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Bruised but Unbroken: Cultural Responses to the Irish Troubles

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SENIOR THESIS APPROVAL

This Honors thesis entitled

“Bruised But Unbroken: Cultural Responses to the Irish Troubles”

written by

Cassandra Young

and submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for completion of
the Carl Goodson Honors Program
meets the criteria for acceptance
and has been approved by the undersigned readers.

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May 4, 2018

Abbreviations

Republican Groups

IRA - Irish Republican Army

PIRA - Provisionsal IRA

Loyalist Groups

RHC - Red Hand Commandos

UDA - Ulster Defense Association

UVF - Ulster Volunteer Force

British Groups

RUC - Royal Ulster Constabulary

SAS - Special Air Service

'Bruised But Unbroken': Cultural Responses to the Irish Troubles

Music and art can be very effective mediums for individual expression, both in personal life and for political thought. It is something that many people can relate to, can reach the heart more directly than mere words, and carries a wide range of unspoken meaning and significance without being reduced to clumsy language. Where words are useful to express ideas, music and art can often convey emotion more effectively and can be very effective in inspiring action or shaping thought. For this reason, these mediums have been and are often used to engage with or reject political discourse with great effect. One particularly potent example of this sort of discussion may be seen in the music and art used to comment on the Irish Troubles. This allows the historian to understand more about the complexities of this conflict by feeling the unspoken

assertions that are not immediately visible through words alone. It may also reveal something about how people thought about themselves, each other, and their histories and identities.

The period of Northern Ireland's social and political conflict, known as "the Troubles," has a very long and complicated history, involving animosities about class, ethnicity, religion, and politics going back for centuries. At its core, the Troubles were a conflict over political status and national identity between republicans wanting union with the Republic of Ireland and loyalists wanting to stay in the United Kingdom, with very old tensions and resentments sometimes spilling over into violence and both feeling justified for doing so.¹ It is generally said to have begun with the Battle of the Bogside on August 12-14, 1969 and ended with the Good Friday Agreement of 1998. But, even that designation is unclear and debatable. During this period, the violence between the opposing paramilitaries, police forces, and civilians attracted international attention.

Historical Context

The origins of the conflict are often considered to go back to the Plantation of Ulster in the seventeenth century, when English and Scottish settlers were granted land by the Crown in the northeast with the aim of establishing a Protestant foothold in the area. This led to economic, social, and religious conflict between the populations as each feared and distrusted the other, sometimes breaking out into violence and reprisals which would only deepen the rift. By the nineteenth century, some politicians began to advocate greater independence for Ireland in order

¹ Not everyone who wanted separation or union fell into these categories. Actually, most people did not; combatants were the visible minority. Non-violent supporters of Irish unification or of staying with the United Kingdom were often called nationalists and unionists respectively, and the fact that a person might support one of these ideas did not mean that they necessarily supported the violent expression of it. There were also other varieties of these ideas, such as Ulster nationalism (supporting a Northern Ireland independent from both the Republic and United Kingdom).

to address economic hardships and discrimination, while others argued for staying in the United Kingdom for protection and financial stability, creating nationalist and unionist parties respectively. Although the question was not a religious one, supporters often fell along social or religious lines, with Irish Catholics more often making up the nationalists while Anglo-Irish Protestants tended to favor unionism. This would create religious and ethnic binaries that would add to the sense of alienation and division each felt from the other.

This division would complicate the question of potential Irish independence. Not only was there the question of whether or not Ireland should be its own nation, but if it did, whether unionists in Ireland should be able to separate themselves. Where nationalists associated their identity with the island of Ireland and its individual history and culture, unionists associated it with both Great Britain and Ireland, regarding the two as inseparable. Protestant unionists also feared that, after facing discrimination for so long, Irish Catholics would turn the tables against Protestants in a new Irish state. Just as nationalists were prepared to campaign for their idea of a nation, so too would unionists. When it appeared that the Third Home Rule Bill would pass, a unionist militia was formed to resist it by whatever means necessary and a nationalist militia soon formed to enforce it. The Act was placed on hold during World War One and many Irishmen, nationalist as well as unionist, joined the British war effort.

However, this would lead to a split within nationalist ranks between more moderate and revolutionary groups over Irish involvement in the war, whether Home Rule was really satisfactory, or whether it would even be enacted at all. In 1916, a group of these revolutionaries decided that this war offered their best chance to secure an Irish republic for good. The Rising failed and its leaders were executed, but it galvanized Irish nationalism into a shift away from

parliamentary politics to revolutionary republicanism. This alienated unionists even further, who saw this not only as a national betrayal but also a personal one in that Ulster divisions had suffered heavy casualties during the war, casualties that might have been lessened if these men had been fighting for the United Kingdom instead of against it.²

The tensions that developed during this time would continue to be divisive, including creating a split between Irish nationalists and Irish republicans during the Irish Civil War, with the latter continuing as the Irish Republican Army (IRA), and dividing up the island between the independent Irish Free State and Northern Ireland as part of the United Kingdom.³ Although political negotiations sought compromise, some parties found the terms to be less than satisfactory and sporadic bouts of violence and unrest would continue through the following decades until coming to a head in the 1960's. When civil rights activists began seeking reform to address potential discrimination against non-unionists and Catholics, including complaints about housing, jobs, and voting practices, some unionists suspected them of having nationalist aims and encouraged resistance to them. As demonstrations and counter-demonstrations picked up, some would escalate into violence. This increased in 1969 with a series of riots which met with violent resistance between opposing civilians and police forces. Outrage over police violence and attacks on civilians pushed the existing resentments and distrust too far and encouraged continued violence and armed campaigns that would continue for the next thirty years.⁴

Although from the outside, sectarian violence may be the most visible aspect of the Irish Troubles, an equally significant part of the conflict was cultural. With the use of music and art, civilians and combatants alike expressed their views about themselves and others, as well as

² Thomas Hennessey, *A History of Northern Ireland*, 1-10.

³ This abbreviation and others are listed in the Additional Information.

⁴ Hennessey, 119-20, 126-50.

attempting to influence how others viewed them. These expressions could be used to express division or unity, aggression or peace, and sometimes a combination of them all. By looking at these aspects of culture, it may be possible to get a glimpse into this conflict through the eyes and ears of the people who lived it. This is important because it opens up an entirely new level of meaning and may give an idea of how these ideas were actually experienced and internalized. These nuances may not be immediately visible to or easily understood from the outside, but the greater variety of responses they reveal is useful for gaining a better understanding of this complex conflict. In addition, it sometimes speaks of a more idealistic bent than violence for its own sake. The mediums themselves are neither inherently violent nor peaceful, but may be used for either end. In the same way that these tools were used aggressively, they were also used peaceably and may continue to be used in this way.

Music

One way that the people of Northern Ireland expressed themselves during this time was through the use of music, already a prevalent medium in Irish culture. A song or tune could be used for a variety of things, whether to honor a fallen hero, project a victorious future, or create distance from a person or group the singer disliked. Which men or events were honored or disdained, when particular songs were sung, and even the style of music or type of instrument could carry significant meaning both for the person singing and those who heard him. In this way, a person could express what they valued or identified with to others without having to specifically discuss it out loud, which was apparently considered rude. In other ways, it could also be used to express sentiments that might be difficult or dangerous to state more explicitly.^{5 6}

⁵ Jack Santio, *Signs of War and Peace*, 4, 30-36, 61.

⁶ To look at how music was used during this time, I selected sixteen pieces of music and divided them according to whether they were supporting or opposing the conflict and whether the tone was aggressive or militant versus more

During the 1960s and 1970s, social conflict and unrest that was already simmering began to break out into periods of protest and violence which added to the grievances that were already being made in Northern Ireland. During the civil rights unrest mentioned above, political tensions sometimes led to violence. This could take a variety of forms, whether violence between groups of civilians, between the police and demonstrators, or between paramilitaries. Some attacks were instigated, while others were not. However, outrage and fear from the attacks would only serve to increase hostilities even further and encourage stronger action in the future. Further protests and violence would also take place after the introduction of internment in 1971, in which large numbers of Belfast residents were taken from their homes and imprisoned without trial. The raids were meant to arrest those suspected of paramilitary activity, but many people arrested were not involved and nearly all of the prisoners taken were Catholic or nationalists, despite the existence of predominantly-Protestant loyalist paramilitaries.⁷

These issues and events would become flashpoints that people and organizations could rally around and hold up as examples for their reason for fighting, and they were often memorialized through song. With these hot issues being fresh on the people's minds, it perhaps makes sense that, of the nine selected songs that were written during this time (plus perhaps two more that are of uncertain date), all but two of them support one side or the other in the conflict. However, more of these are relatively non-aggressive, with a couple notable exceptions. Of the more militant examples from these decades, three of the four were written after 1972, the bloodiest year of the conflict.

passive or non-violent. Once they were divided in this way, I arranged them according to their date and looked at the 1960s-70s group versus the 1980s-90s group. A full breakdown of the music used and their categories can be found in "Songs and Classifications." Some points of context are also included in "Selective Timeline."

⁷ Tim Pat Coogan, *The Troubles*, 126.

In addition to the divisive nature of these political issues and their complicated patterns, their distribution across space was equally messy. While religion, politics, and identity may have congregated in certain regions, populations more often interwove with each other across multiple social lines. In some places, this resulted in a fairly even mixture of social groups which may have served to moderate conflict and encourage peaceful coexistence. However, in other areas, strongly differing groups of people could be located in close proximity to each other or one might find itself heavily outnumbered by another, leading them to feel threatened and more likely to resort to violence.

An example of this might be seen in Belfast's Falls and Shankill neighborhoods, which are within walking distance of each other but are strongly divided along religious lines. In 1971, both were of similar size, but the Falls neighborhood was about 80% Catholic (compared to about 2% Protestant) while Shankill was about 79% Protestant (compared to 8% Catholic). Though religion did not necessarily determine political affiliation, these regions were strongly republican and loyalist respectively and experienced significant conflict on both sides. Similarly, the Protestant unionist community in the city of Derry, comparatively small in 1971 compared to Catholic and nationalist communities nearby, created tensions by evoking memories of being "under siege" by Catholics and feelings of isolation which sometimes led to conflict. With this patchwork geography and complicated social lines, it became very difficult to reach a solution for any given area that would satisfy the needs and interests of its inhabitants. In strongly polarized and neighboring regions, such as in Belfast, it also increased the visibility of the "other" and may have escalated tensions further than they would be otherwise. Given the

episodes of violence mentioned before, this may have created a climate that encouraged more hostile responses than were previously common.⁸

When music aggressively supporting one side or the other occurred, a simultaneous effect of unity and division was often in place by creating brotherhood between the men who fought together and emphasizing their differences from their enemy. Because members of conflicting groups often had different workplaces, neighborhoods, churches, and schools, they could each form a view about others that was not necessarily challenged on a daily basis, so they could group others together as 'all the same.' With both of these happening at the same time, and happening on both sides, it was easy to create a very rigid dichotomy between who was 'right' and 'wrong', with both fervently believing in their own rightness. In addition, such divisive and inflammatory messages could serve to provoke others into violence, and so make the singers' actions seem more justified. Some examples of this combination might be seen in the republican tune "Little Armalite" and the loyalist one "I Was Born Under The Union Jack."

"Little Armalite" describes a Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA) man, sometimes called "Provos", dealing with harassment from British soldiers but feeling satisfaction at their fear and his revenge when he has his "little Armalite." In addition to describing the abuses and humiliation he experiences from his enemies, he contrasts the comradeship and bravery he sees among his own men with the cowardice of the enemy, such as when a "brave RUC man" arrives with six hundred reinforcements and cries "Come out, ye cowardly Fenians, ... come out and fight," but retracts his challenge when he discovers that they are armed. On the other hand, the narrator expresses his joy at fighting with "A comrade on my left and another on my right" in

⁸ Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, *Census of Population 1971 - County Report - Belfast County Borough*, 26.

See also "Belfast and Derry Religious Demographics."

various republican strongholds, including Falls Road and the Bogside in Belfast and Derry. These are significant because they had been sites of conflict between republicans and the British army at various points, such as the Falls Curfew in 1970 and the Battle of the Bogside in 1969, as well as being quite near to the equally-staunchly loyalist neighborhoods of Shankill Road and the Fountain. Large "peace walls" were built in Belfast, Derry, and other cities to separate strongly nationalist and republican neighborhoods from strongly unionist and loyalist ones in an attempt to prevent violence. Many of these walls still stand.^{9 10}

This strong community rivalry is put into reverse in "I Was Born Under A Union Jack." In this song, Shankill is held up as being a proud place in contrast to the Falls (as well as Ardoyne in Belfast), it emphasizes brotherhood with other loyalists, while despising republicans, and refers to specific victories and expressions of identity. This include the Siege of Derry and the Battle of the Boyne during the Williamite Wars, the red hand of Ulster (as contrasted to the Irish shamrock), and the colors red, white, and blue. By mentioning these particular historical events, the song brings to mind images of James Stuart's siege of the city, the Apprentice Boys' closing of the gates and Robert Lundy's attempts to negotiate, and the eventual relief of the city with William's army. Similar images are implied with the mention of the Boyne, a significant victory for the Williamite forces after which James returned to France. This is used to suggest a similar situation for loyalists in the modern day, especially those living in the predominantly nationalist city of Derry. It suggests that loyalists have to fight a war on two fronts, from the disloyal and foreign people around them and from the cowardly politicians who would sell them out. In this way, the song uses images from the past to comment on present feelings and politics.

⁹ A note about Derry/Londonderry: Regarding the issue about the name of this city, I will be following the compromise which refers to the *City* of Derry and the *County* of Londonderry.

¹⁰ Unknown, *Little Armalite*, (1975).

These images and symbols are prominent in loyalist artwork, so they will be discussed in greater detail in later sections, but they serve as rallying symbols for one group, so to speak, while at the same time alienating members of the opposing camp. Within the context of these songs, and especially within the latter, the implication seems to be that a person *must* be one or the other and that there is little room for that other.¹¹

Related to the emphasis on factionalism featured in these two songs is the creation of a proud military tradition for members of these groups to stand behind, especially if it can stretch back far into history. By associating the modern group with one already familiar from their folklore, they could claim the positive associations and legitimacy already attached to past figures. This tradition was already implied simply in the names of different paramilitary groups as they were often taken from older ones, whether or not there was actually any connection between the two besides the name. For example, the IRA would often claim descent from the republican organizations of the 1910's and 1920's, while the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) pointed back to the Ulster Volunteers that resisted Home Rule in 1913.

This association was regularly reinforced through the reminder of past heroes and victories through music and visual images. In the case of the republicans, this often involved a tradition of rebellion and resistance, a history of being oppressed or of wrongs done, and of heroes killed by the enemy. Popular images included members of previous rebellions, especially Wolfe Tone and Pearse, and modern republicans such as the hunger strikers. For loyalists, this often included memories of honored military service in the British army, historical victories won or wrongs endured, or of fallen men. As mentioned before, William of Orange and his victories

¹¹ Unknown, *I Was Born Under A Union Jack*, (1973).

were common themes, as well as images of the 36th Ulster Division in World War One and other war heroes. Some of these themes appear in two more examples of aggressive sectarian music from this period, “Go On Home, British Soldiers” and “Daddy’s Uniform.” These are less aggressive than the previous examples (though some versions of “Go On Home, British Soldiers” are a bit more vulgar) in that there is less emphasis on demonizing the other side, but there is still strong militancy.

Despite being from opposing sides, both of these tunes choose historical military service as their claim for legitimacy. In “Go On Home, British Soldiers,” the military tradition is one of resistance to English rule. The refrain makes the declaration that “For eight hundred years, we’ve fought you without fear, / And we’ll fight you for eight hundred more.” This actually goes back a bit farther than the usual timeline given for Anglo-Irish conflict, which usually is said to have begun in earnest during the seventeenth century. However, eight hundred years from 1973 likely refers to the coming of the Normans to Ireland and the granting of Irish land to the English king in the twelfth century. Besides claiming an even longer history of resistance than the 1916 Proclamation of the Irish Republic (which referred to the seventeenth century), it seems to suggest that the wrong being resisted is not just the refusal to give them their rights, but that the entire basis that British influence in Ireland rests upon was illegitimate from the start, suggesting that the IRA was doubly justified in their campaign. It also points back to Bloody Sunday (“those fourteen men in Derry”) as a more recent example of the wrongs they claim to fight against.¹²

In loyalist music, the choice of historical service often either goes back to the Williamite Wars or World War One, but “Daddy’s Uniform” moves further into the present by highlighting

¹² Unknown, *Go On Home, British Soldiers*, (1973).

Northern Ireland's service during World War Two. In it, a boy asks his father about his old uniform and the honorable service it has seen, and receives an answer about the glory of fighting for the UVF. Towards the end, the father tells him "So son please take my Uniform and go and fight the foe, / And fight just like your father did so many years ago." Like the music mentioned before, this seems to carry a double message of honor for those who fight with Ulster and of shame for those who do not. During World War One, many members of the UVF enlisted in the 36th Ulster Division and fought with distinction, notably at the Battle of the Somme. The implication seems to be that the boy's family has a military tradition - that his grandfather was in World War One, his father in World War Two, and now the next generation is obligated to continue the fight. By naming themselves after the Ulster Volunteers, the UVF of 1966 is associated with these previous engagements.

Instead of fighting the Germans, however, the boy is probably expected to fight the IRA. There also seems to be an implied suggestion of shame in this regard as well in that some Irish revolutionaries resisted Irish recruitment into World War One and even tried to secure German arms for the Easter Rising. Then, during World War Two, the Republic of Ireland declared neutrality. If the father was old enough to fight in World War Two and now his son is old enough to fight in a war himself, it seems that the song may be set in roughly the 1960's, allowing for a twenty year generational gap. In the second verse, the father recalls his memories of 1941 "when Ulsters shores were threatened, / By the Jackboot of the Hun," and he fought against them in the war. This phrase may also bring to mind images of both wars, with the jackboot being associated with the Nazis and 'Hun' being associated with Kaiser Wilhelm. Then, in the third, he says that "Ulster it is calling" and needs the Volunteers to protect it, seeming to equate the IRA of this

conflict with the Germans of the previous oncs. Though not directly spoken, it seems that there may be a subtle contrast at play suggesting that the state the IRA identified with was a traitor and a coward during the wars where Ulstermen showed great service and courage. In this way, it suggests that support for the UVF is not only brave and honorable, but that opposing it is shameful.¹³

However, simply because a piece of music was sympathetic to one of these ideologies did not mean that it represented the aggressive messages associated with other pieces such as those already described. Some nationalist or unionist tunes expressed their political or social beliefs through terms largely removed from the militancy of others. One form of non-violent political or personal expression could take was a nostalgic look towards the past, especially compared to the more tangible present. In nationalist songs such as "Only Her Rivers Run Free" and "Four Green Fields," this could be interpreted as both a lament for the past and a look towards the future, a pattern that can be seen in music expressing opposition to the conflict as well.

Both "Only Her Rivers Run Free" and "Four Green Fields" express a similar sorrowful sentiment - grief that Ireland, with all her beauty and dignity, has endured so much but still is not yet completely free. However, at least sometimes, this grief is mixed with hope for that freedom to one day come. Natural beauty is used to describe Ireland in both songs, especially in "Only Her Rivers Run Free," but the feeling is one of fading beauty, such as in the lines "When leaves are still green in December / It's then that our land will be free" in the former and the comparison of Ireland to a "proud old woman" in "Four Green Fields." This is an especially potent symbol because it calls to mind the image of Cathleen Ni Houlihan in Irish folklore, an elderly woman

¹³ Unknown, *Daddy's Uniform*.

robbed of her home seeking men who will help her regain it. Presumably, the woman was once beautiful and strong, but after all she has endured, her beauty and strength have faded, though her dignity has not. It is also implied that the beauty and richness of her fields are precisely what made them a target for theft, adding to the image of tragic glory.¹⁴

In “Only Her Rivers Run Free,” the tone seems to be one of heartbroken hopelessness, saying that the only time Ireland will be free is when Nature itself defies its own laws, but “Four Green Fields” makes the hopeful statement that “My fourth green field will bloom once again.” The fourth field, the one “in bondage,” represents the province of Ulster, so the image is one of fruitful peace and prosperity once the four ‘fields’ are reunited. However, though the tone of this song is less overtly aggressive than others, it does contain some hint of militancy in the final lines with the suggestion that, for the fourth field to be regained, she will need the help of “my sons [who] have sons, as brave as were their fathers.” Earlier in the song, the woman tells how her brave sons fought and died to protect her fields, much to her grief, and so suggests that her grandsons may have to do the same to regain them and honor their fathers’ lives. She may not necessarily require the next generation to fight and die for her, but the implication is that it may be possible and would be an honorable way to die, echoing a sentiment found in many Irish songs covering a variety of conflicts, both more or less aggressive in tone.¹⁵

Unionist music could also include feelings of nostalgia through the memory of well-loved familiar symbols and experiences, as described in “The Sash My Father Wore.” However, this is nostalgia of a different sort, this time looking back positively towards the past as indicating a hopeful future. Where the previous two songs have a melancholy tune, this one is cheerful and

¹⁴ Mickey MacConnell, *Only Her Rivers Run Free*, (1965).

¹⁵ Tommy Makem, *Four Green Fields*, (1967).

upbeat. The narrator describes the pride he feels at carrying on his ancestors' tradition by being part of the same fraternity and bearing the same symbols as they did. This man probably has a long pedigree with the Orangemen and experiences great satisfaction when he thinks of the glories they won. Although he was not alive at the time of the battles described (including the ever-present Derry and the Boyne), it seems that, by participating in similar activities and sharing certain symbols, he feels that he can claim a part of their victories.

Like "Four Green Fields," however, the possibility of militancy seems to be implied. When the speaker grows tired of marching only in the Twelfth of July parades, "if the call should come we'll follow the drum, and cross that river once more / That tomorrow's Ulsterman may wear the sash my father wore!" The river in question is the Boyne mentioned a couple lines before, so the implied suggestion is probably of a Protestant-Catholic battle, with the victory going to the former. In addition, the second line suggests a feeling of present and future identity being threatened by others. When placed into the social and political context of the 1960 and 1970s, the hypothetical threat described in this song may have felt to some to suddenly become far less hypothetical and in need of greater action than singing along to old songs and marching in a parade.¹⁶

Non-violent support for a cause could also appear in the expression of camaraderie. An interesting point here is that, though nationalists and unionists often opposed each other politically, they both agreed that it was wrong for their men to be held in prison on alleged crimes without a trial. To protest this and express camaraderic and support for the men he held to be wrongfully imprisoned, Paddy McGuigan wrote "The Men Behind the Wire" in 1971, shortly

¹⁶ Unknown, *The Sash My Father Wore*.

after internment began. About a year later, a loyalist version of the same name appeared, both protesting the same policy but for different sets of people.¹⁷ Both songs share a similar theme, that of loyal men being taken away from their homes in Belfast to be imprisoned but still having the support and gratitude of their comrades outside. Also, though it may be suggested by the songs' support of possibly militant individuals and the assurance of reaching their goals, there is very little overly aggressive language in these two songs.

However, because of their different political perspectives, there are significant differences between these two songs as well. One noticeable example is the songs' perspectives, with McGuigan's version being narrated from the outside about the men who have been imprisoned and the unionist version taking the perspective of one of the prisoners themselves, but the biggest difference is in the tone of each. The McGuigan version has three main themes - the brutal tactics of English soldiers past and present, the injustice of the arrests, and the unbroken hopeful spirit of the men still seeking freedom - while the unionist tune focuses mainly on the theme of dogmatic loyalty under duress and has a defiant, triumphant feel.

Rhetorically speaking, the appeal to emotion is strong in the McGuigan version, creating feelings of anger against the British soldiers at the beginning and feelings of hope and pride with the narrator at the end. The first part of the song describes the arrests as disruptive and heart-wrenching as they destroy families by ambushing fathers and sons in the early morning while mothers and young children are forced to look on, eventually making the condemning statement that "Cromwell's men are here again." It also points out the injustice of arresting men without a trial, saying that "being Irish means you're guilty / So we're guilty one and all." This is

¹⁷ Both sets of lyrics can be found in "The Men Behind the Wire - Nationalist versus Unionist Versions."

perhaps the most telling statement, both suggesting that the British justice system is inherently prejudiced against Irishmen and that, if this is 'justice', then it's *better* to be 'guilty'. In a way, it seems to be something of a challenge, calling on others to look and see what was passing for law there. Finally, it echoes the Irish refrain of enduring hardship with an unbroken spirit, still looking forward to the future. Because this is a common theme in Irish music, it probably resonated very deeply with its audience. Overall, the effect seems to be of a largely positive emotional experience, transitioning away from the negative feelings to more positive ones that become associated with the song's subject.¹⁸

The unionist version, on the other hand, seems to rely on the speaker's credibility as a prisoner and his loyalty under pressure more than the emotional response to the sudden arrest of hundreds of people without warning. Instead of the tone being one of sorrow and outrage at the conditions of the arrest, the speaker in this song seems pleased to be going to prison because it will allow him to demonstrate his loyalty and associate with the men already there. In fact, when the judge passes his sentence (in contrast to the statement in the McGuigan version that the nationalist prisoners did not receive any sort of a trial), the speaker makes it clear that his "one desire" was to "serve my sentence with the men behind the wire." Another difference between the groups of prisoners is that only a small minority of people arrested were Protestant or unionists, so perhaps this speaker's pride comes in part of being one of these few selected. This may also contribute to its triumphant tone now that they have the rhetorical point of having men imprisoned for their actions. Like the prisoners in the McGuigan song, this speaker shows no sign of being cowed or giving up, and when the perspective switches to that of a free civilian, it

¹⁸ Paddy McGuigan, *The Men Behind the Wire*, (1971).

is repeated that, because the men were “staunch and true,” the victory will be won. Overall, the tone seems to be a bit more defiant than the McGuigan version, but is less hostile to its opposition.¹⁹

However, not all music from this period was strictly sectarian. More oppositional songs will appear in the next group, music between the 1980s-90s, but two that fall into this one are “Give Ireland Back to the Irish” and “The Town I Loved So Well.” Both speak out against the violence and anger going on around them without resorting to harsh words or anger themselves, but they seem to have different ideas about how to go about correcting the problem.

According to “Give Ireland Back to the Irish,” the answer was simple; the solution was in the title. In its plain logic, it posed the question to British listeners of “What if the roles were reverse? What if *you* were treated the way you’re treating the Irish?” and pointed out the hypocrisy of claiming to stand for freedom while repressing it in their next-door neighbor. With this behavior in mind, it suggests that the British government should not be surprised if Irishmen resist them and that, if the situation does not change, they may have to take their country by force. It may also be a comment on British foreign policy in general with its holdings of many countries overseas. However, it seems to misunderstand the complicated nature of the problem. For one thing, he makes a note that in Ireland, “a man who looks like me” is sitting in a prison, presumably arrested by British soldiers for resisting their rule, “dreams of god and country” and so should be allowed to have an Ireland of his own in which to pursue these goals. Fair enough, but the problem is that these motivations are not confined to those who want a separate Ireland.

¹⁹ Unknown, *The Men Behind the Wire*, (1972).

The motto of the UVF, for instance, is “For God and Ulster,” and though they also fight for God and country, giving Ireland to the Irish would be exactly what they did not want.²⁰

But, if just handing over the reins of government was not a satisfactory solution, what was? Looking at an Irish response, the answer still seems to be uncertain. “The Town I Loved So Well” clearly speaks of an end to the conflict, contrasting the peace and the music of Derry during the author’s youth with the war-torn city of later decades, even acknowledging the anger he feels, but finally looking forward to “a bright, brand new day.” However, though there is not a clearly stated plan for peace, it does seem to contain a pattern for healing, and one all the more effective for being tailored by somebody who called this conflicted community home and could understand and speak to the specific needs of people there.

A path to healing, it seems to suggest, is that it is right to feel grief, hurt, and even anger over the chaos and destruction brought into their community, but not to dwell on it or to retaliate with like anger. Instead, it suggests focusing more on the future possibilities than on the lost past, that nostalgia is alright in its place but won’t change anything in the present. Finally, what the song *does not* mention is police forces taking over, the government stepping in, or foreign powers weighing in with their opinion on the matter. In the end, it seems to suggest that it is the people of Derry, and by extension all of Northern Ireland, that must make their own decisions to forgive and move on because nobody else is able to make that choice for them. Although peace and a better future may seem to be far away, it reminds people to not give up hope and to continue looking forward.²¹

²⁰ Paul McCartney, *Give Ireland Back to the Irish*, (1972).

²¹ Phil Coulter, *The Town I Loved So Well*, (1973).

Despite the hope for peace expressed in songs like this one, it would still be a long time in coming. The 1980s-90s would see a continuation of protests and violence, including the hunger strikes (1980-81), Loughgall ambush (1987), and “Gibraltar killings” (1988) that would appear in republican protests, before finally making progress towards peace with the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985 and the Good Friday Agreement in 1998. It is unsurprising, then, that the majority of selected songs that fell into this time period were opposing the conflict, with the single exception being “The Loughgall Ambush.” What was a bit surprising was the fairly even distribution of aggressive and more passive toned music when the latter might be expected to be more common. Of the five pieces of selected music that fell into these decades, three of them were at least somewhat aggressive in tone.

The most aggressive of these, and the only one supporting one of the combatants, is the republican song mentioned above, “The Loughgall Ambush.” The titular attack occurred in May of 1987 when eight members of the PIRA attempted an attack on a Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) barracks, but were ambushed and shot dead, as well as an accidental civilian. The eight men were regarded as martyrs by the IRA and were memorialized both in song and on at least one mural. This song also follows a similar pattern to some already discussed, using peaceful nature imagery to contrast with the violence of the ambush, suggesting that the “eight brave volunteers” moved openly unlike the “hidden cys” of the Special Air Service (SAS), honoring the fallen dead by name, and declaring retaliation and a refusal to stop fighting. One point specific to the context of this song is the statement that “The SAS did not want any prisoners / ‘Shoot to kill’, their orders were quite clear,” referring to the accusations made against the SAS and RUC that they would use deadly force against Irishmen without bothering trying to arrest

them peacefully and suggests that the British army employed more force than was legitimately necessary for the attack. But, though the song strongly laments the deaths of the eight men involved and seems to regard their killings as unjust, it makes no mention of the potential deaths that could have occurred from their attack on the barracks which provoked the deadly ambush nor of the civilian accidentally killed by the soldiers.²²

Though it may seem a little counter-intuitive, it was also possible for music opposing the conflict as a whole to do so in somewhat aggressive terms, though probably not with the exact same type of language. Two notable examples of this odd combination include “Sunday, Bloody Sunday” and “The House of Orange,” which discuss the speaker’s anger and frustration with senseless violence in pursuit of ‘freedom’ and just with sectarian hatred in general and the destruction it brings. “The House of Orange” makes a particularly strong statement about the anger Canadians feel at being asked for money to fuel the Troubles through appeals to their Irish ancestors. But in the speaker’s view, both sides of the conflict are equally wrong and equally cruel for their refusal to accept peace for the next generation but instead continue to find ways to draw it out. As far as the speaker is concerned, whatever his Irish ancestors’ politics might have been, he himself is uninvolved and has long since forgiven “King Billy and the whole House of Orange,” suggesting that Irishmen should follow his example.²³

This song and “Sunday, Bloody Sunday” really stood out from the other songs opposing the violence because, unlike the quiet sounds of the others, the tone of these songs were angrier and more strongly worded even when they were protesting the same sort of violence. One possible reason for this might be the songwriter’s location and where the song was first released.

²² Unknown, *The Loughgall Ambush*, (1988).

²³ U2, *Sunday, Bloody Sunday*, (1983). Stan Rogers, *The House of Orange*, (1984).

U2, who produced "Sunday, Bloody Sunday" was out of Dublin, while the writer of "The House of Orange," Stan Rogers, was Canadian. On the other hand, two of the three songwriters who produced the more gently-toned oppositional songs, Phil Coulter ("The Town I Loved So Well") and Paul Brady ("The Island") were from Northern Ireland - Derry and Belfast respectively. With this in mind, it may have been possible for U2 and Rogers to make stronger anti-war statements than would have been possible for Coulter and Brady with their connections to areas of heavy fighting. Somebody from Canada might be able to call out specific groups by name, but that might have been dangerous for someone living in Belfast. Another possibility might be that, after decades of enduring the fighting of the Troubles, Irish songwriters may have felt too emotionally exhausted or sick of anger to express harsher sentiments even in opposition to war.

Whatever the reasoning for it, the final examples of music opposing the conflict do have a distinctly different style. Where the others were harsh and strongly worded, these have a much more sorrowful, almost a pleading, sound to them and actually seem to avoid discussing the issues by name. The words do seem to suggest that they refer to the Troubles, but there are no specific references that can be pinned down with much certainty. For example, "North and South of the River" is a little uncertain because it is never mentioned which lough or river is in question, nor what sort of divide the speaker is trying to cross, but the message seems to make sense in the context of the Troubles. Likewise, though "The Island" only mentions one place name ("Lebanon"), given the writer's background in Belfast, it is difficult to dismiss such lines as "Up here we sacrifice our children, / To feed the worn out dreams of yesterday, / And teach them dying will lead us into glory..." as mere coincidence, which makes the final words of "Freedom..." the more poignant.

“The Island” uses a similar contrast of nature versus violence employed in other songs, but this time as a means of reaffirming life and reality while the world dissolves into chaos. The speaker mentions seeing and hearing about violence all around him and trying to get away from sad songs, but always seems to be reminded of them. Though the lyrics seem especially applicable to Northern Ireland, the lack of specifics allows them to fill in for many other sources of conflict as well, expanding the message into a more general one. Another powerful piece of this song is in the shift from ‘they’ language to ‘we’ in the first two verses (“They say the skies of Lebanon are burning,” “And we’re still at it in our own place, / Still trying to reach the future through the past,”) to ‘I’ in the third. Up to this point, the speaker seems to be relatively detached, or as much as he can be, but in the beginning of his final verse, there seems to be an undercurrent of barely-controlled anger that seeps back into the entire comment.

Now I know us plain folks don't see all the story,
 And I know this peace and love's just copping out,
 And I guess these young boys dying in the ditches,
 Is just what being free is all about.

Like the comment in “The House of Orange” that “causes are ashes where children lie slain,” this makes the statement that, whatever the goals of this conflict might be, they are not worth the price of children’s blood. In this way, the speaker makes a powerfully chilling statement without ever raising his voice or resorting to harsh words.²⁴

²⁴ Paul Brady, *The Island*, (1985). Rogers, *The House of Orange*. (1984)

Art and Displays

In addition to the use of music, the people of Northern Ireland also found ways to express powerful political statements through the creation of visual art. Murals are an especially prevalent medium, covering walls and gable ends in multiple locations, especially in Belfast. A significant difference between music and art, however, is in the type of audiences they reach. Music can be a rather private affair, either listened to or sung alone or in a group of similarly minded friends. Even if some of this music is played publicly, such as at a concert or a pub, it may be that it is an area known to be frequented by people of a similar persuasion, and so be less likely to threaten or offend those hearing it. Belting out “God Save the Queen” in a pub on Falls Road would probably be a bad idea, for example, and probably would be unlikely to happen. Instead, in addition to discussing political views, music may also serve to reinforce views already held.

But murals and other street displays are public; people can see them on a regular basis even if they don't spend time in politically-charged environments or even live in the same neighborhood. Though they may share many of the same qualities as musical expression, including their emphasis on solidarity and tradition, murals may also be created as much for those ‘outside’ as those ‘inside.’ In other words, the same image can carry vastly different connotations depending on who views it, and since the artwork is on walls and buildings near the road, this may be anyone. This is problematic because even if an image is not meant to be provocative, it may still be genuinely disturbing to certain people, while others may equally consider it a legitimate expression of identity or political ideals. Even the choice of what flag to fly may be threatening if viewed as a marker of territory or as the suggestion of a foreign

invasion. Unfortunately, this may only serve to deepen the divide already felt between groups of people.²⁵

However, like the pieces of music discussed earlier, artwork has the capacity to both divide and unite, and this unity was also a common theme in murals. Though they could emphasize the differences and potential threats of a particular community, the primary message seems to be one of strength and solidarity with others, although it came from different sources. Common expressions of unity included expressions of national identity, affiliation with social causes, solidarity with similar international situations, and calls for peace.

With so much of this political question being bound up in group identity, it is unsurprising that a major way of expressing unity would be in the display of particular sets of flags. This could be effective both on an individual level, declaring personal identity, and on a community level by publicly declaring association with one state or another, perhaps asserting its right to the ownership of the land. The Irish tricolor and Union Jack are both very common images in these murals, both fully and in color scheme, similar to the use of stars and stripes in American political campaigns. Though they are sometimes displayed individually, they also often appear in conjunction with one or more other flags which add to its associations.

One way that it often appears in nationalist artwork is to show the tricolor alongside flags representing the traditional symbols of the four provinces of Ireland, as can be seen flying from The Rock Bar on Falls Road (Figure 1). Leinster is displayed as a gold harp on a green field, Munster as three gold crowns on a blue field, and Connacht as having a black eagle on a white field on the left and a white arm with a sword against a blue field on the right. Ulster is

²⁵ Santino, 36-7.

I was unable to discuss the topics in this book as much as I'd wanted to, but it was a very good book. I definitely recommend it for further reading on the topic of public displays.

represented by a red cross on a yellow field with a red hand on a white shield in the center. Sometimes they are grouped together in one flag, as over the Rock Bar, or shown separately, as in the Clondara St. Connolly mural (Figure 3).²⁶

Whether shown in a single flag or as separate ones, though, the message seems to be the same. The inclusion of Ulster along with the other three provinces indicates its place alongside the rest of Ireland, emphasizing the wholeness of the geographical island and the unnatural partition that divides it. The use of the yellow and gold arms as opposed to the Ulster Banner may also be significant in that it is associated with the old royal families of Ireland, suggesting that it is not only rightfully part of Ireland, but a part with great pride of place and tradition predating the arrival of men from the east. On the other hand, the use of the Ulster Banner, featuring a six-pointed star for the six counties and a crown for the United Kingdom, in unionist imagery displays its separation and ties to the United Kingdom. By continuing to use the red hand from folklore, it also recalls its legendary history and culture, perhaps suggesting that they are the true holders of Ulster tradition.

Like the tricolor and province flags, the Union Jack and Ulster Banner may be displayed either alone or in a group. In contrast to nationalist flag groupings, however, unionist groupings will often include the Union Jack and the flags of the four countries of the United Kingdom. This parallel seems to be intentional. Where nationalist groupings emphasize the unity of the state of Ireland, these groupings look instead to political and historical ties with countries to the east. This may be as much a cultural display as a political one. In the mural on Crimea St. celebrating 60 years of Queen Elizabeth's rule (Figure 7), the two panels asserting political allegiance are

²⁶ "The Rock Bar", 402 A501, Belfast. Google Maps, Screenshot by author. "Clondara Connolly mural", 1 Clondara St, Belfast. Google Maps, Screenshot by author.

framed by the Union Jack and contain symbols of royal authority. On the far left, however, is a panel consisting simply of six flags - left to right; the Ulster Banner, the Royal Standard, Union Jack, Scotland, Wales, and England.²⁷

Though this also has some political associations, the individual country flags seem to be significant, instead of all being grouped under the Union Jack. This may serve to emphasize and celebrate the various cultures and histories coexisting peacefully within the British government, in contrast to Irish discontent and push for separation. Because many people in these areas are potentially descendants of migrants from these countries, they may also be an expression of these identities as well as Ulster or British identity. Expressing British identity, including the prevalence of the Union Jack, may also be especially important here because the division between British and Irish identities can be turned in reverse outside of Northern Ireland. There, although they identify themselves as British, Ulster unionists may find themselves in an uneasy position similar to that of the Anglo-Irish centuries before - considered British in Ireland and Irish in Great Britain.²⁸

In addition to making political statements, these murals may also speak of social movements, both expressing support for them and linking them back to political goals. This seems to be the case for nationalists especially in linking back to the Easter Rising for support of workers' and women's rights. James Connolly, a leader of both the Rising and Irish socialist groups, is a very common figure to appear in this artwork. Frequently he is shown with images of the Proclamation of the Irish Republic - which he was executed, tied to a chair, for being a part of - and the Starry Plough of the Irish Citizen Army (Figures 3-4). This image, a gold plow

²⁷"Queen Elizabeth mural," Crimea St, Belfast. Google Maps, Screenshot by author. "Ulster Girl". September 25, 2012. Extramural Activity, Belfast.

²⁸Santino, 6-7.

with a sword against a green background with seven silver stars of Ursa Major, goes back to before the Rising and is often included in murals depicting somebody involved in this movement. By linking the Rising and Irish socialism in this way, labor parties can claim legitimacy and historical tradition in a way more easily recognizable to passers-by, and vice versa. If somebody does not recognize one of them, they may recognize the other. It also encourages solidarity between groups with similar goals to achieve something they could not achieve alone.²⁹

Another figure that features in social art is Countess Constance Markievicz, a woman heavily involved in social causes during her lifetime and an active participant in the Easter Rising. Though she also took part in workers' causes with Connolly, her image in these murals appears to have a more feminist bent. Two of these are found on Rockmount St and Beechmont Ave (Figure 5), alongside murals of Connolly (Figure 4), Pat Finucane (Figure 18), and the Rising (Figure 24). With this placement, the Countess, Cumann na mBan, and other women are described as heroes and holders of influential ideas in the same way as the men. They also seem to emphasize their revolutionary ideas by including the unusual (for 1916) images of a lady of the aristocracy using a weapon and of lines of uniformed women marching in file. In this way, the murals remind their audience of the role these women had in the Rising, even if they may sometimes be overlooked.³⁰

Besides linking these people and ideas to the Rising, these murals appropriately suggest social and political messages of their own. They present women as being an equal part of the

²⁹ "Clondara Connolly mural" and "Official Republican Movement", 1 Clondara St, Belfast. Google Maps, Screenshot by author. "Our demands most moderate are..." and "Connolly and Proclamation", 6 Rockmount St. and 2 St. James's Park, Belfast. Google Maps, Screenshot by author.

³⁰ "Women in Struggle", 6 Rockmount St., Belfast. Google Maps, Screenshot by author. "Cumann na mBan 100". March, 2014. Extramural Activity, Belfast.

Irish revolutionary cause, but having an extra struggle of their own for equal political and social rights. These rights cannot be separated from other political rights, it argues, because a cause that resists tyranny and oppression cannot endorse a program that fails to give equal rights to all its citizens. The mural depicting Cumann na mBan sums this up succinctly with the phrase “Ni saoirse go saoirse na mban,” or “No freedom until women’s freedom.” This was applicable to the political situation of the 1960s because, under laws that restricted the vote only to a single head of household per family, many women in Northern Ireland did not have a vote despite women’s suffrage existing in both Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland for decades.

By using the image of a woman well-known for both her participation in Irish republicanism and woman’s rights, this mural reminds its audience of how the cause of freedom applies to women as well. The choice of Countess Markievicz and Cumann na mBan may also be used to express displeasure at the more moderate nationalists that agreed to the Anglo-Irish Treaty in 1921, which conceded the ability of Northern Ireland to stay within the United Kingdom. In the civil war following, members of Cumann na mBan and Markievicz herself supported the anti-Treaty forces. This IRA would exist until the split between the Official and Provisional IRA in 1969.³¹

The theme of social unity is not only present in militant or revolutionary contexts, however. In some cases, it can also speak of a wider sense of unity and encourage peace. Of the selected examples, one of these images takes the interesting approach of using the idea of the Easter Rising, commonly used to refer to a united military tradition, to speak of a non-violent unity (Figure 12). Some of the imagery is similar to other Rising murals (compare, for example,

³¹ “*Cumann na mBan 100.*”

to Figure 24), but the guns in this mural are not being used for war. While they are still there, perhaps as a reminder of the violent past and to suggest that they were necessary to secure the opportunity for peace, the image in the foreground is one of an arm triumphantly holding aloft neither a weapon nor a flag, but a piece of paper marked "Ballot Paper: Unity" and a checkmark, while similar papers can be seen in the background. The mural also features text reading "From Bullet to Ballot: The Evolution of Our Revolution - 1916-2016" and white flowers, which appear to be associated with peace, Easter in general, and the Rising specifically. This is a much more moderate stance than some of the other Rising murals, which sometimes seem to exalt the fighting even when not directly suggesting violence in the modern day, and proposes a path for nationalist goals through democratic means.³²

Though the unity of this mural has a nationalist flavor, another example of artwork expressing peaceful unity rejects sectarianism altogether (Figure 13). "End Sectarianism," it declares in large capitals, "Bring Down the Walls," then in smaller print, "It hasn't gone away. - Worker's Party." This is interesting because, while other murals may use these political movements as means of gaining support for social causes, this one seems to reject political divisions to improve a social cause, apparently workers' rights. The phrase "Bring down the walls" may suggest a couple different meanings, perhaps both at the same time. One possibility might be the presence of literal iron or concrete walls passing through adjacent neighborhoods that are considered heavily polarized. These 'peace lines' were built to avoid violence between strongly republican and loyalist areas, but they may also have the side effect of preventing the kind of regular contact that allows for the building of relationships and reconciliation. Another

³²"*The Evolution Of Our Revolution*". May 23, 2016. Extramural Activity, Belfast.

possibility may be that of a figurative wall, perhaps a feeling of being discriminated against in the workforce. Either way, though the message is strongly stated, there seems to be no direct affiliation with political divisions (besides, of course, the Worker's Party) or suggestion of the use of violence. The party may be somewhat associated with republicanism, but there does not seem to be any of the traditional or otherwise obvious markers denoting that.³³

Murals and other displays can also serve as memorials to the dead, whether civilian, politician, or paramilitary. These can have multiple effects. On the one hand, it is natural for people to remember and honor their dead and wish to seek justice for untimely ends. For victims of paramilitary violence, the creation of a memorial may serve as critique of sectarian violence that could otherwise be dangerous. On the other, like the songs describing wrongs suffered, certain murals describing the dead may keep wounds fresh and encourage feelings of bitterness and fear, reinforcing beliefs that 'they' all want to do 'us' harm. They may also be problematic by creating martyred heroes where others may see violent criminals. These conflicting messages exist within the same visual space depending on who views them, and so can easily become sources of controversy and tension.³⁴

These competing images are perhaps most notable and emotionally-charged in displays noting the death of people killed by 'the enemy,' whether by an opposing paramilitary or police force, because it creates a strong feeling of outrage for one group of people while perhaps seeming justified to another. One particularly powerful image in republican murals is that of the hunger strikers of 1981, especially Bobby Sands (Figures 14-15). During this time, republican

³³ "End Sectarianism", B502, Belfast. Google Maps, Screenshot by author.

³⁴ Santino, 16.

This tension is part of the motivation behind some efforts to remove certain murals, though this decision too is controversial.

prisoners refused food until their demands to be recognized as political prisoners and given the rights associated with that status were granted. The government refused and ten men died before a settlement was reached, Sands being the first after a 66 day strike. These were very controversial deaths and obviously carried strong emotional power, which can be seen in the murals depicting them.

These displays often feature twelve men, two that died on strike in 1974-76 and the ten who died in the 1981 strike, with a portrait and information including their name, age, length of strike, and date of death. The portraits often show them smiling and dressed in normal clothes which, along with the brief biographical information, emphasizes their humanity and the tragedy of their death. Whatever a person's personal beliefs about them, seeing the faces of young men who died a prolonged death must often elicit some feeling of loss or grief, if only for their loved ones. By displaying the faces in this way, these murals seem to point an accusing finger at the British government, saying "Your injustice caused these men to die." It is interesting to note that they do not always make any mention of their paramilitary affiliations or the offenses that put them in prison in the first place. This may simply be based on the assumption that, since this event was so famous, most passersby will already know who the men were and need no further explanation. However, it also seems to imply that they were not involved in violence or that their violence was justified and their imprisonment was not.³⁵

Where the murals in Figure 14 appear to be rather grim, the Bobby Sands mural on the side of Sinn Fein headquarters on Seavastopol St (Figure 15) by contrast is bright and colorful. This seems to speak of a more optimistic look at this event, choosing more to celebrate Sands

³⁵ "Remembering The Hunger Strikers". July 20, 2015. Extramural Activity, Belfast. "Commemorating the Courage....", 2 Clowney St, Belfast. Google Maps, Screenshot by author.

than to accuse his captors, though whether this is really a positive decision may be questioned by some. Surrounding the smiling face of a brightly painted Sands is a blue chain displaying the portraits of other republicans and shattered at top and bottom by a phoenix and lark, respectively. The image of a lark flying through barbed wire, prison bars, and chains is a common symbol in republican prison murals, perhaps suggesting that their spirit cannot be held in bondage and will find a way to break free. (Compare, for example, the symbol in “Remembering the Hunger Strikers” and “Vol. Kieran Nugent” in Figures 14 and 16.) Similarly, the image of the phoenix and its rebirth from its own death might also be visible on another mural that reads “The people arose in 69, they will do it again at any time. Maggie Thatcher think again, don’t let our brave men die in vain”(Figure 2). This may suggest that, although men have died in this fight, they will emerge the stronger for the struggle.³⁶

Another type of memorial to the dead remembers civilians who have been killed, such as in bombings or shootings, from paramilitary activity. In some ways, these memorials can be similar to those commemorating the hunger strikers - displaying faces and dates of death, for example, or creating feelings of grief and outrage. They can also either focus on the lives of the victims and honor their memory or use their deaths as a cry of outrage and injustice. However, they differ in others ways, such as civilian memorials being more likely to be non-sectarian than murals of dead prisoners. This may allow communities grieve and heal together regardless of their political or religious affiliations in a way that would be more difficult with a more politically-charged memorial.

³⁶ “Sevastopol Street (Bobby Sands)”. 2015. Extramural Activity, Belfast. “Remembering the Hunger Strikers” “Vol. Kieran Nugent”, 6 Rockville St, Belfast. Google Maps, Screenshot by author. Peter Maloney. “Clowney St Phoenix”. 2013.

One of these is the Bayardo bombing memorial on Shankill Rd (Figure 21), referring to the IRA attack on Bayardo Bar which killed five people - four civilians and one member of the UVF. Given its location, surrounding flags, and the choice of words employed, it may not be a strictly neutral site, but it does not seem to carry the same accusatory tone present in some other displays. At least, the conviction of the killers seems to take second place behind the memorializing and honoring of the dead. At a first glance, it appears similar to a war memorial with its flags, emblems, and flowers, as well as the sign on its top reading "Lest We Forget." Below this, it displays the names and portraits of the five people as well as pictures of the bar before and after the attack and the caption "5 Innocent Protestants Murdered". Like others, these images encourage people to recognize the human lives that were lost and to reflect on the events that led to this tragedy. However, it seems to do this through a one-sided lens because, like the hunger strike murals, it provides little in the way of larger context, such as potential provocation for the attack or loyalist retaliatory attacks against Catholic civilians afterwards.³⁷

If the sense of outrage takes second place to remembrance in the Bayardo memorial, though, it takes center stage in another mural that makes reference to this attack and the attacks on Four Step Inn, the Balmoral Showrooms, Mountainview Tavern, and Frizzel's Fish Shop (Figure 22). This mural does not contain names of the victims, but includes images of the wreckage and numbers of people killed. The central image, which is the largest, is from the attack on Balmoral and shows the youngest casualty, a child of 17 months, being carried from the scene. Painted in black and white, it is a somber scene, with black lettering denouncing "30 Years of Indiscriminate Slaughter By So-Called Non-Sectarian Irish Freedom Fighters" and

³⁷ "Bayardo bombing memorial", 176 Shankill Rd, Belfast. Google Maps, Screenshot by author.

demanding “Where are our inquiries? Where is our truth? Where is our justice?” This strongly attacks the paramilitary violence that often took civilian lives either intentionally or as collateral damage near a different target. It may also speak out against a government believed to not be taking the steps necessary to prevent and punish these attacks.³⁸

Though some memorials to the dead choose individuals who have died within the conflicts of the last few decades, others remember the dead from further into the past. Perhaps because of their distance, these may be potentially less polarized or controversial than other memorials, though they may still have something of a nationalist or unionist feel to them in their choice of subject or certain symbols, such as the Easter lilies in “Honour Ireland’s Dead” and the shield on the gate entering the Shankill Somme Association’s Garden of Reflection (Figures 20 and 23). The dead being memorialized may have associations with certain political or religious groups, but these memorials seem to invite anyone to remember them even if they do not share their affiliations.³⁹

Combining elements of murals emphasizing unity and solidarity and those commemorating fallen heroes are pieces of art aimed at encouraging continued traditions of pride and honor for their particular group. Like the unity-themed murals discussed earlier, these displays could take multiple forms, whether establishing a military tradition rooted in the past, connecting modern campaigns to well-known individuals, or holding up their endurance under pressure. As already shown, one of the most common military traditions claimed by nationalists and republicans in their art is the Easter Rising, this time featured on the side of a building across the street from two murals portraying Connolly and Markievicz (Figure 24). The soldier’s pose is

³⁸ Peter Maloney, *Shankill Atrocities*. 2008.

³⁹ “Honour Ireland’s Dead” and “Garden of Reflection”, 3 Beechmount Ave and 417 B39, Belfast. Google Maps, Screenshot by author.

heroic, and though there is a suggestion of danger, the death and destruction is not pictured.

Instead of the chaos associated with war, this image depicts Irish unity as created by the Rising with the symbols of the four provinces and the lilies in the foreground.⁴⁰

Unionists and loyalists, on the other hand, often take their military traditions from the Williamite War or the World Wars. Protestant fraternal organizations such as the Orange Order and Apprentice Boys regularly participate in parades and marches marking important points of the Williamite War, for example, especially the Battle of the Boyne and the Siege of Derry, and images of William of Orange can sometimes be found on banners or walls (Figure 29). However, while memory of the Williamite War may be closer to the cultural side, images of the World Wars may be more likely to carry political messages as well. This is not always the case, such as the apparently non-sectarian “Ulster Tower” memorial (Figure 33), but it can happen.⁴¹

For example, a mural on Glenwood St shows some of the standard images of a non-partisan war memorial - red poppies, lines of poetry, words of remembrance, and faded images depicting soldiers. The images on the left side of the mural appear to be from World War One and Two, as would be expected. The right side, however, includes masked paramilitary figures and the symbol of the UVF, perhaps suggesting that their fight is a continuation of the same type of conflict fought generations before. It also links these paramilitary members to traditional soldiers, giving them a legitimacy that would likely be denied to paramilitaries on the opposing side. In this way, it may contain political sub-messages within a display that would otherwise simply honor the dead.⁴²

⁴⁰ “*Éirí Amach na Cásca*”, 3 Beechmont Ave, Belfast. Google Maps, Screenshot by author.

⁴¹ “*Ulster Tower*”, Conway St, Belfast. Google Maps, Screenshot by author.

⁴² “*Their Name Liveth For Evermore*”. May 16, 2014. Extramural Activity, Belfast.

Though many of these murals have described individual people and their contributions especially to forceful political movements, others focus more on their community's strength and identity. These may still be divided along political or religious lines, but these examples do not seem to have particularly aggressive overtones to them. In some cases, negative associations with particular images may produce a potentially uncomfortable response, but for the most part they seem to have a more cultural focus to them than a militant one. That said, though, military images do still appear.

To emphasize their strength and solidarity within a community, some murals will depict their endurance through history. This is similar to the military tradition described in music and art, and may even refer to similar causes or people, but differs in that the focus is on the fortitude of the cause more than the military aspect of it. By doing this, these murals may encourage further unity and solidarity among their people by praising their shared history and causes without alienating others through the use of aggressive imagery. It may also serve to help increase credibility for these goals by distinguishing them from more radical expressions.

One place this may be seen is on a peace wall crossing through Belfast which features a long series of murals, including one in a pop art style depicting hunger striker Francis Hughes and featuring a quote from Terence MacSwiney reading "It is not those who can inflict the most, but those who can endure the most that will conquer." Behind him are many other Irish nationalists known for their endurance under stress, including some who died as a result of their dedication to their cause. Some of the images are of individuals involved in armed risings, such as Theobald Wolfe Tone and Patrick Pearse, but the emphasis seems to be more on their strength to endure what has been inflicted upon them and less on their ability to inflict harm

upon others. This allows important historical and cultural individuals to be honored and shown as part of a unifying identity without overtly excluding or threatening others. In this way, this artwork may help to display the cultural identity of a community more than only its political identity and to allow it to exist without pushing out its neighbors.⁴³

Similarly, the picture of endurance under stress can also be seen in the tradition of resistance to Home Rule in unionist artwork. Like the resistance to British rule seen in nationalist artwork and the theme of endurance in music, this creates a united culture to stand behind and holds up ideals of resolution, courage, and solidarity. There may also be suggestions of civil duty and defense of religion in these images as well, since these were concerns expressed by opponents of Home Rule in 1912. One example of this imagery is a display commemorating the centenary of the Ulster Solemn League and Covenant, featuring an image of Sir Edward Carson signing the document and images of supporters (Figure 32). Simply by its name, the image of the document brings to mind thoughts of righteous and courageous resistance by echoing the Solemn League and Covenant of 1643, which allied the Presbyterian Scots with the English Parliament for the preservation of religion and to resist Catholic troops that might be sympathetic to Charles I during the English Civil War. Although Charles was the king, his opponents felt that he was a tyrant and, though a Protestant, too sympathetic to Catholicism. This led them to conclude that it was their moral and religious duty to resist him, even if that meant potentially committing treason if they failed, and put their names to a document that could be disastrous.⁴⁴

This image is appropriate because, although normally supporters of the British government, Irish unionists in 1912 felt so strongly that an Irish government would be a civil and

⁴³ "Who Can Endure The Most". January 21, 2014. Extramural Activity, Belfast.

⁴⁴ "Ulster Solemn League and Covenant", Argyle St, Belfast. Google Maps, Screenshot by author.

religious threat to what they held dear that they were willing to stand against the law by any means necessary to keep it from coming to pass. Like the seventeenth century Covenanters, an argument could certainly be made that this was the wrongful defiance of legal authority and an isolated and potentially dangerous position. But by appealing to higher authority, their consciences and to God, they assert that their decision is righteous and therefore will ultimately be successful. It may not be an entirely popular position, may perhaps endure scorn and ridicule - it suggests - but unity and moral rightness will provide the strength to endure. By using this image, it can create a history and community similar to that seen in some nationalist imagery but from another perspective and honoring different values. Most importantly, though following the historical threads to later events may lead to examples of militancy, there seems to be few overtly threatening images in this display. The emphasis seems to be on the unity and strength of a community rather than the vilification of another.

In addition to references to events important to a community's history and sense of legitimacy, this artwork also often displays important cultural symbols. Some of these come from recorded history, such as images of the Easter Rising or the Boyne, but others come from legendary history. One of these is the image of the mythic Irish warrior Cúchulainn, who is occasionally used in nationalist artwork, especially modeled after the Oliver Sheppard statue "The Death of Cúchulainn" displayed at the Dublin GPO. During the period of cultural revival in the early twentieth century, legendary Celtic heroes became a popular subject for artwork, including in Pearse's school of St. Enda's. This statue shows the hero tied upright to face his foes standing and as such a fearsome warrior that his enemies dare not approach until a raven proves that he is really dead. His death is also sometimes portrayed as a heroic self-sacrifice, aided by

the similarity of his pose to images depicting the death of Jesus, which may serve to increase cultural associations with early republican movements.

However, the image of Cúchulainn is not limited only to nationalist artwork, but is occasionally seen in unionist imagery as well. Ironically, both types of artwork tend to draw from the same statue but with varying interpretations. Where the nationalist interpretation holds him up as a hero of Celtic Ireland, the unionist image is of an Ulster warrior fighting against southern Irish invaders. This depends on the question of identity at a very fundamental level, even more basic than constitutional politics. Is this land part of a larger Irish culture, or is it a separate entity in itself? This question is problematic because, while different cultures could coexist with equal legitimacy, the land itself cannot simultaneously belong to two different governments. However, though the assumptions behind the image are very different, they may also suggest a similar cultural tradition of stories, heroes, and values that exists beyond political views.⁴⁵

The use of legendary history to claim ownership is also visible in the ever-present image of the Red Hand of Ulster, most commonly seen in unionist artwork. There are various stories for the origin of the symbol, but one of the most common is that the land was promised to the first man to lay his hand upon the shore. One of the men, being very eager for the land, cut off his hand and threw the bloodied appendage onto the rocks to make his claim. With this story, the image of the red hand seems to be one of ownership by right of blood and sacrifice. This interpretation does lend itself to its use in unionist imagery, but could potentially be used for other purposes as well. Like the image of Cúchulainn, it is used for similar but opposing

⁴⁵ Santino, 39-41.

purposes in nationalist and unionist artwork, either symbolizing Ulster as a part of Ireland or emphasizing its distinctiveness.

Like the multiple overlapping identities present in Northern Ireland, aspects from many different parts of culture often melt into and influence each other, making it difficult to clearly define where one ends and the other begins. One place that this may be seen is in the many uses of the image of Pearse. Though associated with the Easter Rising, he was also known as a poet and schoolteacher with a passion for Irish history and culture, encouraging his students to learn its mythology, sports, and language. With his association with cultural nationalism and as a defender of the Irish language, he is commonly used to encourage the use of Irish, as in a display reading "Tír Gan Teanga, Tír Gan Anam", or "A country without a language is a country without a soul" (Figure 34). This is in contrast to the view of Irish as a useless and dying language, instead arguing that it is both necessary for cultural identity and very much alive.⁴⁶

As already noted, music is also an important means of cultural expression, so it is not surprising that musically-themed images also appear in artwork. This may be particularly true of unionist artwork due to the tradition of marching bands, though it is certainly not exclusive. Some of these instruments are visible on a display celebrating one of these bands in particular, the Whiterock Flute Band of West Belfast (Figure 37). It features two men playing flutes with a collection of instruments between them, including snare drums, cymbals, and a Lambeg drum. The Lambeg drums and fifes in particular are common in unionist marches for their association with the Williamite War. The drums, which make a very loud noise when played, often have

⁴⁶ "Tír Gan Teanga, Tír Gan Anam", 2 Hugo St, Belfast. Google Maps, Screenshot by author.

The fusion of cultural images associated with Pearse may also be seen in his rewriting of "Óró sé do bheatha 'bhaile." The song, written in Irish, adopts a Jacobite song to an Irish context using the image of Gráinne Mhaol as liberator. It also includes imagery perhaps alluding to Cathleen Ni Houlihan of folklore.

portraits of politicians, Williamite figures, or famous battles painted on them. A similar practice is also sometimes seen in the painting of nationalist or republican figures on bodhrans, a traditionally Irish drum.⁴⁷

In addition to the painted images, Lambeg drums are also sometimes decorated with images of orange lilies, which are associated with William of Orange (see Figure 29). This is in contrast to the white Easter lilies sometimes displayed in nationalist artwork for their association with the Rising. The use of these flowers, though not necessarily problematic in themselves, can become controversial when attached to buildings, instruments, or banners because the imagery and sound can be seen as threatening. On the other hand, they can also be viewed as non-hostile and legitimate expressions of cultural identity, and the difficulty is that both can be equally correct. While not overtly hostile, and likely even intended to be benign, even these common symbols can become problematic when misunderstandings arise from difficulties understanding others' perspectives. Many nationalist or unionist marches and displays may not be intended to be provocative, but may become so in some circumstances. However, understanding the imagery and how it is used may help to ease potential tensions.⁴⁸

Conclusion

Looking over all of these pieces of music and art, it can be easy to feel overwhelmed, especially because this is only a small sample of the cultural pieces that have been created, with many more examples and themes that could not be discussed here. Among others, this includes the relationship between politics in Northern Ireland and international politics such as the

⁴⁷ "Whiterock Flute Band", 7 Brookmount St, Belfast. Google Maps, Screenshot by author.

As a side note, this division between "Ulster Protestant" and "Irish Catholic" music is poked fun at in the comical song "The Orange and the Green," which has the narrator, a child of a Protestant-Catholic marriage, saying that he would "play the flute or play the harp, depending where I was."

⁴⁸ "Civil & Religious Liberty". September 28, 2016. Extraterritorial Activity, Belfast. Santino, 49-54.

Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the presence of cross-community or variant political movements such as Ulster nationalism, other cultural displays such as marches and festivals, and, most notably, non-sectarian art. This last item was something that I wanted to discuss in greater detail, but had trouble identifying with reasonable confidence. For this reason, most of the art discussed is fairly clearly nationalist or unionist, but not all of it is republican or loyalist. A narrower focus on one particular type of artwork or pieces produced by a particular group could yield a more detailed look than was possible here, as could comparisons between these pieces and those produced elsewhere.

However, as complicated and overwhelming as a broad study of cultural responses might be, it is still very rewarding. In addition to exploring some of the events and issues that were behind this complex conflict, it offers an opportunity to see it through the perspectives of the people involved. By looking at pieces from multiple sources, it may be possible to adopt many different points of view in turn and gain a better understanding of all of them. In some ways, part of this conflict may have stemmed from mutual misunderstandings and having difficulty seeing the situation from another perspective. Examining the cultural pieces produced by these people may help to avoid misunderstandings by learning about the ways these artists view themselves and others, their values and fears, and why they hold the views they do. This helps you to become more compassionate and to treat others with the generosity and respect they deserve.

This process has implications for many situations, including perhaps the current peace process in Northern Ireland. After decades of conflict, the possibility of a peaceful future is in sight, but the tension has not entirely gone away. The trauma of these years will take time to heal, but this process may be aided by taking the time to learn about others and to more readily

empathize with them. Of course, meeting new people and having respectful conversations with them is one of the best ways to do this, but considering their cultural output may be a good way as well. In addition to expressing ideas in their own words rather than the words of their opposition, they may be a potent reminder of the emotion, artistry, and passion that reside in any human soul. Similarly, this concept may be applied in other contexts as well because music and art have the capacity to communicate across many barriers, including those of politics, religion, language, or nationality.

Of course, considering music and artwork alone will not necessarily have a great effect on politics or personal views, but they may be valuable tools. Whether they are tools that should be allowed to be displayed publicly, limited to certain areas and subjects, or hidden away altogether is another discussion entirely, but it is clear that they are effective in expressing ideas and emotions. In some cases, this expression has been used to threaten or demean others, but it has also been used to encourage strength, unity, and peace. Because these products are not inherently good or bad, but depend on the way that they are used, formerly harmful methods may instead be used for healing. In the same way that Northern Ireland may move forward and define itself according to the future rather than the painful past, so too might the cultural practices of music and art be used to create this future without forgetting the past.

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Appendix

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Songs and Classifications

When working with these songs, I divided them into four categories - Aggressive/Militant Support for the conflict (along with which side it seemed to support), Passive/Non-violent Support (also with which side), Aggressive/Militant Opposition, and Passive/Non-violent Opposition. While some of these divisions were fairly clear, others were based on personal interpretation. As such, this is a list of the music I looked at and which category I placed them in, both for easy reference and later research.

AS - Aggressive Support	PS - Passive Support
AO - Aggressive Opposition	PO - Passive Opposition
N/R - Nationalist/Republican	U/L - Unionist/Loyalist

Unknown Date

"The Sash My Father Wore" - Unknown Artist - Unknown Date - PS-U

"Daddy's Uniform" - Unknown Artist - Unknown Date - AS-L

(I couldn't find a solid date for either of these, but because the former may be from a nineteenth-century tune and the latter seems to be post-WWII in origin, I discussed them in the 1960s-70s category because presumably they were already known by that point.)

1960s-1970s

"Only Her Rivers Run Free" - Mickey MacConnell - 1965 - PS-N

"Four Green Fields" - Tommy Makem - 1967 - PS-N

"The Men Behind the Wire" - Paddy McGuigan - 1971 - PS-N

"The Men Behind the Wire" - Unknown - 1972 - PS-U

"Give Ireland Back to the Irish" - Paul McCartney - 1972 - PO

"Go On Home, British Soldiers" - Unknown - 1972 - AS-R

"The Town I Loved So Well" - Phil Coulter - 1973 - PO

"I Was Born Under A Union Jack" - Unknown - 1973? - AS-L

"Little Armalite" - Unknown - 1975 - AS-R

1980s-1990s

"Sunday, Bloody Sunday" - U2 - 1983 - AO

"The House of Orange" - Stan Rogers - 1984 - AO

"The Island" - Paul Brady - 1985 - PO

"The Loughgall Ambush" - Unknown - 1988 - AS-R

"North and South of the River" - Christy Moore - 1996 - PO

Selective Timeline

This timeline demonstrates when different songs and pieces of artwork were being produced in relation to each other and specific major events, especially those referenced within specific pieces.

1965-1969

- 1965
 - "Only Her Rivers Run Free" - Mickey MacConnell - PS-N - expresses grief at the loss of freedom in Ireland
- 1966
 - Formation of the Ulster Volunteer Force - declares war on the IRA (formed from the anti-treaty IRA of 1922)
- 1967
 - "Four Green Fields" - Tommy Makem - PS-N - Expresses sorrow at partition. May imply slight militancy in the final lines "But my sons had sons, as brave as were their fathers / My fourth green field will bloom once again said she" but doesn't seem terribly overt or harsh.
- 1968
 - Beginning of civil rights marches in Derry - petitioned against social and legal discrimination and for better housing
- 1969
 - August 12-14 - Battle of the Bogside - violence between Derry Citizen's Defence Association (and local supporters) and Royal Ulster Constabulary (and local supporters), considered by some to be the start of the Troubles (though a clear date isn't certain); area would later contain Free Derry (marked by the Free Derry Corner painting)
 - IRA Split - creation of the Official IRA and the Provisional IRA

1970-1974

- 1971
 - August - Beginning of internment of alleged republican prisoners (imprisonment without trial)
 - August 9-11 - Ballymurphy massacre - killing of 11 civilians by the 1st Battalion, Parachute Regiment of the British Army (the same battalion involved in Bloody Sunday in 1972)
 - Victims depicted in a mural saying "We demand the truth."
 - "The Men Behind the Wire" - Paddy McGuigan - PS-N - written in protest to Irish internment, encourages solidarity with them - "Not for them a judge and jury / Nor indeed a trial at all / But being Irish means you're guilty / So we're guilty one and all"
- 1972
 - January 30 - Bloody Sunday/Bogside Massacre - soldiers shot into a crowd of civilians protesting internment, killed 14 in total, wounded several others
 - May 29 - Official IRA ceasefire - Provisional IRA remained active
 - "Give Ireland Back to the Irish" - Paul McCartney - PO - Written in response to Bloody Sunday, discusses British hypocrisy in Ireland

- "Go On Home, British Soldiers" - AS-R - "Go on home, British soldiers, go on home. Have you got no bloody homes of your own? For eight hundred years, we've fought you without fear, and we'll fight you for eight hundred more. "Those fourteen men in Derry are the last ones that you'll bury, so go on home, British soldiers, go on home.", "You'll never beat the IRA."
 - "Fourteen men in Derry" possibly a reference to Bloody Sunday
- "The Men Behind the Wire" - PS-U - Unionist version of the 1971 song - "When the judge had passed my sentence and the warder took me down / I cried out "No surrender! Bless the Red Hand and the Crown / But grant me just one favour, that is my one desire / Please let me serve my sentence with the men behind the wire."
 - "No surrender!" and "Still under siege" common loyalist slogans in Derry and are sometimes seen on signs and murals, refers to the Siege of Derry in 1689
- 1973
 - "I Was Born Under A Union Jack" - AS-L - Quite vulgar, apparently associated with the Rangers sports team
 - "The Town I Loved So Well" - Phil Coulter - PO - "Now the music's gone but they carry on / For their spirit's been bruised, never broken / They will not forget but their hearts are set / on tomorrow and peace once again"

1975-1979

- 1975
 - "Little Armalite" - AS-R - "And it's down Along the Falls Road, that's where I long to be, / Lying in the dark with a Provo company, / A comrade on my left and another on my right / And a clip of ammunition for my little Armalite."
 - End of internment

1980-1984

- 1980
 - October-December - First republican hunger strike
- 1981
 - March-October - Second republican hunger strike - Bobby Sands elected MP, became first of ten to die during the hunger strike
 - Hunger strikers in general and Sands in particular would become a popular image for republican murals
 - "Casualty" - poem by Seamus Heaney - "...three nights / After they shot dead / The thirteen men in Derry. / PARAS THIRTEEN, the walls said, / BOGSIDE NIL...."; dead expressed in the terms of a sports match
- 1983
 - "Sunday, Bloody Sunday" - U2 - AO - Rejects the glorification of violence. Feels very angry and hostile. Expresses horror at recent events.
- 1984
 - "The House of Orange" - Stan Rogers - AO - Canadian song against fundraising for the conflict in their country; "All rights and all wrongs have long since blown away / For causes are ashes where children lie slain / Yet the damned U.D.I and the cruel I.R.A / Will tomorrow go murdering again"

1985-1989

- 1985
 - November 15 - signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement - gave the Republic of Ireland a voice as well as the United Kingdom in consultation about Northern Ireland, confirmed Northern Ireland's status in the United Kingdom unless a majority of citizens votes to join the Republic
 - "The Island" - Paul Brady - PO - "And we're still at it in our own place / Still trying to reach the future through the past / Still trying to carve tomorrow from a tombstone..."; "Up here we sacrifice our children / To feed the worn-out dreams of yesterday / And teach them dying will lead us into glory..."
- 1987
 - May 8 - Loughgall Ambush - PIRA attacked a RUC barracks, British soldiers knew of the attack and laid an ambush which killed the IRA men and a civilian
 - Loughgall Ambush mural - depicts the IRA men killed during the attack against an idyllic landscape and a Celtic cross; includes shield depicting the four provinces of Ireland; written in Irish
- 1988
 - March 8 - "Operation Flavius"/"Gibraltar killings" - three IRA men suspected of carrying a bomb shot by the SAS; found to be unarmed and without a bomb, so some believed the suspicion was only a cover for murder
 - Depicted in a republican mural, includes a poem by Bobby Sands
 - "The Loughgall Ambush" - AS-R - "Oh England, do you really think it's over? / If you do, you're gonna have to kill us all. / For until you take your murderers out of Ireland / We will make you rue the blood spilled at Loughgall"

1995-2000

- 1996
 - "North and South of the River" - Christy Moore - PO - "Love wasn't lost, it just got mislaid"; "Can we stop playing these old tattoos? ... I want to meet you where you are, / I don't need you to surrender. / There is no feeling so alone / As when the one you're hurting is your own."; "Some high ground is not worth taking, / Some connections are not worth making. / There's an old church bell no longer ringing, / And some old songs are not worth singing."
- 1998
 - April 10 - Good Friday Agreement signed - acknowledges the legitimacy of both British and Irish identity in Northern Ireland, but protects its status in the United Kingdom; process of decommissioning weapons - paramilitaries begin to declare a ceasefire, usually considered the end of the Troubles (however, violence would still continue off and on into recent years, including the Real IRA and the Real UFF)
 - Protested in a unionist mural - "Nothing about us without us is for us."
- 2000
 - September 24 - Death of UDA member Stephen McKeag - memorialised in a loyalist mural

Unknown Date

- “The Sash My Father Wore” - PS-U - refers to Protestant victories over Catholics (notably at Derry and the Boyne) and was popular during July 12th parades
- “Daddy’s Uniform” - AS-L - tells of Ulstermen fighting in WWI, encourages the next generation to also take a gun in defense of Ulster with the UVF

Belfast and Derry Religious Demographics

THE IRISH TIMES

Two tribes: A divided Northern Ireland

A new mapping project illustrates the geographical split between Catholics and Protestants in what is still a deeply divided society

© Sat, Apr 1, 2017, 06:00 Updated Sat, Apr 1, 2017, 08:16

Paul Nolan

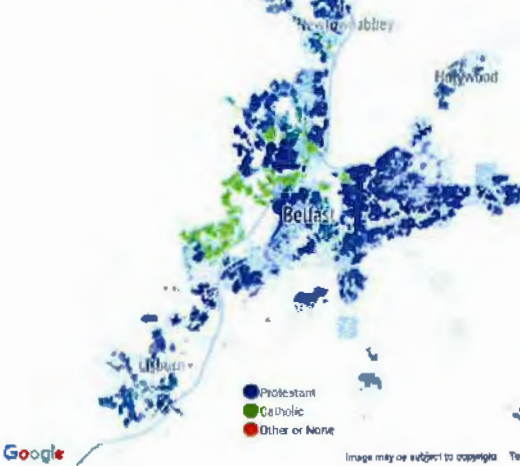
Belfast - 1971-2011

1971 1981 1991 2001 2011

Remove Map Labels

Link to this view

Templepatrick



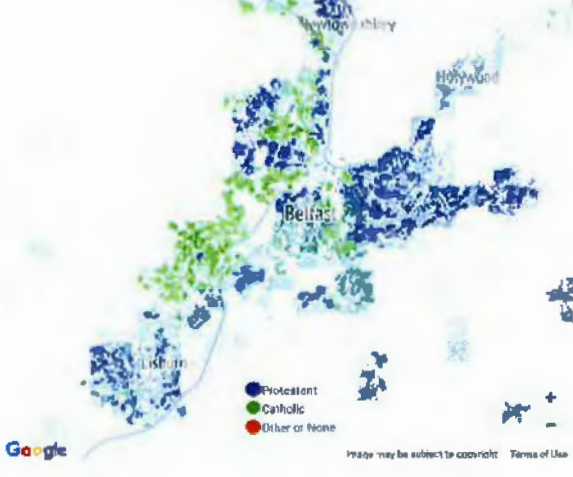
Map images taken from *The Irish Times* "Two Tribes: A divided Northern Ireland". Screenshots by author.

1971 1981 1991 2001 2011

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Templepatrick



Derry - 1971-2011

1971 1981 1991 2001 2011

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1971 1981 1991 2001 2011

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"The Men Behind the Wire - Nationalist versus Unionist Versions"

Nationalist Version - Paddy McGuigan, 1971

Armoured cars and tanks and guns
Came to take away our sons
But every man must stand behind
The men behind the wire

Through the little streets of Belfast
In the dark of early morn
British soldiers came marauding
Wrecking little homes with scorn

Heedless of the crying children
Cragging fathers from their beds
Beating sons while helpless mothers
Watched the blood pour from their heads

Not for them a judge and jury
Nor indeed a trial at all
But being Irish means you're guilty
So we're guilty one and all

Round the world the truth will echo
Cromwell's men are here again
England's name again is sullied
In the eyes of honest men.

Proud we march behind our banner
Firm we'll stand behind our men
We will have them free to help us
Build a nation once again

On the people step together
Proudly firmly on their way
Never fear never falter
Till the boys are home to stay

Unionist Version - Unknown, 1972

'Twas a cold and grey November morn, as I left
Belfast town,
In a cold and lonely prison van, for Long Kesh I
was bound,
'Cause my spirit was unbroken and my heart was
still un-found,
Why, I knew that I'd soon be with the men
behind the wire.

When the judge had passed my sentence and the
warder took me down,
I cried out no surrender bless the red hand and
the crown,
But grant me just one favour, that is my one
desire,
Please let me serve my sentence with the men
behind the wire.

There were many things so strange to me and
many more I knew,
His only cry was Loyalty to the old red white
and blue,
And the love for dear old Ulster, Even in the
darkest hour,
He'd shine with them these loyal men, the men
behind the wire.

And when this war is over and our victory is
won,
Let us not forget the sacrifice made by these
loyal sons,
They were staunch and true for me and you so
lift your glasses higher,
Where would we have been without them, the
men behind the wire.

Belfast Murals

These are the murals and displays that I have focused on for my paper. Of course, this is only a small sample of the artwork in West Belfast alone, much less in the rest of Northern Ireland. Most of these are from Falls Road, Shankill Road, and nearby streets. Images are either screenshots of Google Maps Street View, found with the help of www.belfast-murals.co.uk, or are used with permission from Extramural Activity. (<https://extramuralactivity.com>)

Figure 1 - The Rock Bar - site of a rocket attack in 1994, "has and always will be at the heart of the Falls Road", apparently hosts "Rebel Sundays", bunting visible over the street and tricolors flying from the roof, other flags are a combination of the coats of arms for the four provinces (Ulster is in the top-right)



(Google Maps)

Figure 2 - 2 Clowney St. - "The people arose in 69, they will do it again at any time. Maggie Thatcher think again, don't let our brave men die in vain." - Green and gold avian image in the center, either an eagle or a phoenix? I'm inclined to think the latter, with the "rise again" imagery; four province symbols (from L to R: Ulster, Connacht, Munster, Leinster)



(Extramural Activity - Peter Moloney)

Figure 3 - 1 Clondara St - "The British Government has no right in Ireland, never had any right in Ireland, and never can have any right in Ireland", short bios and portraits of Connolly and his daughter Nora over the Proclamation of the Irish Republic and the Plough constellation, four symbols of the provinces, border reading "1916"

"Official Republican Movement"; features the constellation of 'The Plough' ('The Big Dipper') and is associated with the Irish Citizen Army, a socialist republican group in the early twentieth century



(Google Maps)

Figure 4 - 6 Rockmount St. and 2 St. James's Park - "Our demands most moderate are - we only want the Earth - James Connolly" - Connolly sitting on a bench with a copy of the Irish Worker by his side saying "Belfast ITGWU Organiser Connolly gets 905 votes municipal elections"

Image of Connolly and the Proclamation



(Google Maps)

Figure 5 - 6 Rockmount St and 3 Beelumont Ave - "Women in Struggle - Generations shall remember them and call them Blessed" - features five women and the four provinces (are the women from the provinces?) I can't tell who they are, but the center image seems to be Countess Markievicz standing in front of the GPO with a gun in her hand

"C na M - Cead bliann - Ni saoirse go saoirse na mban" - "There is no freedom until the freedom of women"; mural of Cunnann na Mban, features uniformed women marching in formation and a painting of the Countess; located across the street from the Easter Rising mural and near the Falls Women's Center



(Top: Google Maps
Bottom: Extramural Activity)



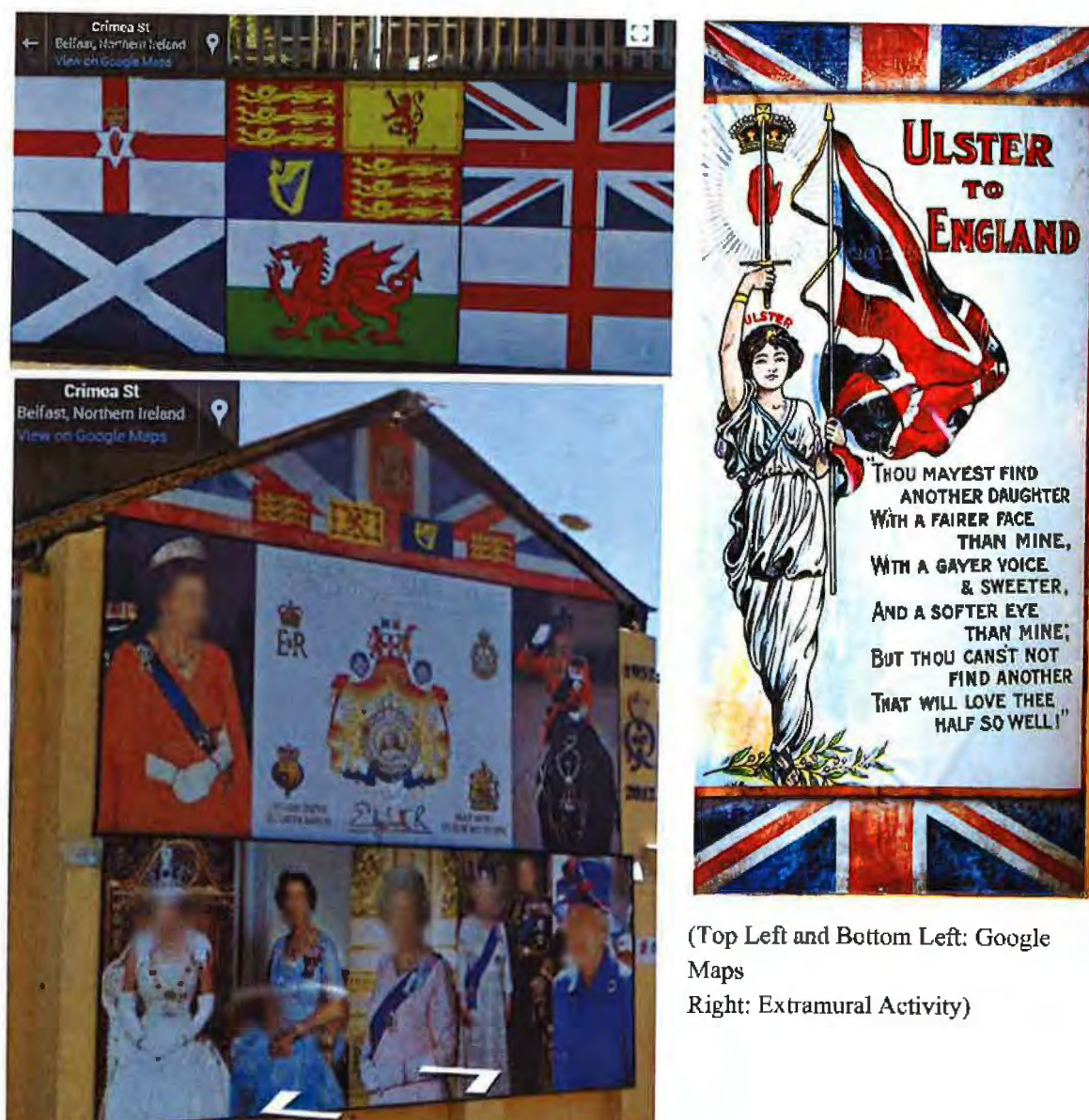
Figure 6 - 315 Shankill Rd. - "Shankill Protestant Boys Flute Band - Est. 1980 - SPB For God and Ulster - USSF" - Features multiple flags, but I'm not really sure what they are. There is a Union Jack on the top right, and what may be an Apprentice Boys and an Orange Order flag on the left. The crown and lions are similar to the Coat of Arms of the United Kingdom; Ulster Special Service Force (USSF); the bottom lists names of battlefields where Ulstermen have served with distinction, including the Somme, Thiepval, and Ypres; located across the road from Carman St.



(Extramural Activity)

Figure 7 - Crimca St. - Flags (Ulster Banner, Royal Standard, Union Jack, Scotland, Wales, England)
 "Ulster to England - Thou mayest find another daughter With a fairer face than mine, With a gayer voice and sweeter, And a softer eye than mine; But thou cans't not find another That will love thee half so well!"; features a woman labeled 'Ulster' holding a Union Jack in one hand and a crowned sword with the red hand in the other.

Queen Elizabeth Mural - "Belfast, Shankill Road, The Heart of the Empire Salutes Her Majesty on 60 Glorious years" - Union Jack gable, Royal Standard, contains the flags from the coat of arms (England, Scotland, and Ireland), 1952-2012



(Top Left and Bottom Left: Google Maps
Right: Extramural Activity)

Figure 8 - 2 Clowney St. - "Catalan Countries" - "1659-2009: 350 years of occupation, 350 years of resistance - Catalan language has been spoken VIII century. Nowadays, after 350 years of occupation and prohibition, there are 9 million Catalan speakers. The spirit of revolt against the Spanish Kingdom and French State is still alive. The struggle of the Catalan people continues against the existing discriminations: NOT SPAIN, NOT FRANCE!" - expresses Irish solidarity with the Catalan cause, displays an Irish tricolor along with a Catalan flag, includes a map of Europe filling Catalan lands in with red and Ireland with a tricolor (the whole island)



(Google Maps)

Figure 9 - B502 - Irish solidarity with Palestinian POWs
Support for Abdullah Ocalan



(Left: Google Maps Right: Extramural Activity)

Figure 10 - B502 - John Henry Patterson wall - Describes Patterson's service in WWI, his leadership of the Jewish Legion, and his work in Zionism. (Extramural Activity)

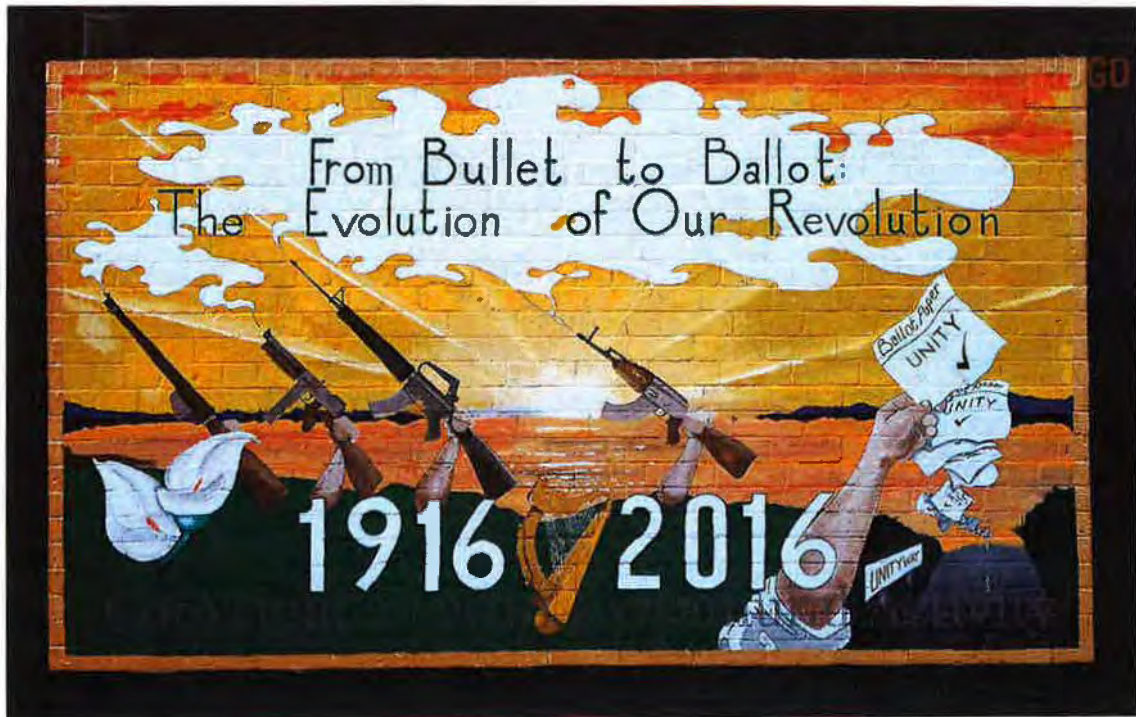


Figure 11 - B502 - Belfast Socialists



(Google Maps)

Figure 12- 2 Hugo St - "From Bullet to Ballot: The Evolution of Our Revolution - 1916-2016" - features as idyllic gold and green landscape with white lillies, there arc guns on the left, arm holding papers saying "Ballot Paper: Unity" and a check mark



(Extramural Activity)

Figure 13 - B502 - "End Sectarianism - Bring Down the Walls"



Figure 14 - 1 Rockmore Rd and 2 Clowney St - "Remembering the Hunger Strikers" - contains images of twelve men who died on hunger strike with their names, length of strike, age, and date of death (L to R - Bobby Sands MP, Francis Hughes, Martin Hurson, Kevin Lynch, Raymond McCreech, Patsy O'Hara, Michael Goughan, Frank Stagg, Kieran Doherty TD, Thomas McElwee, Joe McDonnell, Michael Devine); there is an image of a lark flying through barbed wire, apparently sponsored/created by St. James' Commemoration Committee and St. James' Sinn Fein (I think St. James also sponsored another mural supporting the hunger strikers)

"Commemorating the Courage and Sacrifice of the Hunger Strikers" - Surrounded by plaques bearing the images of the men who died with what looks like names and dates, and below a green and orange 30 with the years 1981 and 2011.

(Left: Extramural Activity Right: Google Maps)

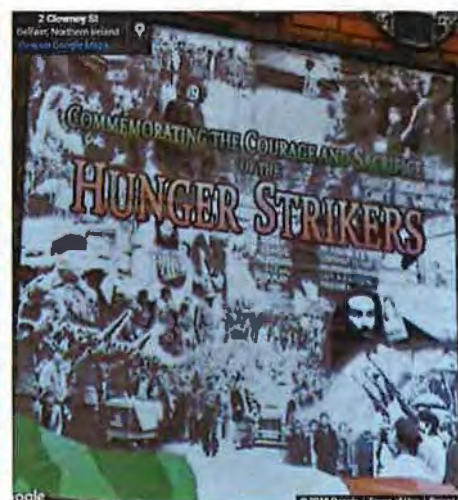


Figure 15 - 5 Scvastopol St - This was on the side of the Sinn Féin building and the government office of Paul Maskey.

"Everyone, republican or otherwise, has their own particular role to play. Our revenge will be the laughter of our children." - "Bobby Sands MP - Poet, Gaeilgeoir, Revolutionary, IRA Volunteer"

"I'll wear no convict's uniform, nor meckly serve my time that Britain might make Ireland's fight 800 years of crime..."

Gaeilgeoir - Irish speaker



(Extramural Activity)

Figure 16 - 6 Rockville St - "Vol. Kieran Nugent - 'I'm not a criminal. The Brits will have to nail prison clothes to my back.'" - Features the titular individual in loose wraps, first member of the blanket strike? Shows a lark flying out of prison bars, an image associated with republican prisoners and with Sands in particular because of a story about a caged lark that wouldn't sing until it was set free .



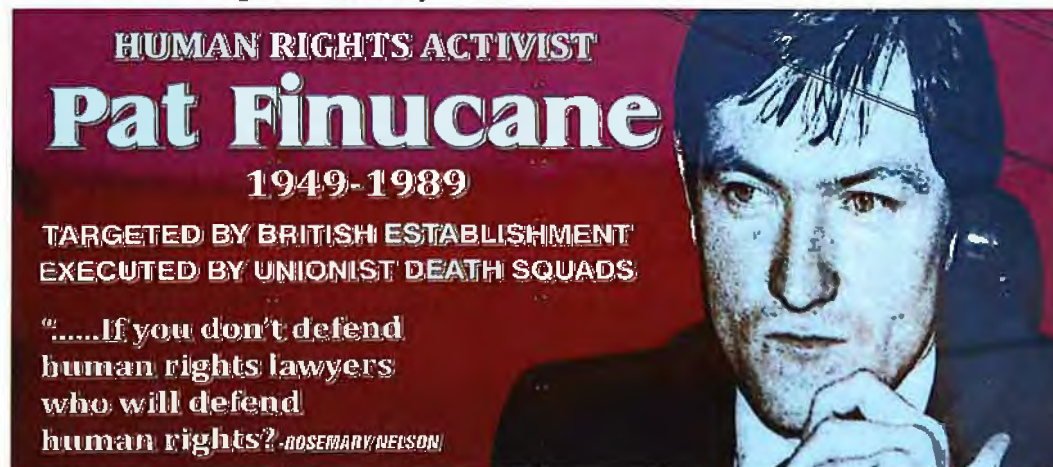
(Google Maps)

Figure 17 - 2 Hugo St - "In Memory of IRA Vol. Pearse Jordan - Murdered 25th November 1992" - contains a quote from Patrick Pearse at the funeral of Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa ("The fools, the fools, the fools. They have left us our Fenian dead, and while Ireland holds these graves, Ireland unfree shall never be at peace." Interestingly, there's no note stating who said the quote or under what circumstances, so I think they expect that anybody reading it will automatically recognise it.



(Google Maps)

Figure 18 - 1 Beechmount Dr - "Human Rights Activist Pat Finucane - 1949-1989 - Targeted by British Establishment, Executed by Unionists Death Squads - '...if you don't defend human rights lawyers, who will defend human rights?' - Rosemary Nelson"



(Extramural Activity)

Figure 19 - B502 - INLA mural



(Google Maps)

Figure 20 - 3 Beechmount Ave - "County Antrim Memorial: casca 1866-2012 - Honour Ireland's Dead, Wear an Easter Lily" - I'm unsure what the images are, but they are bordered by white lilies (associated with republican remembrance), the bottom left shows walls painted with "Stormont must go"



(Google Maps)

Figure 21 - 176 Shankill Rd - - "Lest We Forget - 5 Innocent Protestants Murdered - Bayardo" "William John Gracey, Samuel Gunning, Joanne McDowell, Hugh Alexander Harris, Linda Boyle" "In Memory of five innocent Protestants slaughtered here by a republican murder gang on 13th August 1975" Four of the five were civilians; Hugh Harris was a member of the UVF





(Top and Bottom: Google Maps)

Figure 22 160 Shankill Rd - "30 Years of Indiscriminate Slaughter By So-Called Non-Sectarian Irish Freedom Fighters"

"Fourstep Inn, Bombed 29th Sept. 1971, 2 Innocents Killed - Balmoral Showrooms, Bombed 11th December 1971, 2 Adults and 2 Babies Killed - Mountainview Tavern, Bombed 5 April 1975, 5 innocents killed - Bayardo Bar, Bombed 13th August, 1975, 5 innocents killed - Frizzell's Fish Shop, Bombed 23rd October 1993, 9 innocents killed"

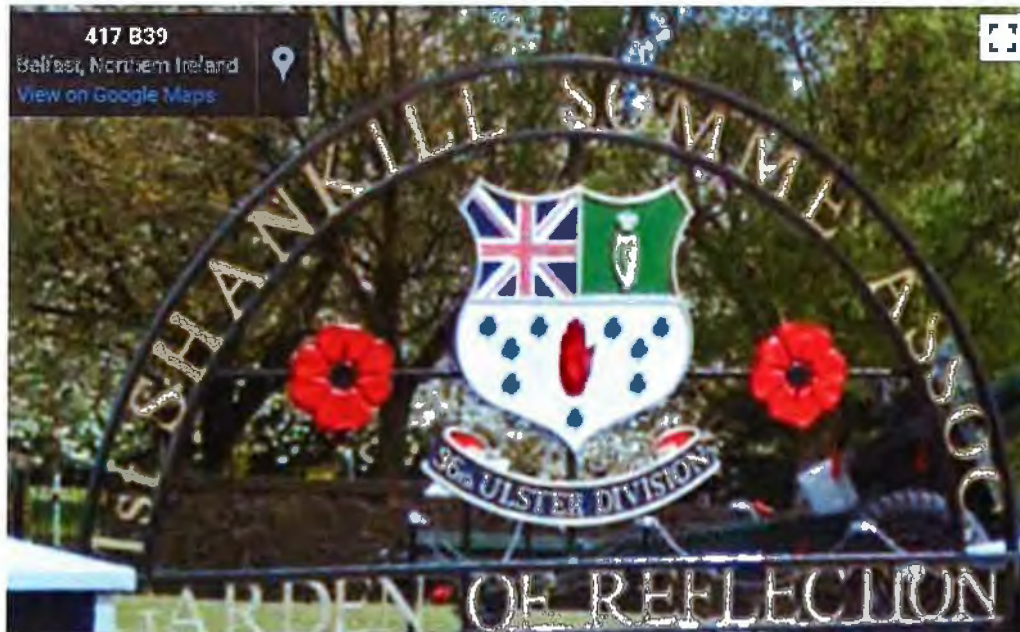
"No Military Targets! No Economic Targets! No Legitimate Targets! - Where are our inquiries? Where is our truth? Where is our justice?"

The center image shows the youngest child being carried from the bombing, a baby of 17 months.



(Left: Extramural Activity - Peter Moloney Right: Extramural Activity)

Figure 23 - 417 B39 - "Shankill Somme Assoc. Garden of Reflection" - I think this is probably non-sectarian, or at least not hostilely so. Features a shield with a Union Jack in the top-left, a crowned Irish harp on the top right, and the bottom half is a red hand of Ulster on a white field surrounded by nine shamrocks. The shield is flanked by two red poppies and is above a scroll reading "36th Ulster Division"



(Google Maps)

Figure 24 - 3 Beechmount Ave - "Éirí Amach na Cásca - 1916" - "The Easter Rising", features a soldier with a gun and bayonet against a smokey sky of green, white and orange, the GPO is on the right behind the four symbols of the provinces and white lilies, flags with the provinces and a tricolor fly from the building



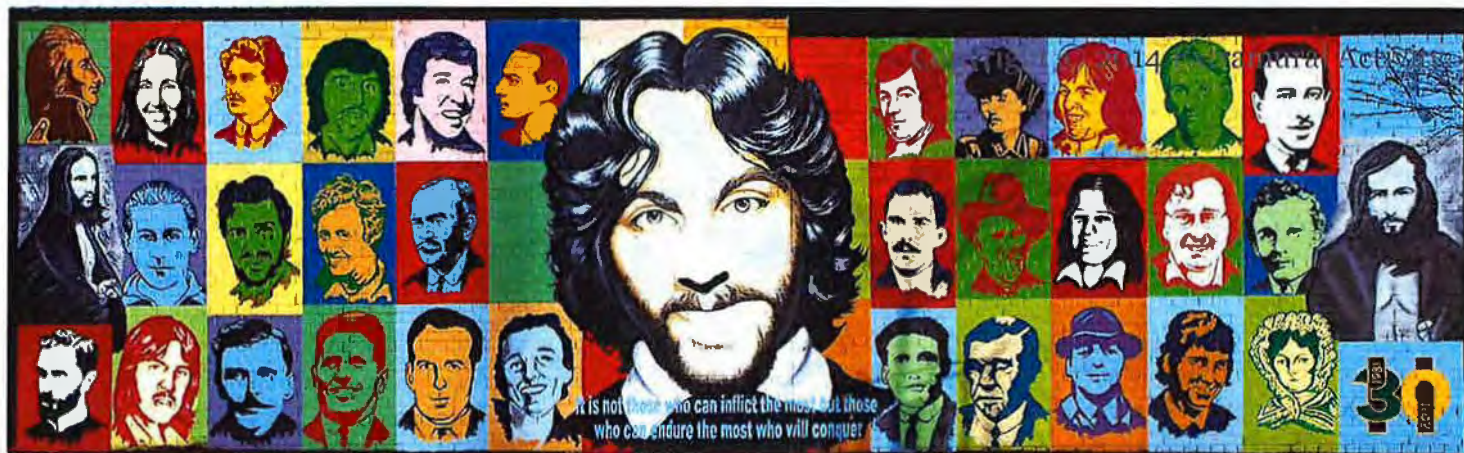
(Google Maps)

Figure 25 - 1 Clondara St. - "Soldier of the people: Joe McCann 1947-1972, Official IRA", backed by a tricolor and The Plough



(Google Maps)

Figure 28 - B502 - "It is not those who can inflict the most, but those who can endure the most that will conquer." - The quote is from Terence MacSwiney, an Irish politician who died on hunger strike in 1920. The center image is of another hunger striker, Francis Hughes, and two blanket protesters are seen on the left and right. Other faces include Theobald Wolfe Tone, Patrick Pearse, Constance Markievicz, Terence MacSwiney, Patsy O'Hara, James O'Donovan Rossa, Bobby Sands, and Roger Casement. A green and gold 30 (1981-2011) is in the corner.



(Extramural Activity)

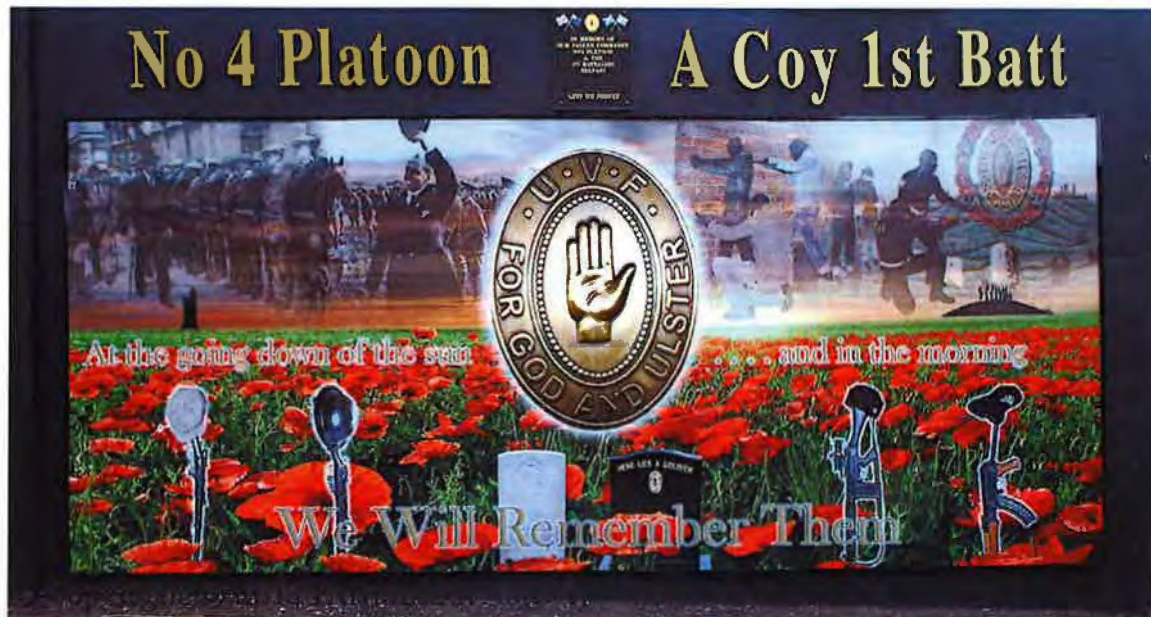
Figure 29 - William of Orange



(Extramural Activity)

Figure 30 - 12 Glenwood St - Honors the men who have fallen in war since WWI; red poppies; guns and hats; No 4 Platoon, A Coy 1st Batt - The montage at the top shows images from what I believe would be the First and Second World War, while the second contains images of paramilitary activity; associated with the UVF; This is across the street from the mural on 14 Glenwood St, and both appear to be a couple

blocks away from a nearby school.



(Extramural Activity)

Figure 31 - 14 Glenwood St - Similar to the facing mural. Honors the dead of what looks like "A' Company" of the Red Hand Commandos (RHC); "Lámh Dearg Abú"



(Google Maps)

Figure 32 - Argyle St - "100 Years of the Ulster Solemn League and Covenant" - "1912-2012" "We will not have Home Rule' - The Lions of Ulster"

"Edward Carson - Saturday 28th September 1912"

Plaques - Major Fredrick H. Crawford, Volunteer Robert J Adje, James Craig, The Ulster Covenant, Sir Edward Henry Carson, Sir George Lloyd Reilly Richardson, Captain Wilfrid Spender, Ulster Volunteer Force

"This mural was dedicated by Alderman Hugh Smyth OBE on Friday the 21st of September 2012 To Commemorate the Centenary of the signing of the Ulster's Solemn League and Covenant"



(Google Maps)

Figure 33 - Conway St. - "Ulster Tower" "The Ulster Tower is a memorial to the men of the 36th (Ulster) Division. It was officially opened on 19th November 1921 by Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson. The tower is located close to the Schwaben Redoubt, a German stronghold at the edge of Thiepval Wood, France which the Ulster Division attacked at 7:30 am on the 1st July 1916."



(Google Maps)

Figure 34 - 2 Hugo St - "Tir Gan Teanga, Tir Gan Anam" - "A country without a language is a country without a soul"; features an image of Pearse



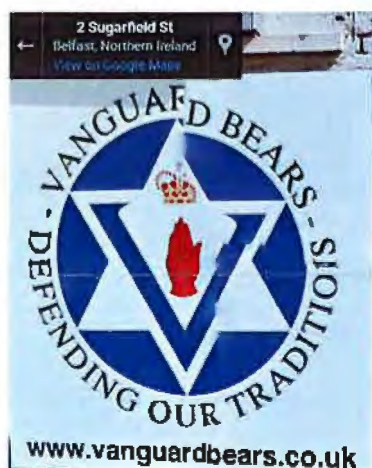
(Google Maps)

Figure 35- B502 - "Welcome to Shankill Road" - Features Belfast in the Blitz, marching bands, the Red Hand ("Proud, Defiant, Welcoming"), boxing, and a mural of William of Orange.



(Google Maps)

Figure 36 - 2 Sugarfield St - "Vanguard Bears - Defending Our Traditions" - I'm not entirely sure what this is, but from their website, it appears that they are associated with the Glasgow Rangers Football Club and support unionists in Northern Ireland. Pretty simple imagery, classic. But the "Defending Our Traditions" line interests me because that seems to imply that they feel those traditions are under attack.



(Google Maps)

Figure 37 - 7 Brookmount St - "Whiterock Flute Band West Belfast - Est 1962" "On Behalf of the Officer and Members of the Whiterock Flute Band, We would like to Thank all our Past Members, Families, Loyal Orders and Community for your Support." - Features two men in blue and gold with an orange plume in their bonnets; the center shows what I think is a Lambeg drum, snare drums, cymbals, and some kind of baton?, Orange lilies form the bottom border; includes part of a sign that says "A Taste of Tradition" and appears to show the logos of the band for the last 50 years. (If it's been 50 years since 1962, I say this is probably from about 2012?); the logos are mostly red/white or red/white/blue and mostly feature the arms of Ulster/Ulster Banner and/or the Union Jack.



(Google Maps)

Figure 38 - 1 Carnan St - "Recognition - Appreciation - Remembrance" "UVF - For God and Ulster" "Here dead we lie, Because we did not choose, To live and shame the land, From which we sprung. Life, to be sure, Is nothing much to lose, But young men think it is, And we were young." (Poem by A.E. Housman); Red roses and cross; Plaque - "1st Battalion Belfast Brigade - 'C' Company - Ulster Volunteer Force - Killed in Action"; a red flag flies from one corner, I think it's an Apprentice Boys flag. My first thought was that this was a WWI/II memorial like many of the others. But, seeing that the dates listed on the plaque were from 1973-78, I looked into it. It was a part of the Ulster Defense Association (UDA) and apparently was associated with killings in the nearby nationalist neighborhoods. Plaque contains lines of the Laurence Binyon poem "For the Fallen", which appears to be a recurring line in WWI memorials.



(Extramural Activity)

Figure 39 - 5 Canmore St. - "UVF - For God and Ulster" "This mural is a memorial to the volunteers of A Comp. 1st Batt. who served the Shankill community so bravely during the years of conflict. Gone but not forgotten. Here lies a soldier"



(Google Maps)