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Foreword

The idea for the conference on which this edition is based came from a series of discussions among PhD students from several schools within QUB early in 2014. Although all of us used very different methods and interpreted our data through very different theoretical lens, it was apparent that two common threads existed between our work. All were focused on Northern Ireland, and all involved the curious notion of ‘identity’. A call for papers was distributed widely and the [‘Explorations of Northern Irishness’](#) conference was held in the Riddel Hall on the 12th March 2015. Particular thanks for the work involved on this conference and the manifold logistical planning issues that it entailed go to Julia Andrade Rocha, Owen Fenton, Portia Ellis-Woods and Jonathan Evershed.

Identity research in Northern Ireland is hardly a new thing, and indeed the region is said to be one of the most over-researched. Why then is it still important to look at identity in the region? Even a cursory look at the contemporary political, social and cultural environment of Northern Ireland and its cyclical crises show that identity is still relevant and the old questions that drove past research have still not been answered. This conference did not answer any of these questions in a prescriptive way. Rather its value lay in the variety of disciplinary viewpoints of the issues involved and in the high quality of the work put on display. This special issue came from a selection of papers presented on the day. Together they give a flavour of the diversity of research presented and they importance of continuing work in this field. The authors are worthy of commendation for their hard work and patient editing and reediting. The fruit of their efforts can be clearly seen in this edition.

Finally, thanks go to Ivanka Antova, Carolyn Augspurger, Ben Christman and Owen Fenton for their meticulous editing and copy editing. The final product is a testament to the work of many people over a long period of time. I hope you find the edition as enjoyable and stimulating to read as it was to produce.

Kevin McNicholl (Chief Editor)

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“They have forgotten about us”: Leading change amongst loyalist paramilitary organisations

PATRICK FLACK¹

This article assesses the changing nature of loyalist paramilitary organisations and evaluates the extent to which leaders of these organisations engender support for change within the Protestant working-class community. Since the end of the Troubles,² many former loyalist combatants have taken up new roles in society. Often, these roles claim to positively affect Protestant working-class communities, such as facilitating restorative justice schemes within communities, as well as developing inter-group relationships between Protestants and Catholics. This study investigated why loyalist paramilitaries lack support amongst the Protestant working-class community and why new leaders are emerging from this community. Six focus groups were conducted involving a range of people throughout Belfast and County Down. Drawing on the social identity approach to leadership, it was found that community members felt that loyalist paramilitaries – unlike new loyalist leaders – were not representative of their social identity and did not act to advance the interests of their group. The results advance the notion that to effectively lead a group of followers, leaders must carefully consider the social identity of the group they wish to influence.

¹ Patrick Flack is a PhD student in the School of Psychology at Queen’s University, Belfast. The author would like to thank the organisers of the Northern Irishness conference for the opportunity to present his work, as well as his PhD supervisors Dr Lesley Storey and Dr Mirona Gheorghiu for all their help and expertise. Any errors are the author’s own. The author can be contacted at: pflack01@qub.ac.uk.

² The Troubles in Northern Ireland (late 1960s to 1998) refers to a thirty year violent conflict that was centred on the constitutional status of Northern Ireland. Two of the main protagonists were loyalists, whose goal was for Northern Ireland to remain as part of the United Kingdom, and republicans, whose goal was for Northern Ireland to become part of a United Ireland.

Introduction

Since the Good Friday Agreement, loyalist paramilitary organisations have struggled to adopt a meaningful and positive role in society. Despite their reputation as being solely concerned with criminal activity, loyalist paramilitaries have been involved in some positive enterprises, such as various conflict transformation initiatives (Shirlow 2012). The two main loyalist paramilitary organisations in Northern Ireland are the Ulster Defence Association (UDA) and the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF). These organisations were responsible for killing approximately 983 people during the Troubles, amounting to 27.4% of all Troubles-related fatalities (Smyth and Hamilton 2004). Loyalist paramilitary groups employed this violent strategy in order to combat republican paramilitary activity and maintain Northern Ireland's status as part of the United Kingdom. Since the Good Friday Agreement in 1998, loyalist paramilitary organisations have decommissioned their weapons and have officially stated that they are now adopting a more positive and community-centred role. However, due to the reluctance of some paramilitary members to adopt peaceful roles in society, this process of change has not been straightforward for the organisations; evidenced by a continued participation in organised crime and the willingness to carry out punishment attacks (25th Report of the Independent Monitoring Commission 2010).

Statements from loyalist paramilitary organisations often state how the loyalist community is fractured and lacking unity. For example, *The Loyalist* magazine (2013: 1 - produced by the UDA linked Ulster Political Research Group (UPRG)) stated that, "We (the loyalist community) have never been so divided and this is worrying". If we are to understand the fragmented nature of the loyalist community, it is necessary to explore how leaders within this community mobilise and influence community members to follow their lead and adopt certain actions. In order to analyse the success and failure of loyalist leaders in influencing the community, I will use a social psychology of leadership that is underpinned by the social identity approach (Haslam, Reicher and Platow 2011).

Traditional theories of leadership have tended to focus solely on the leader as an individual, aiming to determine what psychological characteristics and traits make an effective leader. The “great man” theory of leadership (James 1880) epitomises this individualistic focus. The idea behind this theory was that famous leaders such as Abraham Lincoln and Mahatma Gandhi were born with characteristics that furnished them with an ability to lead effectively. Different advocates of this idea have stressed the importance of different characteristics. For instance, Socrates stated that quickness of learning, good memory, shrewdness, as well as physical presence and prowess, were among the characteristics needed to be an effective leader (Plato 2001). In contemporary psychology, ‘charisma’ is the trait that has received most attention. The term encapsulates the ‘special gift’ that leaders purportedly possess, enabling them to mobilise and lead a group of followers (Marturano and Arsenault 2008). As a result of these in-built traits that leaders allegedly possess, they are able to dominate followers and inject them with a willpower and enthusiasm that they would otherwise lack (Reicher, Haslam and Platow 2007).

However, it has been found – through extensive reviews – that the relationship between personality traits and leadership is weak (Mann 1959; Stogdill 1948). Haslam *et al.* (2011) claim that the theoretical deficiency with these individualistic models of leadership is that they paint a very static picture of the leadership process and fail to account for the fluid nature of leadership across time and space. Weisberg (2004) uses the example of George Bush to show how leaders can change as their context varies. During his time as President of the United States of America, Bush’s intelligence and verbal skills were questioned on various occasions, due to his grammatical errors, his invention of nonsensical words and his tendency to say the opposite of what he intended. However, as Weisberg notes, Bush has an excellent memory for baseball batting averages and other figures that matter to him; “Bush may not have been born stupid, but he has achieved stupidity, and now he wears it as a badge of honor” (2004: para 7). Individualistic and decontextualised theories of leadership are not capable of accounting for this changing nature of Bush’s intelligence and verbal skills. The theory that I will now outline can account for why Bush claimed stupidity as a “badge of honor”.

New Psychology of Leadership

Recently, a new understanding of leadership has emerged, one that not only studies the individual leader but also takes into account the identity of followers and the social factors that are contingent on leadership. Proponents of this theory are unconvinced by previous theories of leadership and therefore adopt a more 'bottom-up' definition of leadership: "Leadership, for us, is not simply about getting people to do things. It is about getting them to *want* to do things... It is about achieving influence, not securing compliance" (Haslam *et al.* 2011: x). Haslam and colleagues stress that for leaders to be effective, they must carefully manage their relationship with followers (hence the bottom-up approach). This interplay between leaders and followers emphasises the need to have an understanding of group psychology. Therefore, this article will draw on the social identity approach and subsequent new psychology of leadership (Haslam *et al.* 2011; Tajfel and Turner 1979).

Henri Tajfel and John Turner formulated social identity theory in the 1970s to account for the part of a person's self-concept that is defined by their group membership. Social identity allows people to act together as a group; this could be as Manchester United fans, Catholics, or academics; this sense of social identity makes collective action possible and is highly valued by group members (Reicher *et al.* 2007). Jenkins (2008) states that group membership is useful for an individual, as it allows self-evaluation, provides an indication of appropriate behaviours and fosters self-esteem. Although Tajfel and Turner did not apply social identity theory specifically to leadership, the approach helps us realise how important it is for leaders to represent the group as a whole. As Adair (2008) claims, the most important word that a leader should use is "we" and the least important is "I"; the social identity approach allows us to understand how leaders negotiate this sense of "we-ness". The influential BBC Prison Study (Haslam and Reicher 2005) demonstrated the vital role that social identity has in leadership. In this study, participants were randomly assigned to the roles of prisoners or guards. The researchers found that meaningful and effective leadership was shown by the prisoners but not the guards; this was because only the prisoners possessed a sense of social identity which was strengthened by their collective goal to resist the guards' authority (Reicher *et al.*

2007). The guards did not acquire an effective leadership structure as they lacked a sense of common identity – this lack of a shared sense of social identity meant that the most basic structures, such as work shifts, could not be implemented as the guards did not trust each other and found it hard to reach agreements.

As leadership can be viewed as social identity management, Haslam *et al.* (2011) identify four components of identity leadership that determine its effectiveness: Identity Prototypicality, Identity Advancement, Identity Entrepreneurship and Identity Impresarioship. For the purposes of this short article, only the two components of this theory which are applied to the current study are outlined. These two components are particularly effective at explaining the leadership and identity dynamics that are relevant to the current study.

Identity Prototypicality: “Being one of us”

Successful leaders are able to effectively represent the shared social identity of the group. In other words, they are prototypical of this group and help to differentiate the in-group from rival out-groups. A leader’s personality traits and actions that are desired by the culture of one group will be different to those valued by another group. Ineffective leadership is often a result of leaders setting themselves apart from the group. Being prototypical of the group and being perceived as ‘one of the gang’ can be illustrated by returning to the example of George Bush. As journalists have noted, when he includes ungrammatical and incoherent “Bushisms” in his speeches, Bush connects with Middle America (Drum 2004; Weisburg 2007) – the image of an ‘ordinary man’ who is prone to making verbal mistakes, and forms identifications with the general public. Indeed, other politicians who attack his imperfect language are prone to distancing themselves from the general public by representing themselves as high-brow intellectuals who have little in common with the ordinary American citizen. As Reicher *et al.* (2007) note, prototypicality can even be increased by adopting a certain dress sense; Bush’s image as a regular guy is strengthened by wearing leather jackets and cowboy attire. Traditional theories of leadership (e.g. ‘great man’ (James 1880)) invariably stated that intelligence was a necessary trait for an effective leader. In some contexts however, group members value traits such as

trustworthiness and a down-to-earth attitude more than intelligence. A study by Turner and Haslam (2001) found that when an out-group had an intelligent leader, in-group members preferred an unintelligent leader who was considerate and dedicated. Studies like this show that there is not one unique profile that defines an effective leader; instead, group members value leadership traits that both represent the group and differentiate the group from rivals.

Identity Advancement: “Doing it for us”

Merely being seen as ‘one of us’ is not enough to achieve maximum effectiveness, leaders will also need to be perceived by group members as ‘doing it for us’. This can be achieved by promoting the shared interests of the group in question, as opposed to prioritising selfish interests or the interests of rival out-groups (Steffens *et al.* 2014). Steffens *et al.* (2014: 1004) note that for leaders to promote the social identity of the group, they must be perceived as “contributing to the realization of group goals” and “acting to prevent group failures”. Therefore, this component is focused on how leaders act, as opposed to who they are. The issue of fairness – and what group members define as fair – illustrates this component persuasively. If a leader understands the content of their group’s social identity, they will be aware of what constitutes fairness. For instance, favouritism within a group is usually very dangerous for a leader, but favouring the in-group over an out-group is often desired by group members. Platow *et al.* (1997) carried out a study in New Zealand and found that people supported a health board CEO who equally allocated time on a kidney dialysis machine between two fellow New Zealanders. However, when the CEO had to divide time between a New Zealander and a foreigner, participants preferred the leader who allocated less time to the foreigner and more time to the in-group member. This is not to say that all groups value leaders who are biased towards the in-group. The content of some social identities means that group members value unbiased treatment of all groups; this explains why some organisations protest for the equal rights of minority groups. Again, this component shows that there is a need for fluid theories of leadership, whereby different leaders are desired in different groups, and desired leadership traits can change depending on the social context.

Method

Six focus groups were carried out with members of the Protestant working-class community. All 36 participants self-identified as Protestant working-class. 20 of these participants were male and 16 were female, ages ranged from 18 to 67. Participants from traditionally working-class areas were chosen as these are the areas that have the strongest and most visible presence of paramilitary organisations. Focus groups took place in North Belfast and West Belfast. These particular areas were chosen because they have a strong paramilitary presence and both contain a number of community groups who were reasonably accessible to researchers. Data was collected between November 2014 and March 2015. Initially, a search of community groups in North and West Belfast was conducted, and the researcher then approached a number of these groups and asked if they would be interested in participating; all groups who showed an interest in taking part in the research met with the research team, and all aspects of the study were discussed and considered. During the focus groups, participants were asked to discuss the topic of loyalist paramilitary organisations, and post-conflict loyalism in general. Ethical approval was granted before data collection took place.

After transcription of the focus groups, all discussion relating to leadership was analysed using thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke 2006). Thematic analysis has been defined as "a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns within data" (Braun and Clarke 2006: 79). As the loyalist community are an under-researched group, thematic analysis was chosen due to its proficiency and flexibility in organising and making sense of a large data set. The researcher familiarised himself with the data through repeatedly reading the transcripts. Initial codes from the transcripts were then generated. Codes were used by the researcher to actively generate themes. These themes were all directly relevant to the research question; the identification of themes was based on the assertion that "a theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set" (Braun and Clarke 2006: 82). Themes were defined and then reviewed in relation to how they each made a unique contribution towards a coherent narrative.

Results

This article now discusses how the two components outlined in the introduction were illustrated in the focus groups.

Identity Prototypicality

The following extract was recorded in a focus group when participants talked about the current UDA leadership in their area:

One of the top men in the UDA said that the 12th of July was the worst day of his year. Those are the sort of men who are supposed to be representing us. For any loyalist, it should be one of the favourite days of his year (Participant 1).

Participant 1 perceives the current UDA leadership as not acting in ways that conform to the social identity of a loyalist. Participant 2 agreed with this respondent by making statements such as “how can anyone be a loyalist and hate the 12th?” So, despite the UDA claiming to be a loyalist group who represent the loyalist community, their leadership potential is compromised by their not acting in ways that are prototypical of the group they purport to represent.

Another UDA leader’s prototypicality is questioned by Participant 3:

A certain UDA leader who is supposed to represent the people in this particular community doesn’t even live here. He now lives about ten miles away. Surely he should live within the community with us.

Participant 3 implies that a leader who is physically distant from the group cannot expect to lead and be representative of that group. The participants in this focus group also felt that they were “under constant attack from republicans”. This perception has two effects. Firstly, this makes it even more unacceptable that someone who claims to lead the community has moved out – the leader has effectively left the community to

defend for themselves. Secondly, as this community has a sense of being *collectively* threatened, they want a leader who shares this collective feeling and will help to defend against it. By relocating, this leader does not share this feeling with the group and can therefore be perceived as not prototypical of the group.

Participant 4 is speaking in a focus group that is considering the flag protests:

When we were out protesting, some paramilitaries were telling us to get off the ground. That is completely unacceptable. As loyalists, we had a right to be there. They should have been supporting and taking part in the protests, not trying to stop them.

This quote by Participant 4 is illustrative of the sort of actions that community members believe loyalists *should* be involved in. Again, as loyalist paramilitaries are not endorsing these preferred actions, they are not prototypical of the group. The majority of focus group participants supported the flag protests and simultaneously felt that mainstream loyalist paramilitary organisations opposed the flag protests. As a result of this, there emerged from the loyalist community new leaders and new groups who endorsed the protests and provided some structure to their activities.

Identity Advancement

Following on from Extract 3 – which demonstrated that paramilitaries who do not support the flag protests are not ‘one of us’ – an extract from Participant 5 shows how leaders who emerged during these protests were not only seen as ‘one of us’, but were also instrumental in advancing the interests of the group:

Paramilitaries here don't seem to value loyalist culture, but other men – who I'm sure you've seen in the news – do. They seem to care about our flag and want to protect our proud culture...they also expose republicanism for what it really is.

This quotation from Participant 5 shows that by taking actions that advance and protect the values of the loyalist community, emergent leaders are acting in the interests of the group and therefore gaining support from followers. Participant 5 also talks about the ways in which the out-group (republicanism) is perceived by emergent leaders. By stating that they "expose republicanism", they are referring to how these new leaders constantly criticise republicans and point out their "evil" ways; this is in contrast to Participant 5's comments about paramilitary leaders:

Paramilitaries don't do anything for us anymore. They are more interested in keeping all their republican friends happy, they have forgotten about us. You see them shaking hands with republicans and all.

Unlike new leaders who place a lot of emphasis on sullyng the name of republicans, Participant 5 claims that paramilitary leaders – who now have a more amicable relationship with senior republicans – are more alienated from the community they claim to represent. The previous two quotes from Participant 5 illustrate how he views these two sets of leaders as having striking differences; whilst new leaders involved in flag protests are keen to highlight the negative intent of republicanism, paramilitaries in his area are engaging in cordial dialogue with senior republicans. It is clear that many focus group respondents value in-group favouritism and, therefore, the leader who shows both in-group favouritism and out-group derogation will be more effective in influencing followers.

Mainstream elements of loyalist paramilitaries claim to have a more "progressive" role in society today, evidenced by their engagement in cross-community peace-building initiatives. However, the Protestant working-class community do not feel that they benefit from these activities, as illustrated by Participant 6:

Our culture is being eroded and the republican community is getting everything they ask for. At the same time, our paramilitaries are trying to build relationships between communities. I think they should sort their own community out first.

Conclusion

Evidence from the results section supports previous research which demonstrates that social identity has important consequences for leadership (Haslam and Reicher 2007; Haslam *et al.* 2011; Hogg 2001). In concordance with 'the new psychology of leadership' (Haslam *et al.* 2011), leadership effectiveness within loyalism is affected by the extent to which leaders are seen as prototypical of the group they wish to lead and the extent to which they advance the interests and social identity of the group in question.

Among the progressive elements of loyalist paramilitary organisations, there is a desire to develop loyalist ex-combatants into what Habermas (1992) called 'responsible participants' and to participate in various conflict transformation initiatives. These have involved former loyalist combatants developing cross-community groups to prevent interface violence and working with republicans to promote shared history (Shirlow 2012). However, as some former loyalist combatants leave behind a paramilitary lifestyle, characterised by an active and violent role in conflict, in favour of a peaceful and transformative role in a post-conflict society, community leadership problems become prevalent. These transformative roles have involved working alongside their republican counterparts Sinn Fein and developing cross-community projects (Bean 2010). Although Protestant working-class community members generally acknowledge that conflict transformation initiatives are positive and worthwhile, there is a perception that these initiatives have "left loyalist communities behind" (Participant 4). In North Belfast, where there has recently been a loyalist feud concerning the UDA leadership (Erwin 2014), a focus group respondent said that "all those initiatives came too soon and moved too fast for this community" (Participant 6). Therefore, as many community members felt their culture was under threat, paramilitary leaders in their area were concerned with other issues that did not coincide with the community's feelings.

If attempts by loyalist paramilitary organisations to implement positive change³ are to be effective and supported by the loyalist community, leaders of change must consider the social identity of their own community and ensure changes contribute to the realisation of the community's goals. It is through the neglect of the loyalist community's goals and values that mainstream elements of loyalist paramilitaries have lost some community support to new and emerging loyalist leaders who seemingly stand up for the social identity that the community shares.

As this study has focused solely on traditionally working-class communities, future research could look outside of traditionally working-class communities and investigate the support or opposition that loyalist leaders elicit from other sections within the PUL (Protestant Unionist Loyalist) community. Although focus groups are very useful in gaining rich data from a number of different community members simultaneously and investigating group dynamics, there are some limitations to this approach. For instance, participants may construct their responses in ways that simply function to please other group members or the researcher and do not reflect their honest beliefs. Participants may also be unwilling to reveal information on sensitive issues such as the discussion of paramilitary groups and therefore be unwilling to diverge too far from the consensus of the group (Wilkinson and Birmingham 2003).

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³ Positive change is synonymous with 'transformative loyalism' and 'progressive loyalism', whereby cross-community initiatives and peaceful means of community development are seen as having positive effects.

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By our tongues united? Irish and Scots language contact in rural Ulster

RACHEL HANNA¹

This article suggests that the impact of long-term language contact between the languages of Irish, Scots and English in the province of Ulster led to a hybridisation of accent which challenges traditional ethnolinguistic differentiations - namely, the myth that Catholics and Protestants can be differentiated by their accent. The digitisation of archive recordings from the Tape Recorded Survey of Hiberno-English (TRSHE) permitted a detailed phonetic analysis of two speakers from Atticall, a rural townland in the Mourne Mountains with a unique geographical and linguistic setting, due to the close proximity of Ulster Scots and Irish speakers in the area. Phonological features associated with Irish, Northern English and Lowland Scots were garnered from previous dialectological research in Irish, English and Scots phonologies, which aided with the interpretation of the data. Other contemporaneous recordings from the TRSHE allowed further comparison of phonological features with areas of Ulster in which linguistic interaction between Scots and Irish was expected to be less prevalent, such as Arranmore, Donegal (primarily Irish) and Glarryford, Antrim (primarily Scots). Accommodation theory and substrate/superstrate interaction illuminate patterns of phonological transfer in Mourne, Arranmore and Glarryford English, supporting the conclusion that accent in contemporary Northern Ireland is built upon a linguistic heritage of contact and exchange, rather than political or ethnolinguistic division.

¹ Rachel Hanna is a PhD student in the School of English at Queen's University, Belfast. The author would like to thank the organisers of the Northern Irishness conference for the opportunity to present her work, as well as her Masters dissertation supervisor Dr. Joan Rahilly for all of her help and expertise. Any errors are the author's own. The author can be contacted at: rhanna21@qub.ac.uk.

Introduction

There is a perception that speech and accent, like much else in the province of Ulster, have been shaped by the political and religious conflicts that have characterised its recent history (Todd 1984). However, the concept of using language as an ethnolinguistic divider or politicised tool seems to be a rather new phenomenon in Northern Ireland. In ongoing policy wars, Catholic nationalists advocate for Irish language provision, whilst Protestant unionists position Ulster Scots as a ‘language’ in its own right. Instead of indulging in debates on the status of Ulster Scots as either language or dialect, this article argues that in contemporary Northern Ireland, phonological similarities amongst speakers from Catholic and Protestant backgrounds subvert political divides. Developmental contact between speakers of English, Irish and Scots languages predates periods of conflict and continues to shape speech varieties today. Despite perceptions of linguistic division in Northern Ireland, analysis provides no concrete scientific evidence. For example, Rahilly (2006) examined the pronunciation of the <h> shibboleth in Northern Ireland² and found that perceptions of difference have, themselves, heightened awareness of the stigma surrounding the pronunciation of <h>, perhaps invoking a differentiating trend. Though dominant ideologies may seek to enforce divisive linguistic patterns, it is important to note that contact-induced changes can rarely be disguised when scrutinised through a close analysis of speaker phonology: the complex processes involved in linguistic transfer cannot be disguised.

Language Contact and Interdialect Formation

In any situation where two (or more) languages co-exist, a contact situation develops and in every contact situation, languages take on roles of either substrate (low status language) or superstrate (high status language) (Hickey 2012). Local demographics influence the likelihood of community engagement with newly arrived speakers and their languages. Across the whole of Ireland, English was a high status language of the settlers, whilst the majority of natives spoke Irish. In Ulster, English-speaking

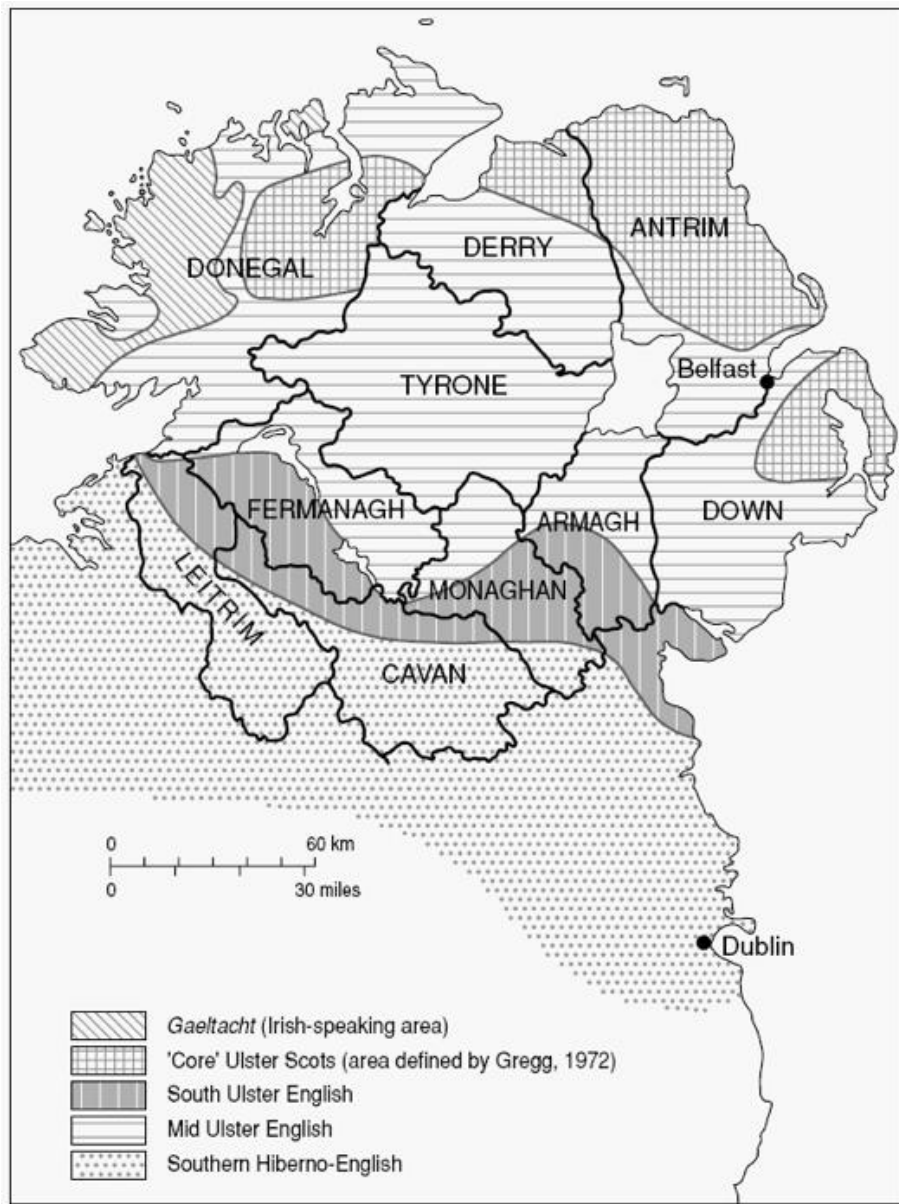
² A widespread belief is that the pronunciation of letter name <h> is realised by Catholics as [hetʃ] and by Protestants as [etʃ], with the phonetic difference being one of “word-initial aspiration versus non-aspiration” (Rahilly 2006: 47).

settlers of Scots and Northern English origin would have adopted some features of Irish for communication purposes, producing a “shift variety of the high-status minority” (Hickey 2012: 19). Thus, speakers of Irish learning English were acquiring a variety of English that was itself in flux, appropriating features of Irish. In contact situations, interdialects emerge (Trudgill 2008), which possess features that are not exact transplantations from the contact languages themselves but are developed during contact, as intermediate or compromising features to maximise communicative ease. Moreover, speakers map new sound structures onto their native phonological frameworks, which is exhibited in patterns of palatalisation, the insertion of /j/ between front and back sounds in the oral cavity, e.g. ‘cart’ is pronounced as /kjaɪt/, in Ulster Scots speech, a remaining feature from the Scots Gaelic root (Hale 2008). Believing that a language shift involves the complete transplantation of features and grammar from one language community to another does not reflect the process of language contact.

Dialectologists traditionally approached linguistic mapping in the fashion shown in figure 1. Mid Ulster English, Gaeltacht, and Ulster Scots are presented as discrete and distinguishable regions in dialect maps (Corrigan 2010; Hickey 2007). Though focusing on historical background and introspective data establishes the neat phonological boundaries exhibited above, the influence of contact-induced variation is ignored in favour of presenting homogeneous areas, which are consequently less reflective of localised trends. Gregg’s early research on Ulster Scots suggests that it is unique to the ‘Coastal Crescent’ of Ards, the North Coast and the Laggan area of Donegal (1972). However, in a later work, Montgomery and Gregg (1997) realised that even in the presence of much more scholarly work and larger amounts of rural speech data, either/or classifications oversimplified the linguistic continuum along which different accents in Ulster were situated.

Traditional approaches to dialectology in Ulster

Figure 1: Dialectological map of Ulster with linguistic isoglosses



Source: Hickey (2007: 442).

As a researcher with local knowledge of South Down, I took issue with the archetypal isoglosses in Figure. 1. The mountainous Mourne area is classified as Mid Ulster English, but Lowland Scots settlers came to Mourne in the 1600s. Though the literature on Ulster Scots language is silent on Mourne and South Down, there is

lasting linguistic and cultural evidence of a Scots presence in the town of Kilkeel and the surrounding countryside. Contact and transfer between Scots Gaelic, Irish Gaelic and English would have been facilitated through the daily tasks of farming and fishing; moreover, the geographical block of the Mourne Mountains appears to act as a barrier protecting the local accent from trends of normalisation across areas such as Banbridge, Lisburn and Mid Down. To test my hypotheses, I needed to subject dialectological data from the Mourne area to a comparative linguistic analysis.

Methodology

The *Tape Recorded Survey of Hiberno-English* (TRSHE), conducted in the 1970s by the Institute of Irish Studies at Queen's University, Belfast, in conjunction with researchers at University of Ulster, Coleraine, University College, Cork, Trinity College, Dublin, and the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, was a methodological innovation for its time. Before the TRSHE, non-mobile older rural males (or NORMs) were the preferred subjects of dialectological research, as they would most likely preserve conservative dialect features; historical linguistic surveys did not strive for representative and inclusive data, as required in contemporary research. The TRSHE however, documented linguistic variety across the island of Ireland by collecting data from 3 age groups (9-12 years, 35-45 years and 65-75 years) (Barry 2014, 1981).

A limitation to any phonological study is the data collection process itself, as participants will usually adapt their speech in an interview setting, a pattern called 'linguistic accommodation' (Giles 1973). The phenomenon is particularly problematic if the fieldworkers have noticeably different accents from the participants with whom they engage verbally, or if read-speech tasks are used, as these tend to heighten speech consciousness and invoke more standardised pronunciation (Bowerman 2012). The elicitation exercise used in the TRSHE sought to distract participants from word pronunciation, as they were focusing on retrieving the appropriate target word. Instead of reading or mimicking, the participant uttered an on-line pronunciation of the target word.

As the Mourne area was the focus of my research, I used the TRSHE archive at the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum to locate recordings made in the area and found just two, both recorded in Atticall, County Down. Atticall remains a predominantly Roman Catholic townland that, according to the 1911 Language Census (see Adams 1964), previously lay in a linguistic interface between areas where Irish was still spoken and English-speaking communities had been developing. Locations for comparative analysis were chosen using the mapped regions in figure 1, in attempts to find archetypal Irish English and Ulster Scots data for comparison. For the former, the specific site chosen was the island of Arranmore; it seemed likely that features of Irish would retain a stronger influence on the local dialect as it was a Gaeltacht region, where Irish was still spoken by the majority. The other control location selected was Glarryford, Co. Antrim; the rural town is situated within Gregg's 'Coastal Crescent' (1972), which is perceived in the literature as a stronghold of Ulster Scots influence in the province.

In order for the data to be accessible for auditory and acoustic analysis, the original reel-to-reel tapes had to be digitised into WAV format. Peter Carson, the sound archivist at the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, oversaw the digitisation procedure. Despite my initial fears of tape degradation (MacKay 2010), the final versions were of suitable quality for phonetic analysis; though admittedly some sections were much clearer than others, and unintelligible portions were removed to prevent analytic bias. The quality of the material available is a testament to the training and expertise of the original fieldworkers and to the recording equipment they used at the time.

Analysis

Impressionistic phonetic transcriptions of the digitised data were made using the International Phonetic Alphabet. It is important to explore phonetic inventories through their position in the syllable, which is made of onset, nucleus (vowel) and coda. Categorising inventories by syllable position helps with the identification of phonotactic patterns governing the language: consonants (or consonant clusters) that are permissible in the onset of a syllable may not appear in the coda, e.g. <str>.

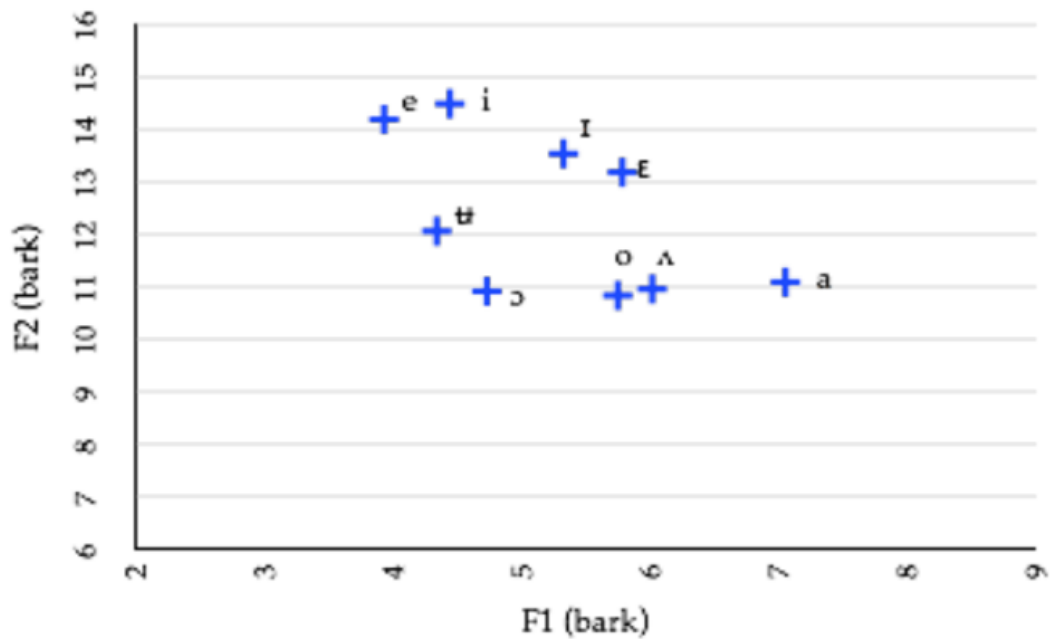
Comparing phonetic inventories for each section of the syllable establishes permissible single consonants and consonant clusters, creating a unique inventory for onsets and codas, developing specific distributional rules. Table 1 shows how target sounds were realised in word-medial onset position according to the geographical location of the participant.

Table 1: Word-Medial Onset Realisations

<i>Target</i>	Arranmore	Atticall	Glarryford
/d/	d, d̥, t̥, θ	d, d̥, t̥	d, ?
/g/	g, gj	g, ø	g
/k/	k	k	k, g
/n/	n, l	n, l	n, l
/ɹ/	ɹ, r	ɹ	ɹ
/t/	t, t̥, d, ð	t, t̥, d, ʔ, θ, d̥	t, t̥, d, ?
/ð/	ð, d̥	ð, ʔ, ø	ð, ø
Total: 7	17 (13)	18 (13)	14 (11)

Source: Hanna (2014:107).

Praat software (Boersma and Weenink 2014) allows the linguistic researcher to consolidate auditory with acoustic analysis by measuring vowel formant frequencies in Hertz, and plotting them graphically (see figure 2). Values are normalised from Hertz to Bark scale, and the vowel space graph produces a visual representation of the size of the vowel space and the distribution of vowels within the oral cavity. In figure 2 below, F1 inversely represents tongue height and F2 inversely represents a fronted tongue position; the distribution reveals quite a narrow range of F1 and F2 values and a minimally distributed (or centralised) vowel space, which is particularly fronted.

Figure 2: Vowel Realisations in Atticall

Source: Hanna (2014: 39).

Results

In the process of data transcription and analysis, it became clear that even the ‘control locations’, which I presumed would be comparatively homogeneous, exhibited crossover between Irish English and Ulster Scots accentual features. Indeed, the Atticall speakers’ phonetic transcriptions often revealed more Scotticisms than the Ulster Scots and Irishisms than the Gaeltacht Irish speakers. However, space limitations allow only a brief depiction of consonantal and vocalic trends in the Atticall data.

Consonantal features of Ulster Scots

	Target Phoneme	Realisation	Phonological Process	Target Word	IPA Transcription
1	/t/	[d]	Voicing	<i>after, faster</i>	[ˈafdəɪ, ˈfasdəɪ]
2	/t/	[ʔ]	Glottalisation	<i>ant, teapot</i>	[anʔ, ˈti:pəʔ]
3	/d/	[∅]	Deletion	<i>diamond</i>	[ˈdaimən]
4	∅	[j] / k, g, n —	Palatalisation	<i>cart, gather,</i> <i>new</i>	[kja:ɪʔ, ˈgjaðəɪ, nɟu]
5a	/x/	[x]	Retention	<i>trough,</i> <i>lough</i>	[tɹɔx, lɔx]
5b	/x/	[xk]	Stopping	<i>trough,</i> <i>lough</i>	[tɹɔxk, lɔxk]

The above features show patterns suggesting an Ulster Scots influence on Atticall consonant realisations, such as:

1. Voicing of voiceless plosive /t/ before a vowel reflecting a break between two syllables.
2. Glottalisation of voiceless plosives in coda position.
3. Deletion of voiced plosives in coda position.
4. Palatal insertion (or gliding) between (a) a velar (back) consonant and a front vowel, and (b) an alveolar consonant (front) and a centralised vowel.
5. a) Retention of the recessive /x/ phoneme, which Hickey (2012) pinpoints as a feature unique to Ulster Scots. /x/ is often realised as either [f] or [k] in syllable-final position, such as [tɹɔf] for /tɹɔx/ *trough*, but [x] remains in Atticall speech. One participant (b) produces a [xk] cluster, suggesting a mix between Scots and normalising trends.

Consonantal features of Irish English

	Target Phoneme	Realisation	Phonological Process	Target Word	IPA Transcription
1.	/t, d/	[t̪, d̪] / _ɪ	Dentalisation	<i>drink,</i> <i>trotting</i>	[d̪ɪŋk, 't̪ɒʔɪŋ]
2.	/θ, ð/	[t̪, d̪]	Stopping	<i>thistles,</i> <i>thimble</i>	['t̪ɪsls, 't̪ɪmbl]
3.	/s/	[ʃ] / WI	Palatalisation	<i>snow</i>	[ʃno]

A smaller number of consonantal features show patterns of accent realisation that suggest Irish influence:

6. Alveolar plosive dentalisation before / ɪ /, which differentiates the place of articulation between adjacent consonants.
7. Stopping dental fricatives, as they are absent phonemes in Irish Gaelic.
8. Palatalisation of /s/ in consonant clusters, again differentiating place of articulation between adjacent consonants.

Vocalic features of Irish English and Ulster Scots in Atticall

The centralised vowel space and patterns of reducing weak vowels to 'schwa' ([ə]) suggests a strong Ulster Scots influence on the Atticall vowel space. A high rate of diphthongisation, or vowel lengthening through the addition of 'schwa', may be a means of gliding between adjacent sounds by returning to the centralised/neutral position in preparation for the next sound, a trend mirroring consonantal palatalisation in Ulster Scots. It could be argued that the process of diphthongising monophthongs is, in itself, a marriage of Irish English and Ulster Scots vowel systems, as it maintains the distinctiveness of vowels seen in Irish English, whilst terminating in a centralised location, typical of Ulster Scots. The influence of Irish is seen in the comparative vowel space distribution of Atticall. However, decreased tongue movement in diphthongs, to the extent that they become monophthongs (e.g. *beard* /bɪəɪd/ > [bɛɪd]), is a feature of Irish rather than Ulster Scots. Regardless of directly earmarking influence, it is clear that phonological features from two underlying

phonological inventories explain the trends of vocalic variation in Atticall.

Conclusion

Speech data collected in Atticall provides little evidence for ethnolinguistic speech profiling in Ulster, as consonantal and vocalic features reflect an intermingling of Irish/Scots phonological features. Moreover, the control areas of Arranmore and Glarryford similarly did not reflect archetypal phonological patterns of Irish English and Ulster-Scots documented in previous literature on the subject. Though limited in scope, the results indicate broader variation, fluidity and accommodation in language than initially expected, suggesting a dialectical relationship in the linguistic development of rural Ulster. As the TRSHE recordings were made at a time when the Troubles were at their height, it was arguably a moment in history when people would have wanted to distinguish themselves by their accent, if they had the conscious ability to do so. The participants did not appear to heighten linguistics features in an attempt to identify with their ‘community’, suggesting ignorance of contemporary ethnolinguistic categorisations, which leads to the conclusion that stereotypes may have developed at a later stage in an attempt to promulgate marked ‘differences’ between Catholic and Protestant communities. Though wars of words may divide Northern Irish communities, it appears that beneath the surface, our tongues continue to unite us.

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The Parodic/Sincere Political Satire of Loyalists Against Democracy (LAD) and its Digital Remixing of Northern Ireland

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This article results from anthropological research on the anonymous online profile Loyalists Against Democracy (LAD), which has been a social media hit in Northern Ireland since the flag protests at the end of 2012. The online engagement and content circulation that characterises LAD's operation, and the ambivalences that constitute its political satire, are analysed here. As part of its intervention, LAD has constantly reworked digital texts, shared by its followers or mined on the web as a whole, into narratives related to the Northern Irish conflictive context. This article will deal with these remixes. Understood here as a peculiar form of politics, LAD demonstrates how the region's traditional conflict can develop new features and variants, and how social media has been a space for the making of contemporary Northern Ireland.

Introduction

Social media in Northern Ireland has been a setting where different narratives about the region and its conflict have been expressed, negotiated and confronted. The period of the so-called loyalist/unionist flag protests offers an example of such interactions. When Belfast City Council voted in December 2012 that the British flag would no longer fly at City Hall during the whole year, but only on 18 designated days, social media was a platform to coordinate the demonstrations against the decision and to express discontentment with the disruption caused by these protests. These platforms

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hosted sectarian exchanges between Catholic nationalists/republicans and Protestant loyalists/unionists (Nolan *et al.* 2014: 70), as well as productive debate about unsolved topics of the peace process (Reilly 2013). The episode signals the increasing relevance of websites such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube for observing and engaging with Northern Ireland.

In the present article, the anthropological analysis of the political satire of the social media profile Loyalists Against Democracy (LAD) will allow an insight into some of this activity. LAD has been an internet phenomenon in Northern Ireland. It was launched on Facebook in December 2012 during the flag protests. The profile assumed a loyalist/unionist persona and posted parodic protest messages, making fun of the demonstrations. The parody spread, and LAD has not stopped since then. The profile, still anonymous, has incorporated new administrators and diversified its content. In May 2015, it had 15,000 followers on Twitter and 26,000 likes on Facebook. LAD does not generate income for the people involved, and its operation reveals a skilful use of accessible digital tools. The profile has loyalist/unionist protesters as its main target. It has criticised sectarian polarisation, attracting supporters and contributors. At the same time, it has been accused on social media of raising tensions further in the region and stereotyping loyalism/unionism.

In order to discuss LAD's polemic satire, this article will first characterise the social media engagement in which the profile participates, since it builds its intervention from these exchanges. On social media, where content production and circulation are tightly interconnected (Fattal 2014), one's impact depends not only on authorial impulse, but crucially on the active influence of other users, that is, their retweets, shares, comments, memes. This online participatory circulation has been intensively discussed in the field of media studies (see for example Shifman 2014, 2011; Jenkins, Ford and Green 2013; Burgess and Green 2009). Anthropology has recently begun to make a contribution to the understanding of these interactions. The works of anthropologists Alex Fattal (2014) and John Postill (2014, 2012) will be important references here for dealing with LAD's intervention in Northern Ireland. Both assess social media circulation in relation to specific political contexts.

At the same time as anthropology has increased its attention to the politics of online engagement, it has also harboured a growing number of recent works on humour (Bernal 2013: 300), especially on satire as a form of political action and mediation (Boyer 2013: 277). Boyer's contribution to this scholarship will be key in the assessment of LAD's content. His formulation about a "constitutive ambiguity" (2013: 280) between parody and sincerity in some forms of contemporary political satire is a crucial tool to use in addressing the profile. This ambivalence is manifested in the profile's piece in varied ways. This article will also discuss how LAD, within its online engagement and in this parodic/sincere dynamics, has produced narratives in relation to Northern Ireland, processing digital material available on the internet and recirculating the results on social media. The analysis will show how this remixing takes place.

Entrepreneurship towards engagement

The flexibility and ubiquity of the internet have allowed an intense and potentially expansive circulation of different kinds of content among social media users and the possible transformation of this material in the process. This engagement involves the widespread and constant reworking of references and digital texts by users and the redisplay of them in derivative compositions and formats (Shifman 2011: 188). Accomplishment on social media has been linked to the relationships that one is able to build and sustain in this web. It has been related to the reach – the spreading – that a post can attain through the constant interaction and reconfiguration of content among users. The engagers, therefore, have a crucial role in the repercussion of a fellow user. Burgess and Green state, for instance, that successful vloggers, apart from their video skills, need to have a "grounded knowledge of and effective participation within YouTube's communicative ecology" (2009: 104).

In Fattal's view, anthropological research can be crucial to reveal the political charge of these social media exchanges "within a given context" (2014: 321). The author bases this point on his study on the "recombinatory circulation" of YouTube videos about the Colombian conflict (320). He defines recombinatory circulation as the interactive reconfiguration of these videos with a political purpose as part of their

circulation among users. According to him, “[o]nline, the Colombian conflict plays out through likes, favorites, shares, comments and reedited videos” (320). Online remixing, for Fattal, is a locus of politics (321). Another author who has adopted an ethnographic approach to deal with the politics of online circulation is Postill (2014, 2012). For him, anthropologists should borrow the expertise of media studies (2012: 178), but at the same time apply a field-grounded “ethnographic eye for technopolitical detail” (2014: 56), tracking new forms of digital political life when observing specific processes (2012: 165, 178). Postill shows, for example, how the Spanish *indignados* turned social media into “viral media” during their protests (2014: 55), enlarging mobilisation through specific practices of social media engagement (2014: 51-69).

In my research, I attempted to follow this anthropological path, pursuing the “technopolitical details” (Postill 2014: 56) of LAD in Northern Ireland. I applied Postill’s “media epidemiographic” approach – the term comes from the combination of epidemiology and ethnography – which aims to track and reconstruct online trajectories (2014: 55). If Postill emphasises the pursuing of viral content, my investigation focused on a user, LAD, its interactions, and the resultant digital output. I implemented my online research mostly on Twitter, but my tracking there took me to other websites as well, such as Facebook and YouTube. In addition, I conducted separate semi-structured interviews with 12 followers of LAD and with the creator of the profile. I also observed in loco two events, the Rally Against Racism (May 2014) and the Twelfth parade (July 2014) in Belfast, with a concomitant accompaniment of the related social media traffic through a smartphone, in order to experience how this online engagement can connect to the offline.

The tracking of LAD revealed a permanent initiative by the profile to acknowledge and embrace its followers’ contributions and reactions, and as a result, to increase its repercussion on social media and in Northern Ireland. This entrepreneurship towards engagement, as I call it, relinquishes strict control of conversations in order to enlarge influence on social media. LAD is in itself an engagement. The first parodic messages posted by a single individual during the flag protests spread quickly. The profile

gained followers and started receiving contributions. The creator of LAD invited collaborators to form an administrative group for the profile. The group, which has changed members since then, keeps in touch and coordinates the work through a chat page on Facebook. Each administrator has a relative degree of autonomy in the task. Users' feedback and contributions (tips, ideas and digital material) have continued, feeding content and circulation.

The Northern Ireland conflict and politics and their daily developments have been a drive for this engagement. I interviewed, for instance, a LAD follower/contributor who showed me, on her/his iPad, a collection of political memes about the region, as well as photos she/he had sent to LAD as ideas and raw material for photomontages to be posted online. In another example, with the intention to build rapport with the profile's administrators, I myself sent them by email an online news piece about a Ukrainian satirical party that was launching Darth Vader for president of the country. The link was immediately reworked to tease a unionist politician and reposted on social media. The two cases illustrate how the satirical output of LAD is preceded by, and reflects, online everyday political interactions that are not always visible in its content. In a conflictive context, the conversations around the profile can involve angry exchanges. "Even people who really hate us follow us", William H. Smyth², the creator of the profile, told me during an interview³. Retaliations are a possibility. In 2013, LAD's Facebook page went down automatically successive times, allegedly because loyalist/unionist users reported it *en masse*. The page would be definitively restored later. The episode was reported by local media outlets in Northern Ireland (see McKernon 2013:11 and Ó Néill 2013).

The flexibility of LAD's operation to take on board users with different motivations and perspectives, including in its administrative group, to process varied contributions, to respond to supportive and hostile interaction, has defined its entrepreneurship towards engagement. The profile has showed a constant state of alertness to engage in the best way and with the best timing with a given circumstance or communication in

² William H. Smyth is the pseudonym used by the creator of LAD.

³ The interview was conducted on 1 August 2014.

order to provoke their followers' reactions and optimise circulation. LAD's regime is not an improvised one, but it has improvisation as a resource and unpredictability as a component. Burgess and Green (2009: 104) are correct in stating that online success is very much a consequence of one's understanding and participation in the medium. However, such comprehension comes from the interaction itself. The engagement is built live.

In the next two sections, the focus will be the object of this engagement: LAD's content. Boyer's (2013) idea of a constitutive ambiguity between parody and sincerity in some forms of contemporary political satire will guide the analysis. Pieces produced by LAD will be examined in relation to this parodic/sincere ambivalence, and the assessment will make clear how the profile has combined references and digital texts, directly related to Northern Ireland or not, in satirising the region's politics. The example above of my accidental contribution, when the profile reworked a news piece about Ukraine to address the Northern Irish context, has already indicated how these remixes emerge from LAD's interactions and are processed in its content.

Constitutive ambiguity

Boyer (2013) develops his notion about a constitutive ambiguity between parody and sincerity in some forms of political satire from his analysis of the Icelandic Best Party. The party won the mayoral election in Reykjavic in 2010, one year after being created by a group of artists to mock and challenge the political status quo, amid the economic crisis in the country. At the same time that the group made statements in favour of cancelling Iceland's debts, it refused to ally with anyone that had not watched all seasons of the TV series *The Wire* (*Ibid*, 278-279). The party, Boyer (*Ibid*, 281) says, has showed an "affective disposition" and a "playfulness" that contrast with conventional politics. For Boyer (*Ibid*, 276-277), some current modes of satire have gone beyond ironic commentary and performatively invaded the sphere of "normal politics". He asks: is the Best Party a sincere and genuine intervention in the Icelandic political sphere, or some kind of joke about it? (*Ibid*, 277). For its participants, the party is both, he argues. They have been refusing to choose between being either parodic or sincere, and this ambiguity defines the initiative (*Ibid*, 279-280). According

to Boyer (*Ibid*, 280), it is not “that sincere politics was hidden inside a satirical shell”, but rather that the “mode of political performance simply denied a categorical distinction between satire and sincerity”.

Boyer points out that the Best Party and satirical TV shows such as *The Daily Show* and *The Colbert Report* can be compared to *stiob*, a parody technique in late socialist regimes. It consists in performing an over-identification with the dominant discourse, that is, mimicking the predictable rhetoric, “squatting” it (*Ibid*, 283), to the point that it becomes difficult to perceive if a manifestation is supportive or ironic (*Ibid*, 282-283; Boyer and Yurchak 2010: 181, 191, 211). In the West, *stiob*-like satire could be considered a reaction, a disruption, to the over-formalisation of liberal discourse, the increasing political concern with image rather than substance, the gap between promises and actions, and the abundance of similar news coverage (Boyer 2013: 276-283; Boyer and Yurchak 2010: 181-184). With regard to a polarised context, such as the one in Northern Ireland, where ethnic and political disputes and alignments keep emerging and repeating themselves in daily life, parody, and the original perspective it offers, can create a critical distance from the embedded dichotomy, a “space of reflexivity” that may allow new understandings and responses to it (Bernal 2013: 307).

The section below will show that on some occasions LAD has had this disruptive effect in Northern Ireland. Concomitantly, it will argue that the profile’s humour can be seen through the parodic/sincere ambiguity discussed by Boyer (2013). The question that the author asks about the Icelandic Best Party – is it a consequent and sincere intervention in the region’s politics, or a case of parody? – could be repeated in relation to LAD, achieving the same answer. It is both of these things. However, being a different phenomenon in a different context, the profile will manifest this constitutive tension in distinct ways. The analysis of LAD’s content will assess some of these manifestations. In addition, it will deal with the profile’s satirical digital remixing and illustrate how it can be considered, following Fattal (2014), a locus of politics.

The parodic/sincere satire and its remixing

The starting point for the assessment of LAD's content is controversial material, which has, nevertheless, been popular among the profile's followers: the reposting of sectarian messages of loyalist/unionist users. This has been a significant component of LAD's intervention related to loyalism/unionism. Administrators and contributors to the profile have mined Facebook, sometimes using fake identities, in search of extremist posts. The profile then republishes the comments in its platforms, usually presenting them with an ironic remark. In this way, LAD makes the extremist posts available for criticism and/or ridicule by its followers. The profile has argued that its intention has been to expose sectarianism. The tactic has divided opinions and angered the targeted users. The reposting is a process in which LAD collects sincere pieces of others and reworks them into parody. It can be seen as a manifestation of the ambivalence described by Boyer (2013). It could be argued that the constitutive ambiguity also opens the critical space referred by Bernal (2013), in which new perceptions of the conflictive routine are forged. The targeting of sectarianism here consists in making it potentially laughable. The satirical reposting gives visibility to day-to-day extremism that, otherwise, might have gone unnoticed in polarised Northern Ireland.

Another kind of LAD content related to loyalism/unionism was its initial jokes, mentioned above, when the profile assumed the persona of a flag protester and posted parodic angry statements on Facebook. A notorious example urged loyalists to only fly with British Airways and avoid the Irish company Aer Lingus (Figure 1). The post reproduced sectarian expressions and perceived shortcomings in the use of the English language. Some social media users who I interviewed during my research did think, at the time, that LAD was a true loyalist protest group, before realising its satirical intentions. The profile's "squatting" (Boyer 2013: 283) of the protesters' discourse made them, and probably other people, believe that the parody was sincere. The ambiguous intervention was a distraction in the disputes about the flag that were prominent on social media at that period. Following Bernal (2013), the practice provoked users to momentarily, at least, distance themselves from the pattern of exchanges and readjust their perspectives to decipher those posts.

Figure 1

Source: Facebook

LAD has also constantly processed Northern Irish current affairs and hacked the news format with a satirical eye in its content. During the Queen’s trip to Northern Ireland in 2014, LAD circulated a photomontage and a video, both simulating a visit by the monarch to the Twaddell camp, set up as a loyalist/unionist demonstration against a parade restriction in North Belfast. The protest camp has been a target of the profile’s irony. In the photomontage posted on Twitter, the Queen was photoshopped into an image of the camp, under the headline: “EXCLUSIVE: Queen at Camp Twaddell” (Figure 2). In the video, old images of the Queen were accompanied by a sober voiceover which, in referring to the fictitious visit, provides a sarcastic description of the camp. In both pieces, two different current affairs news items, the Queen’s visit and the protest camp, were combined, transforming but maintaining a sense of the “real”. The fusion of current affairs topics and the employment of journalistic language gave a coherence to the satirical materials that simulates sincerity, at the same time that the parody tends to be evident. The remixing of the images and references to the Queen and Twaddell were crucial to achieve this effect.

Figure 2



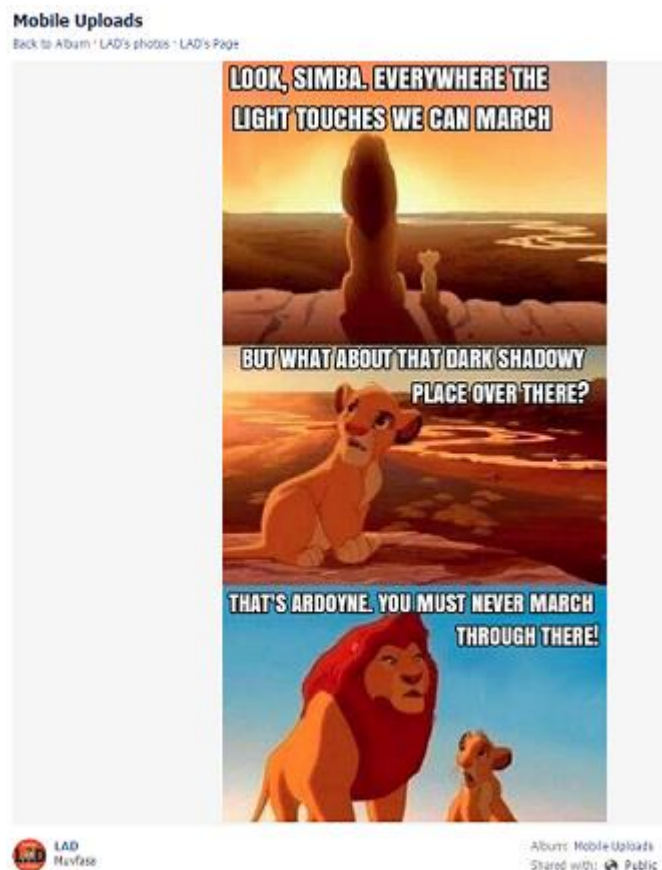
Source: Twitter

In processing Northern Ireland’s current affairs, LAD has also used external references, recycling content available on the internet. In the manoeuvre, the profile negotiates the meanings of these texts to apply them to specific circumstances in the region. LAD transplanted, for instance, characters such as the Lion King and Willy Wonka to address the 2014 marching season (Figures 3 and 4). That specific photo of Gene Wilder’s Wonka has been remixed in various other memes, adapted to different circumstances and goals (Figures 5 and 6). This illustrates the potential “transportability, or detachability” (Spiltunik, 1997: 181) of digital texts, how their meanings can be transformed in their circulation across contexts.⁴ Another of these

⁴ In 1997, before the social media era, Spiltunik already emphasised the mobility of “media fragments” through various social contexts (1997: 181). She analysed then how audiences in Zambia actively transformed the meanings of radio expressions in employing them in distinct situations. For her, “nothing begins from zero”; media communications are preceded by numerous other dialogues and texts (*Ibid*, 161). In her fieldwork and in contemporary web 2.0, the availability of content stimulates circulation (*Ibid*, 162).

recombinations executed by LAD is the musical video “We Didn’t Start the Riot”. The song is a parody of Billy Joel’s “We Didn’t Start the Fire” (1989) and directly targets the loyalist/unionist riots connected to a parade restriction in 2013 in North Belfast. However, the piece goes beyond this event, mentioning a number of references about the Northern Ireland conflict, politics and contemporary affairs. Joel’s original lyrics are structured as a list of personalities and events that made history from 1949, when he was born, to 1989. While he sings Harry Truman, Doris Day, Red China, Marilyn Monroe, LAD sings Willy Frazer, Gerry Kelly, Nolan Show, Game of Thrones. The lyrics’ pattern allowed the profile to make a collage of images, reinforcing the effect of synthesis that the text transmits. This remix of NI by LAD is its most popular video on YouTube, with 55,000 views in May 2015.

Figure 3



Source: Twitter

Figure 4



Source: Twitter

Figure 5



Source: funtumblr.com

Figure 6



Source: memecrunch.com

Amid ironic remixes, the satirical profile has also been a vehicle for sincere messages. LAD has been championing equality policies (gay marriage in particular) in Northern Ireland, combating racism and government inefficiency, varying from sarcasm to sincere advocacy in this process. In 2014, during my research, the so-called ‘Pastorgate’ was an occasion in which the profile intensely combined these satirical and sincere approaches. Pastorgate was the result of the comments made against Islam by the pastor James McConnell during a sermon, and the support given to him by the first minister Peter Robinson. The first minister said, in an interview to the *Irish News*, that he would not trust Muslims for spiritual guidance, but would “trust them to go down the shops” (quoted in Manley 2014: 1). LAD broke the story about the sermon, publishing an excerpt of the speech on its YouTube channel. After the first minister’s intervention, LAD was one of the main protest voices on social media. The profile posted its traditional photo-remixes and jokes, but also indignant and sincere messages (Figures 7 and 8). The online mobilisation led to the Rally Against Racism at City Hall on 31 May (BBC News Online 2014), and Peter Robinson had to apologise three days later (McDonald 2014).

Figure 7



Source: Twitter

Figure 8



Source: Twitter

The discussion here has covered some ways in which the constitutive ambiguity between parody and sincerity (Boyer 2013) are manifested in LAD's content. The analysis has also shown that in polarised contexts, such as Northern Ireland's, the ambivalent satire and its representations have the potential to provoke distinct perceptions and reactions to the conflictive routine (Bernal 2013: 307). The reposting of sectarian messages by LAD, the making of sincere pieces into comedy, was discussed in relation to this point. The reposting was also a manifestation of the parodic/sincere dynamics described by Boyer (2013), as LAD's squatting of protesters' discourse in parodic posts, its remixing of current affairs and satirical simulation of sincerity, and the combination of external references to play with topics in the region's spotlight. In addition, the profile has adopted a genuine sincere voice, despite being a parodic profile. These manifestations signal that LAD has been building a political performance that, beyond ironic commentary, has inhabited the practice of politics in Northern Ireland, grouping itself with the contemporary forms of political satire discussed by Boyer (2013). In the case of Pastorgate, for example, in

performing the traditional journalistic role of breaking the story and contributing to the online mobilisation that led to the rally, it could be argued that the profile's satire invaded the sphere of "normal politics" (Boyer 2013: 276) in concrete terms, pushing it decisively towards the final outcome.

In parallel, the analysis showed how varied the pieces circulated by LAD are, and the extent to which references related to Northern Ireland can be exchanged in the profile's social media engagement and reconfigured in its content circulation. Loyalist/unionist protests, Facebook posts, news pieces, the Queen, the US President, parades, pop songs, and film characters were shared on social media, picked from the news, collected from the web as a whole, and reworked through accessible digital tools into content related to contemporary Northern Ireland. The political targeting and impact of these digital remixes were indicated in the description above. The case of LAD corroborates Fattal's (2014) point that such recombinations are a locus of politics. Like the Colombian conflict assessed by Fattal, the content of LAD discussed here evidences how Northern Ireland's disputes are played out through the procedures of social media circulation and online recombinatory practices.

Conclusion

LAD is a case that can bring together two emergent anthropological scholarships. One is about digital politics and has Postill (2008, 2011, 2012, 2014) and Fattal (2014) as contributors. The other deals with political humour and is exemplified by the works of Boyer (2013) and Bernal (2013). The analysis of the profile has the potential to integrate both Postill's (2012: 178; 2014: 56) and Boyer's (2013: 285) calls for ethnographic studies that address the phenomena discussed by them. Boyer (2013: 277) warns that the Icelandic Best Party leaves a lesson for political anthropology. Researchers should pay attention to emergent and still indefinable forms of political action and belonging that capitalise on the predictability of contemporary politics:

For one thing, these new experiments may not seek to develop political ideologies and movements in the traditional sense. For another (...), it seems precisely the point that whatever comes next need not be

recognizable in terms of categories drawn from the major political movements of the 19th and 20th centuries. (Boyer 2013: 285).

This article argues that the case of LAD gives further weight to Boyer's reflection. The digital politics of the profile, characterised by an effective entrepreneurship towards social media engagement and spreading, and a parodic/sincere ambivalent satire, has constituted a peculiar form of intervention in Northern Ireland. It is difficult to strictly fit the profile into a conventional political category. LAD combines entertainment and advocacy; exercises political correctness towards some issues, but not others; divides opinions to the same extent that it puzzles them.

As part of its online exchanges, LAD has reconfigured a number of references, whether directly related to Northern Ireland or not. As seen above, these recombinations play a crucial role for the parodic/sincere ambivalence of the profile's satirical content. In processing these digital fragments and transforming them into specific narratives about the region, LAD is a case that permits the anthropological grounding of these online exchanges and remixes, their "political charge" and effects, "within a given context" (Fattal 2014: 321). The profile is indicative of how the Northern Ireland conflict, despite being informed by history, is in permanent negotiation and change. LAD has demonstrated how social media has been an environment for the making of contemporary Northern Ireland.

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Children of the Troubles: The need to explore the long-term impact on appraisal and coping

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Although the impact on children of the political conflict in Northern Ireland has been widely studied, leading researchers in the discipline highlight a series of paradoxical findings, which they suggest are as a result of a variety of methodological and ethical issues. As such they suggest that there are a number of gaps in our understanding of how children and young people appraised and coped with the Troubles. In particular, we know little about the long-term and cumulative impact of living in such a society. There is a need, therefore, to explore how growing up in an environment characterised by difference and political violence influences appraisal and coping later in life. This article therefore presents the rationale for studying the long-term impact of growing up during the Troubles in order to enhance our knowledge and understanding of these issues.

Given the vicissitudes of the human drama, it is a wonder that anyone is left physically or psychologically healthy (Hobfoll, 2002:63).

Introduction

Since the start of the conflict in Northern Ireland, euphemistically referred to as the 'Troubles' (McWhirter 1983; Smyth 1998), there has been a plethora of research projects and studies on the subject, leading some researchers to suggest that the Troubles has become the most thoroughly researched conflict (Dunn 1995; Dunn *et al.* 1995; Smyth and Hamilton 2003). A key interest for researchers has been the impact of the violence on children and young people, and more specifically how

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children adapted to and coped with the conflict (Cairns 1987). Leading researchers in the discipline have conducted a series of reviews of these studies, and they highlight a number of paradoxical findings, which they suggest are the results of a variety of methodological and ethical issues (Cairns 1996; Gallagher 2004; Muldoon 2004). They also suggest that, despite the abundance of such studies, we know little about the long-term impact of exposure to political conflict (Cairns 1996). Therefore, the aim of this article is to summarise the gaps in our understanding of the impact of the Troubles on children and young people and to present the rationale for exploring the long-term impact of growing up during the Troubles on appraisal and coping.

Appraisal and coping

Cairns (1996) suggests that in the context of children exposed to political violence, few studies have adopted Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) cognitive phenomenological model. According to this model, the way an event is perceived (appraised) and dealt with (coping) will impact the psychological and emotional outcome. Lazarus (1999) distinguished two types of appraisal, primary and secondary. Primary appraisal is an evaluation of whether or not the situation is personally significant and worthy of attention, whereas secondary appraisal is focused on the availability of coping resources to deal with the event, and in any stressful encounter they are dependent on one another (Folkman *et al.* 1986). Stress arises if there is a perception that a situation has the potential to impact significantly on values, aspirations or beliefs; tax available coping resources; threaten well-being; or disturb normal functioning (Folkman *et al.* 1986). Lazarus (1999) noted a number of individual factors (goals and aspirations, beliefs about self, and personal resources), environmental factors (environmental demands, constraints and opportunities, and culture), and temporal factors (timing and duration of the event) which influenced the appraisal process. Cairns (1996) notes that we know relatively little regarding how children appraise different forms of political violence or what factors impact this appraisal; however, he notes that some of the possible sources of information which children may use include their parents (particularly their mother) and the media.

Cairns (1996) suggests we have a better understanding of how children cope with political violence. Aldwin (2007:125) defines coping as “the use of strategies for dealing with actual or anticipated problems and their attendant negative emotions”. Coping strategies are generally referred to as emotion-focused or problem-focused (Lazarus and Folkman 1984) and the negative emotions associated with stressful encounters include anger, shame, guilt, and anxiety (Lazarus 1991). Emotion-focused coping involves the deployment of cognitive and behavioural efforts to change the meaning of the stressful encounter and problem-focused coping involves the deployment of cognitive and behavioural efforts to change the circumstances of the problem (Folkman *et al.* 1986). Lazarus (1999) emphasised that, in practice, it is not easy to decide which thoughts or actions are problem-focused or emotion-focused. Nor is one strategy necessarily better than the other, as its effectiveness depends on the person, the specific situation being encountered, the timing of the encounter and the anticipated outcome of the encounter (Lazarus 1993), and in stressful encounters individuals may draw on both strategies (Lazarus 1999). Regardless of the coping strategy used, an important factor is the overlap between appraisal and coping (Folkman and Moskowitz 2004). Coping is dependent on appraisal and therefore needs to be understood in the context of the meaning attributed to a stressful encounter (Lazarus 1999).

Cairns (1996: 55) highlights that coping is not the same as “mastery over the environment”, as “many sources of stress cannot be mastered”. He suggests rather that effective coping should be considered as a “strategy which allows the person to tolerate, minimise, accept or ignore what cannot be mastered”. In addition, Aldwin (2007) highlights the importance of socio-cultural factors in determining coping behaviours. Individuals do not exist in isolation, but are ‘nested’ in the wider ‘families’ and ‘tribes’ to which they belong (Hobfoll 2001). To understand coping we therefore need to understand the socio-cultural context in which individuals are ‘nested’, as coping is embedded within this wider context, which determines the demands we encounter, our access to coping resources, and which coping behaviours are considered appropriate and which are not (Aldwin 2007; Hobfoll 2004). In his review of the impact of political violence on children, Cairns (1996) states that

frequent emotion-focused coping strategies highlighted in the literature are denial, distancing, and an avoidance of thinking about the situation and the problems. He further notes that some studies have suggested a more problem-focused ideologically-based active engagement with political violence

Coping with the Troubles

Early 1970s researchers feared that against a backdrop of violence children “would become shell-shocked zombies flooding psychiatric hospitals, or amoral juvenile delinquents totally out of adult control” (Cairns and Cairns 1995: 97). Therefore, initial research focused on the moral and emotional development of children as a result of the violence (Connolly and Healy 2003; Muldoon 2004) and warned that children would suffer serious pathological conditions as a result of exposure to political violence (Cairns and Cairns 1995). These early warnings led to a surge of studies in the 1980s (Connolly and Healy 2003). Muldoon (2004) notes that these studies focused on both the impact of the Troubles on mental health disorders, such as increased anxiety levels and depression symptomology, and also on externalised antisocial behaviours. However, these subsequent studies found little evidence that the Troubles had a significant impact on moral attitudes, church attendance or religiosity, antisocial behaviours, child psychiatric disorders, or stress levels (Cairns and Cairns 1995; Muldoon 2004). As McWhirter (1983: 389) notes: “It would seem, therefore, that fears of a serious growth in antisocial behaviour among the young people of Northern Ireland and the total disintegration of Northern Ireland society are largely unjustified”.

This led to an interest into how children were coping with the Troubles and to a view in the 1980s that young people were coping quite well, as they were becoming resilient to the violence (Gallagher 2004; Muldoon 2004). This ‘hysterical emphasis’ on resilience (Cairns 1996: 11) has since been challenged for overstating the normality of everyday life in very abnormal circumstances (Gallagher 2004), and researchers have suggested that the paradoxical findings of the impact of the conflict are due to a number of conceptual, methodological and ethical issues inherent in the studies (Cairns and Cairns 1995; Cairns 1996; Gallagher 2004; Muldoon 2004).

As Cairns (1996) notes, much of the research in the early 1970s was conducted by psychiatrists and psychologists and conceptually, therefore, the focus was on individual children and their reaction to specific traumatic events. He notes that many such studies focused on capturing reactions to a specific incident (for example street riots); however, he emphasises that, in the context of political violence, children will be exposed to many incidents. He also stresses that one cannot study one isolated event in the life history of the child, as some children will be more prone to develop psychological problems because of personal factors such as age, gender, and personality. Muldoon (2004: 463) therefore suggests that:

...while considerable effort has been expended on considering the negative impact of traumatic violent experiences on young people growing up in Northern Ireland, the effect of growing up in a divided society has less frequently been considered.

Gallagher (2004: 635) therefore highlights that many studies failed to differentiate between individual and social explanations and therefore much “early work by psychologists was based on methodological individualism” and as such there was limited consideration of “individual behaviour within social contexts”. Gallagher (2004) notes with exception the work of Cairns, who viewed the conflict through a lens of Tajfel’s (1982) social identity theory, a framework later applied to many studies in Northern Ireland to explore how and when children categorise themselves as either Catholic or Protestant and differentiate between the two groups (Trew 2004). Gallagher (2004) also notes the work of the social anthropologists Bell, Burton, Darby and Harris, who focused on the wider social and economic factors impacting children’s exposure and attitudes to the conflict. For example, Muldoon (2004: 461) notes that these studies highlighted that the impact of the conflict was not “evenly distributed within the population”, as those from economically deprived backgrounds (as opposed to those from middle-class backgrounds), boys (rather than girls) and those from the minority ethno-national group (rather than those from the majority group) tended to report higher levels of violence. She therefore suggests that “the net

effect of these wider social factors is crucial to a full understanding of the impact of conflict” (462).

Cairns (1996) further highlights that the paradoxical findings may be due to the different methods and measures adopted by researchers, making it difficult to ascertain if they were researching the same phenomenon. Gallagher (2004) therefore suggests that this has led to conflicting research findings as to how children were coping; some researchers have found that children were coping, while others have found that children had become habituated to events, and still others have found that young people were developing exit coping mechanisms, either on a psychological or physical level. He further suggests that early researchers failed to acknowledge the many young men who joined paramilitary organisations as a coping strategy. Muldoon (2004) further suggests that early research studies all too often reflected the interests of the researcher rather than those issues pertinent to the children. For example, Connolly and Healy (2003) suggest that researchers focused on the study of religious identity and difference may have overemphasised the significance of these factors, which may not have held the same salience for children. Muldoon (2004) suggests that much of the research on the Troubles has relied on traditional methods, and there is value in adopting a wider range of conceptual perspectives, research methods and methods of data analyses.

Cairns (1996) also highlights the ethical issues involved in such studies, as children cannot give informed consent. This led to researchers adopting a number of indirect methods and experimental designs to produce data (Cairns and Cairns 1995; Connolly and Healy 2003). For example, Cairns (1996) notes that some research studies used adults (either parents or teachers) rather than children as their research participants; however, he suggests that adults often underemphasise the impact on children. He notes that other studies sought adult permission to conduct research directly with children; however, in their attempts to protect their children, adults often refused to allow their children to participate. Cairns (1996: 18) highlights a further ethical dilemma in that the research on the impact of political violence may be “sensitizing children to the negative aspects of their society, of which they may be happily

ignorant”. Gallagher (2004) therefore suggests that many researchers opted to use more readily accessible data in the form of statistical data based on the number of referrals to say, for example, psychiatrists. However, he warns that this only offers a snapshot of the impact, as not all children who are suffering psychological impact will be referred for treatment.

Researching the long-term impact

In his review of the impact of political violence on children, Cairns (1996) suggests that despite the plethora of studies, we know little of the long-term impact of exposure to political violence over a sustained period such as the Northern Ireland context. He posits a number of hypotheses. First, will having to display an outward persona of being apparently unaffected to cope with events lead to difficulties in later life when this coping strategy is no longer needed? Second, Cairns (1996: 60) speculates whether “having to cope with traumatic events in childhood [will] predispose individuals to disorders later in life if they are again exposed to stressful events”. Third, citing a letter signed by eighty Yugoslavian psychologists published in the 1992 edition of *The Psychologist*, Cairns (1996: 59) highlights the fear that children exposed to stressful events in childhood may develop into “substantially impoverished generations of emotionally unstable, intellectually incompetent, socially limited and intolerant individuals”. Additionally Cairns (1996: 183) postulates “are children directly exposed to political conflict able to envisage peace in the future, or have their experiences turned them into perpetual warmongers?”

Some leading stress and coping researchers highlight that much of the focus in the literature has been on the negative impact associated with exposure to stressful encounters and that we therefore know little about the possible positive outcomes of long-term exposure to stressful events (Aldwin 2007; Frydenberg 2002; Hobfoll 2002). For example, Cairns (1996) posits that surviving stressful events in childhood may have a positive impact in later life through the development of refined coping strategies. Therefore, leading researchers on the impact of the Troubles highlight that although we have had a plethora of studies with children and young people, we know

little about the cumulative and long-term impact of their exposure to political violence (Cairns 1996; Smyth 1998).

However, why is further research in this area necessary in a post-conflict era? Smyth (1998:13) highlights that due to the longevity of the conflict, few adults in Northern Ireland have lived in relative peace. She suggests that:

For those of us who grew up here, and who are in their forties and younger, the Troubles has provided the societal context – and often traumatic punctuation and turning points – to our lives as children and adults.

Therefore, she suggests that there is a need to better understand the long-term impact for those who grew up against the backdrop of the Troubles.

Additionally, Muldoon (2004) suggests three reasons why the impact of political conflict is an important social issue for research. First, she suggests that we need to have a better understanding of the causes of conflict so that this knowledge can be used to build peaceful societies and prevent further conflict. Second, she notes that researchers have a duty to highlight the human cost of conflict as this is often neglected in the rhetoric of opposing factions. Third, she highlights that we need a better understanding of the impact of conflict on civilians so that we can better understand their needs and improve the humanitarian support they are offered during periods of conflict.

Conclusion

Although there have been a number of reviews on the impact of the Troubles on children and young adults, they have highlighted a number of paradoxical findings, and as such, there are still gaps in our understanding of how children experienced and coped with the Troubles. In addition, we know little about the cumulative and long-term impacts of growing up in a divided and violent society and how this affects appraisal and coping later in life. Further studies are needed in this area. Additional

research will go some way to address the gaps in our understanding of how children and young people coped with the conflict. Such studies need to adopt research designs that capture the individual within the wider socio-cultural context. Finally, there is a need for studies which explore the long-term impacts of political violence on children, so that we can better understand the cumulative impact of growing up in the context of sustained political conflict.

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A Comparative Analysis of Ireland, the West Indies and Latin America in the Postcolonial Age

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This article examines Irish, West Indian and Latin American postcolonial theory and literature in an attempt to explore the complex issue of global decoloniality. The theories of scholars like Stuart Hall, Edward Said, Franz Fanon, Antonio Benítez-Rojo, Walter Mignolo, Aníbal Quijano, Seamus Deane, Joseph Lennon, Joe Cleary, and David Roediger will be highlighted along with a literary analysis of great poets and writers like W.B. Yeats, James Joyce, Seamus Heaney, Pablo Neruda, José Martí and Aimé Césaire. It is hypothesised that comprehensive knowledge of the similarities and differences among all the former colonies of the world is essential in order to develop effective international strategies with the indication that decoloniality can only be understood contextually within a wider global framework.

Introduction

The point of this comparative study is not to prove that Ireland, the West Indies or Latin America are exactly alike, since no two colonial sites are ever identical. It is rather to demonstrate that postcolonial expression has always been the product of local, national and global processes that are not just random but part of an international structure of domination and to emphasise that it is always worth examining their similarities in order to better understand the decolonial process itself (Cleary 2003). The author rejects the position of neoliberal, development theorists who argue that these types of postcolonial studies are merely emotional, subjective,

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irrational responses that have limited value in real world situations (Grovoqui 2013; Hopkins 1997). To the contrary, it is suggested that intimate knowledge regarding the similarities and differences among all the former colonies is essential in order to develop effective global development strategies in the future. Connor Leckey in *Postcolonialism and Development* contends that global development will simply not evolve without the inclusion of postcolonial theory which provides the number one challenge to traditional eurocentric teleology (Leckey 2014). It is certainly not surprising that Ireland's cultural/historical status as a colony continues to be hotly contested given the political stakes involved. To imply that Ireland is not an anomaly and that it has always been a colony like all the other colonies of the world is in many ways to deny the legitimacy of the British government in Northern Ireland which is certainly 'a very hard pill to swallow' for all involved (Lloyd 1993). This analysis of Irish, West Indian and Latin American postcolonial theory and literature seeks to explore the multifaceted subject of decoloniality in the modern age.

Thinking Through the Postcolonial Turn

The Postcolonial lexicon of Homi Bhabha (1995), Edward Said (1979), Chinua Achebe (1959), Walter Dignolo (1995), Enrique Dussell (1993) and Stuart Hall (1990) were clearly designed to confront historical and political conditions in India, the Middle East, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean rather than in Ireland. Joseph Lennon in *Irish Orientalism* describes exactly how Ireland, both geographically and culturally in Europe, has been historically excluded from postcolonial consideration. Paradoxically, Lennon (2004) later points out that Ireland was clearly England's first colony and that the colonization of Ireland actually provided the context for the first imperial discourse on how and why to conquer and colonize the world. In this same vein, Joe Cleary in *Misplaced Ideas? Colonialism, Location and Dislocation in Irish Studies* argues that Ireland was never an anomaly and maintains that colonialism is not a remote historical phenomenon, but essential to the development of Irish society whose structural composition, ethnic and class relations and land tenure systems have always been of a purely colonial nature (2003).

In retrospect, the literature seems to suggest that the Irish were actually excluded from postcolonial examination merely because of the color of their skin (Carroll 2003).

Since it has now been logarithmically proven that there is no scientific justification at all for using the term ‘race’ to refer to a discrete hierarchy of genetic phenotypes (Gould 1996), the word ‘race’ now becomes just ‘an idea’, ‘a concept’ or in the words of the Swiss linguist, Ferdinand de Saussure, nothing more than ‘a floating signifier’ (de Saussure 1998). In *Wages of Whiteness*, David Roediger (1991) presents a clear case for understanding ‘whiteness’ not as a biological reality, but as a socially constructed concept. Roediger demonstrates how a dominant Anglo-Saxon American culture was able to successfully pit race against class in ways that have haunted American society ever since. It was precisely because they could not automatically assume their ‘whiteness’ neither in America nor in the British Empire that the Irish were so anxious to disclaim identification with non-Europeans and to plan their escape into mainstream American society.

Argentinean decolonial theorist Walter Mignolo (1995) first coined the term ‘colonialisation of memory’ to show how Spain simply ignored and denied Aztec pictographic and oral traditions as part of history since they did not conform to their eurocentric codification of knowledge. Mignolo, in fact, considers this denial as the most powerful act of the Spanish conquest of the Americas. As an obvious corollary, radical Irish lawyer William Sampson, while writing in exile in the United States, made this same point almost two centuries earlier when discussing the venerable legal codes of both Scotland and Ireland:

“... (They) had an ancient code which they revered. It was called the law of the judges, or the Brehon Law. What it was, it is difficult to say; for along with other interesting monuments of the nation’s antiquity, it was trodden under the hoof of the satyr that invaded her” (Sampson 1812: 165).

In *Nationalism, Colonialism and Literature* Terry Eagleton, Fredric Jameson and Edward Said (1990) demonstrate how Irish poets and writers historically used literature to reject the concept of Ireland as a constitutional anomaly and to demonstrate how the Irish were actually the first to participate in the decolonisation process itself. Seamus Deane (1995), in *Strange Country: Modernity and Nationhood*

in *Irish Writing Since 1790*, uses Irish writers as diverse as the orator Edmund Burke and author James Joyce to research the long standing Irish tradition of imperial critique. Later, Deane in *Dumbness and Eloquence* presents an even stronger assertion when he suggests that the wrath of a colonised people like the Irish who were denied both a specific history and language, may have just been the force that drove Celtic poets and writers to "an almost vengeful virtuosity in the English language" (Eagleton, Jameson and Said 1990:10).

It is important to note that the objectives of contemporary Irish postcolonial theory and actual Latin American transmodern ideology are really quite similar. Irish scholar Joe Cleary (2003) tells us that any determination of a specific national configuration must be conceived as a product of the global which compels Irish studies in the direction of a conjunctural global analysis with the understanding that the decolonial process itself can only be grasped contextually within a broader global framework. Surprisingly, this is essentially the motto of the Latin American Modernity/ Coloniality/ Decoloniality Project (Castro Gomez 2000; Escobar 2005) whose goals are squarely based on the concept of the Colonial Power Matrix² which views decoloniality as a long-term, never-ending global endeavor.

Myths and Legends: Black Pigs and Little Geniuses

Nowhere is Ireland's place on the Colonial Power Matrix more evident than in the Irish myth of 'The Black Pig', wherein James Joyce weaves new possibilities into the space left empty by the colonial/postcolonial vacuum. The traditions surrounding the valley of the black pig are portrayed in the classic novel *Finnegan's Wake* and offer a perfect metaphor for such dual representations in that the valley literally marks, according to myth, the site of the battle of the end

² Anibal Quijano, in his text *Colonialidad de Poder, Eurocentrismo y América Latina*, directly confronted the theoretical questions concerning the implications of the coloniality of power and in the process introduced his most famous concept called The Colonial Power Matrix. The Colonial Power Matrix is an historical-structural organising principle involving exploitation and domination across multiple dimensions with racism at its core. This concept is considered to be the cornerstone of current Latin American transmodern decolonial theory and essential to the Modernity/Coloniality/Decoloniality Project (Quijano 2000).

of the world. Although Joyce clearly takes the opportunity to satirize the revivalist poets of the era for their elevated and epic compilations of folklore and traditions, Joyce's interpretation of the myth functions at its core as a powerful parody of imperial discourse written in a simple conversational style. His words and phrases mock colonial constructions at every turn and, at the same time, offer an exciting alternative to the mere mystique of 'Being Irish'. In many ways, *Finnegan's Wake* mirrors Martinican Franz Fanon's critique of Caribbean intellectuals tempted not only by imperial forms, but also by the exoticism of their very own culture (Yoon 2014). Stuart Hall (1990; 224), in more academic terms, would simply call creative acts like *Finnegan's Wake* "articulations of identity freed from postcolonial discourse". Joyce's use of comedy tears down one world and his affirmations build another in an attempt to turn away from one's colonial past. The Cuban novelist Antonio Benítez-Rojo (1996) understood this concept as well when he introduced the affirming metaphor of resistance and rebirth at the heart of West Indian carnival. In essence, the carnival represents a temporary suspension of colonial control and a place to expose the masks of those in power and reveal their motives for maintaining dominance at all cost. Just as Joyce satirically deflated an aggressive English hegemony, the theatrical interpretations and comical performances of West Indian carnival personify a cultural synthesis that somehow brings together "that which cannot otherwise be unified" (McKenna 2009: 8). The use of language in *Finnegan's Wake's* does indeed mark a profound narrative shift in which the formerly marginalised relocate to the centre of discourse, weaving themselves into the empty spaces vacated by the colonising powers. This Irish obsession regarding the affirmation of formerly marginalised discourse can be seen clearly again in a poem called *Bog Oak* by modern day, Nobel Prize winning poet Seamus Heaney:

"A carter's trophy split for rafters, a cobwebbed, black, long seasoned rib with the moustached dead, the creel-fillers, or eavesdrop on their hopeless wisdom as a blow-down of smoke struggles over the half-door and mizzling rain blurs the far end of the cart track. The softening ruts lead back to no 'oak groves', no cutters

of mistletoe in the green clearings. Perhaps I just make out Edmund Spenser, dreaming sunlight, encroached upon by geniuses who creep out of every corner of the woodes and glennes towards watercress and carrion”(Heaney 1988: 92).

The physical remnants of Ireland's colonial past clearly recall the people that occupied that time. These include men like Sir Edmund Spenser, who is best known not only for his epic poem *Faerie Queene*, which glorifies England's Tudor Monarchy, but also for an inflammatory pamphlet entitled *A View on the Present State of Ireland* written in 1596, wherein he called for the extermination of a “barbarous and degenerative race” and concluded that all remnants of the Irish culture and language must be destroyed (Calder 1981:36). Heaney's remarkable removal of “Edmund Spenser, dreaming sunlight” to the margins, and the relocation to the centre of “geniuses who creep out of every corner of the woodes and glennes” valorises a brand new discourse and becomes a sharp instrument of identity construction. Unlike the bog oak itself, the narrator is totally detached from the Anglos who once occupied his native land. Instead of being able to share a common historical path, the narrator places himself as an outsider who only wishes to “eavesdrop on their hopeless wisdom” (Kroes 2008). In reality, this Irish/English dichotomy is, in many ways, reminiscent of Fanon's (1967) characterisation of the black man as having two separate personas, one face for his fellow ‘negroes’ and the other for the “white man”. Interestingly, Fanon's fellow Martinican Aimé Césaire (2000:42) had contemplated this same thought many years early, “I see clearly what colonisation has destroyed: the wonderful Indian civilizations - and neither Deterding nor Royal Dutch nor Standard Oil will ever console me for the loss of the Aztecs and the Incas”.

Poems of Imaginary Reunification³

Edward Said, reminiscent of Deane's *Dumbness and Eloquence*, originally hypothesised in *Culture and Imperialism* that the very complexity and insidious nature of power itself might just be the fuel that fires the imagination of artists and visionaries and propels them to seek answers to questions of cultural identity at deep metaphysical and aesthetic levels, rather than being satisfied with the concrete reality of the moments and times they live in (Said 1993). Notable examples of this magnificent impulse can be seen in W.B. Yeats's early, almost mythical poems, the beautiful descriptions by Pablo Neruda of Chilean landscapes, depictions of the Antilles by Aimé Césaire and in José Martí's turn-of-the-century appeals to the timeless simplicity and beauty of children. In *La Edad de Oro* (Martí 2007), the Cuban poet extols the children of America to be the best Americans they can be and shows their importance even more dramatically in his poem, *Sueño Despierto* (Martí 2011: 7):

Sueño Despierto

Yo sueño con los ojos	Day and night
Abiertos, y de día	I always dream with open eyes
Y noche siempre sueño.	And on top of the foaming waves
Y sobre las espumas	Of the wide turbulent sea,
Del ancho mar revuelto	And on the rolling
Y por entre las crespas	Desert sands,
Arenas del desierto	And merrily riding on the gentle neck
Y del león pujante,	Of a mighty lion,
Monarca de mi pecho,	Monarch of my heart,
Montado alegremente	I always see a floating child
Sobre el sumiso cuello,	Who is calling me!
Un niño que me llama	
Flotando siempre veo!	

Yeats (1959:16) would later express this same timeless reverence for children in his classic poem, *The Stolen Child*.

³ Since this same article will be presented in Spanish in July of 2015 at the "XVI Congreso Internacional de Filosofía Latinoamericana" in Bogotá, it was considered important to first introduce each poem in its original language followed by a translation. All poems were translated by the author in collaboration with Professor Estella Agudelo of "La Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana".

The Stolen Child

There we've hid our faery vats, Full of berries And of reddest stolen cherries. Come away, O human child! To the waters and the wild With a faery, hand in hand, For the world's more full of weeping than you can understand.	Allí hemos ocultado nuestras tinajas encantadas, Llenas de bayas Y de las cerezas robadas más rojas. ¡Márchate, oh niño humano! A las aguas y lo silvestre Con una hada, de la mano, Pues hay en el mundo más llanto del que puedes entender.
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Just as Neruda can be thought of as a poet who cared about internal colonialism in Chile as well as the menace of imperialism throughout Latin America, Yeats also came to be viewed as a poet with more than just local Irish significance with both poets having earned heroic importance by somehow uniting all of mankind against what Yeats would come to identify as "the uncontrollable mystery on the bestial floor" (Said 1993: 298). In fact, the similarities between the poems of Neruda and Yeats are well worth noting. In *El Pueblo* by Neruda (Neruda 1986: 131) and *The Fisherman* by Yeats (Yeats 1959: 146), the central figure is an unnamed character who in his strength and solitude inspires us all at a universal level:

El Pueblo

Por eso nadie se moleste cuando parece que estoy solo y no estoy solo, no estoy con nadie y hablo para todos: Alguien me está escuchando y no lo saben pero aquellos que canto y que lo saben siguen naciendo y llenarán el mundo.	So let no one trouble themselves when I seem to be alone and am not alone, I am with no one and speak for them all: Some listen to me, without knowing, but those I sing, those who do know go on being born, and will fill up the Earth.
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The Fisherman

It's long since I began To call up to the eyes This wise and simple man. All day I'd look in the face What I had hoped it would be to write for my own race and the reality.	Es mucho desde que empecé Para llamar a los ojos Este hombre sabio y sencillo. Todo el día me miré a la cara Lo que había esperado que sería Para escribir por mi propia raza y la realidad.
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In *Cahier d'un Retour au Pays Natal* Aimé Césaire also dramatically portrays the idealised dreams of the post-colonial poets. His plea for pluralistic and collective destiny for humankind is both powerful and moving as shown in this brief excerpt (Césaire 1984: 76):

Cahier d'un Retour au Pays Natal

Et aucune race ne possède le monopole de la beauté, de l'intelligence, de la force	And no race has a monopoly, on beauty , on intelligence, on strength.
Et il est place pour tous au rendez-vous de la conquête	And there is room for everyone at the convocation of conquest
Et nous savons maintenant que le soleil tourne	And we know now that the sun turns around our earth lighting that parcel
autour de notre terre éclairant la parcelle qua fixe	designated by our will alone and that every star
notre volonté seule et que toute étoile chute de ciel en terre à notre commandement sans limite.	falls from the sky to earth at our omnipotent command.

Poets like José Martí , Aimé Césaire , W.B. Yeats and , Pablo Neruda transcend mere language and stimulate a sense of the universal and eternal which suggests that the global decolonial process itself needs to be analysed contextually utilizing a more sweeping superstructure that goes beyond immediate local and national concerns.

Conclusion

The incredible similarities among all those who have suffered under the dominion of colonial power are undeniable. Dominance, coercion and manipulation by a potent enemy are a legacy shared equally by Irish, West Indian and Latin-American people alike. It is important to understand that all configurations of colonialism are not random but are part of an international structure of dominance and exploitation called the Colonial Power Matrix (Quijano 2000). Classic examples of these fragmented configurations can be seen all over the globe. In the United States, its citizens have every right to be proud of their university system, which is the envy of the world; however, at the same time, they cannot hide the fact that many of its politicians would

like nothing better than to build a giant wall across their entire border with Mexico (The Week 2013). In France, its traditions in the arts and sciences remain unrivalled, but at the same time, their own Jewish citizens are spat upon when entering Muslim neighbourhoods in Paris (Mandel 2014; Khaleda 2015). In Ireland, their writers and poets became eloquent in a language that was not even their own and soon came to dominate the very world of English literature; however, in recent times, the Irish were utterly unable to resist the clutches of the Colonial Power Matrix and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and sacrificed their country entirely to the world of foreign investment which led to the devastating fall of the Irish economy in 2009 (Kirby 2010). In contrast, a country like Colombia can be proud of its economists and politicians who have shown insight and wisdom by not placing their country exclusively in the hands of the global marketplace and, consequently, Colombia's stock market has remained stable. However, for some strange reason that one might attribute to the insidious nature of colonialism itself, Colombians are forced on a daily basis to eat low-quality, black bananas and a second-rate brand of coffee in a country that is a significant producer of both (Quintero Toro 2012). The strengths of each country must, of course, be a source of pride; however, the weaknesses of each should never be a source of embarrassment or humiliation since all have been the result of the colonial process itself. Irish scholar Seamus Deane in *Dumbness and Eloquence* explains that victims often blame themselves and that oppressed people are often "absurd in their own self-estimation" (Deane 2003: 109). To raise awareness concerning the reality of the Colonial Power Matrix and each country's place on this matrix seems like a good way to improve self-esteem for all its members. If the Colonial Power Matrix is in fact a global historical-structural organisational principle, is it not logical to think that resistance to this principle must be carried out both from a national and international perspective? This will require an international substratum of ordinary people implementing both political and apolitical decolonial strategies in their daily lives in a struggle without end.

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