatial aspects of conflict as conflict merely *in* or *over* a particular location, at stake in such violence are competing spatialised conceptions of social objectivity. As such, the ontological questions around the political constitution of social (and spatial) being need not be sacrificed in the study of the ‘concrete’ dynamics of violence. The contributions of this thesis, then, are found in its spatialising of antagonism both theoretically as well as empirically in the study of intercommunal violence in Derry.

As developed in Chapter 1, not only does antagonism render the social world in a much more political light, the theoretical category of antagonism can be mobilised in order to develop a truly post-foundational as well as an antagonistic account of space. An antagonistic account of space stands apart from other post-structuralist conceptions of space. This difference resides in how space is conceived as political. Any critical and post-structuralist analyses of the spatial aspects of social and political life will stress the political character of space, whether this is due to co-constitution of space and social relations, or the dynamic, irruptive and radically immanent nature of space, or space itself could be, as Dikeç puts it, ‘a mode of political thinking.’ In a discursive and antagonistic account of the spatial, however, space is deemed political as it is the outcome of political institution and is antagonistically constituted. The real political significance here is that this originary violence—the political character of spatial formations—can be reactivated through political struggle. This is precisely what makes this discursive understanding of the spatial well placed to help in the interrogation of contested spaces, as well as the spatial dynamics of organised political violence. In a highly routinised society, space, as social objectivity, becomes a taken for granted backdrop of social life. In deeply conflicted societies, however, the political constitution of the spatial is more readily discernible. That is, spatial formations (as social objectivity) encounter their own ontological limit, their constitutive impossibility, through the presence of a radical other or an outside that disturbs and threatens that ordering of space. Space, then, rather than being a plane of action, is instead the outcome of competing political projects that seek to spatially instantiate

different modes of social objectivity. It is the failure to inaugurate space once-and-for-all that is locus of political possibility.

In 1860s Derry, the political performance of space—mostly by the city’s loyalists—spurred on by the dislocation resulting from the increasing political assertion of Catholics, reactivated the political constitution- the originary violence - of the social order. That is, while Derry’s loyalists sought to rebound the social by claiming the local space as a Protestant space, they brought into discursive relief the histories of violence through which Derry as a city, and the state itself, was inaugurated. Instead of naturalising the social and its constitutive relations of power, then, such spatial performances underline the ultimate groundlessness of the social. In this respect, Derry was a ‘haunted’ space, a city that was disturbed by the spectre that things could always be otherwise. However, as stressed throughout Chapter 3, the recovery of the contingency of the social-spatial order does not automatically translate into direct modes of concrete violence. To rest solely on an antagonistic understanding of the social to explain the dynamics of violence would be insufficient. That is, on one side there is an abstract account of space grounded in PDT and on the other there is a very specific case of intercommunal violence in Derry. Perhaps the foremost contribution of this research is that it has asked what happens in between the antagonistic constitution of space and the expression of spatially structured modes of violence? That is the puzzle. What is required then, is some more middle-range categories that help mediate between the antagonistic account of the spatial and the modes of violence that are glimpsed throughout the cases examined throughout the thesis. The answer developed in Chapter 3, inspired by the logics approach (Howarth & Glynn, 2007), identified that the dynamic which spatially structured Derry’s intercommunal conflict and violence was the spatial articulation of the political. That is, the political performance of space in Derry spatially inscribed a communal-political subjectivity. Once political being is spatially articulated, the ontological security of one’s political-communal being is registered spatially. The antagonistic limits of this spatialised identity must then be upheld. As such, space, both the defence and transgression of its boundaries, can become the measure of communal security. This can set in motion a cycle of spatialised representational violence, where any member of the ‘other’ community can be targeted if they are deemed to offend against a certain codification of space. In the nineteenth-century, however, the most dangerous aspects of representational spatial violence were curtailed by the ritualised nature of spatial

transgressions. Once the political performance of space ceased, the boundaries of that space softened. It was not so much *who* was in a particular space, it was *how* they were in that space. In later periods of more serious moments of political violence, in 1920 for example, this dynamic would shift its focus towards the *who*. Simply *being* in a space 'belonging' to the other could in itself be understood as an act of spatial transgression.

Chapter 4, again somewhat inspired by the logics approach, examined the fantasmatic force that drives political practices of space claiming. In Derry, the spatial imagination was at once a mode of political thinking. The political spatial-discourse of Ulster's conservative Protestants was structured according to a beatific/utopian vision that promised a fullness to come if Catholics were both figuratively and literally kept outside the walls. Though the siege as a unique place within the political and spatial discourses of Ulster's loyalists, antagonistic articulations of space will be structured by the same logic. That is, there is always an outside that threatens, though it also sustains, modes of communal-spatial identity. Such political visions of space drive the material practices of space-claiming. Of course, the beatific and horrific vision also structure and propel the spatial practices of Derry's Catholics, nationalists, and so on. The spatialisation of the political/antagonism would make little sense without referring to these visions that undergird such practices.

In Chapter 5, territoriality was conceived as a political logic. That is, in 1920 in Derry, political violence was directly tied to the inauguration of new political regimes. While all the violence and conflict examined in this thesis could, arguably, be understood as violent acts of territoriality, in 1920 the spatial practices which structured Derry's deadly violence were implicated in the territorial reordering of the island of Ireland and the inscription of an international frontier. The struggle around the creation of this national border, violently reactivated Derry's antagonistically constituted spaces, seeing them transition into hardened territories. The territorial practices of 1920 in Derry that were both within, and constitutive of, wider territorial conflict deepened the dynamics of representational spatial violence.

To summarise the contributions of this thesis: In its spatialising of the Laclauian concept of antagonism, this thesis has developed a post-foundational account of the spatial to offer a novel analysis of the spatial dynamics of intercommunal violence in Derry. What is more, this thesis has demonstrated, along with other studies, not only the viability of PDT in conducting empirical research, but also the logics approach in the study of space and violence through the marshalling of

a range of historical archival material. The spatialisation of antagonism, through the lens of the 'logics of critical explanation' has brought into relief the political institution and reactivation of spatial formations, their reproduction, and critically, the fantasmatic dimensions of the spatial articulation of antagonism. Indeed, this study, and any insights it offers around space, antagonism and violence are only made possible by the discursive political ontology that it is grounded in. Thinking antagonism (and PDT) spatially has offered a distinct and productive way of understanding the spatial articulation of the political and the spatial aspects of representational violence, as well as a truly political (in the radical sense) understanding of territoriality.

Now, it is worthwhile briefly discussing what has been potentially lost through the ways that this thesis has thought space antagonistically. Firstly, one substantial limitation of this study has been its near exclusive focus on space *claiming* practices. Thinking antagonism spatially is, we might suspect, in no way exhausted in the discussion of how spaces are claimed and boundaries are enforced and contested. Also important, though not the focus of this thesis, is how antagonism might be spatialised through the giving-up of space. For example, it was regularly acknowledged that, say, the Bogside was a Catholic space or that the Fountain was a working-class Protestant area. The spatial presence of the radical 'other' certainly undermines and yet sustains, at an ontological level, a given political articulation of space. Still, the identity of a communal-spatial subjectivity is also sustained by giving the other their space- 'that is their space, this is ours.' This also raises the question of shared spaces in the city. Indeed, much of Derry, most of the time, would have been a shared space, where members of the opposite community could *peacefully* interact. These spaces might be commercial premises, or shared amenities, such as the railway, roads, and so on. While such interactions, in such spaces, could mitigate against the antagonistic articulation of space, they might also facilitate it. These shared areas could act as buffers, 'no-man's land', or liminal areas, that allow for the spatial division of the social to be upheld. It allows for overtly antagonistically constituted spaces to remain durable, as the existence of shared spaces lets antagonistic boundaries remain in place, though in a way that does not always lead to conflict. Also, the partition of the country, through the inscription of an antagonistic boundary, was a form of giving up space (however

denied). It was the de facto spatial concession, by some at least, that the north 'belonged' to unionists, and the south, to the nationalists.

A second, though very much related limitation of this thesis has been the amount of focus on violence. Again, this is largely epiphenomenal of the emphasis on conflictual acts of space claiming. This is in keeping with Peter Kropotkin's claim that historians have put too much of an emphasis on histories of violence, when the overwhelming majority of social life is characterised by peaceful interaction. There is much to be gained by a fine-grained study of the everyday practices that (re)produce or sediment the antagonistic configurations of space studied throughout this thesis. That is, an emphasis could beneficially pivot towards social rather than political practices that constitute social objectivity. Of course, the challenge here is that it is the dramatic moments—the moments where the social is disturbed—that tend to be recorded, as these moments are only considered events worth recording in so far as they depart from the routine.

Another limitation, or, to put it less critically, an aspect of this thesis' analysis that is worth sharpening is how the materiality of space has featured in the study. In the first chapter, I insisted that discourse as it features in PDT is a radically materialist understanding of the discursive, while admitting that PDT's emphasis has often tended towards analysing political discourses (traditionally understood) and texts, such as speeches and other forms of media. This 'problem' is a matter of focus, rather than some epistemological limitation of PDT which cannot meaningfully grasp the material. Still, while the material has featured throughout this thesis, through brief discussions of how the material arrangement of the city facilitated violent mobilisation, etc., this could certainly be expanded. Given the material configuration of Derry with its segregated neighbourhoods, city walls, and a river that divides that city, materiality is owed further discussion. Here, an engagement with some of the literature of the 'material-turn' that is afoot in contemporary social theory might prove productive. But that is not to suggest that the material can be conceived as some extra-discursive Real—we cannot lose sight of the fact that the material is inscribed within discourse.

The other limitations, that I think need addressing are strictly theoretical. The first of these is the questions and tensions that may arise out of the ontological primacy that this thesis has afforded to the category of antagonism over dislocation. There isn't sufficient space here to develop the theoretical debates around the relationships between dislocation and antagonism. Dislocation should, arguably, be given priority

over antagonism, in that political possibility resides in the dislocation of the social, and the construction of an antagonistic frontier could be held as response to such dislocations. Given that the social is antagonistically constituted, however, and dislocation always takes place within forms of social objectivity, antagonism should be the primary category here. As Marchart (2018, p. 25) puts it, ‘whatever occurs in our social world must pass through antagonism.’ Arguably, whatever stance one take *vis-à-vis* the debate around antagonism and dislocation, it may not affect the analysis of this thesis, as this study concerns the spatial articulation of antagonism. The other theoretical clarification that this thesis would benefit from is a fuller engagement with the Lacanian categories that influence aspects of PDT – this could be especially helpful in developing a deeper understanding of the fantasmatic dimensions of spatial-political thinking.

The most obvious way to develop this thesis, is to expand the study to include the beginning of the Troubles in 1969. That is, to include the creation of ‘Free Derry’, when Catholics in Derry repudiated and ruptured the state’s claim over the local space by setting up barricades and policing the boundaries of their neighbourhoods. Most of the necessary archival work for this has already been conducted. For reasons of feasibility the thesis was cut from three historical layers to two. The inclusion of Free Derry, would offer a more ‘complete’ picture of Derry’s histories of space claiming.

Another potentially productive possibility afforded by this thesis’ analysis is the development of a post-foundational, antagonistic, and anarchist account of space. Currently, in post-anarchist spatial theory there are efforts underway to develop a truly anarchist view of space, one that is devoid of the essentialism that has often marred anarchist thought (Springer, 2015). While some post-anarchist political theorists have marshalled the insights of Laclau and Mouffe in articulating a post-structuralist iteration of anarchism, spatialising antagonism offers a radically post-foundational account of space which grasps the radical negativity of spatial formations. It also underlines how the reproduction of the official space of state is ruptured as it constantly meets its own radical limit through the presence of antagonistic spaces. Moreover, as state space is always haunted by the ghost of its constitutive exclusions, it is in these ghosts that new possible political orderings of space can be glimpsed.

Now, to conclude with some brief thoughts on space and antagonism in Northern Ireland. In the aftermath of the 1994 IRA ceasefire, but prior to the 1998 Good Friday Agreement, Jennifer Todd and Joseph Ruane (1996) in their study of the

dynamics of the Northern Ireland conflict, wrote that the ceasing of hostilities did not necessarily amount to a settlement. In other words, regardless of the prospect of a more durable and permanent end to armed violence, Northern Ireland remained and, would most likely continue to be, an unsettled place. Until, that is, as the authors seem to suggest, the ‘normal’ routines of politics could be restored, or more so, established in the statelet. In the parlance of radical contemporary democratic theory, ‘settling’ Northern Ireland would require the transformation of relationships of antagonism to one of *agonistic* respect, where opponents no longer perceived each other as implacable enemies but as adversaries who pursue their conflictual political projects *within* a shared institutional frame. While, of course, the taming of the conflict through the implementation of the Good Friday Agreement was welcome—bringing an end to nearly thirty years of bloodshed—it is yet too premature to suggest that Northern Ireland is now ‘settled.’ The social continues to tremble as its antagonistic constitution is continually reactivated. That is, the institutions of the Good Friday Agreement, for all their successes, have not altogether buried antagonism through the naturalisation of the social order. What is more, the spatial articulation of antagonism remains a durable feature of northern society. That is, many local spaces are still understood as belonging to one community or another— the spatial articulation of communal subjectivity is still a key aspect of communal identity. Derry, amongst other places throughout the north, remains an active spatial-political fault-line, as evidenced by recent paramilitary activity in the city (though it is greatly reduced from the years of the Troubles).

The question of the Irish border has once again moved to the forefront of Irish and British politics as Britain leaves the EU. No longer do nationalists and unionists share a ‘transcendent’ political frame that stands above British rule in the north. Brexit has set in motion discussions around the prospect of a united Ireland that are now relatively commonplace in the media and in Irish politics. What is more, the centenary reflections on the revolutionary period of Irish history have brought into public discursive relief the foundational violence implicated in the formation of both the Free State and Northern Ireland. The inscription of the Irish border was a moment of originary violence that inaugurated both states. Through public reflections around the histories of violence implicated in this form of spatial division, the contingency of both regimes has been brought back into view. As such, Ireland is a space that remains haunted by the ghosts of what might have been, by what was promised but was lost.

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