Peacebuilding in Northern Ireland: Photo-elicitation and Visual Methodologies as Instruments for Examining Post-agreement Societies

Serena Clark

A dissertation submitted to the faculty at the University of Dublin, Trinity College in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree of Doctor Philosophy in the Department of International Peace Studies.

2020

APPROVED:

Carlo Aldrovandi, PhD
Academic Supervisor

Iain Atack, PhD
Academic Supervisor

David Mitchell, PhD
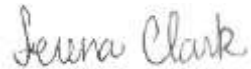Committee Member

Duncan Morrow, PhD
Committee Member

ii

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis has not been submitted as an exercise for a degree at this or any other university and it is entirely my own work.

I agree to deposit this thesis in the University's open access institutional repository or allow the library to do so on my behalf, subject to Irish Copyright Legislation and Trinity College Library conditions of use and acknowledgement.

Signed:

Serena Clark

Date: 27 March 2020

SUMMARY

There is an increasing academic interest in cultural expressions and practices in the fields of peace studies and conflict transformation. These topics are mainly discussed as processes that sustain cultures of conflict or foster reconciliation. However, using cultural expressions like public art to access post-agreement societies from the unique perspective of the local population remains unstudied. This research examines this topic using visual methodologies and Northern Ireland as the central case. These methodologies include photo-elicitation, semiotics, iconography, and deductive thematic analysis.

This research presents visual methodologies as tools to evaluate the current state of post-agreement situations. Photo-elicitation offers direct insight into the local conditions and socio-political elements of post-agreement areas. Iconography, semiotics, and deductive thematic analysis support photo-elicitation. These three approaches are used to evaluate the research data. The iconographic analysis establishes a baseline against participant responses as well as serves as an essential reflexive exercise for the researcher. Semiotics helps better understand and organize participant responses elicited in the interviews, and deductive thematic analysis is used to interpret and synthesize the research findings, analyses, and conclusions.

There are three primary research findings. The first finding explores the sustainability of peace in Northern. The second looks at the evolving roles of identity in the post-agreement state, and the third examines the evolving role of public art in contemporary Northern Ireland and how perceptions of the symbolic landscape offer insight into on-going peacebuilding processes.

From these findings, there are four conclusions. The first conclusion shows the application of the visual methodologies demonstrates a series of challenges in trying to

transform a symbolic landscape that accounts for cultural and symbolic expression in a circumstance where the state's authority is questioned, and a conflictual past is not easily resolved. The second conclusion illustrates that cultural expressions like art in the public realm are particularly powerful in reproducing sectarian identities and divisions, more so than a divisive political discourse or separate socialization. The third conclusion is that the use of photo-elicitation in combination with iconography, semiotics, and thematic analysis offers a valuable tool in accessing post-agreement environments like Northern Ireland. The final conclusion suggests that symbolic landscapes, expressed through public art, serve as a barometer of the situation on the ground in post-agreement areas. This research shows how visual methodologies are useful in understanding post-agreement areas and on-going peacebuilding processes.

To my family and friends, I could not have done this without you.

Thank you for all your support along the way.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIA	Anglo-Irish Agreement
APNI	Alliance Party of Northern Ireland
BIC	British-Irish Council
BIIGC	British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference
ECHR	Council of Europe's European Convention on Human Rights
CVSNI	Commission for Victims and Survivors in Northern Ireland
DUP	Democratic Unionist Party
GFA	Good Friday Agreement
ICA	Irish Citizen Army
IRA	Irish Republican Army
JFTC2	Justice for the Craigavon Two
NIHRC	Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission
NIO	Northern Ireland Office
NSMC	North-South Ministerial Council
POWs	Prisoners of War
REC	Research Ethics Committee
RHC	Red Hand Commando
SDLP	Social Democratic and Labour Party
UDA	Ulster Defence Association
UDP	Ulster Democratic Party
UK	United Kingdom
UFF	Ulster Freedom Fighters
US	United States
UUP	Ulster Unionist Party

UVF   Ulster Volunteer Force

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This research explores the use of visual methodologies in accessing the current state of post-agreement societies and on-going peacebuilding processes. This innovative approach uses photo-elicitation, semiotics, and iconography in conjunction with deductive thematic analysis. Specifically, it is applied to Belfast, Northern Ireland, to explore what cultural expressions like public art can reveal about contemporary Northern Ireland and the legacies of the Troubles. Through the examination of relevant literature and key data from the study, this research seeks to generate a new approach to contribute to the strategies used to evaluate post-agreement environments. At a time when Northern Ireland is experiencing new challenges to its sustained peace, this research makes an essential contribution to the fields of peace studies and conflict transformation. This chapter provides the definitions of key terminology, explains the problem statement, statement of purpose, research questions, research approach, the researcher's assumptions, rationale, and significance of the study and concludes with the structure of the dissertation.

1.2 Definitions of Key Terminology

Definitions of key terminology are provided to help the reader better navigate and understand this research.

Post-agreement State: Post-agreement state refers to a situation where acute violence has ended through formal peace processes and agreements. However, because of the transformative nature of conflicts, minimal levels of violence and tensions may still exist.

Peacebuilding: Peacebuilding refers to the process of developing structures that 'remove causes of wars and offer alternatives to war in situations where wars might occur' (Galtung 1969, 298).

Public Art: Public art refers to forms of visual art in spaces with free public access.

1.3 Problem Statement

Research shows that in conflicts like Northern Ireland, cultural expressions and practices are not meaningless phenomena but are indicators of how groups understand their lived experiences, mirroring the environment in which they exist. In this, it is crucial to examine these phenomena to understand the present state of post-agreement areas like Northern Ireland. Though there are many approaches for accessing post-agreement situations, this study investigates this topic using a new approach that draws on visual methodologies.

1.4 Statement of Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this research is to explore how visual methodologies and cultural expression of public art can be used to evaluate post-agreement environments. Northern Ireland is used as the central case. In performing this study, two key questions were examined.

1. What do cultural expressions like art in the public realm reveal about peacebuilding in post-agreement societies like Northern Ireland?

2. Are visual methodologies like photo-elicitation, iconography, and semiotics useful tools for investigating post-agreement societies?

1.5 Research Approach

This qualitative research uses a single case study approach. After obtaining ethical approval, the researcher conducted 25 photo-elicitation interviews. The sample set of participants includes both female and male participants as well as politicians, artists,

civil servants, religious leaders, members of religious institutions, academics, post-graduate students, former political prisoners, community workers, directors of community organizations, and former paramilitary members. Twenty-eight photographs of public art in Belfast guided the interviews. The researcher documented these photographs; of the photographs recorded, 28 were selected to use in the photo-elicitation interviews.

The implementation of this interdisciplinary research project is innovative in its emphasis on visual methodologies to evaluate post-agreement environments. The methodological approach can be considered a three-step process where photo-elicitation, iconography, Barthian visual semiotics, and deductive thematic analysis support each other. In the first step, photo-elicitation is used as the primary data collection method. The second and third steps are regarded as phases of interpretation. The second step, iconography and Barthian visual semiotics, guide these first phases of interpretation. Iconography is used by the researcher to analyze the same photographs utilized in the photo-elicitation interviews, serving as a reflexive exercise for the researcher as well as producing a baseline for readers when engaging with participant responses. Barthian visual semiotics helps in the initial stages of understanding and in arranging the data collected in the photo-elicitation interviews. In the third step, the research data is analyzed using deductive thematic analysis.

The reflexive use of this methodology generates data that provides direct insight into the local conditions and current state of the post-agreement state. These insights can be used to evaluate on-going peace consolidation processes and other case-specific issues related to post-agreement situations.

1.6 Assumptions

Four primary assumptions were made about this study. The first assumption was that art functions as a language; this was guided by the growing number of theories and methodologies dedicated to understanding visual data. Second, people cannot be separated from their environment, particularly in urban cities, and cultural expressions like public art is often a part of that environment. This assumption is based on the idea that people are exposed to public spaces where public art is located. Third, a photo-elicitation methodology would provoke unique data that could be used to address the research questions. This assumption is based on literature that suggests photo-elicitation interviews help trigger memories, stimulate deeper reflection (Harper 2002, 13), produce more natural, rich and detailed responses (Leonard and McKnight 2015, 632), reduce the power dynamic in the interview (Meo 2010, 160), and enable researchers to 'better see through participants' eyes' (Torre and Murphy 2015, 12). Fourth, Belfast would have enough public art to carry out this research. This assumption was based on the well-established mural painting tradition in Northern Ireland (Lisle 2006, 28).

1.7 The Researcher

In qualitative research, the researcher must be aware of the experiences and meaning systems of others and, at the same time, be aware of how personal biases and assumptions may be affecting what is trying to be understood. The researcher must integrate into and understand the systems of others, but when doing so, the researcher needs to practice reflexivity (Buckle and Corbin-Dwyer 2009, 55). This process helps the researcher confront personal positions and biases that may influence the generation of knowledge, the relationship between the researcher, material, and participants as well as the social implications of the research (Rose 2012, 183). This is made even more essential by the point that the researcher's personal experiences and prejudices cannot

be entirely isolated from the text that is produced from qualitative observations or interviews. As such, the research becomes an extension of these experiences (Johnson-Bailey and Ray 2008, 229-230).

During this study, the researcher was a full-time doctoral researcher. She lived in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland throughout the study. Therefore, the researcher has practical knowledge and environmental familiarity with both places. The researcher acknowledges that these experiences that can contribute valuable insight can also be a liability through bias in factors like researcher design, synthesis, interpretation, and analysis of findings. In addressing personal biases and assumptions, reflexivity was practiced throughout the research process, and assumptions and theoretical positions are presented at the onset of the study. Some of these reflexive practices included journaling, meditated self-reflection, and iconographic analysis.

1.8 Rationale and Significance

In considering the role of cultural expressions and practices like public art in post-agreement areas and on-going peace processes, scholarship has either overlooked or underemphasized the use of these phenomena to evaluate the current conditions of these environments. However, being reflections of the society where they exist, cultural expressions can generate valuable insight into the situation on the ground and for this research, Northern Ireland.

1.9 Structure of Research Write-up

There are nine chapters in this dissertation. The present chapter is an overview of the research project. Chapters Two and Three discuss the research design and methodology and look at topics like photo-elicitation, iconography, Barthian visual semiotics, and deductive thematic analysis. Chapter Four examines the significant contributions in the literature as well as establishes the theoretical framework of the study. Chapter Five

introduces the background and context of the study. Next, Chapter Six and Chapter

Seven present the 28 photographs and iconographic and semiotic analyses. Chapter

Eight provides the deductive thematic analysis of the data in Chapters Six and Seven.

Chapter Nine offers the final discussions and conclusions of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

Methodology

2.1 Introduction

This study explores the use of visual methodologies to understand post-agreement environments. Specifically, it looks at what people's perceptions of cultural expressions in the public realm like art can reveal about contemporary Northern Ireland and the legacies of the Troubles. In examining this topic, an innovative methodology was developed, drawing on photo-elicitation, iconography, semiotics, and thematic analysis. This chapter describes the research methodology and explores many essential topics. Discussions include the rationale for the research approach, explanation of the research sample, an overview of the information needed to conduct the study, a summary of research design, methods of data collection, analysis and synthesis of data, ethical considerations, and issues of trustworthiness. The chapter finishes with a concluding summary.

2.2 Rationale for Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is an approach used to explore and understand the meaning ascribed to social or human problems by individuals or groups (Creswell 2009, 4). It is a form of inquiry that concentrates on how people interpret and understand their lived experiences and the environments in which they exist (Holloway 1997, 2). The process of qualitative research commonly involves developing questions and procedures, the collection of participant-based data, conducting an inductive data analysis, the researcher's interpretation of the study's data, and the construction of a final report with a flexible structure (Creswell 2009, 4). Qualitative research encompasses data that produces rich descriptions and seeks to understand human processes (Huberman, Miles and Saldana, 2014, 4). The rich data generated in qualitative inquiry and its subsequent

7

textual representation should bring to light the richness and complexities of the topic being researched (Marx 2008, 794); this contrasts with the quantitative research approach. The quantitative approaches seek to achieve 'breadth of understanding' whereas the qualitative research approach most often aims to achieve a 'depth of understanding' (Duan, et al. 2015, 534). In quantitative research, the hypotheses are tested by examining the relationship between different variables. These variables are measured, usually using instruments, so that quantifiable data can be analyzed. There is a set structure for the final written report in quantitative research that includes an introduction, the presentation of the relevant literature and theory, methods, results, and discussions. Like the qualitative approach, the quantitative methodology requires the researcher to form assumptions, implement safeguards against potential bias, and be able to generalize and reproduce findings (Creswell 2009, 4).

Qualitative research can produce substantial volumes of data. Following the collection of data, the researcher must reduce the amount of information, deciding what data is relevant, and subsequently identify valuable patterns within the data. There are two essential elements in this process: decontextualization and recontextualization. Decontextualization is a process that extracts portions of the data and examines the information in conjunction with similar items found in the data set. Recontextualization provides continuity and ensures patterns or themes remain connected to the context from which they were collected. This concept also helps sustain the relationship between the field and the participants' accounts of reality. In this, it is essential to extract and identify significant patterns in research data while ensuring those patterns remain rooted in the original data collected (Maltreud 2001, 486).

After considering both research methodologies, the qualitative approach was reasoned to be more suitable because it is more likely to produce the information-rich

data needed to address the research goals of the study. Many features of this approach proved beneficial. Some of these features included flexibility in the research design (Creswell 2009, 4), ability to simplify data without taking away from its complexity (Atieno 2009, 16), opportunities for interaction between the researcher and the participants (McGinn 2008, 767), and the development of contextual understanding (Baxter and Jack 2008, 545; Huberman, Miles and Saldana 2014, 28; Yin 2009, 18).

2.3 Rationale for Case Study Methodology

From the perspective of the qualitative research approach, the single case study design was determined to be most suitable for this research. The case study design provided the researcher with a method to investigate phenomena in a specific environment (Baxter and Jack 2008, 545; Huberman, Miles and Saldana 2014, 28). A case study is defined as an 'empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident' (Yin 2009, 18). This approach is used when a study focuses on contextual circumstances, and those contextual circumstances are thought to be relevant to the phenomenon being studied (Yin 2009, 18). The current research fit well into the case study methodology because it concentrated on the contextual circumstances which were central to the phenomenon under investigation.

2.4 Diversity

In qualitative research, it is essential to consider potential issues of diversity. These issues are often discussed in terms of gender, race, and class (Buckle and Dwyer 2009, 57; Johnson-Bailey and Ray 2008, 226). Looking at issues of diversity in qualitative research is essential for two main reasons. First, the qualitative research method seeks to understand the meaning of a phenomenon in its natural environment. Second, the researcher is the primary instrument in the research design, research process, and the

presentation of the data. Considering these two factors and the position of gender, race, and class in Western society, it is crucial to examine issues of diversity and how these issues may potentially influence the research process concerning human participants. While gender, race, and class are social constructions, they are real regarding the social power and privilege ascribed to them, even if, at times, the ways they influence lived experience and guide how Western society operates are invisible. The qualitative research method helps validate and understand the lived experiences of disenfranchised groups because it departs from the positivist research paradigm (Johnson-Bailey and Ray 2008, 226), which argues real-life events can be explained using empirical observation and logical analysis (Kaboub 2008, 785). Instead, it stresses rationality and objectivity. Diversity issues include, but at not limited to, insider-outsider perspective and issues of representation (Johnson-Bailey and Ray 2008, 226-230).

The insider-outsider perspective considers the position of the researcher to the individuals or groups being studied. It accounts for whether the position of the researcher is an insider or outsider to the individuals or groups under study (Johnson-Bailey and Ray 2008, 226-227). The insider researcher is a member of the group that is being researched. The outsider researcher does not belong to the group under study. The insider or outsider position of the researcher is an epistemological issue because the position of the researcher to the participants influences the information that is collectively generated between them.

Moreover, because the researcher has a direct role in the description and presentation of marginalized voices, it is critical to account for the implications of the insider or outsider position (Hayfield and Huxley 2015, 91). Regardless of the researcher's position as an insider or outsider, the insider researcher must share the role, experience, or characteristics under investigation with those participating in the

10

research. Likewise, the outsider researcher should make clear the shared features or qualities and the personhood of the researcher, including membership status (Buckle and Dwyer 2009, 57).

Issues of representation are also a primary element of diversity in qualitative research. The researcher is required to be empathetic and consider the ethical implications when representing the data. The researcher must consider questions like if participants will understand how they are portrayed, if participants will be included in determining how the data is interpreted and presented, and if the participants' voices are the focal point of the research or if their voices are dominated by an overarching researcher's voice or analysis. Furthermore, the researcher needs to provide a responsible and politically aware representation of the data. The researcher must consider factors like are stereotypes about the participants being portrayed and reinforced, or does the researcher present the data in a multifaceted context that accounts for any negative depictions? In qualitative literature about the representation of the diverse 'other' the main focus remains on how the researcher can present the data in a way that respects the participants' experiences and at the same time, makes clear the researcher's subjectivities and relationship to the researched (Johnson-Bailey and Ray 2008, 227-228).

In this study, the researcher took measures to account for issues of diversity. The researcher was not a member of the group under study. Acknowledging the direct role that the researcher had in the description and presentation of participant responses and her role as an outsider, the researcher made clear to the participants her position, any commonalities, and her membership status. Regarding the issue of representation, the researcher attempted to provide a responsible and politically aware representation of the data generated and present the data in a multidimensional way that would account

for any negative depictions. Overall, the researcher practiced reflexivity and aimed to respect the experiences of the participants.

2.5 The Research Sample

The research sample was selected using a purposive sampling strategy; this method is used in case study based research because it often produces information-rich data (Duan, et al. 2015, 234). Because the focus of the study was Belfast, the researcher sought participants living in Belfast at the time of the study. This study used a maximum variation sampling strategy, sometimes referred to as heterogeneity sampling (Suri 2011, 67). The selection of participants was guided by one factor; each participant had to reside in Belfast during their participation in the study. Because the study focused on Belfast, participants needed to live there.

The use of purposive maximum variation selection made the sample set diverse. The research sample included 25 individuals living in Belfast. It was comprised of politicians, artists, civil servants, religious leaders, members of religious institutions, academics, post-graduate students, former political prisoners, community workers, directors of community organizations, and former paramilitary members. Beyond location, the researcher considered two other factors related to the research sample. First, the researcher sought equal representation of gender and groupings; however, the sample set was contingent on the willingness of individuals to participate. Those willing to participate in the study were overwhelmingly male, and some groups like the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) declined to participate. Second, sectarian affiliations were not used to select participants; at times, however, sectarian affiliations could not remain unknown; for instance, when communicating with political parties.

2.6 Overview of Research Design

This section summarizes the research steps of the study. Each step is discussed in more detail later in the chapter.

1. Before the collection of data, the significant contributions to the literature related to the research topic were reviewed. This literature review was on-going throughout the research process and informed the theoretical framework.

2. After the successful defense of the research proposal, the study was approved by the Research Ethics Committee (REC). In the REC approval process, all procedures and processes were evaluated to ensure the required standards were met. Some of these standards included confidentiality, informed consent, and potential risks to the participants and the researcher.

3. The researcher documented public art using a tablet. After careful review of the photographs, 28 photographs were selected for the photo-elicitation interviews.

4. Potential research participants were initially contacted via e-mail. Follow-up contact was done by e-mail, telephone, and Facetime video.

5. Photo-elicitation interviews were conducted with 25 residents of Belfast.

6. With the consent of each participant, photo-elicitation interviews were recorded with an Olympus VN-765 digital voice recorder (Dictaphone). These recordings were transcribed.

7. The researcher carried out an iconographic analysis of the 28 photographs used in the photo-elicitation interviews; this created a baseline for the data collected in the interviews and served as a reflexive exercise for the researcher.

8. Information from the interview data was initially organized and coded using NVivo. Barthian visual semiotics was used to arrange and understand further the data.

9. The data from the semiotic review was subjected to a deductive thematic analysis. Through this analysis, the research data was analyzed and coded.

2.6.1 Review of Literature

The review of selected literature was on-going throughout the research process and informed the thematic analysis and the overall study. This review focused on cultural expressions like public art, symbolic landscapes, post-agreement environments like Northern Ireland, and peacebuilding. The purpose of this review was to obtain a better understanding of the interactions between cultural expressions like public art and populations in post-agreement environments.

2.6.2 REC Approval

After the completion of the theoretical framework chapter, the researcher successfully defended her research proposal. The elements under evaluation included the aims of the research, a theoretical framework, methodology, detailed bibliography, and research timeline.

2.6.3 Data-Collection Processes and Methods

2.6.3.1 Phase I: The Documentation of Public Art in Belfast

The documentation of public art took place between April 2016 and May 2016. Before conducting fieldwork to record the data, potential areas of public art were marked on a map outlining essential sites in residential and business districts. Two-hundred and twelve photographs were collected; from this collection, 28 were compiled and used in the photo-elicitation interviews.

2.6.3.2 Phase II: Photo-elicitation Interviews

Photo-elicitation was the primary data collection method in this study. Through the basic idea of introducing photographs into the interview process, photo-elicitation interviews provide an alternative to verbal-only methods of collecting participant

perceptions and experiences (Derejko, et al. 2013, 1435). The difference between the verbal-only interview and interviews using texts and images is the way humans respond to each type of symbolic representation. Though this study used photographs, the same method can be applied to virtually any visual image, including cartoons, paintings, graffiti, and advertising billboards (Harper 2002, 13).

The primary function of the photo-elicitation interview is to elicit responses and memories as well as reveal participants' beliefs, perceptions, attitudes, or explore group dynamics (Meo 2010, 150). Images evoke 'deeper elements of human consciousness' than verbal-only interviews (Harper 2002, 13), and can connect culturally different worlds (Harper 2002, 21). Thoughts and memories stimulated by the photograph are not necessarily contained in the images but instead may be provoked by the images. The photograph can make the 'invisible visible' and elicit memories, feelings, and thoughts that can then be verbally expressed, becoming accessible to the researcher. The addition of sight to sound increases the reflexive process and sensory awareness. Because of this, the photo-elicitation interview gives the researcher access to information that may not become apparent through verbal-only approaches (Derejko, et al. 2013, 1435).

Photo-elicitation was considered the most appropriate method for this research for two reasons. First, photo-elicitation interviews can produce more precise, comprehensive, and data-rich interviews than the traditional verbal-only interview (Leonard and McKnight 2015, 632). Photographs can trigger memories (Baruchel, Epstein, et al. 2006, 2) and stimulate deeper reflection; this provides more natural, rich, and detailed responses (Leonard and McKnight 2015, 632). Therefore, photo-elicitation allows for a better understanding of the participants' perspectives (Torre and Murphy 2015, 12). Second, photo-elicitation can reduce the power dynamic between the researcher and the researched; this empowers the researched by positioning them as

experts and giving the control of data collection to the participants (Torre and Murphy 2015, 12; Leonard and McKnight 2015, 632). By encouraging the researched to 'take (a) greater part in constructing meaning and expressing their personal perspectives…photo elicitation can be a powerful tool to simultaneously gather data and empower the interviewee' (Leonard and McKnight 2015, 632).

Who controls the visual media?

Two elements determine how the photo-elicitation interview is conducted. First, is the researcher or the participant generating the photographs? Second, is the researcher, the participant, or both interpreting the photographs? Traditionally, the visual media has been controlled by the researcher (Derejko, et al. 2013, 1435). Douglas Harper, for instance, used selected photographs to study the technological change in the agriculture industry, and David Buchanan used this technique to study a reengineering process in a hospital (Fisher, Gapp and Kobayashi 2008, 1). This approach is distinct from the participant-controlled photo-elicitation interview or auto-driving/reflexive photography photo-elicitation interview (Baruchel, Epstein, et al. 2006, 2). In the auto-driving/reflexive photography approach, the participants control the visual media. Following the collection of photographs, the researcher interviews participants using their photographs (Derejko, et al. 2013, 1436).

In this study, the visual media was controlled by the researcher because all participants needed to respond to the same set of photographs. Ensuring a diverse grouping of photographs was also required to gain a thorough understanding of the phenomenon under study. The auto-driving/reflexive photography approach would not have allowed for one sample set of photographs; each participant would have their own set of photographs, and the interviews would be based on different sample sets. Further to this, in the auto-driving/reflexive photography approach, participants may not return

the cameras, take photographs or follow through with interviews (Torre and Murphy 2015, 14); from this, potential data would be lost.

Integrating the Photograph into the Research Interview: Form and Content

The content and form of visual images should be accounted for when integrating visual media into the research interview (Banks 2001, 51). Images can be read externally (form) or internally (content); form considers what can be seen in the image and content is the message being communicated (Baruchel, Epstein, et al. 2006, 5). Both form and content were considered when recording and compiling the sample set of photographs used in the interviews.

Useful information is not guaranteed by inserting photographs into the research interview; to ensure that useful information is generated, the researcher should emphasize 'breaking the frame.' This concept concentrates on the presentation of the photograph; photographs need to be taken from unusual angles or close-up to allow the participant to engage with their worlds in new ways (Harper 2002, 21; Baruchel, Epstein, et al. 2006, 5). This concept guided the production and documentation of the visual media used in this study; photographs were taken from unusual angles and close-ups.

Breaking the frame was an essential part of this research. The researcher considered how the 28 photographs were presented and the sequence of photographs. These factors can influence participant responses (Leonard and McKnight 2015, 635). For example, figures three and four both depict the same wall on Daphne Street; figure three presents a broad perspective of the wall, whereas figure four provides a close-up. Similarly, figure one captures a mural on Sandy Row from a straight-on perspective, and figure five emphasizes graffiti on a wall near the Village while simultaneously encapsulating the surrounding environment.

Integrating the Photograph into the Research Interview: Pretesting the Photographs

Pretesting the photographs was an essential part of compiling the sample set of photographs used in the interviews; this offered insight into which photograph would elicit usable data. After an initial grouping of photographs was selected, the two academic supervisors of this study evaluated the photographs and provided feedback; these comments were considered. Pretesting the visual media provided a better understanding of the photographs and informed the final collection of 28 photographs.

Recruiting Participants

Twenty-five participants were required for this research; the academic supervisors of this study felt that 25 participants were sufficient. Many communication tools were used to contact participants; these tools included email, telephone, and Facetime. All questions raised by potential participants were addressed. Once a person agreed to participate in the study, an interview was arranged.

The Location of the Photo-elicitation Interviews

The location of the interview can influence the interview process (Baruchel, Epstein, et al. 2006, 7). Each participant selected the site of the interview. The assumption was that if the participant chose the location, they would feel more comfortable in the interview process. Of the 25 interviews, fifteen took place in cafes, six in professional settings, three in pubs, and one in a church. There did not appear to be a correlation between the location and the length of the interview. Instead, the lengths of the interviews seemed to be determined by the photographs. Interviews lasted between fifteen minutes and two hours. Each interview was recorded on a Dictaphone with the permission of the participant and later transcribed.

In addition to the location of the interview, seating arrangements were considered; to minimize the hierarchal relationship between the participant and the

18

researcher, the participant should choose the seating arrangements. Though the power

relationship in interviews may always exist because it is the very nature of human

interaction, 'different locations (of interviews) might situate participants differently in

terms of their power in the research process' (Baruchel, Epstein, et al. 2006, 7). In this

research, participants not only selected the location of the interview but also chose the

seating arrangements. In public locations, isolated parts of the venue were regularly

chosen. Though a practical matter, allowing participants to select the location of the

interview and the seating arrangements may have made them more comfortable and, in

turn, more open during the interview process.

Transcription of the Photo-elicitation Interviews

The researcher transcribed the recordings of the photo-elicitation interviews. The

process of transcription in qualitative research consists of transferring the recordings of

interviews or conversations into textual form (Crabtree and Miller 1999, 106; Poland

2008, 884).

This text becomes the primary data used in the research analysis (Poland 2008, 884).

The transcription process also helps the researcher become familiar with the research

data before beginning the formal analysis (Braun and Clarke 2006, 17). The

transcription of interviews was needed for the thematic analysis. Because there is no

standardized method for the thematic analysis, there are also no specific guidelines for

generating transcripts. Though there may be no set guidelines, it can be argued that at

the minimum, an orthographic transcript or a verbatim record is necessary (Braun and

Clarke 2006, 17). At the same time, however, interviews are 'oral, visual, and

kinesthetic dance(s) between two living, active bodies with multiple levels of

communication.' Because of this, 'the transcription of this performance will never

capture that reality' (Crabtree and Miller 1999, 106); this needs to be considered when

analyzing the transcriptions because transcriptions are 'frozen interpretive constructs.' Therefore, it is essential that the researcher be clear about the type of transcription and how the transcripts were formulated. To determine the most suitable transcription style, the researcher should consider many factors: should the transcription be verbatim or word for word? Should the transcription be refined and formalized? Should the researcher include emotional expressions, silences, and intonations? How detailed should the transcriptions be? Should the transcripts be summarized? The transcription style is dependent on the research questions of the study, on-going interpretations, and can change through the research process (Crabtree and Miller 1999, 106). To determine the most suitable transcription style, the researcher considered each of these questions.

The quality of the transcription was imperative for the rigor of the study. It was, therefore, essential for the researcher to be aware of the potential margins of error. There are two primary discourses about transcription quality. The first discourse emphasizes anticipating or reducing errors in transcription. Some problems can arise from poor quality recordings or poor-quality recording equipment, transcriber fatigue, or trouble understanding accents or culturally specific terms (Poland 2008, 884). Unfinished statements, silences, self-correction, and background noise make the generation of verbatim transcription virtually impossible. Moreover, the many different transcription formats can considerably influence the interpretation of the transcripts (Loubere 2017, section 2.2). Even in the best of conditions, errors can occur like similar sounding words being mistaken for each other; this can lead to a reversal of meaning (Poland 2008, 884).

The second discourse considers the interpretative nature of transcription. The basic material in mediums, like audio recordings, cannot be verbatim records of the interview. Many elements, like nonverbal communication, interpersonal

communication, and interview context that are necessary for interpretation, are not captured (Poland 2008, 884).

> Elements of pace, tonality, affect (humor, sarcasm, excitement, hesitancy), and some elements of turn-taking and verbal communication that do not translate easily into text (e.g., laughter, paraphrasing or mimicking others, or the interviewer's use of *uh-huh* that may steer the interviewee, intentionally or unintentionally) are, in many cases, lost in translation from oral to written (Poland 2008, 885).

From this perspective, the possibility of verbatim transcription is not only questioned but also its suitability, as problems of voice, representation, contextuality, authenticity, positionality, and audience are taken into consideration (Poland 2008, 885).

Further to this, research conducted across cultures and languages can exacerbate problems of technical accuracy and accuracy of meaning. Generating accurate verbatim transcripts proves problematic for many reasons, including difficulty understanding participants because of strong accents. Even if partially verbatim transcripts can be produced, elements of nonverbal communication will still be left out. This type of communication is often more important than the meaning of verbal communication. In this, it is essential to emphasize linguistic and cultural fluency and the need to practice reflexivity throughout the research process to ensure a reliable, useful and authentic understanding of the participant responses (Loubere 2017, section 2.2).

Many strategies can be used to help reduce the margin of error; the selected strategies depend on the type of transcription required to answer the research questions under study. For example, in conversation analysis, the transcript type and attention to detail are different from what is needed for a study that concentrates on what was said rather than how it was said. To anticipate and reduce potential errors, the researcher implemented several strategies. To increase transcription quality, the researcher used a decent quality Dictaphone to minimize background noise, considered the microphone position during the interviews, used observational data and fieldnotes to guide the

transcription process, and acknowledged the transcription quality in the write-up of the study (Poland 2008, 885).

2.6.4 Methods for Data Analysis and Synthesis

Qualitative research can generate large volumes of information (Maltreud 2001, 486). The challenge then becomes reducing the amount of information; arranging the data in a meaningful way to help answer the research questions; relating parts of the information within the data to produce connections, themes, patterns, and new emerging meanings; and collaborating or legitimizing data through issues related to trustworthiness, credibility, standards and interpretive validity (Crabtree and Miller 1999, 20-21). In accomplishing these tasks, it is essential that the researcher remains reflexive about what is happening in the research process and how this has the potential to shape or affect the interpretation, analysis, and synthesis of data (Crabtree and Miller 1999, 14).

Phase I Iconographic Analysis

The formal process of interpretation began with an iconographic analysis of the 28 photographs used in the photo-elicitation interviews. The iconographic analysis aimed to provide a baseline or touchstone for the reader to reference when presented with the data produced in the photo-elicitation interviews; this was important because of the broad variation in the data. Though the researcher tried to provide a standardized interpretation of the 28 images, because of the nature of the iconographic analysis, the researcher acknowledges that interpretations may be subject to variation. The guidelines for guiding accurate interpretation during the iconographic analysis are discussed later in Chapter Three and were considered during the analysis.

The researcher also practiced reflexivity throughout the iconographic analysis; the analysis was a reflexive exercise. The reflexive aspect of the iconographic analysis

was crucial because it forced the researcher to spend significant time evaluating the images and learning detailed information about the subject matter. During this process, the researcher was made aware of her biases and assumptions about different aspects of the research topic. From this, the researcher was able to confront these biases and assumptions. This process was also essential to the other analysis in the research.

Phase II Semiotic Analysis

The second step in the interpretation process was the semiotic analysis of the information produced in the photo-elicitation interviews. Barthian visual semiotics offered a theoretical lens to preliminarily understand and organize the research data. After transcription, the data underwent the semiotic analysis; Chapter Three elaborates on this process.

Phase III Thematic Coding and Analysis

After phases I and II, the researcher completed the deductive thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a data reduction and analysis approach that seeks to decontextualize and recontextualize research information in a way that captures significant themes or concepts in the data set (Ayres 2008, 867; Maltreud 2001, 486). It is primarily a descriptive strategy that helps the researcher find emerging themes and concepts in the research data through thematic coding (Ayres 2008, 867; Boyatzis 1998, 4; Braun and Clarke 2006, 6). Recurring ideas or patterns in the research data is called a theme. Themes can either be directly observed (semantic level) or identified at a deeper level underlying the phenomenon (latent level) (Braun and Clarke 2006, 13). In this process, the data is divided into categories for analysis. This coding method seeks the reduction of data, as opposed to the axial and open coding tactics of grounded theory (Ayres 2008, 867). Themes are generated through inductive (from raw research data) or deductive (from prior research or theory) methods. The set of codes used in a study is

often referred to as a codebook (Boyatzis 1998, vii). This research used a deductive approach where the theoretical framework guided the thematic analysis.

In the beginning stages of the thematic analysis, coding ideas are often heuristic rather than analytic. The initial coding ideas become functional coding categories through rigorous analysis of the research data (Ayres 2008, 867). The researcher practiced reflexivity or reflexive auditing (Blair 2015, 15) throughout the coding process to ensure that the research findings authentically represented the participants' lived experiences. In the coding process, the research data is decontextualized and recontextualized into coding categories (Maltreud 2001, 486). In the analysis process, these categories are reorganized, refined, changed, reconceptualized, separated, or merged, and are rarely static (Ayres 2008, 867).

Because qualitative research often generates substantial volumes of information (Maltreud 2001, 486), it is crucial to have data management strategies (Ayres 2008, 868). Additionally, the trustworthiness of the qualitative research study is dependent on the integrity of the data collection and analysis, as well as the thoroughness and strength of processes. The NVivo data management software is a tool that can help manage research data and allows the researcher to demonstrate thoroughness and integrity and, thus, the trustworthiness of the study. This study used NVivo to manage the research data because of the potential benefits. These benefits included the ability to test possible relationships within the research information, map relationships, track data analysis, and attach notes to the data as well as track the researcher's thought processes (Smith 2008, 563-564).

2.6.5 Ethical Considerations

2.6.5.1 Ethical Considerations and the Participant

Ethics in qualitative research often refers to the relationship between the researcher and the researched. From the formulation of the problem to the presentation of the research results, it is an integral part of the research process. Research objectives can have some moral purposes; research designs are assumed to have integrity, research conduct is necessary to ensure participants are treated according to principles of humane consideration, and the presentation of results heeds to standard ethical conventions related to reporting data (Preissle 2008, 276). It is the researcher's responsibility to protect the rights of participants and implement safeguards to protect the participants from harm (Eisenhauer, Orb and Wynadan 2001, 93). Some of these safeguards include informed consent, ensured anonymity and confidentiality, and secured and protected data (Vannini 2008, 277-279).

Ethics in qualitative research is often interested in the problems that occur because of personal contact between the researcher and the researched, over long periods, and sometimes in intimate circumstances (Preissle 2008, 277). The general, unstructured character of qualitative research and its capacity to generate unexpected problems illustrates that ethical considerations have a resonance in qualitative research (Lewis 2003, 66). In contrast to many survey and experimental researchers, qualitative researchers obtain data through developing relationships with participants. However, the degree that these relationships can be compassionate, and objective is debatable. The modern era presents new problems in presenting research results because many research participants have access to the information about them that is presented or published. It becomes even more important then, to consider the ethical consequences and the justice of the presentation of research findings. Therefore, qualitative

25

researchers need to deal with the moral implications of those depictions with the participants, policymakers, colleagues, the public, and the media. The competing interests of these groups and the different ethical concerns of researchers illustrate the complexity of ethics in qualitative research and are subjugated to on-going debate (Preissle 2008, 277).

The integrity of the research activity must also be given ethical consideration. The integrity of scholarship is reliant on openness, honesty, and the acknowledgment of the research's strengths and limitations based on a set of common standards. It can be argued that any work done in secrecy or covertly lacks integrity because it is not available for peer review. In recent years, efforts to better protect research participants have resulted in the restriction of public access to transcripts, field notes, and other information collected in the research process despite pressure from the courts, policymakers, and the media for full disclosure. (Preissle 2008, 276).

In this study, the researcher considered ethical issues related to the participants, such as informed and voluntary consent, the security of research data and records, development of relationships, the presentation of research results and confidentiality and anonymity. First, participants were made aware of the research purposes, and participation was voluntary. Each participant was asked for consent to participate in the study and have their interview recorded. Consent was documented using the Dictaphone. Second, research-related data was stored on a Dictaphone. Transcripts were filed in NVivo and stored on a computer that had a secure internet connection. Third, the researcher sought to develop compassionate and professional relationships with each participant. Fourth, the researcher considered the representation of participants in the research findings seeking a responsible and politically aware representation of the data. Fifth, the researcher ensured confidentiality and anonymity

through redacting identifiable information in the presentation of research and securing research data and records.

2.6.5.2 Ethical Considerations and the Researcher

Though ethical consideration in qualitative research tends to focus on the welfare of the participant, and the methodological literature lacks and often omits questions about the dangers associated with social science research and the researcher, it is essential to consider the ethical implications for the researcher (Lee-Treweek and Linkogle 2000, 1-2). In this research, ethical consideration was given to the potential physical and emotional danger related to the researcher.

Physical Danger

Physical danger can occur during encounters with participants or interactions with the research environment. This ethical concern is essential to account for because qualitative research allows the researcher access to another world with different values, rules, and experiences of risk. Risks depend on the research topic, goals, and settings (studies with communities under threat, in war zones, or politically charged environment or about physically dangerous professions) (Lee-Treweek and Linkogle 2000, 11).

In this study, the researcher accessed potential physical danger before conducting the field research. Personal risk can occur even during the mundane research tasks like traveling to the location of an interview or even during the interview process (Lee-Treweek and Linkogle 2000, 11). To address these risks, the researcher ensured at least one person was aware of the departure time to each interview as well as the time and location. Also, each interview was held in a professional or public venue. The researcher did not experience any threats in transit to the interviews. However, in one circumstance, the researcher felt vulnerable. After a participant disclosed a violent

past, he ensured the researcher knew of his current violent capabilities. The researcher perceived this as a potential danger and reached out to her contact person. This person came to the interview location and helped the researcher exit the situation.

Potential physical danger and experience of risk are not equally distributed. The researcher needed to consider her gender in connection to potential physical threats. Though all genders are open to physical risk, gender frequently shapes the form of the risk and how the researcher can counter these dangers. For example, female researchers may experience sexual harassment and assault (Lee-Treweek and Linkogle 2000, 12; Hughes 2008, 777). The researcher used the same precautionary methods outlined above for countering this kind of risk. Even though the researcher took precautions, she experienced sexual harassment; during one interview, the researcher was solicited for sex. The researcher continued the interview. Because of the position and background of the participant, she did not feel comfortable abruptly ending the interview and leaving the venue alone. Instead, she reached out to her contact person, and that person came to the interview location and helped the researcher exit the interview.

Emotional danger

The process of qualitative research can have emotional implications for the researcher. The qualitative researcher can experience many different emotions. However, the emotional danger is not merely feeling uncomfortable but occurs when the researcher experiences negative emotions induced by the research process. These negative emotions can affect the researcher's personal life and professional relationships (Lee-Treweek and Linkogle 2000, 13). In this research, the researcher did not experience emotional danger.

2.6.5.3 Ethical Considerations and Transcription

The ethical consideration of transcription was an essential aspect of this research. First, there was a need to protect the anonymity of research participants. The anonymity of the research participants was upheld through the erasure of names and identifying information in the transcripts before carrying out the analysis. Second, ethical consideration was given to the representation of the research findings in published material. There is a distinct difference in the verbal and written construction of language. Because written communication has a different structure, syntax, and rhythm to the spoken word, the use of verbatim quotes in publications may unintentionally misrepresent participants. The researcher must be vigilant in the representation of the research findings, considering potential implications (Poland 2008, 885).

Transcription is an integral part of the research process and is more than just a phase of data preparation and management. Transcribing research interviews requires the same amount of diligence and reflexivity as the other phases in the research. Transcription may even need more reflexivity and rigor because transcription is the production of research data on which the analysis is founded (Poland 2008, 885).

In this study, the researcher considered both the anonymity of research participants and practiced reflexivity in the transcription process. Regarding the anonymity of the research participants, identifiable information was redacted in the presentation of the research. Moreover, the representation of information in publications was considered. The researcher was reflexive, considered potential consequences, and tried to portray the research findings in a way that would not misrepresent the words or meaning of the participant responses.

2.7 Issue of Trustworthiness

One challenge in qualitative research is the issue of trustworthiness. Trustworthiness refers to the level of confidence in the quality of a study's data, interpretation, and methods. In each research study, the researcher should create procedures and protocols that ensure the study is considered reliable. Though many experts argue that trustworthiness is an essential element of research, what constitutes trustworthiness is debatable. However, there are five established principles of trustworthiness that are generally accepted amongst qualitative researchers. These five principles include credibility, dependability, confirmability, transferability, and authenticity (Johnson and Rasulova 2017, 264-266). Though not all these criteria will be used in every research study (Connelly 2016, 435), the qualitative researcher must remain reflexive and create protocols and procedures to address issues of trustworthiness. The following sections examine issues of credibility, dependability, confirmability, transferability, and authenticity.

2.7.1 Credibility

The credibility of a study focuses on the reliability and accuracy of the research findings and the interpretation of those findings. It is synonymous with internal validity in quantitative research (Korstjens and Moser 2018, 121). Internal validity considers if the researcher has measured what was desired to be measured. Credibility refers to the accuracy and thoroughness of the description of the topic being studied to ensure that the data is accurately represented (Given and Saumure 2008, 895). Three questions can be considered when dealing with issues of credibility. First, were the participants in the study suitable for the research topic under investigation? Second, was the methodological approach the correct one to use? Third, were participant responses complete, open, and truthful? (Jensen 2008, 138).

Many different methodological procedures are used to increase credibility. First, the researcher should ensure enough interaction with participants and the context to obtain the information required for the study. Second, the research should examine the data from different positions to gain a holistic picture of the phenomenon under study, and third, colleagues can support the research through the evaluation and critic of the research (Jensen 2008, 139).

To help increase the credibility of this study, the researcher considered these methodological procedures and the three questions outlined above. Regarding the methodological procedures, the researcher took several research trips to Northern Ireland as well as lived in Belfast for one year during the study; examined the data from different perspectives using Barthian visual semiotics, iconography, and thematic analysis; and had colleagues like academic supervisors evaluate the research. Considering the questions, the researcher obtained a diverse sample set of participants, used a methodological technique that elicited rich information, and implemented strategies to ensure participant responses that were honest, open, and complete.

2.7.2 Dependability

Dependability refers to the consistency and repeatability of the research data over time (Connelly 2016, 435). A similar concept in quantitative research is reliability-reproducibility. Here, research findings are understood as reproducible if they can be duplicated using the same situation and procedures. Because qualitative research takes place in continually changing environments, accomplishing this may prove challenging. Therefore, seeking dependability in qualitative research is more realistic than reliability-reproducibility (Given and Saumure 2008, 895-896). To achieve dependability, the researcher needs to clearly describe the steps taken throughout the entire research process (Korstjens and Moser 2018, 121). The instruments and

procedures must be outlined so that other researchers can use them in comparable situations. In theory, similar research outcomes and explanations of the case under study should be found (Given and Saumure 2008, 896). To ensure dependability, the researcher has provided a detailed account of the full research process. Other researchers can use this information and apply it to similar situations.

2.7.3 Confirmability

Confirmability focuses on objectivity and involves ensuring the research data and interpretation of findings are derived from the data rather than the researcher's potential biases. It is essential that the analysis of the data is not based on the perspectives or subjectivity of the researcher but is firmly grounded in the data (Korstjens and Moser 2018, 121). Key strategies of confirmability include extended field emersion, peer examination, and reflexivity.

First, the data collection process in qualitative research requires the researcher to become immersed in the world of the participants; this allows for better understanding and insight into the context of the study. Immersion also helps reduce the distortions of information that may occur because of the fieldwork. Prolonged periods in the field increase participants' trust and helps the researcher better understand the culture and context being studied (Anney 2014, 276). In addressing this aspect of confirmability, the researcher spent a year living in Belfast, which provided a better understanding and insight into the phenomenon being researched. Second, peer examination requires the researcher to confer with neutral colleagues like other doctoral researchers about the research processes and findings; this helps the researcher be candid about the research and encourages reflexivity (Anney 2014, 279). In this study, the researcher often conferred with other doctoral researchers about her work; this helped her be more reflexive and honest about the study. Third, reflexive processes and practices help

ensure confirmability (Anney 2014, 279). Though the goal of achieving full objectivity in qualitative research is arguably unattainable, the researcher none-the-less must, at the very least, practice reflexivity. The researcher practiced reflexivity throughout the research process through exercises like journaling, meditated self-reflection, and the iconographic analysis.

2.7.4 Transferability

Transferability relates to the applicability of the study. The researcher must provide a thick description of the context, behavior, and experiences of the participants; this provides meaning to the outsider and enables the evaluation of the transferability of the research findings. Transferability can be considered the possible relevance of the results to other similar studies (Korstjens and Moser 2018, 122). To address issues of transferability, the researcher provided information-rich data related to the case study, the setting, sample, setting size, strategy, demographics, and interview procedures and topics (Korstjens and Moser 2018, 122); this was done to support the relevance of the study in broader contexts.

2.7.5 Authenticity

Authenticity is another crucial part of qualitative research. In establishing authenticity, the researcher aims to show that the research process and the evaluation of the study are both credible and authentic to the lived experiences of the participants and the broader social and political implications of the study. Authenticity moves away from issues of validity and reliability to focus on the value of the research and its potential impact on the community under study (James 2008, 44). This quality is a distinct advantage of qualitative research because it can portray the deep meaning of the phenomenon under study, which increases the reader's understanding of the phenomenon (Connelly 2016, 436). Five general criteria help demonstrate the authenticity of a study. These criteria

include fairness, ontological, educative, catalytic, and tactical authenticity (Guba and Lincoln 1989, 245-250). The following discussion explores these concepts and the action taken by the researcher to ensure authenticity.

First, fairness concerns the equal representation of participants' voices, stories, concerns, views, and perspectives during the research process and in written reports related to the research. All participants in a study must be given equal access to research inquiry to prevent skewed or biased results and ensure fairness. One way to accomplish this is for the researcher to develop relationships with participants beyond the traditional interview roles of questioning and answering. This approach requires participants to take responsibility for the social and cultural elements of the research inquiry. In turn, participants have a more significant investment in making sure that the outcomes are accurate reflections or authentic representations of the social and cultural context and the interviewees' positions (James 2008, 44). In establishing authenticity, the researcher sought a heterogeneous sample strategy to obtain perspectives from different communities and used an interview approach that allowed participants to take responsibility for the social and cultural aspects of the research.   Furthermore, participants were made aware of the aims of the research when asked to participate. By accepting the invitation to participate with an understanding of the research shows an investment in the study. The informal nature of photo-elicitation interviews also allows for conversation and a repour to develop with the participants.

Ontology and educative authenticity are the second and third criteria and are closely related. Ontological authenticity concerns the development of participants' understanding of the social context under examination and the degree of an increased level of awareness. In this, the research should show that participants can understand the perspectives of others through social or cultural engagement. It is here that

educative authenticity intersects with ontological authenticity. Educative authenticity places the onus on the researcher to help participants gain a better understanding of themselves and others (James 2008, 44). In this study, research participants were invited to interact with and talk about the cultural expression of public art in the symbolic landscape. Through these interactions, the participants arguably gained a better understanding of themselves and other individuals or groups; this is demonstrated in the findings and interpretations. To present an example here, at the onset of the interviews, some participants proclaimed an unsolicited position. However, during the photo-elicitation interviews, the initial position changed depending on the image under examination; this could suggest that participants were learning more about themselves and others during the interview process.

The last two principles of authenticity are catalytic and tactical. Catalytic authenticity concerns the degree to which the research has motivated participants to take some form of action. Tactical authenticity builds on catalytic authenticity and explores the extent that participants are empowered to act. It focuses on participants acting not only as individuals but as a member of a community, with the intent to change their circumstance for the better (James 2008, 44). In the context of these last two criteria, the study stimulated participants to provide the researcher with further contacts (unsolicited) and offer advice on associated areas of interest. Furthermore, the structure of the photo-elicitation interviews engaged and empowered participants to speak on behalf of their community and expand awareness of themselves and the broader context of their lived experiences.

2.8 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter presented the methodology and design of the study. The research sample was made up of 25 people residing in Belfast at the time of their participation in the

study. Participants were both male and female. Though the study sought equal gender and grouping representation, this was contingent on the willingness of people to participate. Here, males were more willing to participate than females, and some groups like the UUP declined to participate in the study. The sample set included politicians, artists, civil servants, religious leaders, members of religious institutions, academics, post-graduate students, former political prisoners, community workers, directors of community organizations, and former paramilitary members.

In the methodological approach, photo-elicitation, iconography, Barthian visual semiotics, and thematic analysis supported each other. The photo-elicitation interviews produced raw data, which was then subjected to semiotic and thematic analyses. The researcher conducted an iconographic analysis of the same photographs used in the photo-elicitation interviews; this created a baseline against the participant responses as well as served as a reflexive exercise for the researcher. The semiotic analysis helped better understand and organize the data elicited in the interviews. Photo-elicitation, iconography, and semiotics prepared the data for the thematic analysis. This analysis was deductive and was guided by the material in Chapters Four and Five.

Photo-elicitation was the primary method of data collection; the researcher controlled the visual media. This approach integrates the photograph into the interview process. For this study, the researcher documented public art and space in Belfast. A collection of 28 photographs was compiled and used in the photo-elicitation interviews. The primary purpose of this method is to evoke responses and memories that can reveal the participants' beliefs, attitudes, observations, or explore the dynamics of a group. This kind of interview can produce information that may not be readily available in verbal-only interviews. Participants chose the location of the interview. It was supposed

that if the participant chose the venue, they would feel more comfortable in the interview process, which would produce more open and honest responses. The interviews lasted between 15 minutes and two hours.

Iconography complimented the photo-elicitation approach; this analysis is a three-stage interpretive process. The researcher conducted a thorough iconographic analysis of the same 28 photographs used in the interviews. This analysis served two functions. First, the information produced from it acted as a touchstone or baseline for the reader against the interview data. Because the data evoked in the interviews varies, this baseline offers the reader a way to understand the different perspectives better. For example, if readers are confronted with contradictory interview responses, they can refer to the baseline to understand the possible reason for the variance or ground themselves in an arguably more consistent understanding.

Beyond serving as a touchstone or baseline, the iconographic analysis offered a way for the researcher to engage in an intensive reflexive exercise. In the iconographic analysis, the researcher considered each photograph individually and went through a multi-stage interpretative process. During this process, the researcher was forced to confront biases and assumptions connected to the research data. This process was critical in the production of trustworthy findings.

Further to this, the data from the photo-elicitation interviews underwent a semiotic analysis using Barthes' visual analysis approach. This method provided a lens to understand participant responses as well as serving as an organizational tool.

The final stage in the interpretation process was the deductive thematic analysis. The iconographic and semiotic analyses prepared the researcher for this final phase of interpretation. The iconographic and semiotic analyses helped the researcher understand and preliminarily organize the data as well as reflexively positioned the researcher for

the thematic analysis. In this final phase, the researcher coded and analyzed the research

data. The next chapter discusses in greater detail iconography and Barthian visual

semiotics.

CHAPTER THREE

Iconography and Barthian Visual Semiotics

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the cultural expression of public art as a language that communicates meaning in a symbolic landscape and provides a better understanding of iconography and Barthian visual semiotics. Art must be positioned as a language, and an established methodology for interpretation must be provided to accomplish the aims of this study. This research argues that art serves as a language and uses visual analysis methodologies to understand that language. Some visual analysis approaches include semiotics, visual rhetoric, content analysis, visual anthropology, iconography, and psychoanalytical image analysis (Van Leeuwen and Jewitt 2001, 1-3). The selection of the appropriate approach depends on the requirements of a study. If needed, the researcher can combine elements of different approaches to develop the framework.

This research uses Erwin Panofsky's iconography and Barthes' semiotics. While the broader debate within visual analysis methodology is acknowledged, iconography and Barthian visual semiotics are the most relevant to the aims of this study. Iconography and Barthian visual semiotics consider the meaning of art and how art produces meaning (D'Alleva 2005, 17). Iconography also serves as a reflexive exercise for the researcher and a baseline or touchstone for readers when engaging with the research data. At the same time, Barthian visual semiotics is used to initially understand and arrange the data produced in the photo-elicitation interviews. This chapter begins by exploring the idea of art as a language. Second, iconography is examined. Next, Barthian visual semiotics is discussed, followed by the concluding summary of the chapter.

3.2 Art as A Visual Language

For this study, it is essential to explore whether art constitutes a visual language. The first step in doing this is understanding what a language is. What constitutes a language depends on the perspective of the person defining it (Eubanks 1997, 31). From an anthropological perspective, language can be described as 'a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions, and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbols' (Sapir 1921, 7). From a linguistic point of view, language can be thought of as 'a set (finite or infinite) of sentences, each finite in length and constructed out of a finite set of elements' (Chomsky 2002, 13). Language embodies the "'human essence,' the distinctive qualities of the mind that are, so far as we know, unique to man and that are inseparable from any critical phase of human essence, personal or social" (Chomsky 2006, 88). Language can also be considered systems of symbols that convey complex ideas. In *Languages of Art*, the structures and functions of symbols in the visual arts, dance, music, and the literary arts are explored, and a philosophical foundation for studying nonverbal representation systems is established. Though there are many perspectives on what constitutes a language, definitions of language often share three common elements. These elements include symbols or signals that have conventional meanings, codes, or systems to organize the grouping of symbols, and use those codes or systems to communicate (Eubanks 1997, 31).

When compared, it becomes clear that verbal and visual languages are similar. In verbal language, symbols with conventional meaning are called phonemes, and in visual language, they are referred to as elements of art. These symbols are coded in distinct ways. In verbal language, the code refers to syntax, and in visual language, it refers to the principle of design. A coded group of symbols creates meaning. In verbal

language, this is referred to as semantics, and in visual language, it is the interpretation of the art by the viewer (Eubanks 1997, 31).

Other shared elements between verbal and visual language are based on language development. In this regard, verbal language has two primary elements; they are receptive and expressive language. First, receptive language refers to decoding verbal symbols to understand words communicated by others (Eubanks 1997, 31). This kind of language is more than merely vocabulary skills. It also incorporates the capability to understand a question as a question or accurately interpret complicated grammatical structures like understanding that the phrase, "'the boy was kicked by the girl' means that a girl did the kicking" (North Shore Pediatric Therapy 2012). Similarly, in visual language, viewers read and interpret encoded visual symbols. Here, the art critic can translate visual language into words to help others understand artworks.

Second, expressive language refers to the construction of coded verbal symbols that are created by the act of writing or speaking. In other words, expressive language is the 'output of language' or how people express their desires and needs; this includes words but also 'the grammar rules that dictate how words combine into phrases, sentences, and paragraphs as well as the use of gestures and facial expressions' (North Shore Pediatric Therapy 2012). Likewise, visual language also has an expressive component. This component manifests in the creation of visual symbol systems that communicate ideas. If in receptive language, the art critic must read the visual language, in expressive language, the artist must fluently speak that language (Eubanks 1997, 31).

While verbal and visual languages share similar elements, there are differences between them. These differences are often based on codification. It can be argued that visual language is less codified than verbal language. In this, the arts 'present us with

images of feeling for which there is no dictionary save that of the totality of human experiences' (Eubanks 1997, 32). Further to this, the codification of verbal language has arguably remained relatively constant for centuries, whereas art has experienced more change. For instance, though modern translations of the Bible would sound different in the seventeenth century, these translations would probably still be understood. However, the changes in art over the centuries may be considered more dramatic, and those in the seventeenth century may not understand contemporary art like performance art, installation, and abstract expressionism. From this perspective, the overarching point is that verbal language has mostly remained constant over the centuries. In contrast, the codification of visual language has drastically changed, thus damaging its credibility (Eubanks 1997, 32).

Based on issues of codification, it can be argued that visual language does not translate into other languages as fluently or directly as verbal language. There are rules, systems, and structures that dictate verbal language, but there is arguably no universal system for understanding the symbol system in visual languages. For example, there are clear rules for translating English into Italian; however, explaining the meaning of the color blue is dependent on context and culture. From this point of view, there are some rules to visual language but no overarching structure that lends to a universal understanding of visual language; 'art may lack enough agreed-upon conventions to be considered a conventional system of signals, and accepted as a language universally' (Eubanks 1997, 32).

Regardless of the shortcomings of visual language argued above, others contend that visual language has a lexicon, forming coded systems of signs and a visual vocabulary (See Barthes 1977; Panofsky 1970; Arnheim 2004; Richardson 1982). Barthes finds that images contain a sophisticated visual language and have an intricate

coding system. The codification and meaning of visual language can be understood

using a structured semiotic approach developed in 'Rhetoric of an Image' (Barthes

1977, 32-51). Art is a language and offers an established interpretive system for

understanding visual language (Panofsky 1970, 51-81). Others find that art may have an

inherent linguistic structure made up of a system of signs which acts as a language; art

is a viable form of communication. These understandings reject the notion that art lacks

similar universal conventions and rules which guide verbal language and, in turn,

cannot be a language. Instead, the symbol network of humans is generally universal and

accounts for the universality of art. The symbols of humans are similar despite possible

language differences because humans exist in the same world. Art as a visual language

surpasses linguistic paradigms, and syntactical structures and offers a universal channel

of understanding (Richardson 1982, 11-12). As illustrated in the below point, it can be

argued that visual language is superior to verbal language.

> (Visual language) comes closer to the original stimulus, verbal language being linear, sequential, and one dimensional, by comparison. Reading a picture is like entering a room in which many conversations are occurring. There are many visual paths for the viewer's eye to follow, more sequential options than reading words because a picture can be read starting from more than one point of view at a time (Eubanks 1997, 33).

Building on these ideas, art educators argue that children learn and understand

complex visual languages at an earlier age than verbal languages; they can understand

words before they can verbalize them (Eubanks 1997, 33). Communication of human

thought derived much earlier than the development of verbal language structures. The

earliest humans used graphic symbols and mnemonics to remember and store

information; this is demonstrated in rock art where symbols often represent universal

items in the physical world. Some examples of these symbols may include flora, the

sun, stars, fauna, and comets (Fischer 2001, 12-14). The human brain has been

processing visual information for longer than verbal information, making the aspects of the brain that process visual information evolutionarily older (Harper 2002, 13).

This review of verbal and visual language illustrates the intersections and divergences between the two forms of communication. This discussion does not try to position one type of language over the other but instead shows that art can function as a language. On the one hand, the legitimacy of situating art as a visual language is questioned, citing issues of codification, fluency, and universality. On the other hand, art is found to be a visual language that has a lexicon, creating a system of signs and symbols that formulate a visual vocabulary. As such, art has an inherent linguistic structure. This research acknowledges the different sides of the debate but argues that art can function as a viable and essential form of communication. In this section, art is established as a language. The next two sections examine ways to decipher this language and explores Panofsky's iconography and Barthes' semiotics.

3.3 Erwin Panofsky's Iconography

Iconography is an approach that seeks to understand the meaning of the content of the image. It is described as a form of visual content analysis and interpretation guided by cultural traditions and research interests originating in the social sciences and humanities (Müller 2015, 249). In short, iconography is the study of images. Iconography was initially developed by art historians to analyze art. Though the concept of iconography dates to Roman scholar Pliny the Elder (AD 23-79), it was not until the sixteenth century that the concept became more systematized. There are many contributors to the development of iconography. Some include Giovanni Pietro Bellori, Johann Joachim Winckelmann, Aby Warburg, GJ Hoogewerff, and Panofsky. However, the founders of modern iconography are often seen to be Warburg and his students, one of which was Panofsky (D'Alleva 2005, 20-21).

Warburg and his students rejected the more traditional or purely formal approach to art likened to scholars, such as Heinrich Wölfflin. Warburg proposed that art is linked to the religion, literature, philosophy, politics, science, and the social life of the period in which it was created. Panofsky argues, "In a work of art, 'form' cannot be divorced from 'content': the distribution of colour and lines, light and shades, volumes and planes, however delightful as a visual spectacle, must also be understood as carrying a more-than-visual meaning" (D'Alleva 2005, 22). In this, iconography is a method to interpret the subject matter or meaning in the image rather than just the form (Panofsky 1970, 51). Warburg is attributed to expanding the scope of art history to include any visual image regardless of its aesthetic value, like press photographs or other forms of visual imagery. This expansion is essential for the application of iconography to other modes of visual images (Müller 2015, 249) like the photographs used in this study.

Iconography addresses the questions of representation and hidden meaning in visual images (D'Alleva 2005, 17). In his essay *Iconography and Iconology: An Introduction to the Study if Renaissance Art*, Panofsky developed a framework to understand the meaning of visual images. This framework is made up of three levels of interpretation, with intrinsic meaning placed at the highest level of understanding (Shin 1990, 17). The first two levels of interpretation, pre-iconographical description, and iconographical analysis focus on content. The third, iconological interpretation focuses on perspective. The pre-iconographical description is concerned with the details in an image like people or events or 'what can be seen in the image?' The iconographical analysis aims to understand a fuller account of the image or 'what can be observed in the image?' Here, meaning is derived from outside sources related to social, political, or cultural contexts. Iconological interpretation occurs when the structure and content are

used collectively to interpret the intrinsic meaning of the image and seeks to determine what the meaning of the image is (Lenette 2016, section 1.1.2). The discussion below explores these three levels of interpretation.

As noted above, Panofsky's iconography is concerned with the subject matter or meaning of an image rather than just the form. To distinguish between subject matter or meaning and form, Panofsky uses the analogy of an acquittance greeting him on the street by lifting his hat. In his initial visual interaction with the figure, he identifies a configuration of details composed of colors, lines, and volumes. After this initial interaction, the configuration is understood as an object, the gentleman, and as an event, the change in detail by the action of hat-lifting; this represents the first sphere of subject matter or meaning called factual meaning. This type of meaning refers to the recognition of visible forms and objects using knowledge gained from personal experiences (Panofsky 1970, 51).

The objects and events identified through factual meaning will generate a natural reaction. The way his acquaintance carries out the gesture of hat-lifting provides insight into the acquaintance's state of being. The meanings assigned by these psychological nuances constitute the second sphere of subject matter or meaning called expressional. Expressional meaning is different from factual meaning because it requires empathy and sensitivity, understood and shaped by practical experiences. Together these two spheres of subject matter or meaning constitute primary or natural meaning (Panofsky 1970, 51-52).

The recognition that the lifting of a hat signifies a greeting is part of the second level of interpretation. This gesture is specific to Western culture and comes from medieval chivalry. Other cultures cannot be expected to understand that this gesture is not only a practical event with expressional meanings but also an indication of

46

politeness. To understand the meaning of the gentleman's gesture, Panofsky not only needs to be familiar with the primary or natural meaning but also be familiar with the deeper customs and cultural traditions specific to a civilization. Likewise, the acquaintance would not have lifted his hat in greeting had he been unaware of the importance of the gesture. The interpretation of the acquaintance's action as a respectful greeting is the second level of meaning called secondary or conventional. Secondary or conventional meaning is different from primary or natural meaning because it is intelligible instead of sensible (Panofsky 1970, 52).

At this stage, the process of interpretation enters the third level. Here, the action of Panofsky's acquaintance can reveal the full makeup of his personality. His personality is informed by the period in which he lives, his gender, nationality, education, social and life experiences, as well as his surroundings and personal worldviews. Though these factors cannot be determined through the single act of a polite greeting, they can be discerned by compiling large sums of comparable observations and interpreting them with general information about his gender, class, period, and educational background. The qualities revealed from this inquiry are inherent in each of his actions, and in turn, every action can be understood according to these qualities. This kind of meaning is called intrinsic meaning or content (Panofsky 1970, 52-53).

Unlike intrinsic meaning or content, which is elemental, the two other kinds of meaning are phenomenal. Intrinsic meaning or content is inherent in the meaning of the action, whereas primary or natural and secondary or conventional are occurrences. This level of interpretation is considered an underlying principle that unifies and explains the visible event and its intelligible meaning as well as determines the form wherein the visible event is shaped (Panofsky 1970, 53).

3.3.1 The Application of Erwin Panofsky's Iconography to Works of Art

By applying the results of Panofsky's analysis of the gentleman's gesture to pieces of art, the subject matter or meaning can be understood using the same three interpretational levels.

3.3.1.1 Primary or Natural Subject Matter

Primary or natural subject matter is sub-divided into factual and expressional meaning. This kind of meaning is acquired through the recognition of pure forms like 'certain configurations of line and colour, or certain peculiarly shaped lumps of bronze or stone, as representations of natural objects, such as human beings, animals, plants, houses, tools and so forth; by identifying their mutual relations as events; and by perceiving such expressional qualities as the mournful character of a pose or gesture, or the homelike and peaceful atmosphere of an interior.' Panofsky calls the realm of pure forms, identified as transporters of primary or natural meanings, the 'world of artistic motifs.' It is the inventory of these motifs that established the pre-iconographical description in a piece of art (Panofsky 1970, 53-54).

3.3.1.2 Secondary or Conventional Subject Matter

The secondary or conventional subject matter is acquired by assigning meaning to the objects or events identified in the first level of interpretation. In the same way that the action of the man lifting his hat was recognized as a polite gesture, in this stage of interpretation, the meaning is derived from the work of art. This is illustrated in the realization that a figure of a man holding a knife characterizes St. Bartholomew or that people uniquely sitting at a dinner table represents the *Last Supper* (1498). Through this interpretative process, artistic motifs and groupings of artistic motifs or compositions relate to themes or concepts. As such, motifs identified as transporters of a secondary or conventional meaning are called images, and groupings of images are called *invenzioni*

by ancient art theorists. *Invenzioni* refers to artistic devices that carry meaning. More contemporary theorists like Panofsky call them stories and allegories (Panofsky 1970, 54).

The recognition of these images, stories, and allegories is often classified under iconography. The argument that iconography is concerned with the subject matter rather than form refers to the realm of the secondary or conventional subject matter. Here, the themes and concepts in images are represented as stories or allegories and not merely by primary or natural subject matter. From the perspective of Wölfflin, formal analysis primarily concerns motifs and the groupings of motifs or compositions. In a strict interpretation of this, expressions like man or horse or even phrases like the admirable clarification of the joints in the human body would need to be avoided. An accurate iconographical analysis assumes an accurate understanding of the motifs. In the case of St. Bartholomew, the knife enables an accurate identification, but if the knife was replaced with another object, the figure is no longer St. Bartholomew. It is essential to point out that the statement, this figure is an image of St. Bartholomew, infers the artist's conscious intent to portray St. Bartholomew. The expressional qualities, however, can be unintentional (Panofsky 1970, 54-55).

3.3.1.3 Intrinsic Meaning or Content

Intrinsic meaning or content is acquired by identifying the underlying principles that convey the attitude of a period, a class, a nation, a religion, or philosophical persuasion. Compositional methods and iconographical importance establish these principles. To illustrate this argument, Panofsky points to a modification in the traditional Nativity scene in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The traditional Nativity scene has the Virgin Mary reclining in bed or on a couch, but this was often replaced with the Virgin Mary kneeling before Baby Jesus in adoration; this illustrates a new emotional attitude

unique to the late stages of the Middle Ages. A comprehensive interpretation may find

technical procedures distinctive to a specific country, period, or artist like

Michelangelo's predilection to use stone rather than bronze in his sculptures (Panofsky

1970, 55-56).

The understanding of pure forms, motifs, images, stories, and allegories as

indicators of principles is called symbolical value. In order to limit the interpretation of

Leonardo da Vinci's famous fresco showing a group of people sitting at a dinner table

and that group of people signifying the *Last Supper*, the interpretation is confined by

the compositional and iconographical elements of the work of art. However, if the *Last

Supper* is understood as a product of Da Vinci's personality, of the Italian High

Renaissance or a specific religious perspective, the art becomes an indication of

something else, and the interpretation of its compositional and iconological elements

become unique elements of this something else. This understanding of symbolic values

is referred to as iconology rather than iconography (Panofsky 1970, 56-57).

'Graphy' is a suffix that originates from the Greek verb *graphein*, which

translates as, to write, inferring a descriptive or statistical approach to a process. In this,

iconography is a description and categorization of images in the same way ethnography

is a description and categorization of human races. It can be considered an axillary

study that informs when and where specific motifs envisioned specific themes. For

instance, it makes clear when and where Christ was dressed in a loincloth or when and

where he was placed on the Cross. From this, iconography helps establish dates,

origins, and authenticity as well as serving as the required basis for additional

interpretation. Iconography does not arrive at this interpretation alone. It may collect

and classify evidence but does not automatically investigate the origins or significance

of this evidence, the interaction between different kinds, the persuasions of theological,

philosophical or political ideas, or the objectives and leanings of artists and patrons. In this, iconography only considers partial aspects of the intrinsic content (Panofsky 1970, 57).

Because of the restrictions on the term iconography, Panofsky proposes using the word iconology when iconography is combined with other methods to understand the meaning of a work of art. Like the suffix 'graphy,' 'logy' means thought or reason, thus denoting something interpretative. Iconology then becomes 'iconography turned interpretative.' Here, iconography is an interpretive approach that results from synthesis instead of analysis. Like the accurate identification of motifs is required for an accurate iconographical analysis, the accurate analysis of images, stories, and allegories is the precondition for an accurate iconological interpretation. The exception to this being when the secondary or conventional subject matter is removed and a direct transition from motifs to content occurs (Panofsky 1970, 57-58).

3.3.2 Accuracy of Interpretation

In an iconographic analysis, it is essential to consider the accuracy of interpretation. Because the pre-iconographical description is limited to motifs, the issue seems straightforward. These motifs can be identified based on practical experience. Nearly everyone can identify the form and behavior of animals, plants, and human beings as well as between gestures that represent happiness versus anger. It is possible that in certain instances, personal experience will not be enough, and an animal, plant, or tool may be unknown. In such cases, practical experience can be expanded by conferring books or experts. However, the realm of practical experience has not been left and informs the type of expert to consult (Panofsky 1970, 58-59).

It is here that a unique problem is encountered. Putting aside the fact that the onus for making objects, events and expressions recognizable is on the artist and when

this endeavor fails it is because of the artist's 'incompetence or malice afterthought,' an accurate pre-iconographical description cannot be attained by indiscriminately placing personal experience on a piece of artwork. Though practical experience is necessary and enough to understand the pre-iconographical description, it does not guarantee accurate interpretation. While the identification of motifs is based on practical experience, the viewer of a piece of art is reading what they see based on how the objects and events are represented under differing historical circumstances; this acts as a corrective principle to practical experience and is referred to as the history of style (Panofsky 1970, 58-60).

Iconographical analysis, engaging with images, stories, and allegories instead of motifs, infers greater familiarity with objects and events and can be obtained through practical experience. It assumes knowledge of themes and concepts as understood through literary sources. When the observer is unable to recognize the subject of an image, they must become familiar with the content to understand the iconographical meaning. To obtain this knowledge, the reader must become familiar with what the artist would have read or the knowledge the artist would have had. For instance, to understand the *Last Supper* as more than a dinner party, the observer must be familiar with the content of the Gospels. Though awareness of specific themes and concepts understood through literary sources is essential and enough material for an iconographical analysis, it does not guarantee an accurate interpretation. In the same way that it is impossible to obtain an accurate pre-iconographical description by the indiscriminate application of practical experience, here it is impossible to obtain an accurate iconographical analysis by haphazardly applying literary knowledge to motifs (Panofsky 1970, 61-63).

Iconological interpretation requires a more comprehensive knowledge of themes or concepts beyond what is communicated in literary sources. The basic principles that dictate the presentation and motifs, as well as the production and interpretation of images, stories, and allegories that assign meaning to the formal structure and technical procedures used, cannot be understood through an individual text like John 13:21 corresponds to the iconography of the *Last Supper*. In order to understand these basic principles, synthetic intuition is required. Like pre-iconographical description and iconographical analysis, iconological interpretation does not guarantee accurate interpretation. In this, the observer must compare the understood intrinsic meaning to other established documents that bear witness to 'the political, poetical, religious, philosophical, and social tendencies of the personality, period or country under investigation' (Panofsky 1970, 64-65).

As demonstrated above, iconography is composed of three levels of meaning. The basic level is often mistaken for form and the second, iconography, for iconology. In each level of interpretation, the identifications and understandings rely on 'subjective equipment.' As a result, they need to be complemented with and corrected by an awareness of historical processes that collectively are called tradition (Panofsky 1970, 65-66).

Table 1 is a synoptic table that summarizes the discussion of Panofsky's three levels of interpretation. Though the table indicates three independent domains of meaning, the table refers to different aspects of one phenomenon, the entire piece of artwork. In the actualization of iconography, the three levels of interpretation combine to form a single process (Panofsky 1970, 67).

Table 1: Synoptical table of Iconography and Iconology

Object of Interpretation	Act of Interpretation	Equipment for Interpretation	Corrective Principle of Interpretation (History of Tradition)
I *Primary* or *natural* subject matter - (A) factual, (B) expressional - constituting the world of artistic motifs.	*Pre-iconographical description* (and pseudo-formal analysis).	*Practical experience* (familiarity with *objects* and *events*).	History of *style* (insight into the manner in which, under varying historical conditions, *objects* and *events* were expressed by *forms*).
II *Secondary* or *conventional* subject matter, constituting the world of *images, stories* and *allegories*.	*Iconographical analysis*.	Knowledge of literary sources (familiarity with specific *themes* and *concepts*).	*History of types* (insight into the manner in which, under varying historical conditions specific *themes* or *concepts* were expressed by *objects* and *events*).
III *Intrinsic meaning* or *content*, constituting the world of *'symbolical' values*.	*Iconological interpretation*.	*Synthetic intuition* (familiarity with the *essential tendencies of the human mind*), conditioned by personal psychology and '*Weltanschauung*'.	*History of cultural symptoms or 'symbols'* in general (insight into the manner in which, under varying historical conditions, *essential tendencies of the human mind* were expressed by specific *themes* and *concepts*.

Source: Erwin Panofsky. *Meaning in the Visual Arts: Papers in and on Art History* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1955), 40-41.

3.3.3 Further Deliberations on Iconography

In his discussion on iconography, Panofsky spends much time explaining external

phenomena like images, symbols, events, objects, and figures. However, it is essential

to note that the meaning of these phenomena is understood by 'a self.' The role of self-

understanding in Panofsky's theory is not addressed as a separate premise in each of the three levels of interpretation. Instead, it is an overarching theme in his theory where 'a self,' an 'I,' is part of the interpretation process. In his discussion of the three levels of meaning, Panofsky uses the term interpretation rather than position or standing. By doing this, he acknowledges the utility of 'the role of the self in the acquisition of meaning from external phenomena' (Shin 1990, 17-18).

Further to this, the reader of the image will hypothetically progress through Panofsky's three levels of interpretation in order. However, many art historians contest the idea of the 'innocent eye' required for the pre-iconographical description. When looking at an image, the reader will interpret it based on their values, experiences, and cultural and historical knowledge. For instance, if a person is raised in the Christian faith, it will be almost impossible for that person to see an image of the Nativity scene at the pre-iconographical level. Instead, the reader skips the pre-iconographical level and immediately arrives at the iconographical level. Conversely, if the readers of an image have too 'innocent' of an eye, they will have trouble engaging with the image at any of the three iconographic levels. If the reader sees an image of a lotus flower, a motif in Egyptian art, but is unfamiliar with this symbol, it may only look like a geometrical shape, and the representational aspects of the image would be lost on the reader (D'Alleva 2005, 22-23).

These criticisms question the pre-iconographical description level of interpretation. Interpretation is based on a person's known experiences, values, and cultural and historical knowledge. From the stance of these criticisms, if the reader is familiar with the content in an image, it is nearly impossible for them to experience the image at the pre-iconographical stage. Barthes grapples with a similar challenge in his semiotic theory. His noncoded iconic or denoted message can be compared to a pre-

iconographical description. The noncoded iconic message is the literal meaning in the image or the informational matter. This message cannot be entirely separated from the highest level of interpretation, the coded iconic message, or symbolic message. The noncoded message is imprinted on the coded iconic message. However, even if the reader of an image can understand the coded iconic message, they can still perceive the noncoded iconic message (Barthes 1977, 35-37). It may be beneficial to consider this regarding the pre-iconographical description. If the reader of an image can understand the iconological level of interpretation, by applying Barthes' idea, it may be possible for them to perceive the pre-iconographical description.

Regarding the concept of too innocent of an eye, Barthes' semiotics may again prove helpful. Though it is conceivable to have too innocent of an eye, Barthes finds that to understand the image at its most basic level, the reader must simply be old enough to understand what an image is and the basic items in the image. He argues that most children learn what an image is by the age of four and refers to this kind of understanding as an 'anthropological knowledge' (Barthes 1977, 36). Again, if this aspect of Barthes' theory is applied to the pre-iconological description, the reader can conceive the pre-iconological description.

3.3.4 The Practical Application of Iconography

This section presents an example of the practical application of iconography. Edward Hopper's *Nighthawks* is the subject of this analysis (1942; see figure one in Appendix B). Hopper argues the image is nothing more than 'a restaurant on Greenwich Avenue where two streets meet,' but critical aspects of the image place it in the anti-urban mold (Slater 2002, 144). In this analysis, the three stages of interpretation, pre-iconographical description, iconographical analysis, and iconological interpretation, are used to determine the meanings in *Nighthawks*.

56

The first phase in the iconographic analysis is the pre-iconographical description. As a reminder, the pre-iconographical description considers motifs. Lines and colors represent the objects and events that inform the motifs, and volumes and are understood through practical experience. There is also a shared understanding of animals and plants and between gestures (Panofsky 1970, 58). Here, it may be helpful to ask, what does the image represent at the most basic level? (D'Alleva 2005, 26). The pre-iconographical elements in the image include an empty street, a restaurant, a couple sitting inside a restaurant, a man sitting alone inside a restaurant, a man serving or talking to the patrons of a restaurant and a contrast in the lighting between the brightly lit inside of the restaurant and the darkness of the outside streets (Slater 2002, 144-145).

The second phase is the iconographical analysis. This phase seeks to understand the themes or concepts in images, stories, and allegories. It moves beyond understanding through practical experience and assumes knowledge through literary sources (Panofsky 1970, 61). The iconographical analysis of *Nighthawk* shows that the image communicates loneliness. The light from inside the restaurant is the only light reflected on the empty streets, intensifying the darkness of the outside, and deepening the image's communication of loneliness. The lighting in the image creates the mood of the scene; 'circular in form, this building is an island that beckons and repels; and the fluorescent lighting is intimidating, alienating, and dehumanizing. It creates an unreal and artificial feeling of warmth, an atmosphere that is clinical and more in tune with a laboratory than a restaurant' (Slater 2002, 144-145). Beyond the lighting, there is a kind of contrast inside the restaurant. The man sitting alone at the counter appears more in tune with the outside than the people that surround him; this indicates that the couple is alienated from their surroundings, "literally 'out of place' in a space which stands for little other than isolation" (Slater 2002, 145).

The final stage is the iconological interpretation. This stage determines the highest level of meaning and requires synthetic intuition. It seeks to find the reason for the existence of the image and understand its deeper meanings (Panofsky 1970, 64-65); it questions, what is the meaning of the image? (Lenette 2016, section 1.1.2). *Nighthawks* is a comment on anti-urbanism in the American city. It represents the "'stills' of the American city that evoke senses of loss, loneliness, alienation, and despair - mournful commentaries on the unhappy material consequences of rampant, erosive Modernity" (Slater 2002, 142).

The analysis of *Nighthawks* is an example of the practical application of iconography. It helps the reader better understand the iconographic processes that are used by the researcher in Chapter Six and Chapter Seven. The next section explores the second visual analysis method used in this research, Barthian visual semiotics.

3.4 Roland Barthes' Visual Semiotics

Roland Barthes' visual semiotics is an essential tool for understanding the visual world, and if this approach is applied to an image, the meaning of that image can be realized. The establishment of modern semiotics is often attributed to the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure and American philosopher Charles Sanders Pierce (Berger 2014, 21). Other prominent semioticians that helped shape semiotics include Umberto Eco, Barthes, Louis Hjelmslev, and Charles Morris. Semiotics principally began with two traditions: semiology and semiotics. Saussure, Hjelmslev, and Barthes generally used the term semiology, while Peirce and Morris used the term semiotics (Nöth 1995, 13). In modern discourse, the term semiotics is predominantly used over semiology (Berger 2014, 22; Nöth 1995, 13). Likewise, this research uses the term semiotics.

Since its emergence, semiotics has expanded to include many disciplines, such as music, theatre, communication, psychology, archaeology, and mathematics (Totu and

58

Yakin 2014, 5). As a result, several semiotic traditions have emerged, prompting

various definitions of semiotics. Some of the more common definitions include a

'science that studies the life of signs within society' (Saussure 1966, 16); semiotics as

'concerned with *everything that can be taken as a sign*' (Eco 1976, 7); 'the study of

sign systems' (Halliday and Hasan 1985, 4); and a way to determine 'what constitutes

signs (and) what laws govern them' (Berger 2014, 22). In general, visual analysis

approaches like semiotics can be used to determine essential patterns and develop

reasonable interpretations that connect observations to past or present social processes

and established norms (Pauwels 2015, 50). In other words,

> Everything we do sends messages about us in a variety of codes…We are also
> on the receiving end of innumerable messages encoded in music, gestures,
> foods, rituals, books, movies, or advertisements. Yet we seldom realize that we
> have received such messages, and would have trouble explaining the rules under
> which they operate… semiotics…teaches us how we find meaning in all the
> objects and other kinds of messages to which we are exposed (Berger 2014, 22).

The tradition of semiotics used in this research is Barthian visual semiotics.

Unlike many of his peers at the time, Barthes explored the relationship between

semiotics and the visual image. In 1961 Barthes published an essay, 'The Photographic

Image' in the premiere issue of the French journal *Communications*. In this essay,

Barthes considers how images communicate, specifically the photograph. Over the next

few years, Barthes continued to study the image (White 2012, 25). During this

endeavor, Barthes sought to understand the semiotic structures of the messages in visual

images and how different signifying systems join and overlap (Innis 1985, 190). In

1964 he published 'Rhetoric of an Image.' In this essay, Barthes argues that images

contain a language, and as such, he establishes a system to understand that language.

This research acknowledges Barthes' other contributions to semiotic theory; however,

the discussion of Barthian visual semiotics primarily concentrates on 'Rhetoric of an

Image' because it provides a concise and structured framework for understanding the language within images.

3.4.1 'Rhetoric of an Image'

Barthes begins 'Rhetoric of an Image' by observing that the word image stems from its Latin root, *imitari*, meaning imitation. From this observation, Barthes raises two questions: can images convey meaning since they are essentially imitations (or analogical representations)? Do images have a language, and if so, how does meaning function within that language? (Barthes 1977, 32). Barthes emphasizes the paradoxical nature of the image. Some see the image as rudimentary, lacking the complex characteristics of written language and an object that resists meaning. Others argue that images are more complex and can depict a situation in ways that cannot be done in the written description (White 2012, 25). These two perspectives are illustrated in the previous section, 'Art as a Visual Language,' where some scholars support the former and others the latter. According to Barthes, the paradoxical nature of the image permits the consideration of the 'ontology of the process of signification' (1977, 32). In other words, it allows for an understanding of how the 'process of meaning works and exists' (White 2012, 25). It is here, Barthes asks three essential questions: 'How does meaning get into the image? Where does it end? And if it ends, what is there *beyond*?' (1977, 32).

To explore these questions, Barthes examines the image of an advertisement. His rationale for selecting this type of image is that in advertising 'signification of the image is undoubtedly intentional…*frank*, or at least emphatic' (1977, 33). Signification is a process that brings together the signifier and signified to form a sign (Chandler 2007, 15). The signifier is the physical element of a sign (Chandler 2007, 261). The signified is the mental concept or meaning of the signifier (Pichler 2002, 8). A signifier

may be the word 'open.' Depending on the context, the signified could be the 'shop is open for business' (Chandler 2007, 15).

Barthes uses a Panzani food advertisement as a case to examine; this can be found in Appendix B under figure two. In his analysis, Barthes begins by observing three types of messages: the linguistic message, the coded iconic message, and the noncoded iconic message. These messages may be referred to by different terms interchangeably, except for the linguistic message, which is always referred to as such. The coded iconic message is also known as the symbolic or connotated message, and the noncoded iconic message is referred to as the denoted or literal message.

The first message is a linguistic message represented by the text in the image. In the case of the Panzani advertisement image, the linguistic message is twofold. It is composed of both denotational and connotational messages. The denoted and connotated messages are found in the labels and the caption. The labels denote the products present in the image. The term 'Panzani' denotes the name of the firm but also connotates Italianicity or the Italian dimension of the advertisement (Barthes 1977, 33).

The second message Barthes identifies is a coded iconic message or symbolic message. Here the linguistic message is set aside, and what is left is the pure image. The labels are still a part of the image but only anecdotally. In the Panzani advertisement, Barthes observes four symbolic encodings or signs. First, there is a scene representing a 'return from the market.' In this sign, the signifier is the half-open bag with items spilling onto the table. The signified implies fresh produce or products, domestic preparation, and the homemade cooking of a meal. To understand the first sign or code, the reader only needs a cultural knowledge of the behavior of shopping for oneself.

The second sign is Italianicity. The understanding of this sign draws on French tourist stereotypes, such as the color scheme and the association with the produce and

products in the half-open bag. The signifier is the combination of the pepper, tomato, and the tri-color hues of the advertisement. The signified is Italy or Italianicity. The third sign relies on the assortment of the objects present in the image. This collection of objects conveys the idea of 'total culinary service,' where Panzani provides everything needed to cook a balanced meal. The fourth sign focuses on the composition of the image, which can be compared to the artistic genre of the still life. The identification of these four codes illustrates how the coded iconic message is encoded in the image. The four codes identified by Barthes are 'discontinuous,' and there is a need for general cultural knowledge to extract these codes (Barthes 1977, 34-35). For example, if the viewer does not understand French perceptions of Italy, they may not perceive the same codes identified by Barthes (White 2012, 27).

Up to this point, two messages have been identified, a linguistic message and a coded iconic message. Here, Barthes questions if this is the end of the meaning contained in the image. He concludes that there is one further message; if all the signs are removed from the image, there is still informational matter to be considered. This informational matter composes the third message, what Barthes refers to as the noncoded iconic message or literal message. In order to understand this type of message, the viewer only needs to be old enough to understand what an image is and the items in the image. Barthes calls this an 'almost anthropological knowledge.' In the Panzani advertisement, the viewer must know what items like a string-bag, a tomato, and a packet of pasta are (Barthes 1977, 36).

According to Barthes, if the reading of the image is adequate, the analysis reveals three types of messages: a linguistic message, a coded iconic message, and a noncoded iconic message. Here Barthes responds to anticipated objections to the third message. The linguistic message can be separated from the other two messages with

relative ease. However, is it possible to distinguish between the noncoded iconic message and coded iconic message? (Barthes 1977, 36). Barthes acknowledges that in a person's lived experience, it may be difficult to separate these two types of messages. However, he argues that the analytical distinction is relevant and may help discern how images function (White 2012, 28). This argument is supported by a key objective of his essay: not to give a naive analysis of the simple composition of elements in an image but to understand the structural description and interrelationship between the messages. Barthes addresses another potential objection to the noncoded iconic message: why include the noncoded iconic message when it does not seem to be a message with substance? He reasons the noncoded message seems to be imprinted on the coded iconic message acting as a support to the coded iconic message (Barthes 1977, 37). The three types of messages discussed above will be revisited in more detail below to provide a better understanding of Barthes' theory.

3.4.1.1 The Linguistic Message

Returning to the linguistic message, Barthes poses two questions: 'is the linguistic message constant? Is there always textual matter in, under, or around the image?' (1977, 37-38). To answer these questions, he argues written texts and the linguistic message, no matter their length, remain important because of connotations (White 2012, 28). The linguistic message can be a caption, a title, film dialogue, comic strip balloon, and so on. If the linguistic message is present in most images, what is its function? The linguistic message has two functions: anchorage and relay (Barthes 1977, 38).

First, anchorage helps guide the reader to what is being conveyed in the image (White 2012, 29). Images are inherently polysemous. In other words, images contain many signifying components, underneath which exists a 'floating chain of signifieds' where the reader can choose some and disregard others (Barthes 1977, 38-39). As a

reminder, the signifying components or signifiers are the physical element of a sign (Chandler 2007, 261), and the signified is the mental concept or meaning of the signifier (Pichler 2002, 8). In order to cope with this issue, societies develop procedures to counteract the uncertainty of signs caused by the 'floating chain of signifieds;' the linguistics message is one such method (Barthes 1977, 39). If a reader sees an image and is unsure of the meaning, in considering all the possible meanings, the text can anchor the reader to the accurate meaning. For instance, imagine an image of a mountain panorama, with a highway, a single car, and a caption that reads 'Switzerland.' Guided by the word 'Switzerland,' the reader may interpret the image as a promotion of Swiss tourism. However, if the image reads 'Mercedes,' the image may be read like an automobile advertisement (White 2012, 29). The linguistic anchor then, helps the reader choose the 'correct level of perception' and prevents the connotated message from proliferating (Barthes 1977, 39). Anchorage subtly dispatches the meaning of the image by guiding the reader through the image to avoid some signifieds and receive others (Barthes 1977, 40).

The other function of the linguistic message is relay. Relay can be thought of as the complementary relationship between the image and text. Here, the image and text work together to convey meaning. Unlike anchorage, which is generally used in advertisements and photographs, relay is commonly used in comic strips (Barthes 1977, 41). In comic strips, the text is regularly minimal and confined to dialogue between characters. In text-relay, the sign systems move together in a complementary sequence; they are two separate entities brought together to create a cohesive message (Barthes 1977, 41; White 2012, 29). For instance, in the conclusion of a comic strip sequence (the punchline), a character is drawn with question marks around his or her head; this may convey surprise or confusion. In such a case, an element of the image helps the

reader interpret the text; the punchline causes one of the character's confusion. Apart from that, the image of the (most likely) stock character adds little understanding of the image. In this, relay operates according to a diegetic code or diegesis (the story (Barthes 1977, 64)). Thus, in the comic strip, the text generally takes precedence over the depictions in the image. In later discussions, Barthes returns to the idea represented above; different codes cooperate to form meaning with one code being dominant over the others (White 2012, 30).

3.4.1.2 The Noncoded Iconic Message

Following his discussion of the linguistic message, Barthes revisits the noncoded iconic message. He reiterates that the relationship between the literal message and symbolic message is merely operational. The literal message cannot be encountered in a pure state, at least in advertising. This type of message will never be substantial but only relational, meaning it cannot be disassociated from the connotation of the image (Barthes 1977, 42). Because of this, the denoted message must be discussed in terms of how it relates to other messages and not in terms of substance. In this, the literal message can only be read when the reader imagines the image devoid of connotation or meaning; "this simple or 'innocent' message, then, is in some sense our perception of a structure of the image – we must imagine that the scene exists in a simple and pure way, even if we will never see it as such" (White 2012, 31-32). Returning to the image depicting mountains, a highway, a car, and the caption 'Switzerland,' even if the reader is concentrated on the connotations of touristic promotion, the reader can perceive the literal message of the image: the mountains, a highway, and a car. They must, then, imagine that the scene exists purely and innocently, even if the reader will never actually see it in that form. The reader must imagine that these components of the image simply exist (White 2012, 32).

3.4.1.3 On the Rhetoric of an Image

This section builds upon the preceding considerations of 'Rhetoric of an Image.' When

discussing the image's rhetoric, Barthes is referring to the tropes and methods through

which the image carries meaning (White 2012, 34). To frame the image's rhetoric,

Barthes revisits the problematic element of the coded iconic message or symbolic

message: the connotative signs contained within the third message are discontinuous. In

the Panzani advertisement, Barthes observed four connotative groupings: a return from

the market, Italianicity, culinary service, and the still life. He acknowledges that other

connotative signs may be present in the image, such as the net bag, which can signify

'the miraculous draught of fishes, plenty, etc.' (Barthes 1977, 46). However, his

concern here is not creating an inexhaustible list of possible connotations but to explore

how connotations work given that they do not automatically complement each other

(White 2012, 35).

Deliberating on this matter, Barthes points out that the groupings of

connotations are not 'anarchic.' Here, readers of the image do not experience 'chaos of

unordered signification' (White 2012, 35). Simultaneously, readers will have an

individualized understanding of the connotations in the image. This occurs because

people understand the sign systems in the image based on different types of knowledge

like cultural, national, aesthetic, or practical; they develop individualized lexicons[1]

(Barthes 1977, 46; White 2012, 35). These lexicons form an individual's idiolect[2] and

inform how an individual understands connotations (Barthes 1977, 47). Thus, the

meaning of the image cannot only be a list of all potential connotations, but its meaning

---

[1] Barthes defines lexicon as 'a portion of the symbolic plane (of language) which corresponds to a body
of practices and techniques' (1977, 46).

[2] Barthes defines idiolect as a lexicon (1977, 47).

66

must be connected to the connotations accessible to the reader's idiolect. For Barthes, the discussion cannot end here. It is not satisfactory to merely conclude that the meaning of the image is individualized, for there is an order, a consistency in the image. Barthes wants to find out where this order, the rhetoric of the image, is derived from (White 2012, 35-36).

To explore where this order or the rhetoric of an image comes from, Barthes explains that the signifiers of the image are called its connotators, and a set of connotators is its rhetoric (1977, 49). These connotators, like Italianicity, are abstract, and if 'deprived of context,' they can refer to many different things. These connotators assume meaning when located in a syntagm, which refers to 'a sequence of linguistic units whose particular order (what we more commonly call *syntax*) gives those units meaning' (White 2012, 35-36). For example, assuming there are several signifiers: child, that, fish, big, ate, this; these signifiers can obtain meaning from their syntagmatic arrangement: this big child ate that fish or that big fish ate this child (White 2012, 36).

Barthes emphasizes syntagm in the photographic image, contending that the connotators are scattered. The scattered arrangement of connotators can potentially lead to many different interpretations and meanings of the image. This syntagmatic organization of elements in the photographic image is central. Without such a system, the discourse would not exist. The syntagm is in the denoted image, and it is only through the denotative syntagm that the connotative elements assume structure or rhetoric (White 2012, 36). Barthes writes, "they are 'set' in a syntagm *which is not theirs and which is that of the denotation*" (1977, 50-51). Here it is made clear how the denotative message acts as a support for the connotative iconic message: "*it is precisely the syntagm of the denoted message which 'naturalizes' the system of the connoted*

message" (Barthes 1977, 51). Meaning in photographic images has two structural functions that are polarized. The connotative elements of the photographic image are considered strong signs but are scattered; they provide strong meanings but lack the structure to make those meanings understandable. The denotative components offer little meaning but provide the connotative meaning with a structure, the 'syntagmatic flow,' in which to function (White 2012, 36-37).

In his final remarks, Barthes moves beyond his reading of the Panzani advertisement. Barthes proposes that perhaps what he has found to be true in the advertising image, that the connotative and denotative elements of the image are in opposition to each other, can be true to meaning in general (White 2012, 37). Specifically, it is possible that 'the world of total meaning is torn internally (structurally) between the system as culture and the syntagm of nature' (Barthes 1977, 51). He concludes that perhaps there are two main domains of meaning. One domain that includes 'story, diegesis, syntagm, and the intelligibility of a culture' and another composed of "a few discontinuous symbols which men 'decline' in the shelter of their living speech" (Barthes 1977, 51).

The above discussion explores Barthes' semiotic theory. Through this discussion, the process of interpreting and understanding the language communicated by the image is outlined. This theory helps situate art as a language and details how that language is understood. The researcher uses this semiotic methodological lens to begin to understand and organize the data produced in the photo-elicitation interviews that inform the findings and analyses

3.5 Chapter Conclusion

Chapter Three positions art as a form of visual language and explores two of the methodological approaches used in the study. Scholars like Broudy, Forrest, and Wolf

question the concept that art can be a language. Their conclusions come from problems related to codification. From this perspective, verbal language has a universal dictionary and has remained relatively consistent for centuries. These scholars find that visual language does not have the same kind of consistency or universal understanding. Wolf even dismisses the notion that art can be a language at all, arguing that while some rules and structures guide verbal language, it does not have universal signs or symbols. However, other scholars like Panofsky, Barthes, Hofstader, and Richardson argue that art does have a lexicon, forming a coded system of signs that is a visual vocabulary. In the most basic form, this argument is derived from the fact that the communication of human thought originated before verbal language structures; this is seen in the earliest humans using visual symbols and mnemonics to remember and store information. It is also argued that visual language goes beyond linguistic paradigms and syntactical structures and provides a universal channel of understanding.

Panofsky and Barthes would be of the philosophy that art functions as a language. Each theorist offers different approaches for reading and understanding visual language. For Panofsky, there are three steps in deciphering an image: pre-iconographical description, iconographical analysis, and iconological interpretation. The pre-iconographical description identifies the details in an image like people or events. Iconographical analysis infers meaning by drawing on knowledge from outside the image like social, political, or cultural contexts. Iconological interpretation focuses on perspective and determines the intrinsic meaning of the image. In Barthes' method, there are three types of messages found in images. The linguistic message, the coded iconic message, and the noncoded iconic message. The linguistic message is represented by the text that may appear in an image, the coded iconic message is the

symbolic meaning in an image, and the noncoded message is the literal meaning of the image.

Both approaches are essential in accomplishing the goals of this research. Barthian visual semiotics is used to organize, and preliminary understand the participant responses evoked in the photo-elicitation interviews. Iconography is used by the researcher as a reflexive exercise and serves as a baseline for the reader when engaging with participant responses. This is essential because photographs often elicited very different responses. Though both visual analysis theories are similar, it is necessary to use both. Iconography is more appropriate for the researcher's analysis of the photographs as a reflexive exercise and in creating a baseline. Barthian visual semiotics is more suitable for understanding and arranging the research data produced in the photo-elicitation interviews. The next chapter provides the theoretical framework for the research. Here, symbolic landscapes and cultural expressions like public art in post-agreement areas alongside peacebuilding are discussed. The use of these methodologies is also contextualized within this framework.

CHAPTER FOUR

Theoretical Framework

4.1. Introduction

This research explores how visual methodologies are useful in generating insight into the state of post-agreement[3] societies, using photo-elicitation, semiotics, iconography, and thematic analysis as the methodology and Northern Ireland as the central case. By using this methodology to examine Northern Ireland 20 years on from the Good Friday Agreement (GFA), it is apparent that conflict-related issues still exist, serving as identifying indicators of the peacebuilding process. In carrying out this research, it was necessary to examine the current and relevant research on the topic; this review was on-going throughout the research process.

This chapter presents the significant outcomes of this examination and the theoretical framework for the study. It focuses on the interaction between peacebuilding, contested cultural expressions like public art, and symbolic landscapes in post-agreement societies. It connects these ideas with the methodology as well as frames the deductive thematic analysis in Chapter Eight, whereby themes are derived using existing literature. Importantly, this discussion shows how photo-elicitation and the broader methodology makes a vital contribution to knowledge, serving as an innovative tool to access information about post-agreement societies that would alternatively not be accessible to researchers and practitioners. In this discussion, a variety of primary and secondary sources were collected. These sources include

---

[3] The definitions of post-agreement environments, public art, and peacebuilding are in Chapter One. This chapter takes these concepts and explores how they interact and inform the study. When relevant, these concepts are explored in more depth.

academic journals, interview and lecture transcripts and recordings, books, online resources, and book reviews.

The examination and critique of the literature contribute to the development of the conceptual framework supporting the research design and implementation. This study's conceptual framework helps shape and guide the research process, informs the methodology, and influences the instruments used to collect the research data. The conceptual framework also guides the development of the coding scheme used to analyze the research data. In this, the conceptual framework serves as an organizational tool for the analysis, interpretation, and synthesis of the study's findings. The chapter begins with a discussion of how the methodology interacts with the theoretical framework and the overall research. The second part explores the importance of researching contested cultural expressions like public art. Next, an understanding of peacebuilding is provided. After this, the rationale for the use of the term post-agreement is explained. Fifth, the interactions between peacebuilding, symbolic landscapes, and contested cultural expressions like public art are examined. This discussion also includes how symbolism should be addressed according to the GFA and peacebuilding projects formed as a result. The chapter ends with a concluding summary.

4.2 Connecting the Methodology to the Theoretical Framework and the Overarching Study

This research shows the importance of visual methodologies like photo-elicitation, iconography, and semiotics alongside a thematic analysis in understanding post-agreement societies. It draws on the symbolic landscape, which highlights issues like contested cultural expressions and practices, on-going peacebuilding processes related to symbolism and ideas of identities and narratives as informed by matters of inclusion

and exclusion. These methodological tools, in conjunction with deductive thematic analysis, provide a language in which to analyze and understand the current conditions of post-agreement societies and, in the case of this research, contemporary Northern Ireland and the legacies of the Troubles. This framework generates insight into cultural expressions like art in the public sphere and shows how they can both intensify conflict and, at times, function as instruments of mitigation. More importantly, it adds to the tools of research into peacebuilding and allows access to a level of information that is otherwise not visible or accessible to researchers and practitioners. As such, this research offers a significant contribution to knowledge.

To begin, an influential source on the topics of cultural expressions like public art, symbolism, and peacebuilding is Marc Howard Ross (2001; 2007; 2008). In his works, he presents a theoretical framework with essential case studies, showing the importance of such phenomena. Cultural practices or expressions like art in the public realm have the potential to both facilitate reconciliation and fuel cultures of conflict and violence in post-agreement societies. They can be used as tools to foster peace but also have the potential to hinder peacebuilding processes (Naidu-Silverman 2015, 11). In conflicts like Northern Ireland, these practices and expressions are not merely superficial phenomena but are indicators of how groups understand their lived experiences. They provide insight into continued conflict and the desires and apprehensions of a group, how it conceives the opposition's actions and motivations, and what a satisfactory agreement with an opponent looks like (Ross 2007, 3).

In conflicts like Northern Ireland are not composed of a single isolated event and do not remain unchanged. Instead, the meanings of events ascribed both internally and between groups transform and are especially important when the mutual and relational understanding of local parties is altered (Ross 2008, 1). The examination of

the symbolic landscape highlights issues of recognition between groups, the conception

of the other in in-group narratives, and the use of expressive culture as a tool of control

in public representations and resource allocation in group conflicts (Ross 2008, 1). The

enactment of cultural expression like public art can be considered a social-relational

process where public art innately occupies a socio-spatial reality beyond its physical

manifestation (Zabracki 2014, paragraph 13). The symbolic landscape becomes a

mirrored representation of society; this is particularly true in the case of Northern

Ireland (Henry, Lloyd and Ritchie 2015, 126). Cultural expressions like public art then,

provide a language for people to understand their lived experiences and the realities of

their daily lives. An in-detail discussion of this artistic language is in Chapter Three,

which establishes that visual images communicate meanings and have complex

lexicons.

Northern Ireland is not an isolated case; there are many recent examples of

conflicts that raise questions about the control over a society's symbolic landscape and

matters of inclusion and exclusion in this research represented in visual images. Some

examples include public art and Loyal Order parades in Northern Ireland, displays of

the confederacy in the United States (US), murals in Guatemala, and monuments and

memorials in South Africa (Carey Jr. and Little 2010; Rolston 2010; Rolston 2012;

Ross 2008). Processes like these show how symbols of inclusion and exclusion can be

used to forge new relationships or perpetuate and deepen points of differentiation (Ross

2008, 1).

It is clear the significations that a symbolic landscape communicates raise

essential questions. First, what parties are included or excluded in public

representations? Second, what characteristics are the people and objects depicted by

which they are defined? What parties hold control of the representations, and how much

are they contested? How is hierarchy conveyed, and how does that connect with certain positions and associations within the societal hierarchy? (Ross 2008, 8).

Here, the argument developed is that visual methodologies are especially crucial in understanding peacebuilding in post-agreement societies. The results of such an application can help manage protracted group conflicts through the development of initiatives aimed at addressing issues highlighted in the outcomes of the study. The establishment of agreements between opposing groups, like those in Northern Ireland, is only one element in a peace process. The cultural approach requires going beyond official peace agreements by acknowledging that rituals and symbols are essential to the implementation of agreements for peacebuilding and peacemaking. Before there can be a renegotiation of conflicting interests and a modification of behaviors and relationships between conflicting parties, cultural expressions need to be addressed. It is often necessary to create inclusive cultural expressions that bring together opposing parties or redefine longstanding rituals of exclusion that may be threatening (Ross 2008, 1). The peacebuilding initiative, the Reimaging Communities Programme in Northern Ireland, is an illustration of such an approach. One aspect of the research findings and analyses discuss the success and failures of the program alongside the parts of the GFA that address symbolism.

This section helps contextualize this study. It shows the relevance of the methodological framework in examining post-agreement societies and peacebuilding through cultural expressions and practices, connecting the theoretical framework to the methodology, and the overarching study. The next part discusses specifically why contested cultural expressions like public art should be studied.

4.3 The Importance of Researching Contested Cultural Expressions

Though contestations over cultural expression like public art are not new, they are undertheorized and understudied (Ross 2008, 1). The possible reason for the lack of scholarship on this topic is that artistic, cultural expressions are considered 'soft' in mitigating 'hard' problems like violence and conflict (Schirch and Shank 2008, 217-218). Nonetheless, there are many reasons why it is crucial to study contested cultural expressions. First, disagreements over culture provide a lens in which to gain insight into the many layers and problems in intractable conflicts in which these disagreements are a part. By examining these areas of tension, the basic dimensions of identity, group needs, and intense emotions that are rooted in the broader conflict become apparent. From this, the more profound differences between groups are revealed (Ross 2007, 16). Second, disputed cultural expressions can consider the emotional aspects of conflict and can complement more instrumental bargaining, resulting in negotiated settlements and constitutional modifications (Ross 2007, 16). Third, cultural conflicts are constructed and, as such, can be reshaped in ways that support the de-escalation of tensions and help foster agreement. The changing nature of cultural understanding can help redefine arguably intractable conflicts in more inclusive terms alongside an effective conflict management strategy (Ross 2007, 16-17).

Serving as compelling 'dramas' conflicts over culture show differing accounts of pertinent issues to the parties concerned, conflict management professionals, and scholars. Obtaining more profound knowledge about competing narratives and the mutual denial of the significance of the opposition's perspectives, help in understanding the difficulty of conflicting parties to see their opponents' actions regardless of the fact they may have comparable motives and fears (Ross 2007, 17). In this framework, these

kinds of conflicts play out for both in-group and out-group actors[4]. Though in these cases, it is essential to highlight that seldom are they planned when they are first developing. Instead, different groups use well-founded assumptions about their group and the 'other' to inform their worldviews. This quality is coupled with intense emotional steadfastness to participate in lengthy, passionate, and sustained activities to protect their groups' existential objectives. The above discussion offers a rationale for the importance of researching contested cultural expressions. Before there can be a further discussion of the symbolic landscapes and peacebuilding, an understanding of peacebuilding must be established. Peacebuilding is an essential on-going process in post-agreement areas. Therefore, it is a crucial part of this study that must be explained. The next section explores the term peacebuilding as defined for this study.

4.4 Understanding the Term Peacebuilding

This section offers an understanding of the term peacebuilding, an idea that the research explores alongside post-agreement Northern Ireland. In this discussion, it is essential first to acknowledge that the meaning of the term 'peace' is contestable. It is often defined in terms of 'negative peace' by governments and academia (Gawerc 2006, 438). However, the term is more complicated and can be understood in distinct ways by different groups engaged in conflict. Because of this, it is essential to develop a broader understanding of the term. Johan Galtung's differentiation between 'positive peace' and 'negative peace' helps form this kind of understanding (Gawerc 2006, 438). According to Galtung, peace has two main parts. The first is negative peace, meaning an 'absence of personal (direct) violence,' and the second is positive peace. This second kind of

---

[4] In-group refers to 'a social category or group with which (people) identify strongly.' Out-group refers to a 'social category or group with which (people) do not identify' (Giles and Giles 2013, 142).

peace also includes an 'absence of structural violence' (Galtung 1969, 183) as well as cultural violence (Gawerc 2006, 438). Galtung defines cultural violence as 'aspects of culture, the symbolic sphere of our existence – exemplified by religion and ideology, language and art, empirical science and formal science (logic, mathematics) - that can be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence' (1990, 291). Here, like that found in the landscapes across Northern Ireland, symbolism can be used to 'justify or legitimize direct or structural violence' (Galtung 1990, 291).

Building on these concepts, Galtung also establishes a three-fold typology. In this typology, he distinguishes between peacekeeping, peacebuilding, and peacemaking. These distinctions inform third-party intervention approaches (Gawerc 2006, 439; Galtung 1976). Peacemaking is the negotiation process that occurs between opposing parties when trying to reach formal agreements in a conflict. Peacekeeping is a third-party intervention seeking the continuation or reduction of direct violence by keeping groups in conflict apart (Gawerc 2006, 439; Galtung 1976). Defining peacebuilding is complicated due to the diverse spectrum of activities which obtain less publicity and concentrate on the social, psychological, and economic aspects at the grassroots level. The purpose of peacebuilding is to establish a framework of peace founded on cooperation, justice, and equity, the foundational principles of Galtung's concept of positive peace. In doing so, the underlying causes of violent conflict are addressed in a way that makes them less likely to reoccur. The literature on peacebuilding places it as a dynamic approach that informs every level of conflict and one that changes with the situation on the ground and the phases of peacemaking activities (Galtung 1969; Gawerc 2006; Lederach 1997).

In the contemporary era, conflicts are often understood as entities under continued transformation, moving away from the idea that conflicts end. Understanding

this concept is essential in understanding peace and peacebuilding. The idea shows the everchanging quality of conflict that informs peace and peacebuilding. The term conflict transformation is now used in peace studies and conflict transformation literature (Gawerc 2006, 439). For John Paul Lederach and Graham Brown et al., transformation acknowledges that conflicts exist on a 'transition continuum' where they move backward or forward along a continuum in line with the status of the situation (Lederach 1995, 17-19; Brown, Langer and Stewart 2007, 4). With this understanding, transformation can be understood as both constructive and destructive. It can be argued that transformation is particularly relevant in asymmetrical conflicts because of its emphasis on transforming hostile social relationships and addressing the underlying causes of conflicts. Transformation, therefore, is in accordance with the tradition of peace studies and peacebuilding where 'it is [direct, structural, and/or cultural] violence, not conflict that is seen as the antithesis of peace' (Gawerc 2006, 439).

In short, though, the expansion of the literature on peace and peacebuilding is not without contestation, the conceptual understanding of peacebuilding can be described as the process of developing structures that 'remove causes of wars and offer alternatives to war in situations where wars might occur' (Galtung 1969, 298). Here, conceptualizing peacebuilding as a method for addressing root causes of conflict and providing alternatives to violence, moves it beyond peacekeeping and peacemaking (Rinck 2015, 20). This section establishes an understanding of peacebuilding as it is applied to this study. Beyond an understanding of peacebuilding, for this research, Northern Ireland must be located as a post-agreement situation. The next section explores the term post-agreement and argues that Northern Ireland is a post-agreement state.

4.5 The Rationale for Using the Term Post-Agreement

Post-conflict is often used to describe a country that has moved beyond acute violence through formal peace processes and accords (Abozaglo 2011, 7). The prefix 'post' infers that a situation has moved past something. In the context of post-conflict, it suggests that a country is no longer in a state of conflict (O'Rawe and Phelan 2016, 2), and hostilities have decreased to a point where displaced populations can begin to return (Abozaglo 2011, 7). This term is problematic because, as pointed out in the previous section, conflicts are not static entities that enter seamlessly and permanently into post-conflict. Instead, they transform, escalating, or de-escalating at different times, rarely dissipating completely. Though formal peace processes and agreements may settle conflicts, hostilities and violence often continue at minimal levels (O'Rawe and Phelan 2016, 2).

These types of situations can experience conflict recurrence. Conflict recurrence refers to incidences, where violent conflict returns after a period of peace (The FDFA worldwide 2018). Chances of conflict recurrence are exacerbated in situations where young people do not see or experience the benefits of peace processes or agreements because the transfer of peace to the next generation is dependent on these young people (Ellison 2014, 43). Around fifty percent of 'post-conflict' situations return to a state of conflict in the first decade (Collier 2004). Because of this, it is beneficial to discuss these situations as transitionary entities, where they can potentially move past or descend back into conflict. These assertions have led some researchers to refer to these environments as post-agreement instead of post-conflict, arguing that conflicts do not end but only transform from a phase of violence into politics (Abozaglo 2011, 7).

Northern Ireland is often referred to as post-conflict. The preceding discussion shows that post-conflict infers conflict has ended. Though acute violence has ended in

Northern Ireland, minimal levels of violence and tensions continue; this is illustrated by on-going segregation (McClements 2018), continued activity of dissident groups (BBC News Northern Ireland 2019), and increased security-related deaths (Nolan 2018). As such, the term post-agreement is more suitable for Northern Ireland and is used in this research. With understandings of peacebuilding and post-agreement Northern Ireland, the discussion can progress to exploring the relationship between peacebuilding and symbolic landscapes in post-agreement areas.

4.6 Peacebuilding and Symbolic Landscapes

The symbolic landscape of a society conveys social and political meanings through the existence of cultural expressions and practices, including public spaces, emotionally significant and visible spaces, and identity-based representations found in mass media, school textbooks, music literature, theatre, and public art. These landscapes reflect how the world is understood by people in it as well as the conceptions of others. They can also serve as essential shapers of these environments when they determine and justify specific normative standards and relations of power within and between groups (Ross 2008, 8). These symbolic landscapes can have an intentional or unintentional influence on people's behavior and perceptions and can shape or reflect social reality (Brand 2009, 37-38). In this, 'landscape is a way of seeing that has its own history, but a history that can only be understood as part of a wider history of economy and society…whose origins and implications extend well beyond the use and perception of land; that has its own techniques of expression, but techniques which it shares with other areas of cultural practice' (Ross 2008, 8). The language communicated by public art in Northern Ireland's symbolic landscapes is an essential part of understanding contemporary Northern Ireland and the legacies of the Troubles. The use of photo-

elicitation gives researchers access to that language and how it informs the local population's understanding of the post-agreement society.

Moreover, symbolic landscapes show inclusion and exclusion, visibility and invisibility, hierarchy, and represent dominant groups and other groups in specific ways (Ross 2008, 8; Poposki and Todorova 2016, 98). These spaces become avenues for different groups to assert positions and beliefs, interact, communicate, and demand legitimacy (Poposki and Todorova 2016, 98). Issues of inclusion and exclusion are regularly expressed in terms of limiting or expanding the symbolic landscape. The exclusionary symbolic landscape is a deliberate kind of denial and declaration of power. In comparison, the inclusion of groups in the symbolic landscape is an expression of an inclusive society and conveys a mutual interest in society (Ross 2008, 8).

The co-consumption of the symbolic landscape by multiple users complicates these issues, and equitable consumption is not guaranteed. The inequitable use of symbolic landscapes can potentially lead to competition or conflict over the limited resource of space. Competition over these spaces can become more problematic in areas with polarized, heterogeneous societies. Symbolic landscapes are spatially constructed, accounting for social and economic factors which can result in zones that are by one group perceived as inclusionary, and by another as exclusionary or places of division and inequality. Individuals and groups can create landscapes that are polarized, inequitable, and sites of resistance, power, and identity. These symbolic landscapes are not only spaces of exclusion and inclusion but refusal and entitlement. This dynamic creates a landscape that decides who is visible, who should not be visible, and who obtains the rights to symbolic space, which is determined by a more extensive social struggle (Henry, Lloyd and Ritchie 2015, 110-113).

82

Furthermore, psychocultural dramas[5] that are inherent in symbolic landscapes are politically significant because they elicit, construct, and reinforce intense emotions that assert claims and provoke action in the interest of a group. In such cases, expressions and enactments of culture are specific acts that further shared ideologies that strengthen the 'emotional persuasiveness of political and social connectedness and (require) the defense of the group' (Ross 2008, 14). Political claims are especially powerful when they use culturally ingrained shared images, metaphors, critical events, and people that link members of the in-group to the past, present, and future. The use of accustomed and emotionally significant expressions form, reinforce, and differentiate a community from out-groups. The essential point to make here is how compelling the fabricated community is for people when they perceive themselves under threat like fears in France over their culture with the increase in Muslim immigration (Ross 2008, 14).

There can be a natural shift from cultural violence through structural to direct violence. Some examples specific examples of cultural violence include 'stars, crosses and crescents; flags, anthems and military parades; the ubiquitous portrait of the Leader; (and) inflammatory speeches and posters' (Galtung 1990, 291). The culture expounds specific discourse, educates, rebukes, incites, and dulls people into understanding exploitation and/or repression as ordinary, or failing to see them entirely. After this, direct violence is used to escape the 'structural iron cage' and, in turn, counter-violence results in keep the integrity of the cage (Galtung 1990, 295).

---

[5] Howard Ross defines psychocultural dramas as 'conflicts between groups over competing, and apparently irresolvable, claims that engage the central elements of each group's historical experience and identity and invoke suspicions and fears of the opponent' (Ross 2001, 159)

These communal cultural expressions taking place in symbolic landscapes can lead to the violence discussed by Galtung and can be both abstract and concrete. The power of symbols like these is not found in specific aspects of expression but in how they are understood in different social and political circumstances. As an example, on the one hand, flags are only pieces of fabric. However, on the other, when flags are associated with a 'nation at risk,' the meaning of flags change. Flags move from being mere pieces of fabric to powerful symbols that stimulate pride and strengthen in-group unity where offenses against a group can motivate violence in response. Flags and insignias in Northern Ireland function in this way (Ross 2008, 14). Likewise, language, public art, parades, music, theater, and clothing are other forms of expression that bring out political identifications. With this, an important point to understand here is many times it is everyday items or expressions that become powerful in political terms. This occurrence is not because of their intrinsic characteristics but because of the meanings ascribed to them by people (Ross 2008, 14).

Though it is common for there to be variation in how cultural expressions are detailed and characterized, regularly, they are marked by recounting group narratives. Involvement in cultural commemorations is essential in the continuation of influential psychocultural narratives and the memories that accompany them. How people can participate in these expressions is not lacking and range from simple observation to active participation, from mundane to controversial and problematic. By participating in, or engaging with cultural expressions, the emotional importance of events is frequently supported in ways that are 'more powerful than in verbal accounts alone' (Ross 2008, 15).

In some cases, ideas themselves are emotionally convincing. However, the full capacity of symbolic significance often only occurs when people participate in activities

or actions closely connected to them. These activities or actions can be commonplace or sacred and are regularly repetitive, which increases the emotional power they command. This makes photo-elicitation even more effective as a method for investigating post-agreement societies because it forces people to engage in an activity where they interact with the symbolic landscape itself; the photographs regularly evoking emotionally powerful responses. Traditional representations like public art produce emotionally essential linkages between the past and present experiences of a group where people participate in many times ordinary activities that connect people across time and place (Ross 2008, 14).

Rituals of display, like the public art in Northern Ireland, are central and meaningful components in the symbolic landscape. Cultural expressions of rituals of display communicate critical elements of identity and history as understood by a group. The public art in Northern Ireland does just this, and how these rituals are used to construct or strengthen political claims and narratives is significant. The construction and solidification of collective memory are dependent on the repetitiveness of the rituals of display. Engagement with different cultural expressive rituals like those that commemorate is essential in understanding rites as not merely expressive, formal, or constrained by time. Instead, rituals mark continuity and, as such, inform collective memory. Here, 'ritual is not only an alternative way of expressing certain beliefs but that certain things can be expressed only in ritual' whereby rituals have their own formalized language embedded in them (Ross 2008, 14-15).

Expressions of ritual can also be used by states to solidify their legitimacy and increase citizen support. In these cases, the ritual often is used by the state to assert power and legitimacy. Rituals used by states often coincide with political changes, national holidays, military successes, the deaths of leaders, and the accomplishments of

heroes, both past and present. Such rites play out in many ways and vary depending on factors like core participants, magnitude, emotive intensity, calendric cycle, or organizational spontaneity. Many expressions of ritual are state-sanctioned, and meaningful public cultural expressions like public art or the Orange Order parades in Northern Ireland are politicized, commonly causing counter-responses (Ross 2008, 15).

While contested cultural expressions (state-sanctioned or otherwise) can be polarizing or cause escalation, there are other potential outcomes where conflicting parties can also use culture to reimagine enduring conflicts in more constructive terms. Ross argues that though all parties can define opponents outside their group using ideas of culture, embedded in each cultural tradition is also essential images of peace and peacebuilding. These have the potential to help in de-escalation and reconciliation. In this way, conflict framed using culture can help in the reduction of strong emotions connected to disputed identities and act as a mediating factor between former adversaries that can result in new institutional agreements (Ross 2007, 26).

It is essential to acknowledge, taking cultural expressions into account does not mean disregarding politics and negotiation. However, it is helpful to use these approaches in conjunction with each other. Formal agreements between established opponents like Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland, for example, are just one part of the peace process. From a cultural standpoint, putting into practice agreements means recognizing that interpretation and narrative are essential elements of peacebuilding through the creation of new inclusive cultural expressions or redefining current ones (Ross 2007, 26-27). The newly formed cultural expressions and narratives established in peacebuilding processes start with the involved parties' perspectives and the acknowledgment that cognitive methods to change the positions of opposing parties will likely fail when not combined with other approaches. A more constructive method

needs to recognize the potential challenges to identity felt by groups. It should not seek to make parties change their positions but rather try to minimize them, whereby space is produced for an active and mutual envisage of alternatives to conflict. From this standpoint, the mitigation of conflict happens when clear connections are made between cultural images and metaphors of inclusion and the practical realities of the specific situation. This is demonstrated in verbal expressions and gestures like when white South Africans started to recognize that a shift to majority rule was inevitable, and many helped make that change happen. The mutual recognition of previous loss through symbolic and ritual expression, when connected to a shared future, can complement interest-based negotiation or measures aimed at cognitive redefinition. Recognizing expressions of culture and ritual does not require the abandonment of positions. Rather, it offers an opportunity for creative reformulation that can produce a symbolic landscape that is more inclusive and one that is less supportive of opposing identities (Ross 2007, 27).

4.7 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter outlines the theoretical framework of the study as it connects to the overarching research project. It explores critical literature related to topics like cultural expressions of public art, symbolic landscapes, and peacebuilding in post-agreement states, specifically Northern Ireland. It includes discussions surrounding the importance of cultural expressions in post-agreement states and the relationship between these expressions and peacebuilding. Additionally, it looks at how the GFA approaches symbolism and subsequent peacebuilding initiatives created to deal with symbolism in the contemporary era.

This review of literature is connected to the overall conceptual framework and frames the deductive thematic analysis in Chapter Eight, whereby the themes are

derived from existing literature. It provides further rationale for using cultural

expressions to investigate post-agreement areas as well as the beneficial use of visual

methodologies in understanding post-agreement societies. These methodological tools

alongside a thematic analysis offer insight into cultural expressions like public art and

illustrate that they can both mitigate or exacerbate conflicts like that in Northern

Ireland. It also further demonstrates the importance of this methodology and

overarching research in understanding these environments, offering data that would

otherwise not be understood. As such, this research is a significant contribution to the

growing fields of peace studies and conflict transformation. Building on this chapter

and the on-going progression of the dissertation, Chapter Five provides a selective

history of Northern Ireland as an essential part of the research without which, the

findings and analyses could not be realized.

CHAPTER FIVE

Background to the Conflict in Northern Ireland

5.1 Introduction to the Conflict in Northern Ireland

Though there is no time here to give a comprehensive summary of the history of Northern Ireland, a history that is functional to the purposes of this research is presented. The selection of literature is guided by the information needed to understand this research project. This chapter builds on the preceding chapters that set out the research project, methodologies, and theoretical framework. Chapter One offers an overarching framework and intents of the study. Chapters Two and Three outlines the research methodologies, and Chapter Four discusses the essential literature on the research topic, its importance and links it to the methodologies and the broader study. Chapter Five is a continuation of these chapters. It connects and provides crucial material needed to contextualize the overall study and the next chapters which compose of the research findings, analyses as well as the conclusions of the study. Without the contextualization of Northern Ireland offered in this chapter, the research could not be understood. Central issues are discussed, like the ideologies and politics of conflict, religious dimensions of difference, the GFA, the mural tradition in Northern Ireland, and peacebuilding initiatives related to symbolism. The chapter ends with a concluding summary.

To begin, after the independence of Ireland in 1921, the island was partitioned between North and South. In the North, the Protestant, unionist majority supported the union with the United Kingdom (UK) while the Catholic, nationalist minority desired a united Ireland. In the years that followed, many Catholics felt politically and economically marginalized, leading to the civil rights movement of the 1960s, which involved both nationalists and unionists. During the civil rights movement marches

often escalated into confrontations with the police, involving the more militant

members of each community. These tensions led to the deployment of British troops in

Northern Ireland in 1969. At the same time, there was an increase in paramilitary

activity involving groups like the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and Ulster Volunteer

Force (UVF). As a result, a new period began in the 1970s that saw intensified

paramilitary violence and an escalation of hostilities between the communities (Morrow

2016, 37).

There were many initiatives supported by the British government aimed at

addressing the developing situation. Some of these included the Sunningdale

Agreement in 1974, which tried to exclude groups like Sinn Féin that were more

'extreme.' A decade later, in 1985, the Anglo-Irish Agreement was signed between the

Irish and British governments, indicating a new phase of cooperation. Nevertheless, it

would take another ten years for political parties to agree to negotiate and include Sinn

Féin in those negotiations (Morrow 2016, 37).

Within these decades, Northern Ireland became a place where social and

political life was characterized by ethnopolitical hostilities. By the 1990s, housing,

education, and leisure were segregated between the two main communities. Despite

these divisions, the political process continued, and in 1996 formal multi-party talks

began. In 1998 the outcome of these negotiations was the GFA. The Agreement

established a power-sharing government between the unionist and nationalist parties as

well as setting forth several provisions related to issues like police reform,

disarmament, and cross border relations (Morrow 2016, 37).

Throughout two and a half decades, around 3,285 people died (Sutton 1994, 195),[6] and another 20,000 were injured (Ruane and Todd 1996, 1). Though Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland suffered casualties, the population of Northern Ireland disproportionately bore the burden of the conflict. Approximately half of all people in the North reported having known someone injured or killed in the conflict, some people suffering more than one personal tragedy (Ruane and Todd 1996, 1). On 11 April 1998, the GFA was reached, formally marking the end to the conflict (D. Mitchell 2015, 1), though minimal levels of violence and tension have continued.

The violence of the conflict undermined the structures of the liberal democratic state and civic culture in Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and Great Britain. Standard judiciary processes ceased to function, human rights violations occurred, security forces and paramilitaries colluded, a culture of war was established, often policing succumbed to the control of paramilitaries, and private groups had stocks of military-grade weapons. The conflict also produced political leaders in Northern Ireland that were highly competent in negotiations related to the conflict but lacked typical government experience. In the South, the political and diplomatic requirements overwhelmed the resources of such a small country (Ruane and Todd 1996, 1).

The conflict reshaped many parts of Northern Ireland's society. There was a politicization of community life, resettlement resulted in 'religiously homogeneous communities of defence,' the presence of government and paramilitary spies shattered

---

[6] In *Bear in mind these dead … An Index of Deaths from the Conflict in Ireland 1969-1993*, Malcolm Sutton qualifies that the discrepancy in this figure and the official British figure accounts for differences in the interpretation of some cases and the fact that the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) figure only incorporates deaths that occurred in Northern Ireland. The researcher acknowledges that these figures may vary depending on the source (Sutton 1994, 195).

community trust and social relationships, social and physical barriers interrupted coexistence and established a culture of exclusion. Less acute versions of this occurred in the border counties in the Republic and Irish communities living in Britain (Ruane and Todd 1996, 1).

In both Northern Ireland and the Republic, cultural development was paralyzed. Matters of national and cultural identity were at the center of the conflict. The essential processes of cultural assessment and development were biased to show allegiance with one side or the other. The conflict was framed by 'cultural oppression of the other and repression of the self.' Symbols and images of nationalism and unionism, and Catholicism and Protestantism became the preoccupation of an entire generation (Ruane and Todd 1996, 1).

Though it is obvious to state that there are points of difference in Northern Ireland that divide communities, the literature on the topic often stresses some dimensions over others. Some emphasize religion, colonialism, ethnic origins, or combine different aspects of the conflict. John McGarry and Brendan O'Leary agree that many elements of division exist like the ones mentioned above; however, argue that the national one is most significant. Others prioritize ideological differences like nationalism and unionism as opposing 'politico-ideological' identities and loyalties. Those like Joseph Ruane and Jennifer Todd contend there are five overlapping and intertwining dimensions of the conflict: religion, ethnicity, colonialism, civility and barbarism, and nationalism and unionism (Ruane and Todd 1996, 10).

There is also debate about what type of conflict Northern Ireland is. The conflict in Northern Ireland is often considered a meta-conflict, a conflict over what the conflict is about (Mitchell 2006, 3; McGarry and O'Leary 1995, 1). Some attempts to classify the conflict can be considered reductionist. Here, it is understood through the lens of an

overarching problem with all other elements held as secondary (Mitchell 2006, 1). The conflict is often considered as cultural, economic, theological, or ethnic (McGarry and O'Leary 1995, 1-2). It can also be considered in global terms as an example of a protracted social conflict, a conflict that is based on ethnic, religious, cultural, or communal identity (Azar 1990, 2). In another way, the conflict can be considered a kind of 'new war.' Unlike 'old wars' that concentrated on issues of geopolitical interest or ideology, 'new wars' are fought in the interest of identity (religion, nation, or tribe) (Kaldor 1999, 69).

Some of the critical contributions to the literature on Northern Ireland include Ruane and Todd (1996), who discuss the conflict in terms of systems of interconnected and supporting relationships that happen at different levels and mutually support each other. McGarry and O'Leary (1995) consider the conflict primarily ethnonational and Claire Mitchell (2006) emphasizes religion, finding it to be an essential part of the conflict that gives meaning to personal and group identities. Others, like John Whyte (1990), consider the conflict in terms of an internal conflict model where the conditions of the conflict are internal rather than external. In this regard, the conflict is mainly between two communities, and no significant conflict exists with the people of Britain and Ireland or the Irish and British states. Frank Wright (1987) uses comparative analysis to understand Northern Ireland and evaluate potential solutions to the situation. Here, he looks at 'ethnic frontiers' like French Algeria, the US South, Prussian Poland, and Austrian Bohemia. Further, Wright (1973) offers a robust analytical approach to religion in Northern Ireland. Moreover, David Mitchell (2015; 2018) offers vital insight into the post-agreement state and the GFA.

5.2 Nationalism and Republicanism

Nationalism involves the identification with a community and the notion that the national community needs political structures for its representation and protection. Supporters of this idea argue that nationalism encourages collaboration, builds trust and empathy, all of which promotes social justice and unity. It requires that nations remain free and unoppressed. Though nationalism does not stipulate that all nations must seek autonomous statehood, members of the nation must consent to the type of government they live under, without which they would not have freedom (McGarry and O'Leary 1995, 14).

Irish nationalism has sought to create the Irish nation bound by an Irish state where the people's right to self-determination and self-governance is protected (McGarry and O'Leary 1995, 14). Other European nationalisms influenced its contemporary form. One of the main driving forces of the movement derived from Protestants trying to reconcile 'settler and native' or Catholic and Protestant, their most significant contribution being the idea of a single, all-encompassing Irish nation (Ruane and Todd 1996, 87). More so, it was driven by Catholic sentiments of past defeat, subjugation and economic victimhood in the nineteenth century. The narrative construction of the history of the Irish nation informed this nationalism. This construction of history resulted in the conception of an Irish nation imagined inclusive of the Gaelic-Irish, descendants of the setters that opposed English rule, Catholic Old English, and their descendants and more recent settlers that uphold nationalist cultural and political values. All others are excluded (Ruane and Todd 1996, 87-88).

The Roman Catholic community usually backs some form of Irish nationalism, advocating for a politically united Ireland separate from the UK. This notion implies that, to some extent, the legislative provisions in Northern Ireland are illegitimate,

causing some disillusionment with the state. Like unionism, there are different positions

of nationalism. Some of these groupings include Sinn Féin, the Social Democratic and

Labour Party (SDLP), and the IRA (Connolly 2019).

In the post-agreement era, there are dissident groups that reject the GFA and the

political compromises made by Sinn Féin. They argue that any form of British rule on

the isle of Ireland is illegitimate and unjust; the only way to combat this injustice is the

use of violence (McEvoy 2017, 214). Dissident republicans hold no political or

electoral mandate and lack support from the general population. It is not common for

these groups to put forth political candidates in elections. If they do, the candidates fail

to gain enough support to make any real political impact (Whiting 2015, 96).

5.3 Unionism and Loyalism

Unionism is the philosophy that the UK should be maintained. Ulster unionism argues

that the union between Northern Ireland and the UK must be kept. Unionism is a

modified version of British nationalism and, like Irish nationalism, has both civic and

ethnic strands. Civic unionism envisions the union as a nation where all citizens of the

UK are equal regardless of race, religion, or cultural origin. In contrast, in ethnic

unionism, the union is expressed through British Protestant successes. In this regard,

Ulster is a land of people descending from the English and Scottish settlers who

civilized Ireland (McGarry and O'Leary 1995, 92-93).

The ideology of unionism came from a backlash against nationalist claims and

ambitions. To oppose nationalist arguments, they drew on the language of British

political identity, liberal political rights, and economic development. From the

beginning, unionism had two parts, a defense of Protestant interests and an assertion

that the union was advantageous for the entire island, not just Protestants, as well as

beneficial for the British empire. From this perspective, the past no longer mattered

because the imperial parliament somewhat addressed Catholic grievances, and both Protestants and Catholics had equal rights under the union (Ruane and Todd 1996, 88-89).

Because loyalism is not founded on a cultural connection with the people of Great Britain, it can be understood as an older version of British nationalism (McGarry and O'Leary 1995, 112). The Ulster loyalist tradition holds far less loyalty to Britain than its unionist counterparts and is more ambivalent about the Ulster Protestant national identity. Their loyalty is not to parliament but the Crown, so long as the Crown protects the rights of Protestants in Ulster (McGarry and O'Leary 1995, 112) and defends them against their enemies (Ruane and Todd 1996, 84). If this support is not upheld, then loyalists will take it upon themselves to defend their communities (Ruane and Todd 1996, 84-85). Loyalism has never organized or developed into a movement in the same way that republicanism has and can be considered a part of the broader unionist grouping but is often distanced from unionism because of its willingness to use violence to achieve its goals (Jarman 2018).

Though there are different unionist political parties in Northern Ireland, the two primary ones are the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) and the UUP (Hennessey, et al. 2018), the DUP often being considered more hardline and in the contemporary era, the principle unionist party (O'Leary 2019, 245). Other political parties played a role in Northern Ireland politics. The Ulster Democratic Party (UDP) formed from the Ulster Defence Association (UDA) and the Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF), both associated as loyalist paramilitary groups. The UDP no longer exists. The Progressive Unionist Party (PUP) is another loyalist political entity in Northern Ireland that is still in existence. The PUP derived from the UVF, a loyalist paramilitary group (O'Leary 2019, 245).

5.4 Religion in Northern Ireland

There is debate among scholars about the role of religion in the Northern Ireland conflict. This section does not argue that the conflict is inherently religious or not but instead provides an overview and contextualizes the role of religion in Northern Ireland and presents different perspectives on the topic. Some like McGarry and O'Leary argue that the conflict is not inherently religious, and religion is merely a way to make distinctions between different ethnic communities (McGarry and O'Leary 1995, 171-213). For them, arguments that emphasize religion fail to consider the many dimensions of difference between the two conflicting groups, and it is more important to consider the national conflict itself. Though religion does, by definition, divide Protestants and Catholics, these communities are also divided economically, politically, and by historical experience. Religion is seen as an ethnic marker that produces segregation in education and housing, and in turn, facilitates spatial segregation between two ethnic and national collectives. In this regard, though religion is considered an ethnic marker, its role in the conflict should not be overemphasized (McGarry and O'Leary 1995, 207-212).

Frank Wright (1973) finds religion to be an important part of the conflict and connects religion to ideology. In his discussion on religion, he explores conceptions held by Ulster Protestants about their Catholic counterparts, and the relationship between these conceptions and the unity Protestants demonstrated in opposition to Catholics and Catholicism (Wright 1973, 213). Wright argues that Protestants' understandings of Catholics and Catholicism are strongly informed by these ideological structures which offer specific values to legitimize the Protestant cause and can manifest as expressions of the conflict. Here it is held that there is a mutual hostility that people are socialized into. This mutual hostility becomes hard to control and often

moves beyond the fundamental theoretical aspects of the conflict. The more the two communities are spiritually and physically separated, the higher the intensity of the ideologies become (C. Mitchell 2006, 9).

Wright contends that in divided societies like Northern Ireland, an understanding of the opposing group is mostly founded in indirect knowledge and socialized teachings instead of personal experience. Though the existence of the opposing groups is a continual concern, little is known about them, which leads to an abundance of theories and ideas of the other (Wright 1973, 213-218; C. Mitchell 2006, 9). He also argues that the association between ideology and socioeconomics is crucial. Here, the position of Protestants' socioeconomic status influences how they understand the political situations in relation to Catholics. However, it is only done through existing ideological beliefs (Wright 1973. 243). In this understanding, the conflict is mostly religious from the perspective of fundamentalist Protestants. However, religious ideologies would not be as significant if they were not tied to socioeconomics or politics (C. Mitchell 2006, 9).

Others, like Mitchell, argue that religion is essential in assigning meaning to group identities and a central part of the conflict. She finds that religion provides 'structures, practices, values, and meanings' to communal boundaries rather than just creating them (Mitchell 2006, 2-5). Mitchell considers several reasons why religion is deeply embedded in the fabric of Northern Ireland. First, religion is closely connected to power relations. The relationship between churches and political parties ensures the continuation of mainstream unionist and nationalist politics (Mitchell 2006, 39-57). Second, religion is used to construct physical boundaries and social segregation; it serves to distinguish between in-group and out-group members (Mitchell 2006, 59-68). These barriers and social segregations manifest themselves through religious rituals that

create a community for both Protestants and Catholics (Mitchell 2006, 69-89). Mitchell also holds that religious ideology steaming from religion but with non-religious ideas of self and other is directly connected to group identities, most strongly felt by Protestants (Mitchell 2006, 91-116). Last, for several Protestants, religious teachings and philosophies inform communal identity and politics. All these aspects of religion inter-relate supporting each other as well as social and ethnic differences and divergences in inequality (Mitchell 2006, 117-132). For these reasons, Mitchell argues that religion is politically and structurally ingrained in Northern Ireland.   This section briefly locates religion in Northern Ireland using some of the core scholars on the topic. Through this discussion, it is apparent that the significance of religion in Northern Ireland and opinions about its influence during the conflict and the contemporary era varies. The next section explores another essential aspect of Northern Ireland, the GFA.

5.5 The Good Friday Agreement and Consociationalism

In 1998, formal peace agreements were reached in Northern Ireland, an event of historical significance (D. Mitchell 2015, 1) and a success that marked the 'normalization' of regional politics (Power 2011). The GFA seemed to be a monumental settlement that would renew damaged relationships and reconstruct a place plagued by a troubled past (D. Mitchell 2015, 1). Those that were instrumental in making this happen thought they had finally brought peace to Northern Ireland (Power 2011). The implementation of the Agreement and addressing tensions between political parties began on 7 May 2007 when a power-sharing government was formed between the DUP and Sinn Féin. With the political settlement in the peace process 'complete,' it was assumed the population would follow suit and overcome their differences. However, the conflict and the transformation of Northern Ireland is not that simple. In

being a deeply divided society, it was unlikely for people to change their 'hearts and minds' immediately; this is something that can take generations (Powers 2011).

The Agreement saw unprecedented support for power-sharing provisions and constitutional reform from many political parties in Northern Ireland, paramilitary groups, and both the Irish and British states (D. Mitchell 2015, 1-2). These peace accords were essential in increasing political cooperation and establishing peace (Mitchell, Tannam and Wallace 2018, 283). Even so, there have been moments when the success of the Agreement has been questioned, and it is not without its critics (D. Mitchell 2015, 1-2). Some critics argue it has hardened sectarian political divisions and failed to foster proper grassroots and community engagement in governance structures. One instance where this is made evident is the collapse of the power-sharing arrangement between the DUP and Sinn Féin in January 2017 and, in turn, the suspension of the Executive. The peace walls are another example of the failings of the Agreement. These walls serve as physical barriers between Protestant and Catholic communities, reinforcing communal divisions (Mitchell, Tannam and Wallace 2018, 283).

The GFA is founded on the principles of consociationalism with federal and confederal qualities, making its structures both 'consociational and territorially pluralist' (McGarry and O'Leary 2009, 18). The consociational theory offers the idea of power-sharing as a democratic solution to societies faced with enduring ethnic division and political conflict (Taylor 2009, 1). Consociational democracies must accept four organizing principles. First, executive power is shared between the main groups, and the Executive is selected according to a representational government approach. Second, each group is given specific measures of independence, especially self-governance over issues related to culture. Third, proportional representation is guaranteed in public

institutions as well as in the distribution of public resources and spending. Fourth, each group has veto-rights and can stop the passage of policies that negatively impact their fundamental interests (McGarry and O'Leary 2004, 98).

The Agreement comprises of three strands. The first strand allowed for a devolved government and power-sharing executive in Northern Ireland. It established the Executive in Northern Ireland, which draws on consociationalism, a power-sharing model of government that ensures each group receives representation. This system replicated the European Parliament model, which used a proportional D'Hondt system whereby both the unionist and nationalist communities were represented, and the two main electoral political parties took the first and deputy positions. Because all political parties were represented under Strand 1, there was no established opposition to the Executive itself. Beyond the establishment of these arrangements, Strand 1 offers an assessment of these arrangements, addressing issues like electoral and assembly procedures (Mitchell, Tannam and Wallace 2018, 284).

The second strand focuses on cross-border problems. It established parameters for the North-South Ministerial Council (NSMC). The point of this council was to set forth six areas of cooperation between the North and South. From it, six formal bodies were formed: Business Development Body, Waterways Ireland, Food Safety Body, Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission, The Language Body, and Special European Union Programmes Body. Also, several areas of cooperation beyond these formal committees were recognized: agricultural policy, education, health, tourism, and transport. (Mitchell, Tannam and Wallace 2018, 284).

The third strand concentrated on the relationship between London and Dublin or British-Irish relations. From this, the British-Irish Council (BIC) was created. The BIC offered a platform for the government leaders in Britain and Ireland to discuss shared

economic interests with the governments in Wales, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Crown Dependencies. Under Strand 3, the British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference (BIIGC) was formed. The BIIGC replaced the Anglo-Irish Conference that had been established under the 1985 Anglo-Irish Agreement (AIA). Its purpose was to establish bilateral cooperation between the Irish and British governments (Mitchell, Tannam and Wallace 2018, 284-285).

The Agreement also addressed issues like human rights through the creation of entities like the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC). It required the UK to officially become a member of the Council of Europe's European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). Likewise, the Republic of Ireland was obligated to form the Human Rights Commission as well as put into place equality regulations (Mitchell, Tannam and Wallace 2018, 285-286). As discussed in more depth later in the chapter, the GFA mostly focuses on constitutional issues, the sovereignty of Northern Ireland, and outlining the structures, procedures, and institutions of the new administration. As especially relevant to this research, symbolism and explicit reference to symbols is limited. Beyond issues of human rights and symbolism, the Agreement sought to decommission paramilitary weapons, decrease the number of UK troops in Northern Ireland, and remove security measures. Some of the other vital parts of the Agreement provide provisions for reformed policing, review of the criminal justice system, and the release of prisoners (Mitchell, Tannam and Wallace 2018, 285-286).

The institutionalization of consociationalism is considered, on the one hand, a beneficial approach in regulating conflicts in divided societies like Northern Ireland. However, it is not without its critics and is also seen as an approach that does not resolve conflicts but instead 'institutionalizes' divisions between opposing parties. The consociational theory has played a central role in Northern Ireland's 'meta-conflict,'

meaning the 'intellectual conflict about the nature of the conflict and the appropriate prescription to tackle it' (McGarry and O'Leary 2006, 45-46). The concept was initially applied to Northern Ireland by Arend Lijphart in 1975 in his article, *Review Article: The Northern Ireland Problem; Cases, Theories, and Solutions*. However, consociational principles had previously been tested in the Sunningdale Agreement of 1973-74, an unsuccessful power-sharing experiment (O'Leary and McGarry 2009, 23).

McGarry and O'Leary are two leading advocates for consociationalism in Northern Ireland and draw on but modify Lijphart's paradigm in their analyses of the conflict. Lijphart considered religion and language as the main elements of 'segmental cleavages' in states where politics focused on the democratic politics of power and resource distribution between divided groups, whereas McGarry and O'Leary associate consociational theory with violent conflict, ethnonationalism and state-building (Hughes 2015, 249). McGarry and O'Leary argue that consociational theory is the most reasonable basis for understanding and transforming Northern Ireland and other comparable conflict areas (O'Leary and McGarry 2009, 23-24). Here they find that aspects of the conflict like sectarianism and the symptomatic segregation arise from root causes based on ethnonationalism. For them, through establishing consociationalism, the Agreement addresses the different cleavages and divisions in Northern Ireland (O'Leary and McGarry 2009, 24).

Though McGarry and O'Leary argue that consociational theory is the most rational basis for addressing the conflict in Northern Ireland, the approach elicits specific criticisms. The main criticism of consociationalism is that it reinforces sectarian divisions by placing priority on segmental autonomy. In doing so, it forces people to conform 'into categories of ethno-nationalist division' and hinders the creation of an integrated society (Mitchell, Tannam and Wallace 2018, 286). From this

perspective, the consociational design of the Agreement is not grounded in democratic governance, acts to reproduce systematic sectarian divisions, and reinforces the root causes of the conflict rather than alleviating them (Hughes 2015, 249-250).

Beyond these assertions, consociationalism has been denounced by Irish republicans, unionists, and self-professed 'middle ground' political parties who claim no affiliation with the ethnonational blocs. Academics and think tanks have also criticized the concept, and many critics argue consociationalism is an 'uncritical acceptance of the primacy and permanency of ethnicity' and of presenting a rather bleak view of humanity' (McGarry and O'Leary 2006, 46). Regardless of the reasons condemning consociational principles in Northern Ireland, McGarry and O'Leary argue that since 10 April 1998, Northern Ireland has had an agreement founded on a consociational design which, for them, is the most probable institutional balance.

5.6 The Mural Painting Tradition in Northern Ireland

Since the 1998 peace agreements, the struggles of the conflict are still embedded in the symbolic landscape, which itself remains spatially segregated by sectarian geography. Though, as this section will show, the mural tradition in Northern Ireland was an integral part of the conflict and remains relevant in the contemporary era, it has been vastly neglected in the conflict's analyses despite its strong reverberations on the post-agreement phase. Public artworks are interwoven in Northern Ireland's post-agreement landscape and connected with the legacies of the Troubles. Cultural expressions like public art have become 'collectively emblematic' of the segregation and polarization in Northern Ireland, especially in working-class areas (McCormick and Jarman 2005, 49). Though the mural tradition has existed for over a century, it has been the notable predominance of paramilitary images and symbols that have come to shape its contemporary spaces (McCormick and Jarman 2005, 49-50). Because of the physical

nature of public artworks like these, they may be more challenging to remove from a specific social context than rhetorical messages.

The peace processes generated an opportunity for memories of the conflict to be reshaped and interpreted in a new way. Though this opportunity arose, at times, there has been a collective ambition to hold onto traditional cultural expressions, symbols, and interpretations rooted in the conflict. For republicans, presenting Northern Ireland to be a delegitimate state and aspiring for a different future, post-agreement Northern Ireland offered an opportunity to imagine that future. This ambition would not be without its problems, and they would need to persuade republican communities to accept the challenging transformation. Each step in this process, like the ceasefire, holding political office, consenting to the newly formed police force, and disbanding the IRA, distanced them further from their original political stances (Rolston 2010, 294-295).

Throughout the conflict, loyalists legitimized their violent actions as extensions of the British Army and the police force. Loyalist paramilitaries were not bound by the same legalities however and were less constrained in their dealings with republican extremism. In this, the IRA ceasefire may be understood as the outcome of the pressure placed on them by loyalist paramilitaries and, thus, a loyalist victory. Like republicans, loyalists faced challenges in the peace processes. Some of these challenges arose from the GFA and came in the form of accepting a reformed police force, the withdrawal of most British military forces, and in the end, their own decommissioning. Unlike republicans, though, loyalists did not have the direct support of a political party, whereas the IRA was associated with Sinn Féin. As a result, many loyalists viewed the change in Northern Ireland as a loss and a threat to their communities rather than an opportunity as republicans often did (Rolston 2010, 295).

These different understandings of transformation in Northern Ireland can be seen in the degree of political symbolism. The tradition of unionist mural painting started in 1908. Respectively, republican mural painting originates from the prisoners' hunger strike in 1981. Their murals had many different themes like Irish history, international connection to other conflicts, and the hunger strike. In contrast, the themes in Unionist murals were more constricted and depicted topics related to the Battle of the Boyne, where King William defeated King James in 1690 (Rolston 2010, 295).

Further thematic limitations occurred in the 1980s in response to the 1985 AIA. Loyalist paramilitaries began a wide-spread campaign that acted as advertisements for their organizations. These commissioned murals mostly consisted of masked men holding guns and can be considered more closely associated with loyalism than unionism (Rolston 2010, 295).

After the GFA, the content of the republican murals changed (Rolston 2010, 295). Guns and masked men were primarily removed from the murals. These changes were done without outside direction or funding and can be considered a kind of self-imposed reimaging (Rolston 2012, 451). Because the republican mural tradition had developed a wide range of symbols and themes over the past two decades, the removal of gunmen though significant, did not drastically affect the ability to represent the republican identity on the walls. Nonetheless, it was still a crucial stage in self-reimaging. This decision saw that the only murals that contained guns were either historical or memorials to specific people (Rolston 2010, 295).

Transforming loyalist murals was a more difficult task because they were wary of the peace process. There was little desire to transform murals into something that indicated that the conflict was over, and a situation driven by politics alone. Lack of thematic diversity was another challenge with changing the murals (Rolston 2010, 295).

Unlike republicans who had spent two decades developing themes, after 1986, most loyalist murals had armed and masked men. The 1994 ceasefire and era of peace processes resulted in more aggressive iconography. The internal debate between different loyalist groups about transformation also was a factor in the reluctance to remove the violent imagery in the murals (Rolston 2012, 452). The removal of gunmen from the murals was a symbolic challenge for loyalists because there were few other symbols to paint.

Eventually, the government implemented the Reimaging Communities Programme in 2006. This initiative was a £3.3 million-pound government program where the Arts Council of Northern Ireland aimed to work with communities to transform the symbolic landscape into a less contentious scene (Rolston 2010, 296-297). This government scheme to reimage the landscapes of Northern Ireland had different outcomes for different communities; some of the reimaged murals depicted human and children's rights. These murals were in the Lower Shankill area of Belfast, the former stronghold of UDA leader Johnny Adair. These murals remained unvandalized for over a year, which suggests public acceptability. At the same time, however, the Reimaging Communities Programme also produce nostalgic murals that were often printed on aluminum or Perspex and secured to the walls. These murals commonly portrayed objects like dance halls or pubs and did not interrogate the challenges of the past or the future these communities were facing (Rolston 2010, 297-298).

Others, like Reverend Gary Mason, worked to persuade loyalists to remove the more contentious murals. He successfully negotiated with the UVF and Red Hand Commando (RHC) in East Belfast to replace some of the murals with ones that had non-hostile imagery. The UDA declined the invitation to participate in changing the

murals. Local heroes like George Best and CS Lewis were painted instead of hooded gunmen. Mason aimed to remove violent remnants of the war from the walls. There was peace now; guns had been removed from politics, so in the same way, the war should be removed from the murals (Rolston 2012, 452). From this, it becomes clear that communities will change the symbolic landscape in their community in their own time. Financially backed programs like the Reimaging Communities Programme cannot change the identity of a community. However, it can be argued that such initiatives should only be considered failures if symbols that perpetuate old ideologies persist. Conversely, the reiteration of symbols may be understood as a step taken before progressing into an unknown future as symbols can serve as a connection 'between the past and the future which makes the present tolerable' (Rolston 2010, 298-300).

On the republican side, Bobby Sands remains a significant symbol for Sinn Féin. There is an image of him on the side of their Belfast headquarters, and he is used in recruitment posters. However, Sinn Féin is not the same party it was in 1981 when Bobby Sands died during the prisoners' hunger strike. It can be argued that the symbolic use of Bobby Sands by Sinn Féin is opportunistic and goes against the very beliefs for which he struggled and died. The use of Bobby Sands by the republican movement connects their political position to the past. It is communicating to its followers that they are still republicans and will achieve the goals set out by republicanism (Rolston 2010, 300-301).

Loyalism also uses past symbols to communicate a similar message to supporters; this is illustrated in the use of themes about the First World War. In the early twentieth century, unionists rejected the possibility of Home Rule and formed the UVF. This organization fought during the First World War as a part of the 36th Division of the British Army and endured significant losses during the Somme and

other battles. This version of the UVF was decommissioned in 1921. The contemporary UVF, established in 1966, viewed itself as an extension of the original UVF and has usurped the First World War symbolism (Rolston 2010, 301).

In post-agreement Northern Ireland, there are two distinct uses for this symbolism. First, representations of the 36th Ulster Division at the Somme are used to assert racial dominance in an increasingly diverse Ulster. In this sense, the soldiers did not lose their lives for a multiracial Northern Ireland. Second, such symbols like memorials dedicated to the 36th Ulster Division and the Somme, images of poppies, soldiers with heads bowed and rifles facing the ground, and quotations from poems about the First World War have become official markings in UVF areas (Rolston 2010, 301).

The second use of the symbolism aligns closely with the aims of the Reimaging Communities Programme. These are symbols that are present not only in the more sanitized reimaged murals but can also be found in previous versions of UVF paramilitary murals. The same symbols used to legitimize the UVF's illegal activities are used in contemporary murals to represent history. In the same way, republicans have used symbols like Bobby Sands to ensure its supporters of the aims of republicanism; loyalism uses symbols from the First World War to communicate to its supporters that its goals are maintained regardless of the peace processes (Rolston 2010, 301-303).

These murals seen across the symbolic landscape 'exist as objects in a material world, but also that as objects, their presence changes the physical context and the social nature of the environment in which they are painted' (McCormick and Jarman 2005, 49-50). In other words, streets or buildings with no murals remain anonymous, monotonous structures like all the other roads or red brick houses found across work-

classes areas in Britain and Ireland. However, the presence of murals distinguishes streets and buildings from each other and locates them in the political conflict (McCormick and Jarman 2005, 50). In this way, public artworks are interwoven in Northern Ireland's landscape and connected with the legacies of the Troubles (McCormick and Jarman 2005, 50-51).

Murals with paramilitary symbolism are synonymous with the broader political culture of Ulster loyalism and Irish republicanism, each advocating for different outcomes in the future of the isle. Ulster loyalists uphold Northern Ireland's inclusion in the UK, and Irish republicans support a united Ireland with no formal ties to the UK. The murals are tools in an 'ideological struggle for the hearts and minds within and between local communities' (McCormick and Jarman 2005, 50). They are cultural expressions of power and control, representing the interests of different grouping in the areas where they exist. On the contrary to what may be suggested or implied, the murals are not indicative of a homogenous part of specific communities (McCormick and Jarman 2005, 50), as the research findings and analyses in this research shows. The reactions to the artworks vary in and between groups, with some seeing them as burdensome, expressions of popular culture, community celebrations, political resistance, or community defiance. To those that oppose specific imagery, they can be considered the imposition of a particular identity, acts of intimidation, or can convey a sinister warning of the message behind the painting. As a result, murals can incite opposition in the same way they can generate support. However, the strong messages conveyed in murals can overwhelm the voices of the opposition in comparison (McCormick and Jarman 2005, 50-51).

This discussion further shows that the murals across the symbolic landscape are cultural artifacts, each having an individual lifespan and biography. As a result, the

meaning, value, and relevance of each mural transform over time. The biographical structure of murals composes of the reasoning for its creation, its maintenance, and whether or not it is erased or left to decay and eventually disappear. Though the artworks have a social, cultural, and political function, their environment and purpose continually change. Interest and analysis of public art like murals in Northern Ireland have mainly focused on the creation, rationale behind them, and their meaning in the broader social and political situation (McCormick and Jarman 2005, 51). Less interest has been paid to what public artworks can reveal about contemporary Northern Ireland and the legacies of the Troubles through the lens of the local population. Building on the importance of investigating cultural expressions (see Chapter Four), public art communicates to the local population and is valuable in trying to understand contemporary Northern Ireland and the legacies of the Troubles. The methodology of this research allows direct insight into the current state of Northern Ireland and on-going peacebuilding processes.

5.7 Peacebuilding and Addressing Symbols in Contemporary Northern Ireland

Contentious cultural expressions and rituals of display, like public artworks in Northern Ireland, elicit the critical narratives of the conflict as well as the strong emotions connected to them as defined by the central communities involved. The artworks are idiomatic expressions serving as platforms for communication and demand making in the post-agreement era. They are political and social statements, provocations and contestations, and public assertions of rights and power. Being public enactments, they are often declarations of identities and narratives that facilitate mobilization in both in-group and out-group capacities. Extensive engagement with public art, either through production or consumption, reinforces relevant narratives,

emotionally engaging people in ways that enhance in-group unity and fosters out-group animosity.

In a discussion about loyalist Orange Order Parades, Ross argues, "conflicts about parades in Northern Ireland are not fundamentally about freedom of speech or religion or protection from intimidation, but about the threatened identities in the region. 'Put simply, the parade issue goes to the heart of the deeply fractured society that, sadly, Northern Ireland represents'" (Ross 2007, 9). The ritual of public art in Northern Ireland serves the same function, as is illustrated in the research data provoked by photo-elicitation as well in the research findings and analyses. Disputes over public art are not about the art itself. Instead, they are about more profound issues about in-group and out-group understandings of each other and the broader situation.

Since the formal peace agreements in 1998, cultural expressions of public art have become increasingly disputed, and their relevance debated. In disagreements over public art, each party highlights matters like recognition and identity, which are systematically played out in symbol and ritual. By using the methodology of this research, it is clear that disputes over public art evoke intense emotions because it is closely connected to collective identity and narrative rooted in the past, present, and future.

It comes as no surprise that the GFA primarily concerns constitutional matters like the rightful sovereignty of Northern Ireland and detailing the procedures, structures, and institutions of what would be the newfound administration. The issue of symbolism or direct reference to symbols is infrequent, and there are no developed concepts about how to address the challenges they demonstrate. The principle mention of the topic is found in the section on Economic, Social, and Cultural Issues (Independent Research Solutions, 2009, 37-38):

All participants acknowledge the sensitivity of the use of symbols and emblems for public purposes, and the need in particular in creating new institutions to ensure that such symbols and emblems are used in a manner which promotes mutual respect rather than division. Arrangements will be made to monitor this issue and consider what action might be required (page 20).

Its proposals on policing should be designed to ensure that policing arrangements, including composition, recruitment, training, culture, ethos and symbols, are such that in a new approach Northern Ireland has a police service that can enjoy widespread support from, and is seen as an integral part of, the community as a whole (page 23).

Peacebuilding initiatives like the Reimaging Communities Programme were developed in line with the GFA. Such peacebuilding projects are not new and aim to create less contentious and more inclusive symbolic landscapes. The reception of these programs and the reimaged imagery is complicated and can prove problematic and may be unpredictable. In such projects, the triangulation of the relationship between the artist, public, and context is essential and defines how such cultural expressions are produced, diluted, negotiated, compromised, and received (Shaffrey 2010, 12-14). Figure 25 in Appendix A is an example of an arguably successful artistic, cultural expression. During the photo-elicitation interviews, there were no adverse responses to the image. The artist, Ed Reynolds, collaborated with the community and considered the context, which is especially important as he is an artist from the Republic of Ireland. In doing so, a mural that was acceptable to the community was created. The fact the mural was not vandalized for five years further shows its public acceptability.

Though this is an arguably successful example of such projects, cultural expressions of public art can also produce unproductive outcomes. This is reflected in a program run by the Belfast City Council Community Service Department between 1977 and 1981. This initiative sought to create more welcoming and inclusive environments, like the Reimaging Communities Programme. Many of the murals created under the scheme had public acceptability and were considered badges of local pride and identity.

However, other murals were rejected by the communities for which they were intended. Local communities were often skeptical of the appropriateness or benefit of the repetitive depictions of animal and jungle scenes, circuses, and fairy tales often found in public art (Crowley 2011, 27).

A mural that was painted on a sixty-yard-long wall in Springhill, Belfast illustrates this point. Des Wilson, the West Belfast community priest at the time, commented that the mural was painted with 'brilliant flair and astounding absence of sensitivity' on the part of the artist. After the mural was painted, the local population was left to contemplate the image and question if the wild animals in the jungle represented the artists' perception of them. Local children altered the image through a series of additions and deletions. Wilson noted, 'the mural may have been an outsider's comment on the district; the emendations were the children's comment on the artist' (Wilson 1983, 19). This image illustrates the disconnect between the government, the artists' intentions, and the public. The local population did not identify with the mural and was unsure about its meaning. Conversely, the mural represented the official government stamp, promoted the caring side of the government, and legitimized the Community Service Department of Belfast City Council (Wilson 1983, 19).

In the contemporary era, there have been on-going peacebuilding efforts like the one above to address expressions of culture. In 2009, the Troubles Archive project was initiated by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland. This project is a digital resource generated 'in recognition of the contribution that the arts make to our understanding of the Troubles and of the impact that the conflict has had upon the arts in Northern Ireland' (Rolston 2012, 451). The goal of the Troubles Archive is to assemble a collection of works by poets, fine artists, singers, and filmmakers; this was inclusive of people whose works were marginalized during the Troubles. Simultaneously, the Arts

114

Council had been taking a central role in rethinking and reimaging the symbolic landscape. A few years before the Troubles Archive program, they initiated the Reimaging Communities Programme, a peacebuilding project that 'places artists in the heart of communities to work with local people to tackle visible signs of sectarianism and racism to create a more welcoming environment for everyone' (Rolston 2012, 451). It aimed to encourage local community engagement in cultivating ways to replace contentious murals and symbolism with imagery that was considered more positive (Rolston 2012, 454). Though this is an underpinning goal of the program, the murals can also be understood as burdens, expressions of mainstream culture, celebrations of community, political resistance, or community defiance. To people or groups in opposition to particular symbolism, the imagery can be interpreted as the imposition of a singular identity, a tactic of intimidation, or the conveyance of a message or warning to those who see the image (McCormick and Jarman 2005, 50). The varying interpretations of these cultural expressions complicate peacebuilding programs like the Reimaging Communities Programme. Resulting from this is conflicting opinions about the art by different people and communities.

5.8 Chapter Conclusion

Chapter Five offers a history of Northern Ireland that concentrates on the information needed to contextualize this research further as connected to discussions of the methodologies and theoretical framework. It explores crucial topics related to the politics and ideologies of the conflict, mainly focusing on unionism, loyalism and Protestantism and nationalism, republicanism, and Catholicism. In being central in both the conflict and post-agreement era, the primary ideologies and politics are discussed both historically and contemporarily.

Other critical components of the chapter explore and critique religion in Northern Ireland, the GFA, consociationalism, the mural tradition in Northern Ireland, and peacebuilding initiatives related to symbolism. In terms of the GFA, deliberations on the primary aspects of the Agreement and a detailed critique are provided. Essential scholars like McGarry and O'Leary, Ruane and Todd, Mitchell, Wright, and D. Mitchell, are used to frame these discussions. These topics are building on the information about cultural expressions, symbolic landscapes, and peacebuilding processes in post-agreement societies, as presented in Chapter Four, as well as set the stage for the subsequent findings, analyses, and conclusions. The next chapters use the information in Chapters One through Five to tie together the practical application of the methodology, theoretical framework, and background on Northern Ireland to accomplish the overall research aims.

CHAPTER SIX

Part One: Photographs, Iconographic Analysis, and Semiotic Analysis

6.1 Introduction

The 1998 peace agreements and subsequent peacebuilding strategies have aimed to address the political and social cleavages in Northern Ireland. These peace agreements and peacebuilding activities have changed Northern Ireland, but the degree of their success or not in addressing the root causes of the conflict is debated. This research offers an innovative approach to evaluating contemporary Northern Ireland and the legacies of the Troubles from the perspective of the local population, using Belfast as the central case and photo-elicitation, iconography, semiotics, and thematic analysis as the methodology. With this methodology, it obtains direct insight into the local conditions and socio-political elements of Northern Ireland. Furthermore, it shows how this methodology is a useful tool in evaluating divided societies emerging from conflict. The methodology used in the study helps in understanding the significance of public art and peacebuilding. By using this model, on-going peace processes and case-specific problems related to post-agreement environments can be examined. Central findings can then be used to develop and inform preventative measures or interventions where needed. As such, it is useful in researching post-agreement situations and peacebuilding contexts. This is illustrated in the successful use of it to answer the primary research questions in this study: What do cultural expressions like art in the public realm reveal about peacebuilding in post-agreement societies like Northern Ireland? Are visual methodologies like photo-elicitation, iconography, and semiotics useful tools for investigating post-agreement societies? During a time when Northern Ireland is encountering new challenges to the established peace, this methodology allows for an increased understanding of the post-agreement state.

The use of photo-elicitation with iconography, semiotics, and thematic analysis generated data that indicates that more than twenty years on from the GFA, deep-rooted issues related to the conflict persist, the same issues that on-going peacebuilding efforts are trying to address. This methodology evoked data that enabled the researcher to see directly through the eyes of the participants, offering insight into the present situation in Northern Ireland from their lived experiences. The photographs of public art in Belfast elicited intense emotional responses that provide insight into the on-going peacebuilding in Northern Ireland. The data presented in this and the next chapter shows that an unresolved past, poverty, paramilitarism, divisive political rhetoric, and the nature of the GFA contribute to continued hostilities and tensions. These claims are also addressed throughout Chapter Eight.

This chapter and Chapter Seven present the photographs used in the photo-elicitation interviews alongside the iconographic and semiotic analyses. Because of the depth of the analyses and the amount of information derived from them, the photographs, iconographic, and semiotic analyses are divided into two chapters. As noted in Chapter Two, the photographs were organized differently for each interview, depending on the known background of interviewees. This was done so as not to turn a participant off from the interviewee process by beginning with a photograph that could be seen as contentious based on their background. As a result, the photographs in these chapters are not organized like in the interviews. Instead, they are presented as much as possible with the progression of Chapter Eight.

Chapter Six, Chapter Seven, and the subsequent chapters connect the different methodologies, theories, background, and critical literature offered in the previous five chapters to help explore the central research questions. Photo-elicitation (Chapter Two) was used to collect the raw research data. After collecting the raw data from the photo-

elicitation interviews, it was necessary to use another method to organize and isolate

essential data. Barthian visual semiotics (Chapter Three) was used to do this. It was

applied to organize and extract pertinent material from that data as well as to understand

participant thought processes. The iconographic analysis (Chapter Three) overlaps with

these methods and serves as a crucial backdrop and baseline against the data gathered in

the photo-elicitation interviews and subsequently examined using semiotics.

Moreover, it served as an intensive reflexive exercise for the researcher. The

iconographic analysis required the researcher to consider each photograph individually

and progress through an in-depth analysis. This process forced the researcher to identify

and challenge biases and assumptions directly related to the research data. This

reflexive exercise was essential to the production of trustworthy findings. The final

layer of this methodological approach was the deductive thematic analysis (Chapter

Two). Here, themes were generated based on established theory and informed by the

categories and descriptors found in the theoretical framework (Chapter Four) and the

background material (Chapter Five). This chapter and Chapter Seven draw on the

background chapter (Chapter Five), which intertwines with the literature in Chapter

Four. This information contextualizes the situation in Northern Ireland and informs this

analysis in this chapter, Chapter Seven, and the following chapters. Without this

contextualization, the researcher would not have enough knowledge about the situation

to make sense of the data collected. In combination, all five of the previous chapters

provide what is required to perform this analysis. Chapter Eight takes what is presented

in this chapter, and Chapter Seven and subjects it to thematic analysis. Chapter Nine

draws on the entire dissertation to make final conclusions.

This chapter begins by reacquainting the reader with Barthian visual semiotics

and iconography to remind the reader of the principal aspects of the approaches. The

next part of the chapter presents eighteen of the twenty-eight photographs used in the

photo-elicitation interviews. Though not all twenty-eight photographs used in the

photo-elicitation interviews appear in the main body of the dissertation, a

comprehensive list is in Appendix A. Each photograph elicited different kinds and

amounts of information, some provoking more information or relevant data. Moreover,

some participants chose not to respond to specific photographs because, for them,

responding to the image would legitimize a piece of art that they felt had no place in

their society. Not responding to the image, at times, is equally as significant as when

participants chose to respond. By abstaining from responding to photographs, it can

show that some images are not welcome by part of the population. These issues made

some photographs more prolific than others in the research data, and that is reflected in

the research findings and analyses.

The chapter presents photographs one through eight. The location, date of

creation, and artist(s) are denoted when possible. Alongside each photograph are the

iconographic and semiotic analyses, and a brief description of the corresponding

theme(s) in Chapter Eight, of which there are three. The first theme questions the

established and durable peace in Northern Ireland. The second theme explores the

evolving role of identity in the contemporary era. The third theme looks at the evolving

role of public art and accesses peacebuilding programs like the Reimaging

Communities Programme in the post-agreement state.

It is important to note that because of the nature of the different methodologies,

there is repetition in and between chapters. The data is subjugated to different kinds of

assessments that generate different analyses. As a result, the semiotic reviews offer the

same quotations that are later used in the thematic analysis. For these approaches to

work, the quotations must be presented in each. Moreover, in line with the

methodology, each iconographic analysis stands alone. Therefore, similar information may be presented in multiple iconographic analyses. The material in Chapters Six and Seven are placed here so the reader can easily reference them when engaging with the subsequent thematic analysis in the chapter.

6.2 Barthian Visual Semiotics and Iconography Revisited

This section provides a brief overview of Barthian visual semiotics and iconography. The intent here is to refamiliarize the reader with these approaches. In the next section, the semiotic and iconographic reviews are placed alongside the photographs, which relate to a specific theme(s). To begin with, the iconographic analysis has three stages of interpretation. First, the pre-iconographical description considers the detail in an image like people or events. It asks the question, what can be seen in the image? Second, the iconographical analysis seeks to understand a fuller account of the image and begs the question, what can be observed in the image? In this stage, outside sources related to social, political, or cultural content are used to help determine meanings. Third, iconological interpretation questions what is the meaning of the image? This phase of interpretation occurs when the content and structure are used together to interpret the intrinsic meaning of an image (Lenette 2016, section 1.1.2). The iconographic reviews will be presented using this three-level structure.

Like the iconographic analysis, the semiotic analysis is revisited to remind the reader how the theory works. Barthian visual semiotics is not only helpful in organizing and extracting data but also helps the researcher understand the layered thought processes of participants. What does the participant observe first? What are the more profound internal ideas and beliefs that the images draw out? The photo-elicitation interviews offered a medium for this information to be gathered, Barthian visual semiotics, a way to organize and extract meaning.

Barthes finds, there are three potential messages in an image. The first is a linguistic one, the texts in an image. The second is the coded iconic message or the symbolic meaning in an image, and third, the noncoded iconic message is the literal meaning. It is easy to separate the linguistic message from the other two. Distinguishing between the coded and noncoded iconic messages is more complicated, however, because the noncoded message imprints itself on the coded one serving as a kind of support. In the analysis of the Panzani advertisement (Chapter Three), the linguistic message denotes the name of the company and connotates Italianicity or Italy. The symbolic message is fourfold and conveys the return from the market, Italianicity, the notion of total culinary service, and the still life. The literal message is simply the string-bag, tomato, and a packet of pasta. To understand this noncoded message, a person only needs an anthropological knowledge, the comprehension of what an image is, and the items depicted (Barthes 1977, 33-37).

Each photograph used in the interviews contains an iconic coded message and a noncoded iconic message; not all the photographs include a linguistic message. A linguistic message is a tool that functions to help direct the viewer to an accurate interpretation; it tries to prevent the viewer from becoming overwhelmed with a list of inexhaustible potential interpretations. Though the linguistic message is a part of the interpretation process because its primary function is to guide the reader to an accurate understanding, it is not openly apparent in the interview process and thus, is not presented here. Instead, the semiotic analysis concentrates on the noncoded iconic and the coded iconic messages. Because the coded iconic messages offer a deeper meaning in participant responses, these messages guide the thematic analysis. The following is the first of two chapters presenting the photographs and iconographic and semiotic analyses.

6.3 Photographs, Iconographic Analysis, and Semiotic Analysis

6.3.1 Photograph One

Photograph one is on Newtownards Road in East Belfast, a primarily unionist, loyalist, and Protestant part of the city. The artist and date of creation are unavailable.

(Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

Iconographic Review

Step 1: Pre-iconographical description: This image uses an array of bright colors. There are many signs and symbols in the image. These signs and symbols include a man; the quote 'you are never too old to set another goal or dream a new dream'; many different

groups of people; a non-Caucasian girl sending a dove into the air; gears; and two buildings.

Step 2: Iconographical analysis: The man in the image is CS Lewis. He is an author from Belfast who wrote *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*. He is often considered the author of the quote in the image, 'you are never too old to set another goal or dream a new dream.' The buildings appear to be Queens University and Belfast City Hall. The dove may represent the dove of peace.

Step 3: Iconological Interpretation: This image tries to convey aspects of Belfast that could be considered positive and represent progress, opportunity, and diversity. There can be different interpretations of this. In one way, it can be understood as a message of encouragement to a marginalized community. In another way, it may be considered irrelevant to a community that does not have easy access to the opportunities conveyed in the image like attending university.

Semiotic Review

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a former member of the IRA, former political prisoner and community worker with a republican affiliated organization. May 18)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: For this image the participant did not verbally express a noncoded iconic message.

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'A lot of this is expressing the uncertainty with the present moment. Fears. There is unfinished business so until you get that settled people will look cautiously towards the future.'

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a worker at a cross community organization in North Belfast. August 23)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: For this image the participant did not verbally express a noncoded iconic message.

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'We have not dealt with issues here. We are going the wrong way. We have a high suicide rate. We have low academic achievement. We have high teenage pregnancy. This can lead to a sense of my voice isn't being heard and not being represented but then hey I haven't bothered my arse to go and actually register to vote. I have no interest in Brexit, I have noooo concept of that whatsoever. I fucking hate foreigners. They're over here taking our jobs, I'm going, what jobs? You aren't working because you don't want to work. See we need to rethink those claims you're making. We need to find a new way of intervention.'

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with Alliance Party political representative in East Belfast. August 24)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'City hall. Queens.'

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'The fact that there are least two individuals of an ethnic minority in that photo as well because Northern Ireland doesn't have two communities. I hate that dialogue. The two communities and the other side. But we have so many more.'

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with art curator from Belfast and founder of a local non-affiliated arts community organization. May 18)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: For this image the participant did not verbally express a noncoded iconic message.

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'It's shit. I hate this so much. It's like someone has vomited onto a wall. It's awful. It's not a fucking mural. It's a paste up. A giant sticker. This is again what happens when you do art by committee. Politicians and government workers don't understand what they are doing.'

Using photo-elicitation, iconography, semiotics, and thematic analysis, the research data shows that photograph one elicited responses relating to each of the three themes. The first two responses relate to theme one, response three to theme two, and response four to theme three. The information gathered suggests that the conflict is still a part of daily reality, reveals pivotal data about the younger generations, offers perspectives about the traditional two community, and speaks to the Reimaging Communities Programme. In line with the iconographic analysis, responses show the relevance and irrelevance of the image. On the one hand, participants spoke about the positive aspects of it, and on the other, it was discussed in terms of on-going social problems arising from the Troubles.

6.3.2 Photograph Two

Photograph two is located off the Falls Road in West Belfast, a primarily nationalist,

republican, and Catholic part of the city. Danny Devenny painted this mural in 2014.

The Derry-based republican ex-prisoner organization, Tar Abhaile, funded this project.

(Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

Iconographic Review

Step 1: Pre-iconographical description: This image is painted on a blue background

with a sign indicating Beechmount Avenue. There are many signs and symbols in the

image. These signs and symbols include a woman at the forefront of the mural; two

additional groups of women; a gun with Cnamb and Céad bliain; and Ni Saoirse go Saoirse na mban.

Step 2: Iconographical analysis: This image represents an organization known as Cumann na mBan (Woman's Council) or Cnamb. The woman at the forefront is Constance Georgine Markievicz or Constance Markievicz, and the groups of women are members of Cumann na mBan. The phrase 'Cumann na mBan Céad bliain. Ni Saoirse go Saoirse na mban' translates to 'Cumann na mBan. 100 years. No Freedom until Women's Freedom' (Crozier-De Rosa and Mackie 2019). Cumann na mBan began as an auxiliary corps to the Irish Volunteer Force in 1914 (Reilly 2006, 115) and played a role in the 1916 Easter Rising and the War of Independence (Furlong 2009, 70-73).

Constance Markievicz was a member of Sinn Féin and Inghinidhe na hÉireann, which stands for daughters of Erin/Ireland (Crozier-De Rosa and Mackie 2019). Sinn Féin is a political party whose agenda is ending the partition of the island of Ireland to establish a United Ireland (Sinn Féin n.d.). In 1909 Markievicz founded the Na Fianna Éireann, an organization that trained young men to be nationalist soldiers and was a 'pseudo-military youth group' (Hay 2008, 53).

During the 1916 Easter Rising, she was second in command to Michael Mallin, and in 1918 she was elected to the House of Commons but did not assume her seat (Lane 2018). From 1919 to 1922, she served as the Minister for Labour (O'Halloran 2018) and was elected as a Fianna Fáil member in 1927; however, she never took her seat because she died a month after being elected. Fianna Fáil is an Irish political party that was founded in 1926 (O'Donoghue 2017).

Step 3: Iconological Interpretation: This mural 'celebrates not just the Cumann na mBan but the input of women throughout Irish history' (Crozier-De Rosa and Mackie 2019). It is one in a series of murals in Belfast and Derry created to celebrate female

activists and the 100th year anniversary of Cumann na mBan (Crozier-De Rosa and Mackie 2019).

Semiotic Review

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a worker at a cross community organization in North Belfast. August 23)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'Women's rights.'

Step 2: Coded iconic message: '[Northern Ireland is] not post-conflict but post-armed conflict, a conflict that hasn't been resolved.'

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a worker at a cross community organization in North Belfast. August 23)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: For this image the participant did not verbally express a noncoded iconic message.

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'When we did get some engagement with young people, young men, young women and women's groups there either was a reluctance or an inability or a combination of both to articulate their thinking. We engaged with the most difficult and hard to reach in the district. They were politically recidivistic. They would go to jail these lads and fight at the interfaces. They would throw stones, petrol bombs…When the war we grew up within and was on, they didn't know this, they didn't see this, so it was transgenerational, residual impact of trauma within these young men, a lot of them taking their own lives.'

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with Sein Féin political representative and former IRA political prisoner. May 20)

> Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'There will be no freedom until the freedom for women is achieved. Constance Markievicz.'
>
> Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'Republicans' is part history. It's like saying Martin Luther King [inaudible section] they were important historical figures, so he was in one of the murals but then people took offence as if he is being glorified. I don't think anything gets glorified it's just a statement. Here's what happened 100 years ago, we do glorify the republican martyrs of 1916 but definitely don't glorify Carson. He was just part of shaping history. Murals show history, memorial, and identity and trying to be a more peaceful representation of the situation but still some people are offended. A misunderstanding of what is meant.'

This photograph of the mural representing Cumann na mBan evoked important information that informs theme one, the durability of sustained peace in Northern Ireland. Each response reveals information about the realities of the conflict in contemporary Northern Ireland, the competition over space, and the 'social construction of acceptability' and speaks to the impact of transgenerational trauma.

6.3.3 Photograph Three

Photograph three is in the Cathedral Quarter, near the city center. This mural, 'Son of Protagoras,' was painted by French street artist MTO in conjunction with the HIT the North festival in 2014.

(Photograph by the researcher, May 2016)

Iconographic Review

Step 1: Pre-iconographical description: A young man with red hair is squatting. He holds a bird that has been killed by two arrows. The fletching of each arrow is red, one marked with black crosses and the other triangular lines.

Step 2: Iconographical analysis: The young man in the image holds the dove of peace, which has been killed by two arrows. Each arrow retrospectively represents the Catholic and Protestant Churches (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with art curator from Belfast and founder of a local non-affiliated arts community organization. May 18).

Step 3: Iconological Interpretation: This image implies the Catholic and Protestant churches destroyed the peace in Northern Ireland and continues to be problematic in the post-agreement state.

Semiotic Review

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with prominent Protestant religious leader during the Troubles and former chaplain in the Orange Order. October 4)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'This is powerful. The killing of peace. Violence to the dove. Young person.'

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'Young people are so disadvantaged or despairing that there is potential to kill the peace that is here. There is a sort of warning in that. There has been change in Northern Ireland but not a lot of transformation. There is a social apartheid, a spiritual apartheid. We have apartheid here but it's not like it's in law. It means the young people are screened from each other. They are therefore colonized by old attitudes which leads to violence and despair and injury.'

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a former member of the UDA and former political prisoner. October 7)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'Dove of peace. Crosses on arrows.'

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'Heavy duty reflection of how the peace maker or messenger has been shot. The peace messengers have been killed. Religion is a major barrier to our peace process.'

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with art curator from Belfast and founder of a local non-affiliated arts community organization. May 18)

> Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'This is the son of Protagoras.'
>
> Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'He is commonly accepted to be the father of agnosticism and the first person to ever be recorded saying I see no evidence of God so how do you know they exist? This is why he is dressed in a toga and why he's holding the dove of peace that's been killed by the Catholic and Protestant churches. The two arrows symbolic of two religions that have torn the country apart and basically about just the destroying of peace. The boy found the dove of peace killed by religion.'

Like photograph two, during the photo-elicitation interviews, photograph three evoked responses related to theme one. Participants articulated replies consistent with the legacies of the Troubles. Religion is still seen to be a barrier to peace processes in Northern Ireland; Catholicism and Protestantism impede the ability to have a sustained peace. Moreover, the image was discussed in terms of the 'apartheid' of young people. Arguably the youth are being separated and, in turn, are drawing on the ideologies of the conflict.

6.3.4 Photograph Four

Photograph four is on Hugo Street in West Belfast, a primarily nationalist, republican, and Catholic part of the city. The artist and date of creation are unavailable.

(Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

Iconographic Review

Step 1: Pre-iconographical description: Chains frame the mural. Two names appear in the image, John-Paul Wootton and Brendan McConville. There are six 'JFTC2' chained together and two sets of chained fists. In the center of the image is the word Injustice, written in bold letters.

Step 2: Iconographical analysis: Dissident republicans John-Paul Wootton and Brendan McConville were convicted of murdering Constable Stephen Carroll in Craigavon in 2009, the first police officer to be killed after the GFA (Murphy 2013). JFTC2 (Justice for the Craigavon Two) is a campaign that seeks their release, arguing the sentence is a miscarriage of justice, and the two men are wrongfully imprisoned (Daly 2013). Dissident republicans reject the GFA and the political compromises made by Sinn Féin (Spencer 2015, 229). The chained fists replicate symbols used in murals advocating for the release of prisoners during the Troubles (see figure four in Appendix B).

Step 3: Iconological Interpretation: This image expresses the opinion that John Paul Wootton and Brendan McConville were unjustly convicted of the murder of Constable Stephen Carroll in Craigavon in 2009. The use of the chained fists implies advocacy for the release of both men from prison.

Semiotic Review

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a worker at a cross community organization in North Belfast. August 23)

> Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: For this image the participant did not verbally express the noncoded iconic message.
>
> Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'The imagery is trying to go back to the our prison struggle and our prison protests. They don't belong to this. That is not theirs. That imagery belongs to the men and women of the provisional IRA. It also gives me sadness that there's a sense of romanticism of what it was like. Men and women did this, so you didn't have to. We also want to be reconnected even when it isn't ours. Like the IRA, there's always that sense of this is an unbroken linage. One voice is republicanism. We always interlock ourselves

135

back to the past. When growing up there were three murals in particular on my street alone. They are a visual trigger and connected to cultural literacy so sometimes the murals can be a very dangerous thing. It's almost like false advertising.'

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with Alliance Party political representative in East Belfast. August 24)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'JFTC2.'

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'Everyone thinks that the conflict has gone away, the conflict between inter-communities. But there is this horrible cancerous element of dissident republicanism that hasn't moved with the overall flow of republicanism to democracy and political means and who has rejected any engagement. There's an undercurrent in some of those communities that there are legitimate targets. I hate all those words. They are used to justify the murder of people who are doing a job. JFTC2, for me, dissident republicans have as little a place in our society as loyalist paramilitaries.'

Photograph four also connects to theme one, the questioning of the peace in Northern Ireland. The participants articulate that the conflict has not fully abated. Dissident republicans reject the GFA and the negotiations made by Sinn Féin, continuing to fight the conflict. Beyond dissidents, the symbolism of the chains and fists relates to the imagery of the Troubles. Using the same imagery as used during the Troubles links the contemporary era to the pre-agreement ideologies.

6.3.5 Photograph Five

Photograph five is in the Cathedral Quarter, near the city center. The artist and date of creation are unavailable.

(Photograph by the researcher, May 2016)

Iconographic Review

Step 1: Pre-iconographical description: The background of the image is like a stained-glass window. There are many signs and symbols in the image. The signs and symbols include two hands reaching towards each other; planet earth with Ireland and a speech bubble that is illegible in the image; crosses; and different people and events.

Step 2: Iconographical analysis: This image was commissioned by a church (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with art curator from Belfast and founder of a local non-affiliated arts community organization. May 18). It can be likened to the fresco by Michelangelo *The Creation of Adam* (1508-1512). The image appears to replicate different stories from religious texts like the Bible.

Step 3: Iconological Interpretation: Because the Church commissioned this artwork, it may be a celebration of religious stories, events, and people.

Semiotic Review

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a board member of a Presbyterian church. October 4)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'Michelangelo. Story of creation.'

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'Interpreting events in a way that gives them reconciliation value, that's part of the church's role.'

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a former member of the UDA and former political prisoner. October 7)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'The Creation. Walking into the sunset.'

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'Baby Jesus and the Bible. One main problem in this society.'

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with art curator from Belfast and founder of a local non-affiliated arts community organization. May 18)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'All parts of the Bible. Calvary. *Last supper*. All kind of links into stories of the Bible.'

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'Commissioned by the church. I don't think it is sensitive to the space around it. I come from a generation of *Across the Barricades*. I don't like this sort of art. It's like a movie: you (Protestants and Catholics) will be friends. But there's a bigger picture. It drives me nuts when I have to look at the work I've done through the lenses of Catholics and

Protestants. I am neither Catholic nor Protestant. Our schools and government are didactically along those lines and why should our art be? Art should say fuck that. There's a thing of beauty and meaning and there's space that exists outside of that.'

This photograph connects to theme one about the established peace in Northern Ireland because of its seeming connection to religion. On the one hand, according to one participant, the image speaks to the responsibility of the church to foster reconciliation. However, similar to other photographs, religion is expressed as a hindrance in the peace processes and perpetuates deep-rooted issues of the conflict in the contemporary era.

6.3.6 Photograph Six

Photograph six is on Dee Street, a primarily unionist, loyalist, and Protestant part of the city. The artist and date of creation are unavailable.

(Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

Iconographic Review

Step 1: Pre-iconographical description: The background of the image is a landscape and a body of water. There are many signs and symbols in the image. The signs and symbols include a badge with UFF formed in 1973, a closed hand and a six-sided star; a badge with UYM, *Terrae-Filius* and a closed red hand; a badge with UDA, *Quis*

Separabit, and an open red hand; Northern Ireland detached from the Republic of Ireland with a flag drawn inside the image of Northern Ireland; men in balaclavas holding guns; and a banner with Dee Street Coy.

Step 2: Iconographical analysis: The UFF is a loyalist paramilitary organization that was formally banned as a terrorist organization in 1973. UFF stands for Ulster Freedom Fighters (C. Sullivan 2011, 599), and the closed red hand on top of the six-pointed star is UFF symbolism. The badge with UYM, *Terrae-Filius*, and a closed red hand is the badge of the UYM (Rolston 2019), and UYM stands for Ulster Young Militants (Adkins 2004, 329). *Terrae-Filius* is Latin for the son of the earth (Rolston 2019), and UDA stands for Ulster Defence Association (McKittrick and McVea 2012, 385). The badge with UDA, *Quis Separabit*, and an open red hand represent the UDA (Wood 2006, 79; Johnson 2005, 17). The masked men are symbols often found in loyalist paramilitary murals (Rolston 2011, 345). The flag drawn inside the outline of Northern Ireland is the Ulster Banner (Mulhern and Melaugh 2019).

Step 3: Iconological Interpretation: The symbolism in this image may represent the aspiration to defend the union with the UK. This assertion is indicative of the loyalist and unionist imagery. Moreover, Northern Ireland is detached from the Republic, signifying a rejection of reunification and desire to maintain the union with the UK.

Semiotic Review

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a former member of the IRA, former political prisoner and community worker at a republican affiliated organization. May 18)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'Poor reflection of six counties.'

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'Reflection of militarism in East Belfast. The UDA and UFF. There are groups of people in that area that murdered and

mutilated people solely because they were Catholic, so it reflects total religious, sectarian, bitter, unbelievably vicious attitudes to the nationalist or Catholic population. Although, I know a lot of people who used to be in the UFF who are decent people. They were caught up in the era and being fed it by their politicians.'

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a worker at a cross community organization in North Belfast. August 23)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'Tone of blue. Red Hand. Shamrock.'

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'Dee street don't understand the idea of freedom. Freedom to be a cunt? Red Hand of Ulster is something I'm intensely proud of as part of culture and heritage. Goes back to my Celtic roots. It's not a clinched fist. It comes from the myth of King of Ulster. I have red hands on lots of jerseys, but you put that with a crown above this I'm deeply offended. The cross of Saint Patrick, the butcher's apron, the iron flag. Butchers apron because the bastards have been killing us for centuries. Another image which extensively belongs to my culture and roots is the shamrock. If you put a shamrock and then put a red hand in the middle of it, I'm seeing UVF. You can take two symbols and once you put two symbols that are extensively mine and interlock them that's a difficulty.'

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with prominent Protestant religious leader during the Troubles and former chaplain in the Orange Order. October 4)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'Murdered by the enemies. Red hand. Fist.'

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'Murals foster enemy consciousness. Protestants have to be unionists or loyalists and Catholics have to be nationalist or republican. Martyr-ology. Making heroes out of people who died and killed people. If less attached to blood sacrifice people are more willing to move past it. The red hand is all about shedding blood. It's a gathering of martyrs. We can't let them die.'

Interview

(Anonymous. Interview with director of a peacebuilding charity in North Belfast. August 23)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'Confrontation.'

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'Republicans will say our murals aren't about conflict or confrontation. They are about the struggles and the injustice and we are the ones dealing with injustice. We aren't the ones antagonizing. We are called to arms to defend our community. We are being attacked and the army and police aren't doing enough so we must be prepared to defend ourselves.'

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with Sein Féin political representative and former IRA political prisoner. May 20)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'UFF.'

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'Loyalist, unionist communities particularly. It's funny how I'm not used to seeing them and then when I see them it horrifies me. Whenever you see something all the time you do absorb it. Slow at moving away from paramilitary. Republicans have moved on by leaps and bounds. Sinn Féin had its hay day being the popular party of resistance and now we are

143

probably establishment. Things change. Republican murals tend to have moved away from showing things of the IRA. It looks very sinister, hostile to me.'

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with Alliance Party political representative in East Belfast. August 24)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'Territorialism.'

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'I came from a Catholic background. In Northern Ireland it's really hard to take away your own baggage. As much as I want to see a shared society there are elements of me that feel less safe in some areas and more safe in others, simply because of my background. With my name, a very Irish name, the assumption is Catholic. Also, because there has been such a threat from the loyalists to the Alliance Party over the past few years because of the flag decision in 2012. But now I represent communities that identify as loyalists. When I see murals like this I still wonder if I will be safe here.'

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with member of Belfast City Council. August 22)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: For this image the participant did not verbally express a noncoded iconic message.

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'One of the murals we wanted to change but they are attractive to tourists. To a certain extent, I don't mind them so much. Do we take things away from the community or the tourists?'

Photograph six connects to themes two and three. These themes explore the changing role of identity in Northern Ireland and the evolving role of cultural expressions like public art and understanding peacebuilding in the contemporary era. This photograph relates to these two themes because of its apparent sectarian

symbolism. This kind of imagery is divisive and often indicates control and power over space, naturally lending to responses related to identity. It is also imagery the is being reconsidered in the post-agreement state. Within this reconsideration, there are those who both oppose and support this type of imagery. A part of the peacebuilding processes related to symbolism is the Reimaging Communities Programme, which aims to create more welcoming spaces across the landscapes of Northern Ireland. This program is a part of the on-going debate. Participant responses reflect these continued challenges in the post-agreement era.

6.3.7 Photograph Seven

Photograph seven is in East Belfast, a primarily unionist, loyalist, and Protestant part of

the city. The artist and date of creation are unavailable.

(Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

Iconographic Review

Step 1: Pre-iconographical description: This image is painted on a pink background.

The public art piece wraps around the wall rendering part of it invisible in the

photograph. There are many signs and symbols in the image. The signs and symbols

include two silhouettes of soldiers with their guns pointed towards the ground and heads bowed; a badge with a closed red hand, UYM and *Terrae-Filius*; and tomorrow belongs to us.

Step 2: Iconographical analysis: UYM stands for Ulster Young Militants (Adkins 2004, 329). The badge is the logo of the UYM (Rolston 2019). *Terrae-Filius* is Latin for the son of the earth (Rolston 2019). The two soldiers with guns down and heads bowed are often used to represent the 36th Ulster Division that fought during the First World War. It is not uncommon to see them used in UVF murals (Rolston 2010, 301).

Step 3: Iconological Interpretation: This image may be a recruitment mural for the UYM. It also may allude to a willingness to take up arms to secure a future that fulfills the objective of the UYM.

Semiotic Review

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a former member of the UDA and former political prisoner. October 7)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'Two soldiers.'

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'If you don't like it don't look at it. People are too easily offended. If I saw a memorial garden where I lived which is 90 percent Protestant and someone complains that it has UVF on it don't come down this way. If it's in West Belfast, then I go somewhere else. It's in a republican area. Nobody's allowed to remember in Northern Ireland. Sectarianism nowadays 20 years on we shouldn't have that.'

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a former member of the UDA and former political prisoner. October 7)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: For this image the participant did not verbally

express the noncoded iconic message.

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'Progressions in unionism. They are trying hard

to change murals like this but are up against the breakaway UVF. Hard man

stuff. The sooner it's done away with the better. We have to get this finished.'

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with prominent Protestant religious leader during the

Troubles and former chaplain in the Orange Order. October 4)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: Tomorrow belongs to us.

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'Reference to those who died and the guns that

they are ready to take up. Still alive that ideology.'

Photograph seven relates to theme one which examines the established peace in

Northern Ireland. Like the other photographs, this one elicited many responses showing

Northern Ireland is still faced with the legacies of the Troubles and alongside that,

communities are dealing with the consequences of social change resulting from the

democratic outcomes in the contemporary era. The participants articulated that in many

ways the conflict is still embedded in the fabric of society, ideologies from the Troubles

remain and the conflict has not ended.

6.3.8 Photograph Eight

Photograph eight is on Broadway Street in the Village in West Belfast. The village is a

primarily unionist, loyalist, and Protestant enclave. The mural was painted in September

2006, and the identity of the artist is unavailable.

(Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

Iconographic Review

Step 1: Pre-iconographical description: The image is painted on a gray background.

There are many signs and symbols in the image. These signs and symbols include a sign

indicating Broadway Street; a blue banner with proud supporters and for club and

country; two identical flags with a red cross and a crown; a coat of arms with LFC; and a coat of arms with Irish Football Association.

Step 2: Iconographical analysis: LFC stands for Linfield Football Club (Ward 2004, 80). The flag in the image is the Ulster Banner; this was the flag of Northern Ireland from 1953 to 1972. In 1972 the flag of Northern Ireland was replaced by the British union flag (Mulhern and Melaugh 2019). The Ulster Banner continues to be used despite its unofficial status and has become a symbol of loyalism (Mulhern and Melaugh 2019).

Step 3: Iconological Interpretation: This image is in support of the Linfield Football Club. The symbols used in the image like the Ulster Banner can be seen to represent unionism and loyalism. Because of this is can be considered both a territorial marking or a celebration of culture and identity.

Semiotic Review

Interview

(Anonymous. Interview with the director of a peacebuilding charity in North Belfast. August 23)

> Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'Football poster. Linfield Football Club shields and Irish Football Association shield. Winsor Cab sign on lamppost. Six-pointed star for the six counties. Red hand of ulster. Crown. Ring.'
>
> Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'It's a positive reimaging project. Not a paramilitary one but proud of a football team. For club and country. There is a story behind this: official flag of the region, until 1974. Official flag of Northern Ireland is the union flag, only flag seen flown at government buildings. Unionist population mainly identify with this traditional flag, Saint George's Cross. It's recognized as the traditional flag even though has no official status. Linfield

150

club would be predominantly supported by Protestants. Reimaging is on one hand to present a more positive space for local community and culture but probably the people it rubs worst are the hardcore elements that feel that this is too soft, and they aren't ashamed to take up arms to defend their community. An example of this is Freedom Corner.'

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with Alliance Party political representative in East Belfast. August 24)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: For this image the participant did not verbally express a noncoded iconic message.

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'I hate this. It's the colors. By painting curb stones or other things, you are marking territory. Demarcating territory. What this says is Catholics are not safe here, Protestants are safe here. No need for it. UVF are the big guys in this area. Demarcation where it doesn't need to be.'

Semiotic Review

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with street artist. May 16)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'Reimaging project. Northern Ireland football team and Linfield.'

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'A more negative mural to me, trying to take identity of those people who live in the community and focus on something more positive. It would be from the same community that would identify themselves with terrorist organizations and all identify themselves with football teams as well. It's a way of maintaining that identity but in a less intimidating fashion. What's important is that something like this, even if not perfect but less

151

bad. What is important for me is that kids see that instead of a more intimidating piece, so the reimaging is very much like that next generation of them not growing up with the same extreme opinions and realizing that you are dealing with kids when covering up walls that are really negative. Even though the kids aren't thinking about that consciously there is still something that happens with that impact.'

Photograph eight connects to themes two and three. These themes look at the idea of identity in the post-agreement era and the evolving role of public art as well as accessing peacebuilding projects like the Reimaging Communities Programme. Though this image may seem inoffensive, its symbolism connects to unionism and loyalism. It is most likely a reimaging project; however, even though the image may be understood as less continuous, the interview data shows that it still conveys similar divisive messages. While there are many examples of mixed responses from participants, this photograph particularly shows the importance of the iconographic review as a baseline for the reader.

6.4 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter is the first of two that presents the photographs used in the photo-elicitation interviews alongside the iconographic and semiotic analyses. This information builds upon the previous five chapters, which outline the research objectives, theoretical framework, methodologies, and background to the study. Considering this material with the data collected in the photo-elicitation interviews, this chapter and the next one provides essential material needed for the deductive thematic analysis in Chapter Eight as well as tying together to dissertation thus far. The chapter begins by revisiting Panofsky's iconographic and Barthes' visual semiotic theories. This helps reposition the reader within the theories to prepare them for the subsequent

presentation of data. The iconographic analyses served as a reflexive exercise for the researcher and here, acts as a baseline for the reader when confronted with varying participant responses. The semiotic analyses helped organize and extract pertinent information gathered during the photo-elicitation interviews. These analyses are subjected to deductive thematic analysis in Chapter Eight.

The chapter is organized by photographs and offers the first eight. Alongside the photographs are the location, date of creation, and artist(s) if available, as well as the iconographic and semiotic analyses. Moreover, with each, a brief description of how the photograph corresponds to the different themes is provided. This material is given at this point to be easily accessible to the reader when engaging in the thematic analysis. The next chapter is the second part of this presentation of data, exploring photographs nine through eighteen.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Part Two: Photographs, Iconographic Analysis, and Semiotic Analysis

7.1 Introduction

This chapter is a continuation of the material presented in Chapter Six. It offers the second set of photographs and iconographic and semiotic analyses. Like the previous chapter, the structure of this one is organized by the photographs. Alongside each photograph is the iconographic analysis followed by the semiotics analyses. These iconographic analyses serve as a baseline or touchstone for the reader when confronted with participant responses and acted as a reflexive exercise for the researcher. The semiotic analysis is an approach that gave the researcher access to participant thought processes. It also afforded the researcher the ability to extract and organize the data gathered in the photo-elicitation interviews. The following sections examine photographs nine through seventeen, and the chapter ends with a concluding summary.

7.2 Photographs, Iconographic Analysis, and Semiotic Analysis

7.2.1 Photograph Nine

Photograph nine is in the Village in the Western corner of South Belfast. The village is a primarily unionist, loyalist, and Protestant enclave. The artist and date of creation are unavailable.

(Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

Iconographic Review

Step 1: Pre-iconographical description: In this image, there is an open space with grass and a cement path. In the open space are an electricity box and a light pole. Both the

electricity box and light pole are painted red, white, and blue. Painted on the utility box is UVF. In the background, there are houses, parked cars, a mountain, and a ball-like figure.

Step 2: Iconographical analysis: This image depicts the Village in the Western corner of South Belfast. The colors on the electricity box and light pole are the same colors of the Union Jack (Mulhern and Melaugh 2019). The letters UVF on the electricity box stand for the Ulster Volunteer Force (McKittrick and McVea 2012, 386). The ball-like figure in the background is an art installation entitled *RISE*, an art installation created by Wolfgang Buttress at the Broadway Junction. The sculpture is located between two antagonistic communities, the Falls (nationalist, republican and Catholic) and the Village (unionist, loyalist and Protestant). The junction and M1 serve as a natural barrier in the middle of these two areas (Etchart 2013).

Step 3: Iconological Interpretation: It is possible to interpret these signs and symbols in two ways. First, the photograph is of the Village, and therefore, the tricolors and UVF indicate loyalism and control of space. Second, the presence of the *RISE* sculpture represents a move towards positive change. While *RISE* is between two opposing communities where there is sectarian violence, the sculpture itself has not become associated with the violence that occurs (Etchart 2013).

Semiotic Review

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with prominent Protestant religious leader during the Troubles and former chaplain in the Orange Order. October 4)

Step 1: 'UVF. Village. Solar panels. Balls on the Falls.'

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'Everything is moving on except these. You live in a bigger world. Whatever world we are in let's be interconnected. Let's create something more beautiful whereas these are the old loyalties of the UVF.'

This photograph links to theme one, which looks at the formal peace in Northern Ireland. The loyalist and unionist symbols, as they appear in the Village, naturally lend to theme one. On one hand, the symbolism indicates a linkage between ideologies of the Troubles and the contemporary era. On the other, *RISE* arguably represents progress and moving beyond the conflict.

7.2.2 Photograph Ten

Ed Reynolds, an artist from the Republic of Ireland, was commissioned by Belfast City Council to paint photograph ten. It is on Sandy Row in East Belfast, a predominantly unionist, loyalist and Protestant part of the city.

(Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

Step 1: Pre-iconographical description: In the forefront, a large crowd of people stands near a body of water. The crowd appears to be composed of only men. The men are wearing similar, if not the same, articles of clothing. In front of the men is a dog and what seems to be two cans of paint. In the background, across the body of water is a building.

Step 2: Iconographical analysis: There is no textual content in the image to help distinguish the identity of the men. However, the building in the background helps the

reader to determine their identity. The building is the Titanic building near the docks in Belfast. The men are the dockworkers (2016. Interview with Ed Reynolds. August 22).

Step 3: Iconological Interpretation: Belfast entered the twentieth century with a segregated labor market and a divided working class. Protestants held a substantial advantage over their Catholic counterparts. The Catholic workforce composed only eight percent of the white-collar municipal clerk jobs and seven percent of high waged shipbuilder positions. The image of the dockworkers may represent deeper structural issues in Belfast in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, such as a labor market guided by sectarianism (Munck 1985, 242-243). However, for some, the dockworkers are a point of local pride. In this, the image may also reflect a celebration of the dockworkers (2016. Interview with Ed Reynolds. August 22).

Semiotic Review

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with member of Belfast City Council. August 22)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'Dock workers.'

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'Most are receptive to reimaging. It's mainly extreme sides. Change offensive murals and change them to something more nicer and more welcoming. Others trying to just show how art works. Some murals were defaced or covered up after reimaging.'

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with member of Belfast City Council. August 22)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'Dock workers.'

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'Shows the massive history behind those areas and that's what we always realized when reimaging. They were keen on

159

showing history of the area and where they are coming from. I think it works well because it's something they can identify with.'

Interview

 (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a worker at a cross community organization in North Belfast. August 23)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'Shipyard. Titanic building.'

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'It represents exclusion and sectarianism that goes along with it. It is working class people standing together.'

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with art curator from Belfast and founder of a local non-affiliated arts community organization. May 18)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'The Titanic. A centenary thing.'

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'One of those things where this looks like a community reimaging project, take paramilitary and do them over. Always linked to industry or Ulster Scots. Reimaging is softer versions. Hardcore music is part of working-class culture, but you'd never see that on the walls so there's a particular thread of the Somme, Ulster Scotts, industrial heritage. These are the things that play well with funders and community leaders. Community leaders are the key. So, this does not necessarily completely represent everyone or representative of where that community is right now, but its simpler, the people who put those murals of balaclavas first, they are the ones you have to move a little way. Sometimes the community is already a bit ahead of them.'

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with street artist. May 16)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'Great. Titanic boat in the background. Colors of the workers. Working class of Belfast.'

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'These are the people who built the Titanic. The city itself is remembering its own history in a more positive way through building a ship like the Titanic. It's about people and the workforce. It's a positive thing.'

Photograph ten associates with themes two and three because the imagery of the dockworkers is historically complicated in Belfast, resulting in divisive symbolism. The photographs not only bring up issues of civil rights, discrimination, and injustice but also a celebration of culture and local pride. As such, participant responses were naturally about issues of identity and peacebuilding in the post-agreement state.

7.2.3 Photograph Eleven

Photograph eleven is on Blyth Street in East Belfast, a primarily unionist, loyalist, and Protestant part of the city. The artist and date of creation are unavailable.

(Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

Iconographic Review

Step 1: Pre-iconographical description: There are many signs and symbols in the image. These signs and symbols include man's face painted on the wall. Painted below is, murdered by the enemies on February 10th, 1998: In proud memory of our fallen comrade, gone but not forgotten; South-Belfast Brigade and Quis-Separabit; a black flag with a closed red hand, UFF, and *Feriens Tego*; a badge with UFF and a closed red hand; a blue flag with UDA, an open red hand and a crown.

Step 2: Iconographical analysis: This is a memorial to the prominent loyalist leader, Robert Dougan. In 1998 he was killed, and the IRA was blamed. This accusation was

significant because it resulted in the expulsion of Sinn Féin from peace talks for seventeen days (White 2017). IRA stands for Irish Republican Army (C. Sullivan 2011, 304). His death is significant because it put pressure on the government to remove Sinn Féin from multi-party talks. Ultimately, Sinn Féin was expelled from the peace talks on 20 February 1998 (Preiss 2019, 395). Sinn Féin is a political party whose agenda is ending the partition of the island of Ireland to establish a United Ireland (Sinn Féin n.d.) and is often associated with the IRA (Bean 2007, 117).

UFF stands for Ulster Freedom Fighters (C. Sullivan 2011, 599), and UDA stands for the Ulster Defence Association (McKittrick and McVea 2012, 385). The UFF and the UDA are Protestant paramilitaries. The UFF is considered the military wing of the UDA (Johnson 2005, 17). The UFF and UDA both incorporate the red hand into their symbolism. The UFF uses a closed red hand as an insignia, and the UDA uses an open red hand (Johnson 2005, 17). The UFF and UDA were involved in the Northern Ireland conflict and sought to maintain a union with Britain (Jarman 2007). The flags in the image are the retrospective flags of each group (Jarman 2007). The crown symbolizes the British Monarchy (Mulhern and Melaugh 2019). *Quis-Separabit* is Latin for who shall separate (Stone 2005, 199), and *Feriens Tego* is Latin for, striking I defend (Feriens Tego 2013).

Step 3: Iconological Interpretation: Because Robert Dougan was killed in the conflict, this image may be a commemoration. One participant noted that he has seen people often bow down when passing this mural (Anonymous. Interview with director of a peacebuilding charity in North Belfast. August 23). The loyalist imagery surrounding him may illustrate the culture and identity of those who associate with the image. For loyalists, flags are often considered symbols of culture and identity. These same symbols are used as territorial markers (Melaugh 2013).

Semiotic Review

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a worker at a cross community organization in North Belfast. August 23)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'Shades of blue. Clinched fists. Gone but not forgotten.'

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'They're not the same as us. A study was done that found 99 percent of republican prisoners would not have seen the inside of a jail if it weren't for the circumstances of the conflict. The same cannot be said of loyalist paramilitaries who would have been involved in criminality. Loyalists are assassins, shooting men and women in their beds whereas republicans only fought back when the killing of Catholics became too much. Loyalists were murderers. He might not be an IRA man, but his son might be one or he might breed one or she might have one. They had to be dealt with. They were dealt with in an extreme set of circumstances. The IRA didn't want to be involved in sectarian conflict, but a conflict of constitutional politics. Loyalists knew they weren't shooting IRA men but assassinating normal Catholics.'

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with Sein Féin political representative and former IRA political prisoner. May 20)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'Murdered by the enemies. Commemorating.'

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'Loyalists are more likely to be involved in drugs. Republicans used positive time in prison and got degrees. Some loyalists

did but very few. Education was important for republicans because they couldn't get jobs and saw education as a way to get jobs. Loyalists are suffering from it to some degree today. The unionist community had jobs in shipyards and factories and completely different background and experience than ours. They would be ponds of the state. Very sectarian. Killed people because they were Catholic. The IRA did kill some people. It could have been described as sectarian, by and large it was that the IRA chose people for political reasons, so it was strategic members of security forces or key member of the UVF. It was not because they were Protestant and then some people got killed by mistake and there's no excuse for any of it, but it happens in war.'

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with Alliance Party political representative in East Belfast. August 24)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'Robert Dougan.'

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'There are ways to remember individuals and this is one of the biggest elements for me as a community worker. Robert Dougan, his mother is just as much a victim as the other person who lost a loved one. There is a hierarchy of victims. People want to memorialize those they see as soldiers or heroes who were fighting for their country but in the same way we need to find a way to memorialize in a way that is sensitive to those who have been victimized by the individual. I struggle with how as a society can we move forward to remember those who have played a part but in a very sensitive way to those who were caught up in it to no fault of their own.'

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'Murdered by the enemies. Red hand. Fist.'

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'They never paint people who have been honored for ending violence or bringing peace. It's a crucifixion scene but don't say who they killed or how many they killed. Whitewash them. They are all turned into saints and thought to have done nothing wrong. They were victims of the Troubles in the sense that they were hardened by them, but they themselves were perpetrators and killed innocent Catholics. These guys were more like Israelis and killing civilians. You just hope they are left and neglected but then there are marches every year to remember these men.'

In divided societies, murals of remembrance and commemoration are inherently divisive. Imagery remembering a valued person or event by one community may be memorializing something that is considered harmful by another. The image of Robert Dougan, a prominent loyalist paramilitary leader, obviously elicits intense emotions by both the communities that support the cause he died for and those that oppose it. As a result, this photograph lends itself to responses related to the second theme, which focuses on identity in the post-agreement state.

7.2.4 Photograph Twelve

Photograph twelve is on Clowney Street, a primarily nationalist, republican, and

Catholic part of the city. The artist and date of creation are unavailable.

(Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

Iconographic Review

Step 1: Pre-iconographical description: There are many signs and symbols in the image.

The image can be divided into two parts. The signs and symbols in the top part include

a sign indicating Clowney Street; an image with commemorating the courage and

sacrifice of the hunger strikers, black and white photos; a flag painted green, white and gold; portraits of twelve men; and the number thirty with 1987 and 2011. The bottom part of the image is painted on a black background. The signs and symbols in the bottom part include four coats of arms; a bird; the people arose in 69 they will do it again at any time; and Maggie Thatcher think again don't let our brave men (die in vain). On the wall next to the main section of the image is a portion of another public art piece. Because a car blocks part of the image, a full version can be found in Appendix B under figure five.

Step 2: Iconographical analysis: The twelve men in this image were involved in the hunger strikes between 1980 and 1981 (The Guardian 2015). The primary function of the hunger strikes was to gain the reinstatement of Special Category status for prisoners convicted of crimes related to the Troubles. This status guaranteed the same rights as Prisoners of War (POWs) under the Geneva Convention. Thatcher's government would not recognize the republican prisoners as Special Category political prisoners, leading to hunger strikes (Hennessey 2014). The hunger strikes arguably transformed the political landscape in Northern Ireland. The hunger strikes can be considered a 'propaganda victory over the British government,' and as a result, the republican movement gained international sympathy. Following the hunger strike, Sinn Féin gained substantial political support and force. The bird symbolizes a phoenix rising out of the ashes; this is republican imagery that was adopted after the defeat in the 1916 Easter Rising against British forces (Kenny 1998, 153). The text in the image refers to the policies of Thatcher that led to the strikes (Doherty 2001, 22), and the green, white and gold flag are the tri-colors of the Irish flag (Mulhern and Melaugh 2019).

Step 3: Iconological Interpretation: This image is commemorating the hunger strikers. The language used in the image, 'the people arose in 69 they will do it again at any

time; and Maggie Thatcher think again don't let our brave men (die in vain),' alludes to a willingness to take up arms to defend the republican cause.

Semiotic Review

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a former member of the UDA and former political prisoner. October 7)

> Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'Phoenix. 30-year commemoration. Out of the ashes arose a phoenix. Out of the ashes arose the IRA. Shows history.'
>
> Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'Republicans will tell you every mural they do is to do with human rights because they are hung up on human rights. Nobody else is allowed to have it. With republicans there was a war against them and to be honest there are victims in the war, but you can't turn around and say those eight republicans are victims, eight heavily armed IRA men. When I first joined the war and the UDA, I knew one of two things was going to happen, either I was going to jail or going to die. Republicans are very, very good at playing the victim. Hunger strikers, Easter Rising, all about them being the victims. You can't be victim all the time. You can't be saying you're constantly a victim when you are also a troublemaker. The people who were victims were the people who were walking minding their business and a bomb went off and they were killed or shot because they were Catholic or Protestant but if you say you're a member of the IRA or UDA and something happens to you, you're not a victim.'

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with Alliance Party political representative in East Belfast. August 24)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'Hunger strikers.'

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'I hate that narrative of those who rose in 69 will do it again at any time. It's like the mural prepared for peace, ready for war. Very negative. Again, hunger strikers are an interesting case as well. If you take them from a purely historical perspective, it's interesting to have a group of men who believed in a cause so much that they gave up their lives and did it through civil disobedience. But at the end of the day they were still members of the IRA, so they were prepared to participate in that kind of activity. Again, I understand the need to remember because they're seen as martyrs but there needs to be a different way of doing it. The naming of places and clubs after some of those men has caused problems in our society. There needs to be a way of commemorating respectfully because there are victims of those people who are still alive and feel the pain. It's still within people's recent memory.'

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a worker at a cross community organization in North Belfast. August 23)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'Hunger strikes.'

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'There is a place and time for imagery. It's time for the murals to be replaced. Because it is a ghettoization to have murals on your walls…We need to move past this. Reimaging, no time for reimaging. Get rid of public art. No public art. Public art is shit. No bad public art. Take it away and find different ways to express identity, history, past. We shouldn't express these things on a wall. Not now. We have access to social media, international media. Other ways to communicate.'

Photograph twelve connects to themes two and three, one looking at identity and the other at peacebuilding and the evolving role of public art in the post-agreement era. The hunger strikes and Maggie Thatcher's policies, which the image presents, evoked responses about the 'other' as well as providing insight into public art in contemporary Northern Ireland. The hunger strikes and Thatcher's policies were critical parts of the Troubles. Therefore, it is expected that symbols about these events would elicit powerful responses that provide valuable information.

7.2.5 Photograph Thirteen

Photograph thirteen is on Rockview Street in East Belfast, a primarily unionist, loyalist, and Protestant part of the city. The artist and date of creation are unavailable.

(Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

Iconographic Review

Step 1: Pre-iconographical description: There is an image on a wall painted on a blue background. There are many signs and symbols in the image. These signs and symbols include a woman; this we will maintain; a crown and E II R.

Step 2: Iconographical analysis: The crown and E II R indicate that the woman in the image is Queen Elizabeth II. E II R stands for Queen Elizabeth II (Sperry 2003, 54); the crown symbolizes the British monarchy and Protestantism (Mulhern and Melaugh 2019), and 'this we will maintain' represents the aspiration to maintain the union between Northern Ireland and the UK (Ulster Unionist Party 2019). This image is part of the reimaging initiative of the Arts Council of Northern Ireland (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with former political prisoner, former UDA paramilitary and personnel of a community organization. May 18); this program helps communities deal with sectarianism and racism through artistic engagement. The primary goal of the initiative is to replace arguably contentious public art with perceivably less controversial images (Rolston 2010, 296-297). The image before reimaging can be found in Appendix B under figure six. A participant involved in the study provided this image.

Step 3: Iconological Interpretation: This image may unintentionally point to potential problems of the reimaging program. Though this image may be interpreted as less contentious than the previous image, the symbolism still points to maintaining a union with the UK as well as being threatening or demarcation of territory. It beckons the question, do reimaged murals convey the same messages as the ones replaced?

Semiotic Review

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a former member of the IRA, former political prisoner and community worker at a republican affiliated organization. May 18)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'Very basic, primitive. Queen Elizabeth. We shall maintain.'

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'If that's what they want to do support a millionaire pensioner. They will profess loyalty to the Queen but won't support

their government. They will break their government's laws but will be loyal to the Queen. Internal contradictions there. Why are they loyalists as opposed to unionists? They are always hard pressed to explain it. I think they are trying to politicize their actions back in time because I think many of them are ashamed of their activities because their activities were anti-Catholic as opposed to anti-republican, but their cause was supposed to be to support the state to defeat the IRA so why are you killing Catholics? I'm not Catholic, I'm republican but I was born a Catholic. I'm a political animal and I certainly wasn't in the IRA because I was Catholic.'

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with art curator from Belfast and founder of a local non-affiliated arts community organization. May 18)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: For this image the participant did not verbally express the noncoded iconic message.

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'I don't get anybody's connection to monarchy. Why are a bunch of poor people supporting the monarchy? I don't have a pot to piss in but God bless our Queen and the 40 million a year it costs. I'm an Irish republican. Anywhere else I would be a republican. There is no freedom until the last king is killed with the last Priest.'

The symbolism in this image is associated with the unionist, loyalist, and Protestant narrative and, therefore, evokes responses that relate to identity, theme one. The Queen and 'this we will maintain' indicate the desire to remain united with Britain, which is likely to elicit data related to identities. In this research, data generated from this photograph primarily came from those with opposing viewpoints to that of the unionist, loyalist, and Protestant perspectives.

174

7.2.6 Photograph Fourteen

Photograph fourteen is in the Cathedral Quarter, near the city center. The artist and date of creation are unavailable.

(Photograph by the researcher, May 2016)

Iconographic Review

Step 1: Pre-iconographical description: There are many signs and symbols in the image. The signs and symbols include a rainbow; H & W crane framing the image; a clock tower (one side analog and the other digital); a man scaling the crane; durg dealers will be shat; a poster with the brawl in the hall; a soldier; a building on fire with images of

people and animals in the windows; the letter 'A' falling from the building; €uropa represented as a crumbling sign; a banner with Belfast says yes; a banner with down with Allianz; union jacks; what appears to be a Playboy bunny; a football player; an orange man; a third unknown man; a bus heading to Napoleon's Nose via the Crum; a black cab; a street sign with bothar druidte; and a girl swings from a sign pole.

Step 2: Iconographical analysis: This image includes many different aspects of Belfast. The yellow H & W crane represents the shipyards (Gallaher 2007). The clock tower is most likely the Albert Clock in Belfast. The brawl in the hall may refer to physical clashes that occurred between politicians in Stormont (MacGinty 2006, Chapter 16). The man scaling the crane in a balaclava may represent paramilitaries. The building on fire is the Europa Hotel, the most bombed hotel in Europe at the time (Connelly 2012, 106).

In the second window from the top of the right-hand side of the Europa Hotel appears to be an image of Bill Clinton. Bill Clinton is a former president of the US who helped in the peace processes in Northern Ireland (Gillespie 2008, 56-57). The Euro symbol has replaced the 'E' in Europa while the 'P' and 'A' have fallen off, leaving the name of the hotel as Euro. The building to the right of the Europa may be Belfast City Hall. Belfast says yes, may refer to the Ulster Says No campaign in protest to the AIA. 'Down with Allianz' and the union flags may refer to legislation pushed through by the Alliance Party of Northern Ireland (APNI), which made it so the British union flag would only be flown at Belfast City Hall on designated days instead of year-round (Gillespie 2017, 123-124). Of the four people walking across the street, only two are recognizable in this analysis. The soccer player is most likely the Northern Irish footballer George Best, and the other man resembles a member of the Orange Order. The Orange Order is a loyalist organization (McKittrick and McVea 2012, 382). The

destination of the bus points to Cave Hill or Napoleon's Nose, which is located in Belfast.

Regarding the black cab, during the Troubles, these vehicles were used as minibuses for some communities when certain bus services were shut down because of violent attacks on buses (Jones and Boujenko 2011,7). Bothar druidte is Gaelic for the closed road (Dónaill 2013, 19). The girl swinging on a lamppost replicates a game played by children in Northern Ireland (Ulster Herlad 2014).

Step 3: Iconological Interpretation: This mural most likely represents different important historical and contemporary events and people in Northern Ireland.

Semiotic Review

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with art curator from Belfast and founder of a local non-affiliated arts community organization. May 18)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'Orange men. Black spies. Belfast says yes. Its comedy. Napoleon nose. Don't vote Alliance. Europa.'

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'It is important to say there are two communities and then there are a whole lot of people caught in the middle of the bullshit.'

Photograph fourteen connects to theme two dealing with identity. The above response from the participant offers insight into how there may be more than the traditional two communities in Northern Ireland. While most participants did associate with the traditional two community paradigm, a few responses challenged this paradigm, as is illustrated in the thematic analysis in Chapter Eight.

7.2.7 Photograph Fifteen

Photograph fifteen is on Beechmount Avenue in West Belfast, a primarily nationalist, republican, and Catholic part of the city. DD and Sean McVeigh repainted the mural due to the installation of the door. The date of recreation is unavailable.

(Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

Iconographic Review

Step 1: Pre-iconographical description: The background of this image is painted green, white, and gold with a sign indicating Beechmount Avenue. There is a second sign that indicates RPG Avenue. There are many other signs and symbols in the image. These

signs and symbols include Éirí Amach (1916) Na Casca; a solider with a gun; Easter

lilies, four coats of arms; a building; and a plaque.

Step 2: Iconographical analysis: The color scheme in the background composes of the

tri-colors of the Irish flag (Mulhern and Melaugh 2019). Éirí Amach (1916) Na Casca

translates to the Easter Rising (of) 1916 (Foclóir 2019). RPG Avenue stands for Rocket

Propelled Grenade Avenue (Sanders and Wood 2012, 83). Beechmount Avenue became

unofficially known as RPG Avenue after an attack on British forces using this type of

weapon (Woods 2006, 182). The four coats of arms are those of the four provinces of

Ireland (French 1905, 247-248). The Easter lilies are often used in nationalist

symbolism (Mulhern and Melaugh 2019).

Step 3: Iconological Interpretation: This mural was painted to commemorate the 90th

anniversary of the Easter Rising. The image replicates a 1941 stamp illustrating an

armed volunteer outside the GPO (Moloney 2006).

Semiotic Review

   Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a former member of the UDA and former political

prisoner. October 7)

      Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'Easter lily.'

      Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'In republican terms it seems to be that they have

      a history and loyalists don't. We're not allowed to show history. Most murals in

      West Belfast haven't changed. Beechmount Avenue is still called RPG Avenue.

      They can keep history, but we can't. Loyalist history must be airbrushed out.'

      Like the other photographs used in the photo-elicitation interviews, this one

produces insight into contemporary Northern Ireland and helps create a broader

understanding of the current situation. It connects to theme three, which examines the

role of public art and peacebuilding in the post-agreement state. This participant offers a critique of the peacebuilding initiative focusing on reimaging the symbolic landscape from a unionist, loyalist, and Protestant standpoint. While this is only one of many responses related to reimaging, it helps in understanding the successes and failures of the Reimaging Communities peacebuilding program.

7.2.8 Photograph Sixteen

Photograph sixteen is on Amcomri Street in West Belfast, a primarily nationalist, republican, and Catholic part of the city. The artist and date of creation are unavailable.

(Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

Iconographic Review

Step 1: Pre-iconographical description: There are many signs and symbols in the image. The image can be divided into two parts. The signs and symbols in the top part include a portion of the wall painted brown with a sign indicating Amcomri Street; a bird; and

two Easter lilies. The signs and symbols in the bottom part include what appears to be a flag in the background; a woman holding a gun; viva Palestine; a closed hand-painted green, white and gold; a closed hand-painted red, white, black and gold; Tiocfaidh ar la; Saoirse; and writing in Arabic.

Step 2: Iconographical analysis: The portion of the wall painted brown suggests that previous messages were erased. The bird symbolizes a phoenix rising out of the ashes; this is republican imagery that was adopted after the defeat in the 1916 Easter Rising against British forces (Kenny 1998, 153). The Easter lilies and harp are often used in nationalist symbolism (Mulhern and Melaugh 2019). The background is the Palestinian flag. The woman holding the gun is Leila Khaled (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a former member of the UDA and former political prisoner. October 7). Leila Khaled is a Palestinian liberation fighter known for hijacking a plane in 1969. She is a symbol of Palestinian resistance (Irving 2012). The closed hand-painted green, white, and gold replicate the colors of the Irish flag (Mulhern and Melaugh 2019). The closed hand pained red, white, black, and gold replicates the colors of the Palestinian flag. Tiocfaidh ar la is Gaelic for our day will come (Miller 1993, 100), and Saoirse is Gaelic for freedom (Sewell 2000, 25). The Arabic writing most likely reflects the same meanings as the Irish ones.

Step 3: Iconological Interpretation: This image is making a comparison between the plight of the Palestinians and republicans in Northern Ireland. The closed hands represent solidarity between the two groups. The phoenix and the Easter lilies are most likely remnants of a former piece of public art.

Semiotic Review

> *Interview*

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with art curator from Belfast and founder of a local non-affiliated arts community organization. May 18)

> Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'Palestinians.'

> Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'To have a comparison to what is going on in Palestine right now is mental. Part of their agenda. It always confused me that. I think they were representative of the conflict, negative whether territorial markings or communications and feelings of community at any given time but it's become engraved in the culture now. They have become very powerful symbols, so I think now utilizing those symbols for positive, progressive manner for the next years would be vitally important to resolve any issues and form a new identity that's not as like divided by religion or your background.'

> Photograph sixteen is associated with theme three, which concerns the evolving role of public art. Theme three discusses different perspectives on public art in the contemporary era, one of which concentrates on the importance of preserving the symbolic landscape. This photograph elicited data that supports using symbolism in the peacebuilding processes, like helping to recreate less divisive identities.

7.2.9 Photograph Seventeen

Photograph seventeen is on Clondara Street in West Belfast, a primarily nationalist, republican, and Catholic part of the city. The artist and date of creation are unavailable.

(Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

Iconographic Review

Step 1: Pre-iconographical description: The image is painted on a green background, and it is framed by the year 1916. These signs and symbols include a man; a woman; four coats of arms; the British government has no right in Ireland, never had any right in Ireland; and never can have any right in Ireland; a document (Poblacht Na H Eireann – The Provisional Government); the symbol of the Official Republican Movement; and two biographical sections: (1) James Connolly 1858-1916. James Connolly was born on June 5th, 1968. In 1910 he became the organizer for the Irish transport and general workers union in Belfast, and 1913 co-founded the Irish Citizen Army (ICA). He was one of the signatories of the 1916 Proclamation and commanded headquarters on the GPO during the 1916 rising. He was executed by the British on May 12th, 1916 (2)

Nora Connolly O'Brien 1893-1981. Nora Connolly was the 2nd daughter of James Connolly. Nora was a member of Cumann na mBan and the Gaelic League in Belfast. She played an organizational role in the ICA in the run-up to the 1916 Rising. She was a trade unionist and remained so throughout her life.

Step 2: Iconographical analysis: The four coats of arms in the image represent the coats of arms of the four provinces of Ireland (French 1905, 247-248). The man in the image is James Connolly. The woman in the image is his daughter, Nora Connolly O'Brien. The two bibliographical sections provide information about the lives of James Connolly and Nora Connolly. The year 1916 references the Easter Rising of 1916 (McKittrick and McVea 2012, 3-4). James Connolly was involved in the Easter Rising of 1916 and was executed on account of his involvement (Lee 1989, 25-28). Nora Connolly O'Brien was also active in advocating for an independent Ireland. She was a founding member of the Young Republican Party, the girls' branch of Fianna and Belfast's branch of Cumann na mBan (Glasnevin Trust n.d.). The document in the image is the 1916 Proclamation of Independence that declared Ireland a republic and independent state (Proclamation of Independence 2018).

Step 3: Iconological Interpretation: This image is a commemoration of James Connolly, Nora Connolly, and the Easter Rising in 1916. It also conveys the history and struggles of the conflict in Northern Ireland from the republican perspective.

Semiotic Review

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a former member of the IRA and former political prisoner. August 25)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'Connelly's daughter.'

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'Murals matter to the people in the districts, particularly when people feel their voice isn't heard. They are looking for ways to express it. Walls become a canvas for those districts. Each area came up with their own murals at one point. Organizations, the main ones like Sinn Féin, UVF, UDA, territory marking but marking the change because you can see it as a barometer of how far we have come. I think there's a role for keeping some of them to remind us where we have come from. I think we should celebrate the fact that people are coming up with new ideas and new symbols. The new focus is all very positive. Murals are more peaceful now. We still do have political stuff particularly because of period of centenaries over the next few years but I think they are getting away from strictly murals supporting armed struggle apart from areas with dissident republicans or loyalists are in contest with each other.'

The symbolism in this photograph is republican, and as such, the historical messages in it are from that perspective. This photograph is important because it elicited data that provides essential data about the continually changing symbolic landscape. These changes serve as a barometer for the evolving situation in Northern Ireland. Therefore, this image links to theme three, the role of public art and peacebuilding programs in contemporary Northern Ireland.

7.2.10 Photograph Eighteen

Photograph eighteen is on Hugo Street in West Belfast, a primarily nationalist,

republican, and Catholic part of the city. The artist and date of creation are unavailable.
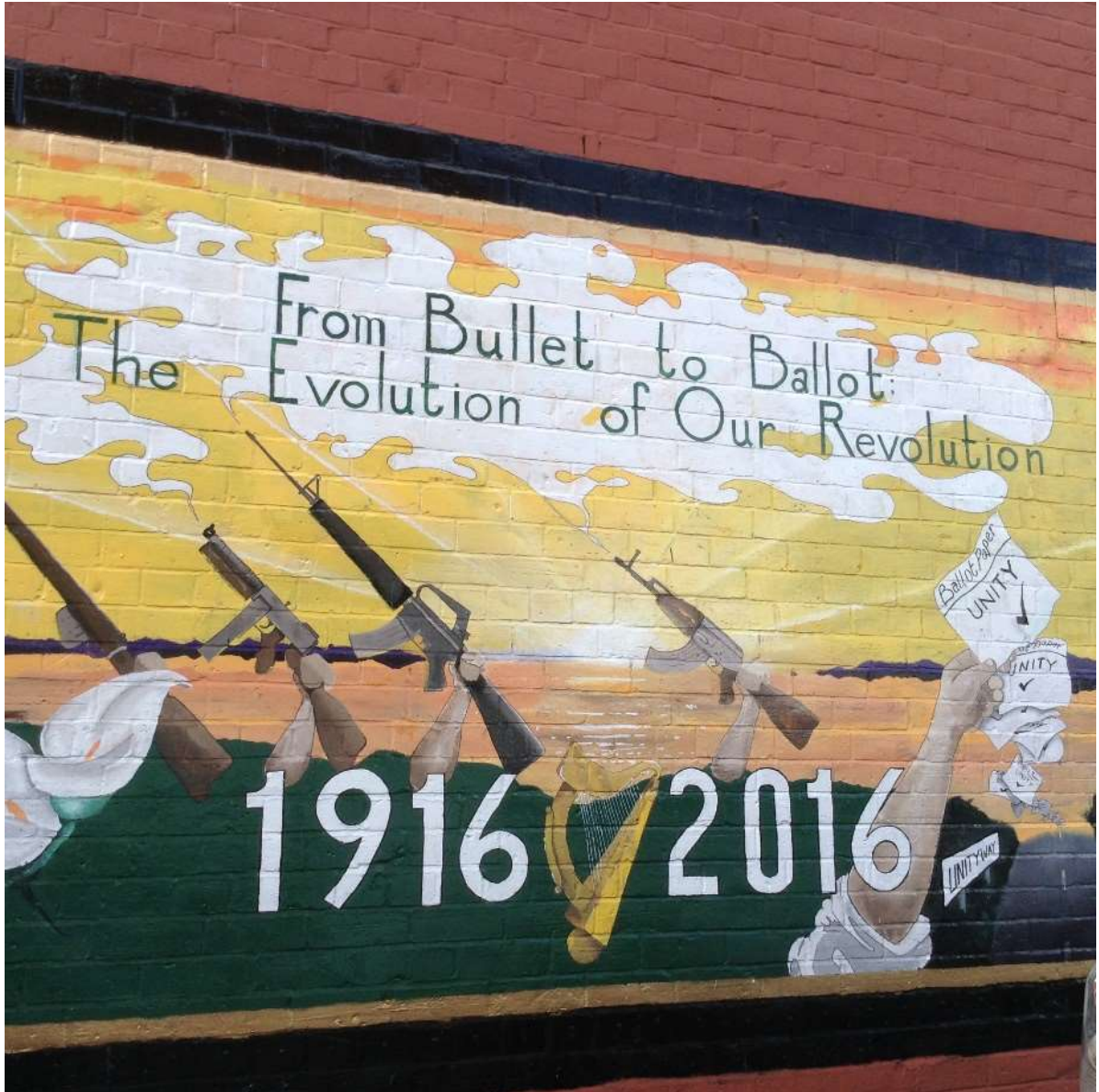
(Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

Iconographic Review

Step 1: Pre-iconographical description: The background of the image is either a rising

or setting sun over land and water. There are five arms, four of which are holding guns

and one holding a ballot paper supporting unity. The smoke coming out of the guns

form, From Bullet to Ballot: The Evolution of Our Revolution. There is a sign that

indicates the name of a road, Unity Way. On this road is a trail of ballots. On the

bottom of the image are the years 1916 and 2016 separated by a harp. The image also

includes Easter lilies.

Step 2: Iconographical analysis: The message formed by the smoke of the guns, the

years in the image, and the progression from guns to the ballot paper signaling unity,

may represent the republican movement over time. The guns are likely four generations

of Armalites, the preferred weapon of the IRA (McKittrick and McVea 2012, 379). The

Easter lilies and the harp are often used in nationalist symbolism (Mulhern and

Melaugh 2019).

Step 3: Iconological interpretation: The image represents the progression of the

republican movement over time, shifting from the use of violence to democracy to

accomplish republican goals.

Semiotic Review

Interview

(Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a worker at a cross community organization in

North Belfast. August 23)

> Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: For this image the participant did not verbally
>
> express a noncoded iconic message.
>
> Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'It was a political process, not a peace process
>
> and we have a very flawed document called the Good Friday Agreement. I don't
>
> think we ever moved from bullet to ballot. I think they always coincided to each
>
> other; you know what I mean? They were always side by side.'
>
> *Interview*

 (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a worker at a cross community organization in

North Belfast. August 23)

Step 1: Noncoded iconic message: 'The evolution of revolution.'

Step 2: Coded iconic message: 'At some point we need to stop celebrating millenarianism. Don't forgive and forget but remember and change. We need to rethink the language. I'm not a fan of murals. We need to move on and get past them.'

Photograph eighteen conveys that there has been a progression from the use of violence (1916) to that of democracy (2016) to accomplish the goals of the republican cause. However, reactions to the photograph question this idea. They also offer understanding into what the role of the murals should be in the contemporary era. As a result, photograph eighteen links to theme three.

7.3 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter is the second part of the presentation of photographs and iconographic and semiotic analyses. It is a continuation of the previous chapter and offers material related to photographs nine through eighteen. The iconographic analysis served as a reflexive exercise for the researcher and simultaneously acts as a baseline for the reader. Like in the previous chapter, the variation in the data derived from the photo-elicitation interviews further makes relevant the iconographic analysis. The semiotic analysis was also central in this research, providing a way to initially extract and organize the data elicited in the photo-elicitation interviews.

Like in Chapter Six, this chapter not only presents the iconographic and semiotic analyses but also includes brief descriptions of the themes associated with each photograph. These three themes explore the sustainability of peace in Northern Ireland, the evolving role of identity, the evolving role and public art, and on-going peacebuilding processes related to symbolism in the contemporary era. This material is situated here to be easily accessible to the reader when engaging in the thematic

analysis in Chapter Eight. The following chapter offers this deductive thematic analysis, which is guided by the material presented in this dissertation thus far.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Thematic Analysis

8.1 Introduction

In being trapped somewhere between a state of peace and a potential return to conflict, Northern Ireland's Troubles legacy is embedded in the urban landscape of its capital city. Rooted in a history of division, the segregated society in Northern Ireland is made visible by cultural, social, and physical barriers like fences, housing estates, murals, flags, and architecture (Abraham and Selim 2016, 205). Since the peace agreements of 1998, sectarian divisions and symbols of the conflict remain inherent in the structures of the city and are considered 'physical scars on the landscape' (Brand 2009, 36-37). Cultural expressions, like public artworks, can have unintended or deliberate influence over collective behavior and understanding, mirroring the realities of the societies where they exist (Henry, Lloyd and Ritchie 2015, 126). As pointed out in Chapter Five, because of their physicality, removing public artworks may prove more challenging than removing rhetorical messages from a specific social context. From this perspective, the murals in Northern Ireland are not just objects but artifacts that change the physical and social nature of the environment (McCormick and Jarman 2005, 49), making understanding the symbolic landscape in contemporary Northern Ireland even more critical.

This chapter explores the different themes found in the data while remaining grounded in the contextualization of post-agreement Northern Ireland as well as the theoretical and methodological aspects of the research. The thematic analysis used a deductive approach. In this deductive method, the generation of themes uses prior research or theory as opposed to indicative where raw research data guide the coding process (see Chapter Two). As such, the material in Chapter Four and Chapter Five

provides the prior research, theory, and contextual background used to code the data and produced this thematic analysis.

Importantly, the semiotic and iconographic analysis in Chapter Six and Chapter Seven also serve an essential role in supporting the thematic analysis. The semiotic analysis functioned to organize and extract pertinent data from that produced in the photo-elicitation interviews. This semiotic analysis data was subjected to the deductive thematic analysis, coded in line with the information in Chapters Four and Five. The iconographic analysis served two crucial functions. First, it was an intensive reflexive exercise, where the researcher had to confront biases before conducting the thematic analysis. Second, the reader can use the material generated as a baseline when engaging in participant responses. Giving the reader access to a touchstone is vital because the responses widely vary.

The culmination of the material in the dissertation thus far enables the generation of the deductive thematic analysis. In this analysis, there was a generation of three themes. The first theme looks at the viability of continued peace in Northern Ireland. The second theme examines the evolving role of identity in contemporary Northern Ireland. The third theme investigates the evolving role of cultural expressions of public art as well as explores peacebuilding in the modern era. Using the first seven chapters as a foundation, Chapter Eight offers the thematic analysis. The chapter begins by presenting theme one and progresses through each theme, ending with a concluding summary.

8.2 Theme One: Sustainability of Peace in Northern Ireland

By drawing on the results of the photo-elicitation interviews and accompanying methodologies, it is apparent that the symbolic landscape in Northern Ireland signifies that the population still experiences issues left over from the Troubles. Events of the

past have shaped the post-agreement state and are indicative of how communities have developed over time. These events inform the present-day experiences of the population and manifest in artefactual materials like the art found across the symbolic landscape. As shown in the research data, the artistic aspects of these spaces have significant implications on how the population understands their daily experiences and the establishment of sustainable peace. It demonstrates that participants question the idea of an established and durable peace and highlights problems that are underlying causes of this.

To begin with, given the importance of the GFA in formally ending the conflict and the on-going peace processes, it is significant that there was a distinct absence of reference to it in the interviews. There was one direct mention of it when a participant articulated that it is a flawed document and that society has not moved from 'bullet to ballot.'

> 'It was a political process, not a peace process and we have a very flawed document called the Good Friday Agreement. I don't think we ever moved from bullet to ballot. I think they always coincided to each other; you know what I mean? They were always side by side' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a worker at a cross community organization in North Belfast. August 23; see photograph eighteen).

The discussion of issues related to the agreement like human rights, politics, education, economics, and cultural matters are framed from a local, community perspective, and often in terms of the past as it plays out in the present and the construction of the future. This omittance suggests that in the public imagination, the GFA seems to have become more of a date than the actual framework for peace and reconciliation, which it was designed for.

Beyond this assertion, dimensions of difference between communities in Northern Ireland are the direct result of the build-up to the enactment of three decades of violent conflict and its aftermath. Sectarian divisions, fear, and diminished trust

between communities did not end with the formal peace agreements. Realities of the

conflict are part of the daily lives of the population, leading to a questioning of

sustainable peace.

> 'A lot of this is expressing the uncertainty with the present moment. Fears. There is unfinished business so until you get that settled people will look cautiously towards the future' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a former member of the IRA, former political prisoner and community worker with a republican affiliated organization. May 18; see photograph one).

> '[Northern Ireland is] not post-conflict but post-armed conflict, a conflict that hasn't been resolved' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a worker at a cross community organization in North Belfast. August 23; see photograph two).

These perspectives express that fundamental issues of the conflict are still

embedded in the institutional and societal structures in Northern Ireland. Problems like

violence, trauma, deprivation, poverty, and sectarianism are concealed by a discourse of

normality that articulates social, economic, and political progress (Haydon, McAlister

and Scraton 2013, 1-3). Though these problems happen throughout society, this

research suggests that young people are disproportionately bearing the weight of them.

> 'Young people are so disadvantaged or despairing that there is potential to kill the peace that is here. There is a sort of warning in that. There has been change in Northern Ireland but not a lot of transformation. There is a social apartheid, a spiritual apartheid. We have apartheid here but it's not like it's in law. It means the young people are screened from each other. They are therefore colonized by old attitudes which leads to violence and despair and injury' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with prominent Protestant religious leader during the Troubles and former chaplain in the Orange Order' October 4; see photograph three)**.**

The implications of not helping young people overcome these obstacles are

essential to consider because they are the ones who can transfer peace to the next

generation. Young people can be both perpetrators or victims of violence, and research

shows that if they are not engaging in or experiencing the benefits of the peace

processes, than continued peace is unlikely (Ellison 2014, 43).

> 'When we did get some engagement with young people, young men, young women and women's groups there either was a reluctance or an inability or a combination of both to articulate their thinking. We engaged with the most

194

difficult and hard to reach in the district. They were politically recidivistic. They would go to jail these lads and fight at the interfaces. They would throw stones, petrol bombs…When the war we grew up within and was on, they didn't know this, they didn't see this, so it was transgenerational, residual impact of trauma within these young men, a lot of them taking their own lives' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a worker at a cross community organization in North Belfast. August 23; see photograph two).

The public art is a visual trigger that informs how young people understand their world. Some of the imagery in the artwork conveys the old ideologies of the older generations and the conflict. However, young people identify with these messages. This linkage points to an unresolved past and symbolisms of the conflict being consumed by the younger generation.

'The imagery is trying to go back to the our prison struggle and our prison protests. They don't belong to this. That is not theirs. That imagery belongs to the men and women of the provisional IRA. It also gives me sadness that there's a sense of romanticism of what it was like. Men and women did this, so you didn't have to. We also want to be reconnected even when it isn't ours. Like the IRA, there's always that sense of this is an unbroken linage. One voice is republicanism. We always interlock ourselves back to the past. When growing up there were three murals in particular on my street alone. They are a visual trigger and connected to cultural literacy so sometimes the murals can be a very dangerous thing. It's almost like false advertising' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a worker at a cross community organization in North Belfast. August 23; see photograph four).

In dealing with these challenges, it is essential to consider that assigning meaning to the future is as essential as to the past (Martz 2010, 1). The children of the ceasefire generation are experiencing the legacies of the Troubles. Conflict-related trauma is also being transmitted to young people from the older generations. This transmission of trauma can have long-term consequences and is seen in the experiences and actions of the youth (Fitzgerald, et al. 2017, 25-26).

'We have not dealt with issues here. We are going the wrong way. We have a high suicide rate. We have low academic achievement. We have high teenage pregnancy. This can lead to a sense of my voice isn't being heard and not being represented but then hey I haven't bothered my arse to go and actually register to vote. I have no interest in Brexit, I have noooo concept of that whatsoever. I fucking hate foreigners. They're over here taking our jobs, I'm going, what jobs? You aren't working because you don't want to work. See we need to

rethink those claims you're making. We need to find a new way of intervention' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a worker at a cross community organization in North Belfast. August 23; see photograph one).

The churches in Northern Ireland continue to try to contribute to peacebuilding and reconciliation processes to address these challenges and oppressive realities.

'Interpreting events in a way that gives them reconciliation value, that's part of the church's role' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a board member of a Presbyterian church. October 4; see photograph five).

Though Protestant and Catholic churches remain arguably relevant in peace efforts, this research reveals the local population's direct views and interactions with religion and these institutions. Implications of religion in the contemporary era and peace processes, as informed by the past, were articulated by participants. Religion was found to be a significant barrier to peace processes and sustainable peace in Northern Ireland.

'Heavy duty reflection of how the peace maker or messenger has been shot. The peace messengers have been killed. Religion is a major barrier to our peace process' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a former member of the IRA, former political prisoner and community worker with a republican affiliated organization. May 18; see photograph three).

'Baby Jesus and the Bible. One main problem in this society' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a former member of the UDA and former political prisoner. October 7; see photograph five).

In the aftermath of the formal peace accords, religion, even only if as an identifier, can still be considered problematic. The subject matter in photograph three is the symbolic representation of the Catholic and Protestant religions' and churches' detrimental influence on society and peacebuilding efforts. It is an artistic expression of the two responses above and is on a highly visible wall in the Cathedral Quarter. In the below response, a participant involved in the creation of the artwork explains its meaning.

'He is commonly accepted to be the father of agnosticism and the first person to ever be recorded saying I see no evidence of God so how do you know they exist? This is why he is dressed in a toga and why he's holding the dove of

peace that's been killed by the Catholic and Protestant churches. The two arrows symbolic of two religions that have torn the country apart and basically about just the destroying of peace. The boy found the dove of peace killed by religion' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with art curator from Belfast and founder of a local non-affiliated arts community organization. May 18; see photograph three).

Beyond these issues, as discussed in Chapter Five, paramilitary groups played a significant role in the conflict and the peace processes. In present-day Northern Ireland, ideas around paramilitarism as well as active dissident groups that reject the GFA persist. Participants discussed the current paramilitary ideologies in terms of both republicanism and loyalism. It can be argued that the conflict had not gone away. Though, to an extent, society has moved on with issues like civil rights, both republican and loyalist paramilitaries still exist. For her, they no longer have a place in Northern Ireland's society.

> 'Everyone thinks that the conflict has gone away, the conflict between inter-communities. But there is this horrible cancerous element of dissident republicanism that hasn't moved with the overall flow of republicanism to democracy and political means and who has rejected any engagement. There's an undercurrent in some of those communities that there are legitimate targets. I hate all those words. They are used to justify the murder of people who are doing a job. JFTC2, for me, dissident republicans have as little a place in our society as loyalist paramilitaries' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with Alliance Party political representative in East Belfast. August 24; see photograph four).

Specific ideologies of the conflict continue, and there is a desire by some to use force to uphold and defend their communities.

> 'Reference to those who died and the guns that they are ready to take up. Still alive that ideology' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with prominent Protestant religious leader during the Troubles and former chaplain in the Orange Order. October 4; see photograph seven).

The 'old' ideologies of loyalist groups like the UVF are in the symbolic landscape and the minds of some people. Despite this reality, some believe it is essential to move beyond these persisting philosophies.

> "Progressions in unionism. They are trying hard to change murals like this but are up against the breakaway UVF. Hard man stuff. The sooner it's done away

with the better. We have to get this finished' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a former member of the UDA and former political prisoner. October 7; see photograph seven).

'Everything is moving on except these. You live in a bigger world. Whatever world we are in let's be interconnected. Let's create something more beautiful whereas these are the old loyalties of the UVF' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with prominent Protestant religious leader during the Troubles and former chaplain in the Orange Order. October 4; see photograph nine).

Further to paramilitary issues, sectarian aspects of the conflict also manifest as expressions of culture and identity in the physical and symbolic structures across the landscape. Sectarianism, which naturally leads to segregation, is perpetuating ideas of the 'other,' as well as shaping the understanding of the expressive actions between communities. How this is playing out often results from the past political and religious conflicts being carried out at a community level.

'Reflection of militarism in East Belfast. The UDA and UFF. There are groups of people in that area that murdered and mutilated people solely because they were Catholic, so it reflects total religious, sectarian, bitter, unbelievably vicious attitudes to the nationalist or Catholic population. Although, I know a lot of people who used to be in the UFF who are decent people. They were caught up in the era and being fed it by their politicians' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a former member of the IRA, former political prisoner and community worker at a republican affiliated organization. May 18; see photograph six).

These political and religious conflicts playing out at a community level can be considered conflicts over art and culture, resulting not only from different personalities and interests but from the democratic outcomes of communities grappling with the consequences of social change (Tepper 2011, 2-3).

'If you don't like it don't look at it. People are too easily offended. If I saw a memorial garden where I lived which is 90 percent Protestant and someone complains that it has UVF on it don't come down this way. If it's in West Belfast, then I go somewhere else. It's in a republican area. Nobody's allowed to remember in Northern Ireland. Sectarianism nowadays 20 years on we shouldn't have that' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a former member of the UDA and former political prisoner. October 7; see photograph seven).

These ideas express a 'social construction of acceptability' which establishes what art is appropriate in a place. The idea of offense is not only personal preference

but, more so, is shaped by social life and shared definitions. This communal, social

aspect of offense is evident where there is disagreement over words and images (Tepper

2011, 2-3).

> 'Republicans' is part history. It's like saying Martin Luther King [inaudible section] they were important historical figures, so he was in one of the murals but then people took offence as if he is being glorified. I don't think anything gets glorified it's just a statement. Here's what happened 100 years ago, we do glorify the republican martyrs of 1916 but definitely don't glorify Carson. He was just part of shaping history. Murals show history, memorial, and identity and trying to be a more peaceful representation of the situation but still some people are offended. A misunderstanding of what is meant' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with Sein Féin political representative and former IRA political prisoner. May 20; see photograph two).

Disagreements over words and images make it essential for reimaging projects to

consider the 'social construction of acceptability.' However, creating this kind of

acceptability in such projects may prove difficult.

> 'Most are receptive to reimaging. It's mainly extreme sides. Change offensive murals and change them to something more nicer and more welcoming. Others trying to just show how art works. Some murals were defaced or covered up after reimaging' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with member of Belfast City Council. August 22; see photograph ten).

> The photographs also evoked responses that show that disagreements over art

and expression imply more profound community struggles. Artworks often serve as

'lightning rods,' pulling out and offering space for the expression of tensions coming

about from social change. When social change occurs, community members compete

over symbols like cultural expressions to affirm their identity and assign meaning to

those changes (Tepper 2011, 2-3).

> 'Dee street don't understand the idea of freedom. Freedom to be a cunt? Red Hand of Ulster is something I'm intensely proud of as part of culture and heritage. Goes back to my Celtic roots. It's not a clinched fist. It comes from the myth of King of Ulster. I have red hands on lots of jerseys, but you put that with a crown above this I'm deeply offended. The cross of Saint Patrick, the butcher's apron, the iron flag. Butchers apron because the bastards have been killing us for centuries. Another image which extensively belongs to my culture and roots is the shamrock. If you put a shamrock and then put a red hand in the middle of it, I'm seeing UVF. You can take two symbols and once you put two

symbols that are extensively mine and interlock them that's a difficulty' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a worker at a cross community organization in North Belfast. August 23; see photograph six).

The discussion up until this point focuses on data derived in the thematic analysis relating to theme one. This analysis makes it apparent that there is a desire to move beyond a conflictual past. However, the legacies of the Troubles plague the contemporary era. A part of this also arises from the evolving role of identity in the contemporary era, which is explored in the next section.

8.3 Theme Two: The Evolving Role of Identity in Contemporary Northern Ireland

Though the GFA of 1998 signified a new era, twenty years on the legacies of the Troubles persist. These legacies can be seen in the contemporary symbolic landscape where artefactual materials like public art reflect the volatility of the situation. Symbols found in murals in one area, for example, may memorialize a former combatant, but another community may consider the same symbols antagonistic. This landscape is where different identities play out, often competing or vying for space. Northern Ireland is commonly thought of as a place with two distinct communities, each having its own constructed identity. From this perspective, these identities are on one side, nationalist, republican, and Catholic, and on the other, unionist, loyalist, and Protestant. It can also be argued, however, that these classifications are too simplistic, and there are many other groupings. These groupings may include but are not limited to, outsiders that have relocated to Northern Ireland or Northern Irish people who say they do not identify with the traditional two community narratives. The extent to which these arguments are fully realized can be debated.

In comparing Northern Ireland's censuses conducted in 2001 and 2011 (the next census is in 2021), there appears to be an increased number of the population selecting alternative categories to the traditionally mainstream ones. When responding

to the question about religious identification, there was a three percent increase in the category 'no religion or no religion stated,' and 'other religion' had a 0.5 percent increase in 2011 from the previous census. Further to this, in response to the question, 'Do you think of yourself unionist, nationalist or neither?' 45.7 percent of young Protestant non-voters selected 'neither,' as did 14.4 percent of young Protestant voters. Similarly, 55.6 percent of young Catholic non-voters and 19.6 of young Catholic voters followed suit (Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency 2001; Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency 2011; Shirlow 2019).

The comparison of the census data seems to indicate a growing number of the population, or at the very least, part of the population is rejecting the mainstream identities that framed the divisions in the conflict. However, this begs the question, can these identities be entirely separated from the population? Ruane and Todd argue there are interconnected dimensions of difference in Northern Ireland concerned with religion, ethnicity, and colonialism that make it difficult to altogether remove oneself from these associations (1996, 22-30). For instance, the 'Protestant identity' is associated with identifications of 'settler status' and Britishness. If a person is part of the Protestant community, even if they are no longer a practicing Protestant, their connection to Protestantism will continue and often for an extended period after participation in the group has ended. This phenomenon is attributed to Northern Ireland's institutional structures, like the segregated education system (Mitchell 2006, 4). The data generated in the photo-elicitation interviews and analyzed using iconography, semiotics, and thematic analysis appears to support Ruane and Todd's assertion. Most participants expressed claims of identity as seen through the perception of the 'other,' using traditional identifications to frame their positions. These identifications may indicate that in the context of classifying oneself in activities like

the census, some people reject the typical classifications. However, when faced with the associated symbols of these classifications, represented in the photographs, they are embraced as personal identifications. Thus, the second theme explores the evolving role of identity in contemporary Northern Ireland. This exploration does not argue that all people in Northern Ireland wholly align with the mainstream identities, but, significantly, this research found that most participants felt connected to them.

As mentioned above, a comparison of census data to some extent implies that there is an increase in a portion of the population that does not subscribe to the conventional identities informed by nationalism, republicanism, and Catholicism, or unionism, loyalism, and Protestantism. However, as proposed by Ruane and Todd, it may be challenging to completely disassociate oneself from these identifications because of the interconnections between dimensions of difference. While the census data seems to contend with this assertion by Ruane and Todd, this research shows that the symbolic landscape, as represented in the 28 photographs, mostly elicits data that, at times, contradict the findings in the comparison of the census data collected in 2001 and 2011. There is an awareness of 'the other' and a perpetuation of the traditional identities that framed the conflict.

Cultural expressions of public art can perpetuate two-community identification and 'enemy consciousness' to not only understand oneself but also to perpetuate 'othering,' an idea that establishes differences and likeness between groups (McManus 2017, 3).

> 'Murals foster enemy consciousness. Protestants have to be unionists or loyalists and Catholics have to be nationalist or republican. Martyr-ology. Making heroes out of people who died and killed people. If less attached to blood sacrifice people are more willing to move past it. The red hand is all about shedding blood. It's a gathering of martyrs. We can't let them die' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with prominent Protestant religious leader during the Troubles and former chaplain in the Orange Order. October 4; see photograph six).

Deep-rooted memories, identities, and perceptions of 'the other' have generated

predisposed notions of 'the other' and intensified the mental maps of places of

accessibility and places of denial. Though post-agreement environments are continually

shaped and re-shaped, it is not possible to erase conflicts over identity and space

(Henry, Lloyd and Ritchie 2015, 116).

> 'Loyalist, unionist communities particularly. It's funny how I'm not used to
> seeing them and then when I see them it horrifies me. Whenever you see
> something all the time you do absorb it. Slow at moving away from
> paramilitary. Republicans have moved on by leaps and bounds. Sinn Féin had its
> hay day being the popular party of resistance and now we are probably
> establishment. Things change. Republican murals tend to have moved away
> from showing things of the IRA. It looks very sinister, hostile to me'
> (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with Sein Féin political representative and former
> IRA political prisoner. May 20; see photograph six).

Physical demarcations create boundaries that affect how people interact, access,

and use their environment. These boundaries influence the formation of mental maps of

inclusion and exclusion, pointing out spaces of 'us' and those of 'the other.'

> 'I came from a Catholic background. In Northern Ireland it's really hard to take
> away your own baggage. As much as I want to see a shared society there are
> elements of me that feel less safe in some areas and more safe in others, simply
> because of my background. With my name, a very Irish name, the assumption is
> Catholic. Also, because there has been such a threat from the loyalists to the
> Alliance Party over the past few years because of the flag decision in 2012. But
> now I represent communities that identify as loyalists. When I see murals like
> this I still wonder if I will be safe here' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with
> Alliance Party political representative in East Belfast. August 24; see
> photograph six).

> 'I hate this. It's the colors. By painting curb stones or other things, you are
> marking territory. Demarcating territory. What this says is Catholics are not safe
> here, Protestants are safe here. No need for it. UVF are the big guys in this area.
> Demarcation where it doesn't need to be' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with
> Alliance Party political representative in East Belfast. August 24 see photograph
> eight).

While this process of identification is common and a natural part of human

behavior, it establishes hierarchies between groups where one group is thought to be

lesser in some form or a potential threat to the opposing group. Identity is secured by

the disassociation and stigmatization of other groups to reinforce ideas of one's

normality while establishing other groups as different (McManus 2017, 3). These

established ideas of difference are formed and reinforced over time (Haydon, McAlister

and Scraton 2013, 8).

> 'They're not the same as us. A study was done that found 99 percent of
> republican prisoners would not have seen the inside of a jail if it weren't for the
> circumstances of the conflict. The same cannot be said of loyalist paramilitaries
> who would have been involved in criminality. Loyalists are assassins, shooting
> men and women in their beds whereas republicans only fought back when the
> killing of Catholics became too much. Loyalists were murderers. He might not
> be an IRA man, but his son might be one or he might breed one or she might
> have one. They had to be dealt with. They were dealt with in an extreme set of
> circumstances. The IRA didn't want to be involved in sectarian conflict, but a
> conflict of constitutional politics. Loyalists knew they weren't shooting IRA
> men but assassinating normal Catholics' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a
> worker at a cross community organization in North Belfast. August 23; see
> photograph eleven).

Symbolic representation in urban spaces is as much about communicating to

'the other' as it is about speaking to the converted. The significance of symbolic

representation is not only about the messages being sent to 'the other' but also the

messages being communicated to its supporters (Jargon 2007, 97).

> 'Loyalists are more likely to be involved in drugs. Republicans used positive
> time in prison and got degrees. Some loyalists did but very few. Education was
> important for republicans because they couldn't get jobs and saw education as a
> way to get jobs. Loyalists are suffering from it to some degree today. The
> unionist community had jobs in shipyards and factories and completely different
> background and experience than ours. They would be ponds of the state. Very
> sectarian. Killed people because they were Catholic. The IRA did kill some
> people. It could have been described as sectarian, by and large it was that the
> IRA chose people for political reasons, so it was strategic members of security
> forces or key member of the UVF. It was not because they were Protestant and
> then some people got killed by mistake and there's no excuse for any of it, but it
> happens in war' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with Sein Féin political
> representative and former IRA political prisoner. May 20; see photograph
> eleven).

The idea of victimhood was a significant factor in assigning value to the

establishment of the 'other' and the perpetuation of the traditional identities. Both sides

discussed human rights and the brutalities of the conflict. As mentioned in Chapter

Five, between July 1969 and 31 December 2001, there were 3,285 deaths linked to the conflict in Northern Ireland (Sutton 1994, 195). Though these statistics are well established, the issue of victimhood is more challenging to determine and the designation of who is a 'victim…in a violent conflict is itself a contested issue' (Graham and Whelan 2007, 482). The GFA acknowledges a responsibility to help victims and survivors of the Troubles. However, it fails to provide a clear definition of what constitutes a victim beyond 'victims of violence' (Ferguson, Burgess and Hollywood 2010, 858).

Though statistics about the impact of the conflict on the population vary, studies suggest that a higher percentage of people were affected than previously thought. These impacts may include death, trauma, injury, and displacement. In a study done by the Commission for Victims and Survivors in Northern Ireland (CVSNI), 500,000 people felt the Troubles had significantly damaged their lives. One hundred seventy thousand people reported either a relative or someone close to them dying during the conflict, and 107,000 people reported they sustained a personal injury during the conflict (Haydon, McAlister and Scraton 2013, 2). In this research, on the one side, republicans, nationalists, and Catholics often framed themselves as victims and referenced human rights and their counterparts, the opposite. Though both sides acknowledge, there are victims in war, what defines a victim varies. Bill Rolston observes,

> 'Both sides get to talk of the human rights abuses and atrocities which they have experienced. Often such statements have been received unsympathetically, not just by the other side but, perhaps surprisingly, more widely. There is a big element of whataboutery here, so that my atrocity can be taken to trump yours. More widely, some commentators accuse the whole of Northern Ireland society of being caught up in eternal whingeing. Despite those reactions, a focus on victims here, like elsewhere in the world, is partly about saying that this should not have happened and should not happen again' (Rolston, Bill. 2016. Interview with Emeritus Professor of Sociology Ulster University. June 22).

This research data illustrates that there are competing narratives of victimhood between the different groups defined through identity.

> 'Republicans will tell you every mural they do is to do with human rights because they are hung up on human rights. Nobody else is allowed to have it. With republicans there was a war against them and to be honest there are victims in the war, but you can't turn around and say those eight republicans are victims, eight heavily armed IRA men. When I first joined the war and the UDA, I knew one of two things was going to happen, either I was going to jail or going to die. Republicans are very, very good at playing the victim. Hunger strikers, Easter Rising, all about them being the victims. You can't be victim all the time. You can't be saying you're constantly a victim when you are also a troublemaker. The people who were victims were the people who were walking minding their business and a bomb went off and they were killed or shot because they were Catholic or Protestant but if you say you're a member of the IRA or UDA and something happens to you, you're not a victim' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a former member of the UDA and former political prisoner. October 7; see photograph twelve).

It is important here to note here that while the participant began his response using the language of a third party or independent observer by the end of his response, he identifies himself and frames republicans as 'the other.' This shows that while he may have intended to disassociate himself in some way from the mainstream identities, the image evoked a response that illustrates he still identifies with them.

Beyond this, it can be argued that republicans still see themselves as the victims of injustices. In the below interview response, the present tense is used. This indicates that republicans still feel they are victims and are still willing to use armed force to defend themselves and their communities against 'the other' and identify themselves with a republican identity.

> 'Republicans will say our murals aren't about conflict or confrontation. They are about the struggles and the injustice and we are the ones dealing with injustice. We aren't the ones antagonizing. We are called to arms to defend our community. We are being attacked and the army and police aren't doing enough so we must be prepared to defend ourselves' (Anonymous. Interview with director of a peacebuilding charity in North Belfast. August 23; see photograph six).

These narratives of victimhood are fostered through memorialization and commemoration, playing a role in the symbolic representation of the conflict and associated identities. Murals portraying memorials can be seen to illustrate contested heritage through the depiction of the past, which can inform the present (Graham and Whelan 2007, 478).

> 'There are ways to remember individuals and this is one of the biggest elements for me as a community worker. Robert Dougan, his mother is just as much a victim as the other person who lost a loved one. There is a hierarchy of victims. People want to memorialize those they see as soldiers or heroes who were fighting for their country but in the same way we need to find a way to memorialize in a way that is sensitive to those who have been victimized by the individual. I struggle with how as a society can we move forward to remember those who have played a part but in a very sensitive way to those who were caught up in it to no fault of their own' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with Alliance Party political representative in East Belfast. August 24; see photograph eleven).

Moreover, remembrance and commemoration are essential points of consideration in transforming societies after violent conflict. Often left traumatized with deep psychological wounds, the contextualization of meaning is central. Finding ways to remember the past in ways that help build a shared future is essential.

> 'I hate that narrative of those who rose in 69 will do it again at any time. It's like the mural prepared for peace, ready for war. Very negative. Again, hunger strikers are an interesting case as well. If you take them from a purely historical perspective, it's interesting to have a group of men who believed in a cause so much that they gave up their lives and did it through civil disobedience. But at the end of the day they were still members of the IRA, so they were prepared to participate in that kind of activity. Again, I understand the need to remember because they're seen as martyrs but there needs to be a different way of doing it. The naming of places and clubs after some of those men has caused problems in our society. There needs to be a way of commemorating respectfully because there are victims of those people who are still alive and feel the pain. It's still within people's recent memory' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with Alliance Party political representative in East Belfast. August 24; see photograph twelve).

Further to this, displaying symbols related to British rule and the historical colonization of the isle of Ireland also demonstrates the divisions embedded in the post-agreement society and the question of the rightful sovereignty of Northern Ireland. The

mural of Queen Elizabeth II, as seen in photograph thirteen, elicited responses that

show the Queen is a potent and divisive symbol of identity in Northern Ireland.

Queen Elizabeth II is a mythomoteur that reinforces the loyalist and unionist

agenda to maintain the union between Northern Ireland and Britain (Forker and

McCormick 2009, 439). The Queen's face, imprinted on currency and stamps, acts as

reminders of the presence of the symbol. This reminder is also found in public art in

Northern Ireland. The symbolic manifestations of the monarchy hold social significance

(Sawyer 1998, 184). The identities of the conflict can be understood through these

kinds of symbols and images.

> 'If that's what they want to do support a millionaire pensioner. They will profess loyalty to the Queen but won't support their government. They will break their government's laws but will be loyal to the Queen. Internal contradictions there. Why are they loyalists as opposed to unionists? They are always hard pressed to explain it. I think they are trying to politicize their actions back in time because I think many of them are ashamed of their activities because their activities were anti-Catholic as opposed to anti-republican, but their cause was supposed to be to support the state to defeat the IRA so why are you killing Catholics? I'm not Catholic, I'm republican but I was born a Catholic. I'm a political animal and I certainly wasn't in the IRA because I was Catholic' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a former member of the IRA, former political prisoner and community worker at a republican affiliated organization. May 18; see photograph thirteen).

> 'I don't get anybody's connection to monarchy. Why are a bunch of poor people supporting the monarchy? I don't have a pot to piss in but God bless our Queen and the 40 million a year it costs. I'm an Irish republican. Anywhere else I would be a republican. There is no freedom until the last king is killed with the last Priest' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with art curator from Belfast and founder of a local non-affiliated arts community organization. May 18; see photograph thirteen).

Northern Ireland is often discussed in terms of the historically constructed two-

tradition paradigm. Up until this point, the research data demonstrates that most

participants identify with this classification. However, it must be acknowledged that a

small portion of the data questioned the traditional categorization of nationalist,

republican and Catholic and unionist, loyalist, and Protestants.

'It is important to say there are two communities and then there are a whole lot of people caught in the middle of the bullshit' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with art curator from Belfast and founder of a local non-affiliated arts community organization. May 18; see photograph fourteen).

Though Northern Ireland is often framed using these sectarian boundaries, one participant argued there are more than two communities.

'The fact that there are least two individuals of an ethnic minority in that photo as well because Northern Ireland doesn't have two communities. I hate that dialogue. The two communities and the other side. But we have so many more' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with Alliance Party political representative in East Belfast. August 24; see photograph one).

The political imposition of this two-tradition paradigm has potential consequences, in that it infers a 'commonality of interests where often none exists' (Graham and Shirlow 1998, 245). In the persisting issue of contested identity, Northern Ireland can be considered a 'political entity that is yet 'to be imagined by the majority of its inhabitants' (Graham and Shirlow 1998, 245).

'Commissioned by the church. I don't think it is sensitive to the space around it. I come from a generation of *Across the Barricades*.[7] I don't like this sort of art. It's like a movie: you (Protestants and Catholics) will be friends. But there's a bigger picture. It drives me nuts when I have to look at the work I've done through the lenses of Catholics and Protestants. I am neither Catholic nor Protestant. Our schools and government are didactically along those lines and why should our art be? Art should say fuck that. There's a thing of beauty and meaning and there's space that exists outside of that' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with art curator from Belfast and founder of a local non-affiliated arts community organization. May 18; see photograph five).

The above discussion shows that through examining cultural expressions of public art, the identities of the conflict remain a part of in society in Northern Ireland,

---

[7] *Across the Barricades* refers to the novel *Across the Barricades: A Kevin and Sadie Story* by Joan Lingard. There is also a film adaptation of the novel. The premise of the story is that Katie and Sadie want to be together, but one is Catholic, and the other is Protestant. It takes place in Belfast during the Troubles.

despite what is arguably shown the comparable census data. The material found in the first two themes makes it essential to examine peacebuilding as it relates to the symbolic landscape and the evolving role of public art, which the following section deliberates on.

8.4 Theme Three: The Evolving Role of Public Art and Understanding Peacebuilding in the Post-agreement State

Like theme one and two, theme three demonstrates how photo-elicitation, semiotics, iconography, and thematic analysis can be applied to public art to reveal essential information about Northern Ireland. Thus far, the research puts into question the sustainability of peace and the identities that shape the post-agreement era. These findings connect to an unresolved past, poverty, divisive political rhetoric, paramilitarism, and the nature of the GFA. Further, they show how cultural expressions are relevant and provide valuable insight into the post-agreement state. Because the research indicates there are still problems related to the conflict, it is essential to look at peacebuilding and the current role of public art. The discussion regarding theme three examines these concepts by looking at topics like the GFA, the Arts Council's Reimaging Communities Programme, and the presence of public art in the symbolic landscape.

To begin with, in 1998, a referendum was held on the GFA in both the Republic and Northern Ireland. In the Republic of Ireland, the referendum passed with a majority 94.4 percent and in Northern Ireland, a 71.7 percent majority (Blackwell and Hackney 2004). It was a crucial moment in the history of the Isle of Ireland, and with it began the formal peace processes. The Agreement demonstrated a recognition that two political and social groupings needed to find a shared arrangement to stop the violence and end the conflict. Furthermore, progressions in European and international legislation and

conventions concerning human rights and minorities in combination with the conflictual

experience of those living in Northern Ireland, produced an understanding of the

challenges minorities faced and the necessity to create mechanisms to protect minorities

(Independent Research Solutions, 2009, 37).

As pointed out in Chapter Four, the GFA only briefly mentions issues of

symbolism. One of the main peacebuilding programs resulting was the Arts Council's

Reimaging Communities Programme. The Arts Council's Reimaging Communities

Programme tries to address issues of symbolism in the aftermath of the conflict. This

program aims to deal with 'the visible signs of sectarianism and racism in Northern

Ireland communities, with a particular emphasis on the replacement of existing

paramilitary murals and other items with new and more positive imagery' (Independent

Research Solutions, 2009, 38-39). The program can be considered controversial, and

the research data questions the successes and failures of it as a peacebuilding approach.

It is important to note that sometimes the success or failure of the artwork differs based

on participant backgrounds and community affiliation. One way it is discussed is in

terms of it being a government project.

> 'It's shit. I hate this so much. It's like someone has vomited onto a wall. It's
> awful. It's not a fucking mural. It's a paste up. A giant sticker. This is again
> what happens when you do art by committee. Politicians and government
> workers don't understand what they are doing' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview
> with art curator from Belfast and founder of a local non-affiliated arts
> community organization. May 18; see photograph one).

This research demonstrates a disconnect between politicians and government officials

and the local population relating to reimaging. At times, the benefits of tourism are

considered over that of local communities.

> 'One of the murals we wanted to change but they are attractive to tourists. To a
> certain extent, I don't mind them so much. Do we take things away from the
> community or the tourists?' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with member of
> Belfast City Council. August 22; see photograph six).

Moreover, the symbolism in reimaged artwork often coincides with the

requirements of funders and community leaders. Resulting is artwork that does not fully

represent the community.

> 'One of those things where this looks like a community reimaging project, take
> paramilitary and do them over. Always linked to industry or Ulster Scots.
> Reimaging is softer versions. Hardcore music is part of working-class culture,
> but you'd never see that on the walls so there's a particular thread of the Somme,
> Ulster Scotts, industrial heritage. These are the things that play well with funders
> and community leaders. Community leaders are the key. So, this does not
> necessarily completely represent everyone or representative of where that
> community is right now, but its simpler, the people who put those murals of
> balaclavas first, they are the ones you have to move a little way. Sometimes the
> community is already a bit ahead of them' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with
> art curator from Belfast and founder of a local non-affiliated arts community
> organization. May 18; see photograph ten).

The differing viewpoints between the Belfast City Council and the local

population further show the disconnect of politicians and government officials. This is

illustrated in the historical symbolism in public art. The below response is from a

member of the Belfast City Council working with reimaging programs.

> 'Shows the massive history behind those areas and that's what we always
> realized when reimaging. They were keen on showing history of the area and
> where they are coming from. I think it works well because it's something they
> can identify with' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with member of Belfast City
> Council. August 22; see photograph ten).

However, from a loyalist perspective, through reimaging their history is erased, whereas

historical representations of republicanism remain mostly untouched. While there is a

desire to show the history of the community, there is also a perceived censorship in

displays of loyalist history.

> 'In republican terms it seems to be that they have a history and loyalists don't.
> We're not allowed to show history. Most murals in West Belfast haven't
> changed. Beechmount Avenue is still called RPG Avenue. They can keep
> history, but we can't. Loyalist history must be airbrushed out' (Anonymous.
> 2016. Interview with a former member of the UDA and former political
> prisoner. October 7; see photograph fifteen).

Beyond this, some artworks are considered 'new and more positive imagery' as guided by the principles of the Reimaging Communities Programme. However, this research illustrates that reimaged artworks can convey the same messages of those they are replacing.

> 'It represents exclusion and sectarianism that goes along with it. It is working class people standing together' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a worker at a cross community organization in North Belfast. August 23; see photograph ten).

Photograph eight evoked a similar response. The reimaged mural is considered 'more negative' and the maintenance of identity in a less intimidating fashion. This perspective shows that similar messages are conveyed in the new mural. However, it is arguably still essential that the next generation does not grow up with the contentious symbols of the Troubles, which has significant implications.

> 'A more negative mural to me, trying to take identity of those people who live in the community and focus on something more positive. It would be from the same community that would identify themselves with terrorist organizations and all identify themselves with football teams as well. It's a way of maintaining that identity but in a less intimidating fashion. What's important is that something like this, even if not perfect but less bad. What is important for me is that kids see that instead of a more intimidating piece, so the reimaging is very much like that next generation of them not growing up with the same extreme opinions and realizing that you are dealing with kids when covering up walls that are really negative. Even though the kids aren't thinking about that consciously there is still something that happens with that impact' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with street artist. May 16; see photograph eight).

Though the data demonstrates there are problems with the Arts Council's Reimaging Communities Programme, it also shows the program may be making some progress. To some extent, the positive nature of reimaging was articulated.

> 'It's a positive reimaging project. Not a paramilitary one but proud of a football team. For club and country. There is a story behind this: official flag of the region, until 1974. Official flag of Northern Ireland is the union flag, only flag seen flown at government buildings. Unionist population mainly identify with this traditional flag, Saint George's Cross. It's recognized as the traditional flag even though has no official status. Linfield club would be predominantly supported by Protestants. Reimaging is on one hand to present a more positive space for local community and culture but probably the people it rubs worst are the hardcore elements that feel that this is too soft, and they aren't ashamed to

take up arms to defend their community. An example of this is Freedom Corner' (Anonymous. Interview with director of a peacebuilding charity in North Belfast. August 23; see photograph eight).

'These are the people who built the Titanic. The city itself is remembering its own history in a more positive way through building a ship like the Titanic. It's about people and the workforce. It's a positive thing' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with street artist. May 16; see photograph ten).

The mural tradition in Northern Ireland did not end with the formal peace agreements. Though peacebuilding programs are trying to address the symbolic landscape, the role of public art is also transforming. From one perspective, the artworks embody potent symbols of the conflict that are part of the heritage of the North. These symbols are considered essential in shaping the future.

'To have a comparison to what is going on in Palestine right now is mental. Part of their agenda. It always confused me that. I think they were representative of the conflict, negative whether territorial markings or communications and feelings of community at any given time but it's become engraved in the culture now. They have become very powerful symbols, so I think now utilizing those symbols for positive, progressive manner for the next years would be vitally important to resolve any issues and form a new identity that's not as like divided by religion or your background' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with art curator from Belfast and founder of a local non-affiliated arts community organization. May 18; see photograph sixteen).

In being historically significant, the continual changing symbolic landscape also serves as a barometer of the present state in Northern Ireland. It can be argued that there is a new situation, and therefore, new symbols and ideas should be supported.

'Murals matter to the people in the districts, particularly when people feel their voice isn't heard. They are looking for ways to express it. Walls become a canvas for those districts. Each area came up with their own murals at one point. Organizations, the main ones like Sinn Féin, UVF, UDA, territory marking but marking the change because you can see it as a barometer of how far we have come. I think there's a role for keeping some of them to remind us where we have come from. I think we should celebrate the fact that people are coming up with new ideas and new symbols. The new focus is all very positive. Murals are more peaceful now. We still do have political stuff particularly because of period of centenaries over the next few years but I think they are getting away from strictly murals supporting armed struggle apart from areas with dissident republicans or loyalists are in contest with each other' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a former member of the IRA and former political prisoner. August 25; see photograph seventeen).

Though some of the data showed the desire to preserve the longstanding mural tradition in Northern Ireland, it is also clear that a portion of the population questions the presence of the murals.

> 'At some point we need to stop celebrating millenarianism. Don't forgive and forget but remember and change. We need to rethink the language. I'm not a fan of murals. We need to move on and get past them' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a worker at a cross community organization in North Belfast. August 23; see photograph eighteen).

From this point of view, the murals no longer serve a purpose and should be removed. There are other forms of communication to express ideas, and as a result, they should not be on the walls.

> 'There is a place and time for imagery. It's time for the murals to be replaced. Because it is a ghettoization to have murals on your walls…We need to move past this. Reimaging, no time for reimaging. Get rid of public art. No public art. Public art is shit. No bad public art. Take it away and find different ways to express identity, history, past. We shouldn't express these things on a wall. Not now. We have access to social media, international media. Other ways to communicate' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with a worker at a cross community organization in North Belfast. August 23; see photograph twelve).

> Moreover, there is a distinct lack of peacemakers represented in the murals.

Instead, the murals portray people like Robert Dougan, and some argue images like this should be removed. However, others celebrate them yearly with Loyal Order parades.

> 'They never paint people who have been honored for ending violence or bringing peace. It's a crucifixion scene but don't say who they killed or how many they killed. Whitewash them. They are all turned into saints and thought to have done nothing wrong. They were victims of the Troubles in the sense that they were hardened by them, but they themselves were perpetrators and killed innocent Catholics. These guys were more like Israelis and killing civilians. You just hope they are left and neglected but then there are marches every year to remember these men' (Anonymous. 2016. Interview with prominent Protestant religious leader during the Troubles and former chaplain in the Orange Order. October 4; see photograph eleven).

> This discussion deliberated on the third theme, which builds on the first two and

explores the changing role of public art and peacebuilding processes. Here, it is apparent that the role of public art is ambiguous, with some participants seeing it as an

asset in the contemporary era and others viewing it as harmful to peace processes. This theme illustrates difficulties in dealing with a conflictual past that is physically demarcated across the symbolic landscape and one that remains in the minds and hearts of the people. Here it is apparent that there are challenges in addressing the symbolic landscape, primarily through peacebuilding initiatives like the Reimaging Communities Programme.

8.5 Chapter Conclusion

Chapter Eight offers the deductive thematic analysis. It draws on the data derived from the practical application of the methodologies of the study, the theoretical framework, and contextualization of the relevant background material. Chapter one provides the parameters of the research project, Chapter Two and Three, the methodologies, and Chapter Four, the theoretical framework that serves as coding parameters. Chapter five presents the background that also serves as coding parameters, and Chapters Six and Seven offer the photographs used in the photo-elicitation interviews alongside the iconographic and semiotic analyses. By using this material, three themes were derived in the deductive thematic analysis. The first theme explores the sustainable peace in Northern Ireland, finding this to be a questionable concept by the local population. Many participants felt that deep-rooted issues from the Troubles still plague Northern Ireland, some asserting that the conflict has not ended. This is important to note as well because there was a distinct lack of mention of the GFA. Theme two examines the evolving role of identity in the contemporary era. Here, most participants identified with the traditional two paradigm narratives, despite a comparison of the censuses in 2001 and 2011, showing a marginal increase in people who rejected these conventional narratives. Building on the first two themes, the third theme looks at the changing role of public art and on-going peacebuilding initiatives related to symbolisms in the

contemporary era. Here, the role of public art is vague, with some participants arguing its importance and others its harmfulness. This theme also found there are challenges in peacebuilding processes and transforming a symbolic landscape in a situation where the authority of the state is questioned, and the past is unresolved.

CHAPTER NINE

Conclusions and Discussions

9.1 Introduction

This research uses visual methodologies to explore what cultural expressions in the symbolic landscapes can reveal about peacebuilding and post-agreement societies. The use of photo-elicitation, iconography, and semiotics, in combination with deductive thematic analysis, offers insight into post-agreement societies that would otherwise remain hidden from scholars and/or practitioners. Being a new and innovative approach, it distinctly contributes valuable knowledge to peace studies and conflict transformation literature as well as generates a new tool for investigating post-agreement environments.

These methodologies interconnect and complement each other to effectively generate significant insights into contemporary Northern Ireland and the legacies. The raw research data was collected using photo-elicitation. Critically, this data underwent semiotic and iconographic analysis. The semiotic analysis served to initially extract and organize the material generated in the photo-elicitation interviews, as presented in Chapters Six and Seven. The iconographic analysis had two primary functions. First, it required the researcher to undergo an intensive reflexive exercise, an essential step in the research process before conducting the thematic analysis of the data. Iconography also importantly acts as a baseline for the reader when engaging with the often-differing perspective of participants on the same topics.

The preceding chapters present the theoretical framework, research design and methodology, background, and the synthesis of the interpretations and analysis of research findings. This chapter offers discussions on the findings, conclusions, and recommendations, limitations of the study, as well as practical implications of the

research. From these discussions, the research questions of the study are addressed. To remind the readers, the two questions this research investigates are:

3. What do cultural expressions like art in the public realm reveal about peacebuilding in post-agreement societies like Northern Ireland?

4. Are visual methodologies like photo-elicitation, iconography, and semiotics useful tools for investigating post-agreement societies?

9.2 Major Findings of the Study

This study confirms that using visual methodologies to investigate cultural expressions of public art in the symbolic landscape generates valuable insight into post-agreement societies, specifically Northern Ireland. In the research findings, three themes emerged. The first finding suggests that two decades on from the signing of formal peace agreements in 1998, conflictual issues related to the Troubles are still embedded in the fabric of society. From the perspective of the local population, the sustainability of peace is questionable. The second finding indicates that though it may appear that people are disassociating themselves from the traditional ideologies and identities that framed the conflict, the methodology evoked responses that show that the traditional ideologies are still a genuine part of the mindset of the local population. The third finding explores the evolving role of public art in contemporary Northern Ireland and how perceptions of the symbolic landscape offer insight into the understanding of peacebuilding by the local population. Here the data shows that while peace initiatives like the Arts Council's Reimaging Communities Programme can be seen as successful in some instances, it can be problematic and produce images that communicate the same messages of those it is replacing. This finding also shows that the presence of public art is both problematic and a valuable tool in shaping the future. Here,

219

participants both felt the symbolic landscape offers opportunities in peacebuilding as well as finding the public art a distinct hindrance to reconciliation.

9.3 Major Conclusions of the Study

9.3.1 Conclusion One

The first conclusion shows the application of photo-elicitation in combination with semiotics, iconography and thematic analysis reveals a series of problems in trying to transform a symbolic landscape that accounts for cultural and symbolic expression in a situation where the authority of the state is questioned, and a conflictual past is not easily resolved. The photographs of the cultural expressions playing out in the symbolic landscape evoked intense emotional responses. These powerful reactions elicited using the effective methodological framework of this study shows problems like competing narratives and histories, recognition between groups, and the mutual denial of the importance of the opposition's worldview remains embedded in the social and political fabric of Northern Ireland. Before a renegotiation of competing interests and a transformation in behaviors and relationships between opposing parties can occur, there needs to be a deeper understanding and consideration of cultural expressions like public art.

9.3.2 Conclusion Two

The second conclusion in this research is that cultural expressions like public art are particularly influential in reproducing sectarian divisions and identities, perhaps more so, than political discourse that causes division or separate socialization. Though documents like the census may show a percentage of the population that disassociates with the central socio-political identities in Northern Ireland, the symbolic landscape represented in the photo-elicitation interviews generated responses that may suggest many still do.

9.3.3 Conclusion Three

The third conclusion finds that not only is photo-elicitation beneficial in investigating post-agreement environments, but iconography and semiotics with thematic analysis are as well. Each of the visual approaches contributed to successfully accessing valuable insights into post-agreement Northern Ireland. Iconography and semiotics established a language for understanding and analyzing the public art and the participant responses evoked in the photo-elicitation interviews. The thematic analysis was also a core element in the analysis of the research data, whereby the main findings for the study were produced.

9.3.4 Conclusion Four

The fourth conclusion is that the symbolic landscape gives key insights into contemporary Northern Ireland. The public art has historically and now contemporarily transformed alongside the state in Northern Ireland. While cultural differentiations are not the cause of conflict, they do shape conflict. In Northern Ireland, cultural expressions like public art are not merely superficial phenomena but are essential indicators of how in-groups and out-groups understand their world. These understandings are rooted in issues like competing narratives and identities, collective memory, and socio-political realities. Through the investigation of public art, it is clear that the symbolic landscape serves as a barometer of the situation on the ground. This makes using the methodology of this study even more essential as a way to gain insight into post-agreement societies like Northern Ireland through the direct lens of the local population.

9.4 Limitations of the Study

This study explored what cultural expressions like public art can reveal about post-agreement societies using visual methodologies, and many substantial findings were

found. Though the findings were significant, this research has certain limitations. Some of these limitations are common in the qualitative research paradigm, and others are inherent in the research design of the study. The researcher has sought to account for these limitations and reduce the potential impact they may have. The research limitations and measures implemented to minimize the potential impact on the study are outlined below.

The use of the qualitative research methodology itself elicits certain limitations. In qualitative research, the analysis of the data is dependent on the researcher and can be limited by researcher bias and subjectivity. To help minimize potential bias and subjectivity linked to data analysis, interpretation, and synthesis, the researcher practiced reflexivity throughout the research process. Further, the researcher engaged in regular immersion in the field; this provided the researcher with a better contextual understanding of the phenomenon under study.

Another limitation of the study relates to the sample set. Though the researcher sought equal representation of gender and groupings, the sample set was dependent on the willingness of people to participate. In this study, men were more willing to participate in the study than women, and some groups like the UUP declined to participate. A third limitation is implicit to the photo-elicitation methodology. Photo-elicitation participants must have the ability to see. In this study, one participant was visually impaired, which hindered his ability to respond to the photographs. However, the use of the tablet helped because the participant could manipulate the size of the photographs.

Beyond the limiting factors surrounding potential bias, the research sample set, and visual impairment, a further limitation of the study relates to the transcription process. Because the participants selected the location of the interview and the seating

arrangement, it was not always possible for the researcher to control background noise. Additionally, some of the accents were challenging to understand. To deal with this issue, when it was difficult to understand accents or the background noise was loud, the researcher attached the Dictaphone to external speakers; this helped the researcher to decipher the recordings.

9.5 Implications for Future Research

The researcher recommends that further studies should be done to increase the knowledge and scholarship about what can be learned about post-agreement environments using this methodology and specifically, what public art reveals about these situations through the perception of the local population. In this regard, the following recommendations should be considered:

1. Studies should be undertaken in other post-agreement societies to test further the strength of the research design and methodology of this study.

2. Because this research found that young people in Northern Ireland are experiencing the legacies of the conflict, it would be beneficial to replicate this study with young people in Northern Ireland to understand their mindsets better because the transfer of peace to the next generation relies on them.

3. A comparative research project should be done with the data in the current study and the second recommended study. This study could provide further essential data on the present state of Northern Ireland and provide an understanding of generational perspectives in Northern Ireland

9.6 The Study for Professional or Applied Settings

The findings of this study have implications for persons interested in using visual methodologies to understand post-agreement environments. The study shows the

benefit of using photo-elicitation, semiotics, iconography, and thematic analysis to gain

direct insight into post-agreement areas from the perspective of the local population.

This study is also useful for people interested in applying the methodology to

other research topics related to international peace and conflict transformation studies.

This methodology provides a unique tool for understanding phenomena in a way that

elicits information that may not be discovered using other methods.

APPENDIX A

28 Photographs of Public Art

Figure 1: Located on Sandy Row (Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

Figure 2: Located on Blythe Street (Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

Figure 3: Located on Daphne Street (Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

Figure 4: Located on Daphne Street (Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

Figure 5: Located near the Village (Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

Figure 6: Located on Broadway (Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

Figure 7: Located in the Village (Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

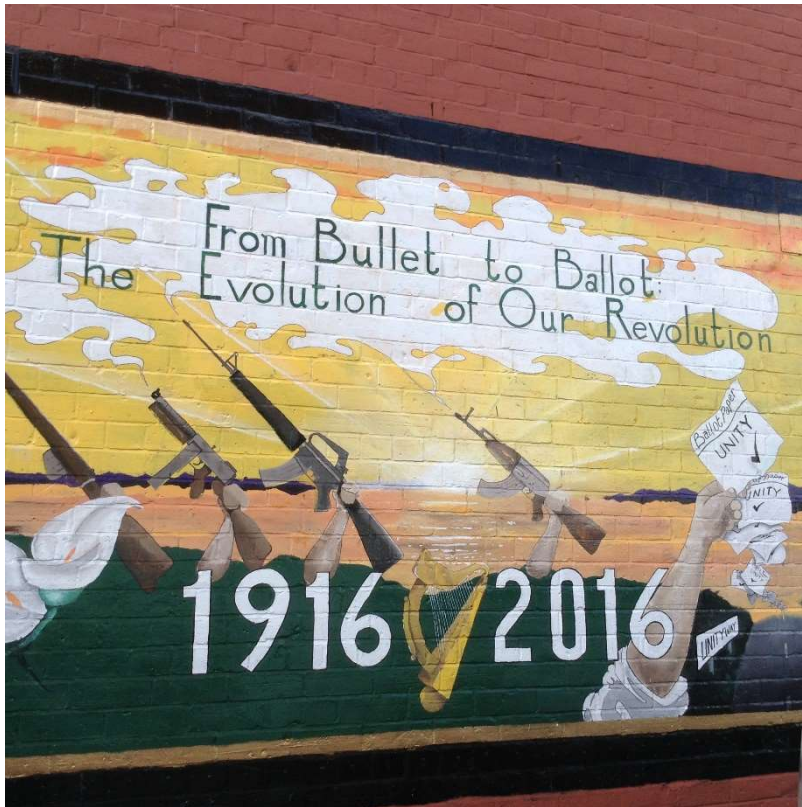Figure 8: Located on Rockview Street (Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

Figure 9: Located on Hugo Street (Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

Figure 10: Located on Hugo Street (Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

Figure 11: Located on Clondara Street (Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

Figure 12: Located on Beechmount Avenue (Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

Figure 13: Located on Beechmount (RPG) Avenue (Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

Figure 14: Located on Clowney Street (Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

Figure 15: Located on Amcomri Street (Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

Figure 16: Located on Newtownards Road (Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

Figure 17: Located on Newtownards Road (Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

Figure 18: Located off Newtownards Road (Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

Figure 19: Located on Dee Street (Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

Figure 20: Located in East Belfast (Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

Figure 21: Located in the Cathedral Quarter (Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

Figure 22: Located in the Cathedral Quarter (Photograph by the researcher, May 2016)

Figure 23: Located in the Cathedral Quarter (Photograph by the researcher, May 2016)

Figure 24: Located in the Cathedral Quarter (Photograph by the researcher, May 2016)

Figure 25: Located on North Queens Street (Photograph by the researcher, April 2016)

Figure 26: Located in the Cathedral Quarter (Photograph by the researcher, May 2016)

Figure 27: Located in the Cathedral Quarter (Photograph by the researcher, May 2016)

Figure 28: Located at North Street Arcade (Photograph by the researcher, May 2016)

APPENDIX B

Supplemental Material

Figure 1: Edward Hopper's 1942 *Nighthawks* (Levin 1996)

Figure 2: Panzani foods advertisement (Kettemann 2013, 59)

Figure 3: Mural advocating for the release of prisoners during the Troubles (Extramural Activity 2013)

Figure 5: Full image of photograph twelve (The Guardian 2015)

Figure 6: Photograph thirteen prior to being reimaged (Photograph provided by
anonymous participant in this study, July 2016)

REFERENCES

Abozaglo, Patty. 2011. Conflict Sensitivity Toolkit: A Resource for Trócaire Staff. Trócaire.

Abraham, Andrew, and Gehan Selim. 2016. "Peace by Piece: (Re) imagining Division in Belfast's Contested Spaces through Memory." *Athens Journal of Architecture* 2 (3): 197-221.

Adkins, Stephen E. 2004. *Encyclopedia of Modern Worldwide Extremists and Extremist Groups.* Westport: Greenwood Press.

Anney, Vicent N. 2014. "Ensuring the Quality of the Findings of Qualitative Research: Looking at Trustworthiness Criteria." *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies (JETERAPS)* 5 (2): 272-281.

Arnheim, Rudolf. 2004. *Art and Visual Perception: A Psychology of the Creative Eye.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Atieno, Ochieng Pamela. 2009. "An Analysis of the Strengths and Limitations of Qualitative and Quantitative Research Paradigms." *Problems of Education in the 21st Century* 13: 13-18.

Ayres, Lioness. 2008. *Thematic Coding and Analysis.* Vol. 2, in *The Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*, edited by Lisa M Given, 867-868. Tousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

Azar, Edward E. 1990. *The Management of Protracted SOcial Conflict.* Hampshire: Dartmouth Publishing Company Limited.

Banks, Marcus. 2001. *Visual Methods in Social Research.* London: Sage Publications, Inc. doi:10.4135/9780857020284.

Barthes, Roland. 1977. *Image Music Text.* Translated by Stephen Heath. London: Fontana Press.

Baruchel, Sylvain, Iris Epstein, Patricia McKeever, and Bonnie Stevens. 2006. "Photo Elicitation Interview (PEI): Using Photos to Elicit Children's Perspectives." *International Journal of Qualitative Method* 5 (3): 1-9.

Baxter, Pamela, and Susan Jack. 2008. "Qualitative Case Study Methodology: Study Design and Implementation for Novice Researchers." *The Qualitative Report* 13 (4): 544-559.

BBC News Northern Ireland. 2019. *Timeline of Dissidentlo Activity.* January 21. Accessed February 21, 2019. https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-10866072.

Bean, Kevin. 2007. *The New Politics of Sinn Féin.* Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.

Berger, Asa. 2014. "Semiotics and Society." *Society* 51: 22-26. doi:10.1007/s12115-013-9731-4.

Blackwell, Amy Hackney, and Ryan Hackney. 2004. *The Everything Irish History & Heritage Book: From Brian Boru and St. Patrick to Sinn Fein and the Troubles, All You Need to Know About the Emerald Isle.* Avon: Adams Media. EBook.

Blair, Erik. 2015. "A Reflexive Exploration of Two Qualitative Data Coding Techniques." *Journal of Methods and Measurement in the Social Sciences* 6 (1): 14-19.

Boyatzis, Richard E. 1998. *Transforming Qualitative Information: Thematic Analysis and Code Development.* Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

Brown, Graham, Arnim Langer, and Frances Stewart. 2008. *A typology of post-conflict environments: An overview*. CRISE Working Paper No. 53, December. Oxford: Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity.

Brand, Ralf. 2009. "Urban Artifacts and Social Practices in a Contested City." *Journal of Urban Technology* 16 (2-3): 35-60. doi:10.1080/10630730903278579.

Braun, Virginia, and Victoria Clarke. 2006. "Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology." *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3 (2): 77-101. http://dx.doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa.

Buckle, Jennifer L, and Sonya Corbin-Dwyer. 2009. "The Space Between: On Being an Insider-Outsider in Qualitative Research." *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 8 (1): 54-63.

Carey Jr., David, and Walter Little. 2010. "Reclaiming the Nation through Public Murals: Maya Resistance and the Reinterpretation of History." *Radical History Review* (106 (WInter 2010)): 5-26.

Chandler, Daniel. 2007. *Semiotics the Basics.* 2. Oxon: Routledge.

Chomsky, Noam. 2006. *Language and Mind.* 3. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Chomsky, Noam. 2002. *Syntactic Structures.* Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Collier, Paul. 2004. "Development and Conflict." Centre for the Study of African Economies: Department of Economics, Oxford University.

Connelly, Lynne M. 2016. "Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research." *Medsug Nursing* 25 (6): 435-436.

Crabtree, Benjamin F, and William L Miller. 1999. "Clinical Research: A Multimethod Typology and Qualitative Roadmap." Chap. 1 in *Doing Qualitative Research*, edited by Benjamin F Crabtree and William L Miller. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

Crabtree, Benjamin F., and William L. Miller. 1999. "Depth Interviewing." Chap. 5 in *Doing Qualitative Research*, edited by Benjamin F Crabtree and William L Miller, 89-107. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

Creswell, John W. 2009. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Method Approaches*. 3. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

Crowley, Tony. 2011. "The Art of Memory: The Murals of Northern Ireland and the Managem." *Field Day Review 7* 22-49.

Crozier-De Rosa, Sharon, and Vera Mackie. 2019. *Remembering Women's Activism.* Oxon: Routledge. Ebook.

D'Alleva, Anne. 2005. *Methods and Theories of Art History.* London: Laurence King Publishing Ltd.

Daly, TD Clare. 2013. *Justice for the Craigavon Two (JFTC2).* October 29. http://claredaly.ie/justice-for-the-craigavon-two/.

Derejko, Katie-Sue, Benjamin F Henwood, Deborah K Padgett, Tran Bikki Smith, and Emmy Tiderington. 2013. "A Picture Is Worth . . . ? Photo Elicitation Interviewing With Formerly Homeless Adults." *Qualitative Health Research* 23 (11): 1435 –1444. doi:10.1177/1049732313507752.

Doherty, Barry. 2001. *Northern Ireland Since c. 1960.* Oxford: Heinemann Educational Publishers.

Dónaill, Éamonn Ó. 2013. *Irish Grammar You Really Need to Know: Teach Yourself.* Hachette: Teach Yousefl. EBook.

Duan, Naihua, Carla A Green, Kimberly Hoagwood, Sarah M Horwitz, Lawrence A Palinkas, and Jennifer P Wisdom. 2015. "Purposeful Sampling for Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis in Mixed Method Implementation Research." *Adm Policy Ment Health* 42: 533-544. doi:10.1007/s10488-013-0528-y.

Eco, Umberto. 1976. *A Theory of Semiotics.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Eisenhauer, Laurel, Angelica Orb, and Dianne Wynadan. 2001. "Ethics in Qualitative Research." *Journal of Nursing Scholarship* 33 (1): 93-96. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1547-5069.2001.00093.x.

Ellison, Christine Smith. 2014. "The Role of Youth in Post Accord Transformation in Northern Ireland." *Peace and Conflict Studies* 21 (1): 25-48. http://nsuworks.nova.edu/pcs/vol21/iss1/2.

Etchart, Joana. 2013. "Belfast Review: A Sign of Change?" In *Changes in Contemporary Ireland: Texts and Contexts*, edited by Catherine Rees, 32-50. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Eubanks, Paula K. 1997. "Art Is a Visual Language." *Visual Arts Research* 23 (1): 31-35.

Ferguson, Neil, Mark Burgess, and Ian Hollywood. 2010. "Who are the Victims? Victimhood Experiences in Postagreement Northern Ireland." *International Society of Political Psychology* 31 (6): 857-886.

Extramural Activity. *Feriens Tego.* January 30. Accessed February 23, 2019. https://extramuralactivity.com/2013/01/30/feriens-tego/.

Fischer, Steven Roger. 2001. *A History of Writing.* London: Reaktion Books.

Fisher, Ron, Rod Gapp, and Kaoru Kobayashi. 2008. "The Use of Photographs in Operations Management Research." *Proceedings of the 6th ANZAM Operations Management Symposium.* Gold Coast: ANZAM.

Fitzgerald, Emily, Mark Given, Maighread Gough, Linzi Kelso, Victoria McIlwaine, and Chloe Miskelly. 2017. *The Transgenerational Impact of 'The Troubles' in Northern Ireland.* Belfast: Queens University Belfast School of Psychology.

Foclóir. 2019. *Foclóir: New Enligh-Irish Dictionary.* Accessed March 30, 2019. https://www.focloir.ie/en/dictionary/ei/Easter+Rising.

French, Canon. 1905. "The Arms of Ireland and Celtic Tribal Heraldry." *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* 35 (3): 234-248. URL:

Furlong, Sharon. 2009. "'Herstory'Recovered: Assessing the contribution of Cumann na mBan 1914-1923." *Uí Cinsealaigh Historical Society* 70-93.

Gallaher, Carolyn. 2007. *After the Peace: Loyalist Paramilitaries in Post-Accord Northern Ireland.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Galtung, Johan. 1990. "Cultural Violence." *Journal of Pcacc Kcscarch,* 27 (3): 291-305.

Galtung, Johan. 1976. *Three Approaches to Peace: Peacekeeping, Peacemaking and Peacebuilding.* Vol. 2, in *In Peace, War and Defense—Essays in Peace Research*, edited by Johan Galtung. Copenhagen: Christian Eljers.

Galtung, Johan. 1969. "Peace, and Peace Research." *Journal of Peace Research,* 6 (3): 167-191.

Gawerc, Michelle I. 2006. "Peace-building: Theoretical and Concrete Perspectives." *Peace and Change* 31 (4): 435-478.

Giles, Howard, and Jane Giles. 2013. "Ingroups and Outgroups." In *Inter/Cultural Communication: Representation and Construction of Culture*, 140-162. London: Sage Publications Inc.

Gillespie, Gordon. 2017. *Historical Dictionary of the Northern Ireland Conflict.* 2. Lanahm: Rowman & Littlefield.

Gillespie, Gordon. 2008. *The A to Z of the Northern Ireland Conflict.* Lanham: Scarecrow Press, Inc.

Given, Lisa M, and Kristie Saumure. 2008. *Trustworthiness.* Vol. 2, in *The Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research*, edited by Lisa M Given, 895-896. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

Glasnevin Trust. n.d. *Nora Connolly O'Brian.* Accessed January 5, 2019. https://www.glasnevintrust.ie/visit-glasnevin/interactive-map/nora-connolly-obrien-1/.

Graham, Brian and *Shirlow, Peter.* 1998. "An Elusive Agenda: The Development of a Middle Ground in Northern Ireland." *Area* 30(3): 245–54.

Graham, Brian, and Yvonne Whelan. 2007. "The Legacies of the Dead: Commemorating the Troubles in Northern Ireland." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 25: 476-495.

Guba, Egon G, and Yvonna S Lincoln. 1989. *Fourth Generation Evaluation.* Newbury Park: Sage Publications, Inc.

Halliday, Michael, and Ruqalya Hasan. 1985. *Language, Context, and Text: Aspects of Language in a Social-semiotic Perspective.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Harper, Douglas. 2002. "Talking about Pictures: A Case for Photo Elicitation." *Visual Studies* 17 (1): 13-26. doi:10.1080/14725860220137345.

Hay, Marnie. 2008. "The foundation and development of Na Fianna Éireann, 1909-16." *Irish Historical Studies* 36 (141): 53-71.

Haydon, Deena, Siobhán McAlister, and Phil Scraton. 2013. "Violence in the Lives of Children and Youth in "Post-Conflict" Northern Ireland." *Children, Youth and Environments* 23 (1): 1-22. doi:Doi.org/10.7721/chilyoutenvi.23.1.0001.

Hayfield, Nikki, and Caroline Huxley. 2015. "Insider and Outsider Perspectives: Reflections on Researcher Identities in Research with Lesbian and Bisexual Women." *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 12: 91-106. doi:10.1080/14780887.2014.918224.

Hennessey, Thomas. 2014. *Hunger Strike: Margaret Thatcher's Battle with the IRA, 1980-1981.* Kildare: Irish Academic Press. Ebook.

Hennessey, Thomas, Máire Braniff, James W McAuley, Jonathan Tonge, and Sophie A Whiting. 2018. *The Ulster Unionist Party: Country Before Party?* Oxford: Oxford University Press. Ebook.

Henry, Keith, Greg Lloyd, and Heather Ritchie. 2015. "People. Power and Planning in Public Places: the Making of Convenant Day." *Urban, Planning and Transport Research* 3 (1): 109-131. doi:10.1080/21650020.2015.1104515.

Holloway, Immy. 1997. *Basic Concepts for Qualitative Research.* Oxford: Blackwell Science.

Huberman, Michael, Matthew Miles, and Johnny Saldana. 2014. *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook.* 3. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

Hughes, James. 2015. "Reconstruction without Reconcilliation: Is Northern Ireland a "Model"?" In *After Civil War: Division, Reconstruction, and Reconciliation in Contemporary Europe*, edited by Bill Kissane, 245-272. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Independent Research Solutions. 2009. *Evaluation of the Re-imaging Communities Programme: A Report to the Arts Council of Northern Ireland.* Lisburn: The Arts Council of Northern Ireland.

Irving, Sarah. 2012. *Leila Khaled: Icon of Palestinian Liberation.* London: Pluto Press.

Innis, Robert E. 1985. *Semiotics: An Introductory Anthology.* Edited by Robert E. Innis. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

James, Nalita. 2008. *Authenticity.* Vol. 1, in *The Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*, edited by Lisa M. Given, 44-45. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

Jarman, Neil. 2007. "Pride and Poseession, Display and Destruction." In *Flag, Nation and Symbolism in Europe and America*, edited by Thomas Hylland Eriksen and Richard Jenkins. Oxon: Routledge .Ebook.

Jensen, Devon. 2008. *Credibility.* Vol. 1, in *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods*, edited by Lisa M Given, 138-139. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

Johnson, John. 2005. "Art in Contentious Spaces." Chap. 2 in *Social and Critical Practice in Art Education*, edited by Paul Dash and Dennis Atkinson, 11-20. Staffordshire: Trentham Books Ltd.

Johnson, Susan, and Saltanat Rasulova. 2017. "Qualitative Research and the Evaluation of Development Impact: Incorporating Authenticity into the Assessment of Rigour." *Journal of Development Effectiveness* 9 (2): 263-276. doi:10.1080/19439342.2017.1306577.

Johnson-Bailey, Juanita, and Nicole M Ray. 2008. *Diversity Issues.* Vol. 1, in *The Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*, edited by Lisa M Given, 226-230. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

Jones, Peter and Natalya Boujenko.2011. 'Rethinking Transport and Connectivity for a Shared City' in *Shared Space*11, March 2011. Belfast: NICRC.

Kaboub, Fadhel. 2008. *Positivist Paradigm.* Vol. 2, in *Encyclopedia of Counselling*, edited by Frederick T Leong, 786-787. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

Kaldor, Mary. 1999. *New and Old Wars.* Cambridge: Policy Press.

Kenny, Mary Catherine. 1998. "The Pheonix and the Lark: Revolutionary Mythology and Iconographic Creativity in Belfast's Republican Districts." In *Symbols of Northern Ireland*, 153-169. Antrim: W & G Baird Ltd.

Korstjens, Irene, and Albine Moser. 2018. "Series: Practical Guidance to Qualitative Research. Part 4: Trustworthiness and Publishing." *European Journal of General Practice* 24 (1): 120-124. doi:10.1080/13814788.2017.1375092.

Lane, Leeann. 2018. *Constance Markievicz.* December 13. Accessed March 22, 2019. https://www.rte.ie/eile/election-1918/2018/1206/1015528-constance-markievizc-leader-profile/.

Lederach, John Paul. 1997. *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies.* Washington, D.C: United States Institute of Peace Press.

Lederach, John Paul. 1995. *Preparing for Peace.* Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.

Lee, John Joseph. 1989. *Ireland 1912-1985: Politics and Society.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Leeuwen, Theo Van, and Carey Jewitt. 2000. "Introdution." In *The Handbook of Visual Analysis*, edited by Theo Van Leeuwen and Carey Jewitt, 1-9. London: Sage Publicantion, Inc.

Lee-Treweek, Geraldine, and Stephanie Linkogle. 2000. "Overview." In *Danger in the Field: Risk and Ethics in Social Research*, edited by Geraldine Lee-Treweek and Stephanie Linkogle, 1-7. London: Routledge.

Lenette, Caroline. 2016. "Writing With Light: An Iconographic-Iconologic Approach to Refugee Photography." *Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 17 (2), Art 8. http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs160287.

Leonard, Madeleine, and Martina McKnight. 2015. "Look and Tell: Using Photo-Elicitation Methods with Teenagers." *Children's Geographies* 13 (6): 629-642. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14733285.2014.887812.

Lewis, Jane. 2003. "Design Issues." In *Qualitative Research Practice: A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers*, edited by Jane Lewis and Jane Ritchie, 47-76. London: Sage Publications, Inc.

Lisle, Debbie. 2006. "Local Symbols, Global Networks: Rereading the Murals of Belfast." *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 31 (1): 27-52.

Loubere, Nicholas. 2017. "Questioning Transcription: The Case for the Systematic and Reflexive Interviewing and Reporting (SRIR) Method." *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 18 (2). http://dx.doi.org/10.17169/fqs-18.2.2739.

MacGinty, Roger. 2006. "We'll have more please, but not now and not like that: Public attitudes to the Assembly in Northern Ireland." In *Territory, Identity and Spatial Planning: Spatial Governance in a Fragmented Nation*, edited by Mark Tewdwr-Jones and Philip Allmendinger, Chapter 16. Oxon: Routledge: Ebook.

Maltreud, Kristi. 2001. "Qualitative Research: Standards, Challenges, and Guidelines." *The Lancet* 358: 483-488. doi:10.1016/S0140-6736(01)05627-6.

Martz, Erin. 2010. "Introduction to Trauma Rehabilitation After War and Conflict." In *Trauma Rehabilitation After War and Conflict: Community and Individual Perspectives*, edited by Erin Martz. New York: Springer.

Marx, Sherry. 2008. *Rich Data.* Vol. 2, in *The Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*, edited by Lisa Given, 794. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

McClements, Freya. 2018. *Fifty Years on from Civil Rights, NI Segregation 'Simply not Tackled'.* June 15. Accessed February 7, 2019. https://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/fifty-years-on-from-civil-rights-ni-segregation-simply-not-tackled-1.3532237.

McCormick, Jonathan, and Neil Jarman. 2005. "Death of Mural." *Journal of Material Culture* 49-71.

McEvoy, Joanne. 2017. "Power-sharing and the pursuit of good goverance: evidence from Northern Ireland." In *Power-Sharing: Empirical and Normative Challenges*, edited by Allison McCulloch and John McGarry, 211-228. Oon: Routledge.

McGarry, John, and Brendan O'Leary. 2006. "Consociational Theory, Northern Ireland's Conflict, and its Agreement. Part 1: What Consociationalists Can Learn from Northern Ireland." *Government and Opposition,* 41 (1): 43-63.

McGarry, John, and Brendan O'Leary. 2009. "Argument ." In *Consociational Theory: McGarry and O'Leary and the Northern Ireland Conflict*, edited by Rupert Taylor, 15-84. New York: Routledge .

McGarry, John, and Brendan O'Leary. 1995. *Explaining Northern Ireland: Broken Images.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Inc.

McGinn, Michelle K. 2008. *Researcher–Participant Relationships.* Vol. 2, in *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*, edited by Lisa Given, 767-771. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

McKittrick, David, and David McVea. 2012. *Making Sense of the Troubles: A History of the Northern Ireland Conflict.* London: Penguin Books.

McManus, Cathal. 2017. "Conceptualising Islamic "Radicalisation" in Europe through "Othering": Lessons from the Conflict in Northern Ireland." *Terrorism and Political Violence* 1-20. doi:10.1080/09546553.2017.1368495 .

Melaugh, Martin. 2013. *Note on the protests related to the Union Flag at Belfast City Hall, December 2012 - January 2013.* Febraury 8. Accessed February 25, 2017. http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/issues/identity/flag-2012.htm.

Meo, Analia Ines. 2010. "Picturing Students' Habitus: The Advantages and Limitations of Photo-Elicitation Interviewing in a Qualitative Study in the City of Buenos Aires." *International Journal of Qualitative Methods 9(2)* 149-171.

Miller, David. 1993. "The Northern Ireland Information Service and the Media: Aims, Strategies, Tactics." In *Getting the Message: News, Truth, and Power*, edited by John Eldridge, 73-103. Oxon: Routledge.

Mitchell, Claire. 2006. *Religion, Identity and Politicals in Northern Ireland: Boundries of Belonging and Belief.* Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Company.

Mitchell, David. 2015. *Politics and Peace in Northern Ireland: Political Parties and the Implementation of the 1998 Agreement.* Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Mitchell, David, Etain Tannam, and Sarah Wallace. 2018. "The Agreement's Impact on Political Cooperation." *Irish Political Studies* 282-310.

Moloney, Peter. 2006. *Éirí Amach Na Cásca.* August 19. Accessed January 21, 2020. https://petermoloneycollection.wordpress.com/2006/08/19/eiri-amach-na-casca/.

Morrow, Duncan. 2016. "From Enemies to Partners: Reconciliation in Northern Ireland." *Accord: Insight 3.* https://www.c-r.org/accord/reconciliation-and-peace-processes-insight/enemies-partners-reconciliation-northern-ireland.

Mulhern, Dara and Martin MeLaugh. 2018. *Symbols of Northern Ireland – Flags used in the Region.* February 1. Accessed March 2, 2017. http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/images/symbols/flags.htm.

Müller, Marion G. 2015. "Iconography." In *The Concise Encyclopedia of Communication*, edited by Wolfgang Donsbach, 249-250. Chichester: Wiley Blackwell.

Munck, Ronold. 1985. "Class and Religion in Belfast - A Historical Perspective." *Journal of Contemporary History* 20 (2): 241-259.

Murphy, Joanne. 2013. *Policing for Peace in Northern Ireland: Change, Conflict and Community Confidence.* Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Naidu-Silverman , Ereshnee. 2015. *The Contribution of Art and Culture in Peace and Reconciliation Processes in Asia.* Copenhagen: Danish Center for Culture and Devlopment (CKU).

Nolan, paul. 2018. *'Post-conflict' Northern Ireland is Still Plagued by Political Violence.* April 23. Accessed December 14, 2018. https://www.irishtimes.com/news/crime-and-law/post-conflict-northern-ireland-is-still-plagued-by-political-violence-1.3470229.

North Shore Pediatric Therapy. 2012. *Expressive vs. Receptive Language.* May 15. Accessed March 3, 2019. https://nspt4kids.com/parenting/expressive-vs-receptive-language/.

Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency . 2014. *Northern Ireland Census 2011: Key Statistics Summary Report.* Belfast: A National Statistics Publication © Crown.

Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency. 2002. *Northern Ireland Census 2001: Key Statistics.* Belfast: A National Statistics Publication © Crown.

Nöth, Winfried. 1995. *Handbook of Semiotics.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

O'Donoghue, Martin. 2017. *A Brief History of Irish Political Party Names .* November 22. Accessed March 22, 2019. https://www.rte.ie/eile/brainstorm/2017/1120/921482-a-brief-history-of-irish-political-party-names/.

O'Halloran, Marie. 2018. *Blazing a Trail: The 19 Female Ministers Since 1918.* December 10. Accessed March 22, 2019. https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/heritage/blazing-a-trail-the-19-female-ministers-since-1918-1.3711176?mode=sample&auth-failed=1&pw-origin=https%3A%2F%2F

O'Leary, Brendan. 2019. *A Treatise on Northern Ireland, Volume III: Consociation and Confederation.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

O'Rawe, Des, and Mark Phelan. 2016. "Introdution: Cities of Memory." In *Post-Conflict Performance, Film and Visual Arts: Cities of Memory (Contemporary Performance InterActions)*, edited by Des O'Rawe and Mark Phelan. London: Springer Nature. Kindle.

Panofsky, Erwin. 1970. *Meaning in the Visual Arts.* Garden City: Doubleday Anchor Books.

Pauwels, Luc. 2015. *Reframing Visual Social Science: Towards a More Visual Sociology and Anthropology.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Pichler, Wilfried. 2002. *The Language of Pictures in Print Media Advertising.* Hamburg: Diplimica Verlag.

Poland, Blake D. 2008. *Transcription.* Vol. 2, in *The Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*, edited by Lisa M Given, 884-885. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publication, Inc.

Poposki, Zoran, and Marija Todorova. 2016. "Public Memory in Post-Conflict Skopje: Civic Art as Resistance to Narratives of Ethnicity and Deintegration." In *Post-Conflict Performance, Film and Visual Arts: Cities of Memory (Contemporary Performance InterActions)*, edited by Des O'Rawe and Mark Phelan. London: Springer Nature.

Power, Maria. 2011. "Introduction: Peacebuilding in Northern Ireland." In *Building Peace in Northern Ireland*, edited by Maria Power. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press. Ebook.

Preiss, Bert. 2019. *Conflict at the Interface: Local Community Divisions and Hegemonic Forces in Northern Ireland.* Zurich: Lit Verlag Gmbh & Co. .

Preissle, Judith. 2008. *Ethics in Qualitative Research.* Vol. 2, in *The Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*, 276-277. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publishing.

2018. *Proclamation of Independence.* November 20. Accessed February 22, 2019. https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/bfa965-proclamation-of-independence/.

Reilly, Eileen. 2006. "Modern Ireland: An Introductory Survey." In *Making the Irish American: History and Heritage of the Irish in the United States*, edited by Marion Casey and JJ Lee, 63-150. New York: New York University Press.

Richardson, Ann S. 1982. "Art Means Language." *Art Education* 35 (5): 10-12.

Rinck, Patricia. 2015. *Power Sharing and Democratic Peacebuilding in Post-Conflict Societies: The Case of Sierra Leone.* Marburg: Tectum Verlag .

Rolston, Bill. 2011. "Mural (Northern Ireland)." In *Encyclopedia of Social Movement Media*, edited by John D. H. Downing and John Derek Hall, 344-345. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publisher, Inc.

Rolston, Bill. 2019. *Plate 10: Red Hand of Ulster.* February 6. Accessed February 22, 2019. https://cain.ulster.ac.uk/bibdbs/murals/plate10.htm.

Rolston, Bill. 2012. "Re-imaging: Mural Painting and the State in Northern Ireland." *International Journal of Cultural Studies* (Sage) 15 (5): 447-466. doi:10.1177/1367877912451810.

Rolston, Bill. 2010. "'Trying to Reach the Future through the Past': Murals and Memories in Northern Ireland." *Crime. Media, Culture* (Sage Publications) 6 (5): 285-307.

Rose, Gillian. 2012. *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to Researching with Visual Materials.* 3. London: Sage Publications, Inc.

Ross, Marc Howard. 2007. *Cultural Contestation in Ethnic Conflict.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ross, Mark Howard. 2008. Cultural Contestation as a Tool for Examining Ethnic Conflict. Prepared for the workshop on "Culture and Conflict: Do They Need Each Other?" Binghamton University, SUNY, April 11-12, 2008.

Ross, Marc Howrd. 2001. "Psychocultural Interpretations and Dramas: Identity Dynamics in Ethnic Conflict." *Political Psychology* 22 (1): 157-178.

Ruane, Joseph, and Jennifer Todd. 1996. *The Dynamics of Conflict in Northern Ireland: Power, Conflict and Emancipation.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sanders, Andrew , and Ian Wood. 2012. *Times of Troubles: Britain's War in Northern Ireland.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Sapir, Edward. 1921. *Language: An Introduction to the Study of Speech.* Dover Ed . New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

Saussure, Ferdinand de. 1966. *Course in General Linguistics.* Edited by Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye. Translated by Wade Baskin. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company.

Sawyer, Roger. 1998. "The Symbolism of Womanhood." In *Symbols in Northern Ireland*, edited by Anthony D. Buckley, 171-188. Antrim: W & G Baird Ltd.

Schirch , Lisa, and Michael Shank. 2008. "Strategic Arts-Based Peacebuilding." *Peace & Change* 33 (2): 217-242.

Sewell, Frank. 2000. *Modern Irish Poetry: A New Alhambra.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Shaffrey, Cliodhna. 2010. "What Is Public Art?" Edited by Lisa Moran. Dublin: Museum of Modern Art Ireland.

Shin, Un-Chol. 1990. "Panofsky, Polanyi, and Intrinsic Meaning." *The Journal of Aesthetic Education* 24 (4): 17-32.

Shirlow, Peter. 2019. "The Union is Safe! Is the Data Correct?" Paper presented at the Union or Unity. Facts, fiction, or a work in Progress?, Seanad Éireann, October 2019.

Sinn Féin. n.d. *What Sinn Féin stands for.* Accessed June 5, 2018. http://www.sinnfein.ie/what-sinn-fein-stands-for.

Slater, Tom. 2002. "Fear of the City 1882–1967: Edward Hopper and the Discourse of Anti-urbanism." *Social & Cultural Geography,* 3 (2): 135-154. doi:10.1080/14649360220133916.

Smith, Robin. 2008. *NVivo (Software).* Vol. 1, in *The Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*, edited by Lisa M. Given, 563-565. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Spencer, Graham. 2015. *From Armed Struggle to Political Struggle: Republican Tradition and Struggle: Republican Tradition and Transformation in Northern Ireland.* London: Bloomsbury Publishing Inc.

Sperry, Kip. 2003. *Abbreviations & Acronyms: A Guide for Family Historians.* 2nd. Provo: Ancestry.

Stone, Jon R. 2005. *The Routledge Dictionary of Latin Quotations: The Illiterate's Guide to Latin Maims, Mottoes, Proverbs and Sayings .* New York: Routledge.

Sullivan, Colleen. 2011. "Irish Republican Army." In *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Terrorism, Second Edition*, edited by Gus Martin, 304-307. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publishing, Inc.

Sullivan, Collenn. 2011. *Ulster Freedom FIghters.* Vol. 2, in *The Sage encyclopedia of terrorism*, edited by Gus Martin, 599-600. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

Suri, Harsh. 2011. "Purposeful Sampling in Qualitative Research Synthesis." *Qualitative Research Journal* 11 (2): 63-75. doi:10.3316/QRJ1102063.

Sutton, Malcom. 1994. *Bear in mind these dead ... An Index of Deaths from the Conflict in Ireland 1969-1993.* Belfast: Beyond the Pale Publications.

Taylor, Rupert. 2009. "The Promise of Consociational Theory." In *Consociational Theory: McGarry and O'Leary and the Northern Ireland Conflict*, 1-11. Oxon: Routledge.

The FDFA worldwide. 2018. *Preventing Recurrent Cycles of Violent Conflicts.* June 8. Accessed March 15, 2019. https://www.eda.admin.ch/deza/en/home/themes-sdc/fragile-contexts-and-prevention/preventing-recurrent-cycles-violent-conflicts.html.

The Guardian. 2015. *Belfast murals – in pictures.* March 4. Accessed Febraury 22, 2019. https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/gallery/2015/mar/04/belfast-murals-in-pictures.

Torre, Daniela, and Joseph Murphy. 2015. "A Different Lens: Using Photo-Elicitation Interviews." *Education Policy Analysis Archives* 23 (111): 1-23. http://dx.doi.org/10.14507/epaa.v23.2051.

Totu, Andreas, and Halina Sendera Mohd Yakin. 2014. "The Semiotic Perspectives of Peirce and Saussure: A Brief Comparative Study." *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 155: 4-8. doi:Doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.10.247.

Ulster Herlad. 2014. *The Light of Other Days.* November 27. Accessed March 25, 2019. https://ulsterherald.com/2014/11/27/the-light-of-other-days/.

Ulster Unionist Party. 2019. *The Ulster Unionist Party's Declaration of Principle and Statement of Policy for the General Election, 1969.* February 6. Accessed February 23, 2019. https://cain.ulster.ac.uk/issues/politics/docs/uup/uup69.htm.

Vannini, Phillip. 2008. *Ethics and New Media.* Vol. 1, in *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*, edited by Lisa M Given, 277-279. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

Ward, Paul. 2004. *Britishness Since 1870.* London: Routledge.

White, Ed. 2012. *How to Read Barthes' Image-Music-Text.* London: Pluto Press. Kindle.

Whiting, Sophie A. 2015. *Spoiling the peace?: The threat of dissident Republicans to peace in Northern Ireland.* Machester: Manchester University Press.

Whyte, John. 1990. *Interpreting Northern Ireland.* Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Wilson, Des. 1983. "The Painted Message." *CIRCA* 8: 19-20.

Wood, Ian S. 2006. *Crimes of Loyalty: A History of the UDA: A History of the UDA.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Woods, Ian. 2006. *Crimes of Loyalty: A History of the UDA: A History of the UDA.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Wright, Frank. 1987. *Northern Ireland: A Comparative Analysis.* Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Wright, Frank. 1973. "Protestant Ideology and Politics in Ulster." *European Journal of Sociology* 213-280.

Yin, Robert K. 2009. *Case Study Research: Design and Method.* 4. Vol. 5. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

Zabracki, Martin. 2014. "Public Art as Conversation Piece: Scaling Art, Public Space and Audience." *Art(s) & Space(s)* 1-17.