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Political Radicalization in the Making:
The Civil Rights Movement in Northern Ireland, 1968-1972

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Abstract

Political Radicalization in the Making:
The Civil Rights Movement in Northern Ireland, 1968-1972

By Gianluca De Fazio

This dissertation investigates the radicalization of contention in Northern Ireland during the "Troubles" between 1968 and 1972. Three arenas of contention - intra-movement dynamic, movement-countermovement interactions and the structure of opportunities/threats available in the political system - are examined to explain the radicalization of the Civil Rights Movement and the ignition of political violence in those years. The radicalization of contention is explored through Quantitative Narrative Analysis (QNA), an innovative methodological approach that relies on computer-assisted story grammars (the Subject (S) – Action (A) – Object (O) sequence and their modifiers) to parse narrative texts. The research strategy is to unveil social actors, their interactions and tactics *within* contentious events. Relying on 2,097 entries from a three-volume chronology of contentious events in Northern Ireland, I compiled a relational database of 6,036 semantic triplets detailing "who did what, when, where, why and how". The analysis of these data via sequential network models allows the reconstruction of the nature and evolution of the interactions among the main political actors involved in the "Troubles". In particular, four distinct phases of the conflict are unveiled through network models of violence, indicating *how* and *when* the conflict radicalized, and *how* actors shifted their strategies of contention. Archival data are used to further specify how mechanisms of radicalization, such as intra-movement competition, political outbidding, hostile counter-mobilization, repression, object shift and boundary activation, engendered the conflict, thus illustrating *why* actors radicalized their requests and tactics.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The Irish War of Independence of 1919-1921 against Great Britain resulted in the Partition of Ireland into two separate political entities: the independent Irish Free State in the South and the establishment of the Northern Ireland province within the United Kingdom. From the nine counties of the historical region of Ulster, the Partition carved out the six counties with a Protestant and pro-Union majority, handing over Northern Ireland to its Protestant-Unionist majority. The Irish-Catholic minority that opposed the Union with Great Britain and made up about one third of the Northern Irish population was essentially barred from participation in the political process. Since the foundation of the Northern Irish province, the Irish Republican Army (IRA) conducted several armed insurgent campaigns against the Unionist government, failing each time in its attempt to end the Partition and unify Ireland. In 1968, the Irish-Catholic minority adopted nonviolent protest to challenge political exclusion and discrimination. Inspired by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the struggle against segregation and discrimination in the United States, anti-unionist activists in Northern Ireland formed a Civil Rights Movement (CRM). The movement consciously adopted the American repertoire of peaceful mass demonstrations, marches, rallies and sit-ins. Civil rights demands included full enfranchisement (“one man, one vote”), the end of discriminatory practices in public housing and employment, and the abolition of draconian police powers.

The Unionist government, the police and a sizeable portion of the Protestant majority perceived these reformist requests as a veiled attempt to topple the Northern Ireland state, instigating hostile counter-mobilization and outright repression of civil

rights demonstrations. The physical confrontations during street protests, pitting challengers of the status quo against opposed citizens and state agents, rapidly escalated into social and political turmoil. In a short period of time, the originally peaceful and reformist CRM turned to increasingly contentious and violent tactics and some embittered protesters eventually enrolled in underground republican organizations like the IRA (White 1989; Bosi 2012). The aspirations of the movement changed too, as it eventually demanded the abolition of the Northern Ireland state once and for all, rather than its gradual reform through legislation. What had started as a peaceful mobilization for civil rights led in August 1969 to the deployment of the British Army in the streets of Belfast and Derry to halt an incipient civil war. The struggle around civil rights was gradually supplanted by an ethno-nationalist insurgent campaign to achieve a United Republic of Ireland, rather than a reformed Northern Ireland. The Irish Republican Army, till then dormant and in disarray, re-organized, unleashing a violent conflict between paramilitary groups and security forces - the so-called "Troubles" - which claimed the lives of 3,600 people in more than 35 years of violent contention.

Why did the Civil Rights Movement adopt a radical strategy of contention, fostering a spiral of political violence? Why did the Unionist government and Protestant majority react viciously against the CRM? How can we explain the outbreak of the Troubles and the radicalization of contention in Northern Ireland in the late 1960s? To answer these questions, this projects examines the dynamics of contention occurred in Northern Ireland during the 1968-1972 years, the period of highest contention and violence in the region (and, arguably, in recent Western European history). Differently from past studies of the outbreak of the Troubles, this project advances a theoretical

framework which goes beyond the traditional ethnic conflict model (Horowitz 1985; McGarry and O'Leary 1995) and its emphasis on fixed ethnic identities and ethnic antagonism as the main causes of the conflict in Northern Ireland. Instead, it embraces a contentious politics approach (McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly 2001; Tilly and Tarrow 2006) that considers the radicalization of contention as the outcome of ongoing interactions between contentious groups (allied or antagonistic), police forces, governments, parties, and transnational actors. A contentious politics approach does not entail the search for "root causes" of conflict or political violence, instead it seeks "to identify crucial causal mechanisms that recur in a wide variety of contention, but produce different aggregate outcomes depending on the initial conditions, combinations, and sequences in which they occur" (McAdam et al. 2001: 37). To investigate the trajectory of conflict in Northern Ireland, this project focuses on three arenas of contention: intra-movement dynamics; movement-countermovement interactions; the structure of opportunities/threats available in the political system (see Alimi 2011: 99). Within each arena, I explore several mechanisms which combined to facilitate the radicalization of contention in Northern Ireland, employing an innovative mixed method approach which entailed the collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data.

The Conflict in Northern Ireland

Interpretations of the conflict in Northern Ireland abound (for a comprehensive and critical review, see Whyte 1990). From theories stressing the economic and material inequalities between the two communities, to those considering the conflict as a religious

one, from those emphasizing internal factors to those focusing on the international context as the main causes behind the conflict, Northern Ireland has been the subject to a plethora of studies in various disciplines (see McGarry and O'Leary 1995). Rather than reviewing these theories, I focus here on the theoretical approach which is currently considered as the dominant interpretation of the Northern Irish conflict: the ethno-nationalist (or ethnic conflict) model.

In 1993, O'Duffy stated that "it is widely agreed that the Northern Ireland conflict centres on conflicting national identities. Most Protestants desire to maintain their membership within the United Kingdom. Most Catholics wish, if only eventually, for a united Ireland" (O'Duffy 1993: 128). According to political scientists John McGarry and Brendan O'Leary (1995: 354-355),

> "the conflict in Northern Ireland is ethno-national, a systematic quarrel between the political organizations of two communities who want their state to be ruled by their nation, or who want what they perceive as 'their' state to protect their nation. Ethnic communities are perceived kinship groups. Their members share a subjective belief in their common ancestry, shared history and common culture, and in specific situations such communities are prone to competition and antagonistic conflict, especially when such conflict has a national character."

The ethno-national conflict "has been the primary source of antagonism, violence and constitutional stalemate" (McGarry and O'Leary 1995: 355), as "Northern Ireland is the site of an ethnic war" (McGarry and O'Leary 1997: 182). Ethno-nationalism has become the mainstream interpretation of the Troubles in Northern Ireland for a good reason: it provides an accurate and convincing *description* of the underlying structural dimensions of the conflict and its tendency towards resilience:

> "Ethnonationalism in Northern Ireland is fuelled […] by its multifaceted and complex nature. It is much more than a simplistic clash between Protestants and

> Catholics, those with a British versus an Irish identity, or unionist and nationalists, or even those who support the link with Britain versus those who wish to see both parts of the island of Ireland reunited. Rather it is rooted in significant intra- as well as inter-community difference based not only on difference in ethnic and national identity but also on conflicting views concerning the very legitimacy of the state and its boundaries" (Hayes and McAllister 1999: 32-33).

Nevertheless, in the last decade, the ethnic (or ethno-national) conflict model has been subject to serious criticism. Rogers Brubaker elaborated a constructivist conceptualization of ethnicity which claimed that "we need to break […] with the seemingly obvious and uncontroversial point that ethnic conflict involves conflict between ethnic groups" (Brubaker 2002: 166). According to Brubaker, by interpreting ethnic conflict as a conflict between ethnic groups, scholars have fallen into the trap of "groupism," the "tendency to treat ethnic groups, nations and races as substantial entities to which interests and agency can be attributed, […] the tendency to reify such groups, speaking of […] Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland […] as if they were internally homogeneous, externally bounded groups, even unitary collective actors with common purposes" (Brubaker 2002: 164).[1] Against this groupist notion of ethnic groups, ethnicity

> "should be conceptualized not as substances or things or entities or organisms or collective individuals—as the imagery of discrete, concrete, tangible, bounded and enduring 'groups' encourages us to do—but rather in relational, processual, dynamic, eventful and disaggregated terms. This means thinking of ethnicity […] not in terms of substantial groups or entities but in terms of *practical categories*, *cultural idioms*, *cognitive schemas*, *discursive frames*, *organizational routines*, *institutional forms*, *political projects* and *contingent events*" (Brubaker 2002: 167; emphasis in original).

[1] In their aptly titled essay "The Roots of Intense Ethnic Conflict may not in fact be Ethnic", Todd and Ruane (2004: 211) criticize ethno-nationalism's essentialist claim that "the specifically ethnic is characterized by a sense or feeling of shared descent, or putative kinship among the group". According to them, "most persistent and deep conflicts, and most lasting social groups, are likely to have multiple and systemic roots; most are overdetermined in terms of cultural categories and interests" (Todd and Ruane 2004: 228).

The ethnic conflict model claims that fixed ethnic identities and ethnic antagonism are the main cause of ethnic violence. Yet, this is a static account of conflict, in that it does merely indicate the pre-existing conditions for ethnic violence, but not why ethnic violence erupts in a certain place at a certain time. According to McGrattan, "the tendency to examine political antagonisms merely describes rather than explains ethno-national contention. The prioritization of ethno-nationalism as a catch-all variable may result in a tendency to use the main features of a conflict as explanations of the conflict rather than of why they are causally important" (McGrattan 2010a: 186). Moreover, "the prioritisation of ethno-nationalism as an explanatory variable fails to explain political contention. Because ethno-nationalism provides both the initial circumstance and the end result of political conflict, the concept cannot specify causal chains" (McGrattan 2010b: 181). Finally, Brubaker and Laitin (1998: 426) have long noticed that

> "even where violence is clearly rooted in preexisting conflict, it should not be treated as a natural, self-explanatory outgrowth of such conflict, something that occurs automatically when the conflict reaches a certain intensity, a certain 'temperature'. Violence is not a quantitative degree of conflict but a qualitative form of conflict, with its own dynamics. The shift from nonviolent to violent modes of conflict is a phase shift […] that requires particular theoretical attention".

If we want to understand episodes of ethnic conflict and violence, like the outbreak of the Troubles in Northern Ireland, it is thus necessary to unpack theoretically and empirically historical processes of collective action and mobilization. It is through these collective processes that certain social boundaries can be created and/or activated, leading conflict and political violence to be framed as ethnic (or ethno-national) (McGrattan 2010a: 10; see also Tilly 2004). Ethno-national categories were certainly in

place since Northern Ireland's foundation, yet it was only in the late 1960s that spirals of mobilization and repression effectively re-activated these pre-existing categories to solidify the Irish-Catholic minority support for a united Ireland, as well as the Protestant-Unionist majority vicious opposition to any reform of the state. To be sure, the IRA had attempted, since the Partition, to overthrow the Unionist government through several armed insurgencies (for instance, with the Border Campaign of 1956-1962: Bell 1971: 272-310). However, these insurgent campaigns were routinely crushed by police repression and lack of support by the Irish-Catholic minority, the alleged ethno-national community the IRA purported to vindicate. Conversely, soon after the Troubles erupted, the IRA was capable to garner significant political and social support among many Irish-Catholics in Northern Ireland. Rather than assuming that the popular support of extremist ethno-national claims and tactics was the obvious and direct product of ethno-national identities, this project intends to *explain* why radical contentious claims gained support during the Troubles.

Current theories of ethnonationalism are *static* descriptions of conflict that are neither able to explain why an ethno-national conflict breaks out in a certain historical moment (if it emerges at all), nor is able to explain the *trajectory* of the conflict. Embracing a contentious politics approach, this project intends to provide a *dynamic* theoretical framework which strives to explain: why radical contention in Northern Ireland erupted in the late 1960s; how, when and why it ended up to be framed as an ethnic conflict; and why it radicalized towards political violence, insurgency and counter-insurgency.

Radical Contentious Politics

The fundamental theoretical assumption of this project is that radical contention and political violence are not the direct outcome of sheer grievances, socio-economic deprivation or inequalities, rational choice, ethno-national or radical ideologies and identities. While all these factors obviously play a role in the unfolding of contentious politics, recent research on political radicalization highlighted how this process emerges "as driven not by generic grievances and religious fanaticism but by the interaction of various political actors and within long-lasting processes" (della Porta and Haupt 2012: 313; see also Goodwin 2012: 1-5). This perspective is mainly informed by McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly (2001) claims that different forms of political collective struggle (such as strikes, revolutions, nationalism and social movements) all share potentially similar Dynamics of Contention. To overcome the compartmentalization of the different fields studying different forms of contention, their research agenda seeks to identify recurring causal mechanisms and sequences across different contexts, examining how these mechanisms work and how their combination may yield different outcomes. McAdam and colleagues (2001: 25-26) distinguish among three different types of mechanisms: *environmental*, which refer to external influences which affect social life conditions (e.g., rise in unemployment or education); *cognitive*, concerning modifications of individual and collective perceptions of actors, relations and situations; and *relational* mechanisms, involving shifts in the links between individuals, groups and interpersonal networks. This project will mainly (yet not exclusively) focus on the latter kind of mechanisms, as it embraces the trio's "relational persuasion", that is treating "social interaction, social ties,

communication, and conversation not merely as expression of structure, rationality, consciousness, or culture but as active sites of creation and change. We have come to think of interpersonal networks, interpersonal communication, and various forms of continuous negotiation – including the negotiation of identities – as figuring centrally in the dynamics of contention" (McAdam et al. 2001: 22).

Building upon this relational view of contention, I elaborate a theoretical explanation of radicalization which examines mechanisms that operate both inside and outside the boundaries of a social movement. This theoretical framework entails the examination of three arenas of contention: intra-movement dynamics; movement-countermovement interactions; opportunities/threats in the political system (see Figure 1.1). Within each arena, I will identify the main mechanisms and processes that may provoke the precipitation of the conflict into radical contention and armed insurgency.

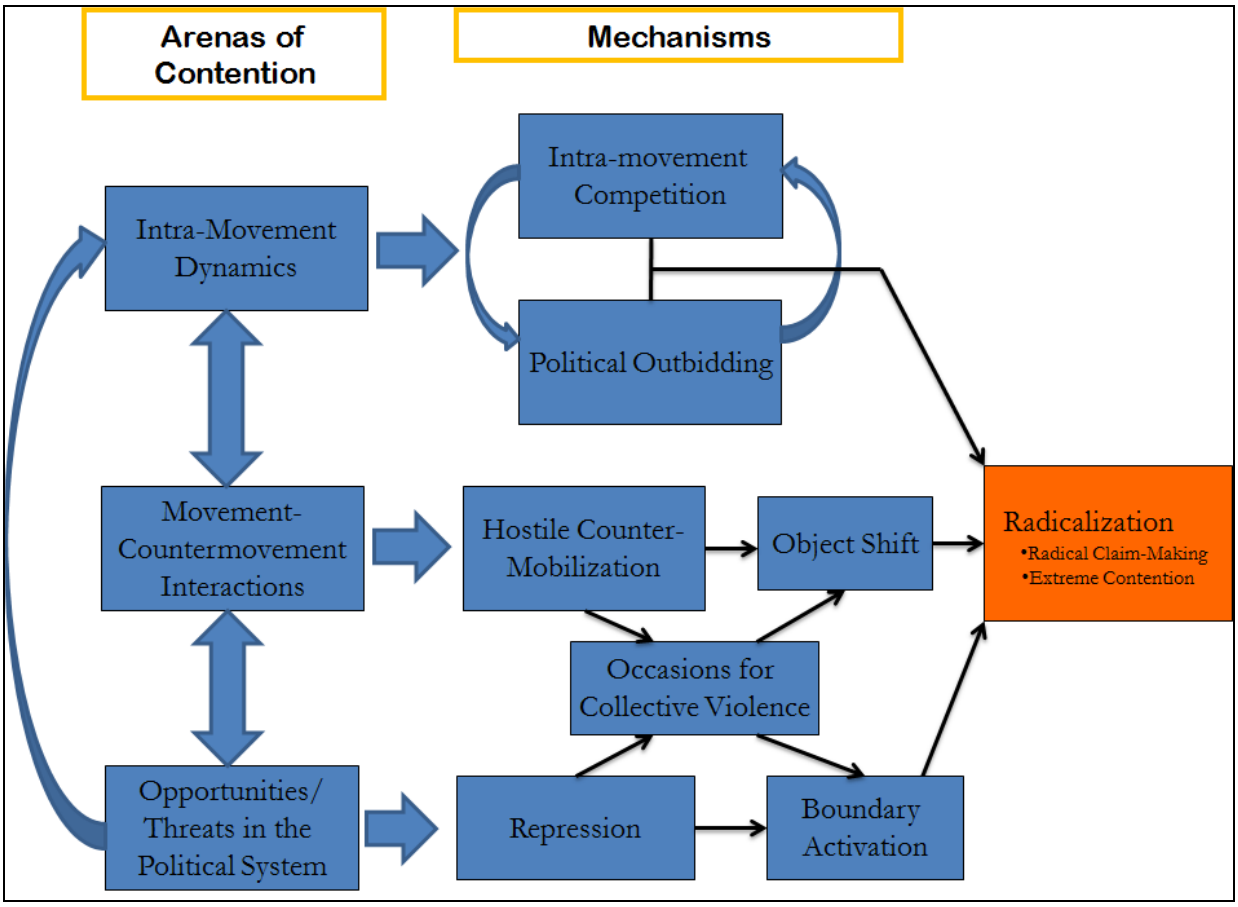

Figure 1.1: Radical Contention, a Theoretical Framework.

In the first arena of contention, internal dynamics of *intra-movement competition* and *political outbidding* are key mechanisms in pushing the different components of political groups and social movements to adopt increasingly radical tactics and claims to maintain or gain support within their constituencies. These dynamics are clearly related to the external environment and the movement relationships with other actors and the political system. Interactions with counter-movements are particularly important in radicalizing contention, as physical confrontations with hostile antagonists often produce episodes of collective violence and the gradual legitimation of violence as a tool of transgressive contention. In this second arena (see the mid-section of Figure 1.1), the

mechanism of *object shift* crucially displaces a movement early goals and agendas, with more extreme claims. The structure of opportunities and threats in a political system, especially as signified by state repression, is going to further impinge on political actors' adoption of radical contention (bottom of Figure 1.1). Brutal police control of protest not only generates collective and political violence, but it also instigates a powerful mechanism of *boundary activation* (Tilly 2004) that facilitates the mobilization of extreme identities and claims.

As the arrows on the left side of Figure 1.1 suggest, the mechanisms occurring within each arena affect each other and are empirically intertwined. Radical contention and political violence unfold - and can be explained - from the interplay of these different levels of interaction and conflict. Ultimately, this approach aims to provide the basic elements of a narrative of the conflict that will allow explaining why ethno-national contention erupted in Northern Ireland in the late 1960s and why it veered toward increasing radicalization. The bottom line is that we cannot consider ethno-nationalism as both a *cause* of the outbreak of the Troubles in Northern Ireland, and a *consequence* of the conflict. A social movement approach to ethnic conflict and violence will be instrumental in delivering such a narrative.

Arenas of Contention

In this section, I introduce the three arenas of contention - Intra-Movement Dynamics, Movement-Countermovement Interactions and Opportunities/Threats in the Political System - and illustrate how the mechanisms of radicalization can spur radical contention.

Intra-Movement Dynamics. In the first arena, I argue that the combination of two mechanisms, *intra-movement competition* and *political outbidding*, promote the gradual radicalization of a political organization and therefore the level of contention in a polity.

Intra-Movement Competition. Social movement organizations usually work together to buttress the activities of the larger movement they belong to, even though they may differ in ideological orientation, targeted constituencies or preferred strategies of action, often engaging in competitive struggles, if not sheer open conflict (e.g., Ansell 2001). Since moderate and radical components normally cohabit within most political groups, "competition may arise from ideological conflict, from competition for space in a static organizational sphere, or from personal conflicts for power between leaders" (Tarrow 2011: 207).

Intra-movement competition refers to activists and groups vying for the allocation of material and symbolic resources usually scarce among social movement activists and organizations. These resources include external funding, allies among the political elite, recruits (Rucht 2007: 204-206), but also positive media coverage and legitimacy in the political process ("certification": McAdam et al. 2001: 316; Furuyama and Meyer 2011). A certain degree of intra-movement competition is to be expected in any episode of contention and it has proved to be valuable to acquire new resources, target new constituencies and foster commitment among supporters (e.g., della Porta 1995: 110). However, competition for increasingly scarce resources can escalate into conflict and eventually organizational radicalization: "whatever its source, a common outcome of

competition is radicalization: a shift of ideological commitments toward the extremes and/or the adoption of more disruptive and violent forms of contention" (Tarrow 2011: 207). Clearly, internal competition does *not* always lead to radicalism, as conflicts can be managed and channeled toward more positive outcomes, internal solidarity often offsetting detrimental dynamics of disintegration (Rucht 2007: 205). I would argue that when intra-movement competition combines with a mechanism I call *political outbidding*, a social movement is more likely to radicalize.

Political Outbidding. The concept of outbidding intuitively relates to the attempts of one player to bid higher than its competitors, and it has been used to decipher various phenomena, from suicide terrorism (e.g., Bloom 2004, 2005) to ethnic conflict (e.g., Rabushka and Shepsle 1972; Chandra 2005; Kaufman 1996; Mitchell, Evans and O'Leary 2009). Scholars of ethnic party systems first introduce the term *ethnic outbidding* to illustrate a process that may develop in the context of electoral politics:

> "when two or more parties identified with the same ethnic group compete for support, neither (in particular electoral configurations) having an incentive to cultivate voters of other ethnicities, each seeking to demonstrate to their constituencies that it is more nationalistic than the other, and each seeking to protect itself from the other's charges that it is 'soft' on ethnic issues. The outbidding can 'o'erleap itself' into violent confrontations, dismantling the very democratic institutions that gave rise to the outbidding. This is a powerful mechanism (and a general one, not confined to *ethnic* outbidding)" (Brubaker and Laitin 1998: 434; emphasis in original).

I elaborate on Brubaker and Laitin's insight about the potentially wide-ranging analytical value of this broader mechanism, that I call *political outbidding* (De Fazio 2013). This mechanism may occur across a variety of political contexts and its application is not limited to electoral politics in the context of ethnically divided

societies. Thus, while ethnic outbidding exclusively refers to the arena of electoral competition in ethnic party systems, I argue that its underlying dynamic can be used to analyze radicalization and the emergence of political violence across different contexts and actors (see: Alimi and Bosi 2008). *Ethnic* outbidding thus becomes a specific occurrence of the more general *political* outbidding dynamic.

	Ethnic Outbidding	**Political Outbidding**
Type of Group	*Ethnic Party*	*Any Political Organization*
Competition Over:	*Electoral Support*	*Political Support (Recruits, Media Coverage, Resources)*
Boundaries:	*Ethnic/Ethno-National*	*Class, Ethnic, Gender, Racial, Religious, etc.*
Defend Vital Interests of:	*Ethnic Community*	*Political Constituency*

Table 0-1.1: Dynamics of Ethnic and Political Outbidding.

Table 1.1 summarizes the main differences between ethnic and political outbidding. First, political outbidding applies to virtually any political formation, from loosely organized groups to highly structured political parties or trade unions, while ethnic outbidding pertains only to ethnic-based parties. Second, instead of trying to secure electoral support in an ethnic party system, political groups would more generally battle over the expansion of political support, trying to draw media attention and recruits within their own 'bloc'.[2] Third, the boundaries of the constituency can be broadly based

[2] Competitive dynamics are based on a mix of similarities and differences among groups. Thus, while they share *broadly similar* political goals, vie for the same resources and target the same *broad* constituency,

upon ethnicity, class, gender, race, sexual orientation, political or religious affiliation, etc., rather than being limited to ethnic or ethno-national groups. As a consequence, and fourth, political outbidders may claim to 'defend the vital interests' of their political constituency (or social base) broadly defined, instead of a narrow ethnic or (ethno-national) community.

Political outbidding ignites when more radical factions of a political group use extreme pleas to protect their 'people' and interests, and formulate accusations of treachery against more moderate components. Moderate groups with a reformist agenda will have to contend with the hardliners trumpeting more uncompromising goals. To avoid losing ground against their more radical competitors, moderates have to modulate their positions and tactics. Otherwise, they risk being perceived (or depicted) as betrayers of their group's cause before their activists, sympathizers and the general public. In a situation of political outbidding, moderates have few strategic maneuvers (sometimes without even the possibility) to sustain a gradualist platform of action, as it might drive them into political irrelevance. Ultimately, if an organization is to survive from the accusations of 'selling out', chasing the rallying cry of radicalism is almost an inevitable course of action.

I argue that when intra-movement competition encounters political outbidding, they are likely to generate the organizational radicalization of social movements. The outcome of their mutually reinforcing interaction is a legitimation of radical action and goals. Claims and requests previously considered as extremist, are justified as the ones truly acting in defense of a group's interests, values, identities and, eventually, physical

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they also differ in the *specific* ways to achieve those goals and the *particular* sections of the constituency they seek out.

or cultural 'survival'. Likewise, an increasingly transgressive repertoire of action progressively acquires the status of a rightful 'weapon' to advance the movement's agenda. As a result, a social movement *as a whole* radicalizes. During this process of transformation, the activists and groups composing the social movement are constantly evolving. Thus, while some followers will disengage from 'radical activism' and/or activism altogether, new recruits with more radical outlook will join the movement, reinforcing its radicalizing path.

The two mechanisms proposed are not uniquely related to the Northern Ireland, but can be found in several other episodes of contention. One of the goals of the contentious politics research agenda is indeed to detect causal mechanisms applicable across disparate cases. The attempt here to delineate 'political outbidding' as a mechanism that can be potentially used beyond ethnic party systems is part and parcel of the theoretical enterprise of the contentious politics perspective. Another tenet of this approach is that the combination of various mechanisms within different political contexts and regimes are likely to lead to different outcomes. Whether or not radicalization is internally 'successful' (i.e., moderates are compelled to chase radicals), will be contingent upon the external dynamics of contention, such as the structure of political opportunities and threats available and movement interactions with counter-movements.

Movement-Countermovement Interactions. The second arena of contention relates to the formation of *hostile counter-movements* and how they may affect activists and their organizations, often prompting contentious interactions to turn violent. Competition and

conflict are common inside a social movement and its organizations; yet, conflictual interactions typically tend to occur between *opposed* political groups. Meyer and Staggenborg (1996) argued that a *counter-movement* is likely to arise when one of these three conditions occurs: 1) when a movement seems to be successful/effective; 2) when it threatens another group's interests; 3) when political elites are favorable to aid oppositional mobilization. As soon as a social movement is able to carry out some of its intended political goals (or garner sufficient media coverage), it may attract the attention of groups opposing those same very goals, eventually generating a process of counter-mobilization. This will be more likely if social movement goals are perceived (or constructed) as threatening the material and symbolic interests of other social or political groups.

Regardless of a movement's initial political goals, the mere presence of a hostile counter-movement can unleash the radicalization of the original movement and its antagonistic counter-part, through a mechanism of *object shift*, "a change in the relations between claimants and the objects of claim, as when an additional actor enters the scene and diverts attacks to it" (Alimi, Bosi and Demetriou 2012: 12). As Alimi and colleagues have indicated in their comparative analysis of radicalization processes,

> "A frequent object shift […] occurs when new claims by the movement pertain to the countermovement, thereby complementing existing claims aimed at the authorities, which are usually the immediate, central object of claims. Thus the introduction of a countermovement with a clear agenda of inflicting damage on the movement and undermine its struggle and goals opens up a new front of contention with significant influence on the process of radicalization" (Alimi et al. 2012: 12).

When movements and counter-movements repeatedly collide (symbolically *and* physically) in the public space of protest, they are creating - predictably, if

unintentionally - *occasions for collective violence*. Recurring (and highly ritualized) physical confrontations among protesters and counter-protesters polarize the political game and push it towards increased radicalization. Inter-movement conflict becomes increasingly non-negotiable, as fundamental issues of worldviews, physical integrity and control of territory, rather than pragmatic policy disputes, are at stake. Confrontations between protesters resemble a zero-sum game, where each political (or even merely symbolic) victory of one side represents a defeat for the other side. In a relatively short time, a spiral of mobilization and counter-mobilization may lead to a violent political showdown, as contending movements are "successful above all in mobilizing against each other" (Collins 2001: 40). Countering an antagonist movement becomes a reason in itself to mobilize, and the spiral of violence and radicalization shove the original aim of mobilization out of sight (*object shift*). When movements' claims and strategies of action are increasingly geared toward rallying their own constituency to counteract the mobilization of their opponents, radical claims and tactics are more likely to attract support. Furthermore, as the conflict with direct opponents acquire saliency among movement activists and organizations, the search for favorable media coverage and political allies among the elites become less relevant, fundamentally emasculating the political incentives for moderation.

To sum up, hostile counter-mobilization multiplies occasions for the creation of politically-motivated, collective violence, and instigates an object shift among activists that may promote spirals of violent mobilization. Counter-movements also contribute to instigate the crucial internal processes propitious to radical contention. Countries or regions permeated by deep-seated ethnic or ethno-national divisions are prone to witness

spirals of mobilization and counter-mobilization. Northern Ireland is an exemplary case, as antagonistic mobilization by rival movements punctuated its history of contention. Loyalist counter-mobilization was a decisive factor in the overall polarization of the conflict, as its obstructionist tactics generated opportunities for political violence and exacerbated the already tense relationship between the CRM and police forces. Finally, it also fuelled the competitive processes within the CRM and altered the structure of opportunities and threats available in the political system.

Opportunities/Threats in the Political System. The third arena of contention concerns the shifting opportunities and threats that constrain and shape actors' perception of the political system and its vulnerability to challenges. In particular, I focus on the role played by repression in facilitating radical contention. Tilly's definition of *repression* as "any action by another group which raises the contender's cost of collective action" (1978: 100) includes the activities of state authorities as well as non-state collective actors, as they both may threaten challengers' collective action. State repression is a key mechanism in altering the structure of opportunities and threats available to contentious actors, as it can generate a process of *boundary activation* (Tilly 2004) which ultimately facilitates the mobilization of pre-existing identities for political purposes (in this case, ethno-national identities).

Social scientists have devoted a great deal of attention to the issue of state repression and its relationship with social movements and political violence (for a recent review, see Earl 2011). Research, unfortunately, has been largely indecisive in terms of consistent and robust findings, as it seems to be very hard, if not utterly impossible, to

gauge with a sufficient degree of accuracy the effect of repression on mobilization. Theoretically, researchers have elaborated "arguments for all conceivable basic relationships between government coercion and group protest and rebellion, except for no relationship" (Zimmerman 1980: 191), even though Koopmans indicates that a 'no relationship' argument can be reasonably proposed.[3] While all possible causal links have been deemed as theoretically plausible, the empirical testing of those links "ha(s) been as inconclusive as the theories they have tried to test" (Koopmans 1997: 152). Some research indicates that repression causes moral outrage and increases activists' frustration (Gurr 1969; Davies 1962), or, alternatively, reinforces their collective identity (Koopmans 1995). In both cases, the outcome is the same: repression fuels more mobilization. On the other hand, rational choice theorists argue that repression increases the costs of collective action and in their empirical studies have tried to demonstrate that repression leads to demobilization (e.g., Muller and Weede 1990; Opp and Roehl 1990).

Koopmans distinguishes between situational repression (heavy-handed control of protest), and more subtle institutional repression (such as legal constraints and ban on organizations; see Earl 2003, 2004). *Institutional repression* is usually effective in subduing mobilization as it does not create powerful images and frames of violence and atrocities; instead, it aims to strike directly against activists capacity's to organize and mobilize. *Situational repression*, on the other hand, is more likely to disseminate injustice frames and elicit radical responses, as protest policing becomes a meta-issue of mobilization (della Porta and Reiter 1998) able to arouse more extreme forms of action as well as more radical political goals. Police brutality invites activists to question the very

[3] One might theorize that "both repression's costs and the moral outrage repression produces are linear functions of its intensity, in which case they neutralize each other and produce no effect at all" (Koopmans 1997: 152).

legitimacy of the state they are trying to reform, as police misbehavior becomes the focus of social movement agendas. The issue of police control of protest is at the core of the democratic rules of the game, as it involves basic rights of freedom of expression and movement, and can therefore stir up more extreme forms of action and challenges to power-holders.

Repression can thus play several possible roles to foster radical contention. First of all, a heavy-handed style of protest policing multiplies *occasions for collective violence*. States have, without doubt, historically been the biggest producers of collective, organized violence (Tilly 1995, 2003), state repression exposing protesters to symbolic and, most importantly, physical violence. Secondly, when protesters, counter-protesters and state agents clash with relative regularity in occasion of protest events, a process of *socialization to violence* is likely to occur among activists. Being socialized to violence is part of the process of radicalization, as protesters are initiated to political violence and learn how to use it for self-defense, as well as for proactive purposes. In other words, violence becomes a 'normal' feature of contention and a legitimate tactic within a movement's repertoire of action. Activists routinely cite their direct experience of state brutality during street demonstrations to explain their involvement with radical groups and clandestine organizations (White 1989, 1993a; della Porta 1995: 158-161). Direct experience of police harassment and state repression tend to reinforce "frames of injustice" (Gamson, Fireman and Rytina 1982: 123) among protesters, who come to perceive the state as an unfair and brutal authority. As a result, protesters and social movements perform increasingly extreme acts of contentious resistance against

oppressive authorities, and shift their claims toward more radical political goals of dismantling a state increasingly perceived as repressive and illegitimate.

Finally, repression facilitates *boundary activation*, or an "increase […] in the salience of the us-them distinction separating two political actors" (Tilly and Tarrow 2006: 215). Changes in social boundaries can be momentous: "boundary change produces serious consequences across a wide range of social interaction. It facilitates or inhibits exploitation of one category by another. It likewise facilitates or inhibits mobilization in the forms of social movements or popular rebellions. It strongly affects the likelihood, intensity, scale, and form of collective violence" (Tilly 2004: 226). Tilly provided a stylized representation of how a violent conflict may erupt following boundary change:

> "In this elementary sequence, authorities draw lines among social sites where they did not previously exist; that boundary increases in salience as an organizer of social relations on either side, of social relations across it, and/or of shared representations; actors on at least one side respond to the boundary's activation by engaging in coordinated attacks on sites across the boundary; and actors on at least one side engage in coordinated defense against those attacks" (Tilly 2004: 226-227).

It is through this mechanism that pre-existing socio-political identities can be re-activated, repression rendering them increasingly salient for social and political conflict. This was the case in Northern Ireland, where the repression of the CRM reactivated ethno-national boundaries, which led to a recrudescence of ethnic antagonism. On both sides of the conflict, ethno-national identities and claims re-emerged and were used to mobilize activists inside each ethno-national community. The unionist government policies of failed reform and one-sided repression altered the available opportunities and threats for the CRM and the loyalist counter-movement, in turn shaping their strategic positions and capacity to exert political influence within the polity. Violent clashes

between activists and police forces pushed the CRM and loyalists toward more confrontational tactics, setting the terrain for the outbreak of the Troubles and its ethno-national conflict.

Radical Scenarios

The three arenas of contention described above do not exhaust all the possible dynamics and factors affecting the trajectories of the actors involved in radical politics in Northern Ireland. There are both distal (see Bosi 2008: 247-256) and proximate (Prince 2007) factors and events which rendered 1968 a propitious time for opportunities for contentious action to be transformed into actual protests. The framework proposed here will be successful as long as it is able to clarify how the interactions between political actors that seized those opportunities and those who tried to contrast them, generated radical contention. Moreover, the theoretical framework has to unveil how the combination of these mechanisms facilitated the polarization of the conflict and its transformation from protest-based disturbances to inter-communal riots to armed insurgency and counter-insurgency. However, radicalization is a historically situated process that, rather than drawing unilinear or uniform trajectory, tends to unfold in complicated and even contradictory ways. Movement organizations and activists constantly evolve and chase radical politics in idiosyncratic ways, as political conditions and events shape bursts and hiatuses in contention. Challengers do not contend only with hostile counter-movements, repressive police and internal competitive processes which facilitate radicalization; they also face forces that pull them in the opposite direction of

moderation and institutionalization. In addition to authorities' attempts to coopt segments of social movement leadership, some activists may opt for more institutional tactics to advance their cause (or political careers), for example by joining or creating new political parties, running for elections, becoming lobbyists or professional politicians. These contrasting thrusts render difficult the explanation of radicalization, as contradictions, reversals and opposite dynamic punctuate the unfolding of this political process.

To assess the validity of the theoretical perspective advanced here, I suggest some possible scenarios of movements' radicalization and outline a sketch of what I expect to find in the empirical analysis of the data collected for this project.

Internal Dynamics. To observe internal dynamics of intra-movement competition and political outbidding, I will rely mostly on archival data regarding the various civil rights organizations which made up the CRM, accounts of former civil rights leaders as reported in their biographies, autobiographies, newspaper articles and secondary literature. From these sources, I expect to observe the different components of the CRM increasingly engaging in competitive struggles and attempts to outbid each other politically, as they have to contend with antagonistic opponents (i.e., loyalist counter-protesters). As street confrontations with counter-protesters and authorities intensify, I would anticipate finding evidence of the more radical elements within the CRM accusing moderates of being too soft with their requests and tactics. If radical claims are successful, moderate groups and activists will be impelled to re-adjust their strategies and run after radicals. The composition of the movement would evolve too, as some

moderates might denounce a growing ‘radicalism’ within CRM and abandon the movement.

If a situation of political outbidding is to develop, I expect to detect a centrifugal dynamic shifting the CRM’s original agenda from a reformist to a more far-reaching one. Specifically, this would entail to find a shift in the CRM’s claims from civil rights requests against discrimination to radical ethno-nationalist claims about the sovereignty and legitimacy of the Northern Ireland state and its security apparatus. This centrifugal dynamic would affect the loyalist counter-movement, which will respond to the radicalization of the challengers’ demands by escalating their own contraposition. I predict, then, a parallel and concurrent process of outbidding occurring in the Protestant-Unionist side of the ethno-national divide; in their speeches and claims hardliners will thus charge moderate Unionists willing to compromise with the CRM of treachery with the “enemy.” Loyalist conflict with the unionist establishment will expand with the security apparatus, as it is perceived not to be ‘tough enough’ against disloyal agitators. Quantitative data on collective events and the use of network analysis will display graphically the interactions of conflict/opposition among the various social actors taking part to the Troubles. These graphs will chart the evolution over time of these interactions and, I would expect, capture the emergent rift between loyalists and security forces.

External Dynamics. Interactions with counter-movements and state authorities create opportunities for the radicalization of contention. While for internal processes I will be relying mostly (yet not exclusively) on archival data, the investigation of the external factors affecting trajectories of contention is based on a mix of quantitative data on

collective events of protest and violence, and the actors participating to these events, and qualitative data on actors' strategies and goals.

One of the mechanisms deemed as crucial to activate radical contention is the repeated occurrence of collective violence during protest events. I anticipate observing a number of counter-demonstrations to occur in conjunction with civil rights protests, frequently resulting in violent confrontations among opposite groups. Simple event counts will be utilized to plot temporal trends in the level of civil rights mobilization and germane loyalist counter-mobilization, as well as to gauge the incidence of violence during civil rights demonstrations. Qualitative data will be used to ascertain the effect of antagonistic counter-mobilization on the CRM and its claims. In particular, I expect to find an *object shift* in the CRM, as it adapts its tactics and goals to deal with loyalist counter-protesters.

Police control and repression of protest will be measured through event counts. Crucially, though, I will also be able to analyze the targets of police repression - as well as the targets of protesters and counter-protesters violence - thanks to network graphs which will display the extent and direction of violent interactions among political actors involved in contention. I expect the CRM to be the main recipient of police violence/control, while I also predict that the radicalizing CRM - notwithstanding its claim of being and remaining a nonviolent movement - will reciprocate attacking both state authorities and counter-protesters. Moreover, as the nature of the conflict evolves from civil rights contention to ethno-national dispute, so does the pattern of violence. Ethnic-related violence, as detected from quantitative data, is used as an indicator of boundary activation and the revitalization of ethno-national identities and conflict.

Methods to Study Contention

The research strategy of this dissertation is to reconstruct the evolution of a system of contentious interactions over time and space in Northern Ireland in the late 1960s by using a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis.[4] The contentious system under examination includes the challengers of the polity (the CRM and, more generally, the Irish-Catholic minority), their allies, opponents and the state agents. The quantitative side of the project employs Quantitative Narrative Analysis (QNA; Franzosi 2004, 2010) to map thoroughly the dynamics of radical contention in Northern Ireland. For all the richness of its analyses, the sources of QNA data do not address directly issues of meaning, nor do they unveil actors' interpretation of events. The qualitative side of the project thus complements and enriches the findings obtained through QNA and relies on archival and secondary sources to investigate actors' perception, claims and strategies.

Quantitative studies of protest and political violence have routinely relied on catalogues of protest events and their properties to "systematically map, analyze and interpret the occurrence and properties of large numbers of protests by means of content analysis […]. Protest Event Analysis [PEA] is a method that allows for the quantification of many properties of protest, such as frequency, timing and duration, location, claims, size, forms, carriers, and targets, as well as immediate consequences and reactions" (Koopmans and Rucht 2002: 231). Based upon the systematic coding of texts, mostly but

[4] For an extended discussion of the data and methods employed in this project, please refer to the Methodological Appendix.

not exclusively newspapers, scholars have typically applied statistical tools like regression and time-series models to analyze collective events data (e.g., McAdam 1982; Tarrow 1989; Oliver and Maney 2000). Protest Event Analysis, however, shares some of the limitations of quantitative approaches to socio-historical research, with its emphasis on the relationship among variables and its silence about actors and their actions (Abbott 2001; Franzosi 2004: 240).

Charles Tilly remarked that "students of contention have often made stark choices between epidemiology and narrative. At the epidemiological extreme, they have analyzed counts of contentious events such as strikes or violent attacks by examining change and variation in their social locations. At the narrative extreme, they have reconstructed single events as one action or interaction after another" (Tilly 2008: 206). Instead, he urged students of contentious politics to "move away from classified event counts and single-episode narrative toward procedures that trace interactions among participants in multiple episodes" (Tilly 2008: 211). Following Tilly's advice, this project diverges from traditional approaches to the study of contentious politics, from both historians' rich narratives of local cases and social scientists' statistical analysis of event counts. This project employs Quantitative Narrative Analysis as part of a research strategy that delivers social actors and their interactions within an event, narrative and counts, quality and quantity. QNA is a novel, linguistic-based approach that utilizes computer-assisted story grammars, instead of coding schemes, to parse narrative texts (Franzosi 1997). Story grammars concern "the linguistic structure <subject> <action> <object> and respective modifiers that characterizes simple narrative text" (Franzosi 1999: 133). In QNA, the unit of analysis is not the protest event, but the semantic triplet, or the S-A-O

(Subject-Action-Object) form and its modifiers, the most basic narrative structure accessible in a text. QNA thus effectively gathers detailed information on actors and their actions, on their characteristics (e.g., time and space of action), on the chrono-logical sequences of actions (both temporal and logical).

In this project, I used specialized software, PC-ACE, to construct a relational database of contentious events, actors and actions.[5] The narrative texts utilized come from a three-volume chronology of events (Deutsch and Magowan 1973, 1974, 1975) which details all the contentious events occurred in Northern Ireland from 1968 to 1972. In addition, I consulted Sutton's Index of Deaths (1994) to verify the accuracy of the entries narrating killing events, and I complemented or amended possible missing or incorrect information. I used PC-ACE to code 2,097 chronology entries, the final database containing 6,035 semantic triplets, grouped into 2,323 events of contention. This database provides fine-grained data about 'who did what, when, where, why and how', the basic information needed to carry out an actor-oriented approach to the study of radical contention (Tilly and Tarrow 2006: 201-210; Tilly 2008). The analysis of the database allows the systematic mapping of the dynamics of contention in Northern Ireland and its evolution over time and space. Simple computations of demonstrations, counter-protests, riots, police interventions, etc., will allow the spatial and temporal re-construction of processes of mobilization, counter-mobilization, police control of protest and diffusion of political violence. Network models will provide a thorough charting of the interactions among the actors involved in the Troubles (civil rights organizations, loyalists groups, state agents, paramilitary organizations, and so on), according to

[5] See the Methodological Appendix for the technical details of how I constructed the database and retrieved information from it.

different spheres of action (e.g., violence, control, …), and their evolution over time. The application of spatial diffusion (GIS) models will instead illustrate the diffusion of protest and collective violence over time and space in Northern Ireland.

Despite the richness of QNA data, they can elucidate only certain aspects of contention though. While QNA allows tracing actors' interactions, it cannot unveil the meaning actors attached to their strategic interactions with others. The *sources* of data utilized in QNA often offer "*surface* reasons for action" (Franzosi, De Fazio and Vicari 2012: 28; emphasis in original) (e.g., 'police baton charge civil rights protesters because were participating to an illegal demonstration'). Yet, these sources hardly capture "the *deep* reasons, the *meaning* of action" (Ibidem) (e.g., why police would use violence against banned civil rights protests, but not against unlawful loyalist counter-demonstrations). To make sense of interactions, "we need to go not only *inside* the event but also *outside* the event, and relate internal characteristics not just to each other but to external ones as well. Text and context must go hand in hand" (Franzosi et al. 2012: 29; emphasis in original). Qualitative data are thus indispensable to better comprehend the Northern Ireland context and outline the key mechanisms fostering radical contention. To gather these data, I rely on original archival sources, as well as the vast secondary literature on the Troubles (for an overview, see: McGarry and O'Leary 1995; Whyte 1990). In 2009, I conducted archival research at several sites in Belfast, in particular at the Newspaper Library at the Belfast Central Library, the Special Collection at the Library of Queen's University Belfast and the Northern Ireland Political Collection at the Linenhall Library in Belfast. This latter collection holds over a quarter of a million items, from pamphlets to stickers to leaflets, newspapers and political manifestos, covering

roughly the last 40 years of Northern Ireland's history. This rich source of socio-historical information documents "the activities and views of all the parties in conflict, from government to paramilitaries." The archival evidence available in the Collection is an unrivalled resource for the study of the Troubles and the actors that participated to the conflict and will be used to reconstruct, with historical accuracy, their perceptions, claims and strategies of contention. Moreover, newspaper articles, transcripts of parliamentary debates and declassified government documents will be used to further enhance the understanding of state actors, especially Northern Irish police, the unionist government and establishment.

Dissertation Plan

In the brief sketch of the events recounted in the opening of this chapter, I emphasized the shift in the requests advanced by the Civil Rights Movement, as it exacted more and more drastic transformation of the Northern Irish political system. What had started as an appeal for full British citizenship ("British Rights for British Citizens," as one slogan claimed in the early days of civil rights demonstrations), ended up in a bloody confrontation reclaiming the breakup of the United Kingdom altogether ("Brits out!"; Bosi 2011: 136). In chapter 2, I present an outline of the main phases of the conflict in Northern Ireland between 1968 and 1972, from the initial contention about civil rights to the re-emergence of ethno-national identities and antagonism, to insurgency and counter-insurgency. This chapter will work as the historical backbone and general framework within which the rest of the dissertation will unfold. Chapters 3, 4 and 5 delve into the

events, actors and actions animating each phase of the conflict, analyzing the three arenas of contention and the mechanisms which generated the radicalization of contention in Northern Ireland. In the Epilogue, I summarize the main findings of this study and discuss its contribution to the literature on Northern Ireland, social movements and radical contention. The Methodological Appendix present an extensive discussion of the data and methods utilized in the dissertation, appraising their strengths and limits.

Chapter 2: Northern Ireland as a Site of Contention

In this chapter, I outline how the Troubles came to Northern Ireland, illustrating how the conflict developed between 1968 and 1972. I inductively identify four phases of the conflict, each one characterized by a distinct pattern of contentious interactions. During each phase, various actors engaged in different types of political violence and activities, from the initial civil rights contention to the revitalization of inter-community ethnic antagonism, and then the descent to the spiral of armed insurgency and counter-insurgency. As contention transformed and radicalized, new actors formed or entered into the conflict, while others altered their strategic positions, tactics and claims, or disappeared altogether. Following a relational perspective, political actors are conceived here not as "neatly bounded, self-propelling entities with fixed attributes, but [as] socially embedded and constituted beings who interact incessantly with other such beings and undergo modifications of their boundaries and attributes as they interact" (McAdam et al. 2001: 56). A central concern of this project is thus to disaggregate the analysis at the actor-level, unveiling the trajectories of contention of the various actors operating within and across the two ethno-national communities, as well as within the British state and government structure.

The analytical effort of disaggregation provides an interpretation of the conflict and its radicalization which goes beyond the static ethnic conflict model. Focusing on actual actors and their actions, this project thus intends to defy the reification of ethnic groups often used to describe ethnic conflict. As Brubaker (2002: 171-172) argued, "although participants' rhetoric and common sense accounts treat ethnic groups as the

protagonists of ethnic conflict, in fact the chief protagonists of most ethnic conflict—and a fortiori of most ethnic violence—are not ethnic groups as such but various kinds of organizations, broadly understood and their empowered and authorized incumbents." A contentious politics approach to radicalization maintains that the mere existence of ethnic identities and antagonism does not explain in itself the outburst of political violence, or the resilience of the conflict. This is particularly true in Northern Ireland, where ethnic animosity characterized inter-community relationships even before the foundation of the province in 1921. What happened in 1968 and the following years was that

> "the changing political context and the intervention of the British state inspired perceptions of opportunity or threat, influencing local decision-making. Thus, a situation of deepening communal division was created, not simply due to the existence of antagonistic communities, but also because specific decisions encouraged political entrenchment and communal polarization" (McGrattan 2010a: 8).

The building blocks of the explanation of Northern Ireland's radical contention include these political decisions (such as, for instance, the hardening of the security measures by the Northern Ireland Government and the introduction of internment without trial) and their consequences, as well as intra-group dynamics (for example, the dynamics of competitive escalation in the Irish-Catholic community, first within the CRM and then within the Republican movement, culminated in the IRA split into Officials and Provisionals) and inter-groups interactions. I now present the broad canvas - the four main phases of conflict - depicting the radicalization of contention in Northern Ireland from 1968 to 1972.

Social Relations of Conflict and Network Models.

Civil Rights Protests and Civil Disturbances (August 1968-July 1969). In January 1967, the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA) was founded as a loose coalition of anti-unionist activists to challenge the Northern Ireland government and its discriminatory practices through a civil rights campaign (Purdie 1990: 132-133). This ideologically heterogeneous network of activists and associations aimed: "1) to defend the basic freedom of all citizens; 2) to protect the rights of the individual; 3) to highlight all the possible abuses of power; 4) to demand guarantees for freedom of speech, assembly and association; 5) to inform the public of their lawful rights" (NICRA 1978: 20). During its first 18 months of existence, NICRA consciously molded its rhetoric and tactics after the National Council for Civil Liberties, the main civil rights organization in the UK. The adoption of legal-institutional tactics to further civil rights in Northern Ireland were however unsuccessful (Purdie 1990: 133-134). Facing a botched institutional approach and inspired by the American struggle for civil rights of the 1960s (De Fazio 2009: 164-165), in the second half of 1968 NICRA eventually embraced direct political action and protest.

On August 24, 1968, about 2,000 civil rights activists marched from Coalisland to Dungannon, deliberately crossing both Protestant and Catholic areas to validate their anti-sectarian claims.[6] While the march met some opposition by loyalist counter-demonstrators and was re-routed by the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), the police force in Northern Ireland, it went by relatively quietly. The second civil rights march, due to take place in Derry on October 5, was banned by the unionist government on the ground of security concerns. When a few hundred protesters decided to go on with the march, the RUC enforced the ban with violence, using baton charges and water cannons

[6] One core mission of the CRM was indeed to denounce and combat sectarianism (Mulholland 2000: 244).

to disperse the peaceful marchers. The televised images of police violence rapidly spread throughout the British Isles and across the world, prompting a wave of mass civil rights mobilization.

Three main civil rights organizations were at the core of the CRM: NICRA, People's Democracy (PD), a radical student group formed as a reaction to the police mistreatment of civil rights protesters (Arthur 1974: 30), and the moderate Derry Citizens' Action Committee (DCAC; see: Ó Dochartaigh 2005). These organizations targeted different segments of the Irish-Catholic community in Northern Ireland: NICRA represented the more moderate and middle-class element of the CRM; People's Democracy was mainly based at Queen's University in Belfast and recruited students, faculty members and leftists, while DCAC was mostly concentrated in the Derry area (Cinalli 2002: 93). Notwithstanding their divisions in terms of class, locale, age and political ideologies, civil rights organizations and activists fully cooperated in their initial efforts to challenge the unionist government. At this stage, their shared political agenda included electoral reform ("one man, one vote" and the end of gerrymandering), anti-discrimination legislation and police reform. Nevertheless, frictions between the more radical PD and the other civil rights organizations had surfaced since the outset of mass mobilization.

Modeled on the Selma-Montgomery civil rights marches, in January 1969 PD leaders organized a 'Long March' from Belfast to Derry, crossing several loyalist strongholds in the Northern Irish countryside. This march ostensibly violated a "truce" settled in December by the CRM and the unionist government to let the Parliament approve a package of civil rights reforms (NICRA 1978). The intended goal of the march

was to expose the repressive nature of the Northern Irish government, as well as to embarrass the more moderate elements in the CRM (McCann 1974; Farrell 1988), that were opposed to the march (Bosi 2011: 134).[7] The Cameron Report (1969: 47) on the 1969 disturbances in Northern Ireland labeled the tactic as "calculated martyrdom," as the march came under violent loyalist attacks, multiple times. Near Burntollet Bridge, in the outskirts of Derry, loyalist supporters in collusion with off-duty policemen ambushed the marchers with stones and clubs, injuring several marchers (Cameron 1969: para 177); NICRA and DCAC immediately lent their support to the PD marchers and welcomed them at their arrival in Derry.

In February 1969, several civil rights leaders ran for office for the Northern Ireland Parliament, three of them eventually securing a seat (two from NICRA, one from DCAC). The February elections "marked a turning point in the inter-organizational relationships" (Cinalli 2002: 93) within the CRM. As anti-Catholic violence reappeared in the streets and civil rights activists were given an institutional voice in the political process, mobilization dwindled, causing fierce intra-movement competition for grassroots support and activists. Moreover, the elections for the Parliament in Stormont registered an increase in the "ethnic vote" (Elliott 1972), signaling the revitalization of the constitutional issue of Partition, until that moment never invoked by the CRM. As a result, an ideological rift between 'moderates' and 'radicals' developed inside the movement, as "the inclusive, antisectarian, and polycentric collective identity of the CRM […] was now gradually replaced by an exclusive communal identity" (Bosi 2009: 16). The radical wing of the CRM tried to take control of the CRM, as it displayed

[7] According to Purdie (1990: 217), the PD march "was essentially an oppositional tactic, against what was seen as [Northern Ireland Prime Minister] O'Neill's fake reformism, against the truce in civil rights activities, and against the leaderships of the civil rights movement and the Catholic community."

antagonistic tactics and more wide-ranging requests of political change. On March 14, 1969, four prominent NICRA members resigned from the Executive Committee because of it supported a PD march that was planned to go across a hostile unionist area on March 29.[8] Several other resignations, both within NICRA and DCAC, ensued, as moderate activists felt that the CRM was "being undermined by extremist movements for whose actions we cannot hold ourselves responsible".[9] Eventually, PD cancelled its march and all civil rights organizations agreed to hold a protest march in Derry on March 29.

During the first half of 1969, NICRA and DCAC had to adapt to the changing political situation and, to retain support and activists, had to chase the more radical PD in their terrain of risky contention and radical political goals. Moreover, as political violence in Northern Ireland was starting to flare, many moderates dropped out from the CRM and activism. Figure 2.1 below visualizes the network of violent interactions among the main political actors operating in Northern Ireland between October 1968 and July 1969. In network analysis terminology, the actors in the graph are called *nodes* and the lines connecting them *ties*. In the graph, the arrowheads indicate the direction of the action (who committed violence against whom), while their size and the width of the ties are proportional to the amount of violent interactions linking two nodes. The numbers near each node report the frequency of (violent) actions between those ordered paired actors. The graph provides a succinct, yet revealing, snapshot of the nature of contention in the early period of civil rights mobilization.

[8] *Belfast Telegraph*, March 15th, 1969.
[9] *Irish News*, March 17th, 1969.

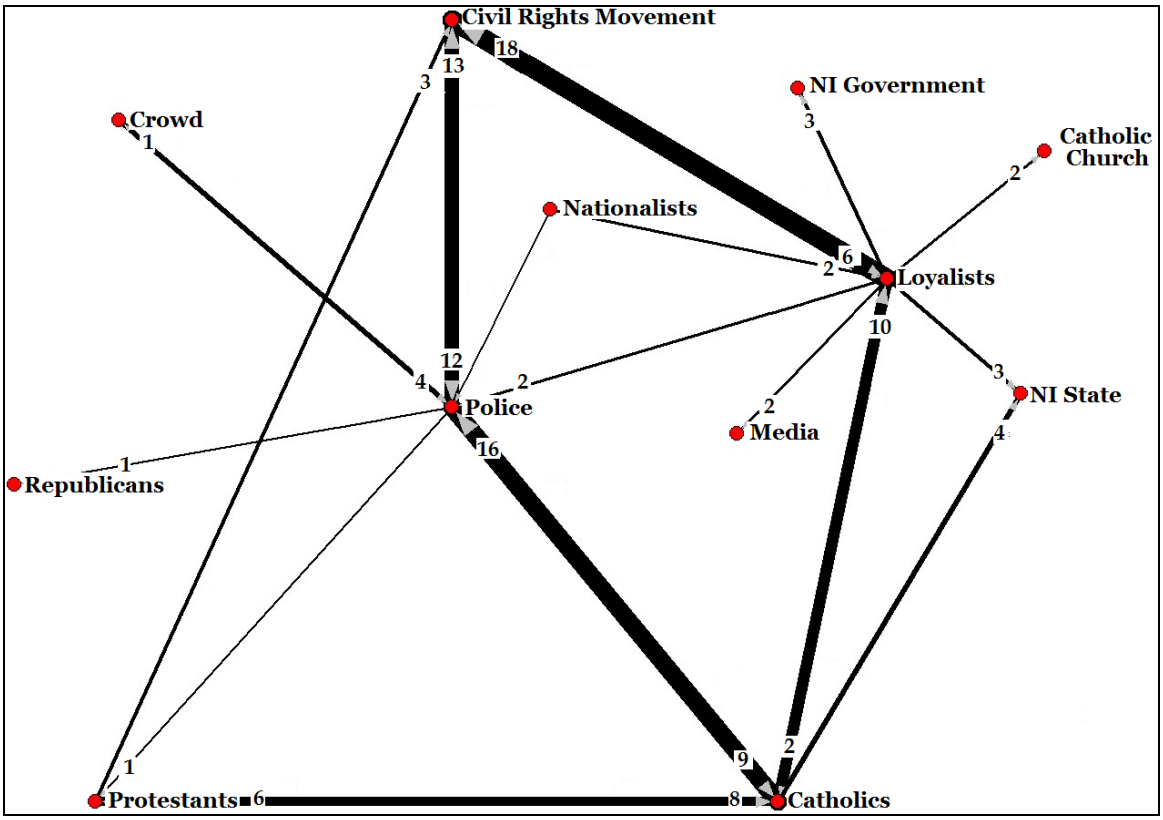

Figure 2.1: Network of Violence, Northern Ireland (March 1968 - July 1969).

While the absolute level of conflict in this period is low in comparison with what was happening in the rest of Europe (e.g., May 1968 in France, *Autunno Caldo* in Italy), the small size of Northern Ireland and the use of unprecedented tactics of protest render its level of conflictuality unusually high. During these months, the CRM was most actively pursuing its strategy of direct action to further the civil rights cause, immediately meeting the aggressive response from the Protestant loyalist majority and state authorities. The thick arcs linking the CRM with police and loyalists show how these actors frequently engaged in violence, as street demonstrations were often conducive to disturbances. Most of the politically-motivated violence which took place in this period thus concerned street confrontations among protesters, counter-protesters and police. The

arc connecting Protestants and Catholics[10] in the lower portion of the graph points instead to some inter-community violence during those months, even though of lesser magnitude than the protest-induced one. Members of the Catholic community or living in Catholic areas had to endure police harassment and a few attacks from loyalists, against which they noticeably retorted back.

Up until July 1969, protest-related clashes and attacks on the Catholic community prompted intra-movement competition for support and activists among the main civil rights organizations in Northern Ireland. The frustration caused by the stalled political situation and the incapacity of moderate civil rights leaders to obtain tangible results, together with the revival of the ethno-nationalist cleavage prepared the ground for radical contention to unfold in the following months. As moderate positions were losing political support, radical groups like PD sought to acquire prominence and leadership within the CRM and control on its strategies of contention.

The Outbreak of Ethnic Antagonism (August 1969-January 1971). In the initial months of civil rights mobilization, the Protestant majority and the unionist government reacted vehemently against the perceived threat coming from the CRM. Hostile counter-mobilization and state repression resulted in the ignition of key mechanisms of object shift and boundary activation, which, in turn, fuelled the dynamics of radical contention in Northern Ireland. Moreover, incipient ethnic hostility, coupled with intra-movement competition, rendered political outbidding a tempting and viable option for radical groups

[10] I use the label "Protestants" and "Catholics" to identify individuals or unorganized crowds belonging to those communities or residing in areas traditionally associated with them. These labels do *not* intend to indicate that the two communities represented monolithic, homogeneous ethno-religious or ethno-national groups, but they are simply used as shorthand to identify actors engaging in (violent) claim-making.

in the second half of 1969. The Cameron Report on the civil disturbances in Northern Ireland observed that:

> "fears and apprehensions among Protestants of a threat to Unionist domination and control of Government by increase of Catholic population and powers, inflamed in particular by the activities of [Loyalist organizations], provoked strong hostile reaction to civil rights claims […] which was readily translated into physical violence against Civil Rights demonstrators" (Cameron 1969: 91).

Loyalist mobilization was not a merely reactive phenomenon, as protests in defense of the Protestant nature of the Northern Ireland state preceded the emergence of the CRM (Bruce 2007: 90-93; O'Callaghan and O'Donnell 2006). In 1966, Rev. Ian Paisley had organized several demonstrations against the decision of the Unionist government to allow Nationalists to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Easter Rising (O'Callaghan and O'Donnell 2006: 207). In addition to the usual enemies - disloyal Catholics and the IRA - loyalist mobilization targeted also the unionist government and its attempts to modernize and secularize Northern Ireland (Bruce 2007: 92).

When in 1968 the CRM rose at the center of the political arena, Rev. Ian Paisley could already rely on a plethora of loyalist organizations (Farrington 2008: 529) and an established strategy of contention to counteract civil rights demonstrations. The loyalist repertoire entailed the organization of counter-demonstrations at the same time and in the same place where a civil rights protest was scheduled to occur. As a consequence, the government would ban any demonstration on that day on security grounds, and compelled the police to work as a buffer between crowds.[11] According to my data,

[11] The Dublin-based newspaper *Irish Times* on October 4, 1968 remarked how "a formula has now been patented. Whenever the Northern Government wishes to ban a demonstration it can rely on its Unionist

between April 1968 and August 1969, loyalists disrupted at least 58% of civil rights demonstrations. The CRM resolution to defy the ministerial bans to march often resulted in vicious clashes among civil rights protesters, loyalist counter-demonstrators and the police, thus creating multiple opportunities for violent confrontations. These had momentous effects on civil rights activists and their organizations.

The frequent clashes with loyalist counter-demonstrators and the subsequent outburst of sectarian violence socialized civil rights protesters to political violence. Movement-countermovement contentious interaction prompted an *object shift* among activists, as loyalist violence on civil rights demonstration helped to displace the initial reformist agenda of the CRM. As the movement had to deal with a new wave of ethnic antagonism and violence, as well as the reinvigorated question of Partition, radical organizations like People's Democracy tried to seize the direction of the civil rights agenda and impose its confrontational attitude against the state. In a clear attempt to politically outbid the moderates within the CRM, in the last months of 1969 People's Democracy launched - through its weekly publication "*Free Citizen*" - ferocious verbal attacks against NICRA and its allegedly too moderate stances (Cinalli 2002: 101), accusing its leadership of treachery and 'selling out'. The outcome of this political outbidding was the swing of the fulcrum of the political arena in the direction of more intense ethno-national claim-making, as these polarizing contentions gained widespread support in both communities (Farrington 2008).

After almost a year of tense inter-community relationships, in August 1969 the annual Apprentice Boys of Derry parade unleashed several days of brutal rioting and

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lunatic fringe to come to its rescue. Mr. Paisley might offer his services as a permanent foot in the door of Nationalist demonstration" (cited in Farrington 2008: 529).

sectarian attacks on Catholic districts all over Northern Ireland. The British government sent its Army in support of the exhausted (and widely hated by Catholics) local police to halt an embryonic civil war and reinstate public order in the streets. When the British Army suddenly appeared in the political equation, even People's Democracy activists had to retreat and leave the control of the Catholic minority to traditional Republican organizations.

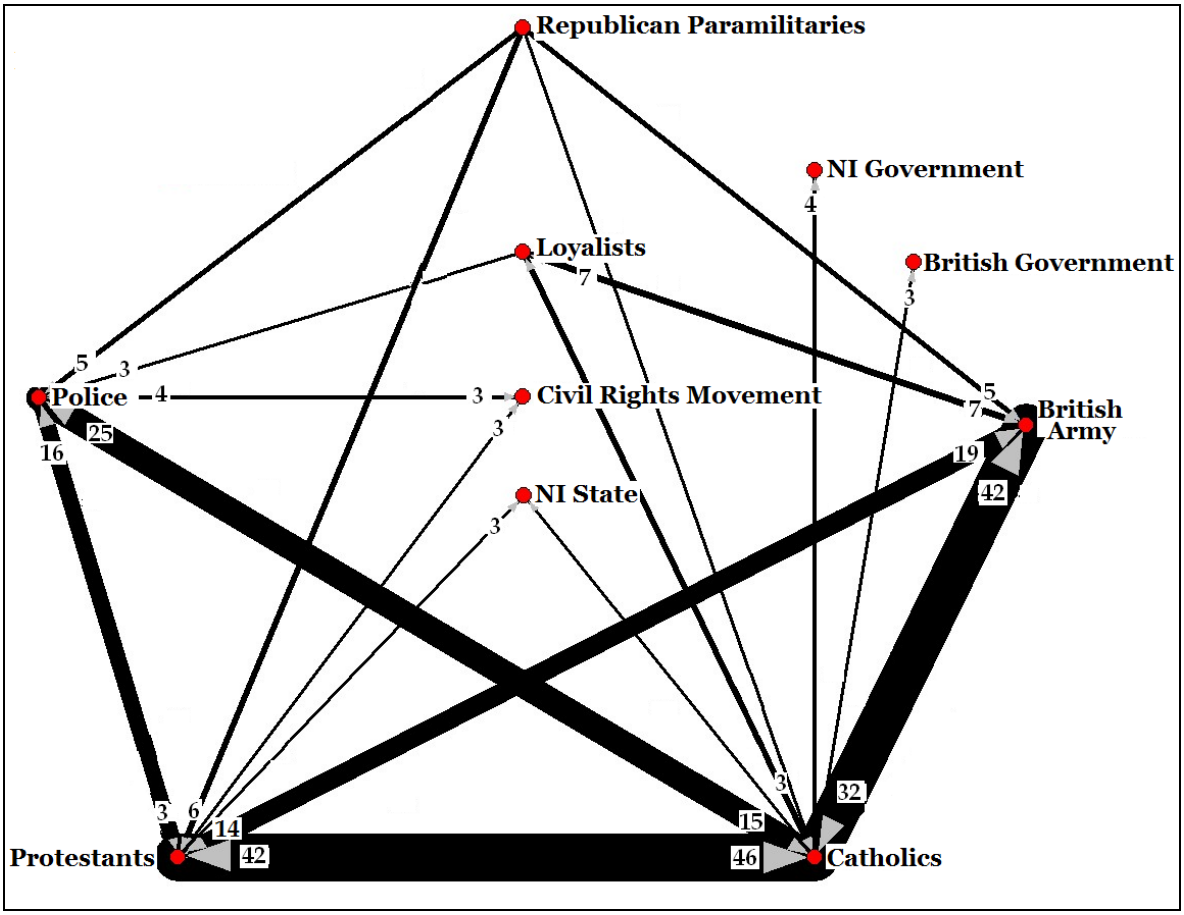


Figure 2.2: Network of Violence, Northern Ireland (August 1969 - January 1971).

Figure 2.2 forcefully unveils the shift in the nature of the violent interactions that occurred after August 1969, when the British Army was sent to prevent the violent

conflict in the streets to escalate into an all-out civil war. In contrast to the previous pattern of protest-related violent disturbances, Figure 2.2 depicts the ignition of a violent ethno-national conflict in which the two ethnic communities bore the brunt of violence, as protest-related contention gave way to inter-ethnic violence and riots (see the width of the arc connecting Protestants and Catholics). Moreover, while the CRM became a lesser target of police repression, radicalized sections of the Catholic community engaged in a violent conflict with the state and its security apparatus (see the arcs linking Catholics with police and the British Army).

To construct the network models, it was necessary to aggregate all different types of violent actions; as a result, the shift in the predominant *type of violence* animating contentious interactions in each phase is not directly observable in the graphs. However, we can analyze the database at a more disaggregated level, more specifically we can observe how the *verbs* (the Actions) in the semantic triplets changed in the two periods. In the first phase of the conflict, the most common verbs of violence thus included: 'threw [objects]' (18 actions), 'injured' (13) and 'scuffled' (13), that is acts of violence usually associated with crowds clashing during protest events. In the second phase, though, the most common violent verbs in the triplets were, by far, 'rioted' and 'continued rioting' (combined 79 actions), followed by 'injured' (34) and 'threw [objects]' (29), clearly indicating a radicalization toward sectarian, rather than protest-induced, violence.

As the conflict radicalized, a new violent actor emerged: republican paramilitary organizations. Since the early 1960s, republican organizations such as the Connolly Association indicated civil rights agitation against discrimination as a strategy to weaken

the Unionist regime and force the British government to address the issue of Partition. It is well-known that some republican activists were part of the heterogeneous civil rights network within NICRA (Bell 1971: 357-358), yet when the CRM emerged in the late 1960s, it consciously stayed away from constitutional issues and focused instead on discrimination. Radical contention and state repression proved to be a fertile recruiting ground for republicans who were not averse to violence and eager to occupy the CRM's political role within the Irish-Catholic minority. In December 1969, the till then mostly inactive Irish Republican Army split into two groups for ideological and tactical reasons. While the breakaway faction - the Provisional IRA - was committed to achieve the traditional republican goal of a United Ireland through armed insurgency, the Official IRA maintained a Marxist agenda aimed to unify peacefully the Catholic and Protestant working classes against the oppressive Unionist regime. Even though the Official IRA would later perpetrate a brief violent campaign of insurgency, it was the Provisional IRA that declared war against the Crown and launched a full-scale attack on the British Government and Army. At the top of Figure 2.2, we can detect how Republican paramilitaries started to use what they would call a strategy of "active defense" against the police, British Army and Protestants (Bell 1971; English 2003).

The Resurgence of Paramilitary Activity (February 1971-July 1971). State repression played a key role in the transformation of the conflict, as it decisively contributed to the acrimonious re-activation of ethno-national boundaries and claims. Since the outset of civil rights mobilization, police control of their protests had been notoriously harsh (Ellison and Smyth 2000). Northern Irish police perceived the CRM as both an

operational[12] and political threat, and interpreted its role as a staunch defender of the Northern Ireland state and its Unionist government (De Fazio 2007: 80), often implementing an approach of 'escalated force' (McPhail, Schweingruber and McCarthy 1998) against activists. Following the police mistreatment of the CRM's demonstration on October 5, 1968, an embarrassed British government impelled Stormont to grant immediately a package of civil rights reforms (Mulholland 2000; Walker 2004). After August 1969, when the British Army assumed control over internal security and law and order, the issue of the constitutional status of Northern Ireland had become *the* issue for the Irish-Catholic minority. However, the CRM found itself unprepared to keep under control its constituency and handle the extremely volatile and polarized situation it had helped to create. In the words of Fergus O'Hare, at the time a young radical activist from West Belfast:

> "when police started to attack people's homes it was no longer a question of sitting down peacefully, the question of defending your homes became a major issue for the movement. And then the question of defence of areas arose. When the police were using guns against people, the issue of military defence, and in the Irish context the issue of the IRA, came on the agenda. So the nature of the conflict and of the struggle began to change, the forces of the State became more hostile, more militarized and more directed on people's homes and the issue of defence and that sort of activity came onto the agenda. That's when IRA started reforming" (Bosi 2011: 135-136).

[12] Anti-sectarian marches were a brand new public order challenge for police forces in Northern Ireland. A challenge they were not prepared to deal with: "by 1968 the RUC was neither ideologically nor tactically prepared for the subtle machinations of CRM, with its emphasis on peaceful and non-violent protest, and demands for basic civil rights" (Ellison and Smyth 2000: 62).

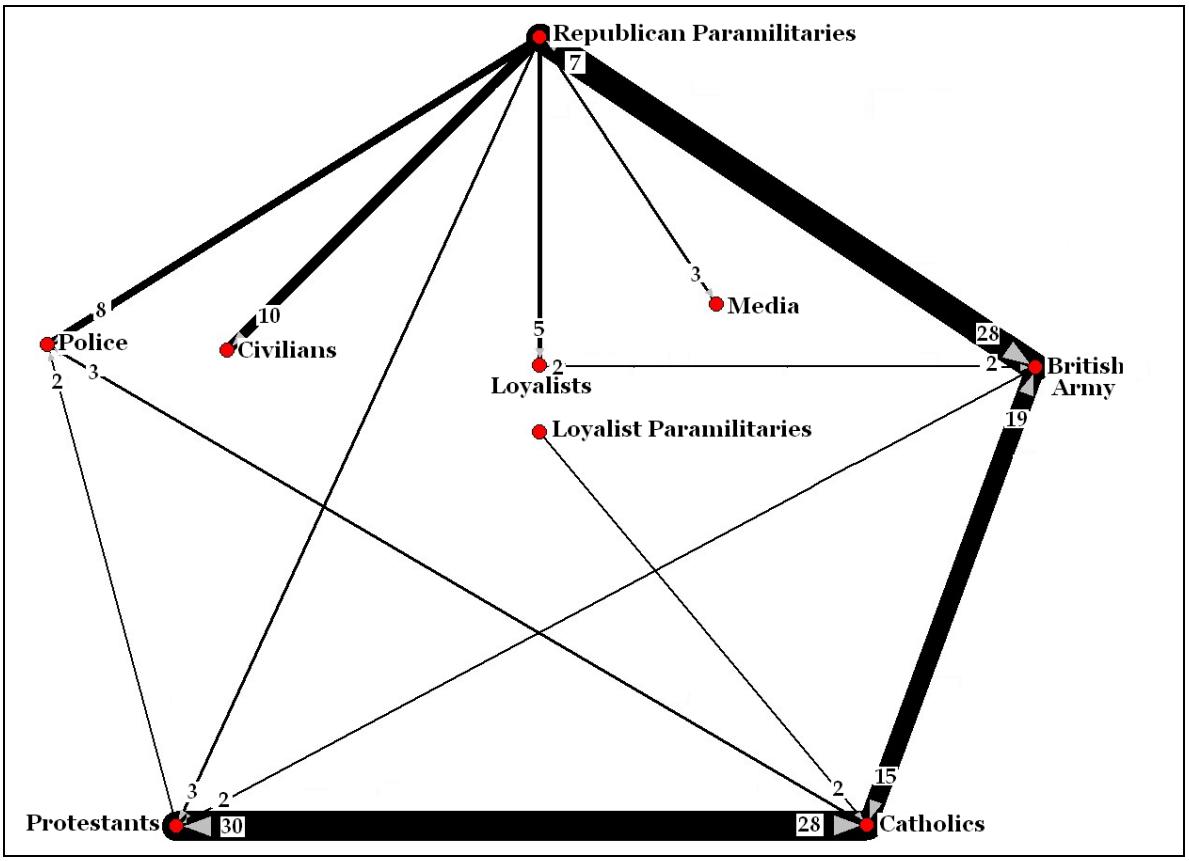


Figure 2.3: Network of Violence, Northern Ireland (February 1971 - July 1971).

Figure 2.3 shows how, between February and July of 1971, the strategy of republican paramilitaries impacted the Troubles, further altering the nature of the conflict. While Figure 2.2 depicted the onset of a violent inter-community conflict, in which a revived ethno-national antagonism marked the relationship between the unionist majority and the Irish-Catholic minority, the graph above is a snapshot of a new axis of violent contention. On February 6, 1971, a Provisional IRA sniper in Belfast shot dead Gunner Robert Curtis, the first on-duty British soldier to die during the Troubles. The Provisional IRA had declared war to the British Crown with the stated goal of achieving a United Ireland, waging a terrorist campaign against British 'peace-keeping' forces in Northern Ireland. Thus, in addition to the ongoing inter-communal rioting, and the

conflict between Catholics and security forces, Republican paramilitaries embarked in a campaign of violent insurgency primarily targeting British soldiers and Army facilities. This shift can be detected also by looking at the disaggregated data and the main violent verbs featured in this phase: while verbs like 'rioted' (50 actions) and 'threw [objects]' (13) are still prominent, indicating the ongoing intensity of the sectarian conflict, more ominous verbs like 'fired' (17) and 'shot dead' (12) start to creep into the triplets, signaling the surge of paramilitary activities.

With the CRM and its activities virtually disappeared from the streets, republican paramilitary organizations assumed the leadership of the minority resistance against ongoing sectarian attacks and security forces harassment. Filling a political vacuum, the IRA inaugurated a new wave of radical contention (English 2003).

Armed Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency (August 1971-December 1972). Republican insurgency laid the basis to entrench the Troubles into a protracted, multifaceted conflict, leaving little room for mass demonstrations and protest. In Figure 2.3 above, the CRM has completely disappeared from the network of violence, indicating the low level of civil rights contentious activities. Civil rights leaders and activists, though, had not vanished from the political game. Since the outbreak of political violence, parallel to the process of radicalization, an opposite process of moderation and institutionalization had taken place within the Irish-Catholic minority. Many moderate leaders and activists within the CRM had gradually abandoned transgressive contention in favor of institutional and electoral politics. In February 1969, civil rights leaders John Hume, Paddy O'Hanlon and Ivan Cooper were elected to Stormont as Independents. Their path of institutionalization

would be completed in August 1970, when the three former civil rights leaders co-founded the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP). The intended goal of the SDLP was to advance civil rights and the re-unification of Ireland through constitutional means, firmly opposing political violence and IRA's armed campaign. The SDLP quickly replaced the ineffective Nationalist Party as the most representative party within the minority community in Northern Ireland, becoming the official voice of constitutional nationalism and the principal opposition party in Stormont.

In June 1971, unionist Prime Minister Faulkner offered the SDLP to chair two of the three new Committees established to oversee the control of key government departments and policy and legislative review. Initially, the SDLP seriously considered the proposal, but this was soon doomed to fail due to the new security policies implemented by the unionist government. To counter the offer of including the opposition in the Committees, Faulkner had in fact to comply with loyalists' requests for tougher security measures, giving new powers to the British Army. On July 8, 1971, the British Army shot dead two unarmed Catholics during street disturbances, causing widespread rioting in Derry and outrage among the Irish-Catholic community. When the unionist government refused SDLP's request to hold an official inquiry to investigate the circumstances of the shooting, the SDLP withdrew from Stormont.

Another security measure was destined to have historic consequences on the conflict in Northern Ireland: the re-introduction of internment without trial in August 1971. On the morning of August 9, the British Army and the RUC launched Operation Demetrius, a series of raids throughout Northern Ireland during which security forces arrested and interned without trial 342 people suspected to be members of paramilitary

organizations. In the first 48 hours of the operation, 17 people were killed, 10 of them civilian Catholics killed by the British Army; about 7,000 people (mostly Catholics) were forced to leave their homes. The operation was an unmitigated military, political and social disaster (Thornton 2007). Security forces operated under outdated and faulty intelligence, arresting several people with no connection to paramilitary organizations. The active members of the IRA, aware that internment was about to be implemented, had already fled. During the operation, security forces often operated brutally, interrogating prisoners with techniques that the European Commission of Human Rights would later judge as torture. Most of the people interned were released after a few days, outraged and traumatized by the experience of internment. Furthermore, the application of internment was blatantly sectarian, as it targeted almost exclusively Catholic nationalists (Hogan and Walker 1989: 94), even though loyalist paramilitary organizations were re-emerging and conducting violent attacks against the minority community (see Figures 2.3 and 2.4).

The introduction of internment without trial immediately provoked the violent reaction of republican paramilitaries (see Figure 2.7) and street disturbances. In Derry barricades were erected to defend Catholic areas from the assaults of security forces and loyalists, "Free Derry" becoming a no-go area in which the British Army was not allowed to get in. In a nutshell, the internment policy "increased terrorist activity, perhaps boosted IRA recruitment, polarised further the Catholic and Protestant communities and reduced the ranks of the much needed Catholic moderates" (Hamill 1985: 63).

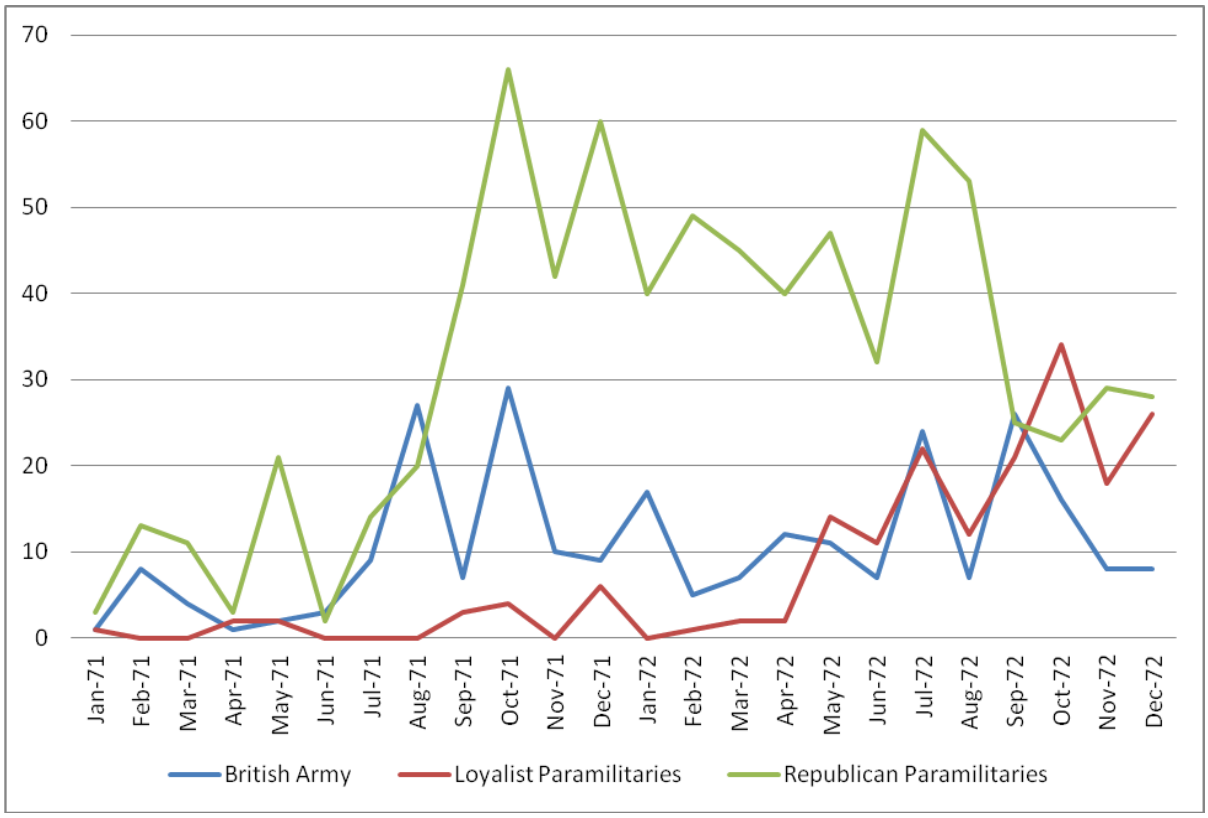


Figure 2.4: Violent Actions by Actor, Northern Ireland (January 1971 - December 1972).

The Revival of Protest. Indiscriminate state repression not only fuelled a further radicalization of contention, but it also revived declining protest activities by the CRM and hardline loyalists (see Figure 2.5 below). The implementation of internment without trial and, more generally, of draconian security measures by the unionist government created a new host of grievances for the Irish-Catholic minority. Having by now abandoned its initial civil right requests of inclusion in the political process, the CRM re-organized contention around the issues of internment, repression and the reunification of Ireland.

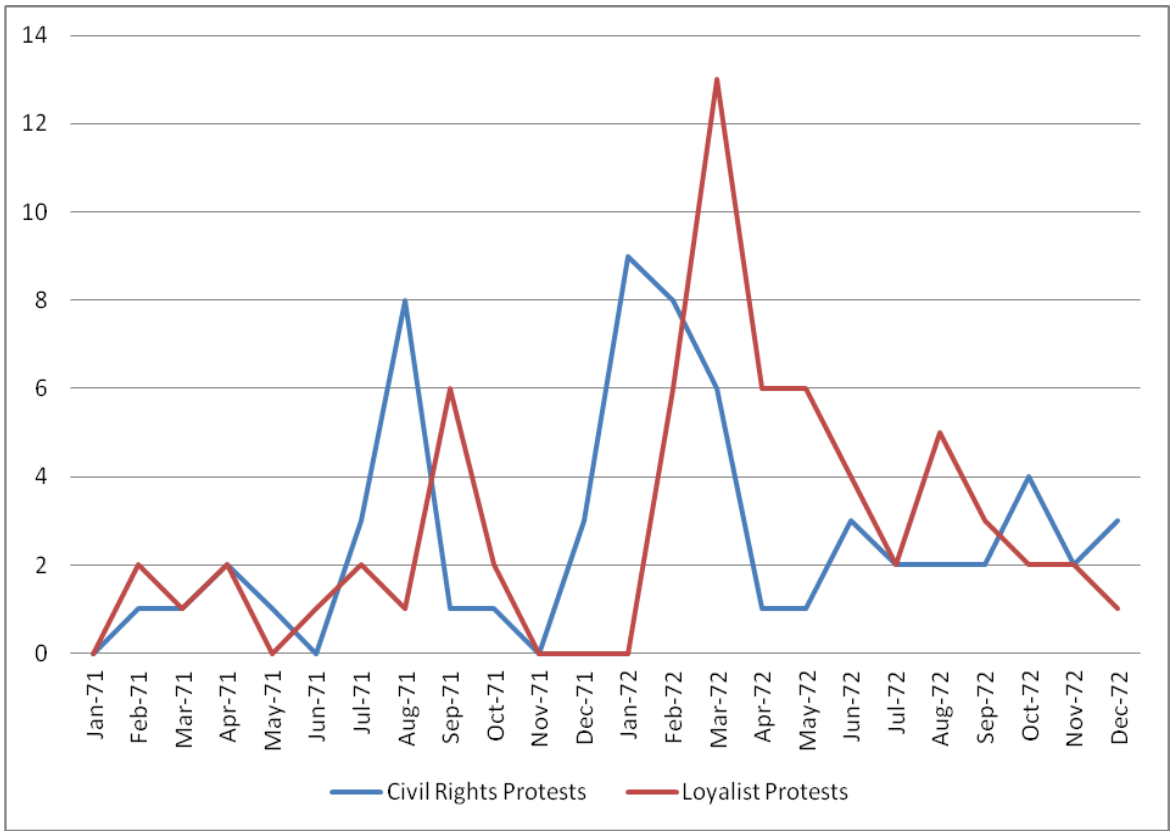


Figure 2.5: Civil Rights and Loyalists Protests, Northern Ireland (January 1971 - December 1972).

In Figure 2.6, I illustrate the network of *protest interactions* (who protested against whom) between August 1971 (when internment was reintroduced) and December 1972. In the aftermath of the introduction of internment, the CRM came back to the streets to protest especially against the Northern Ireland government (25 actions of protest: 9 rallies, 7 marches, 5 strikes and 4 acts of civil disobedience), but also the British Army (12 actions, mostly demonstrations) and the British government (6).

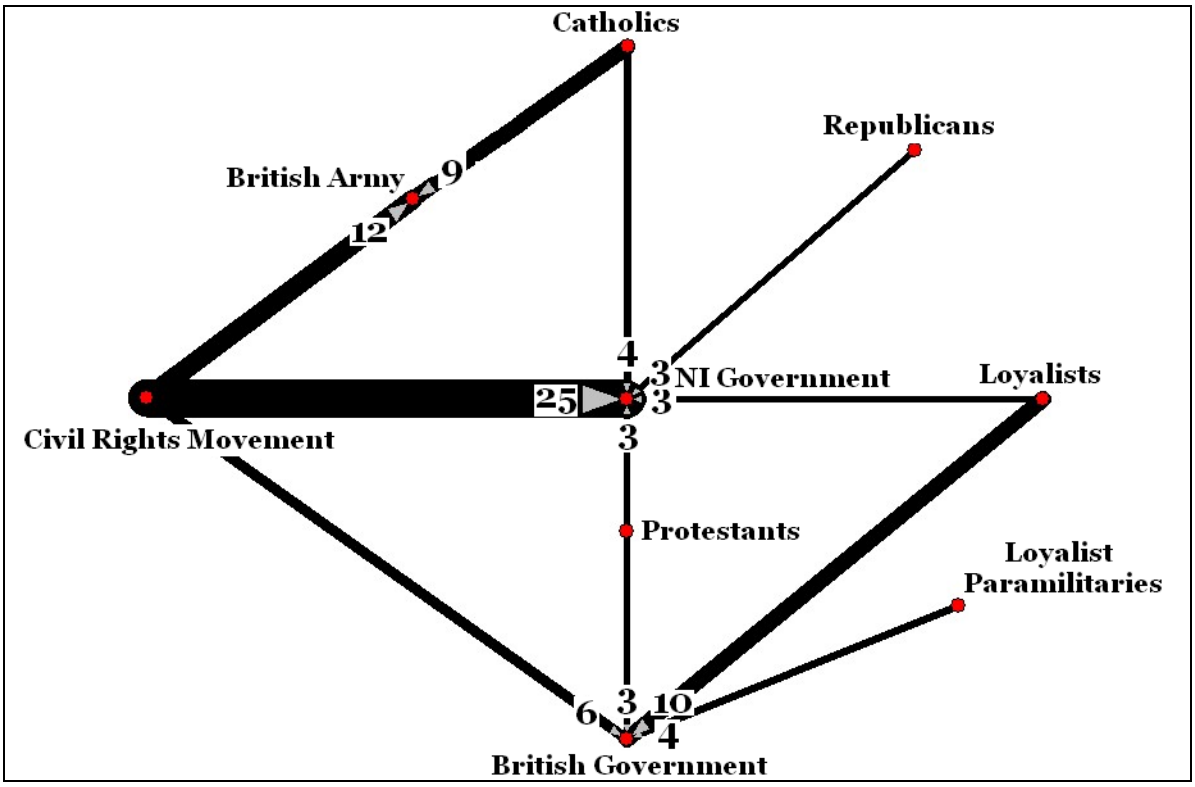


Figure 2.6: Network of Protest, Northern Ireland (August 1971 - December 1972).

Loyalist organizations also resumed contention in this period of heightened repression and insurgency, but for reasons diametrically opposed to those of the CRM, and with different targets. Loyalist mobilization (including protests by loyalist paramilitary groups) was mostly directed against the British government (combined 14 actions), rather than the government of Northern Ireland (3 actions). This is indicative of the growing conflict between the loyalist movement and British authorities. As both the security and political situation were precipitating, in March 1972 the British government dissolved the Northern Ireland Parliament and government, assuming Direct Rule over the province. The imposition of Direct Rule (and the formal end of unionist domination) provoked a loyalist backlash, as all loyalist protests against the British government in this phase took place during or after March 1972, including 4 rallies, 3 strikes, 2 marches and

5 other actions of public dissent. Notably, there were no counter-demonstrations organized by loyalists against the CRM after August 1971, signaling how, as the conflict transformed, the British authorities embodied a more important threat for Ulster Loyalism than the CRM.

Explosion of Terrorist Violence. Finally, state repression had its most infamous and tragic consequence on January 30, 1972, when the First Parachute Regiment of the British Army shot dead 13 unarmed civil rights activists participating to a NICRA march against internment in Derry. The national and international reaction to *Bloody Sunday* was unanimous in condemning an unprovoked massacre of civilians. Violent disorders occurred throughout Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, where the British Embassy in Dublin was burnt to the ground. While *Bloody Sunday* did not increase IRA violence (see Figure 2.4; see also White 1989: 1289), it further polarized the political spectrum and reduced the already scarce opportunities to lessen the conflict and its violent outcomes. As both the security and political situation were precipitating, in March of 1972 the British government dissolved Stormont and assumed Direct Rule over Northern Ireland, provoking a further loyalist backlash (see the spike in loyalists protests during March of 1972 in Figure 2.5).

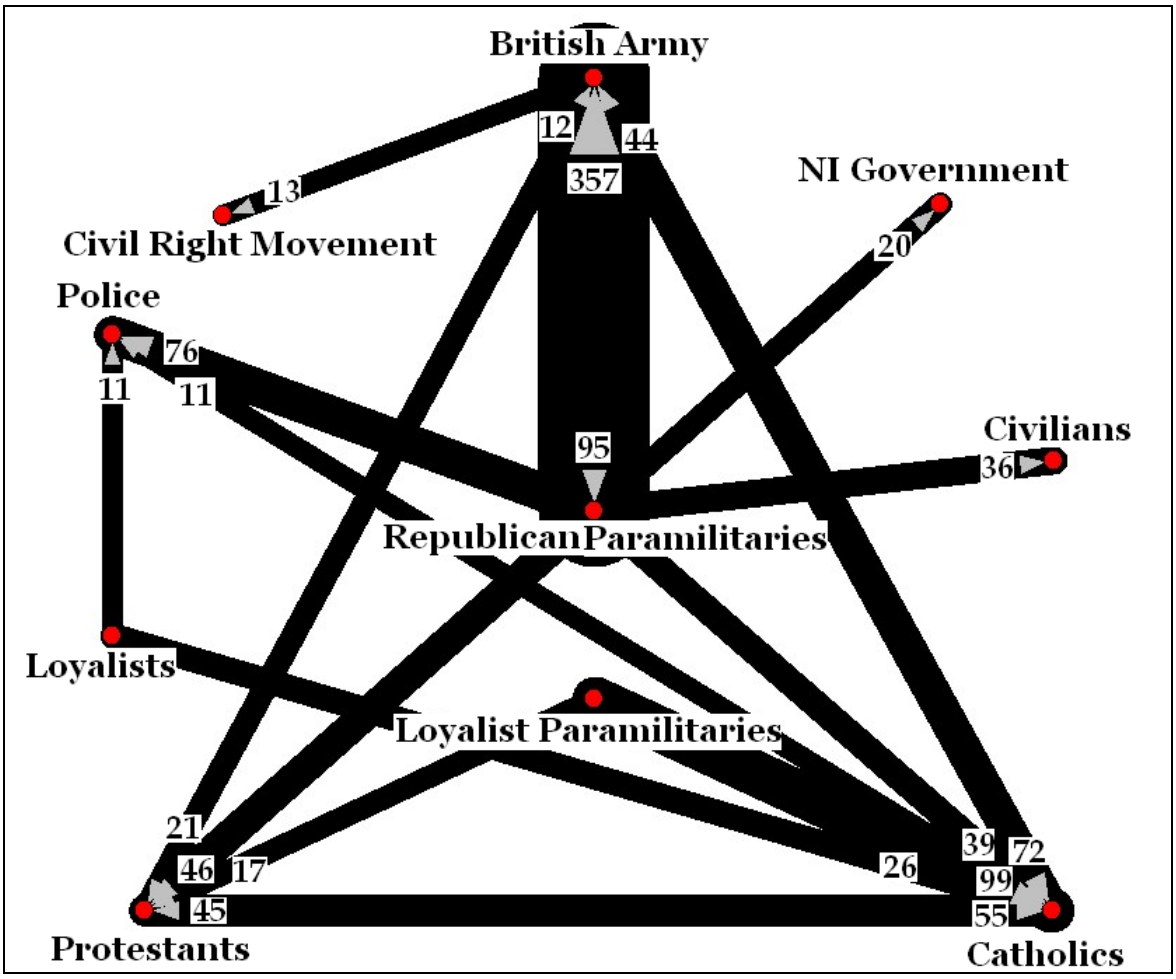


Figure 2.7: Network of Violence, Northern Ireland (August 1971 - December 1972).

Figure 2.7 above summarizes the multifaceted violent conflict which unfolded in Northern Ireland from the introduction of the internment in August 1971 until December 1972. The Troubles in Northern Ireland have finally transformed into a conflict between republican paramilitary groups like the Provisional IRA and British security forces, as this axis of contention is by far the one generating the largest amount of violence. The British Army was also involved in the repression of the CRM and the Catholic community, assisted by the RUC. It is not an accident that the violent verbs with the highest frequency in this phase of the conflict were: 'shot dead' (238 actions), 'fired' (145) and 'killed' (137), all indicating deadly or potentially lethal violent actions.

Republican paramilitaries are situated at the center of the network of violence, as, in addition to the open war against the "occupying" British forces, they also targeted other state authorities (Northern Ireland police and government), civilians, Protestants and, interestingly, even Catholics. Intra-group violence by the Provisional IRA mainly consisted of shaming practices to sanction anti-social behaviors, but especially to punish "collusion" with the enemy (very often, young Catholic girls dating British soldiers). While only a small fraction of republican paramilitaries violence was aimed against members of the Protestant community (46 actions), the main objective of loyalist organizations (especially paramilitary ones) was the violent intimidation and harassment of the Catholic community. Even though inter-ethnic violence between the Protestant and Irish-Catholic communities was not the main dimension of the conflict as during the 1969-1970 years, it was still ongoing, as violent verbs like 'injured' (90 actions), 'attacked' (78) and 'rioted' (73) immediately followed the insurgency-related types of violent verbs.

The Landscape of Contention: GIS Models

The historiography on the Troubles has long recognized the highly localized nature of the conflict (see Whyte 1990), and several valuable local histories of the conflict have been written (for instance, on Derry, see Ó Dochartaigh 2005). A comprehensive account that pieces together the various local histories with the broader configuration of contention is still missing, though. To make sense of the trajectory of contention in Northern Ireland is important to analyze the local patterns of political and inter-ethnic relations and how they shaped actors' radicalization. Especially in the case of the Troubles, "the nature of space

itself has a direct influence on the type, nature, scope, frequency, and repetitiveness" (Parker and Asencio 2008: 206) of contentious events and dynamics (see Ó Dochartaigh and Bosi 2010).

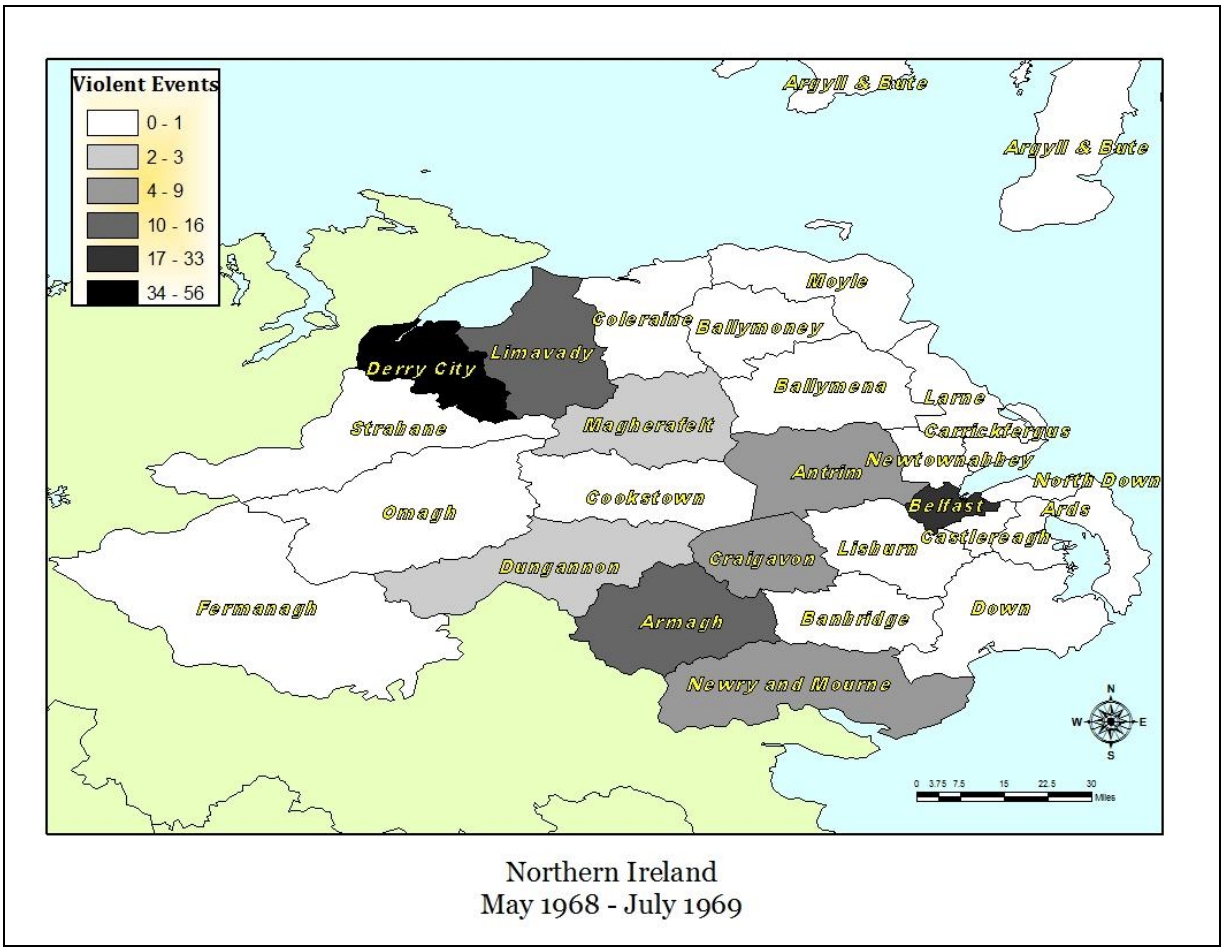
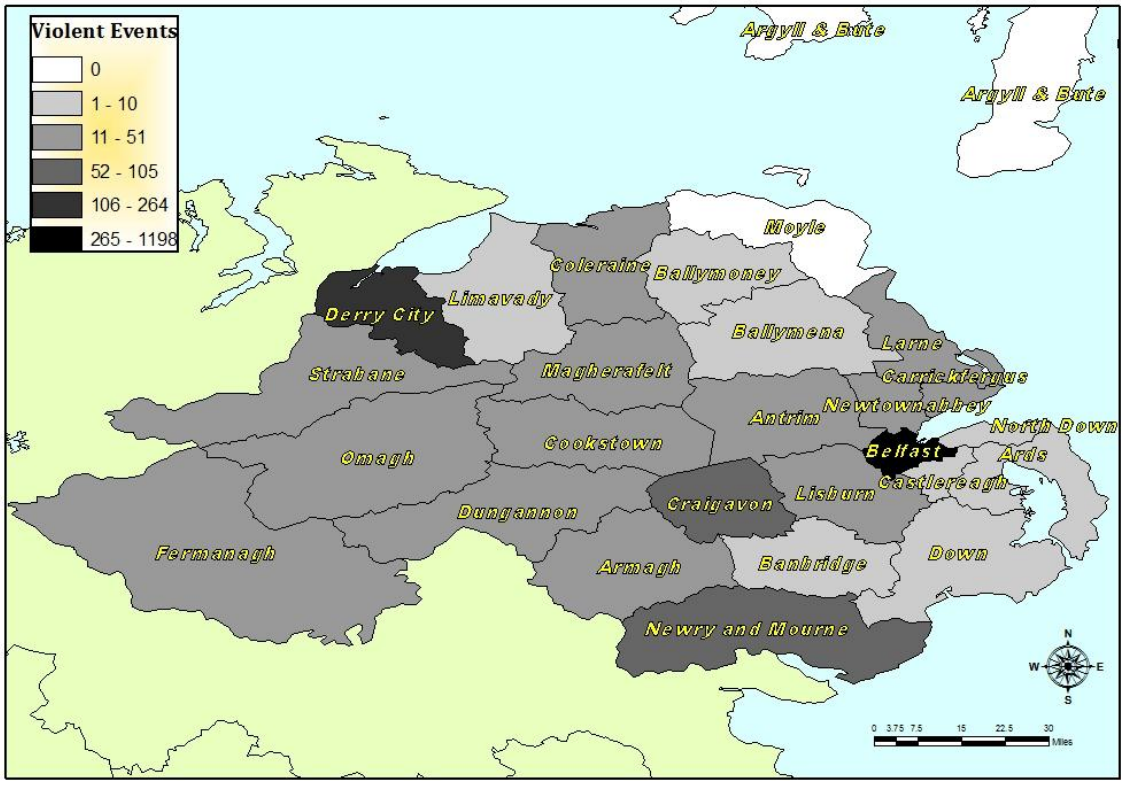


Figure 2.8: Map of Political Violence, Northern Ireland (May 1968 - July1969)

Figure 2.8 maps the geographical distribution by counties of the 150 actions of violence which took place in Northern Ireland from May 1968 to July 1969. The map indicates two findings: first, at the outset of the conflict, most violence was concentrated in the two main urban areas of Belfast and Derry, as more than one third of violence occurred in the city of Derry (53 out of 150 episodes) and one fifth in Belfast (35). The

mainly Catholic city of Derry, the second largest in Northern Ireland, was governed by a Unionist Council due to the gerrymandering of its electoral boundaries. It was no accident that the CRM initiated its campaign against discrimination in Derry and that violence between protesters, counter-protesters and police first broke out there. The second finding that the map unveils is that a majority of the counties (15 out of 26) were left untouched by protest-related violence. Figure 2.9 below instead depicts the distribution of violence from August 1971 to December 1972, when the insurgent campaign by the Provisional IRA was shaking Northern Ireland. Two years later, the map of contention looks dramatically different.



Northern Ireland
August 1971 - December 1972

Figure 2.9: Map of Political Violence, Northern Ireland (August 1971 – December 1972).

In stark contrast with the first phase of the conflict portrayed in Figure 2.8, in the later years of armed insurgency and counter-insurgency, political violence in Northern Ireland had diffused in all counties, except one (Moyle). Furthermore, Belfast is the epicenter of the violent conflict, with 1198 out of 2024 (60%) of all violent actions concentrated in the capital. This cursory look at spatial distribution of violence intends to alert the reader of the complexity of the conflict and the role territoriality played in the unfolding of the Troubles.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I presented a narrative of how the Troubles came to Northern Ireland and how they evolved, as the conflict developed from civil rights contention to ethnic antagonism and ultimately insurgency and counter-insurgency. In the next chapters, I will zoom into the initial phases of the conflict, discussing in detail the mechanisms and processes which led to the increasing radicalization of contention. By looking at the three main arenas of contention of intra-movement dynamics, movement-counter-movement interactions and opportunity/threat available in the political system, the empirical analysis will be devoted to unpack the relationship between the changing political situation and the various actors' interactions and trajectories of contention.

Chapter 3: The Emergence of the CRM and its Opponents in 1968

Stormont System of Power

The Partition of 1921 preserved the six counties in the northern-east part of Ireland under British rule and established the Irish Free State in the southern part (eventually, the Free State became the independent Republic of Ireland in 1949). From a constitutional point of view, Northern Ireland was formally incorporated in the 'United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland'. Nevertheless, Northern Ireland *de facto* developed into a largely semi-autonomous entity, especially in comparison with the other provinces of the UK (England, Scotland and Wales). Northern Ireland had its own parliament (Stormont), government and judicial system and, most importantly, retained full responsibility for the crucial duty of internal security and public order.

The Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) dominated the Northern Ireland polity through the establishment of the Stormont system of power. Stormont, the area near Belfast where the parliament and government of Northern Ireland are located, represented the symbolic site where unionist domination was created, reproduced and executed. In 1929, the unionist government abolished the proportional electoral system and substituted it with a Westminster-style 'first past the post' majority system which certified the exclusion of the Irish-Catholic minority and the Nationalist Party from the political process. In more than fifty years of government, no Catholic was ever appointed to be part of the Cabinet. Most political decision-making operated fairly autonomously at the local level, especially for what concerned housing, urban planning and education policies. Gerrymandering of

the electoral wards boundaries ensured unionist control of local administrations even in towns with a Catholic majority. The most blatant case concerned Derry, the second largest city in Northern Ireland, where a Unionist corporation ruled over a two-third majority of Catholics (Lee 1989: 420). Antiquated limitations on the electoral franchise further penalized economically disadvantaged citizens, who disproportionately belonged to the minority community.

The Unionist Party held an ostensibly unopposed monopoly of power over Northern Ireland, both at the local and national level, for more than fifty years. British governments showed little to no interest toward Northern Irish politics and avoided to interfere with what was perceived as a peripheral and troublesome region of the United Kingdom (Rose 1971). The Northern Ireland state basically embodied a confessional state with institutionalized partiality, without the necessary checks and balances to limit systemic excesses and biases and no oversight from the central government. Political scientist Richard Rose observed that:

> "The local majority did not require support from the central regime; they were strong enough and determined enough to manage local affairs to the satisfaction of themselves, if not to the satisfaction of everyone who lived under their jurisdiction. […] Northern Ireland [was] effectively [an] autonomous polit[y] with regard to matters central to them, such as franchise laws and internal security. […] Many Ulstermen remained loyal to a Crown that once threatened them with Irish Home Rule, because (and as long as) the Crown maintained the Protestant cause" (Rose 1976: 260-261).

The appropriation of the state by the Protestant majority loyal to the Union extended beyond the political administration of the region. The judicial system and police organization were also firmly in the hands of the Protestant community, as an overwhelming majority of judges and magistrates were unionists (Dickson 1992: 131), as

well as the 90% of the Royal Ulster Constabulary (Ellison and Smyth 2000) and the totality of the Ulster Special Constabulary, the notorious B-Specials.[13] The Special Powers Act (SPA, 1922) endowed police with extraordinary powers, such as to arrest without warrant, intern without trial, stop and search, and ban public meetings and protests. Unlike other local police forces in the rest of the United Kingdom, the RUC was heavily armed and lived in barracks, as they bore a counterinsurgency responsibility (Hunt 1969: 13) "to maintain public order, combat sectarian intercommunal violence and protect the state from subversive and violent opponents" (Weitzer 1995: 10). Even though the RUC employed their draconian police powers infrequently, these measures represented a symbolic intimidation against the Irish-Catholic minority and its alleged disloyalty toward the Northern Ireland state.

The UUP's one-party government unsurprisingly led to institutional discrimination against the Catholic minority (see: CSJ 1964; for an academic debate about the extent of discrimination, see: Hewitt 1981, 1983; O'Hearn 1983). Even though residential segregation, especially in cities like Belfast, predated the foundation of the state, Stormont did nothing to address it; on the contrary, successive unionist governments tried to preserve segregation intact. The two communities lived side by side in separate social microcosms, especially in terms of their residential, educational and employment settings. Compounding the exclusion of the Irish-Catholics from the state, discrimination in employment and public housing further marginalized and aggrieved

[13] The B-Specials were a part-time, voluntary reserve force, established in 1920 with the absorption of the members of the Ulster Volunteer Force, a Protestant, armed militia founded in 1912. The USB was disbanded in 1969, after the Cameron (1969) and Hunt (1969) reports heavily criticized the sectarian misbehaviors of its members against the civil rights protesters and the nationalist community.

them, fostering their resentment toward the unionist regime. According to sociologist Denis O'Hearn,

> "discrimination in employment was the normal state of affairs during the [1968-1969] period […]. The [1971] census shows unemployment among Catholics to be two and one half times the rate among Protestants. In comparison, the rate of unemployment among blacks in the USA is twice that of whites. Furthermore, Catholics are employed in very low numbers in modern manufacturing sectors, the most important location of employment, and are concentrated in manual unskilled jobs" (O'Hearn 1983: 442).

However, it was discrimination in public housing that, in the early 1960s, sparked the first civil rights agitation in Northern Ireland.

Origins of the Civil Rights Movement

In Search of Constitutional Redress: The Precursors of the CRM (1963-1968). In 1963, a group of young Catholic mothers formed the Homeless Citizens' League (HCL) to oppose discrimination in the allocation of public housing in Dungannon. On May 13, 1963, HCL staged a picket outside the unionist local council (Keenan-Thomson 2009: 209), their placards including slogans like 'Racial discrimination in Alabama hits Dungannon,' and 'If our religion is against us, ship us to Little Rock' (Purdie 1990: 92).[14] The very first campaign to agitate against discrimination in Northern Ireland consciously compared the conditions of the Catholic minority in Northern Ireland with those of African Americans in the US South, a recurring theme in later civil rights strategies (De Fazio 2009: 164-165). After a summer of protests, which culminated in the squatting of

[14] The local newspaper *Dungannon Observer* covered HCL's campaign closely; see especially their articles on May 18, June 15, August 31, September 7 and 21, 1963.

prefabricated houses in September 1963, the unionist council finally gave in and conceded that public housing was assigned to Catholic families too (Keenan-Thomson 2009: 217).

Following the successful efforts to improve housing allocation in Dungannon, one of HCL's leaders, Patricia McCluskey, and her husband, Conn, a well-known physician, initiated in January 1964 a Campaign for Social Justice (CSJ). The goal of the campaign was "to collect comprehensive and accurate data on all injustices done against all creeds and political opinions, including details of discrimination in jobs and houses and to bring them to the attention of as many socially minded people as possible" (McCluskey 1989: 17). The CSJ planned to reach both Irish and British audiences through the publication of well-researched and clearly argued pamphlets,[15] and to target MPs at Stormont and Westminster via lobbying, petitioning and letter-writing (McCluskey 1989). Moreover, CSJ tried to use the courts to challenge institutionalized discrimination by unionist local councils. The legal mobilization strategy and its underlying logic were akin to the NAACP's efforts to defy racial segregation in the United States (De Fazio 2012: 11). The CSJ filed specific individual cases of discrimination in court against local councils, with the goal to have institutionalized discrimination against minorities sanctioned as illegal, and thus repudiated through courts or legislation (McCluskey 1989: 41-51). However, differently from the US, civil rights litigation and legislative efforts to outlaw religious discrimination in Northern Ireland were far from successful.

In 1965, the CSJ submitted a test case to challenge public housing discrimination in Dungannon but due to the high costs of litigation and its failure to obtain legal aid, ultimately had to reckon that "denial of Legal Aid amounts to denial of access to the

[15] For a detailed analysis of CSJ's publications, see Purdie 1990: 96-102.

courts" (CSJ 1966: 3; see also Purdie 1990: 98-99; De Fazio 2012: 12). Another test case was presented in 1967 to dispute the Stormont decision to declare republican organizations illegal. When in 1969 the case reached the House of Lords, the latter ruled that "so broad a grant of discretion in banning political organizations was lawful" (Rose 1976: 277), rejecting the attempt to counter discrimination against the minority in Northern Ireland. Socio-legal scholars have noted the influence that that ruling had on future civil rights strategies of contention:

> "(t)he decision of the House of Lords in this case was in line with the prevailing British approach to constitutional law in refusing to challenge ministerial discretion in the absence of clear proof of bad faith. But in the context of Northern Ireland it was the final proof to the minority community that they could expect no aid from Britain in their struggle for what they regarded as their legitimate civil rights. […] *there can be no doubt of its symbolic importance in showing the futility of pursuing the civil rights campaign through courts*" (Hadden and Hillyard 1973: 13, emphasis added).

In the 1960s, the British legal system lacked a written Constitution, as well as civil rights legislation expressly devoted to safeguard human rights and protect citizens from religious discrimination.[16] Lack of justiciable civil rights and a widely shared perception of a biased judicial system (Livingstone 1994: 347-348) undermined the confidence in the judicial system "as a means of securing justice" (Boyle et al. 1975: 11) for CSJ and the minority community in Northern Ireland. These factors constituted an insuperable barrier to challenge discrimination through civil rights litigation in Northern Ireland (De Fazio 2012: 13-15).

In addition to legal mobilization, activists attempted to challenge the unionist regime with other institutional tactics, in particular by lobbying MPs in Westminster. A

[16] The Race Relations Act of 1965 was the first piece of legislation in the UK to outlaw discrimination on the basis of race, ethnic or national origins in public places. However, it did not include religious discrimination and, at any rate, the Act did not apply to Northern Ireland.

parliamentarian convention barred Westminster to interfere with Northern Ireland's internal affairs, leaving to Stormont the prerogative to legislate on matters such as housing or employment. In 1965, about sixty MPs, mainly from the British Labour Party and the Liberal Party, embarked on a 'Campaign for Democracy in Ulster' to sidestep the convention, amend Northern Ireland electoral laws and pass anti-discriminatory legislation. This legislative campaign failed too, as the Conservative and Unionist parties at Westminster forestalled any initiative potentially meddling with Northern Ireland's *status quo* (Purdie 1990: 107-120).

In the early and mid-1960s, several anti-discrimination groups had tried different tactics to redress the grievances of the Irish-Catholic minority in Northern Ireland. With the notable (and farsighted) exception of the HCL's summer of protests over housing discrimination in Dungannon, all other attempts had employed institutional avenues of contention and all had failed. The British judicial system had turned out to be impervious to the Rights Revolution (Epp 1998) that had swept the United States since the 1950s, legal mobilization proving to be a ineffective tactic to pursue civil and human rights (De Fazio 2012: 15). Seeking help from Westminster to circumvent the Unionist Party domination over the political institutions in Northern Ireland was equally fruitless. Paddy Byrne, one of the British Labour MPs who co-founded the Campaign for Democracy in Ulster, in June 1968 concluded that "in the present situation in the Labour movement the people most likely to aid our case, the British Left, are far too concerned to save socialism from extinction than to bother about Northern Ireland about which the mass of British people know little and care less" (Rose 2001: 103). Help from the British legal-

political system was not readily available for activists seeking to challenge the unionist regime in Northern Ireland.

The last effort to adopt institutional tactics to promote civil rights was the establishment of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA) in 1967 (Purdie 1990: 132-133). The goals of this loose network of activists and associations differed from those of CSJ, focusing more on legal and policy issues than redressing housing and employment discrimination (Bosi 2008: 257; see also: NICRA 1978: 20). In the first year and half of its existence, rather than pursuing the transgressive repertoire of contention exhibited by civil rights activists in the United States, NICRA borrowed the moderate tactics of the London-based National Council for Civil Liberties. During those frustrating months, "NICRA did little more than send letters to Stormont (most of them to William Craig, Minister of Home Affairs) and Westminster, compiling a list of demands, denoting grievances through leaflet campaigns and meetings in church halls" (Bosi 2008: 258). According to civil rights leader Austin Currie (2004: 80), "any form of public protest was far from the mind of those who brought [NICRA] into existence." It was only during the summer of 1968 that civil rights politics finally moved out to the streets.

The Birth of the CRM in Northern Ireland: The Militant Route (1968). Since at least 1962, C. Desmond Greaves and the Connolly Association, a republican socialist organization, had proposed popular agitation against discrimination as a strategy to weaken the Unionist regime and force the British government to address the issue of Partition. Together with other republican intellectuals like Roy Johnston and Anthony Coughlan, who gravitated around the Wolfe Tone Societies, Greaves had realized that

physical force against "British Imperialism" was fruitless and new strategies to unite Ireland had to be formulated.[17] This group of intellectuals had come to recognize that "Northern Ireland was an 'irreformable' entity which could not survive without systematic discrimination and artificial division of unionist and nationalist workers […] Therefore asking for civil rights for the region was seen as an important weapon for striking the Achilles' heel of Unionism […], thereby gradually dismantling the Northern Ireland regime" (Bosi 2008: 266-267) and uniting the Catholic and Protestant working classes to overcome the Union. Even though NICRA was born under the auspices and intellectual thrust of the Dublin's Wolfe Tone Society (Purdie 1990: 132), it did not embrace its nationalist agenda.

When the CRM network emerged in 1968, it deliberately avoided to advocate for a united Ireland. As civil rights leader Ivan Cooper recounted, "The Civil Rights Movement started with this type of philosophy. If we are part of the United Kingdom then we want the same votes and rights as the people of Birmingham, London, Glasgow, and Cardiff. It was not a movement putting forward nationalistic issues at its early stage; it was a movement putting forward demands for equality and civil rights" (Interview with Ivan Cooper, cited in Bosi 2008: 257). These demands, though, had to be pushed forward with bolder tactics than writing letter of complaints. According to Ann Hope, at that time a NICRA committee member,

> "In the spring of 1968 there was much rethinking within the NICRA leadership; the tactics of Martin Luther King in America had been absorbed inasmuch that it was felt by some that only public marches could draw wide attention to what we were trying to achieve by normal democratic means. But there were members on

[17] For an accurate reconstruction of the intellectual debate regarding civil rights agitation within Republicanism, and the influence of this debate on the birth of the CRM, see Purdie 1990: 122-134.

> the EC [executive committee] who didn't relish either the trouble this would create or were too constitutional in their thinking" (cited in Purdie 1990: 134).

The growing frustration with the inability of the unionist government to deliver significant reforms, the encouraging example of the CRM in America and the closed channels for legal mobilization convinced some within NICRA leadership to redirect their efforts toward direct action (De Fazio 2009: 169). Transgressive tactics of non-violent civil disobedience and demonstrations were deemed as more effective weapons in the struggle for civil rights (Bosi 2008: 259).

Following a squatting dispute in Dungannon, where a Catholic family was evicted from a house to leave it to an unmarried 19-years old Protestant woman, NICRA decided to organize a protest march from Coalisland to Dungannon on August 24, 1968. This was the first demonstration in Northern Ireland during which about two thousand people marched through both Protestant and Catholic areas as a display of the anti-sectarian nature of the movement. This would be one of the unprecedented features of the CRM and its tactics, as one of its goals was to expose the sectarian character of Northern Ireland's state and society. Till then, Mulholland (2000: 244) explains, "street marches in Northern Ireland had a very definite historical and sectarian significance, with vast potential for upsetting the tacit understanding between the two communities about territorial divisions." Unsurprisingly, then, the civil rights march met loyalist opposition and counter-demonstrations. The RUC cordoned off Protestant areas and re-routed the march - a scheme police would use repeatedly in the following months of street confrontations. Notwithstanding some tension between marchers and counter-protesters, the first civil rights march in Northern Ireland was largely peaceful and perceived as a success by civil rights activists. NICRA thus decided to stage another civil rights march

on October 5 in Derry, the second largest city of Northern Ireland and the most palpable site of unionist domination and discrimination against the local Catholic population.

The Minister for Home Affairs decided to ban the march on the grounds that a counter-demonstration had been announced by the Apprentice Boys of Derry, a Protestant organization, increasing the risk of violence. A few hundred civil rights protesters decided to defy the ministerial ban and go on with the march. The Cameron Report on the Disturbances in Northern Ireland reconstructed the police-protesters interactions during the march on that day:

> "The procession marched straight up to the police, and [...] batons were used by certain police officers without explicit order […].[B]oth Mr. Fitt and Mr. McAteer [opposition MPs at Stormont] were batoned by the police, at a time when no order to draw batons had been given and in circumstances in which the use of batons on these gentlemen was wholly without justification or excuse" (Cameron 1969: par. 49).

At the end of the march, civil rights leaders addressed the protesters and asked them to disperse peacefully. However, while marchers were disbanding,

> "many of the police having drawn their batons individually, the County Inspector ordered them to disperse the march. [...] the police broke ranks and used their batons indiscriminately on people in Duke Street. [...] the District Inspector in charge used his blackthorn with needless violence. Rapid dispersal of the crowd was also assisted by the use of water wagons [...]. There is no real doubt that they sprayed the dispersing marchers indiscriminately, especially on the bridge, where there were a good many members of the general public who had taken no part in the march. There was no justification for use of the water wagons" (Cameron 1969: par. 51).

One of the reasons why the police attacked protesters, who were peacefully dispersing, lied in their resolve to enforce the ban aggressively. According to the Cameron Report, "the police were determined that the Minister's order should be made effective on this occasion and by a display, and, if necessary, use, of force to deter future

demonstrators from defying ministerial bans" (Cameron 1969: par. 54). The RUC suffered of a major breakdown of discipline and resorted to an excessive use of force unwarranted by the situation on the ground. Police violence transformed an otherwise minor event into a "transformative event" (Bosi 2007: 50). The images of police brutality, reminiscent of tactics used against civil rights demonstrations in the US South and students protests in Europe, rapidly spread throughout the world. The wave of mass civil rights demonstrations had just started, immediately entering in collision with the dominant majority community and 'its' institutions.

Reactions to Civil Rights Mobilization

Unionist Perceptions and Reactions to the CRM. During waves of contention, challengers interact with state actors as well as other members of the polity, shaping and constraining each other's tactics and strategies of contention. Political groups may perceive the activities and goals of challengers as either an opportunity or a threat, and thus mobilize to assist or counter them. Why did the Unionist government and the Protestant majority react viciously against the CRM? At the outset of the CRM's mobilization, civil rights requests were quite moderate and reformist and well in line with the democratic standards in force in the rest of the United Kingdom. Indeed, one of the first slogans of the CRM was "British Rights for British Citizens" (Bosi 2011), together with the hard-to-object request of "One Man, One Vote." And yet, the immediate unionist response to the civil rights protests was one dictated by anxiety and "Pavlovian defensiveness" (Walker 2004: 165; see also Mulholland 2000: 137). In the next sections,

I examine the various responses to the emergence of the CRM by the police, the unionist government and loyalists. First, though, it is important to outline a broad picture of the Protestant majority in Northern Ireland and its perception of the CRM and more generally of the Catholic community.

Since the Plantation of Ulster in the 1600s, the Protestant settlers had benefited occupational and material advantages thanks to the land expropriation and economic subordination of the native Irish. In addition to the economically subordinate status of the minority, the political configuration of Northern Ireland also guaranteed Protestant elites the monopoly on the exercise of political power. This monopoly did not just secure material prosperity, as "Northern Ireland Protestants […] received many other benefits […]: their norms, values and symbols have been given prominence in public display and the operation of the state; they had […] the satisfaction of being governed and largely policed by members of their own ethnic group; their identity has been reaffirmed as the one socially approved and favoured" (Wallis, Bruce and Taylor 1986: 26). Obviously, not all members of the Protestant community profited equally from the subordination of the minority. Yet, similarly to poor whites in the segregated US Deep South, even deprived Protestants had an interest in the preservation of the status quo, as

> "the Protestant working classes were marginally better off [in comparison with the Catholic working class], if only in the sense that they "belonged" to the ruling class. Even for those Protestants who were close to the bottom of the economic heap, it was comforting to know that Catholics, as a class, were worse off. It fed the myth of superiority, of ascendency, of exclusivity. Hence Protestants – even the poorest – were in some sense 'better'" (O'Malley 1983:145).

When the issue of civil rights surfaced in the 1960s, an overwhelming majority of Protestants simply denied the existence of the grievances affecting the excluded minority.

According to an academic survey conducted in 1968, 74% of Protestants declared that the minority was not treated unfairly; the same proportion of Catholics instead affirmed the exact opposite (Rose 1971: 497). The belief that up to the mid-1960s Northern Ireland was a peaceful and trouble-free country was widespread among Protestants (Ellison and Smyth 2000: 32). In the post-World War II era, economic conditions were improving for everyone and Catholics, so it seemed, were increasingly accepting the status quo and finding contentment within it (Nelson 1984: 70).[18] Edmund Warnock, a veteran Unionist MP at Stormont, voiced this conviction on October 16, 1968, during the Parliamentary Debate about the Derry march:

> "I believe that on the whole the Nationalist minority in this country has been treated very fairly. I am prepared to concede that there are exceptions, but I think that, all in all, the minority are reasonably contented and that outside the political sphere the relationship between the two sections of the community, except in very small areas, is extremely good. […] [T]he relationship between Protestant and Catholic, taking it all over the community, is far better than the politicians would lead people to believe" (Edmund Warnock HCNI, 1968 vol. 70, p. 1036).

Accusations of discriminations were thus often dismissed as political fabrications:

> I think […] that a great many of [Catholics'] grievances have been greatly exaggerated; that the Opposition has very seriously overplayed its hand. In many cases the complaints have been totally devoid of foundation. In other cases I think they were manufactured for the purposes of political propaganda no matter whether they had any foundation at all" (Edmund Warnock HCNI, 1968 vol. 70, pp. 1035-1036).

Furthermore, for many Protestants these allegations came as a genuine shock, as they challenged their self-images as pious, law-abiding and conscientious citizens. Their

[18] Interestingly, this persuasion closely resembles white segregationists' view of African Americans' conditions: "in the folklore of the Deep South there is no more cherished fiction than that of Negro contentment with segregation. According to this myth, southern black men recognized that the progress of their race could be attributed largely to the friendship and forbearance of southern whites; hence they wanted nothing more than to live out their days in peace and harmony under 'our biracial system'" (McMillen 1971: 207).

incredulity was further exacerbated by the fact that the accusations originated from a minority perceived as disloyal to Northern Ireland and the Union (Nelson 1984: 68-69). If any discrimination against Catholics was taking place at all, this was a natural and, according to some, justified response to their disloyalty (Nelson 1984: 71). It is within this broad context that we can better understand why the unionist majority perceived demands for civil rights as a sweeping threat to 'its' state.

RUC's Perceptions and Policing of the CRM. In past research, I have discussed the policing of civil rights protests by the RUC in Northern Ireland (De Fazio 2007). Relying on police testimony before the Scarman Tribunal of Inquiry, I examined the role of police perceptions in fostering harsh policing styles toward protesters, observing how the closed political channels for the Catholic minority in Northern Ireland were further reinforced by police attitudes toward the CRM. Police officers testimonies

> "showed the typical cognitive mechanisms concerning the stereotyping of protesters [as 'hooligans'], as well as: (1) an orientation towards a staunch defence of the state and the Unionist domination by all means; (2) a rejection of the minority's claims about their grievances - initially the discrimination and *then* the repressive policing of Civil Rights protest; and (3) a disregard for both accountability and citizens' rights to protest" (De Fazio 2007: 82; emphasis in original).

Newly released declassified documents further enrich our understanding of police attitude and behavior toward civil rights protests.

A prominent theme among unionists was that the civil rights campaign was in reality a nefarious republican plot to overthrow the Northern Ireland state. The police reports about the first civil rights events largely championed this view. In his report to the RUC Inspector General (the chief of police in Northern Ireland) on the civil rights march

from Dungannon to Coalisland in August 1968, District Inspector Sterritt wrote: "I am satisfied that the protest march was in reality a Republican one which is evidenced by the great number of noted Republicans taking part" (Sterritt Report to A. Kennedy, Inspector General of the RUC, 28 August 1968; PRONI, Public Records HA/32/2/27, p. 5). The following day, Inspector General Kennedy wrote a confidential letter to the Minister of Home Affairs, endorsing Sterritt's evaluation that "It might be more correct to describe [the Dungannon-Coalisland march] as a Republican parade rather than a Civil Rights march" (Letter A. Kennedy, Inspector General of the RUC, to the Ministry of Home Affairs, 29 August 1968; PRONI Public Records HA/32/2/27; p. 1). Moreover, Kennedy noticed that "the Civil Rights organisation is allowing its platform to be used by extremists and trouble-makers for the purpose of preaching violence and stirring up hatred amongst the people" (Ibidem). However, the only evidence the Inspector General marshaled to support this claim concerned a "most provocative" speech by Republican Labour MP Gerry Fitt, one of the six the speakers from the platform. Gerry Fitt had asserted that "the ban imposed by the police made his blood boil and called the County Inspector and District Inspector 'a pair of black bastards'" (Ibidem). Kennedy, however, failed to mention that, according to the Sterritt Report, "the other speakers were reasonably mild in their remarks" (Sterritt, p. 3).

There is no doubt that among marchers there were *also* republican activists, but they were just one component, and not the most relevant one, of a wildly heterogeneous mix of liberal, labour, communist, nationalist, trade unionist and conservative protesters, sharing the same anti-discrimination agenda and anti-unionist feelings. What these early police reports show is their failure to detect the distinctiveness of the civil rights march

from past instances of nationalist dissent (see Ellison and Smyth 2000: 62). Marchers in Dungannon had deliberately avoided mentioning the issue of Partition and the constitutional position of Northern Ireland in the Union, focusing instead on civil rights issues like universal franchise and institutionalized discrimination. Republicans might well have been among the marchers, but no Republican goals were flaunted during the march. Secondly, the marchers' intention to go through both traditionally Protestant and Catholic areas was an unprecedented tactic to expose the 'religious geography' of Northern Ireland and counter deep-seated sectarianism (Ó Dochartaigh and Bosi 2010). As historian Mulholland (2000: 244) noted, the CRM "was perfectly sincere in its view of its marches as non-sectarian but it was a perception which was not widely shared."

The RUC was a police force trained to identify (and legally sanction) any expression of public dissent as a potential threat to the state; even trivial gestures like the display of the Irish tricolour were prohibited under the Flags and Emblems Act, 1954. When the CRM started its protests in the second half of 1968, the RUC's knee-jerk reaction was to immediately equate the movement maneuvering with a republican conspiracy. The RUC initially failed to grasp the radical novelty of the movement strategies and goals, especially in the insular context of Northern Ireland. A much more nuanced and accurate evaluation of the movement would, however, arrive later on in November from an unexpected source: RUC Inspector General Kennedy. In a confidential letter to the Minister of Home Affairs sent on November 25, 1968, Kennedy provided his interpretation of the civil rights campaign. While only a few months earlier Kennedy had embraced the view that the CRM was a façade to carry out republican plots, in this letter he formulates probably one of the most lucid and prophetic assessment of the

movement and its possible consequences on Northern Ireland. At the outset of his letter, Kennedy warned the Minister that

> "the present trouble could become much more serious than that created between 1956 and 1962 by the I.R.A. During that period it was largely a battle between the police and the I.R.A. and fortunately the ordinary citizens did not become involved. Thus the scope of activities was confined, and actually there was very little public disorder or anything in the nature of a real menace to the day to day life of the community" (Letter from A. Kennedy, Chief Inspector of the RUC, to the Minister of Home Affairs, Belfast, 25 November 1968; PRONI Public Records HA/32/2/28, p. 1).

In the fall of 1968, though, the situation was "frought [sic] with more danger, because, in my opinion, a number of people on what I may call the loyalist side are confused and are not making any distinction between the I.R.A. and Civil Rights marchers and those belonging to similar organisations" (Ibidem). While immediately after the first civil rights demonstrations Kennedy himself had failed to make that distinction, he now acknowledges the "confusion" behind such hasty judgment. In an extraordinary and almost textbook-case of self-fulfilling prophecy, Kennedy further alerted the Unionist government that

> "this is resulting in opposition to peaceful marches, demonstrations and meetings of such a nature as could lead to armed conflict, with the I.R.A. stepping in to take advantage of the situation to exploit their aims and objects. […] death and destruction would be inevitable and the impact on the whole way of life in Ulster would be catastrophic" (Ibidem).

In a plea to better understand the nature of the movement and avoid further confrontation and escalation of conflict, Kennedy submitted a not-so-veiled criticism of the hardliners in the unionist establishment:

> "It seems to me that enough is not being done by responsible people who should, I suggest, be busy pointing out the differences between the two kinds of activity I

> have mentioned, and stirring themselves to call for a better understanding, especially in regard to interference with those who, peacefully, are stating their grievances publicly. If it could be proclaimed that the old bogey of partition plays no part in the present agitation (*and this is how I see it*) and that the constitution is not in any danger from those who are protesting, I feel that a great deal of heat will disappear" (Ibidem; emphasis added).

He thus recommended moderation as the best way to lower the tensions in the country:

> "I would also suggest, very earnestly, that people holding important public positions should carefully refrain from making public statements which are, perhaps quite unintentionally, calculated to inflame passions. Also, I should say here that appeals for calm and restraint, many of which have been made recently, will not have the desired effect unless they are accompanied by the kind of explanation I have already mentioned" (Ibidem).

Kennedy concluded his dense letter launching a final alarm about the limited capacity of the RUC in dealing with such strained public order conditions: "Unless there is a marked change in the situation soon I am afraid that the small police force we have in Ulster will be up against a problem of maintaining law and order unprecedented in the history of the Province, and one which they may find quite impossible to cope with successfully" (Ibidem, p. 2). Kennedy explicitly hoped that his confidential recommendations would be "taken into consideration" when a new program of reforms was going to be soon unveiled by the unionist government (Ibidem).

Kennedy's confidential letter uncovers a surprising re-evaluation of the civil rights protests and their goals. The Inspector General had basically recognized that he (and the police force he was in charge of) had misjudged the civil rights challenge and that the unionist establishment should implement a profound tactical and rhetorical change to tackle this challenge and avoid a resurgence of armed activism. The chief of a police force conceived and trained to suppress any form of dissent coming from the

excluded minority, was unexpectedly calling for more comprehension and moderation toward the CRM and its requests. Nevertheless, the most revealing aspect of this document may not even be its content, as much as its fate. The Minister of Home Affairs, William Craig, one of the hardliners in the unionist government Kennedy obliquely referred to, never replied to the letter or ever mentioned it (Warner 2008: 27). Needless to say, Kennedy's advices were hardly heeded. In January 1969, after serving as the Inspector General of the RUC for eight years, Kennedy retired.

The Unionist Government and the CRM. The very fact that Kennedy's pleas fell on deaf ears is a telling insight about the unionist government, its perception of the CRM and the strategies adopted to deal with it. In the aftermath of the civil rights march in Derry on October 5, the government squarely defended its decision to ban the march and the police methods employed to enforce it. In defending police conduct, the government promptly blamed the civil rights protesters for the disturbances in Derry. During the parliamentary debate about the march, Prime Minister O'Neill condemned the CRM and its unsettling protest tactics, appealing to the view that democracy and the political process belong exclusively to the parliament: "The place for political argument is in Parliament, not in the streets. Disorder is the way, not to equal rights, but to an equal share of misery and despair" (Terrence O'Neill, HCNI, October 15, 1968, vol. 70, p. 1005). In those circumstances, the government's priority is to uphold the law: "The maintenance of peace and order comes before all other responsibilities" (Ibidem, p. 1002). Moreover, O'Neill "not only resent(ed)" the accusations of discrimination advanced by the CRM, he "repudiate(d)" them, blaming popular resentment on distorted media reports (Ibidem).

Behind closed doors, however, the Prime Minister displayed much more frankness about the CRM and its requests. In a secret memo sent to his Cabinet the day before the debate at Stormont, O'Neill wrote: "Of course there are anti-partition agitators prominently at work, but can any of us truthfully say in the confines of this room that the minority has no grievance calling for a remedy?" ('The Political Situation: Memorandum by the Prime Minister', 14 October 1968; PRONI Public Records CAB/4/1406; p. 2). O'Neill was acutely aware of the impending political pressure that would be exercised from London (and the threat to lose generous transfer of money from the British Exchequer), as well as the international scrutiny over Northern Ireland politics.[19] While in public he advocated for a law and order policy to deal with the civil rights protests, he privately recognized that those polices would not suffice to pacify the rising tensions in the two communities: "The first reaction of our own people [i.e., Protestants] to the antics of Fitt and Currie and the abuse of the world's Press is to retreat into old hard-line attitudes. But if this is <u>all</u> we can offer, we face a period when we govern Ulster by police power alone, against a background of mounting disorder. Are we ready, and would we be wise, to face up to this?" (Ibidem; p. 2; emphasis in original). Some sort of (symbolic, yet undisruptive) concession was necessary, as the long-term costs of a politics of intransigence might have been very high: "Things like the multiple vote at local government elections […] are not essential to maintain our position. And we may even in time have to make a bitter choice between losing Londonderry and losing Ulster" (Ibidem; p. 2). The Cabinet agreed that "the multiple vote in local government should not

[19] "Whether the Press and T.V. coverage was fair is immaterial. We have now become a focus of world opinion; indeed we know through official channels that the Embassy and B. I. S. [British Information Service] in America have been under intense pressure from the American press" ('The Political Situation: Memorandum by the Prime Minister', 14 October 1968; PRONI Public Records CAB/4/1406; p. 1).

be regarded as sacrosanct" ('Conclusions of a meeting of the Cabinet', 14 October 1968; PRONI Public Records CAB/4/1406, p. 2), yet strong opposition to any concession to the CRM was voiced both inside the government and by unionist backbenchers. For instance, in a successive Cabinet meeting, Minister of Home Affairs Craig argued that electoral reform "could have disastrous political repercussions, and that he would propose to hold to [O'Neill's] consistent public position that local government reform must precede any examination of the franchise" ('Conclusions of a meeting of the Cabinet', 23 October 1968; PRONI Public Records CAB/4/1409; p. 2).

William Craig, the Minister for Home Affairs who would ignore his chief of police' evaluation about the CRM and the possible consequences of violent confrontations in the streets, was the main opponent of O'Neill's reformism inside the government. Even before the October civil rights march in Derry, the Ministry of Home Affairs in Belfast had sent a memorandum to the Home Office in London which subscribed to the belief that the CRM was a covert operation with sinister aims.[20] After the march, Craig famously - and somewhat more accurately - defined the composition of the movement as an "omnium gatherum" of republican, socialist and communist organizations (William Craig, HCNI, October 16, 1968 vol. 70, p. 1014), neglecting though to mention the non-political and moderate activists and organizations operating within the movement. Craig not only dismissed the allegations of discrimination, he also never hid his genuine contempt for the CRM, calling students protesting outside of his house "silly, bloody fools" (Deutsch and Magowan 1973: 10). In Parliament, he did not

[20] "The Civil Rights Association is composed largely of persons opposed to the Constitution of Northern Ireland and, despite its title, is regarded by many - and rightly so - as having aims which are largely Nationalistic, although these are cloaked by other alleged pretentions" (Memorandum from J.E. Greeves, Ministry of Home Affairs, Belfast, to the Home Office, London, 4 October 1968; PRONI Public Records HA/32/2/26; p. 1).

hesitate to "describe much of this civil rights activity as bogus" (William Craig, HCNI, December 4, 1968 vol. 70, p. 2236) and went as far as arguing that "the very fact that one does not have universal adult suffrage in local government in itself does not mean that there is a denial of a civil right" (Ibidem). His overall appraisal of the CRM, its 'Marxist' techniques and conspiratorial aims are well summarized in this speech:

> "I would repeat that whatever political discontent there may be in this country the right way to express that discontent is not by organising marches on the scale and on the frequency that we have had in recent weeks. It is not in keeping with the whole technique of democracy and everyone of us in this House should be prepared to say so. If there is any indictment the reason this Communist and Marxist technique is being adopted is probably because people who feel that they have discontent have lost confidence in hon. Members opposite who have purported to represent them for so long" (Ibidem, p. 2239).

On November 13, 1968, Craig banned all marches inside Derry, prompting the CRM to defy the ban and stage more civil rights demonstrations. In December, Craig harshly criticized the reform plan presented by the unionist government to appease the CRM and the Catholic minority; as a result, Prime Minister O'Neill sacked Craig. While throwing Craig out of the government eased O'Neill's position in the Cabinet, loyalist mobilization against the CRM *and* the unionist government - accused to be selling out to civil rights requests - did not alleviate the external pressure on the executive.

"Not an Inch!" Loyalist Reactions to the CRM. It is important to reiterate that the Protestant community in Northern Ireland was not a monolithic or undifferentiated group. On the contrary, internal ideological conflicts (Todd 1987) and class divisions (Bew, Gibbon and Patterson 2002) pervaded the majority community and its political culture. Within unionism, we can discern at least two ideological and social blocs: the "Ulster

Loyalist" and the "Ulster British" (Todd 1987: 1). The first represented the 'hardline' strand of unionism, whose main political goal was to defend the Protestant nature of the Northern Irish state against the attacks of both secular liberal unionism and Irish Nationalism. Fierce anti-Catholicism and anti-ecumenicalism inspired Ulster Loyalists, who would judge any compromise with "the enemy" as a sign of treachery and "sell out" (Nelson 1984). It is not surprising that for the considerable portion of the Protestant community identifying with the 'Ulster Loyalist' political culture, civil rights protests appeared as a conspiracy to overthrow the Northern Irish state and a threat to its Protestant nature. The second version of unionism - the 'Ulster British' - was comparatively moderate. Identifying with Great Britain's ideals and lifestyles, these unionists were loyal to the Crown first, and toward Northern Ireland second. The Eton-educated, patrician Captain Terrence O'Neill best embodied the Ulster British version of unionism and its attempts to normalize inter-community relationships in Northern Ireland.

The unionist establishment uncertain response to the CRM allowed loyalist hardliners to define Protestant attitudes. Reverend Ian Paisley, the ultimate incarnation of Ulster Loyalism and the architect of its mobilization, quickly emerged as the leader of the popular Protestant reaction against civil rights agitation. Paisleyism and its unique combination of religious fanaticism and political extremism predated the civil rights mobilization (Bruce 1986: 89); in the 1960s, Paisley and his followers had an established repertoire of contention to oppose nationalist claim-making as well as O'Neill modernizing policies (Farrington 2008: 527). Paisley could rely on traditional tactics of religious protest, "a form of evangelical vaudeville" (Walker 2004: 159), to obstruct and

prevent civil rights events to occur. Loyalist activists were committed to interfere and stop CRM's protest, by threatening counter-demonstrations and violence, thus insuring the unionist government intervention to ban any form of protest or public meeting. In October of 1968, the Dublin-based *The Irish Times* remarked how "a formula has now been patented. Whenever the Northern Government wishes to ban a demonstration it can rely on its Unionist lunatic fringe to come to its rescue. Mr. Paisley might offer his services as a permanent foot in the door of Nationalist demonstration" (cited in Farrington 2008: 529).

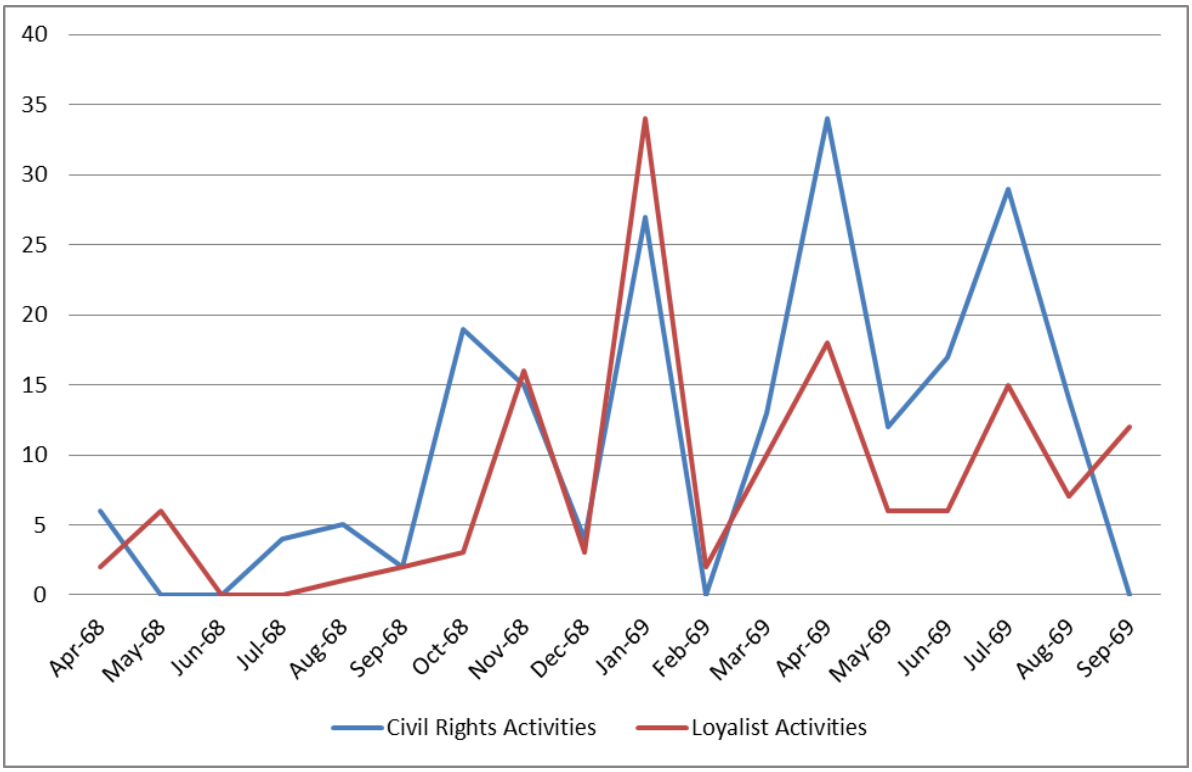


Figure 3.1: Civil Rights and Loyalists Activities, Northern Ireland (April 1968 – September 1969).

In Figure 3.1, I plotted the intensity of civil rights and loyalist activities (including confrontational acts of protest, conflict, meeting, claim-making and violence) from April 1968 to September 1969. The plot shows that while loyalists may have been caught by

surprise by the surge of activities by the CRM, they learned quickly to respond. The plot also distinctly unveils how the relationship between civil rights mobilization and loyalist counter-mobilization become synchronized, as their level of activities waxed and waned together. At times, the volume of loyalist activities would even exceed CRM's operations (see January 1969), showing their capabilities to mobilize large sections of unionism. With his religious and apocalyptic rhetoric, Paisley was able to capitalize on Protestant fears of a United Ireland - "a conspiracy to sell out true Bible-believing Protestantism" (Bruce 1986: 90) - and mobilize the substantial portion of Northern Irish Protestants who identified with Ulster Loyalism. The unionist government indecisions and divisions regarding how to deal with civil rights contention further fueled loyalist activism in confronting disloyal Catholics and secular unionists.

Prime Minister O'Neill had reckoned the public order and political threat represented by militant loyalism at least since 1966, when Paisley had staged several violent demonstrations against the unionist government. In that occasion, O'Neill condemned Paisleyite groups as "Fascist organization(s) masquerading under the cloak of religion. […] Mr. Paisley is hell-bent on provoking religious strife in Northern Ireland. […] I oppose Mr. Paisley because he is a stumbling-block to better community relationships" (Terrence O'Neill, HCNI, June 15, 1966, vol. 66, pp. 388-389). Two years later, several Ministers in the unionist Cabinet "strongly deprecated the apparent impunity with which extremist Protestant elements seemed to arrange parades and meetings for obstructive purposes" ('Conclusions of a meeting of the Cabinet', 14 October 1968; PRONI Public Records CAB/4/1406, p. 2). In his confidential letter to Craig, Chief Inspector Kennedy indicated loyalists' potential for disruption: "Police

information indicates that many professing Unionists support the [civil rights] protesters, and the trouble emanates from a comparatively small minority of people holding extremist views [i.e., loyalists] who, quite sincerely I feel, see a danger to the constitution which, as I have said above, does not exist" (Letter from A. Kennedy, Chief Inspector of the RUC, to the Minister of Home Affairs, Belfast, 25 November 1968; PRONI Public Records HA/32/2/28, p. 1). Loyalist mobilization indeed targeted both the CRM and the Northern Ireland government, as visible in Figure 3.2 below. The network graph in Figure 3.2 reconstructs the (*nonviolent*) contentious interactions occurred among the main political actors between April 1968 and July 1969. These interactions include actions of protest, conflict and threat, but exclude violence (for the network of *violent* interactions in this period, refer to Figure 2.4).

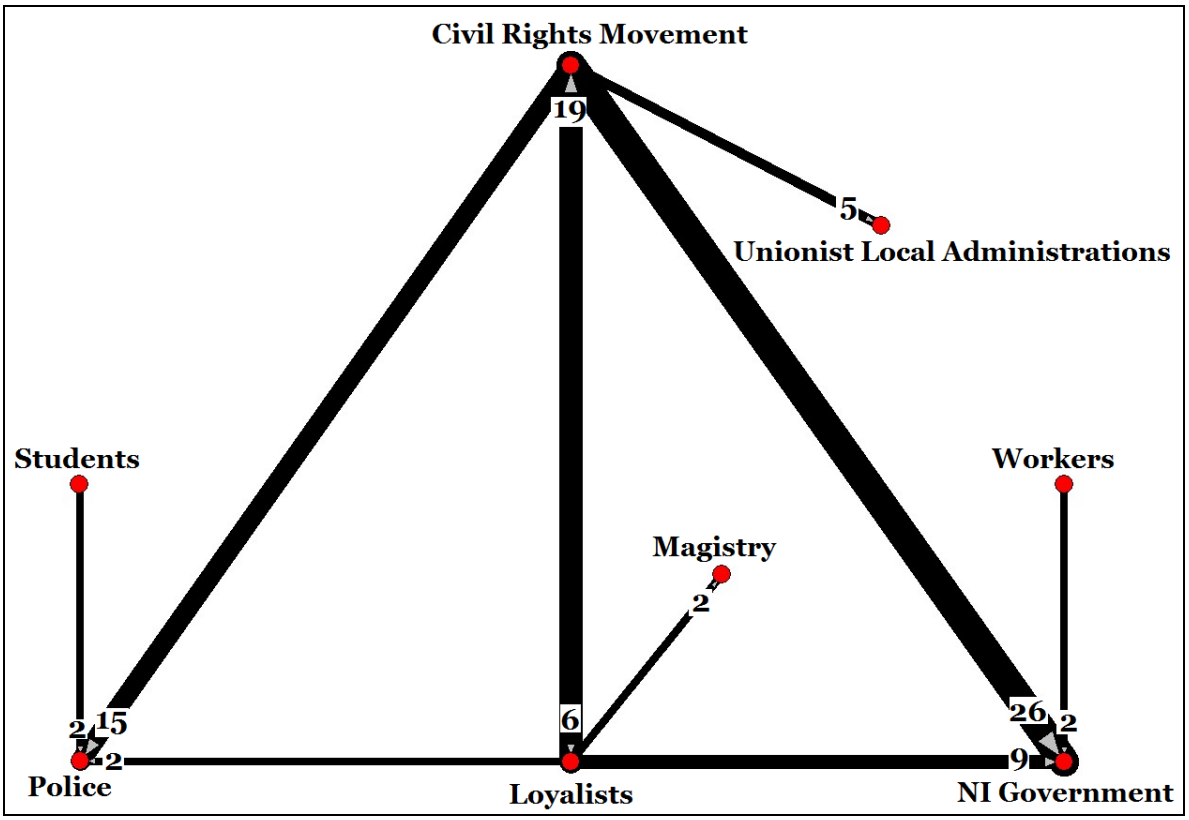


Figure 3.2: Network of Nonviolent Contention, Northern Ireland (April 1968 - July 1969).

The CRM mostly challenged the unionist government and local administrations (and their discriminatory practices) with 26 and 5 actions of contention, respectively. Civil rights contention was also directed to contest police and their repressive handling of civil rights protests in 15 cases, and to counter loyalist crowds in 6. On the other side of the contentious divide, loyalists directed their actions against the CRM 19 times, while also confronting several unionist institutions like the government (9), the police (2) and even the magistry (2), all guilty of turning their back to the loyal citizens of Northern Ireland and compromise with the CRM and the disloyal minority. In addition to nonviolent contentious actions, loyalists in this period attacked the CRM with violence 18 times (again, refer to Figure 2.1 for the network of violent interaction in this period).

Conclusions

On November 22, 1968, under strong pressure from British Prime Minister Wilson, O'Neill presented a five-point reform program to respond to the most urgent civil rights requests. The program included the abolition of the business vote in local elections, a points system for housing, the appointment of an Ombudsman, a review of the Special Powers Act and the establishment of a Londonderry Development Commission (Deutsch and Magowan 1973: 12). However, the key issue of 'One Man, One Vote' was not tackled, as several limitations on local franchise remained and the government had promised to review universal adult suffrage only after a three-year study of local government reform. The CRM was unsatisfied with the reform program, judged to be too timid, especially for the lack of universal suffrage; NICRA and the other civil rights organizations were committed to return to the streets until 'One Man, One Vote' was guaranteed. After more violent clashes between civil rights and loyalist protesters in Armagh, O'Neill decided to deliver a televised speech ('Ulster at the Crossroads') in which he called all parts to stop their demonstrations in order to avoid further violence and let the reform plan be implemented. The speech received a large amount of support from both communities, with over 150,000 people sending letters of support to O'Neill (Deutsch and Magowan 1973: 13). The CRM called a period of truce with no marches or other protest activities.

However, not everyone within each community was pleased with O'Neill promises of reform. People's Democracy, the radical student component of the CRM,

announced that they would be staging a ‘Long March’ from Belfast to Derry on January 1, 1969. Loyalist leader Major Bunting warned PD not to march through Protestant areas and called his fellow citizens to take every step to “hinder and harass the so-called Civil Rights marchers” (Deutsch and Magowan 1973: 14). In the next chapter, I discuss how the events during and after the ‘Long March’ initiated the process of radicalization of the CRM and more generally of the conflict in Northern Ireland, as political violence increasingly tinged the relationships among the political actors involved in contention.

Chapter 4: 1969 and the Historical Context of the Troubles

The rise of the Civil Rights Movement in the second half of 1968 elicited hostile reactions among the unionist establishment, police forces and the Protestant community. Clashes during street demonstrations, fear of an impending resurgence of political violence and pressure by the British government convinced Prime Minister O'Neill to launch a reform plan for Northern Ireland in November of 1968. To ease the tension in the streets and cool down the political situation, in his Crossroad speech O'Neill crucially appealed to the CRM to halt its demonstrations and 'let the reforms work'. Even though not entirely satisfied with the reform plan, especially because it did not include universal adult suffrage, NICRA and other organizations decided to give the government a chance to address the CRM's concerns. Civil rights leaders thus responded affirmatively to the Prime Minister's request and called off all protest marches and demonstrations. Yet, not everyone in the movement was willing to accept the government's appeal. People's Democracy (PD), or at least its most militant core, did not intend to stop upsetting the status quo until 'real' reforms were implemented in Northern Ireland. PD's determination to infringe the truce and stage a Long March from Belfast to Derry on New Year's Day of 1969 turned out to be fateful. The events surrounding the march and its aftermath created an ideological and political fracture that would eventually facilitate a dynamic of competitive escalation inside the CRM and, more generally, the radicalization of contention in Northern Ireland.

In this chapter, I describe the actors, events and mechanisms that in 1969 led to the intervention of the British Army during the summer and the outbreak of the Troubles.

In particular, I examine the Long March and the end of the truce which prompted a divided Unionist Cabinet to dissolve the Stormont parliament and call early elections in February. The elections triggered internal competition and outbidding both within the CRM and the unionist bloc. The ensuing revitalization of ethno-national antagonism and the radicalization of the conflict in the streets eventually culminated in civil disturbances of an unprecedented scale during the marching season in August, compelling the British government to deploy its Army to act as a peace-keeping force between the two warring ethno-national communities. The direct involvement of the British authorities marked a point of no return in Northern Ireland's history, as it altered the nature of the conflict and the configuration of actors in the arena.

People's Democracy and the "Long March"

The harsh police tactics adopted against peaceful marchers in Derry on October 5, 1968 had angered several segments of the Northern Irish society. As a reaction to this outrage, several new civil rights organizations were founded, contributing to the sudden growth of the budding CRM. One of these new organizations was the student-based People's Democracy. In an interview the *New Left Review* conducted in April 1969 with PD leaders, Eamon McCann recalled how:

> "People's Democracy began as a result of the police behaviour in Derry on October 5th. A number of Queens University students who were among the Civil Rights marchers went back to Belfast and organized a march there in protest against the police brutality. That march was also stopped and the students returned to the University somewhat demoralized and very confused. They began talking about what they should do and PD emerged from that discussion" (New Left Review 1969: 4).

Differently from other civil rights organizations, many activists inside PD believed to be part of the larger transnational wave of leftist protest that was sweeping Europe in 1968. Michael Farrell, another PD leader and founder, in the same interview remarked that:

> "PD is not just part of the Civil Rights movement, it is a revolutionary association. Its formation was considerably influenced by the Sorbonne Assembly and by concepts of libertarianism as well as socialism. It has adopted a very democratic type of structure; there is no formal membership and all meetings are open" (New Left Review 1969: 4).

Even though PD's claim of belonging to the European student movement was probably a hyperbole,[21] there is no doubt that the '68ers' rebellion against authority and hierarchy inspired many of its members and its *modus operandi*. PD did not have an accepted constitution, membership fees or a formal organizational structure, except for a 'Faceless Committee' elected for merely coordinating purposes (Purdie 1990: 207). During their meetings, everyone was allowed to participate, speak freely and vote on any of the issues at stake (Cameron 1969: para 195). Admittedly, this radically unstructured organization could not work "very satisfactorily" (New Left Review 1969: 4) or efficiently, and a small group of committed activists ended up exploiting it to impose its own militant agenda.

During the early civil rights protests in October and November 1968, PD strictly adhered to the themes and claims of the broader civil rights campaign. For instance, the leaflets PD distributed during its protests advocated for "one man – one vote", "houses on need", "jobs on merit", "free speech", "fair [electoral] boundaries" and the "repeal of the

[21] Few, if any, formal relationships with other student groups were established outside of the UK; the themes and goals of PD remained relatively parochial and unrelated to the larger European contestation; finally, the PD leadership was largely composed of non-students (Purdie 1990: 211; New Left Review 1969).

Special Powers Act".[22] In addition to its reasonably moderate and reformist demands, PD gained substantial praise for its capacity to exert self-restraint when their sit-ins and marches came under attack from Paisleyites and the RUC (Purdie 1990: 207). At least in the initial months of its existence, PD was also able to attract a good amount of support among Protestant students at Queen's University (Beach 1977: 308). When in December of 1968 Prime Minister O'Neill invited the CRM to accept a 'truce', suspend their protests and let a reform package be approved, the more militant PD members firmly rejected this invitation as they considered the proposed reform plan as "too little, too late" (Bosi 2006: 91). To react against what was perceived as an attempt by the unionist establishment to co-opt the CRM (Arthur 1974: 38), some radical activists were determined to organize a massive protest march in Belfast on December 14. At the large meeting to discuss the proposed march, the majority of participants followed the mainstream opinion within the CRM and voted to cancel the march (Cameron 1969: para 89). The leftist activists inside PD, upset with the outcome of the meeting and the revocation of the protest, "demonstrated clearly that they would have their way at all costs" (Arthur 1974: 38). Taking advantage of Christmas' academic recess and PD's amorphous decision-making procedures, on December 20 a small group of militants met at Queen's University in Belfast and annulled the previous meeting's vote to call off the march (Cameron 1969: para 89). Instead, it was decided that, on New Year's Day, PD activists would embark on a 'Long March' from Belfast to Derry. Leaving from Belfast on January 1, 1969, the march was designed to go across both nationalist and loyalist rural areas, planning to reach Derry on January 4. Michael Farrell, the ideological and strategic architect behind the march, had consciously devised it after the well-known

[22] See: http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/ephemera/leaflet/pd_leaflet_1068r.pdf .

1965 Selma to Montgomery civil rights marches, "which had exposed the racist thuggery of America's Deep South and forced the US government into major reforms" (Farrell 1976: 249). According to PD leader Bernadette Devlin, the aim of the march was:

> "to break the truce, to relaunch the civil rights movement as a mass movement and to show people that O'Neill was, in fact, offering them nothing. We knew that we wouldn't finish the march without getting molested, and we were accused of looking for trouble. What we really wanted to do was to pull the carpet off the floor to show the dirt that was under it so that we could sweep it up" (Devlin 1969: 120).

Unionist politicians and liberal media outlets condemned the planned march as being a provocative and reckless tactic. Some nationalist and civil rights activists also criticized the march and forewarned PD of the likely sectarian violence it would provoke (Bosi 2011: 134). In addition to the political expediency voiced by Devlin, there was also a mix of youthful naiveté and ideological condescension in PD's dismissal of the warnings against marching through 'unwelcoming' territory. For instance, Paul Bew, then a young PD Trotskyite activist and currently a professor of politics at Queen's University Belfast, in recent interviews acknowledged that:

> "Betty Sinclair [a leading figure in the Northern Ireland Communist Party] came in and told us not to go on that march, but we didn't care, we thought she was a 'Stalinist.' But actually she was right […]. Thinking now, I think I should have treated these people with respect. To me their position was ridiculous, at the time, all the international context was legitimizing the politics of movement of drama" (Paul Bew, cited in Bosi and Prince 2009: 147).

> "If one had been more attuned to society itself, one would have said, 'Well can one march 70 miles between Belfast and Derry through these little Protestant villages, but is this a wise thing to do?' In fact what we said was, 'We are socialists. We are progressive. Trying to stop us marching through your villages is ridiculous because we are carrying a banner of enlightenment'" (Paul Bew, cited in Bosi 2006: 148).

As many had foreseen, the Long March encountered many violent counter-

demonstrators along the road. At several points during the march, loyalist mobs stoned and harassed the marchers with clear premeditation (Purdie 1990: 215). On the night of January 3, a riot erupted outside of the Guildhall in Derry where loyalist leaders Reverend Paisley and Major Bunting were holding a religious service (Cameron 1969: para 96). The following day, about two hundred loyalist extremists, in collusion with off-duty police officers, waited for the marchers to reach Burntollet Bridge, just outside Derry. When the marchers approached the bridge, loyalists ambushed them with stones and iron clubs, causing several injuries among marchers and the policemen assigned to protect them (Cameron 1969: para 99, 177). Upon entering Derry, the march suffered further attacks in Irish Street, a Protestant area of the city (Cameron 1969: para 100). When the exhausted and battered marchers finally arrived in Derry, the other civil rights organizations welcomed them as heroes and together held a rally in Guildhall Square (Ibidem).

The vicious violence against PD marchers was able to consolidate, at least momentarily, the CRM. The movement leadership heavily criticized the RUC for its (deliberate) failure to protect the march from loyalist attacks and, more generally, railed against the Unionist government. The moderate leader of the Derry Citizens Action Committee (DCAC), John Hume, terminated the 'truce' with the government and declared an immediate commitment to "return to militant action" (Arthur 1974: 41). The Long March, however, had more long-term negative effects on the movement and its trajectory toward radical contention, as it had "created a left-wing elite" which alienated moderate and Protestant students from PD (Arthur 1974: 43). Moreover, it had "established PD's separate existence within the civil rights movement, giving it a sense of

self-importance and helping to create a division between itself and the more moderate groups" (Arthur 1974: 43), which would never be reconciled again. The Cameron Report lucidly captured the polarizing effect of the Long March on the CRM and its public reputation:

> "For moderates this march had disastrous effects. It polarized the extreme elements in the communities in each place it entered. It lost sympathy for the Civil Rights movement and led to serious rioting in Maghera and Londonderry. It divided the Civil Rights movement and weakened the Derry Citizens Action Committee. We are driven to think that the [PD] leaders must have intended that their venture would weaken the moderate reforming forces in Northern Ireland. We think that their object was to increase tension, so that in the process a more radical programme could be realized. They saw the march as a calculated martyrdom. In addition the riot of 3rd January in Guildhall Square, Londonderry which was wrongly attributed to the Civil Rights movement, still further damaged that movement in the public mind" (Cameron 1969: para 100).

The abrupt end of the truce between the CRM and the Unionist government meant a quick return to street protests. Unsurprisingly, the return of civil rights demonstrations was complemented by further violent clashes between the CRM and police forces. On January 11, a civil rights protest in Newry degenerated into a riot when the RUC re-routed the march and civil rights leaders and stewards were not able to restrain the circa 6,000 protesters (for a detailed account of the march and the subsequent violence, see Cameron 1969: para 102-120). The local organizers of the march had made "inefficient and inadequate arrangements" (Cameron 1969: para 118), their poor planning resulting in protesters conducting acts of vandalism and violence against the RUC and local shops. The Newry riot further damaged the reputation of the CRM among unionists and exacerbated the divisions within the Northern Ireland government. The most important political consequence of the Long March and the revival of civil rights contention was perhaps the destabilization of O'Neill's position in his Cabinet (Arthur 1974: 43), as it

accelerated the path toward new elections in Northern Ireland and reduced space for political moderation and compromise.

February Elections and Contained Contention

Under pressure for yet another failure of the security forces to protect civil rights marchers and prosecute the loyalist attackers at Burntollet, on January 15 O'Neill appointed a Commission "to inquire into and report on violence and civil disturbance in Northern Ireland since October 5th 1968".[23] In a secret memo, the Prime Minister had illustrated to his Cabinet the rationale behind this political initiative:

> "I do not think we should delude ourselves that so-called 'firm government' through the exercise of police power will provide any satisfactory answer to our problem. […] I therefore consider it essential that we continue to search for political as well as law-and-order solutions. Clearly no concession will satisfy those elements which are bent upon disruption as an end in it-self. But we would take an enormous amount of steam out of the Civil Rights movement if we demobilized all its moderate support. It is in this context that I welcome the suggestion of an inquiry of some kind." ('The Political Situation: Memorandum by the Prime Minister,' 14 January 1969; PRONI Public Records CAB/4/1427; pp. 1-2).

In the memo, O'Neill considered the appointment of a Commission of Inquiry as a political operation to rally moderates behind the government and marginalize the CRM and its followers, or at least its more radical activists. O'Neill also cynically evaluated the standing of his government before the public opinion and concluded that an inquiry could have done little to produce additional damage to its reputation. If anything, instead, the inquiry could have put forward a more balanced scrutiny of the situation in Northern

[23] Later in September, the Commission led by Lord Cameron would eventually publish the results of its inquiry, the well-known and widely cited Cameron Report.

Ireland and the intricate issues the government had to tackle:

> "What have we to lose by such an inquiry? As things stand it is all too widely accepted throughout the United Kingdom that a sectarian Government, directing a partisan police force, is confronting a movement of idealists. The complexities of the situation, and not least the involvement in Civil Rights of some extremely sinister elements, have not been successfully brought out. An inquiry might criticise some of our actions or some of the actions of the police. But such criticism is being made in any event, and in the case of the police has already led to a domestic inquiry whose results should be available before long. A wider inquiry could hardly fail to bring out in an objective way the real difficulties of the situation and the real aims of some of those involved." ('The Political Situation: Memorandum by the Prime Minister,' 14 January 1969; PRONI Public Records CAB/4/1427; p. 2).

Nonetheless, the inquiry would, in all likelihood, require at least an important concession, namely the acceptance of universal adult suffrage: "in endorsing the proposal for an inquiry I am asking all my colleagues to accept that a change of franchise may well be recommended, and that it will be our duty to convince our Party that this change must be made" ('The Political Situation: Memorandum by the Prime Minister,' 14 January 1969; PRONI Public Records CAB/4/1427; p. 4). In bitter disagreement with the establishment of the Commission of inquiry, deemed as a capitulation to the CRM and its sinister tactics, two prominent ministers resigned from the Cabinet and 12 dissident Unionist MPs asked O'Neill to step down as Prime Minister (Deutsch and Magowan 1973: 18-19). As his leadership within the Unionist Party vacillated, on February 4, O'Neill formally dissolved the Stormont Parliament and called a snap election to determine the extent of unionist support to his reformist approach vis-à-vis the hardliners.

The announcement of new elections for the Stormont, to be held on February 24, had the immediate effect of rapidly putting on hold all *transgressive* contention in the province. Public protests and confrontation momentarily abated in favor of *contained* contention, "those cases of contention in which all parties are previously established

actors employing well established means of claim making" (McAdam et al. 2001: 7); basically, electoral/institutional politics. For the second time since the civil rights campaign took off in the late summer of 1968, institutional politics directly determined the pace and rhythm of protest, effectively bringing it to a halt.

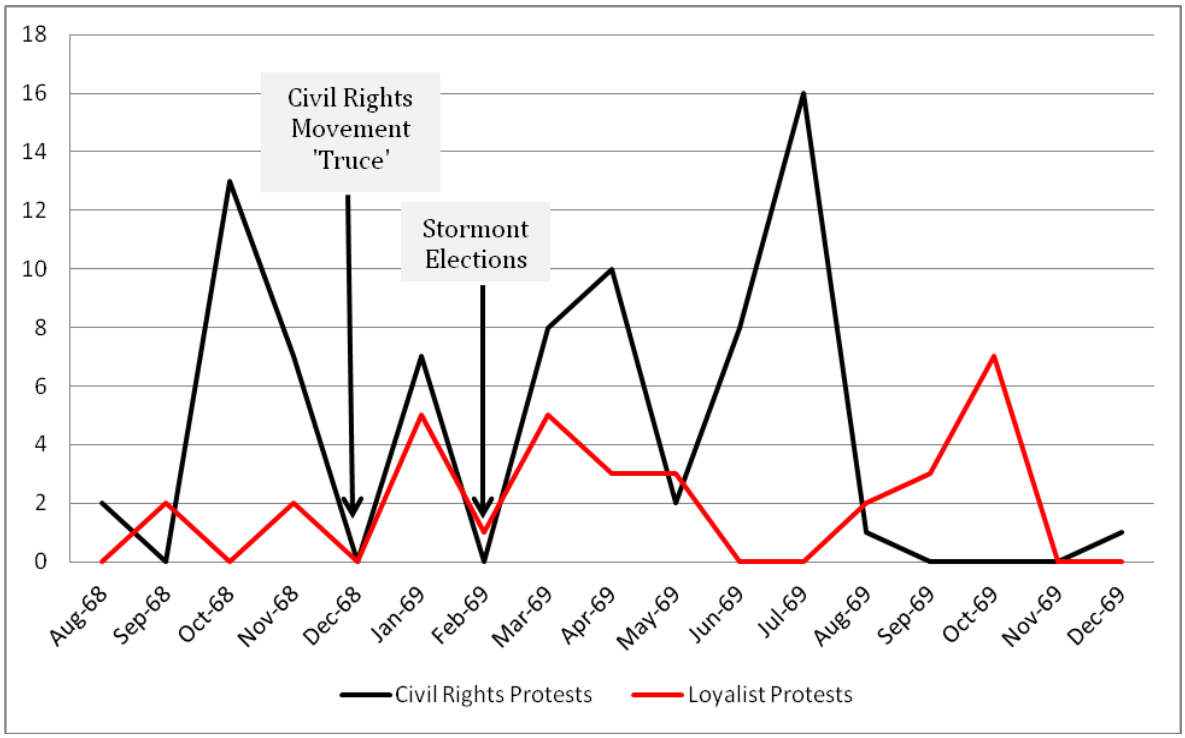


Figure 4.1: Civil Rights and Loyalists Protests, Northern Ireland (August 1968 - December 1969).

In Figure 4.1 above, I plot civil rights and loyalist protests in Northern Ireland from August 1968 till the end of 1969. The chart shows that in December 1968 and February 1969 both the CRM and the loyalist counter-movement stopped to engage in transgressive claim-making. These pauses in protest activities were the direct results of institutional political events. In December, the 'truce' between the Unionist government and the CRM dictated the suspension of civil rights protests and therefore loyalist counter-protests. In February, the elections at Stormont prompted a cessation of street demonstrations. The level and tempo of transgressive contention in Northern Ireland thus

seem to be more strictly related to relational processes and political events, than to fluctuations in grievances, ideologies or rational choice calculations.

Besides unionist and nationalist politicians, several civil rights and loyalist leaders decided to participate to the elections, in order to publicize their causes and gain direct access to those institutions that had failed to redress their (opposed) grievances. The main arena of contentious politics thus shifted toward the electoral contest, even though for only a short period of time and with a competitive dynamics different from the earlier, transgressive contention. In ethnically divided societies, party politics is best understood as a dual party system, where political competition occurs *inside* each segment of the polity, rather than *between* them (Mitchell 1999: 93). The main political parties in Northern Ireland represented and aggregated consensus mostly within each ethno-national community, rather than competing across the political spectrum. The temporary substitution of the main realm of political struggle, from street politics to the ballot box, entailed a shift in the dynamics of contention in the province. While the violent attacks at Burntollet Bridge against the PD Long March had a (transitory) *centripetal* effect on the CRM, cementing the solidarity among the civil rights components, the general elections largely offset those forces. The electoral campaigns activated *centrifugal* mechanisms of internal competition and outbidding within each bloc. The elections had in fact two contradictory effects, as they pushed both for moderation *and* competitive escalation inside the two communities.

The first immediate moderating influence related to the suspension of the CRM and loyalists' contentious activities and confrontations, as shown in Figure 4.1. Elections quite simply moved politics from the streets, back into the realm of institutional politics.

Interestingly, they also pushed several candidates to (unsuccessfully) seek inter-community electoral support. Thus, in order to overcome the internal revolt against him, Prime Minister O'Neill explicitly appealed to Catholic moderate voters to rally behind his reformist platform of inclusion and to join the ranks of moderate unionism (Purdie 1990: 218). However, O'Neill's lack of trustworthiness among the Irish-Catholic community only tarnished his cross-community outreach efforts.[24] On the other side of the political divide, PD candidates ran on a platform that, in addition to the usual civil rights requests, included a crash housing program, integrated education and state-owned, workers-controlled factories. The declared goal was to appeal to both Protestant and Catholic working-classes and bring them together to contest the bourgeois Unionist ruling class (Purdie 1990: 219). This effort to tap into some imaginary cross-community, unitary working class interest fell flat too.[25]

On the other hand, the elections fueled intra-movement competition and conflict. Many activists in the CRM were directly involved with the organization of the electoral campaigns of their leaders, switching their organizational roles from staging mass demonstrations to running electoral machines. During the election, PD activists set up branches in different towns throughout the province, including Newry, Armagh, Enniskillen and Belfast: "this caused friction since it meant that the PD was organising in direct competition with NICRA and it also hastened the PD's leftward drift. Since it was

[24] According to then PD activist Kevin Boyle, "O'Neill's problem at the time that he pulled his general elections and called on all Catholics to vote for him was his credibility. Here was a man saying that the future was contingent on Catholic support for him, but he could not field one single Catholic candidate, and he was endorsing all kinds of people clearly anti-Catholic" (interview with Kevin Boyle, in Van Voris 1975: 108).

[25] McCann acknowledged that he and other PD activists had "failed to get our position across. We keep saying parrot-like that we are fighting on working-class issues for working-class unity, that our objective is a workers' and farmers' socialist republic. But when you say to the people in the Bogside area in Derry that they are being exploited because they are workers not because they are Catholics, they are not very inclined to believe you" (New Left Review 1969: 5).

no longer a purely student body and was competing for the same supporters as NICRA, it emphasised the characteristics which distinguished it most clearly from the association - its greater militancy and radicalism" (Purdie 1990: 223). In other words, electoral politics accentuated the different strategic positions of the various civil rights organizations, inciting intra-movement competition over scarce resources like funding, militants, political support and the leadership of the movement's broad constituency (De Fazio 2013). Fierce internal competition, however, was not limited to the CRM, as also the unionist camp was riddled with internecine conflicts over its leadership and direction. In particular, the dispute over O'Neill's leadership led to the fragmentation of the Unionist Party into 'Official Unionist' (i.e., pro-O'Neill) and 'Unofficial Unionist' (anti-O'Neill) candidates, as well as the candidacy of Reverend Paisley to aggregate loyalist anger against the unionist establishment.

The elections returned 27 Unionist MPs supporting O'Neill and 12 Unionist MPs opposing his leadership within the party parallel structure; in his own constituency, O'Neill received 7,745 votes while Rev. Paisley surprisingly polled 6,331 votes (Elliott 1973). The elections further weakened O'Neill's position, as his reformist approach was besieged by more intransigent unionists and loyalists, while not getting any traction among the Irish-Catholic minority. The biggest loser in the election, however, was the Nationalist Party, the long-established, largely ineffective institutional agent of the Catholic community. Several civil rights activists, running as Independents, contested traditionally nationalist seats; three of them, all coming from the moderate NICRA and DCAC, were able to defeat the nationalist candidates. In particular, John Hume, the Derry-based civil rights leader, was able to win the Foyle seat, beating the Nationalist

Party's leader, Eddie McAteer. According to Purdie (1990: 219), "the events of the previous eighteen months had brought about a fundamental shift within the Catholic community for whom the civil rights movement was beginning to eclipse the Nationalist Party as a means of political expression." PD had decided to run separately from the other civil rights organizations and field its own candidates under the People's Democracy aegis, obtaining more than 23,000 preferences, or 4.2% of the total votes (Arthur 1974: 47). However, PD failed to win any seat and "there is no strong evidence to suggest […] that it persuaded people to vote across the traditional divide" (Ibidem). On February 27, Michael Farrell announced that PD "would return to the streets to press for Civil Rights demands" (Deutsch and Magowan 1973: 21).

Back to the Streets: the Radicalization of the CRM

The results of the elections for the Northern Ireland parliament registered a key realignment in the socio-political system, signaling a reawakening of ethno-national boundaries and antagonisms. Since the end of World War II, electoral support for parties not aligned along the ethno-national cleavage (i.e., parties that were neutral towards the issue of Partition, like the Northern Ireland Labour Party, Independent Labour and Ulster Liberal Party) had constantly increased. From a combined 9.3% of the votes obtained in 1949, these parties reached their peak during the 1962 Stormont elections, with 37% of all votes (Bosi 2006: 87; Elliott 1973). The rising support for non-sectarian parties in the post-war years signified a *decreased salience* of ethno-national identities in organizing consent in Northern Ireland politics. In the February 1969 Stormont elections, however,

the support for these parties "dropped significantly to 11.7% […], even though turnout was the largest in two decades" (Bosi 2006: 93). The electoral competition, influenced by the events surrounding the emergence of the CRM and its unprecedented tactics and goals, clearly reinvigorated the ethno-national cleavage and the traditional constitutional issue of Partition (Ibidem). Even though the CRM had never invoked the issue of Partition and had intentionally avoided trumpeting any ethno-national claims, the wave of civil rights protests had shaken the Northern Irish polity, setting off the aggressive reactions of the Unionist government, police forces and loyalist activists. The dynamic interactions among these actors set in motion several mechanisms which helped to radicalize the CRM and more generally contentious politics in Northern Ireland, setting the terrain for the outbreak of ethno-national violent contention during the summer of 1969.

As soon as the electoral process came to an end, civil rights activists abandoned contained contention and resumed mass demonstrations. While some of the original civil rights requests had been at least partially addressed by Stormont, an additional central issue started to gain prominence in the political conflict between the CRM and state authorities: repressive policing and the announced toughening of the Public Order Act (1951). In March 1969, the Unionist government proposed to strengthen police and executive powers to regulate public order and "clearing the streets" (Deutsch and Magowan 1973: 22), essentially trying to increase institutional repression (Koopmans 1997: 154) on demonstrators and their activities.[26] The new provisions would require

[26] Koopmans (1997) differentiates between *situational* repression (heavy-handed control of protest), and more subtle *institutional* repression (such as a ban on organizations; see also: Earl 2003; 2004). The first type of repression is more likely to create injustice frames (Gamson et al. 1982) and radical responses, as protest policing becomes a meta-issue of mobilization (della Porta and Reiter 1998: 28) able to arouse more

protest organizers to give notice of a parade 96 hours in advance (doubling them from 48 hours); they would ban sit-downs, counter-demonstrations and occupation of buildings; finally, they would make illegal not just the *organization* but also the *participation* in unlawful demonstrations (Purdie 1990: 222). The obvious target of these more repressive measures was the CRM (as well as the Paisleyite movement), as the government attempted to tame its demonstrations, reduce public confrontations and keep public order under control.[27] Ironically, the debate about the Public Order Act in the newly elected House of Commons was conducive to literally bringing transgressive street protest tactics *inside* Stormont. On March 20, nine Opposition MPs, including civil rights leaders John Hume and Ivan Cooper, "seated themselves on the Floor of the House and proceeded to sing, 'We shall overcome'" (House of Commons Northern Ireland, March 20, 1969 vol. 72 p. 682; see also pp. 683-685), as a gesture of dissent against the Public Order Act. After their refusal to interrupt the sit-in, the Speaker of the House instructed the RUC to remove the intemperate MPs from the Floor of the House. The Opposition MPs were eventually suspended for seven days (Deutsch and Magowan 1973: 22).

Opposition to the Public Order bill was naturally voiced in the streets too, as the CRM kept holding its marches and rallies in March and April (see Figure 4.1). People's Democracy was particularly active in contrasting the government policies and its increasingly repressive outlook. For instance, on March 4, members of PD picketed Stormont "with placards reading 'Civil Rights Now,' and 'Reform not Repression'"

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extreme forms of action, as well as more radical political goals. *Institutional repression*, on the other hand, is more likely to subdue mobilization as it does not create powerful images and frames of violence and atrocities, rather it aims to strike directly against a movement's capacity to organize and mobilize.

[27] As Tilly (1978: 100-101) noted, "from a government's point of view, raising the costs of mobilization is a more reliable repressive strategy than raising the costs of collective action alone. The antimobilization strategy neutralizes the actor as well as the action, and makes it less likely that the actor will be able to act rapidly when the government suddenly becomes vulnerable."

(Deutsch and Magowan 1973: 21) and, on March 22, they held rallies in Enniskillen, Newry, Derry and Armagh. Taking advantage of the fact that some of the most prominent moderate civil rights leaders had become MPs in Stormont, PD essentially tried to take control of the CRM, its tactics and orientation. As the more militant components of the CRM displayed more confrontational protests and more far-reaching demands of change in the political system, moderates in the movement found themselves divided about how to react to the radicals' takeover attempt. When the NICRA executive decided to lend its support to a controversial PD march planned to go across a hostile Protestant area, four prominent members of NICRA resigned in protest on March 14.[28] Several other resignations, both within NICRA and DCAC, ensued, as moderate activists felt that the CRM was "being undermined by extremist movements for whose actions we cannot hold ourselves responsible".[29] Eventually, the internal fracture to the CRM was recomposed, as PD agreed to revoke its demonstration and all civil rights organizations held a march together in Derry on March 29 (Deutsch and Magowan 1973: 23). Nevertheless, the ideological and strategic conflict between 'moderates' and 'radicals' inside the movement intensified, as NICRA and DCAC had to adapt to the changing political situation of heightened sectarianism and violence. Militant members of PD were determined to veer the CRM towards more radical and class-based contention; in his April interview with the New Left Review, Michael Farrell candidly declared that:

> "Our general strategy in the past was that we should enter into the Civil Rights Movement in order to participate in the mobilization and radicalization of the Catholic working class, and to radicalize the civil rights demands themselves. We should now move forward in two ways. 1. We should complete the ideological development of the Catholic working class. 2. We should develop concrete

[28] *Belfast Telegraph*, March 15, 1969.
[29] *Irish News*, March 17, 1969.

> agitational work over housing and jobs to show the class interests of both Catholics and Protestants. We have delayed far too long trying to develop the ideology of the Catholic working class and agitating on specific class issues" (New Left Review 1969: 4-5).

Facing PD overt attempt to move the CRM into leftist politics, moderates had to strive to retain support and activists, getting involved in riskier contention and a more ambitious political agenda. Together with riskier contention, inevitably more political violence ensued.

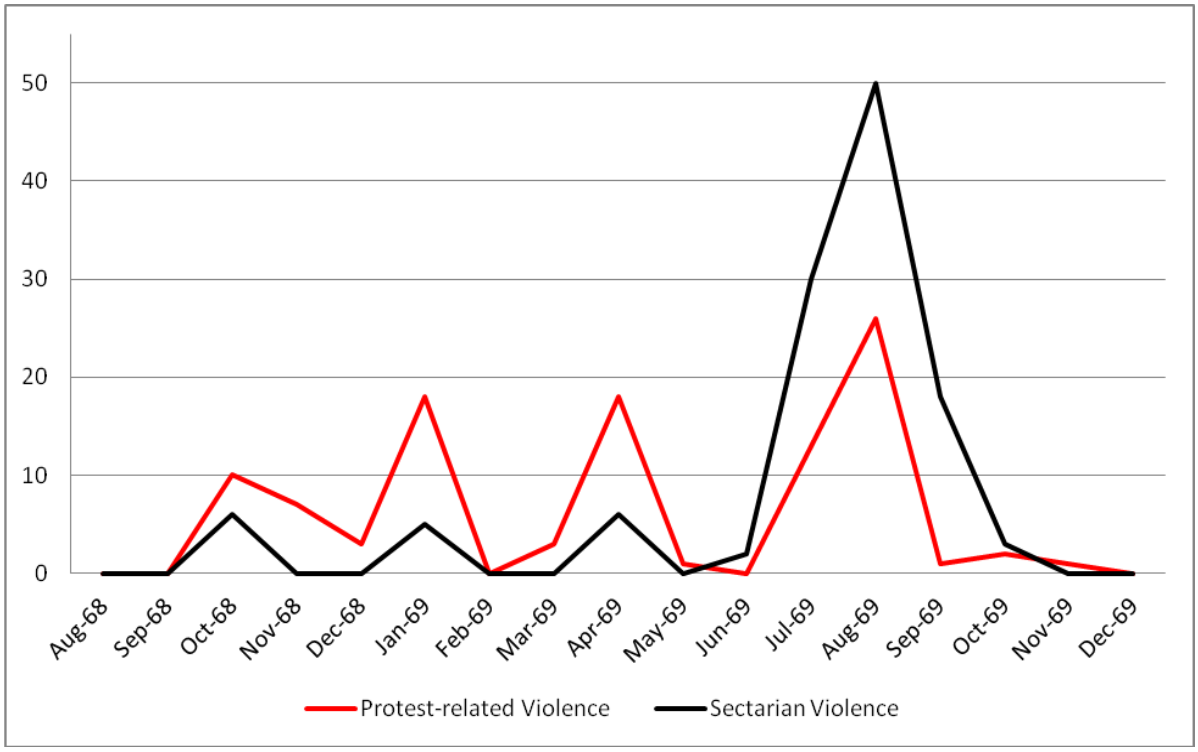

Figure 4.2: Protest-related and Sectarian Violence, Northern Ireland (August 1968 - December 1969).

Figure 4.2 shows how different types of violence unfolded in Northern Ireland during the civil rights mobilization phase of the conflict. In particular, I plotted the level of protest-related violence (an aggregated count of all violent acts perpetrated by the CRM, loyalists and the police during street demonstrations) and sectarian violence (all

violent acts perpetrated by Catholic and Protestant crowds against each other in non-protest situations). In April 1969, protest-related violence flared up again, as opposed activists and police forces clashed repeatedly, matching the level of violence that occurred in January, the month of the infamous Long March and its aftermath. In particular, on April 19, a group of loyalist supporters attacked civil rights demonstrators with stones in Derry, which led to some of the worst rioting in that city in more than a decade.[30] As a result of the violent confrontations between police forces and protesters, more than 160 people had to receive medical treatment (Deutsch and Magowan 1973: 24). In the following days, several civil rights demonstrations ended with attacks on police stations, urging NICRA and PD to momentarily suspend all demonstrations (Ibidem).

The already tense climate took on an even more disturbing outlook when a series of explosions at water pipe-lines and electricity stations on March 30, April 4, 20, 24 and 25 caused serious power and water shortages in Belfast (Deutsch and Magowan 1973: 23-25). The Irish Republican Army was immediately accused of planting these bombs as part of a republican conspiracy to overthrow the Unionist government. However, it would later turn out that a loyalist paramilitary organization, the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF), was instead responsible for the very first acts of sabotage of the Troubles. The UVF plan was to derail the O'Neill government and block his voting reforms. Nonetheless, the

[30] Deutsch and Magowan (1973: 24) reported the events: "Serious rioting developed in Derry during the late afternoon when Paisley supporters arrived in the city from the bridge at Burntollet and Civil Rights supporters were stoned. Police intervened and many Civil rights supporters were baton-charged by the police and chased into the Bogside. They threw stones at the police who used water cannons to disperse them. Later the violence increased and petrol bombs were thrown at the police who advanced behind armoured vehicles up to the entrance of the Bogside. Police later sealed off the Bogside area. The rioting continued with Civil Rights supporters putting up barricades in Rossville Street which riot police pushed aside. Police were stoned from high flats in the Bogside. Paisleyites remained on the walls and threw stones into the Bogside."

explosions failed to achieve their intended goals, and on April 23 the Unionist government conceded the universal adult suffrage, the biggest victory for the CRM yet. Five days later, under mounting internal pressure from the unionist establishment and loyalist protests, O'Neill was forced to step down as the leader of the Ulster Unionist Party and resign from his position as Prime Minister (Hennessy 1997: 161).

On May 6, the new Prime Minister of Northern Ireland, Major Chichester-Clark, granted an amnesty to all protesters who had been charged or convicted of offences committed during political demonstrations since October 5, 1968. The amnesty included the release from Crumlin Road jail of loyalist leaders Rev. Paisley and Major Bunting, who had been detained since March 25, 1969, because of their involvement in the Armagh disturbances of the past November (Deutsch and Magowan 1973: 22, 26). Both the CRM and the loyalist movement welcomed the amnesty as a sign of goodwill on the part of the new government. Moreover, PD and NICRA maintained their decision to temporarily suspend all street demonstrations to avoid further rioting (Deutsch and Magowan 1973: 25-26), thus conceding some much-needed breathing space to the new Prime Minister to deal with the civil rights agenda. So, after the turbulence of the previous months, both the CRM and the loyalist movement mostly suspended their protest activities in May (Figure 4.1). As a result, both protest-related and sectarian violence subsided again (Figure 4.2). The authorities recorded this quietness in the public order situation, as the newly formed Joint Internal Security Committee in Northern Ireland observed, somewhat optimistically, that tensions in Northern Ireland had eased

considerably.[31] However, beneath this apparent calm the process of radicalization of the CRM was well underway.

In the spring of 1969, the repeated violent confrontations in occasion of civil rights protests prompted many activists to re-evaluate their participation in increasingly high-risk contention. As violence in the streets became more frequent and more vicious, many among the initial supporters of the CRM disengaged from the movement's potentially dangerous street demonstrations, or from civil rights activities altogether. Moreover, civil rights leaders and newly elected MPs like John Hume and Ivan Cooper were now loudly voicing their opposition to the Unionist regime directly in Stormont. The fact that moderate and middle-class civil rights activists had direct access to the political process to vindicate their claims further depotentiated the strategic appeal of street politics. With the security situation growing bleaker and resentment against police brutality mounting, civil rights protests were increasingly populated by new, younger, and more radical participants. Political historian Niall Ó Dochartaigh (2005: 43) cogently described how this new generation of protesters progressively became the protagonists of civil rights contention in the city of Derry:

> "The civil rights campaign had brought large numbers of young people on to the streets, educated them about Catholic grievances and got them discussing these grievances. The successes of the campaign had given them a sense of power and achievement. By spring 1969, the civil rights campaign was petering out, having achieved some but by no means all of its demands. Moreover, a huge store of new grievances against the RUC had built up and these had not been resolved. There was massive widespread hostility to the RUC as a force, especially among the young. In these circumstances the Derry teenagers who had taken part in the civil rights campaign were like a huge army expected to demobilize without victory, with no prospect of further political involvement and with nothing to go

[31] The committee was chaired by the RUC Inspector General and included the deputy Inspector General, the Head of the RUC Special Branch and the British MI5 and Military Liaison Officers (Warner 2008: 21); 20 May 1969, National Archives Public Records, JIC(A)69(UWG)5.

> home to in many cases but unemployment and boredom. In the circumstances, it is little surprise that many of them chose to stay in the streets."

The partial demobilization of moderate civil rights organizations like the DCAC in Derry and NICRA in Belfast prompted a shift in the composition of the CRM, facilitating the radicalization of its goals and an increased acceptance of political violence within its younger, angrier ranks. According to Derry-based PD leader Eamon McCann,

> "It was difficult after [the riots in Derry on April 19] to organize a demonstration which did not end in riot, and the [D]CAC was not about to assume such responsibility. But by ending demonstrations the moderates took away from the youth any channel for expression *other* than riot. […] The 'hooligans' had taken over and the stage was set for a decisive clash between them and the forces of the state" (McCann 1974: 57-58; emphasis in original).

With the revitalization of the ethno-national divide, working class youths from Catholic neighborhoods increasingly joined street protests, attracted by their anti-establishment message and fueled by intense resentment against the RUC's treatment of the Irish-Catholic minority. Differently from earlier civil rights contention, in which activists professed a nonviolent approach to dissent, the more recent participants were animated by anti-police rage and displayed much less willingness to withstand harassment from rival Protestant hecklers and the RUC. These younger crowds would thus often resist the effort of the movement's stewards to de-escalate conflict with hostile counter-protesters, at times initiating clashes against loyalist crowds and assaulting RUC barracks (for instance, on April 20, civil rights supporters in Andersonstown and Newry attacked police stations, while in Belfast they damaged nine post offices: Deutsch and Magowan 1973: 24-25).

Moderate leaders and activists, however, tried to recover ground inside the CRM

and to re-gain some control over the direction of the movement. The intention of isolating the radicals of PD, marginalizing the 'hooligans' and returning to the original civil rights platform and nonviolent tactics was the subject of a secret conversation between the moderate civil rights leader John Hume and the new unionist Prime Minister Chichester-Clark. At the first meeting of the Northern Ireland Cabinet's Security Committee on May 7, the Prime Minister reported the conversation he had with Hume, during which the latter admitted that the CRM "could now be divided into two distinct groups – the reformers, to which he belonged, and the revolutionaries."[32] Hume also stated that:

> "it would be possible for him to split the movement but in order to achieve this he would need to have certain assurances from the Government. (1) Evidence that it meant business in regard to the one man/one vote. (2) An assurance that electoral boundaries would be re-drawn by an impartial body. (3) The drawing up of 'State of Emergency' powers on the [Republic of Ireland's] example to replace the Special Powers legislation. (4) An indication of its intention to deal with grievances at Local Government level" (Northern Ireland Cabinet Security Committee, Minutes, 7 May 1969; PRONI Public Records HA31/3/1).

In exchange for the acceptance and implementation of the original civil rights platform of universal suffrage, end of gerrymandering and draconian executive powers, Hume basically offered to isolate the more radical elements of the CRM. The Prime Minister, pressured by the Unionist MPs in Stormont and loyalist activists, could not commit to this deal and the CRM persisted in its radicalizing trend.

The Summer of 1969 and the Onset of the Troubles

[32] This committee had not met since 1966, an indication of how the issue of public order and security situation was of the utmost importance for the new government (Warner 2008: 28)

The new Prime Minister had to strike an intricate balance in pursuing the path of civil rights reforms initiated by his predecessor, O'Neill. On the one hand, not only the CRM, but also the British government strongly advocated for a bold plan of reforms (see Warner 2005) that would align the Northern Ireland political system with British standards of equal rights and fairness. On the other hand, hard-line unionists and loyalists vehemently opposed those same reforms, as well as any policy that could be considered as a 'sell out' to the "CRA-IRA front" and its alleged plans to destroy Northern Ireland.[33] The only narrow course of action available for Chichester-Clark was to keep pushing for civil rights reforms, without making them appear as victories of the CRM, or as spineless concessions dictated by the threat of public disorder. The only way forward for the Unionist Cabinet was to show that the reforms were the results of their own initiatives and that they were in charge of dictating the pace and purpose of the whole process. Ironically, the perhaps impossible mission to reform Northern Ireland would ultimately exacerbate the divisions and personal animosities within the CRM and determine the end of the movement as a quasi-unitary actor. This enhanced internal conflict would eventually diminish the capacity of the CRM to temper its more radical components during street protests, facilitating civil disturbances and violence.

As former PD activists Paul Arthur observed, the February 1969 elections and its aftermath had set forth a competitive dynamic that underscored the ideological, tactical and generational heterogeneity within the CRM:

> "One of the victims of PD's youthful exuberance was its relationship with the NICRA. In its enthusiasm to build up branches it was inevitable that it would clash with the NICRA at central and at local levels. A serious split did develop within the NICRA executive and it spread throughout the local branches never to

[33] *Protestant Telegraph*, May 17, 1969.

> be properly healed. This rift highlighted a fundamental difference of opinion on tactics and principles between the 'moderates' and the 'activists'. It was the first clear sign of a 'generational struggle' within the Civil Rights movement" (Arthur 1974: 61).

This 'generational struggle' would culminate in June 1969, when discord about the acceptability of the government timetable for reform provoked a bitter conflict inside the movement. On June 19, Opposition MPs declared that the timetable the Unionist Cabinet had proposed to reform local government and revise the Special Powers Act was "reasonable" (Deutsch and Magowan 1973: 31). However, many civil rights activists were not satisfied with the pace of reforms and took to the streets again to request sweeping and immediate changes in the governance of the province. During a civil rights rally in Strabane on June 28, PD leaders Eamon McCann and Bernadette Devlin accused the parliamentary opposition of selling out to the Unionist government, and also charged the CRM to have taken the route of sectarian politics. In his speech, McCann asked: "What the hell are three Opposition MPs (Mr Austin Currie, Mr P. O'Hanlon and Mr P. Kennedy) doing on the same platform if they believe the Government's reform time-table is reasonable?" (Arthur 1974: 63). After the Strabane rally, "the split which had first appeared in March but which had been temporarily healed was now irrevocable. Necessity, in the form of the greater enemy, Unionism, might force them to join in temporary alliance but they could never work together effectively again" (Arthur 1974: 64).

The turn of events of the summer of 1969 would, at any rate, render the internal divisions of the CRM mostly irrelevant, as the conflict in Northern Ireland was about to change dramatically in nature. In June and July 1969, civil rights protests had resumed with more intensity and with a younger and more radicalized generation of activists

engaging in marches, demonstrations and sit-ins. This new generation of protesters was also more willing to use violence against loyalist and police forces; Figures 4.1 and 4.2 confirm the spikes in both civil rights protests and protest-related violence during these months. The split within the CRM had undermined the more moderate civil rights organizations and leaders, lessening their ability to control their crowds during protest events. For instance, by July 1969,

> "the authority of the DCAC [in Derry] had crumbled and the initiative had passed to local youths. Marches, which were sometimes followed by riots, had given way to regular and often unprovoked rioting on the streets. Hostility to the RUC had deepened after the beating of Sammy Devenny in April and had spread to the moderates who had been instrumental in preventing rioting on previous occasions" (Ó Dochartaigh 2005: 98).[34]

With recurring sectarian clashes (partially a result of street protests that were increasingly out of control: see Figure 4.2) and the forthcoming Orange parades season, local residents in Derry organized to defend themselves from loyalist extremists and police forces. Thus, as the marching season approached, "the Derry Republicans set up a [Derry Citizens'] Defense Association (DCDA) which succeeded in drawing in some moderates and which displaced the authority of the DCAC" (Ó Dochartaigh 2005: 98). While initiated by local Republicans, the Defense Association gained legitimacy thanks to the involvement of civil rights activists from the DCAC. Perhaps more significantly, the killing in Dungiven of Francis McCloskey by the RUC on July 14, and the death of Sammy Devenny three days later, bred a collective fear in the Bogside that the parades

[34] In the midst of the April 19 riots in Derry, several RUC officers had chased some young rioters inside the house of Samuel Devenny, a 42 year old Catholic who had not been involved in the disturbances. Unable to find the rioters, police officers severely beated Devenny with their batons, causing him internal injuries and a heart attack. RUC officers also batoned two of Devenny's daughters, of age 16 and 18. As a result of the injuries, on July 17, 1969 Samuel Devenny died. According to Ó Dochartaigh (2005: 98), Devenny's death "eroded even further the commitment of moderates to actively preventing attacks on the RUC."

could degenerate into a full-scale attack on Catholics areas.[35] This sense of alarm, together with a shared urgency for preparedness, boosted the support for the republican-dominated Defense Association and the legitimation of the potential use of violence for defense purposes (Ó Dochartaigh 2005: 98-101).

The Battle of the Bogside. Every August, the Protestant organization *Apprentice Boys of Derry* celebrated the 1689 Siege of Derry, a key historical event in the Williamite War in Ireland (1689-1691),[36] with several parades and marches. In particular, the *Apprentice Boys*' parades celebrated the 105 days during which the Protestant troops inside the walls of Derry resisted the siege of the Catholic, Jacobite forces. The celebrations of the Siege of Derry inaugurated the traditional "marching season" of Orange parades throughout Northern Ireland, a symbolic reaffirmation of Protestant supremacism over the Catholic minority. Historian J.J. Lee stressed the anthropological significance of parades in Northern Ireland, as these are not

> "like parades in more normal societies. Because of the territorial imperative, they are contests in machismo, expressions of tribal virility, taunts to the manliness and muscle-power of the tribal enemy. They were not therefore simple symbols of protest, bearing silent, or even raucous, witness to some grievance, real or imagined. They were directed against the self-respect of the other tribe" (Lee 1989: 420).

The highly confrontational and provocative nature of the Orange parades in Northern Ireland, with their controversies over marching through 'hostile' territories,

[35] On July 13, the RUC had baton-charged an Irish-Catholic crowd who seemed to be about to attack the Orange Hall in Dungiven, County Londonderry. In the baton charge, RUC officers hit in the head Francis McCloskey, a 67 year-old Catholic. As a result of his head injuries, McCloskey would die the following day. McCloskey and Devenny are sometimes considered to be the first two 'official' victims of the Troubles (Sutton 1994).

[36] The Williamite War ended with the defeat of James II, the Roman Catholic King of England, and his substitution with William of Orange, as the new, Protestant, King

typically caused sectarian tensions and, sometimes, violent confrontations. In 1969, the potential from sectarian clashes turned into full-scale disturbances and the worst ethnic rioting in Northern Ireland to that date, precipitating the contentious politics over civil rights into an ethno-national violent conflict.

On August 12, local Irish-Catholic youths in Derry attacked with stones the *Apprentice Boys* parade and the RUC officers in charge of protecting the parade. While civil rights leaders like John Hume and Ivan Cooper tried to placate the violent demonstrators (Deutsch and Magowan 1972: 38), they had long lost control over what was happening in the streets of Derry. Sectarian clashes turned quickly into the infamous *Battle of Bogside*, a series of violent riots between the RUC and the Catholic residents of this nationalist district in Derry. According to the first-hand account of Eamon McCann:

> "The battle lasted for about forty-eight hours. Barricades went up all around the area, open-air petrol-bomb factories were established, dumpsters hijacked from a building site were used to carry stones to the front. Teenagers went on to the roof of the block of High Flats which dominates Rossville Street, the main entrance to the Bogside, and began lobbing petrol bombs at the police below. […] As long as the lads stayed up there and as long as we managed to keep them supplied with petrol bombs there was no way – short of shooting them off the roof – that the police could get past the High Flats. Every time they tried it rained petrol bombs" (McCann 1974: 59).

After two days of violent clashes, the RUC was finally able to dismantle the barricades at the entrance of the Bogside, and penetrate into the nationalist stronghold thanks to the use of CS gas for the very first time in the United Kingdom (Scarman 1972: 76). Furious Protestant crowds followed the RUC and exacted revenge against the Bogsiders by attacking their houses, smashing windows and causing devastation. With most of Derry outside of the control of the authorities, Irish-Catholic crowds in Belfast took to the streets to protest against what was happening in Derry and to divert police

forces from there. This caused even worse violence in the capital city, where, on August 14, "Catholic and Protestant crowds faced each other in Divis Street, Percy Street and Dover Street. Police and 'B' Specials tried to keep crowds apart but Protestants entered some Catholic areas and burned down houses in Conway Street and Brookfield Street. Police fired Browning machine-guns which were mounted on Shorland vehicles" (Deutsch and Magowan 1973: 39). To avoid a budding civil war, in the afternoon of August 14 Prime Minister Chichester-Clark requested the intervention of the British Army. Troops began arriving in Derry on the night of August 14 and in Belfast on the following day (Lee 1990: 428-429). Parts of the Bogside became *no-go areas*, where barricades were re-built to preclude any state authorities to gain entry into the area. The three-days of violence caused the death of six people in Belfast (three civilian Catholics were killed by the RUC during street disturbances, two civilian Protestants were killed by Republican armed groups and one Republican militant was killed by a Loyalist paramilitary group) and one in Armagh (a Catholic civilian, killed by the Ulster Special Constabulary - the 'B-Specials' - during street disturbances) (Sutton 1994). The Troubles had started.

Conclusions

The New Years Day's Long March from Belfast to Derry and the February elections in 1969 proved to be fateful in the radicalization of the CRM and, more generally, in the escalation of the conflict in Northern Ireland. Both transgressive and contained contention, unconventional and institutional politics, were responsible for the instigation

of a dynamic of intra-movement competition that ultimately led to an open conflict between the moderate and radical components of the CRM. As some civil rights leaders entered in Stormont to take part of the parliamentary opposition to the Unionist regime, radical groups like People's Democracy attempted to take over the movement, pushing its strategy towards more confrontational tactics and more revolutionary goals. The ongoing hostility of Reverend Paisley and the loyalist counter-movement, as well as a repressive RUC, completed the recipe for fueling protest-related violence in the first half of 1969. Simmering under these politically-motivated disturbances, ethno-national identities in both communities were re-awakened, as demonstrated by the result of the February elections and the increasingly more frequent sectarian clashes during the spring. In these months, the distinction between protest-induced clashes and sectarian-based riots became more and more faint, as radicalized and violence-prone civil rights protesters were increasingly perpetrating mass demonstrations and street politics, at times taking the initiative of attacking opposite groups and police stations. The attainment of universal suffrage placated only temporarily the activities of the CRM, as loyalists reacted with disdain and vocal resistance against any hint of civil rights reforms. As the marching season approached, sectarian violence and the first two Catholic victims of the Troubles at the hands of the RUC in July marginalized the moderate forces in the CRM and spurred the organization of defense groups in distressed Irish-Catholic communities. August 1969 and the *Battle of Bogside* marked the end of the civil rights era and the ominous start of the Troubles, with the intervention of the British Army, the re-emergence of paramilitary groups and the deflagration of a violent ethno-national conflict. In the next chapter, I describe how the nature of the conflict in Northern Ireland

dramatically changed after the bloody events of August, 1969 and how it evolved into an ethno-nationalist struggle in the following 18 months. Moreover, I analyze the role that mechanisms of political outbidding, hostile counter-mobilization and repression played in the radicalization of contentious politics in Northern Ireland, the unleashing of ethno-national antagonism and paramilitary violence.

Chapter 5: The Troubles and Ethno-national Contention

In the previous chapter, I outlined how during the first half of 1969, from PD's 'Long March' in January to the Battle of the Bogside in August, the changing political situation in Northern Ireland prompted intra-movement competition among the main civil rights organizations. The frustration caused by the stalled political situation, the incapacity of moderate civil rights leaders and organizations to obtain tangible results, together with the revitalization of ethno-nationalist antagonism, prepared the ground for political outbidding to unfold in the following months. As moderate political positions were losing ground and grassroots support, radical groups like PD sought to increase prominence and leadership within the CRM and gained increased control of its strategies of contention. The interaction of the CRM with its natural opponents, Paisley's loyalist movement and state authorities, not only facilitated, but critically shaped the radicalization of the movement. As the CRM and Paisleyites supporters grew more extreme in their tactics and political requests, the overall field of contentious politics in Northern Ireland headed for a new phase of the conflict. In this radicalized scenario, ethno-national boundaries, identities and claims became the organizing principle of street politics and the main source of political violence. As a result of this realignment, the field of actors participating to the violent conflict was radically re-designed. New actors, like the British Army and Republican paramilitary groups, entered into the stage of violent contentious politics, while other actors struggled to remain relevant and transform themselves in the face of an unprecedented level of conflict.

In this chapter, I analyze the descent into an ethno-national conflict and the

beginning of the Troubles through the lens of a Dynamics of Contention approach (McAdam et al. 2001). I dissect how external factors of hostile counter-mobilization and state repression induced the radicalization of the CRM and set the stage for the ignition of the Troubles. Also, I discuss how, in the aftermath of the August 1969 riots, PD attempted to outbid politically the moderates in the CRM, ultimately facilitating its radicalization. Finally, I outline how the second phase of the conflict, with the intervention of the British Army and the re-organization of paramilitary groups, shaped contention in Northern Ireland and morphed its pre-existing ethno-national divide into an open sectarian conflict.

The Radicalization of Contention

In the previous chapter, I discussed the dynamic of intra-movement competition in the CRM to stress how the internal processes shaped the movement shift toward more antagonistic claims and tactics. These internal processes, however, unfolded in close relationship with the contentious dynamics occurring outside of the CRM. In particular, the strategy of contention of Paisley's loyalist movement and the RUC repressive policing of civil rights protests were decisive in pushing civil rights organizations toward open conflict against each other and more generally toward radical contention. In this section, I detail the specific mechanisms that link the external environment of political constraints, opportunity and threats to the dynamics of radicalization in Northern Ireland.

Hostile counter-mobilization. The initial clashes in the fall of 1968 with loyalist counter-

demonstrators became more frequent and more vicious during the spring and summer of 1969. Episodes of carefully planned loyalist violence against the CRM, like the ambush at Burntollet Bridge during the Long March in January and the attacks in Derry on April 19, indicated an escalation of how far loyalists would go to thwart civil rights activities and defuse the CRM's challenge to the status quo. The 'encounters' with loyalist counter-protesters generated several radicalizing dynamics within the CRM. In particular, I analyze two main effects of hostile counter-mobilization on the CRM and contentious politics in Northern Ireland: 1) protesters' socialization to violence; 2) displacement of reformist goals with more radical ones (*object shift*).

Socialization to Violence. For many civil rights activists, the aggressive loyalist counter-mobilization and their coordinated attacks on the CRM meant their initiation to political violence. The first civil rights march in August 1968 from Coalisland and Dungannon was animated by many activists that had never participated to forms of organized dissent and contentious politics, contributing to its carnival-like atmosphere (Devlin 1969). Moreover, the adoption of nonviolent protest was a deliberate strategy that was widely shared in the movement for both symbolic and tactical reasons, even though it was more a rhetorical device than an organizational philosophy (De Fazio 2009: 174-176). In fact, when faced with harsh police tactics and aggressive counter-protesters, nonviolent principles and practices were hardly followed and implemented (De Fazio 2009: 177). The main point, however, is that many civil rights activists had never experienced political violence and, aside for a few radical activists (see, for instance, McCann 1974), it was never one of their intended goals. During 1969, involvement in civil rights protests

became increasingly subject to risks of physical injuries and legal penalties (the proposed toughening of the Public Order Act would punish mere participation to illegal demonstrations). A predictable outcome of this situation was the demobilization of many moderate activists and protesters (Bosi 2006: 93-94), or their institutionalization via electoral politics.

High-risk activism had deterred some protesters to sustain their participation in civil rights contention; however, it also induced the remaining activists to learn violent tactics to defend them-selves and counter loyalist and police aggressions. Furthermore, as already discussed in chapter 4, violent interactions with loyalists and police forces attracted previously uninvolved youths from the Catholic, working-class areas. Their participation to street protest, though, had little to do with fervent civil rights reformism and more with their ire against the unionist regime and their ill-concealed eagerness to get back to loyalist extremist crowds and the RUC.

Since mass demonstrations in the first half of 1969 tended to be more confrontational and violence-prone, the separation between movement-related street activities, sectarian clashes against Protestant crowds, and disturbances targeting RUC cars, barracks and officers, gradually waned. The deterioration of the boundaries demarcating peaceful demonstrations from violent disorders instilled among protesters the belief that violence was an indispensable mean of self-defense. The perceived and actual threat of loyalist incursions and police harassment in Catholic neighborhoods prompted a sort of ‘civilian combat readiness’ mindset in those areas, providing a further layer of legitimacy to violent contention. As a result of this socialization to violence, radical tactics were accepted as a justifiable tool of contention. For instance, by August

1969 the manufacturing and throwing of petrol bombs had become a standard routine task for many of the youngsters involved in the organized groups for the defense of the Bogside (McCann 1974: 57-59). The claim that the struggle over civil rights in Northern Ireland should be a nonviolent one was going to be surpassed by the events and relegate into irrelevance.

Object Shift. In addition to socialization to political violence - a key factor in the legitimation of extreme tactics - loyalist counter-mobilization actively shaped the agenda of the CRM and its re-positioning toward more extreme claims and goals. It did so through the mechanism of *object shift*, "a change in the relations between claimants and the objects of claim, as when an additional actor enters the scene and diverts attacks to it" (Alimi, et al. 2012: 12). When a movement appears to be successful or is threatening another group's interests and values, it is likely to generate an opposite reaction that may take the form of a counter-movement (Meyer and Staggenborg 1996: 1635-1642; Zald and Useem 1987: 247). The result of the "introduction of a countermovement with a clear agenda of inflicting damage on the movement and undermine its struggle and goals" (Alimi et al. 2012: 12) may consist of a displacement of the movement's original goals and tactics (*object shift*). Past research indicates how "movement and countermovement may attempt to damage or destroy the other group, preempt or dissuade the other group from mobilizing […]. One strategy used […] is to try to raise the costs of mobilization for the other group" (Zald and Useem 1987: 260). A strategic re-orientation geared toward an effort to oppose antagonists' mobilization rather than advancing one's political requests often prompts the relapse of the initial reformist efforts.

The emergence and successful development of the CRM in Northern Ireland had channeled loyalists' traditional aversion to the 'disloyal minority' into mass protests. The growing international recognition of the civil rights campaign only fueled the intensity and belligerence of loyalist counter-mobilization (Nelson 1984: 73-75). Similarly, Paisley and his capability to engender a popular campaign against the "CRA/IRA"[37] had a catalyzing effect on the CRM. While organized opposition may threaten one group's capability to achieve its goals, it may also provide "an opportunity for social movement organizations to mobilize resources, train and politicize activists, and engage in tactics aimed at countering opposition strategies" (Meyer and Staggenborg 1998: 1652). This was the case in Northern Ireland, where the two opposing movements entered in a self-sustaining spiral of conflict that locked them into a vicious cycle of increased militancy and antagonism.

The perverse consequences of this spiral, and its potential for serious public order disruptions, were readily detected by Northern Irish authorities in the summer of 1969. In early July, the Northern Ireland Ministry of Home Affairs asked the RUC "an assessment of the Civil Rights Movement, e. g., its intentions re marches, etc. and how far it is being riven [sic] by dissenting elements" (Letter from D. Johnston, County Inspector of the RUC, to Ministry of Home Affairs, Belfast, 7 July 1969; PRONI Public Records HA/32/2/28, p. 1). The confidential report, compiled by RUC County Inspector David Johnston, also contained a detailed assessment on "whether [the CRM] will dissolve gradually or whether it will surmount its present troubles and remain a coherent, if troublesome, force in Northern Ireland" (Ibidem). In his report, Johnston accurately

[37] The alleged equivalence, or collusion, between civil rights organizations like NICRA and paramilitary groups like the IRA was probably one of the most powerful rallying cries for the loyalist movement.

pointed to a key factor feeding the ongoing civil rights campaign - its direct antagonist Paisley and his supporters: "If the Reverend gentleman [Paisley] could only be persuaded to leave it to the Government and police […] the C.R. attendances would continue to fall away. C. R. only feeds and thrives on such opposition. But I presume *he too feels he must lead again to survive*" (Ibidem, p. 2; emphasis added). The CRM and the loyalist movement had basically entered in a pattern of what I call *tactical codependency*,[38] a situation in which two opposed movements depend tactically on the other movement mobilization, this dependency fueling each other militancy. In other words, the CRM in Northern Ireland was tactically constrained *and* energized by loyalist antagonistic counter-protests and mobilization efforts. In turn, the strategy of contention of Paisley and the loyalist movement was mostly designed around the compulsion to respond to (and attempt to obstruct) all the CRM's acts of public dissent, an affront to the status quo and Protestant dominance over Ulster.

In his report, Johnston observed how the fate and perseverance of the CRM were inextricably related with those of its antagonist:

> "[The CRM] would certainly not prosper to the same extent if Paisley would get the message that he is playing the game their way and that they thrive mainly on his reactions" (Letter from D. Johnston, then County Inspector of the RUC, to Ministry of Home Affairs, Belfast, 7 July 1969; PRONI Public Records HA/32/2/28, p. 5).

The symbiotic, if unhealthy, relationship of the CRM with the loyalist counterpart, in which mobilizing to counter the opponent acquired more tactical significance than campaigning for policy reforms, entailed a strategic adjustment for civil

[38] I borrow the term *codependency* from psychology, which usually refers to "a relationship in which a person is controlled or manipulated by another who is affected with a pathological condition […]; dependence on the needs of or control by another" (Merriam-Webster definition of codependency).

rights activists. As Meyer and Staggenborg (1996: 1652) argued, "the threats created by opposing movement […] increase issue attention and provide *tactical opportunity*, [but] they also limit the *content* of those opportunities. When a countermovement mobilizes successfully, the initiating movement may find itself trapped into reactive tactics aimed at defending the status quo rather than free to pursue proactive efforts to win new advantages" (emphasis added). Studies of counter-movements have typically predicted that the shift of focus to reactive tactics would be associated with a *moderation* in the movements' claims:

> "movement leaders are always faced with tensions stemming from the need to appeal to activists as well as to the public and third parties. The presence of an opposing movement makes these tensions more acute because *there is greater pressure to move to a moderate position in order to compete for public support*. Consequently, there are likely to be numerous 'frame disputes' (Benford 1993) as leaders seek to moderate their rhetoric and limit claims in response to the opposing movement rather than to frame demands in a manner calculated to appeal to longtime movement supporters" (Meyer and Staggenborg 1996: 1652; emphasis added).

In a political context where contention aims to convince public opinion and third parties to rally behind one's cause (see Lipsky 1968), internal debate would normally veer toward the adoption of more moderate collective action frames. However, this was not the case in Northern Ireland, where ethno-national identities had acquired primary saliency and public opinion would be neatly divided into 'us-vs.-them' mentality. In this context of enhanced ethno-national antagonism, there could be no realistically feasible attempt to convince people on the other side of the divide to rally behind the civil rights banners (or loyalist ones). Differently from pluralistic societies, in blocked political system with a deeply divided polity the emergence of opposing movements will tend to foment intra-movement competition and object shift toward more radical claims. As the

competitive escalation among opposite groups focuses on drawing together and galvanizing people 'of their own kind', rather than broadening the mobilization potential and appeal to uninvolved parties, the frames adopted will mostly be inward and exclusionary, rather outward and inclusive.

Johnston's report lucidly captured the radicalizing dynamic between the CRM and loyalists but also outlined the political situation the CRM was facing during the tense summer of 1969. In particular, the report hinted to the narrow route available to the civil rights activists, if they wished to retain their political relevance:

> "If the Movement is not to wane or founder it must of necessity become more militant - and there must come a new crop of impossible demands. The so-called moderates are caught up in this competition and must show increasing militancy to survive and stay in power" (Letter from D. Johnston, County Inspector of the RUC, to Ministry of Home Affairs, Belfast, 7 July 1969; PRONI Public Records HA/32/2/28, p. 2).

The move towards "a new crop of impossible demands", (rather than "to a moderate position in order to compete for public support" as Meyer and Staggenborg would hypothesize for a pluralistic democracy) was also facilitated by the shifting composition of the CRM. The influx of more militant activists and groups helped to fortify the growing primacy of ethno-national identities in organizing contentious politics:

> "In composition the Movement was and is Catholic, but in the beginning a Protestant sprinkling of idealists and do-gooders presented a broader facade. This has now largely been shed, however, apart from an element of radical Socialists and Communists. At grass roots the Movement has now crystallised into the familiar 'green' composed of Republicans and Nationalists, but still, as I have said, containing a vociferous minority grouping of Trotskyites or Revolutionary Socialists. I feel therefore the present struggle for power can best be seen against this background" (Ibidem).

As the ethno-national divide and identities were being re-activated and willfully mobilized, the composition of the CRM was thus becoming more and more 'green', that is filled with anti-partitionists and Irish nationalists. As a result, the initial participation of Protestants in the CRM, especially Queen's University students involved with PD's activities in Belfast, vanished. Johnston concluded his report emphasizing the role of internal competition in the CRM to predict the future moves and destiny of its campaign:

> "My prediction is the Movement leadership and policies will remain as at present - with the P. D. Trotskyites remaining a minority vociferous ginger group. In the competition though there is bound to be an increase in militancy by all groups." (Letter from D. Johnston, then County Inspector of the RUC, to Ministry of Home Affairs, Belfast, 7 July 1969; PRONI Public Records HA/32/2/28, p. 5)

Johnston's prediction would turn out to be correct in regard to the "increase in militancy by all groups" in their goals and tactics. As one of the tactical priorities for the CRM became the opposition to loyalist contention, its reformist goals were progressively substituted with ethno-national claims.

Repression. The other contextual factor responsible for the radicalization of the CRM and the polarization of contentious politics in Northern Ireland was state repression. In the system of opportunities/threats available to the various actors participating to transgressive politics, repressive tactics by state authorities tend to have the most decisive effect on the development of radical contention. Harsh methods of protest policing are typically the most conspicuous generators of political violence (e.g., della Porta and Reiter 1998). Repressive state actions increase the costs of mobilization, critically constraining challengers and shaping their trajectories of contention (Tilly 1978). Research on activists' involvement with extreme movement and clandestine

organizations has pointed out how being victims of police brutality during street protests is a major motivating factor in their decision to engage in radical contentious politics and joining clandestine violent organizations (White 1989, 1993a; della Porta 1995: 158-161; Bosi 2012). Together with offering ground to justify the use of political violence for self-defense as well as a legitimate proactive tactic, the most consequential effect of repression on contentious politics in Northern Ireland was perhaps to re-activate and boost the ethno-national divide. Boundary activation engendered the transformation of the conflict from a civil rights issue to the more fundamental (and largely intractable) issues of Partition, territory and state sovereignty.

Legitimation of Political Violence. The notoriously harsh policing of civil rights demonstrations by the RUC, in conjunction with the aggressive loyalist counter-mobilization, socialized civil protesters to the use of political violence. Transformative events (Hess and Martin 2006) like the civil rights march in Derry on October 5, 1968, when the RUC broke ranks and attacked demonstrators that were dispersing peacefully, had long-lasting effect on contentious politics in Northern Ireland (Bosi 2006). On the one hand, they set the terrain for the re-activation of the ethno-national boundaries; on the other hand, they inserted the meta-issue of protest policing (della Porta and Reiter 1998: 28) into the agenda of the CRM. Police brutality against peaceful protesters would turn out to be capable to mobilize even more effectively than the initial civil rights claims; however, it would do so by attracting young Catholic protesters who were more prone to utilize violence against the unionist regime.

By August 1969, the fear of a loyalist invasion of the Bogside during the

Apprentice Boys' parade on the 12th, and the dread that police would side with extremist Protestants rather than defend the Catholic district, was overwhelming among Irish-Catholics. It is clear that this collective feeling of insecurity and powerlessness contributed to the legitimation of violence for self-defense (English 2003: 103-104). Past police (mis)behavior against the CRM and more generally the Catholic minority mostly validated Bogsiders' apprehension of a combined RUC-Loyalist attack and the related call to prepare to repel those attacks. For instance, during the Long March in January, the RUC had demonstrated its inadequacy in defending the civil rights marchers from the frequent loyalist attacks (Hunt 1969); at Burntollet Bridge, several off-duty police officers participated to the extremist loyalist ambush against PD activists. The Cameron Report stigmatized the extent of police misconduct during the riots that erupted in Derry on January 4, after the arrival of the battered marchers:

> "our investigations have led us to the unhesitating conclusion that on the night of 4th/5th January a number of policemen were guilty of misconduct which involved assault and battery, malicious damage to property in streets in the predominantly Catholic Bogside area giving reasonable cause for apprehension of personal injury among other innocent inhabitants, and the use of provocative sectarian and political slogans. […] not only do we find these allegations of misconduct are substantiated, but that for such conduct among members of a disciplined and well-led force there can be no acceptable justification or excuse. […] County Inspector Baillie […] independent investigation has led him to reach the same conclusions as to the gravity and nature of the misconduct as those at which we have arrived in our consideration of the evidence before us. Although this unfortunate and temporary breakdown of discipline was limited in extent, its effect in rousing passions and inspiring hostility towards the police was regrettably great, and obscure the restraint, under conditions of severe strain, then displayed by the large majority of the police concerned" (Cameron 1969: para. 177).

The April disturbances in Derry also elicited "further acts of grave misconduct among members of the R.U.C., including, on this occasion also, serious allegations of assault occasioning personal injury and of malicious damage to property" (Cameron

1969: para. 180). This pattern of one-sided police misconduct escalated during the summer of 1969, when the RUC adopted a full-scale strategy of crowd control which included the use, for the first time inside British mainland, of CS gas in Derry (Scarman 1972: 76)[39] and machine guns in Belfast (Scarman 1972: 9). The Battle of the Bogside was only the culmination of the RUC pattern of sectarian policing and repressive tactics. As an English journalist who witnessed the events would later recall, "it wasn't the RUC's stoning or rare petrol bombing that shocked; it was their hate that really stunned, matching that of Catholics. The obscenities, the threats, the religious tauntings – and all coming from a peace-keeping force" (cited in: Ellison and Smyth 2000: 61-62).

Research on situational repression (e.g., Koopmans 1997: 154) shows that when police forces routinely rely on heavy-handed violent tactics to control protest, they tend to promote "frames of injustice" (Gamson et al. 1982: 123) among movement activists. In Northern Ireland, these frames of injustice were compounded by the RUC immunity for their violent misconducts. It is important to emphasize that when on duty, RUC officers' behavior was basically unaccountable to the citizenry. The RUC did not have any effective control system to identify and punish misbehaviors (De Fazio 2007: 80) and no police officer was charged or removed from its role in relation to any of the events reported above.[40] This fundamental lack of accountability, in addition to failing to provide an important restraint on police conduct, further exacerbated the resentment towards a police force that was perceived to be partisan, sectarian and determined to

[39] Before 1969, only the British Army (which also trained the RUC for its use) and colonial police forces had used tear-smoke gas, in situations of counter-insurgency in post-colonial countries.

[40] RUC officers on duty had virtual impunity thanks to the Special Powers Act (1922) and other security legislation intended to protect police's role as defender of the Northern Irish state from insurgency. Judicial review for police misbehavior was simply not available (Ellison and Smyth 2000: 24) and, before the implementation of the Hunt Report in late 1969, there was no independent body for external scrutiny of the RUC. Finally, an institutional mechanism through which citizens could submit formal complaints against officers' misconduct did not exist either.

suppress civil rights contention with violent means. Frames of injustice in Northern Ireland thus disseminated an image of police and state actors as blatantly partisan, unfair and ultimately illegitimate authorities. It is thus not too surprising that against security forces regarded as institutionally biased, untrustworthy and fiercely opposed to dissent, violent tactics became more acceptable means of rebellion.

Boundary Activation. Another critical radicalizing mechanism in the context of contentious politics is *boundary activation*, or an "increase […] in the salience of the us-them distinction separating two political actors" (Tilly and Tarrow 2006: 215). This mechanism implies that "an existing boundary becomes more salient as a reference point for collective claim making. Boundary between social classes, ethnic groups […] and other categories already exist. They organize some of routine social life. But contention typically activates one of these boundaries while deactivating others that could have been relevant" (Tilly and Tarrow 2006: 80). Tilly and Tarrow imply that contention is paramount for the activation of these boundaries, as political entrepreneurs may attempt to exploit and capitalize upon these pre-existing boundaries and their connected identities. But while various political groups may attempt to activate certain boundaries via contention, only some of them will eventually succeed. For instance, Reverend Paisley was extremely effective in mobilizing a large section of the Protestant community along the loyalist ethno-national identity. His whole political career can be synthesized as revolving around the single-minded construction and implementation of Ulster Loyalism as a legitimate and viable political project (see Bruce 1986), first in the streets and subsequently in institutional politics. Conversely, the revolutionary/socialist plans of

groups like People's Democracy have, perhaps inevitably, failed to muster protesters and activists along the traditional class cleavages. Ultimately, PD's goal to unify the Protestant and Catholic working classes against the bourgeois, Unionist regime could not be attained. In addition to the differential political ability of movement actors to 'activate' their intended constituencies, the system of political opportunities/threats shapes the political conditions determining the success or failure of those attempted mobilizations. In Northern Ireland, repression played a key role in activating certain boundaries while disabling others. Repressive actors can be a powerful force in the transformation of pre-existing identities and boundaries into organizing principles for social and political conflict.

Police repression of the demonstrations and activities of the CRM only confirmed and reinforced the widely held belief among the Catholic minority that the RUC represented the armed wing of unionism and the custodian of its exclusionary regime (Ellison and Martin 2000: 692). That belief was hardly an exaggeration. In Northern Ireland, the interests of the state (and of a police force overwhelmingly recruiting from the majority community)[41] coincided with those of the Protestant and unionist population. In the context of a society with two competing ethno-national communities, where the state was not a neutral arbiter of the conflict, but "directly embodied the domination of one section of their population over another" (Waddington 1999: 86), policing could not but be intrinsically contested. The RUC was purposefully designed as a police force devoted to "the defense of a sectarian regime and the maintenance of a social order based on institutionalised inequality between dominant and subordinate communal groups" (Weitzer 1995: 5).

[41] In 1969, only 11% of the RUC constables were Catholics (Hunt 1969).

Ellison and Smyth (2000: 24) encapsulated the essence of the RUC and its role in the political system:

> "from its inception, the RUC was a paramilitary force and one that played a highly political role. […] the RUC was charged with implementing the Special Powers Act and other legislation […] designed to maintain the hegemony of the Unionist regime. While the RUC undoubtedly performed 'routine' policing duties, these were ultimately subjugated to its primary role for the suppression of nationalist dissent."

The repressive policing of the CRM, a movement that had deliberately avoided any anti-partitionist goal and that sincerely professed anti-sectarianism as one of its ideological pillar, inevitably invited the arousing of ethno-national claims and identities. State repression was the confirmation that the unionist regime, through its strong arm, would not tolerate any public, raucous challenge to the status quo. The unionist regime would simply not allow reforming itself, in order to accommodate basic civil rights requests. Repressive policing was a constant symbolic and material reminder of the exclusion of the minority from the political process. Each violent encounter between the RUC (often in collusion with loyalist crowds) and the CRM was a reiteration of the usual message from the unionist establishment that the 'disloyal' Catholic community was not worthy of first-class citizenship (English 2011: 85). Any moderate attempt to reform Northern Ireland was progressively perceived as bound to fail. The long-established nationalist notion that the only way to terminate the unionist regime's hegemony was through the end of Partition and the reunification of Northern Ireland with the Republic instead seemed to ring truer each day (English 2003: 104). Ethno-national claims acquired saliency and primacy in the public discourse and political actors' agenda. The threat of RUC repression and violent loyalist counter-protests or incursions in Catholic

areas unmistakably fueled the ethno-national antagonism against the Protestant community.

In early August 1969, radical PD leader Eamon McCann wrote a pamphlet, alarmingly titled "Who's Wrecking Civil Rights?", in which he denounced the increased sectarianism of the CRM:

> "Once upon a time we all talked about the non-sectarian nature of the Civil Rights movement. Now we are planning to seal off the Catholic area of Derry on the Twelfth of August. *We are accepting, deepening and physically drawing the line between Catholic and Protestant working class people*" (McCann 1969: 1; emphasis added).

McCann also recognized the failure of the 'radicals' in the CRM to contain the ethno-national impetus developing inside the movement and its capitulation to self-defense, republican-led organizations like the 'Defense Association' in Derry:

> "Radicals have been pressing for the extension of the platform to include economic demands, to include in particular a programme for ending the housing shortage and for creating full employment. They have been arguing that unless this is done the demand for 'fair play' implies that Protestants should be less privileged than they are at present; and that as a result, it is easy for an adept propagandist to represent the whole Civil Rights movement as anti-protestant. The Radicals have failed. They have failed because if they insist on putting forward such a programme they would split the movement. Unable to get their point across, but unwilling to leave the Civil Rights movement lest they lose all influence, they have emerged simply as 'militants'. In Derry we have finished up participating in the 'Defence Association' locking ourselves inside the Catholic area. Probably it is necessary. One must make some attempt to avoid a Catholic versus Protestant fight" (McCann 1969: 3).

The "Catholic versus Protestant fight" became exactly the center of violent contention after the August riots and the intervention of the British Army. The increased centrality of ethno-national antagonism, however, was not exclusively an effect of repressive tactics against the CRM. State authorities, including the RUC, had a key

impact also on activating and galvanizing the other side of the ethno-national divide. In fact, the unionist government's immediate reaction to the CRM mobilization was to label the civil rights organizations and activists as covert republican fronts, whose real plan was to destroy the government (and Protestant supremacism: Walker 2004: 165). The RUC perceived civil rights protests as a direct threat to Northern Ireland (De Fazio 2007: 79) and was determined (and instructed) to treat it as such.[42] These knee-jerk reactions by unionist and police forces against the civil rights campaign only played into the worst loyalist fears and paranoia (Mulholland 2000: 137) of an imminent IRA insurgency to end Partition. The government and police responses to the CRM effectively stirred up ethno-national loyalist identities and prepared the terrain for fringe political entrepreneurs like Paisley to masterfully exploit these fears and mobilize a relevant section of the Protestant community (De Fazio 2009: 171). State repression and state authorities, then, did not just activate directly the ethno-national boundary for the Irish-Catholic minority. They were also instrumental in magnifying the fierce mobilization of the more inflammable sections of the Protestant majority - loyalist extremists - thus radicalizing the whole field of contentious politics.

The Aftermath of August 1969

The August riots and the start of the Troubles had certified the *de facto* end of civil rights reformism and the opening of a new phase of the conflict. The rise of sectarian violence

[42] Many RUC officers regarded the CRM as "nothing more than IRA" (Ellison 1997:157). The Scarman Report on the disturbances in Northern Ireland also emphasized that: "the [police] conduct which we have criticised was due largely to the belief held at the time by many of the police, including senior officers, that they were dealing with an armed uprising engineered by the IRA" (1972: 16).

in the previous months had set the stage for the eruption of the ethno-national conflict and the Troubles. The quasi-civil war situation in Northern Ireland, in which the British Army was acting as a peace-keeping force to buffer the two communities, created a disturbing political vacuum in which no political actors seemed capable to gain leadership within each community. The CRM found itself marginalized and mostly unable to formulate an effective strategy to cope with the changed situation. With the creation of *no-go areas* in parts of Derry and British troops patrolling the streets, protest activities became out of question for the CRM and more generally for the Irish-Catholic minority. As Figure 5.1 shows, civil rights activities basically vanished in the months immediately following August 1969.[43]

[43] It would take several months before civil right protests peaked again in February 1970 (see Figure 5.1) as a response to the amendment of the Public Order Act that increased repressive measures against processions, illegal protests and the formation of paramilitary associations. Once again, the meta-issue of protest policing and repression demonstrated to be the most potent enticement for public protest for the Irish-Catholic minority.

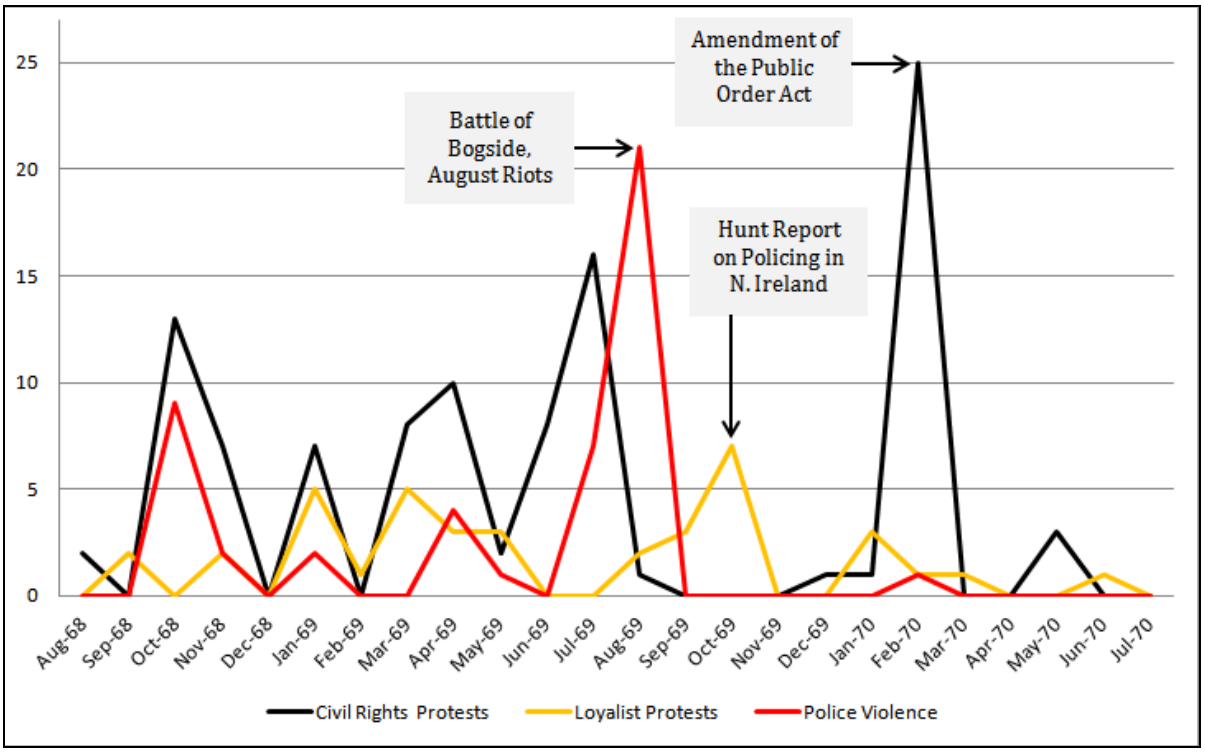

Figure 5.1: Civil Rights Protests, Loyalists Protests and Police Violence in Northern Ireland (August 1968 - July 1970).

After being elected to Stormont in February, civil rights leaders like John Hume and Ivan Cooper were pushing civil rights reforms mostly (even though, not exclusively) inside Stormont. While the most prominent moderate leaders debated the pace of political reforms and fought against the *proposed* toughening of the Public Order Act, civil rights activists in the streets were dealing with the *actual* issue of RUC's repressive tactics and loyalist aggression. The opposition to draconian police powers and their discriminatory use against the Irish-Catholic minority turned out to be the most powerful rallying cry around which anti-unionist forces could channel their anger and mobilize dissent. PD conducted a conscious effort to capitalize on the anti-police resentment and anti-unionist rage to push its own radical agenda. As the moderates in the CRM were determined to avoid a full-fledge frontal clash with counter-protesters and police forces, PD exploited

moderates' weakness toward authorities to outbid them and capture the direction of the CRM.

Political Outbidding in the CRM. In the second half of 1969, enhanced ethnic animosity and turbulent intra-movement competition facilitated the ignition of *political outbidding* among the organizations and activists composing the CRM. Outbidding is a powerful mechanism (see Brubaker and Laitin 1998: 434; Alimi 2011; De Fazio 2013), in which one actor (or a set of actors) will try to bid higher than other actors in claiming to defend or promote the 'true' interests of a certain constituency, be it a social class, ethnic group, religious minority, local community, etc. When political groups try to outbid their direct competitors within their own constituency or political 'bloc', they generally do so in search for expanded political support, increased media exposure and more recruits. Political outbidding usually generates a competitive dynamic that is based on a mix of similarities and differences among the groups participating to the outbidding race. While these competing groups share *roughly similar* political goals, vie for the same resources and target the same *broad* constituency, they also differ in the *specific* ways to achieve those goals and the *particular* sections of the constituency they try to attract and mobilize (De Fazio 2013).

The combination of intra-movement competition and political outbidding propels the internal radicalization of social movements. One important outcome of the combination of these mechanisms is the legitimation of increasingly radical tactics and goals among political activists. Claims and goals previously considered as extremist become almost necessary political requests to defend the interests, values, identities and,

eventually, the physical integrity of a constituency (on the process of legitimation of political violence, see Demetriou 2007). Likewise, an increasingly transgressive repertoire of action progressively acquires the status of a rightful 'weapon' to achieve the movement's agenda (Alimi et al. 2012).

In June 1969, an open conflict developed between PD and the moderate civil rights leaders in Stormont that had accepted the pace of reforms proposed by the Unionist Cabinet. After the explosion of sectarian violence in August, PD embarked in an open crusade against the moderates in the CRM. In its official weekly publication, "*Free Citizen*", PD activists systematically condemned NICRA and its supposedly too accommodating stances toward the unionist regime and government (Cinalli 2002: 101). For instance, PD bulletins routinely referred to Patricia and Conn McCluskey, founders of the Campaign for Social Justice and prominent moderate leaders within NICRA, as "'the McCluskey group,' 'the McCluskey junta' and McCluskey's 'in clique'" (Arthur 1974: 76), criticizing their reformism and alleged right-wing conservatism. In addition, "within the first few months of publication every opposition member came in for heavy criticism in the pages of *Free Citizen*" (Arthur 1974: 77; emphasis in original). PD accusations of treachery and selling out were part and parcel of PD strategy to take over the CRM and impose its socialist agenda (see Arthur 1974: 78). Personal animosities against other civil rights activists and leaders naturally played a role in PD condemnation of moderates. Nevertheless, through its outbidding strategy, "PD was interested in stressing its own identity. […] PD wanted to capture the support of the estranged radicals who, it believed, had been let down by the more conventional parties. […] PD saw salvation in the dream of a united working class of Belfast which 'can play a leading role

in the building of the socialist republic'" (Arthur 1974: 79).

PD envisioned its mission as a revolutionary one, in which they would convince Catholic and Protestant working classes to supersede their sectarian impulses and, in the name of class unity and shared class position, fight against the forces of international capitalism and British imperialism. PD's criticism of civil rights reformers was also fundamentally based on a Marxist critique of Northern Irish society. In a pamphlet published in 1970, Michael Farrell explained the deep-seated ideological divergence between PD and the rest of the CRM that focused on 'reforms' and rejecting extremism, rather than cultivating the class conflict:

> "The 'moderates' accept the necessity for the reforms and would usually go a bit further than the Government. They believe that when the reforms are completed N[orthern] Ireland will become a civilised democracy and in this new atmosphere the Unionist party will wither away. Then the moderates will take over – which is why most of them are interested at all. They see the real danger as coming from the extremists – on both sides. The Unionist extremists, McKeague, Paisley and occasionally Craig, endanger the passage of the reforms. If they create sufficient disturbance there will have to be a compromise. The non-Unionist, extremists – usually the PD or the Republicans – are dangerous because they may reject such necessary compromises and expose the fraud behind a lot of the Government's promises. The PD in particular may also start to agitate about economic issues and create industrial unrest just at a time when a period of peace is required to re-establish profit margins and allow a continuance of the policy of attracting outside investment" (Farrell 1970: 28).

In their quest for political power, moderates would thus be afraid of economic upheaval and political instability, rather than actively embracing them, according to Farrell. Furthermore, moderates had failed to understand the 'true' nature of the ethno-national divide as a source of bigotry and antagonism. They had not realized that the Unionist establishment consciously cultivated and stirred sectarianism as a tool to channel Protestant working class energies and resentment against disloyal Catholics, rather than rebel against the unionist elites:

> "The 'moderates' fail to understand the significance of the discrimination and gerrymandering in N[orthern] Ireland. They believe that bigotry has been fostered and pandered to by the Unionist leaders solely in order to achieve political power. They rightly recognise that if the reforms are implemented the Unionist party can no longer survive in its present form. But after that they think it is merely a question of a few discontented bigots who will gradually come to their senses. The 'moderates' fail to realise the living conditions of the Protestant working class. […] the 'moderates' fail to understand that by removing discrimination in jobs and housing they are removing a buffer which has shielded the Protestant workers from the worst effects of the economic situation in the North. Time will not soften the blow for these people; it will only sharpen it as the full force of economic depression begins to bite. […] The noble idea of building a just and equal society – which excludes them – is not likely to attract the inhabitants of the[Protestant working class area of] Shankill […]. The Protestant backlash is the rock upon which the 'moderates' will founder" (Farrell 1970: 30-31).

PD's harsh criticism of basically whoever disagreed with their ideas can be partially explained by their ideological furor: "because PD saw itself as being in the vanguard of a potentially powerful revolutionary movement[,] it did not feel itself obliged to adopt the niceties of political interplay" (Arthur 1974: 80). The logic consequence of the embrace of this revolutionary ideology was the dismissal of civil rights reformism in favor of a much more far-reaching agenda. On October 12, 1969, in occasion of PD's conference, Michael Farrell presented the following motion: "The People's Democracy, which has been active in the struggle for civil rights, for more jobs and houses, and against Toryism, North and South, believes that its objectives can only be obtained by the ousting of both Tory governments and the establishment of an Irish Socialist Republic" (Arthur 1974: 132). By the second half of 1969, PD had thus abandoned the goal of civil rights reform in favor of a socialist and anti-partionist platform to counter British imperialism and the "threat of Orange Fascism." According to Arthur, the unworkable alliance inside the CRM between PD and NICRA "was an unhappy one because as a potential revolutionary organisation [PD] did not want to be

concerned with reformist demands; and equally the NICRA was embarrassed by its unwanted radical offshoot" (Arthur 1974: 106). This alliance would come to an end in February 1970 at the Annual Conference of NICRA, when the two PD members sitting in the NICRA Executive resigned from their positions. PD activist Kevin Boyle would later explain his resignation from NICRA because of two reasons: "the fact that there was an urgent need to put PD's energies into the first priority of building a 'socialist' movement; and the fact that PD disagreed with the proposed future direction of NICRA" (Arthur 1974: 75).

Ultimately, PD overt attempt to radicalize anti-unionist forces was both a success and a failure. PD was in fact able to bring young, working class and mostly unemployed Catholics in the streets to protest and rebel against the unionist regime. As Arthur observed, "undoubtedly a section of the Catholic working class had been radicalised" (1974: 116) and PD had a role in fomenting working class solidarity *within* the Irish-Catholic enclaves. However, in their revolutionary zeal to take down unionism and its armed enforcers - the RUC and the B specials - PD (inadvertently) played up the traditional ethno-national identities of the minority community. In particular, notwithstanding their best intentions, PD contributed to the reaffirmation of Irish-Catholics' long held belief that they had being *politically oppressed* by the Protestant-Unionist majority, including (or especially) by violent *working class loyalists*. Among the Catholic minority this message of ethno-national oppression resonated much more than the accusations of *economic exploitation* by the capitalist class. PD's rhetoric also added fuel to the loyalist fire and inflated the sectarianism it strived so much to supersede. Its

attempt to unify the Northern Irish working classes gloomily failed, as Eamon McCann had already forewarned in the spring of 1969:

> "We thought that we had to keep these people, bring them along, educate and radicalize them. It was a lot of pompous nonsense and we failed absolutely to change the consciousness of the people. The consciousness of the people who are fighting in the streets at the moment is sectarian and bigoted" (New Left Review 1969: 5).

> "It is perfectly obvious that people do still see themselves as Catholics and Protestants, and the cry 'get the Protestants' is still very much on the lips of the Catholic working class. Everyone applauds loudly when one says in a speech that we are not sectarian, we are fighting for the rights of all Irish workers, but really that's because they see this as the new way of getting at the Protestants" (New Left Review 1969: 6).

In the following years, PD would maintain its radicalizing trend in the direction of revolutionary politics, eventually embracing socialist Republicanism as its ultimate goal. Once the more combative sections of the Catholics working class in Derry and Belfast were radicalized, they eventually "supported, or, at least acquiesced in, the politics of violence of the Provisional IRA. In seeking its political fortune through an alliance with the Provisional [IRA], [PD] abandoned any pretensions it may have had in healing the fundamental working-class splits. It had taken its rightful place in the Catholic radical camp in which the socialist solution became subservient to the national question" (Arthur 1974: 116).

The CRM and the Issue of Violence. Since the first acts of civil rights contention in 1968, the CRM had consciously followed the symbolic footsteps and strategic example of the African-American struggle for civil rights in the United States. Civil rights leaders always professed to be inspired by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and his philosophy of nonviolent resistance: "a force more powerful" than violence to challenge oppressive

regimes (De Fazio 2009: 164).[44] However, violent movement-counter-movement interactions and state repression had, on one hand, convinced some civil rights activists to abandon high-risk protest events, while, on the other hand, had attracted younger and more radicalized youth to participate to the movement activities. Driven by anti-police rage and eagerness to retaliate against loyalist taunts and assaults, these younger protesters were quickly socialized into political violence, how to use it to defend themselves and their 'territory', but also how to attack opposite counter-protesters, police officers and facilities. Throughout this chapter we explored the external factors (hostile counter-mobilization, state repression) and the related mechanisms that facilitated the radicalization of the CRM. We also looked into the internal dynamics and the conflict within the movement to understand the shift toward more extreme ethno-national claim-making. This analysis, however, begs the significant question: was the CRM a *nonviolent* movement in the first place? Which role did violence play in the CRM and its process of radicalization? These questions are crucial because they raise both organizational and ideological issues about the nature of the movement and its trajectory of contention. In this section, I attempt to address the issue of violence in the CRM and explore the implication that it may have on our understanding of the radicalization of the CRM and more generally of the outbreak of the Troubles.

The CRM in Northern Ireland was organizationally chaotic, ideologically disparate, with a fragmented leadership and the lack of a coordinated center of activities.

[44] For instance, in 1985 John Hume addressing an American audience, proclaimed: "The dream which Dr. King proclaimed of a glorious opportunity for a new America, transformed by the moral energy of its minorities, was for me and others of my generation in Northern Ireland the inspiration for our search for justice and equality. The American civil rights movement gave birth to ours. The songs of your movement were also ours. Your success was for us a cause of hope. We also believed that we would overcome. *Most importantly, the philosophy of nonviolence, which sustained your struggle, was also part of ours*" (quoted in Wilson 1995: 19; emphasis added).

For instance, it has been suggested that it would "probably [be] more accurate to speak of civil rights *movements,* given that the campaign operated almost autonomously in Belfast and Derry, with widely different demands, strategies and tactics adopted by the organizers" (Ellison and Martin 2000: 689; emphasis in original). The inability of the Northern Irish CRM to coordinate a unified campaign of protest within a territory large less than one tenth of the state of Georgia, is a revealing indicator of its organizational fragility. NICRA itself was not a mass based organization, but "a small, self-selected group of activists, not a movement. In theory, members of the executive committee were representatives of affiliated organisations and the committee was supposed to co-ordinate the efforts of the groups which supported it. In fact, the executive *was* the association. Executive members did all the organising work and very largely constituted the activists within NICRA" (Purdie 1990: 155; emphasis in original). NICRA was fraught with ideological (moderate vs. radical), cultural (civil rights advocates vs. anti-partitionists) and class divisions among its components. At first, this heterogeneity was kept in check and was even an asset for the movement ability to mobilize different sections of the Northern Irish society. Yet, these divisions would later on surface on the issues of tactical choices and strategic assessments.[45]

The loyalists and police aggressive reactions against the CRM found the activists utterly unprepared both tactically and strategically on how to respond to those attacks.

[45] Furthermore, conflict inside the CRM was exacerbated by its transnational links with organizations sustaining the civil rights campaign in Northern Ireland. Most of the CRM's funding originated from outside Northern Ireland, especially among Irish-American organizations. According to Maney calculations, around two thirds of NICRA revenues originated abroad (Maney 2000: 162-163). This aspect contributed to further organizational weakness rather than increased support: "while external support groups competed with each other for recognition as the voice of the movement in their society, organizations in Northern Ireland argued over whom should receive the spoils of external funding" (Maney 2000: 167). In sum, "increased heterogeneity resulting from the participation of groups from other societies […] intensified culture clashes and identity conflicts within the [CRM's] network' (Maney 2000: 171).

Civil rights leaders routinely invoked the nonviolent nature of the movement in their propaganda and leaflets,[46] however there was no active effort to "learn, teach and systematically employ [nonviolence's] theory and practice" (De Fazio 2009: 174). This was partly due to a poor understanding, mostly mediated through the lens of British media, of the American CRM and its tactics. The complexity and nuances of King and the civil rights strategy of contention in the US South was hardly absorbed, let alone implemented in Northern Ireland (see Purdie 1990: 244-245). The Cameron Report captured the CRM's misuse of the term nonviolence and its actual execution during mass demonstrations, especially from PD activists:

> "we would draw particular attention to the conception of 'non-violence' as interpreted by certain of the prominent figures in [the CRM]. Although the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association is especially dedicated to 'non-violence' the phrase is given a particular and limited meaning, among some at least of its supporters […]. In their vocabulary it is not violence to link arms and by sheer weight and pressure of numbers and bodies to press through and break an opposing cordon of police. If the police resist such pressure then it is the police who are guilty of violence - and if such 'violence' is offered then a 'defensive' violent reaction is permissible. This doctrine was presented to us by several witnesses, among them [PD leaders] Messrs. Farrell, Toman, McCann and Kevin Boyle to instance a few. With all respect to those who hold and express these views we cannot consider them other than metaphysical nonsense and divorced from the world of reality. They may provide a salve to tender consciences, but are, we suspect, an argumentative justification for bringing about what their professors desire - publicity from violent confrontation with the police and the stirring up of passions and hostilities within the community" (Cameron 1969: para 204).

Former PD leaders like Bernadette Devlin and Eamon McCann would later on acknowledge their inadequate understanding of nonviolence:

[46] For instance, during a civil rights demonstration in Newry on 11 January 1969, PD distributed leaflets encouraging marchers to maintain the peace: "no retaliation permitted, even under extreme provocation from opposing factions" (Linen Hall Library, Northern Ireland Special Collection, PD box 2). This kind of warnings, however, did not signify an adherence to nonviolent practice, but rather a reflection of the CRM's expectation of opposed counter-mobilization.

> "Almost everything we learnt from outside was by osmosis, we watched the television – that is why we probably got it wrong – we watched the black civil rights movement and we missed a bit about the nonviolent training and the reading of Gandhi and all of that" (interview with Bernadette Devlin, cited in Bosi 2005: 72).

> "We had no understanding of the personal discipline involved in nonviolent politics. It was totally naïve to expect that we would take people out onto streets, and stones would bounce off their heads, and then expect them not to react simply because we were a nonviolent movement. People just took it until they'd had enough, and the nonviolent movement was lost" (interview with Eamon McCann, cited in Bosi 2006: 54).

The CRM in Northern Ireland had borrowed nonviolent slogans and tactics from its American counterpart at a rhetorical level, to maximize its legitimacy, publicize its plights and amplify its collective action frame. However, it did not fully understand its principles and did not provide the training necessary to put into action a campaign of nonviolent resistance. To be sure, many episodes of contention validate the claim that especially (but not exclusively) the moderate leadership in the CRM was authentically committed to prevent and avert violent clashes with police and counterdemonstrators. However, we also know that some radical elements in the CRM were, at times (e.g., during the Long March), attempting to provoke a confrontation with extreme loyalists and an overreaction of the RUC to demonstrate the violent and sectarian nature of the Northern Ireland state. The relationship between the CRM and violence was contradictory at best. In particular, I would argue that the organizational flimsiness of the CRM and its unresolved ideological ambiguity toward violence fundamentally contributed to a serious lack of preparedness in engaging effectively with its antagonists. The ideological conflict among civil rights activists exacerbated their inability to respond to external threats as a unitary actor. The strategy of contention of the CRM, far from being a well-organized conspiracy to overthrow the Northern Ireland government, was a

reflection of the organizational chaos and ideological incoherence of its various components. One can only wonder if a campaign of principled nonviolence would have yield a different outcome in terms of the radicalization of the CRM and contentious politics (see De Fazio 2009: 175-176). Conversely, one could speculate whether the political system was so ideologically and materially opposed to any challenges, that adopting nonviolent resistance would have made little difference.

Conclusion

The CRM and its unprecedented direct action challenge to the Unionist regime generated a hostile and at time violent response from the authorities as well as loyalist extremists, that in turn unleashed sectarian antagonism on both sides of the divide. Confrontations over civil rights and discrimination were thus gradually replaced by a violent ethno-national conflict fueled by paramilitary organizations and counter-insurgency. As the British Army took charge of public order, the old issue of Partition and British domination over Ireland and the Irish-Catholic minority was not only revived but placed at the center of the political process for the next 35 years of the conflict. The CRM was utterly ill-equipped to control the situation in the streets it had contributed to create, let alone moderate and manage the rage caused by the August riots and the Battle of the Bogside among the minority community. Even the more radical wing of the CRM, PD, with its attempts to radicalize the movement and drive it toward socialist revolutionary goals were not up to the job of defending the Catholic areas. As Conor Cruise O'Brien (1972: 186) cogently observed:

> "(a)fter August, 1969, the radical orators had in fact nothing further to offer to the Catholic population; they never had had anything to offer to the Protestants. […] The fear of the Catholic community […] did not call for more oratory or marches, or appeals to a non-existent class solidarity, or a resolution of the hopelessly divided working class. It called for guns to defend Catholic homes. […] The stage was set for the return of the Irish Republican Army"

Deadly sectarianism and the intervention of the British Army in the summer of 1969 altered forever the rules of the political game in Northern Ireland, dictating the marginalization of the CRM at the edges of the political arena. In the final months of 1969, civil rights mobilization almost disappeared (see Figure 5.1), and the distance between radical and moderates further widened. By 1972, PD would deem "basic Provisional [IRA's] demands as being the absolute minimum to ensure peace" (Arthur 1974: 114). NICRA and moderate activists, instead, gradually abandoned transgressive contention in favor of institutional and electoral politics. The institutionalization of part of the CRM was formally reached in August 1970, when former civil rights leaders John Hume and Ivan Cooper, co-founded the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP). SDLP would soon replace the ineffective Nationalist Party as the main party of the Catholic minority with the stated program to advance civil rights *and* to end the Partition of Ireland by constitutional means. To be sure, the CRM continued occasionally to organize mass demonstrations, even though they were mostly protests against the security state and draconian repressive military and police forces. The initial civil rights reformism had evaporated under the weight of ethno-national contention and the lethal violence of the Troubles. As the CRM's opportunities to reform Northern Ireland through street politics waned, other actors took the center stage of radical contention, ultimately determining the end of the 'civil rights era' in Northern Ireland.

Epilogue

This project revisited the substantive issue of why Northern Ireland experienced an unprecedented level of political violence in the late 1960s and a lethal, thirty-five year long ethno-national conflict. As Tilly pointed out, "[Northern Ireland] presents a serious puzzle because since its formation [...] the UK [...was a] high-capacity democracy; [...] high-capacity democracies do not host much coordinated destruction" (Tilly 2003: 111). The outbreak of the Troubles (and its persistence for more than three decades) assigned to Northern Ireland the questionable reputation of the 'unwanted child' among the peaceful, Western European democracies. During the late 1960s and 1970s, violent underground organizations operated in other European countries like Germany and Italy (della Porta 1995), but the intensity and sheer number of victims (more than 3500) of the Troubles made this case unique. The atypical lethality of the conflict in Northern Ireland is compounded by the fact that one of its key consequences was the collapse of the unionist regime.

This project started by asking the following research questions: Why did the Civil Rights Movement in Northern Ireland adopt a radical strategy of contention, fostering a spiral of political violence? Why did the unionist government and the Protestant majority react viciously against the CRM? More generally, how can we explain the outbreak of the Troubles and the radicalization of contention in Northern Ireland in the late 1960s? To examine the Northern Irish puzzle, I adopted an actor-centered, social movement research perspective that aimed to systematically reconstruct the evolution of the "conflict situation" (Goodwin 2012: 3), which involved the contentious interactions that occurred

among collective and state actors. One of the main arguments of this project was that the main analytical focus should be on the relational process of radicalization that preceded the August 1969 riots, the intervention of the British Army and the conflagration of the sectarian, ethno-national conflict. In particular, its research design was devoted to outline, trace and scrutinize the trajectories of contention of the main actors that actively participated to the conflict in the streets. The analysis of the progression of the conflict situation unveiled how this shaped the actors' tactics, strategies and political agendas and clarified how the Troubles came to Northern Ireland. I conclude by summarizing the core findings of this project and articulate its contributions in trying to solve the puzzle of why the wave of popular contention that swept Northern Ireland - a wave in many respects similar to the one that the rest of Europe was experiencing at the same time - transformed into an ethno-national violent conflict.

A Contentious Politics Approach to the Troubles

In this project, I used a contentious politics approach to explain the radicalization of the CRM and more generally the emergence of radical contention in Northern Ireland in the late 1960s. The main theoretical assumption of this approach claims that the mere existence of grievances, ethnic identities and violent ideologies does not explain in itself the outburst of political violence, or the resilience of the conflict (Tilly and Tarrow 2006). This approach goes against the narratives exhibited by the actors partaking in the conflict that cite the grievances of an oppressed minority or violent irredentist ideologies as the principal causes of the Troubles.

The various conflicting factions have repeatedly provided their own interpretations (and justifications) of the Troubles and its causes. For many prominent unionist politicians and for a relevant section of the Protestant majority, the civil rights campaign had always been a façade, masquerading yet another republican conspiracy to end the Partition. When, at the end of 1969, republican paramilitaries re-organized and later embarked in a violent campaign against the British Army, the worst loyalist fears of a republican plot to overthrow the government were *seemingly* vindicated. The civil rights agitation, according to loyalists, had finally relinquished its pretension of vindicating 'British rights for British people' and revealed its true, ugly face: the umpteenth republican scheme to destroy Northern Ireland. The CRM was just another incarnation of the republican ideology of irredentist violence and the Troubles its direct consequence.

On the opposite side of the ethno-national divide, nationalists and republicans had long claimed that it was the repressive, autocratic and irredeemable nature of the unionist regime that justified the use of extreme insurgent strategies as the only way to overcome their grievances. As Richard English (2011: 85) summed up,

> "From the foundation of the Northern Ireland state onwards, militant IRA republicans had argued the following: the northern state is necessarily sectarian; it is irreformable; attempts to change it peacefully will fail, and efforts to engage cooperatively with it will prove futile; nationalists will be vulnerable to attack from the other community, will receive no protection from the state, and will require the IRA to defend them; the only way to end nationalists' second-class status is for the IRA to destroy the state, laying the way clear for a new, united, and independent Ireland."

The unionist and nationalist interpretations of the conflict became very popular and broadly shared within each community in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Ibidem).

Nonetheless, they are hardly convincing. Historian Bob Purdie (1988) has abundantly demonstrated that there were no conspiratorial purposes behind the civil rights movement. This dissertation not only confirmed this finding, it also detailed how the process of the *radicalization of contention* from 1968 to 1969 years rendered civil rights moderation politically irrelevant, while facilitating the organization of (republican-dominated) self-defense groups. In a textbook case of *self-fulfilling prophecy* - against which Anthony Kennedy, the Inspector General of the RUC, had forewarned the unionist government in the fall of 1968 - state repression against the peaceful CRM and loyalist violent incursions in Irish-Catholic districts mainly prompted the intervention of republican groups in defense of the community, setting the terrain for the subsequent IRA campaign of armed insurgency.

On the other hand, the republican armed struggle was far from being inevitable or necessary (for an extended critique of the IRA's claims about the necessity of the armed struggle against British occupation, see Alonso 2003). As Goodwin (2012: 3) remarked,

> "The use of [political] violence and terrorism—or the refusal to employ these strategies—is the result of a decision, however constrained, that political actors sometimes make. Even if they initially stumble into violence, so to speak, or employ it without much deliberation or debate, violence remains a choice."

The decision within the IRA to take up arms against British forces in late 1969 was so contested that the organization acrimoniously split into two factions: the Provisional IRA and the Official IRA. At that time, armed struggle was far from being the only available option for militant republicans, for both ideological and tactical reasons (English 2003; Bell 1971). A contentious politics approach does not dismiss the importance of these popular narratives, especially as they often work as self-serving

motivations submitted by militants and organizations to explain and justify their participation in the conflict. However, these grievances and ideology-based type of explanations are historically inaccurate and should not be accepted at face value. Most importantly, these motivations cannot account for the emergence of political violence in the Northern Irish context.

Current academic interpretations of the Troubles mostly describe the conflict as a clash between two ethno-national groups vying over the same disputed territory in the pursuit of different state sovereignties (e.g., McGarry and O'Leary 1995). The ethnic conflict argument considers ethnic identities and antagonism as the main basis and cause of collective violence. Yet, by arguing that the Troubles essentially embodied a conflict between two distinct ethnic groups, ethno-nationalist interpretations merely indicate the pre-existing conditions for the violent conflict, but not why this confrontation would surface in a specific historical period. This argument implicitly suggests that the eruption of an ethnic conflict in Northern Ireland was inevitable and would consider the contention leading to the outbreak of the Troubles as a secondary epiphenomenon. Nevertheless, the dispute over Partition and its consequences did not suddenly appear in August 1969. The institutional discrimination and, more generally, the political, economic and social grievances that the minority had to endure existed at least since the foundation of the Northern Ireland state. The 'threat' that both Stormont and the Protestant majority perceived as coming from the disloyal minority also accompanied the birth of the province and justified the establishment of its security apparatus and draconian police powers. The history of Northern Ireland is indeed punctuated by violent revolts, sectarian riots and insurgent campaigns; for instance, immediately after the

Partition, the IRA tried to topple the regime in the 1920s and then in the 1930s and during the Border Campaign between 1956 and 1962 (Bell 1971). All of these armed campaigns, however, were systematically repressed and were never the source of a sustained, inter-communal violent conflict. Crucially, these armed insurgencies enjoyed little support by the Irish-Catholic minority that perceived them as futile and counter-productive. Conversely, soon after the Troubles erupted, the IRA was capable of garnering significant political and social support among many Irish-Catholics in Northern Ireland. Rather than assuming that the popular support of extremist ethno-national claims and tactics was the direct result of ethno-national identities, this project scrutinized why and how radical claims gained saliency and paramilitary organizations acquired legitimacy during the Troubles.

Ethnic antagonism and ethno-national identities alone cannot explain the outbreak of the Troubles in the late 1960s. Furthermore, ethnic and religious animosity between Irish-Catholics and Ulster Protestants predate the Partition of more than two centuries, as they can be traced back to the Plantation of Ulster in the 1600s. Contrary to the current ethno-national interpretations, the radicalization of contentious politics that occurred in Northern Ireland during the civil rights years was *not* the inevitable outcome of ethno-national antagonism. On the contrary, the formation of radical contention leading to the August 1969 events and the Troubles constitutes the central *explanandum* of this project. The pre-existing ethnic identities, ethno-national groups and their related antagonism are not compelling or sufficient *explanans* of violent contention (see McGrattan 2010a, 2010b). This project countered the existing limitations in the literature by offering a theoretical (and methodological) approach that examined actors and their strategies, their

shifting political opportunities and threats and more generally political events, decisions and constraints in order to explain the radicalization of contention in Northern Ireland.

The Four Phases of the Conflict. This project makes a substantial contribution via the combination of a relational perspective *and* methodology to reconstruct systematically and with historical accuracy the evolution of complex fields of action during the first years of the Troubles. Differently from traditional variable-based approaches, this project put actors and their ongoing, shifting interactions at the forefront of our understanding of the contention and political violence that existed in Northern Ireland. Relying on the combination of archival research and QNA, an innovative method to collect relational data, this project uncovered the ongoing evolution of actors' contentious interactions and, more generally, outlined the trajectory of radical contention from 1968 until 1972. The analysis inductively identified four distinct stages of the conflict in Northern Ireland between 1968 and 1972, each one characterized by increasingly radical patterns of contentious politics and each one bringing about distinctive radicalizing consequences. In Table 6.1 below, I summarize the main features of the four phases, for each one indicating the politically salient events, the predominant type of violence, the main axis of the conflict and its dynamic consequences.

	Phase I. August 1968 - July 1969	**Phase II.** August 1969 - January 1971	**Phase III.** February 1971 - July 1971	**Phase IV.** August 1971 - December 1972
	Civil Rights Protests and Civil Disturbances	*Outbreak of Ethnic Antagonism*	*Resurgence of Paramilitary Activity*	*Armed Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency*
Politically Salient Events	Civil Rights March, October 5, 1968; Stormont Elections, February 1969	Battle of Bogside, August 1969; Hunt Report, October 1969; Public Order Act, February 1970	Onset of Republican Insurgency, February 1971	Internment without Trial, August 1971; Bloody Sunday, January 1972; Direct Rule, March 1972
Predominant Type of Violence	Protest-related Disturbances	Sectarian Clashes and Riots	Sectarian Violence and Armed Insurgency	Armed Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency
Main Axis of Conflict	CRM vs. Loyalist Movement vs. RUC	Catholics vs. Protestants; Catholics vs. British Army	Catholics vs. Protestants; Republican Paramilitaries vs. British Army	Republican Paramilitaries vs. British Army vs. Loyalist Paramilitaries; Loyalists vs. British Authorities
Dynamic Consequences	Radicalization of the CRM; Re-activation of ethno-national boundaries	Legitimation of Defensive Violence	Repressive Measures	Renewed Mobilization

Table 6.1: Summary of the Phases of the Troubles in Northern Ireland, 1968-1972.

In the *first phase of the conflict* (August 1968 - July 1969), the CRM challenged the unionist establishment and its discriminatory practices through an unprecedented strategy of direct action. Borrowing from the American CRM's repertoire of contention, civil rights activists in Northern Ireland employed rallies, sit-ins and anti-sectarian marches to protest against the unfair treatment of the Irish-Catholic minority. The CRM tactics and accusations inevitably upset the Protestant majority and 'its' institutions: the unionist government and the police forces. Transformative events like the civil rights march in Derry on October 5, 1968, inaugurated a wave of mass demonstrations, loyalist counter-mobilization and police repression. The clashes between the CRM, loyalists and

the RUC represented the main axis of the conflict at this stage, as well as the main source of political violence. The network graphs in chapter 2 depicted the centrality of this struggle, while the archival data in the following chapters detailed the mechanisms that instigated its escalation. In particular, the analysis focused on three arenas of contention: intra-movement dynamics, movement-countermovement interactions and opportunities/threats available in the political system. For each arena, I highlighted the internal (competitive escalation, political outbidding) and external (object shift and boundary activation) mechanisms that led to the radicalization of the CRM and more generally of contention.

This radicalization entwined with the reactivation of ethno-national boundaries to produce the conditions that led to the Battle of the Bogside and the intervention of the British Army during the summer of 1969, marking the start of the *second phase of the conflict* (August 1969 - January 1971). With the outbreak of ethno-national antagonism and violence, the main axis of the conflict involved clashes between Irish-Catholic and Protestant-Unionist crowds. Rioting became the foremost source of violence, while a new actor - the British Army - entered in the field of contentious politics and engaged in an increasingly vicious conflict against the Irish-Catholic minority. The involvement of the British Army initially started as a peace-keeping operation, but furthered the conflict by shifting the focus of contention from civil rights to Partition, the traditional terrain of nationalist and republican forces. Sectarianism and state violence also generated a need for the Catholic minority to organize the defense of their areas, partially legitimizing the use of political violence against authorities perceived as oppressive and illegitimate.

The *third phase of the conflict* (February 1971 - July 1971) was marked by the resurgence of republican paramilitary groups, as they escalated their roles and tactics from 'active defenders' of the community to full-blown anti-British insurgency. In February 1971, the Provisional IRA declared war against the British authorities, starting a deadly armed struggle to end Partition. Insurgency, together with the ongoing ethno-national rioting, fueled the violent conflict, as a new axis of contention between paramilitary organizations and security forces dramatically increased the lethality of the Troubles. With the escalation of the conflict came the intensification of repressive and draconian security measures to curb insurgent groups, members and activities.

The introduction of internment without trial set off the *fourth phase of the conflict* (August 1971 - December 1972), when armed insurgency and counter-insurgency took up the center of the network of violence. As the fight between republican paramilitaries and security forces spiraled to unprecedented levels of violent deaths, loyalist paramilitaries too joined this axis of armed conflict to counter the IRA and 'preserve the Union'. Heightened repressiveness against the Catholic minority revived the civil rights network to protest against internment and seek an end to Partition. During a NICRA march in Derry in January 1972, the British Army shot dead 13 peaceful marchers (Bloody Sunday), further precipitating the political situation. The dissolution of Stormont and the imposition of the Direct Rule in March certified the formal end of unionist domination over Northern Ireland, sparking another front of contention between loyalists fearful of an impending break-up of the Union and British authorities.

The four phases of the conflict emphasize the causal relevance of actors, their interactions and trajectories in understanding the outbreak of the Troubles. The analytical

disaggregation at the level of actors and interactions was possible thanks to the use of story grammars and semantic triplets, rather than coding schemes and event counts. To be sure, this is not the first attempt to study the conflict in Northern Ireland by disaggregating the analysis at the actor level. For instance, White (1993b) used monthly counts of violent political deaths caused by republican paramilitaries, loyalist paramilitaries and security forces as dependent variables and regressed them on measures of regime repressiveness, unemployment and deaths by other actors. White concluded his study by observing that: "In Northern Ireland, anti-state insurgents, pro-state vigilante counterinsurgents, and the state are all caught in a complex web of violence. These groups have different motivations, and the dynamics of the conflict in Northern Ireland cannot be understood without examining the violence perpetrated by each group" (White 1993b: 583). This project embraced this view and advanced it in several ways. First of all, thanks to its research design and the use of story grammars to parse narrative texts, this study examined *all* instances of political violence and radical contention (not just aggregate counts of deaths) in its analysis. The fine-grained data about the various types of contentious (both violent and nonviolent) actions in each phase of conflict gave a much more granular view of the conflict and its transformation over time and space. Thus, recording the *verbs* of the events, rather than counting events, made it possible to identify the four distinct phases of the conflict and accurately track the process of radicalization.

Second, while White's (1993b) efforts to unpack actors' deadly strategies are laudable, his time-series regressions are still relatively *static*, as they cannot incorporate the evolving *interactions* between actors and their changing strategies. A variable-based

approach is ill-equipped to take into account how the contingent and fluid *socio-historical context* may affect the various actors' range of tactics and targets available and the constraints on carrying out their strategies of contention. Conversely, this project aimed to offer a much more *dynamic* account of the outbreak of the Troubles, showing how the various actors shifted their tactics and targets as they adapted to changing opportunities and threats. Ultimately, analytical disaggregation at the actor level allowed the unveiling of how the complex, multiple conflicts (CRM vs. Loyalists vs. Police; Catholics vs. Protestants; Republican Paramilitaries vs. British Army; Loyalists vs. British Authorities) developed during the Troubles, vis-à-vis the underlying ethno-national division. In sum, an actor-based, rather than variable-centered approach, provided not just a more nuanced appreciation of the evolving field of contentious politics, but also a relational understanding of radical contention and political violence in which actors are not reduced to variables but are central in the explanation of the Troubles.

Despite the advantages of this project, this new, relational understanding of the Troubles leaves certain questions unanswered. With its focus on collecting data on the 1968-1972 years, this project may not have accounted for the distinctiveness of the Troubles in Northern Ireland's history. In other words, why was *this* episode of contention different from past outbursts of ethno-national violence in Northern Ireland? In the next section, I discuss how this dissertation can possibly address this question.

Why Was This Time Different? Civil Right Contention and the Troubles. A key conclusion of this dissertation is that *the Troubles were a direct consequence of the mass*

mobilization that had preceded the precipitation of the conflict in August 1969. It was the unprecedented use of a nonviolent (or better, unviolent) repertoire of contention, inspired by the CRM in the United States and facilitated by the international context of mass rebellion in 1968, that made the Troubles possible. The civil rights mobilization, loyalist counter-mobilization and police repression created the conditions for a radically different type of conflict to unfold, instigating a political situation with few possibilities and incentives for political compromise and negotiation. Differently from past insurgent campaigns, this time the brutal partiality and repressiveness of the unionist regime had shown its face against the peaceful civil rights marchers. The amplified sectarian tensions and premeditated loyalist incursions in Catholic districts had created a need for self-defense. The international condemnation of the unionist regime and its increased isolation from the British government instilled in the Protestant majority a feeling that it was being abandoned to fight against its most formidable opponent: republican armed struggle. In other words, the wave of popular contention in 1968-1969, together with the violent response by the state authorities, made it possible to expose (and publicize to the world via the international mass media) the second-class status of the minority in Northern Ireland. It also showed the indefensible nature of a biased, confessional state in the midst of Europe and the fragility of unionist institutions.

Civil rights contention and the loyalist reaction had also uncovered how the staunch loyalty of its Protestant-Unionist majority to the Crown was not without critical reservations. Many unionists "remained loyal to a Crown that once threatened them with Irish Home Rule, because (*and as long as*) the Crown maintained the Protestant cause" (Rose 1976: 260-261; emphasis added). When the British government interfered with

Northern Ireland politics and tried to force Stormont to align to British democratic standards, the loyalist reaction was furious. On the night of October 11, 1969, following the publication of the Hunt Report that recommended the disbandment of the notoriously sectarian B-Specials, loyalist crowds in Belfast clashed with the RUC and British troops (Deutsch and Magowan 1973: 47-48). During the disturbances, loyalists shot dead an RUC officer (the very first policeman killed as a result of the Troubles), while the British Army shot and killed two civilian Protestants (Sutton 1994). When London threatened to shut down Stormont and impose the Direct Rule in 1972, an open conflict emerged between loyalists and the British authorities, as Ulster Protestants felt they were being abandoned and betrayed by the Crown.

According to McGrattan (2010a: 8), since 1968,

> "the changing political context and the intervention of the British state [in Northern Ireland] inspired perceptions of opportunity or threat, influencing local decision-making. Thus, a situation of deepening communal division was created, not simply due to the existence of antagonistic communities, but also because *specific decisions encouraged political entrenchment and communal polarization*" (emphasis added).

In this project, I emphasized how some key *political decisions* had fateful consequences on the radicalization of contention. The unionist government's reluctance to approve immediately even basic civil rights requests like universal adult franchise in the fall of 1968 was crucial in keeping the CRM in the streets and fostering its mobilization. O'Neill's promise of a reform package during the Crossroad speech in December was simply 'too little, too late.' The decision by the radicals within PD to defy the truce between O'Neill and the CRM by holding the Long March despite (or because of) the potential to create disorders and violence was fateful too. The Burntollet Bridge

ambush and the clashes between loyalist crowds, civil rights supporters and the RUC further polarized the political situation, exposing activists to political violence and attracting more radical youths to street demonstrations. Perhaps, though, the most consequential decisions entrenching the Troubles concerned the hardening of the security measures by the Northern Ireland government, first with the Public Order Act and most notoriously with the internment without trial of suspected republican insurgents in August 1971. These decisions not only reinforced the polarization of the polity and further invigorated the more radical components among the Irish-Catholic community; they also reduced the political relevance and effectiveness of the moderates (see: Hamill 1985: 63). The broader sociological point is that in a radicalized situation of heightened conflict and political violence, *law and order policies have the strongest effect in shaping contention, its intensity and direction*. Harsher security policies like internment without trial boosted the political support for republicanism and fueled IRA violent insurgency (see Figure 2.4). Internment also sparked intense outrage among moderate and radicals alike in the Irish-Catholic minority and momentarily revived the protest activities of the CRM: Bloody Sunday occurred during a NICRA march in Derry to protest against internment (see Figure 2.5 and 2.6). Before internment, public order legislation and policing issues were capable of generating the most intense level of mobilization in both communities. Anti-police rage, rather than civil rights idealism, drove scores of Irish-Catholic youths to join civil rights demonstrations in the spring of 1969 during which they would often attack RUC officers and facilities. In February 1970, when Stormont, despite the strong opposition from the minority, decided to modify the Public Order Act to punish more severely participants to illegal demonstrations and to obstruct protest

activities in general, the CRM organized the largest number of demonstrations yet (see Figure 5.1, reposted below for convenience).

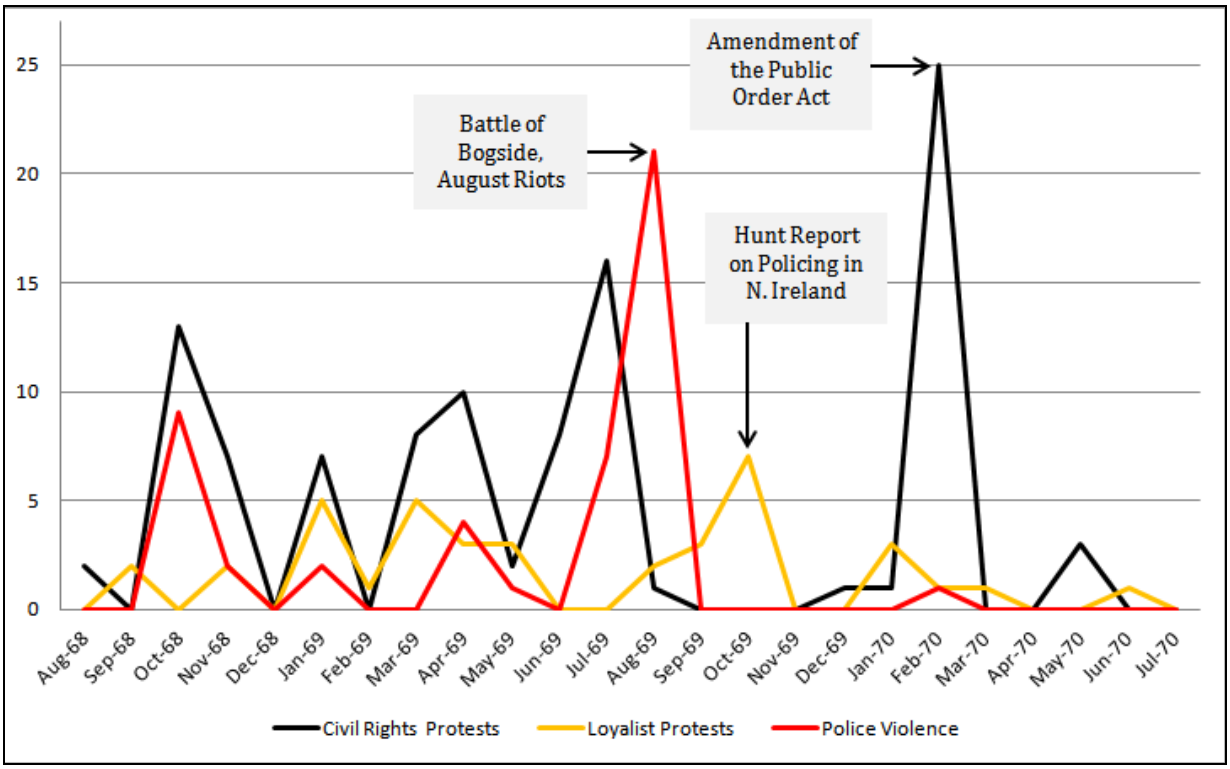

Figure 5.1: Civil Rights Protests, Loyalists Protests and Police Violence in Northern Ireland (August 1968 - July 1970).

Another security-related policy enraged loyalists and drove them to the streets even more than the civil rights campaign: the decision by the unionist government to fully accept the Hunt Report on the reform of policing in Northern Ireland. The Hunt Report recommended, among other things, the demilitarization of the RUC and most importantly the disbandment of the B-Specials, the *de facto* Protestant militia that often colluded with loyalists in their attacks on Catholic areas. Enraged loyalists took to the streets to protest against the termination of 'their' police force and the betrayal from the unionist government in endorsing such an affront. As previously mentioned, violent

clashes in Belfast between Protestant crowds and security forces led to the killing of a police officer and two civilians. A major conclusion of this project, then, is that *in the context of a divided society, where state authority is deeply contested and where one section of the polity claims 'ownership rights' over state institutions, issues of protest policing, public order and security become the central focus of mobilization and violent contention.* Political decisions and security policies thus fundamentally influenced the radicalization of contention and the outbreak of the Troubles; these factors, though, also filtered into, and were shaped by, *intra-group dynamics*.

Especially inside the Irish-Catholic community, the dynamics of competitive escalation occurred first within the CRM, with PD trying to take control of the movement toward more radical goals and tactics, and then inside militant republicanism, culminating in the IRA split into Officials and Provisionals (see Alimi and Bosi 2008; Alimi et al. 2012). Internal competitive dynamics, however, were at play inside *each* bloc of the ethno-national divide, as in the Protestant side Paisley and loyalist activists countered with very aggressive, if not openly violent, tactics against the civil rights campaign. Moreover, loyalists pushed for more intransigent and repressive policies against the CRM first, and the IRA later.

The mechanisms of internal competition and political outbidding offer a unique insight into two antagonistic, yet specular dynamics of escalation. These opposed radicalizations, though, were not symmetrical in their outcomes. The CRM was the challenger of the status quo, while the loyalist counter-movement represented the staunch defender of the state, their radicalization thus affecting the outbreak of the Troubles in distinct ways. The radicalization inside the Protestant bloc was decisive because it spilled

over and constrained the unionist establishment response to the challenge coming from the CRM. Under pressure by loyalist contention and its increasing aggressiveness, the unionist government adopted tougher law and order policies to tackle civil rights protests and more generally to repress nationalist dissent. The embrace of radical contention (and rhetoric) by the unionist bloc had very different results (i.e., more intransigent government policies toward civil rights requests) than the radical contention by the CRM because of their opposite political positions in the Northern Irish polity and power structure. A radicalized CRM, of course, also affected the outbreak of the Troubles and its entrenchment, as it had mobilized a portion of the minority that was not averse to violence and was motivated by exacting revenge against the police and loyalists. In a vicious cycle of threat and repression (see Goldstone and Tilly 2001), the internal radicalization of the two blocs led to increased sectarian antagonism and state violence, preparing the conditions for the August 1969 riots and the outbreak of the Troubles.

Political decisions and internal dynamics then interacted to radicalize contention and facilitate the transformation of the conflict into an ethno-national one. *Inter-group contentious interactions* (clashes between civil rights protesters, loyalist counter-protesters and police, republican paramilitaries and the British Army, etc.) is the last arena I examined to understand the emergence of the ethno-national conflict. In particular, I observed how the tactical codependency between civil rights and loyalist tactics shifted the primary focus of their strategies of contention as primarily geared toward mobilizing against their opponents. Perhaps most importantly, state repression of the CRM re-activated ethno-national boundaries and the issue of Partition was once again

disputed and fought over, provoking the re-organization of republican paramilitary groups.

The escalation of political violence and the start of a new phase of the conflict in August 1969 ended up relegating the CRM to political irrelevance and its eventual demise. The increased violence, rather than to delegitimize the extreme factions in both blocs, brought them to the fore. Moderate forces lost their appeal and political support in favor of radical groups and ideologies. As English pointed out,

> By the early 1970s-after the attacks on Catholic areas, the batoning of civil rights marchers, the harsh actions of the British army-many [Irish-Catholics] had, perhaps unsurprisingly, come to be persuaded [by republicanism]. Not only, therefore, were you prepared to use violence to hit back at the people who had hit your own community first; you also had an ideological framework providing you with justification, explanation, and a seeming hope of victory" (English 2011: 85).

This dissertation put actors and their interactions at the center of a relational understanding of the Troubles and its outbreak in the late 1960s. While mostly focusing on reconstructing the dynamics of radical contention during the 1968-1972 years, this project was also able to investigate the unique nature of the conflict in Northern Ireland. In particular, its main sociological contribution was to highlight how in divided societies, contestation over state authorities and public order are at the core of political contention. These fundamental issues were indeed capable of provoking the most heated responses among the two battling communities, critically shaping the rhythm, intensity and viciousness of political violence. This project has shown the centrality of the nexus between contention and the state's indiscriminate responses to it in the development of radical contention. This finding is critical both for scholars of political violence and policy-makers dealing with contentious activists and rebellions.

Methodological Appendix

This dissertation was designed as a *case study*, within an historical-interpretive paradigm (Alford 1998: 72-102) that entails the generation of "richly detailed, thick, and holistic elaborations and understandings of […] social phenomena through the triangulation of multiple methods that include but are not limited to qualitative procedures" (Snow and Trom 2002: 151-152). A case-oriented research strategy aims to understand a system of interaction and explain its evolution in time and space thanks to the use of multiple methods and data sources. The ultimate research goal is to obtain a "multiperspectival orientation" (Snow and Trom 2002: 154) that can reconstruct the whole range of relevant participants involved in the system of interaction under scrutiny. This dissertation examines the system of contentious interactions that developed in Northern Ireland between 1968 and 1972, a system that included the challengers of the polity (the CRM and, more generally, the Irish-Catholic minority), their allies, opponents and state authorities operating at the regional (e.g., the Northern Ireland government, the RUC) and national level (e.g., the British government and Army). To comprehend the process of radicalization that unfolded within that system of interactions, this project relies on a variety of sources of data concerning collective events, the relationships between actors, their framing of the conflict, their perceptions and assessments of other actors and events, and their repertoires and trajectories of contention.

The quantitative component of this dissertation employs Quantitative Narrative Analysis (QNA) to map systematically the dynamics of contention in Northern Ireland. Processes of political radicalization, as well as mobilization, counter-mobilization and

repression, are tracked down through counts of actors' interactions with each other, according to different spheres of actions (violence, control, protest). These interactions, and their evolution over time, are graphically displayed through the elaboration of sequential network models of interaction. The spatio-temporal diffusion of collective events, such as protest and violence, are mapped through GIS tools.

The qualitative side of the project complements the findings obtained through QNA. For all the richness of its analyses, QNA does not directly address issues of meaning, nor can it render actors' interpretation of events and their formulation of alternative courses of action. To investigate in more depth actors' strategies and the justifications for their claims and tactics, I conducted archival research in different research sites in Northern Ireland.

Methodological Approach

Quantitative studies of protest and political violence have traditionally relied on the systematic count of events and their characteristics, a technique usually called Protest Event Analysis (PEA). PEA has probably been one of the most important methodological contribution in social movement research, as this has been used to

> "systematically map, analyze and interpret the occurrence and properties of large numbers of protests by means of content analysis […]. It is a method that allows for the quantification of many properties of protest, such as frequency, timing and duration, location, claims, size, forms, carriers, and targets, as well as immediate consequences and reactions" (Koopmans and Rucht 2002: 231).

Based upon a systematic content analysis of texts, especially newspapers articles, the unit of analysis of PEA is the collective event (e.g., protest, riot, vigil, etc.), while

regression and time-series analyses are the typical statistical tools employed for data analysis. PEA has been extensively used for the study of historical episodes of contention. For instance, in the 1970s, Charles Tilly and colleagues conducted pioneering research about 19th century waves of contention in France and, more generally, Europe (Snyder and Tilly 1972; Tilly, Tilly and Tilly 1975), while in the 1980s scholars like McAdam (1982) and Tarrow (1989) used PEA to examine more contemporary cycles of protest. As the popularity of PEA thrived, scholars started to use it to conduct cross-national studies of social movements mobilization (e.g., Kriesi, Koopmans, Duyvendak and Giugni 1995), confirming the ductility of this technique to refine its scope and aims (see Rucht and Koopmans 1999; Rucht, Koopmans and Neidhardt 1999; Koopmans and Rucht 2002).

PEA however shares some of the limitations of social scientific, quantitative approaches to socio-historical research that mainly focus on exploring relationships among variables. According to historian Geoffrey Elton, "(t)he social science methods […] were designed to analyze structure (static conditions) and were thus ill-equipped to cope with the basic problem of history, that is change through time" (Elton 1983: 112). As Franzosi also pointed out, the "real problem with a narrowly focused statistical approach to history is that it encourages a view of history and social relations as *'variables'* rather than as *social actors*. The agents of history (whether individuals, institutions, social groups or classes) are nowhere to be seen" (Franzosi 2004: 240; emphasis added). For the most part, PEA is not concerned about the different *actors* participating in the *collective event*, their actions and interactions. The analytical focus is indeed the 'challenger' of the polity, at the expense of other relevant actors, such as

counter-movements or the police. This limitation prevents a full understanding of "who did what, how and why," possibly the most important aspects of contentious politics.

This project relies on Quantitative Narrative Analysis (Franzosi 2004, 2010), an innovative methodological approach that aims to put back actors and their interactions as the key analytical focus for the study of contentious politics (Franzosi 1999). Relying on the linguistic properties of texts, QNA is a set of techniques designed to collect large quantities of narrative data, while still preserving the centrality of actors and their interactions for socio-historical research purposes. Rather than using coding schemes or event counts, QNA relies on computer-assisted story grammars as the main tool of data collection. Basically, story grammars concern "the linguistic structure <subject> <action> <object> and respective modifiers that characterizes simple narrative text" (Franzosi 1999: 133). With QNA, the unit of analysis is not the collective event, but the semantic triplet, or the S-A-O (Subject-Action-Object) form and its modifiers, the most basic narrative structure accessible in a text. QNA thus crucially implies an important shift from the traditional General Linear Model of variable-centered explanations, to actor-based narrative explanation.[47]

Quantitative Narrative Analysis. Prominent linguists such as Propp (1968), Greimas (1966) and Labov and Waletzky (1967) have been examining for years the structural properties of narratives, pinpointing their basic invariant functions. In particular, they pointed towards the most basic narrative structure accessible in a text: the sequence Subject (S) – Action (A) – Object (O) and respective modifiers (Franzosi 2010: 11-14).

[47] On the broader sociological implications of moving from variables to actors, see Franzosi 2004: 238-247. For a compelling manifesto advocating for narrative-based explanation in the social sciences, see Abell 2004.

The SAO sequence is also labeled *semantic triplet*, forming the relational structure of a "story grammar" (see Figure 7.1). Taking advantage of the structural properties of narrative, Franzosi (1997) adopted highly formalized and computerized story grammars as the cornerstone of QNA. A story grammar is "the set of rules that provides the categories into which the various invariant elements of a story fall (e.g., actor, action, time, space), the nature of each category (e.g., a text, a number, a date; allowed to occur one or multiple times), and their reciprocal relationships" (Franzosi 2010: 23). Basically, the story grammar is the analytical tool through which the narrative text will inform us about the 5 Ws of journalism: Who, did What, When, Why and Where (and How) (Appendix A contains the full story grammar for this project).

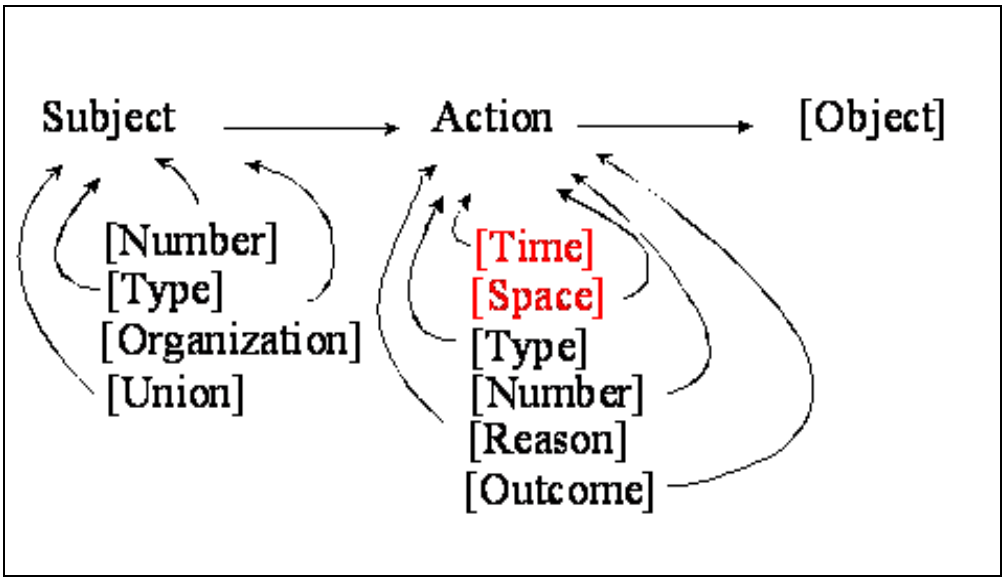

Figure 7.1: The Relational Structure of a Basic Story Grammar.

The organization of a story grammar is formally represented by a set of rewrite rules (Franzosi 2010: 23-24), symbolized by a right-pointing arrow (→). A rewrite rule

indicates how an element to the left of the symbol can be rewritten in terms of the elements to its right. For example, consider this brief story grammar:

Macro-event	→	{ < event > }
< event >	→	{ < semantic triplet > }
< semantic triplet >	→	{ < subject > } { < action > } [{ < object > }]

Figure 7.2: An Excerpt of Story Grammar (adapted from Franzosi 1997: 277).

This basic story grammar organizes the spatially and temporally situated actions of the actors involved in a particular semantic triplet, into an event. Also, the story grammar arranges the events into a higher level of aggregation, a macro-event. The first line in the grammar shows that a macro-event can be rewritten into one or more events; in fact, the symbol {} means that the item inside the brackets can be repeated several times. In the second line, the grammar states that the < event > can be rewritten into one or more semantic triplets. The symbols < > indicate that 'event' is a non-terminal item (i.e., "it can be further rewritten in terms of other elements" Franzosi 1998b: 83). Finally, the < semantic triplet > can be rewritten as a series of < subject >, < action > and < object >. The symbols [ ] specify that < object > is an optional term: in the case of a semantic triplet, this means that 'subject' and 'action' are necessary items, while 'object' is not.[48] The elements of the semantic triplets can in turn be rewritten according to their properties and attributes. For instance, < subject > can be rewritten as follows:

[48] For instance, in the sentences "workers strike", or "the civil rights movement marched through the streets of Derry", the actions of striking and marching do not have an *explicit* recipient object (the object, though, might be implicit or abstract: workers might be striking against government policies, while the civil right movement might be marching against discrimination).

< subject >	→	< actor > [{ < actor modifier > }]
< actor >	→	crowd, workers, police, …
< actor modifier >	→	[{ < number > }] [{ < type > }] [{ < organization > }]
< number >	→	one, two, …, several, … hundreds, … thousands, …
< type >	→	male, female, armed, …
< organization >	→	FIAT, Civil Rights Movement, …

Figure 7.3: An Excerpt of Story Grammar (adapted from: Franzosi 1997: 277).

A subject can be rewritten as actor and its modifiers. An actor can consist of a crowd, or police or whoever is the agent in the semantic triplet. But we are also interested in knowing the attributes and properties of these actors. For instance, we might want to know the number of the actors involved in a demonstration, or the organization(s) who have participated in a movement's protest. The same logic applies for < action >, that can be rewritten according to action and their modifiers (e.g., in terms of time and space, type of action, duration, etc.; see Franzosi 1997: 278), and < object >.[49] The rewrite rules I presented in the previous figures are just a handful of the tens of lines that comprise a full story grammar (see Appendix A; also, to provide a better understanding of how a semantic grammar parses narrative texts, Appendix B shows the coded output of one of the narrative texts collected for this project).

One of the main advantages of story grammars is that the coding of the text is mostly independent from the researcher's theoretical perspective, as it originates directly from the linguistic properties of the text itself (Franzosi 1999; 2010: 36-37). Furthermore, story grammars allow the analytic disaggregation of the protest events into the actors participating in them, their characteristics and the types of the relation which link them.

[49] For examples of narrative texts coded with a semantic grammar, see: Franzosi 1997; 1998b; 2004.

In fact, "a [story] grammar structures narrative information within the basic template SAO, or subject, action, object, where both subjects and objects are typically social actors […]. In other words, the basic structure of a [story] grammar links social actors around specific spheres of action" (Franzosi 1998a: 526). The analytical focus on actors and their relations enables the use of techniques of data analysis such as network models (see: Franzosi 1997; 1999; 2004; 2010; Franzosi et al. 2012), that are extremely effective not only in portraying the type of relations established between collective actors, their allies, opponents, and state agents, but also their evolution over time.

Software for QNA: PC-ACE. The use of computer-assisted story grammars to collect, code store and manage data requires specialized software. For this project, I employed PC-ACE (Program for Computer-Assisted Coding of Events), "a software program designed to carry out quantitative narrative analysis for large-scale sociohistorical research" (Franzosi 2010: 75).[50] PC-ACE contains several tools which render the implementation of a QNA project optimal, as it allows: 1) the development and set up of a story grammar specifically tailored to researchers' needs; 2) the maximization of data-entry speed; 3) the examination of data reliability; 4) the querying of the data via Structured Query Language (SQL); 5) the aggregation and update of data (Franzosi 2010: 101-102).

Sources of QNA Data. For this project, I relied on the three volumes of "Northern Ireland 1968-73. A Chronology of Events" compiled by Deutsch and Magowan (1973;

[50] PC-ACE is a software freely available for download at http://www.sociology.emory.edu/rfranzosi/pc-ace/.

1974; 1975) to construct a relational database of collective events. The three volumes are filled with around ten thousand chronology entries that briefly report all the politically-related events occurred in Northern Ireland on a daily basis. I coded only the entries that described episodes of contention such as protests, riots, sectarian and political violence; these events made up about a quarter of all the entries in the chronology.

Deutsch and Magowan based their work on *Fortnight*, a Northern Irish political and cultural magazine that systematically detailed about all the politically salient events occurred in the previous fortnight. In the first volume of their chronology, the authors state that: "It has been our aim to present in this book a factual record of events affecting Northern Ireland, within their proper time sequence, for the five-year period, 1968-1973" (Deutsch and Magowan 1973: ix). This chronology is indeed an impressively rich source of information and scholars of the Northern Ireland conflict have extensively used it for research purposes. Social scientists have especially relied on the chronology to quantify episodes of political violence, protest and state repression. For instance, Peroff and Hewitt (1980: 597) used the chronology to tally the monthly number of riots in Northern Ireland between 1968 and 1973; Robert White instead relied on these data to measure the level of IRA's violence in Derry (White 1989: 1284) and civil disturbances in Northern Ireland during the 1969-1972 years (White and White 1995: 339; see also: White 1993b, 1999). Greg Maney partially relied on this chronology to build his database of protest and conflict events in Northern Ireland from 1963 till 1972 (Maney 2001: 77; 2007). Quantitative researchers have mostly employed Deutsch and Magowan's chronology to count violent or protest events in Northern Ireland and used them as variables for statistical manipulation. However, the entries of this chronology have not yet been

utilized to compile a database that, rather than collecting event properties, records actors and their interactions in time and space *within each event*. These chronology entries are perfectly suited for this actor-centred methodological approach. In fact, each record in the Deutsch and Magowan's chronology details the actors involved in a particular event, describing what happened (who did what and pro/against whom), where and when. For instance, this is a typical chronology entry:

> May 20, 1968: "About 500 Protestants gathered outside Craven Street Hall, Belfast where the Prime Minister was speaking at a meeting of Woodvale Unionist Association. They carried placards saying 'O'Neill must go'. As police were escorting the Prime Minister out of the meeting the crowd threw stones, egg and flour, hitting his car. The Rev. Paisley appealed to the crowd to disperse and go home peaceably. This was the most hostile demonstration to occur in the premiership of Captain O'Neill to date" (Deutsch and Magowan 1973: 8).

The entry above is almost a quintessentially narrative text, as it aptly exposes the Subject-Action-Object's basic structure of narrative texts, and its modifiers (Franzosi 2010: 44-46). Descriptive and evaluative clauses that would render the coding process particularly cumbersome are largely absent (only the last sentence is a commentary on the event). The entries of the Deutsch and Magowan's chronology lend themselves to a relatively straightforward and exhaustive coding of the text and its transformation into a chrono-logically ordered set of semantic triplets, "the skeleton narrative clause" (Franzosi 2010: 24).

One clear advantage of relying on this chronology, rather than collecting newspaper articles, is that this source largely eludes the issue of the uneven "thickness" of the descriptions of the events across texts. Variations in articles' length, and the corresponding amount of information provided for each event, may introduce biases in the generation of semantic triplets (on this issue, see Franzosi et al 2012: 10, 13-14).

Unlike newspaper articles, however, the chronology entries utilized here are consistently very short and terse. In a large QNA project on lynching events based on newspaper articles, the average number of triplets per event was 19, with a median of 16, the range of triplets going from 2 to 100 (Franzosi et al 2012: 13-14). In my database, the average number of triplets per event was 3.1, with a median of 2 and a range between 1 and 49 triplets. The brevity of the entries ensured that triplets were not artificially multiplied, thus minimizing biases due to uneven amount of information available for each event.

When entries did not provide information about who perpetrated an action (e.g., 'a bomb exploded in Belfast during the night'), I assigned the code of 'unknown' to the Subject of those triplets. Entries about riots between opposing crowds (or between a crowd and security forces) were coded as two distinct semantic triplets with the same Action (typically, the verb 'rioted') and the actors under Subject and Object reversed (e.g., 'Catholics rioted against Protestants'; 'Protestants rioted against Catholics'). If the target of a triplet was not explicitly mentioned in an entry, but could be inferred from the context, I coded the *implicit* actor under Object (for example, in an event where 'a Protestant crowd smashed the windows of a house in the *Bogside* [a Catholic area of Derry]', the implicit actor coded under Object would be 'Catholics'). For analytical purposes, the hundreds of actors stored in the database had to be classified into discrete collective actors. For instance, all organizations and leaders belonging to the CRM were assigned the aggregate code of 'CRM' and subsequently analyzed under that label. Similarly, all the 940 verbs recorded in the database had to be sorted into meaningful spheres of actions (e.g., 'shot', 'attacked', 'rioted', etc., were grouped under the code 'violence'). The process of data aggregation entails an inevitable loss of information

(Franzosi 2004: 285-287) and may involve some degree of arbitrariness, especially for overlapping categories[51] and for cases in which not enough information was available to sort them unambiguously.[52]

While the Deutsch and Magowan's chronology provides the ideal data to build a relational database through QNA, it is subject to some of the methodological issues that the construction of catalogs of collective events has to tackle (for an overview, see: Maney and Oliver 2001). Scholars regularly use texts like newspapers (or, alternatively, police records and official documents: McCarthy, McPhail and Smith 1996) to collect information on contentious events such as protests, political violence and movement activities. The methodological issues regarding the use of newspapers data to study collective action and protest have been extensively discussed in the social movement literature (for recent overviews, see Earl, Martin, McCarthy and Soule 2004; Ortiz, Myers, Walls and Diaz 2005; see also Franzosi 1987; 2004: 167-180). While this dissertation does not use newspapers articles, the chronology is based upon media-based accounts of events, rather than official sources such as police records. As a result, it might be affected by issues similar to those concerning the use of newspapers for socio-historical research. In particular, the use of a media-based chronology to build a catalogue of collective events raises problems of data validity and reliability similar to those arising when using newspapers articles (see Franzosi 2004: 177-183).

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[51] For instance, civil rights activists were for the most part also Irish-Catholics, while loyalist activists were exclusively Protestants. I argue, however, that it is crucial to *analytically* distinguish between activists participating to movement activities and unorganized crowds engaging in some sort of contention, like a riot. While certainly overlapping, these actors have in fact different strategies, logics, ideas and goals, making this imperfect distinction analytically necessary.

[52] For example, the code 'Civilians' is used to identify all victims of violence that were neither paramilitaries nor security forces, and for which there was no information about their ethno-national affiliation. While the use of this somewhat heterogeneous category is hardly ideal, the only alternative would be to completely ignore this information.

While validity refers to (non-random) systematic reporting error (e.g., are small-size protest events underrepresented in the data?), reliability relates to the random errors produced during the phase of coding and data-entry when building a database of collective events. According to Franzosi,

> "social science researchers have put laudable efforts in attempting to eliminate random errors (reliability) from data collected from newspapers, while generally neglecting non-random errors (validity). [...] [However,] "given that non-random error (validity) is much more likely to distort historical data than random error (reliability) and given the disproportionate attention paid to problems of reliability than of validity, I would recommend a shift in focus from problems of reliability to problems of validity' (Franzosi 2004: 182-183).

In the next two paragraphs I discuss the issues of validity and reliability in the collection of socio-historical data through media-based sources, and how they may affect the data utilized in this project.

Data Validity. Media-based reports of collective events have to grapple with several issues of data validity. The most important one concerns *selectivity*: which events are included in the sources of information, and which are (more or less systematically) excluded? It is well known that "there are no perfect records of collective events, nor are there perfect methods for gatherings all of the collective events in any given source" (Maney and Oliver 2001: 164-165). As a result, Oliver and Maney (2000: 495) suggest that "inventories of events taking place over extended period of time must be compiled using a wide variety of official sources and news sources." Scholars would readily agree, at least in principle, with Oliver and Maney's recommendation of diversifying sources when building a catalog of collective events, as well as to assess each source "against the others to determine its selection logic" (ibidem; see also Maney and Oliver 2001).

However, time and resource constraints may render prohibitively expensive to pursue different sources of information. *Ideally*, a more comprehensive project would entail the collection of articles from different newspapers (for instance, from the liberal-unionist *Belfast Telegraph* and the nationalist *Derry Journal*) and police records, where available, to build a more inclusive catalog of events. For each event identified, researchers should triangulate all the information provided by these different sources and detect each source's "selection logic". Finally, to offset each source's biases, different weights should be assigned to each source. However, this 'ideal' research strategy is not a feasible option within the time and financial constraints of a doctoral dissertation.[53] In addition, the actor-centered technique of data collection adopted here is very time-consuming, as the coding of information is extremely labor-intensive. As a result, the Deutsch and Magowan chronology is the main source of information for the QNA part of the project; in addition to the chronology, however, I have also consulted Sutton's Index of Deaths (1994)[54] to verify the accuracy of all the entries narrating killing events, and I complemented or amended possible missing or incorrect information.

There are several reasons to believe that the results obtained relying on Deutsch and Magowan's chronology are *fairly* representative of the contentious events occurred in Northern Ireland during the 1968-1972 period. On one hand, the authors have detailed the process through which they have compiled the chronology and assured us about its thoroughness:

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[53] And, nonetheless, one that would not necessarily yield a bias-free dataset: Earl et al. 2004: 74-75.

[54] The Sutton database collects information on all the people who died as a result of the conflict in Northern Ireland, starting on July 14, 1969, until today, detailing the circumstances of their deaths. The information was first published in a book in 1994; after the publication of the book, Sutton has been continuously updating the database with information on new deaths and corrections to the existing material. The database is freely available at http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/sutton/ .

> "(o)n occasions when reports have been at variance we have investigated literally all possible sources available to us to ascertain elusive facts or statements whose origin we were trying to establish. We have not only examined dry or sparkling Hansard reports but have sifted through the more full-bodied accounts contained in Northern Ireland's newspapers as well as those of the Republic of Ireland and England. We have also examined specialised articles from journals and magazines and a large number of published works by authors studying the Northern Ireland scene. Private papers to which we were granted access have proved extremely valuable as an aid to accuracy and we have also turned to the spoken word for help in determining the 'mood' of an occasion when recordings of speeches or interviews provided a highly perceptive and sensitive method of research" (Deutsch and Magowan 1973: ix).

While it is not possible to directly verify the veracity of Deutsch and Magowan's reassurance on the validity of their chronology, according to Maney "(a)mong the scholars [...] there existed a consensus that Deutsch and Magowan's study provided the *most comprehensive listing of political events*" (Maney 2001: 77; emphasis added). Moreover, past research unequivocally indicates that stories of violence and conflict represent newsworthy items and large protests go rarely unnoticed in the media (Barranco and Wisler 1999; Jenkins and Schock 1992; McCarthy et al. 1996; Mueller 1997; Snyder and Kelly 1977). Smaller events are less likely to be reported, though, especially in national newspapers - the size of a protest event is the best predictor of its coverage in the media (McCarthy et al. 1996: 494). The data utilized in this project may be partially affected by this issue too, as small protests in rural settings are probably less likely to be included in the chronology. The collection of data from local newspapers might obviate to this bias in under-reporting of smaller, rural events, yet it is outside the scope of this project.

Other potential sources of selection bias can be: a) the *geographical proximity* of an event to the reporting news-agency - the closer the event, the higher the likelihood it will be reported (Franzosi 2004: 168-169; McCarthy et al. 1996), and vice versa (Muller

1997). b) *Issue-attention cycles*: when an issue (for example, war) gains salience among media, protests related to that issue (anti-war demonstrations) are more likely to be reported (McCarthy et al. 1996: 494-495). As soon as the attention wanes, though, so does the reporting of issue-related protests. Selection biases due to proximity and issue-attention cycle should be minimal in my data. Northern Ireland is a very small country, with a population of about one million and half of inhabitants. Compared with the United States, Northern Ireland is less than one tenth as large as the state of Louisiana, and, in the 1960s, had less than half of Louisiana's population. The chronology's entries are mainly based on local sources,[55] physically and socially very close to the events recorded. The issue of proximity bias, as well as that of selectivity (i.e., the under-reporting of small, rural events) should thus be negligible. Moreover, the CRM met police repression and hostile counter-mobilization almost instantaneously, rendering civil rights protests (and loyalists counter-protests) immediately newsworthy, and securing them the center-stage of the issue-attention cycle. The sectarian divide and the dynamics of mobilization and counter-mobilization always remained a top priority in the media and political arena during the 1968-1972 years in Northern Ireland, and, at least partially, in the United Kingdom too. Needless to say, political violence and repression was *the* issue for Northern Ireland politics and society for the following 35 years, supplanted only by the peace process during the 1990s.

As a final remark on the limits of media accounts, one should always keep in mind that these reports sometimes are the only historical records available to detect contentious events. Especially in socio-historical research, other sources of information

[55] In particular, Belfast-based newsmagazine *Fortnight* and other local newspapers, as well as national newspapers (Deutsch and Magowan 1973: ix).

may be non-existent, not accessible or not systematically produced (Franzosi 2004: 171; Earl et al. 2004: 76; McAdam 1982: 236). At any rate, even when official sources such as police records are available, they are subject to reporting biases too (especially in the case of small, unpermitted protests: Maney and Oliver 2001: 151-155, 165). As there is no such thing as unbiased data, it is safe to remind that "what is important is to know the type and form of bias in order to be able to gage its effect on evidence and conclusions" (Franzosi 2004: 172).

Data Reliability. The tasks of coding texts and entering information into a computer environment are prone to (random) human errors which may affect the reliability of the data collected. The use of QNA to parse narrative texts and store them through specialized software (in this project, PC-ACE: Franzosi 2010: 89-100) is no exception. Relying on the properties of narrative texts, there are at least two ways to minimize the problem of data reliability through PC-ACE. The coding protocol requires that the coded data is examined for a) semantic coherence and b) input/output verification.

As a linguistics-based approach to store narrative data on collective events, QNA tries to preserve as much as possible the logic of the original texts. The coded output has then to maintain the *semantic coherence* of the original narrative text. In other words, the coded text "must make sense to any competent user of the language" (Franzosi 2010: 89). Linguists discern between two types of coherence: local and global (Van Dijk 1983). Local coherence refers to the meaningful, logical connection among the different objects that make up a sentence (in our case, a semantic triplet). Global coherence, instead, concerns the chrono-logical order of the sentences (semantic triplets) within a larger

sequence of sentences (in QNA language, an event), and their meaningful relationship with the main theme(s) of the whole text (see: Franzosi 2004: 77; 2010: 89). In QNA, the process of data cleaning involves, among other things, the verification of all the stored material to identify and amend the errors concerning both the local and global semantic coherence of the coded output. Another task for data cleaning concerns the direct comparison between the original input texts and the coded output. *Input/output verification* checks the accuracy of the information coded, as well as possible document omission (Franzosi 2010: 90). In this project, I checked the *entire* database for both semantic coherence and input/output verification during the data cleaning process.

Retrieval and Analysis of QNA Data. PC-ACE enables researchers to extract information from narrative texts, code and store them in a computer environment and produce, via story grammars and semantic triplets, a coded output highlighting social actors and their interactions. To extract data from the relational database, QNA relies on the "mathematical underpinnings of the formal representation of a semantic grammar, namely set theory. The concepts that set theory makes available, […] make possible the quantitative analysis of words and their interconnections" (Franzosi 1997: 281-282). *Set theory* is also the foundation of Relational Database Management Systems (RDBMS), which allows the organization and storing of the parsed narrative texts into a computer environment. Set theory basically provides a mathematical framework within which is possible to go from words to numbers through cardinal numbers (i.e., counting). Set theory also enables the examination of the connections between the various components of a story grammar.

The relational design of the data structure of PC-ACE (basically, a RDBMS) "makes possible the statistical analysis of what are basically words, despite the complexity of the structure" (Franzosi 2010: 82). In fact, "having objects in a relational database makes counting more meaningful for a quantitative narrative analysis. You don't count the frequency of unrelated objects, but the frequency of selected objects […] in relation to other objects […] and for specific values of each" (Franzosi 2010: 102). As a result, QNA delivers data which depart from the usual ones produced by content analysis of texts. Protest Event Analysis, for example, mainly delivers frequencies of coding categories, which are then handled as distinct variables and treated quantitatively through statistical analyses. QNA too can yield simple frequency distributions of actors, actions, localities which can then be used as variables. Nevertheless, QNA critically differs from PEA and thematic content analysis as it is also able to produce *relational data* and *spatial data*. Relational data concern "the contacts, ties and connections, the group attachments and meetings, which relate one agent to another and so cannot be reduced to the properties of the individual agents themselves" (Scott 2000: 3). Spatial data simply "comprise observations of some phenomenon that possesses a spatial reference" (Fotheringham, Brunsdon and Charlton 2000: 15), in our case the location where a semantic triplet or event has occurred. While QNA is capable to produce counts which can be used to assemble variables, the analysis of its relational and spatial data requires techniques other than the traditional variable-based one. Network analysis and GIS spatial analysis offer a set of techniques to effectively analyze relational and spatial data.

Network Analysis. Network analysis shifts the analytical focus from the measurement of attitudes, behaviors and attributes of individuals, groups or organizations - and the consequent statistical handling of case-by-variable matrix - to the examination of social relations between social actors, groups and organizations. While the relations between individuals have been the focal point of network analysis, the approach is equally valuable in studying formal or informal links between collective actors, such as social movements (see Diani and McAdam 2003), firms or national states. To be properly handled in a network perspective, collective actors have to be discrete and distinct entities, as well as being internally homogeneous (Chiesi 1999).

In a story grammar, the Action (A) works as the link between Subject (S) and Object (O). If we cluster the whole set of Actions into distinct spheres of action (e.g., communication, conflict, violence, control), we can retrieve from the RDBMS the list of actors involved in a certain sphere of action, that is all the actors which either carried out an action related to that sphere, or were the object of those actions. The relationship between actors (Subject and Object) within a given sphere of action will be dichotomous and directional (Franzosi 1998b: 87); that is, an actor can be linked or not with another actor, and the role an actor assume as either a Subject or a Object *is* relevant ('police shoot protesters' and 'protesters shoot police' are very different semantic triplets). We can then draw a list of all the ordered pairs of actors within a specific sphere of action, say violence (see: Franzosi 1998b: 89). Network models can transform this list into a graphical representation of the violent relations between social actors. In network terms, each actor is a *node* and the presence of a link with another actor is represented by an *arc*, which indicates that a violent interaction between the two actors has indeed occurred. The

arc linking actors has also a direction, because of the distinction between Subject and Object. So, if it is the police who are shooting on protesters, then the direction will be from police (Subject) to protesters (Object). If it is the opposite case, then the direction will be reversed. As a final result we have a *directed graph*, a graphic representation of a given set of actors (nodes) and their corresponding arcs (arrows with a direction) concerning a specific sphere of action. In this way, we can immediately visualize which actors were the perpetrators of some type of action - in this case violent action - and who were the recipients of those actions. We can also observe if the recipients reciprocate or not.

Through aggregation of various actors into appropriate homogeneous social categories (e.g., members of police forces and armies can be grouped into a category named 'security forces'), it is possible to display the type of relations linking various collective actors. The directed graphs so obtained give a powerful representation of how social actors relate to each other in a certain sphere of action, in a specific period of time and in a given geographic unit (usually a country, but it can be restricted to a single city, or a province, region, state, etc). The systematic mapping of how different social actors relate (or fail to) with each other across different types of relation can help explain a large variety of socio-historical processes and dynamics of interactions (for instance, see the network models to illustrate the rise of Italian Fascism in Franzosi 1999). Furthermore, tracking the evolution over time of these networks of interaction is instrumental to explain the trajectory of social and political change over time, relying on an actor-centered, rather than variable-based, social scientific explanation.

Spatial Analysis. Similarly to network analysis, spatial analysis partially deviates from traditional quantitative social science, in particular from its focus on investigating the relationship between variables while rarely taking into account the geographical context of those variables. Instead, the use of spatial analysis to handle data containing spatial information yields "results […] [that] are dependent in some ways on the locations of the objects being analyzed – if the locations change, the results change" (Goodchild and Janelle 2004: 5). The underlying assumption of spatial analysis is that "the nature of space itself has a direct influence on the type, nature, scope frequency, and repetitiveness" (Parker and Asencio 2008: 206) of the actions, processes and events under study. Space is not just yet another attribute of a fixed entity to be treated as a variable, but is part and parcel of the socio-historical reality that significantly shapes social processes and requires careful investigation. This is especially true in the study of social movements and, more generally, the development of political contention (for a discussion of the role of space for the study of contentious politics, see Sewell 2001: 51-70), as

> "space is not merely a variable or 'container' of activism: it constitutes and structures relationships and networks […]; is integral to the attribution of threats and opportunities […]. In short, social relations are spatial as well as historical, and altering the spatial or historical constitution of social processes will likely alter how they play out" (Martin and Miller 2003: 144-145).

To be sure, "spatial analysis examines data in cross-section, as opposed to longitudinal analysis" (Goodchild and Janelle 2004: 5); yet, "successive snapshots can, in principle, be assembled to provide longitudinal series" (Goodchild and Janelle 2004: 5). In other words, spatial analysis can deal with crucial issues of both space and time in socio-historical research. Geographers have developed a set of techniques to enable researchers to conduct spatial analysis. These techniques are grouped under the terms of

geographic information system (GIS), "a system designed to store, manipulate, analyze and output map-based, or spatial, information" (Steinberg and Steinberg 2006: 7).

By using story grammars that require, for each semantic triplet, the identification of the geographical location where Action occurred (i.e., city, county, state, and, where the information is available, also address and neighborhood), QNA is able to yield spatial data across time. These data can then be geocoded and explored with GIS tools, as these are "ideally suited to dealing with information such as time, space, actors and actions" (Franzosi 2010: 124). These are precisely the type of information that QNA stores in its RDBMS and that can be extracted through SQL queries.[56]

Limits of QNA. While QNA systematically and powerfully traces actors' interactions over time, space and spheres of action, it cannot unveil the meaning actors attached to their strategic interactions with others. In fact, the *sources* of data utilized in QNA (usually newspapers articles, or, in this project, chronology entries) typically offer "*surface* reasons for action" (Franzosi et al. 2012: 28; emphasis in original) (e.g., 'police baton charge civil rights protesters because were participating to an illegal demonstration'). Yet, these sources cannot unveil "the *deep* reasons, the *meaning* of action" (Ibidem) (e.g., why police would use violence against banned civil rights protests, but not against unlawful loyalist counter-demonstrations). To make sense of interactions, "we need to go not only *inside* the event but also *outside* the event, and relate internal

[56] For example, Franzosi has extracted spatial data about working class mobilization (when and where workers engaged in protests and the occupation of factories) and fascist violent counter-mobilization (when and where fascists carried out acts of political violence) from his database on the rise of Italian Fascism. Relying on these data, he used GIS software to create maps detailing the diffusion of workers' mobilization and the violent response by fascist groups; then, he crafted a so-called 'hot spot' map charting the areas where the geographic overlap between these due processes of mobilization and counter-mobilization was more intense (Franzosi 2010: 124-127). Through the use of spatial data extracted from a QNA database, he was thus able to explore the 'red menace' hypothesis to explain the rise of Italian Fascism.

characteristics not just to each other but to external ones as well. Text and context must go hand in hand" (Franzosi et al. 2012: 29; emphasis in original). Ultimately, the analyses that QNA produces "are not related to other characteristics of the socio-historical period in which the stories are embedded" (Franzosi 2010: 144-145). For instance, chronology entries about contentious events in Northern Ireland do not provide contextual information about the extent of political and economic discrimination the Irish-Catholic minority endured during the late 1960s. Nor do they hint to the fact that a large section of the Protestant community perceived the allegations of discrimination as mostly unfounded. The nature of the sources of the data then limit the scope of QNA analysis in terms of the ability to reconstruct the historical context as well as the meaning actors attached to their strategic interactions with allies, opponents and state authorities. The latter issue, however, is not limited to QNA and its sources of data, but it also applies to network analytic approaches to explain conflict and contentious politics. As Ann Mische has cogently noted,

> "the formal representations we gain from network analytic techniques provide useful insight into the complex patterning of relationships - and thus the structural opportunities, constraints, and dilemmas actor confront. But these representations need to be complemented by historical, ethnographic and interview research that examines the communicative interplay, strategic maneuvering, and reflective problem solving carried out by actors in response to these relational tensions and dilemmas. [...] this requires attention both to the observable communicative processes that compose networks [...] and to the 'meaning structure' of networks, grounded in intersubjective expectations as well as systems of categories and the ongoing interpretive work of situated individuals" (Mische 2011: 90).

It is therefore necessary to bring in qualitative data to better understand historical context and actors' strategies. In this project, QNA results are then complemented by

both original archival research and the vast secondary literature on the Troubles in Northern Ireland.

Archival Data. The fine-grained results obtained through the analysis of the QNA database basically work as the "skeleton" of the dissertation, as they portray the relations between actors, their repertoires of action and their evolutions over time and space. This skeleton, though, needed to be fleshed out with qualitative, historical data.

In 2009 I spent two months in Belfast, the capital city of Northern Ireland, to conduct archival research. In particular, I consulted primary sources at the Northern Ireland Political Collection of the Linenhall Library, the Newspaper Library at the Belfast Central Library and the Special Collection at the Library of Queen's University Belfast. The most relevant source of archival material was the Northern Ireland Political Collection at the Linenhall Library. This collection holds over a quarter of a million items, from pamphlets to stickers to leaflets, newspapers and political manifestos, covering roughly the last 40 years of Northern Ireland's history. This rich source of historical information documents "the activities and views of all the parties in conflict, from government to paramilitaries." The Linenhall Political Collection houses the semi-official archive of the civil rights movement and is thus an unrivalled resource for the study of the collective action frames the movement adopted and the experiences the activists voiced during political meetings. In particular, the examination of the internal documents of the CRM (e.g., newsletters, minutes of meetings, etc.) unveils the growing conflict and competition occurring among the different components of the movements, and the attempts by more radical organizations to politically outbid the moderates. The

Political Collection also stores official press releases and propaganda materials of state authorities, political parties, unionist and loyalist organizations, documenting their viewpoints and tactics. Archival sources at the Linenhall Library are used in this project to 1) describe the internal mechanisms that facilitated the radicalization of the CRM; 2) disclose how activists' claims and strategies shifted over time, as the CRM learned to cope with repression and hostile loyalist counter-mobilization; and 3) detail the perspectives and maneuvers of other political actors, especially loyalist organizations, state authorities and paramilitary groups.

Another source of historical material was the Special Collection of the Queen's University Library in Belfast, which hosts the minutes of evidence of the Scarman Tribunal of Inquiry. In 1969, the Stormont Parliament appointed the Scarman Tribunal to investigate the events which led to the Troubles and endowed it with the power to interrogate protest leaders, policemen, politicians, and everyone else involved in the controversial events of the 1968-1969 years. In their testimonies, witnesses had to account for their behaviors and those of their organizations, thus providing another source of information on actors' motivations. The Queen's University Library also stores virtually all the secondary literature on Northern Ireland and the Troubles (for an overview, see: McGarry and O'Leary 1995; Whyte 1990), including relevant qualitative evidence like biographies and autobiographies of civil rights and loyalist activists, leaders, policemen, soldiers and politicians.

An important digital resource to understand the political conflict through the lens of the political institutions is the 'Northern Ireland Parliamentary Debates Online'. This website (http://stormontpapers.ahds.ac.uk/index.html) offers access to the digitized

transcripts of all the Parliamentary Debates of the devolved government of Northern Ireland from June 7, 1921, to the dissolution of Parliament in March 28, 1972. These Parliamentary debates present the official views of the various parties and the government in Stormont about the political situation, the events and actors involved in contention.

Finally, I consulted the digitized material made available online by the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI). Founded in 1923, PRONI is the official archive for Northern Ireland, housing most of the documents created by official sources, such as government departments and non-departmental public organizations (courts of law, local authorities, etc.). Under the "30 years rule", previously secret records have been declassified and are now available to researchers. Located in the University of Ulster, the Conflict Archive on the INternet (CAIN: http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/) is a website that collects information and source material on the Troubles and politics in Northern Ireland, from 1968 to the present. The website also hosts a section, 'PRONI Records on CAIN', which offers a selection of digital versions of PRONI's public records (http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/proni/index.html). CAIN selected records related to the conflict and politics in the region, mainly covering the period from 1968 to 1982 (following the 30 years rule, every year new documents are added online). By sifting through declassified governmental documents it was possible to reconstruct government and police perceptions of the CRM, their evaluations of its threat, and their debates about the public order policies to be adopted to curb radical contention.

Appendix A: Story Grammar

Legend:

--> Rewrite Rule (or Production): the object to the left of the arrow is "rewritten" in terms of the object(s) to the right;

< > indicates that an object can be rewritten (i.e., is not a terminal element of the grammar);

[ ] indicates that an object is optional;

{ } indicates that an object may have multiple instances;

| indicates a logical OR between alternative values that a simplex can take;

++ denotes One-To-Many (Hierarchical) complex objects (complex objects are made up of simplex and complex objects);

+ denotes One-To-Few complex objects (objects enclosed in <> without a + or ++ are simplex objects);

(1a)(1b)... denote grouped and mutually exclusive objects.

****

Chronology entry --> <Entry Date>
<Entry number>
<Page number>
[<Verified IO>]
[<Verified SC>]
[<Description>]
[<Evaluation>]

<++Macro Event> --> <City name> <Definite date> [{<++Event>}]

<++Event> --> <Type of event> <+Space> [{<+Alternative Event>}] [{<++Semantic Triplet>}]

<+Semantic Triplet> --> <+Participant-S> <+Process> [{<+Participant-O>}] [<Triplet relation>]
[{<+Alternative triplet>}]

<+Participant-S> --> {<+Actor>}

<+Actor> --> [<ActorCode1>] {<+Individual (1a)>} {<+Collective actor (1b)>} {<+Organization (1c)>}
<ActorCode1> --> British Army | British Government | Catholics | Civil Rights Movement | IRA | ...

<+Individual> --> <Name of individual actor> [{<+Personal characteristics>}]
<Name of individual actor> --> individual | Army Colonel | bar owner | bookmaker | Captain O'Neill | ...

<+Personal characteristics> --> [<+First name and last name>] [<Gender>] [<+Age>]
[{<+Family relationship>}] [<+Residence>] [<Religious affiliation>]
[{<Nationality>}] [{<Body part>}] [{<Type of actor (Adjective)>}]
[{<Job>}] [{<+Organization>}] [<Party affiliation: Political party>]

```
41:
42:                    <+First name and last name> --> [<First name>] [<Middle name: First name>] <Last
name>
43:                      <First name> --> Belle | Dusty | Eugene | J.P. | John | ...
44:                      <Middle name: First name> --> Belle | Dusty | Eugene | J.P. | John | ...
45:                      <Last name> --> Bachelor | Bivins | Cruthfield | Hamming | Hathaway | ...
46:                    <Gender> --> female | male
47:
48:                    <+Age> --> <Qualitative age (1a)> <Exact age: Numeric value (1b)>
49:                      <Qualitative age> --> middle age | old | young | youth | ...
50:                      <Exact age: Numeric value> --> 500 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | ...
51:
52:                    <+Family relationship> --> <Type of relationship> <+Actor>
53:                      <Type of relationship> --> aunt | brother | husband | sister | wife | ...
54:                      <+Actor> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 31
55:
56:                    <+Residence> --> <+Space>
57:
58:                      <+Space> --> {<+City (1a)>} {<+Territory (1b)>}
59:
60:                        <+City> --> [<Space qualifier>] [<Spatial direction>] [<+Distance from city>]
61:                                [<+Locality within city>] [<Locality near city>] <City name> [<County>]
[<State>]
62:                          <Space qualifier> --> along | behind | close to | in front of | near | ...
63:                          <Spatial direction> --> down | from | to | towards | up | ...
64:
65:                          <+Distance from city> --> <Numeric value> <space unit>
66:                            <Numeric value> --> 500 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | ...
67:                            <space unit> --> feet | miles | yards | mile | ...
68:
69:                          <+Locality within city> --> {<+Address (1a)>} {<+Building (1b)>}
{<Neighborhood (1c)>}
70:
71:                            <+Address> --> [<Number: Numeric value>] <Street (1a)> <Square (1b)>
[<Neighborhood>]
72:                              <Number: Numeric value> --> 500 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | ...
73:                              <Street> --> ? | Agnes Street | Albert Street | Alloa Street | Ardmoulin Street
| ...
74:                              <Square> --> Brown Square | Carlisle Square | Guildhall Square | Market
Square |
75:                                      Shaftesbury Square | ...
76:                              <Neighborhood> --> Andersonstown | Ardoyne | Ballymurphy |
Ballymurphy estate |
77:                                      Bogside | ...
78:
79:                            <+Building> --> [<Headquarters of>] [<Proper name of building>] <Type of
building>
80:                                      [<+Address>]
81:                              <Headquarters of> --> String
82:                              <Proper name of building> --> Empire State Building | Ringgold Bank |
Aquinas Hall |
83:                                              Armagh City Hall | Army Post | ...
84:                              <Type of building> --> bank | court house | jail | office | post office | ...
85:                              <+Address> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 71
86:                            <Neighborhood> --> Andersonstown | Ardoyne | Ballymurphy | Ballymurphy
estate | Bogside | ...
```

```
87:                         <Locality near city> --> In the woods | Outside the city | Annalong-Kilkeel
Area |
88:                                                 AOH Hall | Aughatara | ...
89:                         <City name> --> ? | Altnagevil | Andersonstown | Annalong | Antrim | ...
90:                         <County> --> Appling | Bacon | Banks | Barrow | Foulton | ...
91:                         <State> --> Alabama | Georgia | Louisiana | Mississipi | South Carolina | ...
92:
93:                       <+Territory> --> [<+Distance from territory>] [<Spatial direction>] <+Type of
territory>
94:                                           [<Non administrative unit>]
95:
96:                         <+Distance from territory> --> <Numeric value> <space unit>
97:                           <Numeric value> --> 500 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | ...
98:                           <space unit> --> feet | miles | yards | mile | ...
99:                         <Spatial direction> --> down | from | to | towards | up | ...
100:
101:                        <+Type of territory> --> <County (1b)> <State (1a)>
102:                          <County> --> Appling | Bacon | Banks | Barrow | Foulton | ...
103:                          <State> --> Alabama | Georgia | Louisiana | Mississipi | South Carolina | ...
104:                        <Non administrative unit> --> Deep South | Jim Crow South | Mid West | North
East | West | ...
105:                  <Religious affiliation> --> Catholic | Free Presbyterian | Protestant | ...
106:                  <Nationality> --> American | Danish | French | Italian | Spanish | ...
107:                  <Body part> --> arm | body | chest | face | leg | ...
108:                  <Type of actor (Adjective)> --> drunk | guilty | innocent | strong | already present | ...
109:                  <Job> --> banker | butcher | doctor | farmer | peasant | ...
110:
111:                  <+Organization> --> [<Paramilitary Organization>] [{<Social Movement
Organization>}]
112:                                           [{<+Institution (1a)>}] [<Role in the Organisation>]
113:                    <Paramilitary Organization> --> IRA | IRA Army Convention | Provisional Army
Council |
114:                                                 Ulster Defence Force | UVF | ...
115:                    <Social Movement Organization> --> Ardoyne Citizens Action Committee |
Armagh CRA |
116:                                                   Armagh Republican Club | CCDC | civil Rights Committee |
...
117:
118:                    <+Institution> --> <Political party (1a)> <State organisation (1b)> <Other
institution (1c)>
119:                      <Political party> --> Armagh Labour Party | Derry Labour Party | Labour Party |
Liberal Party |
120:                                                 Liberal Party in Ulster | ...
121:                      <State organisation> --> Irish Government | ?? | 1st Battalion | Armagh Council |
Army | ...
122:                      <Other institution> --> Action Committee | Anglican and Roman Catholic Joint
Commission | AOH |
123:                                                 Apprentice Boys of Derry | BBC | ...
124:                    <Role in the Organisation> --> banker | chief | Pastor | sheriff | Active Service Unit
| ...
125:                  <Party affiliation: Political party> --> Armagh Labour Party | Derry Labour Party |
Labour Party |
126:                                                   Liberal Party | Liberal Party in Ulster | ...
127:
128:              <+Collective actor> --> <Name of collective actor> [{<+Collective characteristics>}]
```

```
129:                <Name of collective actor> --> 10 men | 10 people | 1000 marchers | 1000 people |
1000 troops | ...
130:
131:                <+Collective characteristics> --> [{<Gender>}] [{<+Age>}] [{<+Family
relationship>}] [{<+Residence>}]
132:                                        [{<Nationality>}] [{<Type of actor (Adjective)>}] [{<Job>}]
133:                                        [{<+Organization>}] [<Religious affiliation>]
134:                                        [{<Party affiliation: Political party>}] [{<+Group composition>}]
135:                                        [{<+Subgroup (among which): Subset (among which)>}]
[<+Number>]
136:                  <Gender> --> female | male
137:                  <+Age> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 48
138:                  <+Family relationship> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 52
139:                  <+Residence> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 56
140:                  <Nationality> --> American | Danish | French | Italian | Spanish | ...
141:                  <Type of actor (Adjective)> --> drunk | guilty | innocent | strong | already present | ...
142:                  <Job> --> banker | butcher | doctor | farmer | peasant | ...
143:                  <+Organization> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 111
144:                  <Religious affiliation> --> Catholic | Free Presbyterian | Protestant | ...
145:                  <Party affiliation: Political party> --> Armagh Labour Party | Derry Labour Party |
Labour Party |
146:                                                Liberal Party | Liberal Party in Ulster | ...
147:
148:                  <+Group composition> --> <Part qualifier> <+Actor>
149:                    <Part qualifier> --> a few of which | among which | most of which | mostly | the
majority | ...
150:                    <+Actor> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 31
151:
152:                  <+Subset (among which)> --> <Part qualifier> <+Actor>
153:                    <Part qualifier> --> a few of which | among which | most of which | mostly | the
majority | ...
154:                    <+Actor> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 31
155:
156:                  <+Number> --> [<Comparative qualifier>] [<Approximate qualifier>] <+Qualitative
value (1a)>
157:                          <+Quantitative value (1b)>
158:                    <Comparative qualifier> --> fewer than | less than | more than | ...
159:                    <Approximate qualifier> --> about | around | circa | maybe | after | ...
160:
161:                    <+Qualitative value> --> [<Quantitative qualifier>] <Numeral>
162:                      <Quantitative qualifier> --> a few | many | several | some | a large | ...
163:                      <Numeral> --> dozen | hundred | million | thousand | large quantity | ...
164:
165:                    <+Quantitative value> --> <Numeric value (1a)> <+Range of values (1b)>
[<+Value out of total>]
166:                      <Numeric value> --> 500 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | ...
167:
168:                      <+Range of values> --> <Lower value: Numeric value> <Upper value: Numeric
value>
169:                        <Lower value: Numeric value> --> 500 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | ...
170:                        <Upper value: Numeric value> --> 500 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | ...
171:
172:                      <+Value out of total> --> <Out of total: Numeric value> <Numeric value>
173:                        <Out of total: Numeric value> --> 500 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | ...
174:                        <Numeric value> --> 500 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | ...
175:              <+Organization> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 111
```

```
176:
177:              <+Process> --> [<ActionCode1>] {<+Simple process (1a)>} {<+Complex process (1b)>}
178:                <ActionCode1> --> control | protest | violence | ...
179:
180:                <+Simple process> --> [<Negation>] [<Modal verb>] <Verbal phrase> <Aggregate code>
[{<Action type (Adverb)>}]
181:                                      {<+Time>} [{<+Duration>}] {<+Space>} [{<+Reason>}] [{<+Number>}]
[{<+Instrument>}]
182:                                      [{<+Outcome>}] [{<+Content>}]
183:                  <Negation> --> did not | do not | not | ...
184:                  <Modal verb> --> can | could | have to | should | would | ...
185:                  <Verbal phrase> --> abandons | accept | accused | act as peacemakers | acted | ...
186:                  <Aggregate code> --> accusation | approval | assembling | authority | communication | ...
187:                  <Action type (Adverb)> --> allegedly | apparently | fatally | hardly | savagely | ...
188:
189:                  <+Time> --> [<Approximate qualifier>] <+Date> [<+Time of day>] [<Temporal
periodicity>]
190:                    <Approximate qualifier> --> about | around | circa | maybe | after | ...
191:
192:                    <+Date> --> <+Definite date (1a)> <+Indefinite date (1b)>
193:
194:                      <+Definite date> --> [<Temporal direction>] <Definite date>
195:                        <Temporal direction> --> after | ago | before | during | from | ...
196:                        <Definite date> --> 03/07/1967 | 02/09/1968 | 03/07/1968 | 04/12/1968 |
04/14/1968 | ...
197:
198:                      <+Indefinite date> --> [<Temporal direction>] [<Time qualifier>] <+Duration (1a)>
199:                                                <+Time expression (1b)> <+Reference yardstick>
200:                        <Temporal direction> --> after | ago | before | during | from | ...
201:                        <Time qualifier> --> late | mid | after | all | at the beginning of | ...
202:
203:                        <+Duration> --> {<+Number>} {<Time unit>}
204:                          <+Number> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 156
205:                          <Time unit> --> day | hour | month | week | year | ...
206:
207:                        <+Time expression> --> <Day (1a)> <Month (1b)> <Season (1c)> <Generic
temporal expression (1d)>
208:                          <Day> --> Friday | Monday | Saturday | Sunday | Thursday | ...
209:                          <Month> --> April | August | December | February | January | ...
210:                          <Season> --> Fall | Spring | Summer | Winter | ...
211:                          <Generic temporal expression> --> today | tomorrow | tonight | yesterday | 2
weeks | ...
212:
213:                        <+Reference yardstick> --> <Entry date: Definite date (1a)> <+Semantic Triplet
(1c)>
214:                                                      <+Event (1d)> <+Macro Event (1e)>
215:                          <Entry date: Definite date> --> 03/07/1967 | 02/09/1968 | 03/07/1968 |
04/12/1968 |
216:                                                          04/14/1968 | ...
217:                          <+Semantic Triplet> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 26
218:                          <++Event> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 24
219:                          <++Macro Event> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 22
220:
221:                    <+Time of day> --> [<Approximate qualifier>] <+Exat Hour: Exact Hour (1a)>
222:                                          <+Indefinite time of day (1b)>
223:                      <Approximate qualifier> --> about | around | circa | maybe | after | ...
```

```
224:
225:                    <+Exact Hour> --> <Hour and minute>
226:                      <Hour and minute> --> 12:00:00 AM | 1:00:00 AM | 2:00:00 AM | 2:30:00 AM |
3:00:00 AM | ...
227:
228:                    <+Indefinite time of day> --> [<Time qualifier>] <Moment of the day>
229:                      <Time qualifier> --> late | mid | after | all | at the beginning of | ...
230:                      <Moment of the day> --> dawn | evening | morning | night | noon | ...
231:                  <Temporal periodicity> --> monthly | yearly | ...
232:                <+Duration> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 203
233:                <+Space> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 58
234:
235:                <+Reason> --> <Name of reason> [<+Semantic Triplet (1a)>] [<+Event (1b)>]
[<+Macro Event (1c)>]
236:                  <Name of reason> --> arrest | attack | fight | intoxication | move | ...
237:                  <+Semantic Triplet> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 26
238:                  <++Event> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 24
239:                  <++Macro Event> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 22
240:                <+Number> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 156
241:
242:                <+Instrument> --> <Type on instrument> [{<+Number>}]
243:                  <Type on instrument> --> guns | 10 shots from an automatic weapon | 180 lbs of
gelignite |
244:                                    additional barricades | armoured vehicle | ...
245:                  <+Number> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 156
246:
247:                <+Outcome> --> <Name of outcome> [{<+Quantification of outcome>}] [<+Semantic
Triplet (1a)>]
248:                          [<+Event (1b)>] [<+Macro Event (1c)>]
249:                  <Name of outcome> --> arrest | attack | death | killing | retrieval | ...
250:
251:                  <+Quantification of outcome> --> [<+Number>]
252:                    <+Number> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 156
253:                  <+Semantic Triplet> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 26
254:                  <++Event> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 24
255:                  <++Macro Event> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 22
256:
257:                <+Content> --> <Name of content> [<+Semantic Triplet (1a)>] [<+Event (1b)>]
[<+Macro Event (1c)>]
258:                  <Name of content> --> decision | demand | plea | request | thought | ...
259:                  <+Semantic Triplet> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 26
260:                  <++Event> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 24
261:                  <++Macro Event> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 22
262:
263:              <+Complex process> --> [<Aggregate code>] <+Simple process> <+Other process>
264:                <Aggregate code> --> accusation | approval | assembling | authority | communication | ...
265:                <+Simple process> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 180
266:
267:                <+Other process> --> <+Simple process (1a)> <+Nominalization (1b)>
268:                  <+Simple process> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 180
269:
270:                  <+Nominalization> --> [<Negation>] <Verbal noun> [{<+Time>}] [{<+Space>}]
[{<Action type (Adverb)>}]
271:                                  [{<+Reason>}] [{<+Outcome>}] [{<+Instrument>}] [{<+Number>}]
[{<+Content>}]
272:                    <Negation> --> did not | do not | not | ...
```

```
273:                    <Verbal noun> --> meeting | negotiation | sit-down | ...
274:                    <+Time> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 189
275:                    <+Space> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 58
276:                    <Action type (Adverb)> --> allegedly | apparently | fatally | hardly | savagely | ...
277:                    <+Reason> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 235
278:                    <+Outcome> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 247
279:                    <+Instrument> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 242
280:                    <+Number> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 156
281:                    <+Content> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 257
282:
283:          <+Participant-O> --> [<Case>] <+Actor (1a)> <+Physical object (1b)> <+Abstract object
(1c)>
284:            <Case> --> at | for | from | into | with | ...
285:            <+Actor> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 31
286:
287:            <+Physical object> --> <Type of physical object> [<Proper name>] [{<+Number>}]
[<+Property>]
288:                                <+Implicit object>
289:              <Type of physical object> --> door | tree | window | 100 petrol bombs | 180 petrol bombs
| ...
290:              <Proper name> --> AOH Hall | Aquinas Hall | Bogside | Brown Square barracks |
Catholic district | ...
291:              <+Number> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 156
292:
293:              <+Property> --> {<+Individual (1a)>} {<+Organization (1b)>}
294:                <+Individual> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 34
295:                <+Organization> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 111
296:
297:              <+Implicit object> --> {<+Actor>}
298:                <+Actor> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 31
299:
300:            <+Abstract object> --> <Name of abstract object> [<+Implicit object>]
301:              <Name of abstract object> --> 111 names | a further meeting | a meeting |
302:                                            abandonment of Orange demonstrations |
303:                                            administration and security of the Bogside | ...
304:              <+Implicit object> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 297
305:          <Triplet relation> --> and | so that | because | but | if | ...
306:
307:          <+Alternative triplet> --> <+Semantic Triplet>
308:            <+Semantic Triplet> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 26
309:        <Type of event> --> Assault | Attack | Court trial | Lynching | Robbery | ...
310:        <+Space> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 58
311:
312:        <+Alternative Event> --> <+Event>
313:          <++Event> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 24
314:
315:        <+Semantic Triplet> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 26
316:      <City name> --> ? | Altnagevil | Andersonstown | Annalong | Antrim | ...
317:      <Definite date> --> 03/07/1967 | 02/09/1968 | 03/07/1968 | 04/12/1968 | 04/14/1968 | ...
318:
319:      <++Event> --> Rewrite rules for this object on line 24
```

Appendix B: Coded Output

Original Narrative Text:

"May 20, 1968: About 500 Protestants gathered outside Craven Street Hall, Belfast where the Prime Minister was speaking at a meeting of Woodvale Unionist Association. They carried placards saying 'O'Neill must go'. As police were escorting the Prime Minister out of the meeting the crowd threw stones, egg and flour, hitting his car. The Rev. Paisley appealed to the crowd to disperse and go home peaceably" (Deutsch and Magowan 1973: 8).

Coded Output:

(Event: (Identifier: Protestant Protest (Craven Street Hall Meeting Place Belfast))

(Type of event: Protestant Protest) (Space: (City: (Locality within city: (Building: (Proper name of building: Craven Street Hall) (Type of building: Hall))) (City name: Belfast)))

<1> (Semantic Triplet: (Identifier: Woodvale Unionist Organization hosted a meeting (5/20/1968 Craven Street Hall Meeting Place Belfast))

(Participant-S: (Actor: (Organization: (Institution: (Other institution: Woodvale Unionist Organization))))) (Process: (Simple process: (Verbal phrase: hosted a meeting) (Aggregate code: meeting) (Time: (Date: (Definite date: (Definite date: 5/20/1968)))) (Space: (City: (Locality within city: (Building: (Proper name of building: Craven Street Hall) (Type of building: Hall))) (City name: Belfast))))))

<2> (Semantic Triplet: (Identifier: Captain O'Neill (O'Neill male Prime Minister Northern Ireland Government Prime Minister) spoke (5/20/1968 Craven Street Hall Meeting Place Belfast) at meeting Woodvale Unionist Organization)

(Participant-S: (Actor: (Individual: (Name of individual actor: Captain O'Neill) (Personal characteristics: (First name and last name: (Last name: O'Neill)) (Gender: male) (Job: Prime Minister) (Organization: (Institution: (State organisation: Northern Ireland Government)) (Role in the Organisation: Prime Minister)))))) (Process: (Simple process: (Verbal phrase: spoke) (Aggregate code: communication) (Time: (Date: (Definite date: (Definite date: 5/20/1968)))) (Space: (City: (Locality within city: (Building: (Proper name of building: Craven Street Hall) (Type of building: Hall))) (City name: Belfast))))) (Participant-O: (Case: at) (Abstract object: (Name of abstract object: meeting) (Implicit object: (Actor: (Organization: (Institution: (Other institution: Woodvale Unionist Organization))))))))

<3> (Semantic Triplet: (Identifier: Protesters (about 500 Protestant) gathered (5/20/1968 outside of Craven Street Hall Meeting Place Belfast))

(Participant-S: (Actor: (Collective actor: (Name of collective actor: Protesters) (Collective characteristics: (Religious affiliation: Protestant) (Number: (Approximate qualifier: about) (Quantitative value: (Numeric value: 500))))))) (Process: (Simple process: (Verbal phrase: gathered) (Aggregate code: assembling) (Time: (Date: (Definite date: (Definite date:

5/20/1968)))) (Space: (City: (Space qualifier: outside of) (Locality within city: (Building: (Proper name of building: Craven Street Hall) (Type of building: Hall))) (City name: Belfast))))))

<4> (Semantic Triplet: (Identifier: Protesters (about 500 Protestant) held placards (5/20/1968 outside of Craven Street Hall Meeting Place Belfast 'O'Neill must go'))

(Participant-S: (Actor: (Collective actor: (Name of collective actor: Protesters) (Collective characteristics: (Religious affiliation: Protestant) (Number: (Approximate qualifier: about) (Quantitative value: (Numeric value: 500))))))) (Process: (Simple process: (Verbal phrase: held placards) (Aggregate code: protest) (Time: (Date: (Definite date: (Definite date: 5/20/1968)))) (Space: (City: (Space qualifier: outside of) (Locality within city: (Building: (Proper name of building: Craven Street Hall) (Type of building: Hall))) (City name: Belfast))) (Content: (Name of content: 'O'Neill must go')))))

<5> (Semantic Triplet: (Identifier: police (Police) escorted (5/20/1968 out of the meeting Craven Street Hall Hall Belfast) Captain O'Neill (O'Neill male Prime Minister Northern Ireland Government Prime Minister))

(Participant-S: (Actor: (Collective actor: (Name of collective actor: police) (Collective characteristics: (Organization: (Institution: (State organisation: Police))))))) (Process: (Simple process: (Verbal phrase: escorted) (Aggregate code: control) (Time: (Date: (Definite date: (Definite date: 5/20/1968)))) (Space: (City: (Space qualifier: out of the meeting) (Locality within city: (Building: (Proper name of building: Craven Street Hall) (Type of building: Hall))) (City name: Belfast))))) (Participant-O: (Actor: (Individual: (Name of individual actor: Captain O'Neill) (Personal characteristics: (First name and last name: (Last name: O'Neill)) (Gender: male) (Job: Prime Minister) (Organization: (Institution: (State organisation: Northern Ireland Government)) (Role in the Organisation: Prime Minister)))))))

<6> (Semantic Triplet: (Identifier: Protesters (about 500 Protestant) threw (5/20/1968 outside of Craven Street Hall Meeting Place Belfast stones, eggs and flour) against Captain O'Neill (O'Neill male Prime Minister Northern Ireland Government Prime Minister))

(Participant-S: (Actor: (Collective actor: (Name of collective actor: Protesters) (Collective characteristics: (Religious affiliation: Protestant) (Number: (Approximate qualifier: about) (Quantitative value: (Numeric value: 500))))))) (Process: (Simple process: (Verbal phrase: threw) (Aggregate code: violence) (Time: (Date: (Definite date: (Definite date: 5/20/1968)))) (Space: (City: (Space qualifier: outside of) (Locality within city: (Building: (Proper name of building: Craven Street Hall) (Type of building: Hall))) (City name: Belfast))) (Instrument: (Type on instrument: stones, eggs and flour)))) (Participant-O: (Case: against) (Actor: (Individual: (Name of individual actor: Captain O'Neill) (Personal characteristics: (First name and last name: (Last name: O'Neill)) (Gender: male) (Job: Prime Minister) (Organization: (Institution: (State organisation: Northern Ireland Government)) (Role in the Organisation: Prime Minister)))))))

<7> (Semantic Triplet: (Identifier: Protesters (about 500 Protestant) hit (5/20/1968 outside of Craven Street Hall Meeting Place Belfast stones, eggs and flour) Captain O'Neill (O'Neill male Prime Minister Northern Ireland Government Prime Minister) car Captain O'Neill (O'Neill male Pr)

(Participant-S: (Actor: (Collective actor: (Name of collective actor: Protesters) (Collective characteristics: (Religious affiliation: Protestant) (Number: (Approximate qualifier: about) (Quantitative value: (Numeric value: 500))))))) (Process: (Simple process: (Verbal phrase: hit)

(Aggregate code: violence) (Time: (Date: (Definite date: (Definite date: 5/20/1968)))) (Space: (City: (Space qualifier: outside of) (Locality within city: (Building: (Proper name of building: Craven Street Hall) (Type of building: Hall))) (City name: Belfast))) (Instrument: (Type on instrument: stones, eggs and flour)))) (Participant-O: (Physical object: (Type of physical object: car) (Property: (Individual: (Name of individual actor: Captain O'Neill) (Personal characteristics: (First name and last name: (Last name: O'Neill)) (Gender: male) (Job: Prime Minister) (Organization: (Institution: (State organisation: Northern Ireland Government)) (Role in the Organisation: Prime Minister))))) (Implicit object: (Actor: (Individual: (Name of individual actor: Captain O'Neill) (Personal characteristics: (First name and last name: (Last name: O'Neill)) (Gender: male) (Job: Prime Minister) (Organization: (Institution: (State organisation: Northern Ireland Government)) (Role in the Organisation: Prime Minister)))))))))

<8> (Semantic Triplet: (Identifier: Rev Ian Paisley (Ian Paisley Reverend) appealed to disperse (5/20/1968 outside of Craven Street Hall Meeting Place Belfast) Protesters (about 500 Protestant))

(Participant-S: (Actor: (Individual: (Name of individual actor: Rev Ian Paisley) (Personal characteristics: (First name and last name: (First name: Ian) (Last name: Paisley)) (Job: Reverend))))) (Process: (Simple process: (Verbal phrase: appealed to disperse) (Aggregate code: request) (Time: (Date: (Definite date: (Definite date: 5/20/1968)))) (Space: (City: (Space qualifier: outside of) (Locality within city: (Building: (Proper name of building: Craven Street Hall) (Type of building: Hall))) (City name: Belfast))))) (Participant-O: (Actor: (Collective actor: (Name of collective actor: Protesters) (Collective characteristics: (Religious affiliation: Protestant) (Number: (Approximate qualifier: about) (Quantitative value: (Numeric value: 500))))))))

<9> (Semantic Triplet: (Identifier: Rev Ian Paisley (Ian Paisley Reverend) appealed to go home (peacefully 5/20/1968 outside of Craven Street Hall Meeting Place Belfast) Protesters (about 500 Protestant))

(Participant-S: (Actor: (Individual: (Name of individual actor: Rev Ian Paisley) (Personal characteristics: (First name and last name: (First name: Ian) (Last name: Paisley)) (Job: Reverend))))) (Process: (Simple process: (Verbal phrase: appealed to go home) (Aggregate code: request) (Action type (Adverb): peacefully) (Time: (Date: (Definite date: (Definite date: 5/20/1968)))) (Space: (City: (Space qualifier: outside of) (Locality within city: (Building: (Proper name of building: Craven Street Hall) (Type of building: Hall))) (City name: Belfast))))) (Participant-O: (Actor: (Collective actor: (Name of collective actor: Protesters) (Collective characteristics: (Religious affiliation: Protestant) (Number: (Approximate qualifier: about) (Quantitative value: (Numeric value: 500)))))))))

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