

1 Contextualizing the Troubles

Investigating Deeply Divided Societies through Social Movements Research

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The sheer scale and duration of Northern Ireland's 'Troubles', with 3530 people killed (1840 civilians) and 47,500 injured, between 1969 and 1998, make this conflict as one of the most lethal episodes of contention in post-war Western Europe. This volume relies on social movement research to challenge the exceptional character that has been often attributed to this conflict in the past. At the same time, it asks how research on the Troubles might inform future research on social movements beyond the Northern Ireland case. Despite the increasing importance of ethnonationalist conflicts in the post-Cold War period (Wimmer 2013; Muro 2015), social movement scholars have paid little attention to deeply divided societies (notable exceptions include: Cirulli and Conversi 2010; Cowell-Meyers 2014; Demirel-Pegg, forthcoming; Gorenburg 2003; Khawaja 1995; Martheu 2009; Melucci and Diani 1992; Norwich 2015; Olzak and Olivier 1998; Seidman 2000, 2011; Touquet 2015; Vladislavljevic 2002; Watts 2006), preferring instead to focus on 'stable', Western democracies (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001). This book aims to at least partially address this gap by presenting state-of-the-art social movement research on the Northern Ireland's Troubles.

All societies are traversed by divisions, whether based on ethnicity, religion, race, class, or any combination of these and other factors. These fractures tend to exhibit varying degrees of intensity, resiliency, and politicization and are subject to historical and geographical fluctuations. *Deeply divided societies* are characterized by cleavages that are not pacified, as well as by the widespread belief that the state is actively taking the side of one of the parts in conflict. Regardless of its accuracy, this interpretation of the state acting in favour of a portion of society, rather than for all its citizenry, creates the potential for sociopolitical conflict and deepens its latent virulence, since the legitimacy of the state is ultimately questioned. In this dynamic, the dominant group 'appropriates

1 We would like to thank Devrashee Gupta, James Jasper, Niall Ó Dochartaigh, Joseph Ruane, Lee Smithey, Jennifer Todd, and Robert White, as well as the AUP reviewers, for their thoughtful comments on a previous draft of this chapter.

the state apparatus and shapes the political system, public institutions, geography, economy and culture' (Yiftachel and Ghanem 2004: 650). Thus, in deeply divided societies, subcultural divisions based on antagonized sociopolitical cleavages lead to regimes lacking full legitimacy, a propensity to widespread political violence, and state repression (Nordlinger 1972; Guelke 2012). The Northern Ireland case is a prototypical example of a society deeply divided along an ethnonational cleavage, similar to cases like Cyprus, South Africa, Israel, Lebanon, Iraq, Sudan, Congo, Pakistan, and the former Yugoslavia, among many others. This volume addresses this under-researched domain of cases by focusing on a number of key related questions: How does non-violent mobilization emerge and persist in deeply divided societies? What are the trajectories of participation in violent groups in these societies? What is the relationship between overt mobilization, clandestine operations, and protests among political prisoners? What is the role of media coverage and identity politics? Can there be non-sectarian collective mobilization in deeply divided societies? The answers to these questions do not merely try to explain contentious politics in Northern Ireland; instead, they tackle key issues in contemporary social movement scholarship debates.

In this introduction, we first discuss the main theoretical approach typically used to study deeply divided societies and then suggest how social movement studies may enrich and complement our understanding of the dynamics of contentious politics in these contexts. We examine the existing social movement scholarship on this case and then provide a brief discussion of Northern Ireland's historical context. Finally, we situate each chapter of the volume within the social movement field and emphasize their unique contributions to the Northern Ireland case.

Contentious Politics in Deeply Divided Societies

While not all deeply divided societies are split along ethnic or national cleavages, the ethnonational perspective has been the most prominent one applied to these cases. The ethnonationalism approach argues that, when in a single territory competing ethnic communities 'want their state to be ruled by their nation, or [...] want what they perceive as 'their' state to protect their nation' (McGarry and O'Leary 1995: 354), ethnonational conflict is likely. Ethnonational communities and their political organizations (violent or non-violent) are at the core of ethnic conflict and the main source of political violence and antagonism.

For all its *descriptive power*, however, the ethnonationalist perspective suffers from its reductionist view of what constitutes ethnic communities. Sociologists like Rogers Brubaker have warned against ‘the seemingly obvious and uncontroversial point that ethnic conflict involves conflict between ethnic groups’ (2002: 166). By interpreting ethnonationalist conflict as a *conflict between ethnonationalist groups*, scholars have in fact fallen into the trap of ‘groupism’, or the reification of ethnonationalist groups as if they were monolithic collective actors with distinct, undisputed interests and agency, which statically respond to environmental stimuli (Brubaker 2002: 164-167).² This reduces choice in the face of structural and historical inexorability. The ethnonational approach claims that fixed ethnic identities and ethnic antagonism are the main cause of ethnic violence (i.e. initial conditions). Yet, this is a static and over-deterministic account of conflict, in that it mainly indicates the pre-existing conditions for ethnic contention, but not *how* and *when* violence deemed as ethnic-based erupts in certain contingent *historical contexts*. This has led scholars to underemphasize some specific characteristics of mobilization: 1) the trajectory of ethnonationalist mobilizations, their emergence, development, and decline; 2) the intra-movement competition and conflict *within* heterogeneous ethnonationalist groups; and 3) the emergence of new groups and identities that transcend hardened ethnonationalist boundaries.

To understand and explain episodes of ethnic conflict and violence, like the outbreak and trajectory of the Troubles in Northern Ireland, it is thus necessary to theoretically unpack historical processes of popular mobilization and state reactions (Tilly 1978, 2003). It is through these collective processes that certain social boundaries and identities can be created and/or activated and transformed, leading conflict and political violence to be framed as ethnic (or ethnonational) (Tilly 2004). Ethnonational categories were certainly central in Northern Ireland’s own foundation in 1920. Thus, when in the late 1960s mass protests demanding civil rights against unionist discriminatory rule were met by violent loyalist counter-protests and heavy state repression, all of this re-activated these pre-existing categories as *the most salient* organizing principle of Northern Ireland’s contentious politics. The magnification of ethnonational identities solidified the deep divisions between the different factions appealing to opposite ethnonational claims, ultimately radicalizing their repertoires of contention (De Fazio 2013). As Brubaker and Laitin (1998: 426) pointed out, ‘even where

2 For a critique of the ‘essentialist’ tendencies of ethnonational interpretations of the Troubles, see Ruane and Todd (2004).

violence is clearly rooted in preexisting conflict, it should not be treated as a natural, self-explanatory outgrowth of such conflict, something that occurs automatically when the conflict reaches a certain intensity'. The transition from structural causes to effects is not automatic and we need to take into account agency as well.

Undeniably, the Irish Republican Army (IRA) had attempted, since the Partition, to overthrow the unionist government through several armed insurgencies (1942-1944; 1956-1962). Nevertheless, these insurgent campaigns were routinely crushed by police repression and lack of support by the Irish Catholic minority, the alleged ethnonational community that the IRA intended to vindicate. Conversely, soon after the Troubles erupted, the IRA was able to garner significant political and social support among many Irish Catholics in vast areas of Northern Ireland. Rather than assuming that the popular support of radical ethnonational claims and repertoires was the obvious and direct product of ethnonational identities, we have to *explain* why radical contentious claims and repertoires gained support at a particular juncture in Northern Ireland history (for instance, see English 2009: 85-86; White 1989). If the civil rights movement had not gone down to streets politics, or if the unionist establishment had provided a concrete answer to the civil rights demands, then the Troubles might have never happened. Current interpretations of the Troubles as an ethnonationalist conflict are *static* descriptions that cannot explain why an ethnonational conflict breaks out in a certain historical moment (if it emerges at all), or why the conflict follow the *trajectory* it does.

In this volume, we argue that recent developments in social movement theories (entailing an actor-based approach and the contextualization of contentious politics) provide a *dynamic* theoretical framework able to look at the Troubles and, more generally, at conflicts in deeply divided societies as the result of ongoing relational processes. The social movement field has grown rapidly over the last 40 years in both empirical research and theoretical analysis (Snow, Klandermans, and Soule 2004; Della Porta and Diani 2015). As Della Porta and Diani have suggested, this field of studies has focused 'around four main sets of questions, concerning (a) the relationship between structural change and transformations in patterns of social conflict; (b) the role of cultural representations in enabling collective action; (c) the mechanisms that render it rational to mobilize on collective goals; and (d) the effects of the political and institutional context on social movements development and evolution' (Della Porta and Diani 2015: 4).

Contemporary social movement research emerged, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, in reaction to *collective behaviour* approaches, which described

contentious politics as irrational, unorganized, spontaneous, mainly violent, and resulting as a consequence of important structural changes, such as modernization. Following such approaches, individuals who share grievances and generalized beliefs are driven into mobilization rather than willing to mobilize for their purposes. *Resource mobilization theory* challenged these early socio-psychological approaches and focused on rational actors, at their organizational capacities and resources (material, social-organizational, moral, human, and cultural), moving away from deprivation and grievances. Where social movement organizations are seen as enterprises, individuals are understood then as rational actors who strategically weigh the costs and benefits of alternative courses of action and choose the course of action deemed as most likely to maximize their concrete goals and interests. In the 1980s, *new social movement* scholars in Europe challenged collective behaviour studies through a social-constructivist perspective by focusing on identity, lifestyles, meanings, and beliefs as possible explanations for understanding social movements. Whereas resource mobilization theory was seeking to answer *how* collective action emerges, the new social movement approach looked to explain *why* mobilization happened. Meanwhile, in the United States, social-constructivists scholars started to investigate *framing* processes: how movements offer solutions to grievances and how movements provide the rationale needed to motivate support for collective action. This approach particularly focused on the role of cognitive, affective, and ideational roots of contention.

In the early 1980s, *political process theories* rapidly took an almost hegemonic position in the field, stressing that social movements are political rather than psychological phenomena, and that the political context of collective action and the political opportunities it provides (increased access to political decision-making power, instability in the alignment of ruling elites, access to elite allies, declining capacity and propensity of the state to repress dissent) are capable of mobilizing activism as well as decreasing it. These approaches, which have been criticized for being overly structural and static, have been joined by more dynamic ones: *contentious politics* (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001; Tilly and Tarrow 2007), *strategic interactions* (Jasper 2007; Jasper and Duyvendak 2015; Duyvendak and Jasper 2015), and *field theories* (Fligstein and McAdam 2012), among others. While different schools of thought in the field exist, with competing concepts, paradigms, and priorities, it is important not to overstate such differences as the work of scholars who are usually associated with one or the other approach are in reality more complex and richer than assumed (Buechler 2011).

Recent social movement theories challenge overly structural assumptions by recognizing the agency of all political actors participating to contention, from paramilitaries to state authorities and political parties, within their complex organizational fields, emphasizing their shifting strategies as they interact with each other and adapt to their context (Jasper 2004; Maney, McCarthy, and Yukich 2012; Jasper and Duyvendak 2015; Duyvendak and Jasper 2015). It is through the untangling of the ever-changing relationships between the main actors in the conflict, the transformation of their identities, goals, priorities, and tactics, that we can make sense of episodes of violent contention, such as the Troubles. Following this perspective, conflicts in deeply divided societies become de-exceptionalized and de-essentialized, without the willingness to equate conflicts in deeply divided societies with conflicts in other types of societies. In looking for agency, social movement approaches are not arguing against structural explanations, but consider the complex interactions between agency and structure and are better able to underline the importance of societal structures in deeply divided societies, constraining and shaping players' choices. We believe that deeply divided societies are capable of showing more clearly how agency may unfold within certain historical structures/institutions/conditions, and how this relationship changes across time and space (Bosi and Davis, forthcoming; Ruane and Todd, in this volume).

Our goal with this book is to advance our understanding of the Troubles, while also opening new avenues of research for social movement scholars interested in exploring conflict in deeply divided societies from a fresh perspective. We argue that the interactions between social movement actors and other political actors should be at the centre stage of contentious politics (Tilly 2008), and propose a perspective that contextualizes the emergence of political violence, the groups that embrace it, and those that eventually disengage from it (Bosi, Demetriou, and Malthaner 2014; Bosi, Ó Dochartaigh, and Psoiu 2015). In bringing the analytical power of this perspective to a case of a deeply divided society, we believe that this volume looks as well at a future challenge that we have only started to address thus far. Recognizing that we can use social movement theories to study contentious politics in deeply divided societies, we are compelled to ask what are some of the unique challenges social movements face in these contexts.

Collective movements challenging political authorities, as well as structures of authority, assume a different meaning when they occur in deeply divided societies. In these societies the legitimacy of the political system and the rules of the game are contested, if not openly rejected, by a section of the polity. At the same time, structures of authority alternative to the

state can be founded within ethnonationalist communities, as these represent 'composite emergent products of a long historical process whereby past successes in organising division lay the foundation for subsequent reproduction of community solidarity and identity' (Ruane and Todd, in this volume). Moreover, the emergence of antagonistic countermovements is far more likely in contexts where competing ethnic or national identities can be activated and made salient in a short period of time (Bob 2012). Political authorities do not have the luxury of ignoring these challenges, as might be the case in traditional liberal democracies; nor, can they simply act as neutral arbiter between conflicting movements. The opposite options of either granting concessions to challengers, or showing intransigence towards them, are both costly strategies for governments (Luders 2010), with outcomes that are hard to predict. In fact, political authorities in deeply divided societies are less likely to repress against the majority community if they need their support in order to maintain the status quo and stay in office (White 1999). Similarly, the policing of protest is not a routine, neutral public order task in a divided society; in the context of a state perceived as partial, if not outright hostile to certain groups, the impartiality and legitimacy of police as representative and enforcer of that state is intrinsically called into question (De Fazio 2007; Guelke 2012). Under certain political, social, and historical conditions, political violence is an option not too far removed from the realm of possibilities in deeply divided societies, where institutional mechanisms for accommodating grievances are missing or underdeveloped. In deeply divided societies, the establishment may oppose the inclusion of certain groups (not necessarily a minority group, as the case of South Africa's apartheid suggests) and do not provide legitimate channels for regime opponents to voice their discontent in non-violent ways. Once political violence, be it state-sanctioned, coming from clandestine organizations, protesters, or vigilante groups, enters into the equation of contentious politics, the search for peaceful solutions becomes increasingly more difficult. Where mobilization does not directly confront the political authorities, but is instead willing to counter deeply entrenched divisions and sectarianism, what is indirectly challenged are the structures of authority on which different players are drawing their legitimacy (this was the case of the Peace People in Northern Ireland, see Smithey, in this volume). These types of mobilizations are capable of generating cross-cutting solidarities and divisions across well-established cleavages (Diani 2000); some movements may be directly attempting to radically transform ethnonational identities, while others embrace pluralist politics to emphasize non-ethnic claims,

such as LGBT rights (see Nagle's chapter on these types of mobilizations in Northern Ireland and Lebanon).

The Northern Ireland Context and the Troubles

When Great Britain partitioned Ireland into two separate entities, six counties in the north-eastern historical region of Ulster remained under British rule (Northern Ireland), while the Irish Free State was established in the south. The new province of Northern Ireland was created so that the Protestants loyal to the British Crown, about two-thirds of the local population, could retain their political and cultural union with the United Kingdom. The remaining one-third of the population, the Irish Catholics, instead identified politically and culturally with what would later become the Republic of Ireland in the south. Northern Ireland was thus established as a semi-autonomous province within the United Kingdom, with its own parliament (Stormont), local government, judicial system, and, most importantly, full responsibility for internal security and public order.

Stormont represented the symbolic site where unionist domination over the Irish Catholic minority was created, reproduced, and executed (Ruane and Todd 1996). The Northern Ireland regime basically embodied a confessional state with institutionalized partiality, without the necessary checks and balances to limit systemic excesses and biases and no oversight from the central British government. The latter, in fact, rarely showed interest towards Northern Ireland politics and avoided interfering with what was perceived as a peripheral and troublesome region of the United Kingdom (Rose 1971).

In the aftermath of World War II and with the expansion of the British welfare state, a group of activists in the mid-1960s decided to tackle housing, job, and electoral practice discrimination in Northern Ireland by borrowing the rhetoric of the Civil Right Movement in the United States, but, at least initially, not its direct action approach. The reformist goals of the Northern Ireland civil rights movement (CRM) was to outlaw institutional discrimination through a political and legal campaign geared to highlight the unfairness of the political system in the region, especially in comparison with the democratic standards adopted in the rest of the United Kingdom. One of the tactics of the CRM was to provoke Westminster to intervene by pressuring Stormont to put an end to widespread discrimination. In 1968, the growing frustration with the inability of the unionist government to deliver significant reforms, the encouraging example of the civil

rights mobilization in the United States, and the closed channels for legal mobilization finally convinced some within the CRM leadership to redirect their efforts towards direct action. Transgressive tactics of non-violent civil disobedience and demonstrations were deemed as more effective weapons in the struggle for civil rights (Purdie 1990).

On 5 October 1968, the unionist Minister of Home Affairs banned a civil rights march planned to take place in Derry, claiming public order reasons; the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) eagerly enforced the ban with excessive and indiscriminate use of force against peaceful marchers as well as bystanders. Police violence against the CRM transformed an otherwise minor protest into a 'transformative event'; the images of police brutality, reminiscent of tactics used against civil rights demonstrations in the US South, rapidly spread throughout the world. A wave of mass civil rights demonstrations had just started, immediately colliding with the dominant majority community and 'its' institutions. In a few months, this sociopolitical crisis opened up the space, first, for extreme communal violence during the summer of 1969; second, for the deployment of the British Army in the streets of Belfast and Derry to restore law and order; third, for the emergence of the Provisional IRA at the end of 1969, as an answer to loyalist mobs and to the degeneration in the relationship between the British Army and the local residents in Catholic working-class neighbourhoods (Ó Dochartaigh 2005). The deterioration of the situation brought to an end the Stormont regime in March 1972, when Westminster instituted Direct Rule, but violence did not stop for another quarter of a century. In the mid-1970s, a peace movement brought together Catholic and Protestant moderates, but with no success.

The decline of the armed conflict option originated in the early 1980s, when the efficacy of the armed struggle was first questioned and little by little progressed in the next two decades, following the decision of the Provisional IRA leadership, through the role played by Sinn Féin, to participate in the peace process (Bean 2007). After the failures of the Sunningdale experiment (1973) – brought down by the loyalist workers' strike of 1974 – and of the Anglo-Irish Agreement (1985), the Good Friday Agreement (1998) finally created a devolved government in a power-sharing executive supported from both communities (Ó Dochartaigh 2016). However, this has not signified a complete solution to the conflict, as some dissident republican militant groups have not accepted the agreement and refuse to abandon the armed struggle (Evans and Tonge 2012), as well as was the case with the flag dispute in 2012 and the role of loyalist fringes (Ruane 2017). The recent vote of the United Kingdom to exit the European Union, with the majority of Scotland and Northern Ireland voting to remain, might trigger

a new resurgence of contention over Irish unity, which might destabilize the young post-agreement institutions.

Social Movement Research in Northern Ireland

Before the turn of the millennium, relatively few scholars engaged with social movement theories to study the Troubles in Northern Ireland. In 1985, John Hannigan's research investigated dilemmas of strategy and ideology within the Provisional IRA, using resource mobilization theories and a political process approach, probably one of the earliest social movement pieces on the Troubles. However, it was Robert W. White who systematically brought social movement theories into his research on the Irish republican movement (1989, 1992, 1993, 1999, 2007, 2010). In more than 20 years of academic research on the subject, White adopted the analytical tools typically used to study peaceful protest to investigate the micro-mobilization, commitment, and post-recruitment activism of the republican movement in Northern Ireland, reconstructing its contentious history and evolution over the course of the conflict. He did so by relying on resource mobilization and political process theories (1989, 1992, 1993), as well as identity theories (2007, 2010), by conducting numerous intensive interviews with militant activists during and after the conflict. Moreover, he collected and analysed quantitative data on the victims and perpetrators of political violence, including state authorities, thus disaggregating the multiple factors behind the strategies of the various actors in the conflict. White's use of these original sources and social movement theories has provided alternative interpretations of the republican armed struggle campaign, in which the outbreak of the violent conflict is contextualized in the interaction between social movements, countermovements and the state. During the 1990s, two further authors adopted social movement theories to study the Northern Ireland Troubles, both from a comparative perspective. Cynthia Irvin (1999) innovatively used social movement theories to compare how armed groups change strategies and engage in institutionalized politics, in the often compared cases of the IRA in Northern Ireland and ETA in the Basque country. Diarmuid Maguire (1993) has instead compared the consequences of protest in Northern Ireland and Italy between 1967 and 1992, challenging the unexceptional character of the ethnonationalist conflict. Well before the growing interest in disengagement processes in the literature on political violence, Irvin's empirically rich work has investigated the strategic and organizational dilemmas faced by clandestine groups to

give up armed struggle for participating in political institutions and has connected these shifts to a model which links the internal dynamics of the respective clandestine groups with changes in their external environment. Maguire's work has instead used the Northern Ireland case to challenge the naïve assumption that 'greater citizen protest lead inevitably to the introduction of reforms and the expansion of democracy' (1993: 103).

In the past fifteen years, a number of social movement scholars have used the Northern Ireland Trouble as a 'hard case' (Lijphart 1971) to investigate un-explored topics, or to challenge existing ones within the social movement field: the need to investigate transnational networks (Maney 2000); how social movements develop across time (Bosi 2006, 2011); paths from armed rebellion to peaceful activisms and vice versa (Maney 2007); pathways of activists mobilization across time (Bosi 2007, 2012; Bosi and Della Porta 2012; Bosi 2016c); the interaction between mobilization and repression (De Fazio 2007, 2009); new social movements in deeply divided societies (Nagle 2008, 2015; Hayes and Nagle 2016); territoriality and collective action (Ó Dochar-taigh and Bosi 2010); countermovement mobilization in deeply divided societies (Smithey 2009, 2011; Smithey and Young 2010); relational dynamics and processes of radicalization (Alimi, Bosi, and Demetriou 2012; De Fazio 2013); legal opportunity and social movement strategy (De Fazio 2012); determinants of political violence against civilians (Maney, McCarthy, and Yukich 2012); within-movement competition (Maney 2012a; De Fazio 2014; Bosi and Davis, forthcoming); the paradox of reforms and processes of social movements institutionalization (Maney 2012b; Bosi 2016a); disengagement processes (Bosi 2013; Duhart 2016; Clubb 2016); and the contextualization of biographical outcomes (Bosi 2016b, 2016c, forthcoming).

While these scholars have used the Northern Ireland case to qualitatively extend social movement scholarship, the analytical power of this perspective also influenced other scholars outside of this circle, as they have increasingly adopted these frameworks to investigate the Troubles. For example, Graham Ellison and Greg Martin (2000) have questioned the assumptions contained in social movement research on policing, seeking their applicability to a deeply divided society such as Northern Ireland. Denis O'Hearn's study (2009) of protest by republican prisoners underlines how the dynamic interaction between protest and repression transformed political prisoners' culture, further investigating the key role of protest leaders in this process. Kevin Bean (2007) has studied the trajectory of the republican movement over the 30 years of conflict, relying on the social movement literature on processes of institutionalization. Christopher Farrington (2008) adopted a contentious politics approach to examine the

role of unionist counter-mobilization and its interaction with the Northern Ireland state in facilitating the outbreak of the Troubles. Kevin Grisham (2014) compares the Provisional IRA with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia and the Abu Sayyaf Group, studying their transformation processes through a social movement analytical approach.

Another sign of the relative success of social movement scholarship in shaping the academic debate about Northern Ireland and the Troubles can be seen among several historians. The pioneering work by political historian Bob Purdie and his book *Politics in the Streets* (1990) put in the foreground the role of the civil rights movement, its strategies, allies, and antagonists in setting in motion the events leading to the Troubles. While not directly engaging with social movement theories, his rigorous scholarship and analytical focus on the emergence of the CRM and its unprecedented direct action campaign, prompted a new interest in the study of mass mobilization during the early years of the Troubles. There is hardly a social movement scholar studying Northern Ireland who does not hold an intellectual debt towards Bob Purdie and his endeavour to position processes of collective mobilization and the 'politics in the streets' of the late 1960s at the heart of our understanding of Troubles. Later on, political historians like Niall Ó Dochartaigh and Richard English have more explicitly engaged with the social movement literature on mobilization and political violence. In their histories of local conflict in Derry (Ó Dochartaigh 2005) and the interaction between non-violent and violent politics in Northern Ireland (English 2009), they grapple with social movement concepts and scholarship, injecting key theoretical insights into their rich historical analyses.

Volume Structure

This volume explores the intersection of social movement scholarship and research on divided societies by inspecting the Troubles in Northern Ireland. It is divided into four sections, each one devoted to investigate from different theoretical and methodological perspectives a specific aspect of the Troubles, from the early years of the conflict, to the post-Good Friday Agreement period. In particular, the four sections will examine: 1) the civil rights years, with a focus on the civil rights movement and its political context; 2) unionist and loyalist contention, dealing with both peaceful collective action and violent strategies inside the Protestant community; 3) the republican movement, analysing its trajectory, from the recruitment and mobilization inside prisons, to the emergence of feminist republicanism;

and 4) non-sectarian mobilizations, in which movements that do not and did not align with the ethnonational cleavage are examined. The chapters in the book have important theoretical and substantive implications for future research on social movements in divided societies and beyond.

The first section of the volume presents three chapters from Niall Ó Dochartaigh, Erin-Beth Turner and Gianluca De Fazio, and Gregory Maney. These opening chapters examine the relationship between the CRM and its larger political and media context. They grapple with how the evolution of the conflict shaped the movement goals, its logic of actions and policy impact, as well as with how the media representation of the movement frames affected the reputation and effectiveness of the movement. These chapters address key debates in social movement research on the formation of social movements, as well as their strategic interactions with authorities and the media. In Chapter 2, Ó Dochartaigh shows how, as the contentious context of the late 1960s was shifting, so were the goals of the CRM. Adopting a contentious politics approach, Ó Dochartaigh examines protest and violence as being part of a continuum of contention, each one deeply related to the other. In particular, Ó Dochartaigh discusses the failure by the unionist government to implement its reform package promised in late 1968 as the catalyst for increased radicalization and potential for political violence. The very same Five-Point Reform package proposed by the unionist government is one of the main focuses of Erin-Beth Turner and Gianluca De Fazio's Chapter 3. Here they adopt Joseph Luders' (2010) lucid theoretical framework on the logic of social change, based on the rational calculation of disruption and concession costs by the targets of social movement actions, and apply it to the context of Northern Ireland. They show how, following a rational cost-evaluation by O'Neill's unionist government, only limited reforms could have been granted at that particular historical moment. At the same time, they also highlight some of the limitations of Luders framework and call for a more careful inspection of the role of ideology and emotions in the rational evaluations of policy formulations by social movement targets. In Chapter 4, Maney adds another important arena in the political equation of the civil rights years: mainstream international media. In particular, Maney explores the role of international coverage of the CRM in affecting its outcomes and the strategic responses by the unionist government, inserting another layer of complexity to the relational field.

The second section of the volume addresses a longstanding gap in the social movement scholarship on the Troubles: Protestant mobilization. While scholarship on the CRM in Northern Ireland has thrived in the last couple of decades, social movement research has paid only minor attention

to unionist and loyalist mobilization. More generally, these chapters enrich the growing literature on the conditions for the emergence of countermovements and on disengagement from political violence. In Chapter 5, Sarah Campbell addresses this gap by looking at the role collective memory and collective identity played in facilitating and galvanizing collective action in the Protestant community. In particular, Campbell traces the trajectory of Protestant mobilization from the reaction to the CRM in the late 1960s, through the Ulster Workers' Council strike in 1974 that paralyzed Northern Ireland, up to the (ultimately failed) 'Ulster Says No!' campaign against the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985. In Chapter 6, Neil Ferguson and James W. McAuley explore the role of collective identity among loyalists in joining and later abandoning political violence. They analyse the narratives former loyalist paramilitaries exposed during in-depth qualitative interviews, in which they recount how they joined those organizations.

The third section of the volume zooms into the Irish republican movement from different historical and theoretical perspectives. In their respective chapters, Robert W. White and Tijen Demirel-Pegg, Denis O'Hearn, and Theresa O'Keefe examine the internal dynamics of the movement, as they deal with issues of recruitment from a longitudinal angle (White and Demirel-Pegg), the development of mobilization in the H-Block prison (O'Hearn), and the emergence and impact of radical feminism within republicanism in Northern Ireland (O'Keefe). All these chapters contribute to our understanding of the internal functioning of high-risk movements, from activists' differential motivations for participation, to conflicts over strategy and agenda setting. In Chapter 7, White and Demirel-Pegg dissect the issue of recruitment within the larger republican movement through in-depth interviews with activists who have joined the movement at different historical stages, some of them participating in the armed struggle. They explain the transformation of the Provisional IRA and Sinn Féin during the Troubles, as well as the emergence of post-Good Friday Agreement republican dissidents who refused to abandon political violence. In Chapter 8, O'Hearn explores the relationship between republican prisoners and the outside republican movement. In particular, O'Hearn explores how solitary confinement in the infamous H-Blocks produced solidarity and facilitated the unlikely emergence of protest within a total institution such as prison. The analysis focuses specifically on the interaction between the successes of protest inside the H-Blocks (especially the 'blanketmen' protests against prison authorities) and the mobilizing capabilities of the movement outside (and vice versa). It also investigates the conflict inside the republican movement, as the external leadership tried to control and

direct the protests inside the H-Block, without success. In Chapter 9, O'Keefe inspects an overlooked aspect of the republican movement: republican feminism. O'Keefe describes how the experience of conflict and violence among some republican women generated a unique, even radical form of feminism. In-depth interviews with women active in the republican movement, including some who engaged in political violence, detail how these women developed a feminist sense of self and a collective feminist identity. This collective identity nurtured a subversive politics of feminist resistance that challenged patriarchy both within republicanism and the wider Irish society.

The fourth and last section of the volume deals with movements that do not align with the traditional ethnonational divisions, thus operating from a non-sectarian platform. The two chapters from John Nagle and Lee A. Smithey directly address the issue of how the construction, maintenance, and transformation of collective identity affect social movements and their political context. In Chapter 10, Nagle compares non-sectarian social movements in Northern Ireland and Lebanon, two emblematic divided societies. Ethnic identities are obviously central organizing principles for contentious politics in these divided societies; however, activists' efforts to challenge these identities and provide alternative sources of mobilization are an extremely significant subject of study. Two types of non-sectarian mobilizations can be identified: *transformationist* movements that seek to transform ethnic identities, and *pluralist* ones that strive to make the society more receptive to alternative identities. Nagle argues that the power-sharing agreements that rule Northern Ireland and Lebanon are the main factors determining the predominance of one type of movement over the other. Chapter 11 by Smithey focuses on an explicitly non-sectarian movement active in Northern Ireland in the late 1970s: the Peace People movement. The study of the Peace People movement allows the investigation of the life cycle of a non-sectarian movement and the unique challenges it has to face by operating in the context of a deeply divided society. Contrarily to loyalist and republican movements, the Peace People movement adopted non-violent praxes, countering all political violence and inciting the emergence of a non-sectarian, unifying identity for all Northern Ireland people.

All the chapters in this volume share the goal to explore the multifaceted nature of the Troubles through a social movement perspective. The analytical payoff of this rich theoretical perspective is to dissect the ethnonational divide in Northern Ireland, the societal structure within which contentious politics developed into the Troubles, while focusing on its actors, their strategies, identities, interactions, motivation, conflicts, and outcomes.

Differently positioned within (or consciously outside) the ethnonational cleavage and its organizations and institutions, political actors at the micro, meso, and macro level interpreted their situations, estimated opportunities, threats, acted on them, while transforming themselves and the political system. Also, in this perspective political violence is not an intrinsic feature of certain groups or the inexorable product of social structures, but is a contested strategic option that can be perceived as palatable or even inevitable according to changing temporal or spatial circumstances. The ultimate contribution of the social movement approach, and we hope of this volume, is to illuminate how these messy and contradictory processes can unfold and inform contentious politics in Northern Ireland, as well as other intricate divided political contexts.

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