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ONE STATE OR TWO? ANTICIPATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR AND OBSTACLES TO IDENTITY SHIFT

Introduction

Institutions and constitutions are only as good as the way they function. Communal coordination patterns can 'convert' formally democratic institutions into instruments of ethno-religious dominance, or institutionalised ethno-religious quotas into ways of overcoming divisions. Does a two-state settlement in Israel/Palestine eternalise division, or create the high fences that make for good neighbours? Does a one-state settlement allow a blurring of boundaries or will it re-ignite conflict and violence? Much of the literature on appropriate forms of constitutional and institutional settlements (in Israel/Palestine and more generally) focuses on security safeguards, protection of rights and fair distribution of resources (cultural, political and economic). But there is another set of issues which arise even when institutions meet the best security, rights and equality standards. How will those institutions be taken by the once-opposed populations? Will they encourage individuals to move away from oppositional understandings, particularistic values, identities which demean their opponents? If not, the best of institutions can reproduce conflict, and the implementation of the best of agreements be delayed until it is too late. My paper focuses on the ways in which institutional change promotes or hinders processes of identity-shift (including change of understandings and values associated with ethno-national and ethno-religious distinction).

The case looked at in most detail in this paper is not contemporary Israel-Palestine but contemporary Northern Ireland. Despite the very different international and regional context, the Northern Ireland provides a useful comparison and model for discussion of settlement in Israel/Palestine. First, the seeming clarity of the 'national' conflict in each case disguises the ethno-religious and political diversity and complexity within each of the opposed populations, and thus the potential for identity shift, is comparable. Second, the history of the Northern Ireland conflict gives us a number of comparisons to look at the impact of institutions and states on community relations and perceptions. The very creation of Northern Ireland in 1921 was part of a two-state settlement of the Irish problem by partition which gave one of the states to the Catholic majority on the island and the other to the Protestant majority in the North-east, with significant minorities of respectively Protestants and Catholics in each of the new states. The very existence of Northern Ireland created incentives for the ruling Protestant Unionist party to deepen already substantial inequalities between Protestant and Catholic populations. The major violent conflict to which this eventually led in Northern Ireland was finally, in 1998, settled in a manner which has aspects of a one state settlement (Protestants and Catholics, unionists and nationalists co-govern on the basis of equality in Northern Ireland) and aspects of a two state settlement

(the 1920 partition of the island remains, but the role of the British and Irish states in Northern Ireland is reconfigured, and there are clear democratic procedures whereby unification could occur).

I hope in my case study to identify the institutional incentives and obstacles to change away from opposition, and in this way to move to a general assessment of the opportunities and dangers of each type of settlement.

The Northern Ireland case

One can usefully analyse the origins of the Northern Ireland conflict in three temporally distinct phases: the first begins with 17th century plantation and subsequent augmentation of the new power relations, the second begins with late19th-early 20th century nationalist mobilization and state formation, the third begins with the civil rights mobilization and subsequent movement to violent conflict in the late 1960s-early 1970s. Each originating phase creates a particular socio-structural context that defines a set of protagonists with conflicting interests, more or less defined aims, and a given temporality of conflict. While it was possible that the later phases could have radically changed, indeed undone, the form of conflict set in place with plantation, the tendency at each new phase was instead to further specify, define and intensify the earlier patterns of conflict. In each phase a particular definition of conflict is 'locked in' in a path-dependent way: if the 17th century locks in a communal conflict, the creation of Northern Ireland superimposes upon it a national and nation-state form of conflict, and the crisis of the 1969-72 sets in place an intensely violent struggle in the name of conflicting nationalisms.[1] Each phase sets a structural level of conflict: the earlier communal struggle does not go away but remains the base and everyday level of a conflict which may be fought in the name of nationalism but which is motivated by a much wider range of interests and values.

The period since 1998 can be seen as a fourth phase, this time a phase of settlement which begins to undo the patterns of previous phases. It ends the recent phase of violence, and does this by re-casting the state-form set in place in 1921, and by impacting more unevenly – but significantly, particularly through equalization policies which have been seriously underway since 1989 - on the structural relations between the communities, their identities aims and antagonisms, that are the product of a longer history.

In what follows I look at the two phases which are most relevant to the questions set for this conference. First, I give an overview of 'phase 2', when a two-state solution to the historic British-Irish conflict was set in place with partition in 1920. Second I look at 'phase 4' when a fairer settlement within the 2-state frame is implemented. Phase 4 can also, from another angle, be seen as a 'one-state' egalitarian settlement within Northern Ireland.

The partition settlement of 1920: A two state solution and the generation of a structural bind

The partition settlement of 1920, set in place with the formation of Northern Ireland in 1921, was based on underlying social and religious divisions, but it was not determined by them. The deep ethno-religious divisions within Ireland, and particularly within the North East, laid down with plantation (colonization and dispossession) in the seventeenth century continued to generate local communal conflict of varying local intensity right through the nineteenth century in Ulster.[2] But those local divisions were given wider political relevance by the role of the English/British state in guaranteeing the position of the Protestants, despite recurrent and lost historic opportunities to break the pattern.[3] A politicization of the divisions on nationalist/unionist lines in the late nineteenth century was validated by the state. [4] As mobilization against and for the third home rule bill proceeded in the early twentieth century, ethnic, religious and political distinctions were forged into a coincidence.[5] Ulster unionists, homogenously Protestant, won a partition settlement which institutionalized their local demographic dominance (as two thirds of the population) in six of the thirty two counties of Ireland by giving that region devolved status within the United Kingdom. That settlement was imposed by the British state on Irish nationalists, who were given the remaining twenty six counties, 80% Catholic, which became the Irish Free State (within the empire) and later a republic.[6] This fell far short of nationalist aspirations: nonetheless it was just enough to detach Irish political leaders and populace from practical concern over Northern Ireland, their primary interests remaining in their own territory.

Partition – the two state solution – provided a state for each ethno-religious-national group and each state was used to dig division deeper, in nation-building enterprises, in institutionalising confessionalism, and – in the North – in using state resources clientelistically to secure Protestant unity.[7] That there was discrimination and increasing communal inequality in Northern Ireland between 1921 and 1972 is well attested.[8] What needs to be recognized is that there were systemic institutional incentives for this in the two state solution. From the formation of Northern Ireland in 1921, only Protestants and unionists could be relied upon to defend the state.[9] The threat to that state was not primarily a product of nationalist size, strength or organisation, inside or outside Northern Ireland. It was a theoretical threat based on the *possibility* of constitutional change, given that the settlement had been enforced on a minority inside and majority outside and on the uncertainty of the British alliance. The form of settlement meant that no amount of detachment from the South or weakness of Catholics in Northern Ireland would reassure unionists. Unionists therefore relied on themselves to defend the state, excluding those of more uncertain political loyalty : the more they they pulled together to defend it, the easier it was to see the state as simply another resource for Protestant interests. A structural bind, whereby the Protestant quest for security precluded equality for Catholics, thus reproducing nationalist opposition and unionist solidarity, was built into the new state. It became extremely difficult for unionist leaders – even the liberal ones – to

conceive of what was necessary to secure nationalist acquiescence and those few who did were marginalised or defeated.[10]

Partition also had another effect. It massively increased the importance of sovereignty in Northern Ireland. With another state in the archipelago, British sovereignty became much more important than before, and its importance was more deeply felt in Northern Ireland, where it was challenged, than elsewhere in the United Kingdom. Unionists needed the British state to protect them against a Catholic dominated society in the South, and they identified with the British state for a whole range of reasons – economic, religious, moral – which are not reducible simply to ethnic origin or national solidarity.[11]

This two-state solution worked in Northern Ireland while Northern Catholics were acquiescent, and while they focused their own activities around church and church-centred activities (Catholic controlled schools and hospitals, Gaelic games, drama and cultural activities in the church hall, cultural nationalism). It broke down not because of nationalism but because Catholics (and some Protestants) mobilized for equality in Northern Ireland. This provoked divisions between unionist liberals (at the time the majority in government and in the Protestant population) and unionist ultras (with strong presence as party activists and in the security forces).[12] The unionist government strove to keep the unionist alliance – the fatal flaw built into the institutions of party and state. In the process it radicalized civil rights supporters into nationalists and republicans, and in the end it lost control even of its own ultra supporters. If the British army had not intervened at unionist behest in August 1969, there would likely have been a re-partition with even more massive population movements and deaths than occurred in 1969-70.[13]

The point is that there was significant moderation, and willingness to compromise on reform, among both Protestant and Catholic populations and leaders. However this was to no effect because of the institutional incentives in the situation: to act on this willingness unionists had to put into danger the alliance on which their state was built, or nationalists to trust that alliance, which very few were willing to do.

The violence which followed hardened political demands and also attitudes.[14] But throughout the period of violence both ordinary people and politicians contemplated compromise, rethought attitudes and identities. Change was not blocked solely by 'ethnic entrepreneurs' but by ordinary people themselves who realized that they were still caught in a structural bind. Violence intensified it, but did not create it. There was absolutely no sign that political restructuring sufficient to give equality to nationalists, including some path to constitutional change, and security to unionists, would have come without pressure.

The Good Friday Agreement of 1998: Loosening the structural bind

The period from 1985 to 1998 saw a decisive movement by the Irish and British states to restructure Northern Ireland so as to provide the framework

for a settlement which would resolve political stalemate and end violent conflict.[15] The specific provisions of the different agreements, from the Anglo Irish Agreement of 1985 to the Good Friday Agreement of 1998, have been discussed elsewhere.[16]   Many strands of negotiations and processes of change were engaged in to draw republicans into talks, to map out an institutional frame of settlement, to broker a cease-fire and end to war, to create an arena for multi-party talks and broker a settlement, and later to implement it.[17] In terms of the historical stages sketched above, we can define three main processes: a 'peace process' which led to an end to the violent conflict which characterized the period from 1969 (involving *inter alia* the opening of contacts, the brokering of cease-fire, the finding of a way to achieve decommissioning, demilitarization, release of prisoners, reform of policing and criminal justice and integration of militants into the political process); a 'constitutional' or British-Irish process, which involved a revision of the partition settlement, a movement from the two state model to a more multi-levelled and multi-located form of governance which left the constitutional future open; a restructuring process which involved a repositioning of the British state with respect to the communities and a radical equalization of the communities, which changed some of the conditions of the much older pattern of ethno-religious conflict. While interrelated, each process has its own logic. In what follows, I will discuss only the constitutional and the restructuring processes and their effects on popular attitudes and identifications.[18]

The constitutional process began slowly with the Anglo-Irish Agreement of 1985 which gave the Irish government a role 'less than executive, more than consultative' in the governance of Northern Ireland. This gave nationalists in Northern Ireland an additional channel of participation and voice (through a reconstitution of the island-wide nationalist alliance led by the Irish government) and stimulated the restructuring process discussed below. It also had a 'wedge' effect. Through its very small breach in the principle of British sovereignty over Northern Ireland it opened the way for more creative models of governance (and of international brokerage) in the coming decade. It would be further developed in the complex governance structure outlined in the Good Friday Agreement of 1998, with its internal Northern Ireland Assembly, North-South Council and implementation bodies, and British-Irish intergovernmental conference (a continuation with minor changes of the Anglo-Irish conference) and British-Irish Council.[19] In particular, it allowed the creation of exemplary forms of North-South institutions which, although relatively minor in terms of funding and actual achievement,[20] were a major step in modeling how integration on the island of Ireland might proceed and in creating an official culture open to integration. It brought a promise (yet fully to be achieved) of harmonization of equality measures and rights in both jurisdictions, and provided constitutional recognition of those who wished to be Irish or British or both. This limited movement was less than nationalists had desired, but it was seen by the Irish government as a preparatory step to ensure that – should there be a vote for Irish unity – it could be brought about smoothly and without disruption.[21] At the same time, the mapping of a possible path to Irish unity allowed a constitutional guarantee – by both governments and all parties – that there would be a change from British to

Irish sovereignty when and only when it was so voted by a majority in each jurisdiction on the island

This (i) opened way to future change, thus part-satisfying nationalism, while ensuring that that change would only be by majority consent in Northern Ireland, thus giving unionists a level of security. (ii) it gave nationalists new avenues for influence on policy (iii) it changed the character of the state and of sovereignty, not formally, but in terms of what it meant. British sovereignty in Northern Ireland became an increasingly formal concept and did not mean that Northern Ireland would be governed as the rest of the United Kingdom (iv) it gave a gradualist route to Irish integration, through the layering effect of the new North-South institutions. This is not yet serious North-South economic, educational or social integration, but it could become so were unionists to participate wholeheartedly in the institutions (to date the DUP have attempted to avoid them).

Part of the effects of this have been a stabilization of constitutional preferences among Catholics and nationalists (see Figure One), together with a greater sense among Protestants that they could live with a democratically achieved united Ireland.[22] Unionist security was much increased when the 2001 census showed only a slight increase in the percentage of Catholics in Northern Ireland (to 44%). Given the divided constitutional preferences among Catholics in Northern Ireland (about a half say they want a united Ireland, and about 20% want the UK) in effect this meant that Irish unity would only come about in the middle term if a section of Protestants voted for it.

FIGURE One: Constitutional preferences of Catholics in Northern Ireland
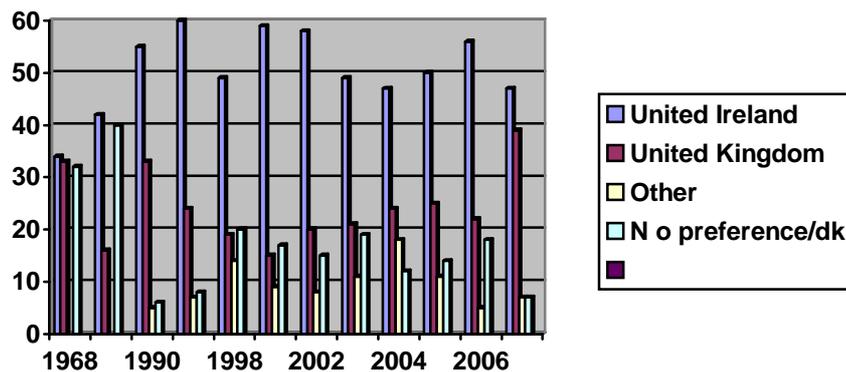
Sources: Rose, 1971; Smith and Chambers, 1991; Social Attitudes Surveys; Life and Times surveys.

The restructuring process had a different logic systematically and with increasing intensity against strong unionist protest from 1985. From the Fair

Employment Act of 1989 to the Northern Ireland Act of 1998, increasingly strong fair employment legislation was put in place which had a very significant effect, as shown in the overall Catholic position (see table one below).[23] Worrying inequalities remained: Catholics remained significantly more likely to be unemployed than Protestants, and were disproportionately present in the most marginalized quarter of the population.[24] But economic inequality was no longer prioritized on the republican or nationalist political agendas: it was believed to be substantively achieved.

TABLE One: Catholic position 1970s – 2000s[25]

	1970s	**2000s**
Catholic percentage of population	36.8%	44%
Catholic % of professional employment	14	43
Catholic % of managerial employment (men)	16	39
Unemployment differential Catholic/Protestant	2.5	2.3
Catholic % of top 250 civil service jobs	8.2	31.8
% Catholics in third level education	27.4	46.2
Belief (% of Catholic respondents) that Catholics are discriminated against	74	15[26]
Belief (% of Catholics) that their culture is unprotected	N/A	9

In addition, numerous other areas of equalisation were successfully pursued : Nationalist symbolism was given rights equivalent to unionist in the public realm, and subject to equal restraints. Now nationalist areas of Northern Ireland like Newry have bilingual (Irish-English) road signs. Meanwhile Orange marches were quite severely restricted, both in their paths of march and in the tunes and songs that could be played. Measures to promote the Irish

language (and Ulster Scots) are in place in education, and facilities for simultaneous translation are available in the Assembly. Once again, this does not constitute full cultural equality : courts have found against Sinn Féin's argument that the British flag should not be flown on public buildings. But it constitutes very significant movement towards such equality. Equality was also assured in political instiutitons, in the equal rights of each of the self-designated unionist and nationalist voting blocs in the Assembly to veto (by parallel consent or weighted majority voting) contentious legislation, and in the equal powers of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (initially voted by parallel consent of unionists and nationalists). The symbolically as well as politically significant integration of republicans – once 'terrorists' and 'outcasts' – into government at all levels should also be noted. In addition institutions at the core of unionist and Protestant power have been thoroughly reformed, most notably the police service and criminal justice system.

All of this has very radically changed the shape of Northern Ireland. Brian Feeney wrote that even moderate nationalists in the SDLP would only sign up to the new Northern Ireland if it were no longer Northern Ireland[27] . Unionist Peter Weir complained that the 'dimmer switch' was constantly being applied to Britishness.[28] If, constitutionally, this remains Northern Ireland under British sovereignty, politically and experientially, it is a Northern Ireland as much open to and ruled by nationalists as by unionists. It is a different sort of state in which unionists are no longer comfortable and nationalists are no longer uncomfortable.

Restructuring and identity change

Restructuring has produced quite radical shifts in attitudes and identities, although it remains an open question whether or not the political structures are optimal to encourage and allow these to be expressed. [29]

In 2003 (the last time the question was asked in the Life and Times surveys) only about 15% of Catholics thought Protestants were treated better than themselves.[30] The mood of the Catholic public has been described as 'buoyant'[31] This has been correlated with an increasing assertion of Irish identity particularly among the young.[32] But the wider values and aims associated with the assertion of Irish identity have changed. The desire for a united Ireland has declined over ten years even while the Sinn Féin vote has risen (see figure one above). The political distinction between republicans and nationalists has decreased: now those who vote Sinn Féin may not want a united Ireland, or at least not want one immediately; sons and daughters of 'constitutional nationalists' vote republican without sharing either the social profile or the beliefs of republicans of the 1980s. [33] Nationalists, and young nationalists in particular, have seen the changes as confirming and allowing them to assert their Irish identity, and at the same time freeing them to decide whether or not they actually want constitutional change. This was described by a politically-moderate nationalist in a border town in Northern Ireland, in his late 20s at the time of the interview:

[IN THE PAST IF] 'you were very strongly Irish [IT] almost accredited you supporting the IRA or Republicanism, you know… .. but now I'm much more confident about saying I'm Irish and… proud to say I'm Irish… because there seems to be less attack on that notion of Irishness'… [and he went on]…'

a united Ireland would be great and …… what we realize that, you know, it's… not at any cost… And I think that none of us feel strongly that if it never came about that it would be the worse thing in the world, you know' [34]

TABLE TWO: SELF-REPORTED IDENTITY: NORTHERN IRELAND[35]

	1968	1978	1986	1989	1994	1998	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
British															
Protestant	39	67	65	68	71	67	72	65	75	66	74	65	63	61	
Catholic	15	15	9	10	10	8	9	9	10	8	12	8	11	9	
Irish	20	8	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	3	5	3	4	
Protestant															
Catholic	76	69	61	60	62	65	59	62	62	63	61	60	61	62	
Northern Irish															
Protestant	Not	Not	11	16	15	18	15	19	14	22	17	24	26	27	
Catholic	asked	asked	20	25	28	24	28	23	25	25	25	29	23	23	
Ulster	32	20	14	10	11	10	7	9	6	8	5	5	7	5	
Protestant	5	6	1	2	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	
Catholic															

Meanwhile Catholics are increasingly willing to see a British element in their identity. Table Three marks an *increasing* Catholic acceptance of a British dimension to their identity, a trend confirmed by the community relations identity modules of 1999 and 2007, and by the fact that the respondents themselves believed that their parents would have been much more likely (58%) to say 'Irish only'. [36]

One change is clear from the data: identity packages are significantly more varied than in the past. The cluster of strongly Irish identified republican supporters who want a united Ireland immediately and are deeply alienated from Northern Ireland may still exist, but both Irish identifiers and Sinn Fein supporters now also include individuals with a much wider range of attitudes and aims, thus diffusing the political impact of older cluster. The Catholic population's self-reported identity and views are still sharply contrasted with those of Protestants, but now within the Catholic population it is more difficult to predict politics from identity, or even identity from politics. The one segment where the older dynamic remains is among the most marginalized sections of

the Catholic population some of whom have become recruits for dissident republicans.

Table Three: Some people think of themselves first as British. Others may think of themselves first as Irish. Which, if any, of the following best describes how you see yourself?[37]

	%		
	Catholic	Protestant	No religion
Irish not british	43	0	7
More irish than british	32	4	23
Equally irish and british	14	18	22
More british than irish	4	40	26
British not irish	1	35	14
Other	6	2	8
Don't know	1	0	0

There has been significant change too among Protestants. Half of Protestants, when asked in 2003, thought that Protestants and Catholics were treated equally and only about 10% of Protestants thought that Catholics were treated better than Protestants in Northern Ireland.[38] This marks a striking acceptance of equality measures each of which was initially much disliked by the Protestant population. By the mid 2000s, qualitative research showed many Protestants seeing that change is inevitable, and reprioritising the elements of their identity accordingly. They remain 'British' but British identity for many is becoming increasingly thin, purely official, a political sign rather than a culturally rich identity.[39] The 2007 Life and Times survey (table 3 above) shows only a minority of the Protestant population who see themselves as 'British only'. [40] Young Protestants increasingly opt for a Northern Irish identification.[41] For this wide and internally diverse group of Protestants, a cultural threshold is being crossed, as they opt away from a 'national' notion of Britishness.

At the same time, radical divisions have emerged within the Protestant population between those who do and those who don't feel confident, support the new order, want to make things work. In the early 2000s about a third of Protestants felt their culture unprotected, and felt that they were underdogs.[42] A third of Protestants in 2003 believed equality laws protected Catholics at the expense of Protestants.[43] This minority of Protestants who are deeply unhappy with the new order have used the new norms of equality to justify their protests. The Glenbryn protest against Catholic schoolgirls walking to school, or the Harryville protests against Catholic church attendance were legitimated for protestors by the sense that Protestants were not permitted to

march in Catholic neighbourhoods and so these Catholics should not be permitted to walk near Protestant neighbourhoods.

The restructuring policies and equalization norms have functioned for most people as means to pass threshold after which strict group equality is no longer necessary, and after which change can proceed in more participative fashion. However for a section of Protestants they have produced a reaction, justifying institutions and practices which were in origin supremacist in terms of 'equality of cultural traditions'. Where this 'equality' is not granted, some feel it justifies sectarian violence. What remains unclear is why the norms function differentially.

The trends

What are the trends? In particular, are we moving into a stable or unstable equilibrium in the new egalitarian non-militaristic and constitutionally open Northern Ireland? While one can see a certain stability in the Catholic position (what I have elsewhere categorized as a 'wait and see' nationalism[44]), the Protestant position – judged by qualitative interviews as well as survey data – appears much less stable. Three directions of change can be identified:

A minority of Protestants have moved to a real openness to new cross-border and constitutional possibilities. Some respondents in interviews have become genuinely open-minded, slowly and reflexively getting rid of what they call the 'baggage' or prejudice from the past, and in the process involving themselves in multiple forms of boundary-crossing: these are found in the business community, among radical evangelical Protestants, mixed marriage couples, workers in cross-community organizations.[45] Others have more cautiously opened up to cross-border linkages, or even begun to question if, in the words of Ken Bloomfield, there might be more dignity for unionists in a united Ireland.[46]

Other Protestants have privatized from politics and got on with life. But this option is unstable, particularly in the new Northern Ireland where any local involvement in likely to put them in contact with republicans and nationalists with much clearer political projects, much better able to articulate their interests and gain resources.[47] This has led some to greater segregation and bitterness.

Still others have attempted to compromise, as David Trimble himself did in leading the Ulster Unionist Party into acceptance of the Agreement and into government. But compromise or adaptation is always within limits. Dean Godson describes David Trimble's reaction to the outrageous 'moral equilateralism' of the Pattern Report on policing: '*Patten had misunderstood the nature of the Belfast Agreement. The accord was not about the obliteration of symbols of both communities, as the report had proposed, but their more sensitive use… Patten had not understood that the Agreement was about nationalist Ireland affirming for the first time the legitimacy of Northern Ireland's position within the United Kingdom and determined by the consent principle. This confirmation of Ulster as part of British sovereign territory,*

Trimble reasoned, would inevitably have consequences for symbols, in the police and elsewhere.'[48] In consequence Trimble and the liberal unionists fought police reform. The example of Trimble is repeated in many cases in qualitative interviews: unionists who want to compromise are being pushed farther than they believe they should have to go. In effect, the new Northern Ireland demands a paradigm change in understanding by unionists and relatively few – even of the moderates - have fully made that change.

One option is to retreat into segregrated communities – and segregation has increased significantly in the last decade - and press clientelistically for equal resources. Alternatively marginalized loyalists have attempted to resist. Each option, increasing segregation and resistance, hold out dangers for the future.

The big question is how the British, Irish and Northern Irish governments can stimulate more momentum for change. One of the wild cards is precisely the cross-border one: the increasing permeability of the state border is one way that the antagonistic balance in Northern Ireland itself may be offset, and further change stimulated

Lessons from the Northern Ireland case about two-state and one-state models

This section of the paper is the least developed, and I hope it will be expanded and refined in light of discussion at the conference. In it I attempt to generalize from the Northern Ireland case to the sorts of patterns which accompany one- and two-state models, and the sorts of conditions that allow them to or preclude them from transcending violence and conflict. Of course the security situation and power balance determine the acceptability and likelihood of any settlement. But one of the lessons of Northern Ireland is that when the prospects of an acceptable settlement began to emerge, so too did the possibility of brokering a peace and the prospect of international evening up of power asymmetries that might have prevented a settlement.

The two state model

Northern Ireland between 1921 and 1972 was an example of the imposition of a two state model (partition) on a complexly over-determined ethno-national conflict. By giving each ethno-national movement its own state, partition produced new minorities in each state. The balance of demography and power meant that this led to much more serious problems in Northern Ireland than in the Irish state. In the latter, development proceeded relatively detached from concern about Northern Ireland. In the former, however, a structural bind existed where unionist security was incompatible with nationalist equality: unionists – even the liberals – could not admit (or even see the need for) reform because it threatened the security of the state, and nationalists - in part because equality was so thoroughly denied - remained nationalists.

A two state model in Israel Palestine is likely to face more extreme problems. The position of the Palestinian minority in Israel would remain problematic, if

perhaps somewhat less so than in Northern Ireland as long as they remain a small minority. Still, as in Northern Ireland, if the existence of the state remains at risk, those committed to the state are unlikely to incorporate those whose commitment to it is in question. And the existence of the state is likely to remain at risk unless the two state solution is sufficient to detach those in the new Palestinian state from concern with Israel. Here the economies of Israel/Palestine seem from the outside at least to be less conducive to a two-state solution than the (relatively separate) economies of Ireland and the industrial North-East in the early 20th century. If in Ireland, there was enough prospect of development and independence in the South to make the inequalities between North and South and the presence of a stronger, richer, British neighbour matter little to those in the South, it is not obvious that the same would be the case of a two state solution in Israel/Palestine. Of course in Ireland, even with Southern detachment, unionist insecurity remained. Note that the situation for Palestinians is also significantly more extreme than it was for Irish nationalists in the Irish state: the Irish had lost 'a part of their nation', but not the part they themselves had lived in or particularly identified with. Palestinians lost the land they had lived in, and so the question of the right of return is likely to remain practically (rather than simply theoretically) important unless and until they have adequate life-chances and conditions in their present situation. Thus the economic and political viability of a Palestinian state is an absolutely critical question, even before we begin to talk of the critical political issue of Israeli settlers in 'the occupied territories', or other issues of security in the region.

On the other hand, if an economically and politically viable Palestinian state were to be achieved, then the demands on Israel by Palestinians would radically decrease, thus benefiting Israel and – *per hypothesi* – permitting a radical improvement of position of Palestinian citizens of Israel. At the same time, Palestinians would have the key resource of a state from which to negotiate. The Irish experience shows the importance of a state – even a small and weak one. The constitutional and restructuring processes which permitted settlement in Northern Ireland were driven by the Irish state, and it was Irish diplomacy that brought in the international actors (in particular the US) to guarantee the settlement.[49] If indeed Palestinian state-hood is seen as a way of increasing the power resources of Palestinians, rather than simply as an end in itself, then this should be built into and constrained within a two-state model: for example a range of multi-levelled and located institutions of governance should be outlined from the outset to deal with outstanding issues on an iterative basis. The Irish case gives some examples: an inter-governmental conference where, without impact on sovereignty, each state has input more than consultative but less than executive on issues impinging on minorities in the other state and on common issues of concern (security) with agreement to make 'determined efforts to resolve disagreements'; a regional council with implementation bodies which facilitate agreed modes of cross border cooperation, trade, travel, education, etc; a constitutional agreement not just on rights within the two state model but also on procedures by which the two state model can be changed. By building in agreement on the prospects of future change, some of the dangers of a two-state model can be avoided.

From two states to one? Restructuring the state

Post-1998 Northern Ireland shows how acceptance of a shared state – initially conceived as illegitimate by nationalists – is possible. Two interrelated aspects are key here. The first is that this is not a fully bi-national, joint authority state,[50] it is a state under British sovereignty with agreed procedures which would allow a move to Irish sovereignty in the future, while rights of individuals and groups would be guaranteed equivalent under either sovereignty. For Israel/Palestine, the parallel would be an Israeli state (for greater Israel) that could become a Palestinian state under specified conditions, with no change in the rights of individuals and groups. However a more thoroughly binational, joint-authority Israel/Palestine state might be deemed more appropriate.

The second is that nationalist acceptance of Northern Ireland was premised on a thorough restructuring of power relations and institutions within it, so that it would be 'no longer Northern Ireland'. If we generalize this to the Israel/Palestine, the effect is very radical. It would mean a radical equalization of economic opportunity and condition through Israel, the West Bank and Gaza with strong affirmative action policies and targeted investment in the most deprived areas, and targeted training and education for the most deprived communities. It would require some form of consociational government with some form of weighted voting or bloc vetoes, and joint Palestinian-Israeli government. It would involve public affirmation of parity of esteem through the range of public and educational institutions. It would require a radical restructuring of the security forces so that it 'has the confidence of all parts of the community'. The Northern Ireland case suggests that such a route can pay- off considerably before full equality of condition is reached, and thus the potential dangers of having to enforce ethno-national equality into perpetuity can be bypassed. But dangers remain of clientelist politics, segregation and a pillared society that benefits conservative leaders.

This scenario has Israelis – like unionists – standing to lose not their state but its distinctive character, their advantageous position with respect to regional resources, and – as a by-product – their previous self-understandings. Unionists did not move here voluntarily, even for the sake of peace. They did it because they were pushed by the British government, with threat of worse if they did not move. The result has been much better than they had feared: their state remains, British sovereignty remains, there are more guarantees that they cannot be submerged in a state antipathetic to their values, there is less violence, there are new opportunteis for advance. Unionists have even benefited from equality legislation. That activists and parties who once opposed the move are experiencing its benefits from it is seen in their very calm and moderate reaction to recent dissident republican violence. For Israelis, the benefits of such a scenario would be major: a more secure peace, and a deradicalisation of Palestinian opposition. For Palestinians too, the benefits would be massive both materially and morally. [51] Clearly a number of different quasi-federal situations within a one-state model could apply, with

agreed conditions of movement towards a unitary state or towards a two state model.

What is left out?

The models sketched above purposively ignore violence and power. I purposively left out questions of violence, terrorism, security. Solving those questions in Northern Ireland required the constitutional and restructuring processes, although it also required more. The other factor is power in the region and internationally. The massive power superiority of Israel over any putative Palestine, and its need to maintain a high degree of armament because of instability in the wider region are well known. Equally, the US had a different relation to Northern Ireland (where it acted to even the power imbalance, at times countering the massive power of the UK, acting as a guarantor that republican as well as unionist issues would get onto the political agenda) than it does to Israel/Palestine. Whether the US can change its role, however, depends in part on the actual prospects of a settlement and for this reason, even before real opportunities of change open, it is surely necessary to sketch political models of settlement.

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[1] Joseph Ruane and Jennifer Todd, "Path Dependence in Settlement Processes: Explaining Settlement in Northern Ireland, *Political Studies* vol. 55 no.2 (2007), pp. 442-458.

[2] Frank Wright, *Two Lands on One Soil: Ulster Politics before Home Rule*. (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1996).

[3] There were lost opportunities to win groups of Catholics to the state cause, not just in the 17th century, but also immediately after the Union, when early Catholic emancipation would have forestalled O'Connellite mobilisation. By the later nineteenth century there were opportunities to win groups of Protestants to the Home Rule cause, and to keep Catholics loyal to empire if not to state. Jane Ohlmeyer, 'Colonization within Britain and Ireland', pp. 124-147 in Nicholas Canny, ed., *The Origins of Empire, vol I of the Oxford History of the British Empire,* Oxford University Press, (1998) p. 140-3. James Loughlin, "The Irish Protestant Home Rule Association and nationalist politics, 1886-1893', *Irish Historical Studies* XXIV (1985).

[4] Ian Lustick sees the moment which defined subsequent relations as March 1914 when the British government did not assert its authority over officers in the military camp of the Curragh who refused to march on Ulster,. Ian S. Lustick, *Unsettled States, Disputed Lands: Britain and Ireland, France and Algeria, Israel and the West Bank-Gaza* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), pp. 206-9. There were also earlier choice-points.

[5] Still one of the best accounts is given by Peter Gibbon, *The Origins of Ulster Unionism: The Formation of Popular Protestant Politics and Ideology in Nineteenth Century Ireland* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1975) pp. 112-140.   .

[6] Nicholas Mansergh, *The Unresolved Question: The Anglo-Irish Settlement and its Undoing 1912-1972* (London: Yale University Press, 1991), pp. 115-140, 171-189..

[7] Scholars from different perspectives converge in this judgement. Patrick Buckland, *The Factory of Grievances: Devolved Government in Northern Ireland 1921-39*. (Dublin, Gill and Macmillan, 1979), Paul Bew, Peter Gibbon and Henry Patterson, *Northern Ireland 1921-2001: Political Forces and Social Classes*, (London: Serif, 2002). Graham Walker, *A History of the Ulster Unionist Party: Protest, Pragmatism, Pessimism, (*Manchester: Manchester UP, 2004) for example, pp. 67, 101.

[8] J. H. Whyte, 'How much discrimination was there under the Unionist regime?', in Tom Gallagher and James O'Connell, eds., *Contemporary Irish Studies*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983). Ruane and Todd, Dynamics of Conflict in Northern Ireland, pp. 116-131, 150-157, 178-186.

[9] The structural situation was different in the South, for reasons at once of demographic balance and of ideology.

[10] Walker, *History of the Ulster Unionist Party***,** records only a few cases of dissent and the predominant inertia even of those with liberal convictions in face of sectarian practices, eg pp. 117, 121..

[11] See the study of Belfast Protestant church-goers and their varied reasons for resisting Irish unity in Frederick W. Boal, Margaret C. Keane, David N. Livingstone, *Them and Us ? Attitudinal Variation among Churchgoers in Belfast*, (Belfast, Institute for Irish Studies, 1997), pp. 89-90

[12] If we take O'Neillites as 'liberals' they were a majority of unionists in the 1969 election. If we take a more stringent definition of liberal as those willing to restructure state and party, unionist liberals were certainly a minority. See Andrew Gailey, *Crying in the Wilderness: Jack Sayers A Liberal Editor in Ulster 1939-69* Belfast, Institute of Irish Studies, 1995 . The earliest survey in Northern Ireland, in 1967, has a significant minority of Protestants (over 40%) preferring more contact with the South, Rose's different questions have just over 20% of the Protestant population with this view, and 52% as Ultras. See John Whyte*, Interpreting Northern Ireland*, Oxford: Clarendon, 1991, pp. 77-8. Richard Rose, *Governing Without Consensus,: An Irish Perspective*, London: Faber and Faber, 1972.

[13] John Darby estimates that over 3,500 families were intimidated from their homes in August and September 1969, the large majority Catholic J. Darby, *Intimidation and the Control of Conflict in Northern Ireland*, Gill and Macmillan, 1986, p. 58. On the difficulties of repartition given the intermingling of populations, see Liam Kennedy, 'Two Ulsters: A case for repartition', Belfast, 1986. Some nationalists at the time argued that immediate Irish intervention would have required UN intervention and by thus internationalising the conflict it would have led to a quicker resolution.

[14] See Whyte, *Interpeting Northern Ireland*, pp. 78-93

[15] Ruane and Todd, 'Explaining settlement'.

[16] On the provisions of the Good Friday Agreement, see J. McGarry and B. O'Leary, *The Northern Ireland Conflict: Consociational Engagements. (*Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 260-293

[17] See J. Ruane and J. Todd, eds, *After the Good Friday Agreement: Explaining Political Change in Northern Ireland* (Dublin, UCD Press, 1999); M. J. Bric and J. Coakley (eds.), *From Political Violence to Negotiated Settlement.* Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2004.

[18] This is for reasons of space. The processes discussed here were first motivated by, and later affected by, the changing situation of war and security, they changed political opinion and allowed the negotiation of ceasefire and the changing strategy of republican militants, and and it was in turn only ceasefire and the promise of permanent peace that made possible unionist engagement in the process, while it was the political integration of militants – central to the restructuring process - that very nearly overturned it.

[19] For discussion of the different levels of the Good Friday Agreement see J. Coakley, B. Laffan and J. Todd, (eds.), *Renovation or Revolution: New Territorial Politics in Ireland and the United Kingdom*. (Dublin: UCD Press , 2005)

[20] John Coakley, "The North-South relationship: Implementing the Agreement", pp.110-131   in J. Coakley, B. Laffan and J. Todd, (eds.), *Renovation or Revolution: New Territorial Politics in Ireland and the United Kingdom*. (Dublin: UCD Press , 2005)

[21] As is well known, the original list of North-South implementation bodies provoked unionist rejection in the 1998 negotiations and Bertie Ahern, the Irish Taoiseach (Prime Minister) decided to radically cut the list to secure a deal with the unionists.

[22] Consistently each year since 1998, around half of Protestants say they could live with a united Ireland although they would not like it and a quarter would welcome it (www.ark.ac.uk/nilt politics module, 1998-2007) although in the 1980s well over half predicted violence should there be a united Ireland (Smith and Chambers, 1991, p. 96

[23] For a discussion of the reform process, see B. Osborne and I. Shuttleworth, eds., *Fair Employment in Northern Ireland : A Generation On*. (Belfast : Blackstaff, 2004)

[24] Paddy Hillyard, Demi Patsios and Fiona Semillon, "A daughter to ELSI – NILSI : A Northern Ireland Standard of Living Index or Problematising Wealth in the Analysis of Inequality and Material Well-being "*Social Policy and Society*, 6.1 81-98, 2007

[25] The data summarised here are from different sources and different precise dates: the first three columns from the censuses of 1971 and 2001, the fourth from the 1971 census and 2005 Labour force survey, the fifth from Osborne and Shuttleworth,   , the sixth from Rose (1968) and Life and Times (2003). For the final row , we have not yet found good comparisons for the 2000s data.

[26] 2003 figure of those Catholics who believe that Protestants and Catholics are not treated equally AND that Protestants are treated better than Catholics.

[27] Brian Feeney, opinion column, 22.08.01 Irish News

[28] Reported Irish Times, O3.05.00..

[29] My own view is that the egalitarian form of governance is justified as threshold rather than as steady state, but that requires longer discussion.

[30] Over half thought they were treated equally, and the rest said 'it depends'.

[31] Joanne Hughes'Attitudes towards equality in Northern Ireland: evidence of progress?', pp 166-183 in Bob Osborne and Ian Shuttleworth, eds. , *Fair Employment in Northern Ireland: A generation on.* (Belfast,Blackstaff, 2004 , p. 172.

[32] The Young life and times survey, 2007 has 80% of 16 year olds self-reporting as Irish www.ark.ac.uk/ylt

[33] Republican supporters in the 1970s and 1980s were disproportionately working class and unemployed, and disproportionately likely to want a united Ireland immediately (Ruane and Todd, *Dynamics of Conflict*, pp. 73-4   ).

[34] ITENIBA interview, by N. Rougier

[35] Sources: R. Rose, *Governing Without Consensus: An Irish Perspective* (London: Faber & Faber, 1971): Moxon-Browne, *Nation, Class and Creed in Northern Ireland;* D. J. Smith, *Equality and Inequality in Northern Ireland* (London: Policy Studies Institute, 1987); K. Trew, 'National Identity' in R. Breen, P. Devine and L. Dowds, editors, *Social Attitudes in Northern Ireland: The Fifth Report* (Belfast, Appletree, 1996): 140-52; Life and Times, (Northern Ireland) 1997–2002. Life and Times Survey, website, (community relations module, identity) <http:// http://www.ark.ac.uk/nilt/

[36] Life and Times, identity module, 2007 : the 1999 Life and Times community module which asked respondents if they had a strong or weak sense of British/Irish/Northern Irish identity or none at all) showed a third of Catholic respondents with at least a weak sense of British identity and over 60% none at all.

[37] Life and Times, Identity module, 2007, www.ark.ac.uk/nilt

[38] Most of the rest responded 'it depends'.

[39] C. Mitchell and J. Todd "Between the devil and the deep blue sea. Nationality, power and symbolic trade-offs among evangelical Protestants in Northern Ireland", *Nations and Nationalism*, 13 (4), 2007 ; J. Todd, N. Rougier, T. O'Keefe, L. Canas Bottos, 'Protestants, minorities and the remaking of ethno-religious identity in Ireland', *National Identities*, vol 11, no. 1 2009

[40] This was a clear reduction from the half who saw no Irish element in their identity in 1999, and a perceived change from their parents' attitudes, which respondents estimated at 60% 'British only'.

[41] 42% of 16 year old Protestants in Young Life and Times, 2007 (www.ark.ac.uk/ylt)opted for Northern Irish and 47% for British as self-reported identity, an increase in Northern Irish identification over the 4 years the question was asked.

[42] While initially it was the skilled working class who most opposed the agreement, support fell off quickest among the unskilled, and least among the professional-managerial sector)

[43] A quarter had no views, and almost a third disagreed.

[44] J. Ruane and J. Todd, 'A new Irish nationalism? The significance of the Good Friday Agreement of 1998' pp. 121-145 in J. Ruane, J. Todd and A. Mandeville, eds, *Europe's Old States in the New World Order: The Politics of Transition in Britain France and Spain* (Dublin: UCD Press, 2003).

[45] Gladys Ganiel, *Evangelicalism and Conflict in Northern Ireland.* (New York : Palgrave, 2008) ; Todd et al, 'Protestants, minorities and the remaking of ethno-religious identity'

[46] Kenneth Bloomfield, *A Tragedy of Errors: The Government and Misgovernment of Northern Ireland*, Liverpool U Press, 2007, p. 258. Mitchell and . Todd 'Between the devil and the deep blue sea'.

[47] Rural Community Network (2002) *You'd feel you had no say. Rural Protestants and Community Development.* Cookstown: Rural Community Network

[48] Dean Godson*, Himself Alone: David Trimble and the Ordeal of Unionism* London, Harper Collins, 2004, p. 472.

[49] See Ruane and Todd, *Explaining Settlement*.

[50] This has been proposed on several occasions, for example B. O'Leary, T. Lyne, J. Marshall, B. Rowthorn, *Northern Ireland: Sharing Authority*. London: Institute of Public Policy Research, 1993.

[51] It could even be argued that this model constitutionally squares the circle, giving both the 'right of return' and greater Israel. In parallel to the constitutional squaring of the circle in the Good Friday Agreement (which gives self-determination AND British sovereignty).