Contested borderlands: formal and informal institutions as players[1]

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Abstract. Northern Ireland is a segregated society. Restrictive territoriality, troubled community relations, and the legacy of long-lasting conflict are apparent in urban structures as well as in the everyday experiences of the people. Derry/Londonderry[2] as an urban borderland consists of several local communities, institutions, contested spaces, political ideologies, and cultural and religious traditions. In this article the players of these contested territories are discussed. Focus is on the formal and informal institutions such as the education system, security forces, paramilitary organisations and local communities. Empirical findings of this article are based on the experiences of people living in L/Derry. Empirical data was collected in seven focus group interviews arranged in different parts of the city of L/Derry in early 2000. Two of the focus groups were entirely Protestant, three were Catholic groups and two were mixed focus groups. Altogether thirty-six individuals took part in these discussions.

The multiple dimensions of local borderlands

Usually the concept of borderland describes areas located on the both sides of a national border between two nation-states (Donnan & Wilson 1999: 61–62). Some scholars such as Minghi (1991) have focused on the geographies of scale in borderlands between states. More recent works have paid attention particularly to the scale problem in identity construction, but have adopted a more constructivist view (see e.g. Paasi 1996, 2002; Shapiro & Alker 1996; Donnan & Wilson 1999; Herb & Kaplan 1999; Häkli 2001, 2002; Kepka & Murphy 2002; Minghi 2002; Raento 2002). Scales of interaction in borderlands vary greatly according to the particular case. This denotes the simultaneous appearance of several geographical divisions, actors, and furthermore negotiation processes in which these

[1] This article is based on one chapter of my PhD thesis. See Kuusisto-Arponen (2003). Our Places – Their Spaces. Urban Territoriality in the Northern Irish Conflict. University of Tampere*: Acta Universitatis Tamperensis,* 920, p.102-117.

[2] Derry, Londonderry, Doire, Maiden City, Stroke City are different names for one place. There has not been a commonly acceptable way to refer to the city. The first term is mostly used by the Catholic community and the second by the Protestants. Especially since the outbreak of violence in the late 1960s and early 1970s the name of the city has become a political stance. In this article the term L/Derry is used to accommodate both views.

borderlands are reconstructed (Häkli & Kaplan 2002: 7). In this article the borderland concept is applied to an urban context[3], that of the city of L/Derry in Northern Ireland.

In L/Derry the borderland is both national and local. Since the Northern Irish peace process the role of the national border between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland has changed radically. The city centre of L/Derry is located some ten kilometres from the national border, which nowadays is open for traffic and not guarded by the security forces as it was during the high intensity years of the Northern Irish Troubles. The Army checkpoints have been removed and currently the state border is subject to much daily crossing, as many people from the Republic of Ireland commute to work in Northern Ireland. Lower petrol prices also attract motorists from Northern Ireland to fill their tanks on the Irish side of the border. In the formal sphere various institutional border-crossing projects and new cross-border bodies have been set up since the peace process began. The changing nature of the national border affects everyday life in L/Derry. For many decades, the border was often targeted in acts of political violence and the strict security control made everyday interactions across the border difficult. In the contemporary situation the close geographical proximity of L/Derry to the border is viewed in a more relaxed way than it was a few years back. However, while crossing the state boundary has become part of everyday life, this appears to have no direct relations on the persisting territorially guided boundary-maintenance on the local neighbourhood level. Even the state boundary is often crossed just for economic reasons, whether cheaper petrol, or EU funding for a youth programme requiring a cross-border element. Boundary-crossing as a learning experience, or for achieving better mutual respect, is still quite rare, even though it often is a pronounced goal in national policy-making (Kuusisto-Arponen 2002).

Locally there are different ways in which the national border is perceived in the communal imagination[4]. For L/Derry's Catholic population the close distance to the border has always meant a special sense of security and comfort, as the "other Ireland" they feel they also belong to is not far away. Especially now that the border can be freely crossed, most of the negative associations have vanished from people's everyday imagination. However, for the Protestant community the national border feeds a sense of insecurity, which was not felt when the border was formally guarded in all situa-

[3] Borderlands in all contexts refer to an area divided with physical or mental boundary lines. The borderlands in the city function in the same way as in larger contexts, but with the distinction that physical boundary construction is perhaps surpassed in importance by mental boundaries. The separating element of these mental boundaries is as high as with national frontiers.

[4] In contemporary L/Derry the mental effect of the national border is less pronounced than in some other counties of Northern Ireland, such as South Armagh, where the border still is a highly politicised concept in people's everyday life. There are also regional variations in the presence of the security forces in the border areas (some counties are perceived as being more dangerous than others by the state apparatus) which also affect the degree of symbolising and politicising of the national borderline. L/Derry is one of the areas where the British military presence has been reduced since the peace process, while South Armagh still has Army patrols walking on the streets.

tions. Now that this mechanism is lacking, they feel more exposed to threats, such as Republican violence conducted from the Irish side of the border. Fortunately, the latter fear has not been realised.

In the Northern Irish situation borderland identities and local boundary construction are the key element in the continuation of the conflict and communal segregation. The local borderlands in L/Derry are formed out of overlapping *local* ("us" vs. "them"), *national* (British, Irish, Ulster, Northern Irish), *physical* (peace walls, the River Foyle, the national border), *mental* ("no-go" areas, safe havens), *political* (Unionist, Loyalist, Nationalist, Republican, Women's Coalition, Independents), *economic* (deprived, middle ground, wealthy), *social* (working-class, middle-class, upper-class, employed, unemployed) *cultural* (Orange, Green and the people between), and *religious* (Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Church of Ireland, Methodist, No religion) boundaries. This variety forms a complex system of allegiances and loyalties. The long-lasting conflict has, of course, affected these patterns and thus phenomena such as Orangeism and Loyalism or Irishness and Republicanism tend to be seen as exclusive blocs. However, combinations such as "working-class" and "deprived", creates a line of division that cuts across the Protestant and Catholic dichotomy. Every locality is formed out of a particular set of divisions. L/Derry is undoubtedly a city of multiple borderlands, where similarities and differences interplay.

The dynamic of the cityscape of borderlands is interesting. There are several institutions, structures and processes which support these divisions reach into almost every field of society. In this article I discuss the role of institutions in creating the local borderlands. I shall begin with formal institutions such as education system and affiliation to nation-state, and I will continue by discussing the social control practiced by paramilitary organisation and formal security apparatus (the police force and the British army) and finally the crucial role of local communities. All these formal and informal institutions are players in borderland formation in Northern Ireland and particularly in the city of L/Derry.

Segregated education system

Locally several formal and informal institutions influence how the borderlands are constructed. Education being one of the most important features in socialisation and especially spatial socialisation (Paasi 1996), it is often referred to as the key to the future as well. Moreover, it transfers the history, practices, old legacies of the past and models of thinking from one generation to the next. The *education system* in Northern Ireland ignores the wide cultural diversity on the ground. Children attend schools that reflect only one part of the divided society. The problem of a segregated school system is widely acknowledged but little improvement has been achieved. It is the adult population's suspicion of mixed education that has kept these two school systems apart so far. Certainly, the role of the Catholic and Protestant Churches is crucial, and especially the Roman Catholic Church claims that children's religious learning has to take place in schools as well as in church. State-maintained schools (the majority of Protestant children attend these schools) do not support this view.

Segregated education has been one of the main institutional settings where the norms of the divided society are openly

taught. The segregated school system is in itself a difficult setting for learning things about the other community, and the gap between the local communities is not adequately approached in the teaching itself. There is not enough time, resources, or sometimes even willingness to deal with the issues in the classroom. This is not to say that attempts are non-existent, but the work is quite small-scale even locally viewed. However, national objectives for cross-cultural learning were set in 1989 when the programme "Education for Mutual Understanding" (EMU) was launched in Northern Ireland (Smith & Robinson 1996). While EMU is now part of the curriculum for all grant-aided schools (i.e. state-maintained schools and many Catholic schools also get this grant from the state), the programme is still often run with a minimum budget because other subjects in school are considered more important. The lack of adequate funding for the programme reduces the number of students who are able to take part. Most often these courses are targeted at young teenagers from 10–14 years of age. At this age young people tend to be in their most radical phase and against inter-communal mixing, at least if they have been brought up in a single-identity housing estate, like many children in L/Derry. If worthwhile results are to be achieved, children should have the possibility to meet across the division already in their first years at school, which would mean at the age of five or six years. Furthermore, in the contemporary situation the projects are short-term and hardly ever bring about concrete results. This was also emphasised in two focus groups discussions conducted in L/Derry in early 2000:

Discussion I:
Protestant, Female, age 14: In the first year [of secondary school] we went to have a weekend with a Catholic school. First we just played games and talked and all. Just to get to know them.
[…] We started writing as pen pals first and take pictures and all. Then we met in the weekend. We noticed that we are just the same.
K-A: Have you kept in touch since then?
P, F, 14: No.
P, F, 14: No.
K-A: Do you think any of your classmates did?
P, F, 14: No.

Discussion II:
C, F, 16: We went to Scotland with Protestants and we learned a lot about them.
K-A: What did you learn?
C, F, 16: They are same as us!
C, M, 29: There you learn that they are not different from you.
C, F, 16: Auch, no different.
[…]
C, M, 15: We did things together.
C, F, 16: And they ask you questions what do you think about Protestants and like? And we answer them.
[my note] All speaking at the same time about a Catholic girl and a Protestant boy who met on the course and were attracted to each other but never met again after the course.

Some of the youths have clearly experienced the power of learning from each other. Even though these opportunities might be rare, the fact is that the number of youths involved in these projects is grad-

ually increasing. Unfortunately, the institutional setting, i.e. school, which serves as the venue for these "one-off" boundary crossings, is simultaneously a major factor in disabling the everyday contacts between young people. The contemporary school system reproduces social segregation and no short-term solution can be expected to this situation. In L/Derry area there are only two integrated schools to which both Catholic and Protestant children go. In the Oakgrove primary and secondary schools the demographic division is fifty/fifty. Both schools are state-owned and children from all social classes attend. Due to the limited number of places available, only a few L/Derry children can attend this school. Clearly, there is an effort to overcome some of the everyday categories and view difference as a positive resource, but diversity and heterogeneity of this kind does not easily fit into the dominant societal culture where "us" and "others" are kept apart and the construction of otherness is viewed in connection with enemy or evil positions (Aho 1994; Woodward 1997).

Another issue which is not often publicly discussed is the education system's ignorance of contemporary reality and developments in Northern Ireland. Several focus group participants argued that they are taught nothing about the contemporary political situation around them. Sometimes the teachers would not answer even direct questions about these issues, one youth claimed.

> *Discussion*:
> P, F, 26: I think they are more interested in teaching about the potato famine than what is going on out there…than your own culture, Irish culture [sic]…that is the way it is. You know what I mean. In geography we don't learn anything about Northern Ireland. You are not taught about where you live.
> K-A: Do they teach about the political situation in school?
> P, F, 26: Auch god, no!
> K-A: They did not tell you anything about the Assembly?
> P, F, 16: No

As similar opinion was put forward by a Protestant community worker in an interview:

> "Protestants in the schools they are being taught the British history and nothing else. We were told about the country that we never lived. In Catholic schools they have Irish history. So, we have this situation where on the other side (sic) community identity is strong and on the other it is not."

As the above quote implies, the education system as one of the central institutional settings for socialisation has extensive and cross-generational impacts. Segregated education allows children to be educated mostly among their kind. It also seems to offer the ultimate feeling of security for parents when deciding in which school to enrol their children. For security reasons this might have been desirable during the most intense years of the Troubles, but this practice has many negative side-effects. In fact, the feeling of security among the local communities has not grown even though this was one of goals of the exclusivist community politics and segregated settings for education (Kuusisto 1998). Particularly before the EMU was established in the schools, it was not exceptional that students did not meet people from the other community until they reached the age of 18 and

got into higher education. Obviously, the school environment in Northern Ireland is not a venue in which to meet people from a different cultural background and this way to learn to co-exist. It also seems that on a communal level school education cannot attain one of its basic functions, to socialise children by giving them a secure sense of identity and sense of belonging. Instead of reinforcing segregated structures and spheres for socialisation, concern for shared interests and commonalities in identity politics may provide a new way forward. A crucial question is whether there is a strong enough desire on both sides to see these common possibilities. The practicalities of territorial politics are hard to overcome even in social interaction.

What nation, which state?

Affiliation with a nation-state (the United Kingdom or the Irish Republic) is a well-known problem in the Northern Irish context. People identify themselves as British or Irish, but categories such as Northern Irish and Ulster are used as well. In everyday language the Catholic community is most often unanimously associated with Irish culture and identity, but for the Protestant community the source of national identity is viewed as being more fragmented: most often it comes down to being "British." However, identifying with England and the English is quite rare. The Protestant community associates itself with an (abstract) British heritage (formed by the unity of the English, Welsh and Scots) but not with England, even though originally one part of the Planters came from there. Often the Protestants' national preference is personalised in the loyalty they proclaim to the Queen. It is sometimes said that some members of the Protestant community identify themselves as being Ulster Protestants or Northern Irish.

> Mixed group, M, 17: Catholics would associate themselves as Irish and then Protestants would associate themselves with the Queen and England.

These stereotypical images of national preference live steadfastly among the local communities. Therefore, it is quite surprising to learn what single individuals claim to prefer according to studies on affiliation. In a recent "Life & Times" survey conducted in 2000 (sampling from all of Northern Ireland), there was a question about people's preference as to their national identity (table 1).

The British state in Northern Ireland has never reached an undisputedly legitimate position among the Catholic minority. For this section of the population the British state represents the colonial legacy in Ireland, which needs to be resisted and protested against (at least in ideological discussions). The other position, mainly that of the Protestant community, acknowledges the state as a legitimate source of power and force. For these people national security is achieved through control and restrictions imposed by the state apparatus. It would be far too simplistic to argue that this national division equals exactly the Catholic and Protestant boundary. Some Protestants have turned against the state apparatus, especially in times when they have perceived that the British state, which they have almost unanimously trusted, sought accommodation by means of sacrificing Protestant principles. "The Life and Times" survey shows that among the Catholic re-

Table 1. National identities in Northern Ireland in 2000 (Life & Times survey/ variable NINATID).

	Catholic %	Protestant %	No religion %
British	9	72	45
Irish	59	3	13
Ulster	1	7	6
Northern Irish	28	15	24
Other answer	2	3	10
Don't know	1	1	1
	100	100	99*

* percentages according to original source

spondents more variation in choosing one's national identity occurs, and on the other hand that the Protestant respondents seem to be somewhat more unanimous in their choice. This result contradicts the simplistic images upheld by the communities. However, the larger pattern, the overall tendency to claim loyalty to either Britain or Ireland, still prevails.

Interesting conclusions can also be drawn from the results of a survey questionnaire charting peoples' opinions towards the long-term policy for Northern Ireland (see table 2). The belief that the Catholic population is extremely rigid in its demands for reunification seems to be a myth from the past. Forty-two percent of the Catholic community wants to see the future of Northern Ireland in an all-Ireland context, while one-fifth feels that the most preferable option for Northern Ireland is to stay as part of the UK. Also, the share of undecided respondents is noticeably high. Overall, there is a greater plurality of opinion among the Catholic population. The majority of the Protestant community (83 %) stands behind the option of remaining part of the UK. Only four percent of Protestants support a united Ireland. The national borderland seems to have become even more fragmented than a few years ago when the positions were still quite fixed. Nowadays the question is not so much about resisting Britain or Ireland as such, but rather the focus in everyday communal identity politics is on cultural survival and power within the territory of Northern Ireland.

Security apparatus and the question of social control

When the state apparatus and other institutions closely related to it (such as the *British Army* and the *Police*) are acceptable only for one part of society, alternative ways to *achieve law and order* in the localities are used. Then the production of order is connected to being in opposition to the state-led order and to reinforcing local territoriality through a paramilitary presence. *Paramilitary organisations* should be seen as institutions which are just as influential as the state-related organisations in the construction of borderland experience and social control. Both Republican and Loyalist paramilitaries have become local substitutes for the official security apparatus. The practices by which security against external threats is actually constituted are based on fear. His-

Table 2. Opinions of the long-term policy in Northern Ireland by religious affiliation (Life & Times Survey 2000/ variable NIRELAND).

	Catholic %	Protestant %	No religion %
To remain part of the United Kingdom	20	83	53
To reunify with the rest of Ireland	42	4	15
Independent state	15	6	10
Other answer	4	2	4
Don't know	19	6	18
	100	101*	100

* percentages according to original source

torically the IRA has controlled anti-social behaviour in the Catholic-dominated estates they occupy by punishing the perpetrators. Sometimes young males are expelled from their home area by paramilitary organisations because of constant mis-behaviour such as joyriding or drug-dealing. Ironically, this kind of anti-social behaviour is also practised by the paramilitaries themselves.

In the early years of the modern armed conflict in Northern Ireland, the IRA was highly visible in Catholic localities and conducted "security operations." In the 1970s the paramilitary presence in the localities was an important part of the symbolism of the struggle, one which created coherence among the Catholic community but simultaneously annoyed the official security apparatus. In the city of L/Derry this kind of resistance was seen in the form of Catholic "no-go" areas, of which the most famous and largest was the Bogside housing estate near the city centre.

> The biggest no-go area was, I think, in Derry. All the time when there was a no-go area obviously the Unionist politicians in Stormont who were supposed to have the control over security in Northern Ireland were outraged that the rule of law did not outreach to these Catholic areas. They wanted the Army to go in even at an earlier point. The fact that the IRA was patrolling openly was embarrassment to the British government and to the British Army. They did not want to see it, that was one of the reasons for the Bloody Sunday as well. […] At that time (1971–72) the IRA would have been patrolling the area (the Bogside estate in L/Derry), both wings of the IRA. They filled their cars with IRA men and guns. They would often set up checkpoints to check the cars, but I don't think anything came out of that. These were done because the Army tried to gather intelligence and were putting undercover units in the area. (Catholic, Male, academic, lived in the Bogside in the early 1970s)

The Bogside was a *site of resistance,* where effective community control was imposed on a self-defined territory. As a site of resistance it also was a battle field of power (see e.g. Routledge 1994). Both the local community and the state apparatus had their own ideas of who the legitimate authority to rule and conduct security operations in

the area was. Moreover, the "no-go" areas took a stance on the question of national identity by claiming to be free zones for Irish Catholics and not part of the British-led state-centric system. "No-go" areas are, indeed, sophisticated illustrations of territorial organisation reinforced by informal institutions, in this case, the local Catholic community and the IRA.

In the contemporary situation the paramilitary presence is no longer so visible but it remains as effective as thirty years ago. The new features in the local community order are confrontations between paramilitary splinter groups. These conflicts have influenced the territorial dynamics by bringing intra-community warfare to the territories. Particularly after the cease-fire of 1997, the Protestant paramilitary groups have, at times, waged open war with each other. This has led to a situation where the local communities are terrified because they have been left in the middle of the semi-militant struggle conducted by their fellow community members. It sometimes happens that locals are wrongly targeted because someone suspects they are involved with a competing paramilitary organisation. Since this trend has only appeared recently there is no statistical information about the exact numbers of victims of this kind of violence but the number of attacks has increased, the interviewed group-leaders in both communities claim.

The presence of the security forces, i.e. "*Police Service of Northern Ireland"* [former *RUC* (Royal Ulster Constabulary)][5] and the *British Army*, is highly visible in the urban borderlands. They too reinforce the divided reality and are often contested locally in Northern Ireland. Since the mid-1980s the acceptability of the RUC has changed radically. In the borderland context where the RUC was previously accepted by the Unionist community and opposed by the Nationalist community, the acceptance by the former has, in the contemporary situation, evolved into conditional trust. The Nationalist community views the RUC as still part of the Unionist-led institutional hegemony. However, they concede that the police has become somewhat more approachable than previously. Whereas for example the Drumcree marching disputes from 1995 to 1997 have showed, the Protestant community's trust in British state and the police force (as the superior authority of law and order) has weakened (Bryan 2001).

In general, the contemporary peace process has introduced a new societal situation in which the sources of authority are fragmenting and more competition over the power to control local communities has grown. This has meant that the police and the Army are tackling more "in between" fighting Catholic and Protestant communities than previously. It might be expected that a position like this – being in the middle – opens up better possibilities for listening to both communities, but in fact it has created a trap, where the angry reactions on both sides have found a new target, the police. What often happens in Northern Ireland is that these exclusive communities seek acceptance and acknowledgement for their own views and if they do not get an appropriate response from the security

[5] From 4.11.2001 the name of the Royal Ulster Constabulary was replaced with the "Police Service of Northern Ireland." In this article the RUC is used because at the time of my field work it was still the official name.

forces, people easily turn their back on any further co-operation.

In recent years the police has confronted major difficulties in maintaining public order. Its role is to protect the communities (mostly from each other's violent activity) and simultaneously uphold national security (a particularly controversial issue in Northern Ireland), but in carrying out these duties assigned by the state apparatus, the security forces are often blamed for the whole situation. Problems of authority have often been experienced. For example, in the autumn of 1999 L/Derry experienced a wave of late-night violence, which some claimed to be sectarian-related. This being true at least in some cases, the media coverage of these attacks created an illusion that all fights in the city during the weekends were sectarian. Mostly, however, the violent acts happened in the city centre after the pubs were closed, when hundreds of people were on the streets on their way home. The local media pointed an accusing finger at the police because they had not increased the number of patrols in the city centre, even though this had been requested by the local community groups on both sides. *Derry Journal* and *Londonderry Sentinel* published many articles on the city centre violence during September and October of 1999:

Derry Journal, e.g.
Sectarian gangs in the city centre
Attacks against innocent youths
City centre a no-go area

Londonderry Sentinel, e.g.
Young Protestants do not feel safe in the city centre
City no-go area for Protestants
City centre becoming too dangerous – even for police.

From the point of view of the police there was a genuine threat that these incidents would grow into large scale riots if a larger police presence was introduced. Physical attacks against the police had also increased in the city centre. In the pages of *Derry Journal* an RUC Superintendent said: "Ideally I would like to put high visibility policing into the city centre. But the reality is that it is not possible to do that. Just few weeks ago one of my officers was stabbed in the back while trying to help an ambulance crew dealing with another person who had been assaulted (21.9.1999)". Because this kind of authority problem was experienced, local community-leaders on both sides took the lead on the issue. Eventually, the solution to late-night violence was found through mediation among the perpetrators and the victims (*Derry Journal* 21.9.1999, 24.9.1999; *Londonderry Sentinel* 22.9.1999, 13.10.1999).

Normative control, specific aims for socialisation, law enforcement and disciplinary actions taken by the formal institutions construct the territorialised social and spatial order. In a divided city such as L/Derry institutions are often perceived as favouring one section of the community. People tend to take exclusive positions in relation to formal institutions, which mean that they are either strictly for or against them. Anger and desperation are expressed both in verbal and physical attacks. This behaviour is, of course, not just concentrated in the localities in L/Derry, but is found all over Northern Ireland, in both urban and rural environments.

Discussion:
C, F, 15: If police come down in the fronts and people would still throw things at them, stones and things like that.

C, M, 15: Aye, people get mad.
C, F, 15: Like bottles and bricks and when they (police) are seen in the streets people are calling names…

In the borderland context the institutions that aim to create social coherence and security may in fact produce instability and confusion. Moreover, the institutions are frequently accused of being segregative and divisive by nature. I agree with this claim to some degree, but the formal institutions certainly do not form the only realm which ends up naturalising the territorially controlled society. Often, as my field work illustrated, the borderland experiences described by the local people are in the first instance reflected through the formal institutions which are present in their everyday life. In people's minds control and restrictions are imposed on them by formal institutional practices. Only after direct reference (by the researcher) to the communal practices, are some considerations of the role of their particular community expressed. In fact, I am prepared to argue that this everyday communality constructs majority of the borderland mentality and its strict territorial rules.

Communal identity

Local community as an institution refers to the idea of legitimate agency in the borderland context. The local community is a crucial agent in the processual construction of the territorial way of life. Communities have their own goals, ambitions and means to fulfil these aims. Whereas the school as an institution aims to educate, the police and the Army to keep public order and the Churches maintain the religious element in people's lives, the community as an institution constructs (in a reciprocal relationship) communality, belonging and collective identity. Community level social systems draw boundaries between the included (i.e. community members) and the excluded (i.e. the outsiders), who do not belong to the defined social community and particular place (Sibley 1995: 79; Paasi 1996: 14). They also construct the feeling of belonging to a particular territory and emphasise the sense of place, order, security, tradition and cultural unity (Relph 1976; Tuan 1977; Oakes 1997).

Everyday socio-spatial order in the communities is based on social rules and the unwritten but normative territorial behaviour that individuals have acquired through socialisation. The local community as an institution is often more dynamic but also more conflict-inclined than the formal institutions. Hierarchies, "pecking orders," competing goals and sub-groups exist in this informal institutional setting as well. It is important to recognise the heterogeneity of opinions and identity traditions existing within the communities, especially in the Northern Irish context.

In general, the range of loyalties among both local communities has become more heterogeneous during the last ten years. The setting where community politics is practised and loyalties constructed is dependent on several issues, such as communal institutional structures, communication culture, desire for categorisation and exclusive/ inclusive space politics, opinion leaders, community activists, popular support and so forth. Re-consideration of the community's ideological foundations has raised another set of questions: whether wider popular support can and should be attained through selling one's principles. This has led to an ironic situation where the communal

characteristics defining a particular identity category have become somewhat blurred. Exclusive identity politics is combined with conditional boundaries where the conditions for inclusion and exclusion depend on the time and spatial context. Simultaneously with the inner polarisation of the Catholic community, a similar development has occurred in the Protestant community. This has meant that for example a person's political views, and especially the approval of paramilitary violence, determine whether she or he is allowed to live in or visit a particular housing estate: identity category is still a territorial qualifier (Kuusisto-Arponen 2003). Thus, even in the times of change and peace, the quest for collective identity, security and bounded territory form the existential goals for both communities.

In contemporary Northern Ireland the majority of Catholic and Protestant communities tend to reproduce the contested borderlands and dominant spatial order, i.e., strict territorial rule. The order that the local community is trying to emphasise is based on an illusion similar to the one prevailing in the practices of formal institutions: that of the effectiveness of categorising. By categorising security and fear, insiders and outsiders, anti-social and social, "our" territory and "their" territory, "our" cultural heritage and "theirs", the communities gain confidence. Such confidence, as often witnessed in Northern Ireland, is fickle (Graham 1994: 261; Duffy 1997). The means to impose these categories, the unwritten social rules and codes of conduct, are so embedded in communal everyday life that they are seldom challenged. The local community constructs everyday urban borderland, in which both the territorial process and its results are effectively regulated. Too often this regulation is based on the fear of punishment, whether by fellow community members or outsiders.

For some people this fixity of the borderland is too oppressive and emancipation is sought by criticising the dominant perceptions of segregated identity politics and divided institutional cultures. Geographical and historical trap has become a burden for many individuals and some want to free themselves of the old models of thinking and behaving. Many of these challengers desire inter-communal dialogue, trust the power of learning and education, and have a strong enough will to stand up against the majority opinion. The plural narrative stresses an awareness of all people being basically the same; an individual's communal background does not make him or her any worse or better; the conflict only continues because there are extremists on both sides and therefore the generalisation that many people condone the use of force is incorrect. Moving beyond emphasises education instead of forcing people into specific modes of action. Moreover, it means carrying responsibility for one's actions and words. The culture of ignoring and excluding is abandoned and replaced with explaining and a desire for mutual understanding. These people will have great impact on the future of Northern Ireland, especially as creators of confidence in shared place politics.

Conclusions

L/Derry as an urban borderland is a setting that is socially and geographically ever-evolving. Not even the past, the narrated history of L/Derry, is static or upheld by one legitimate perspective. Collective identification with a community and place have served as tools in the construction of the

crucial local sense of security. Unfortunately, in the divided city of L/Derry socialisation processes and identity categories have created an environment that is filled with one-sided and conflictual ideas of society. Several formal and informal institutions have an important role in constructing this borderland and specifically its territorial organisation. Even though it can easily be concluded that L/Derry is a borderland which is best described by the concept of *territorial (geographical) trap*, another conclusion relates to the transformations taking place in society today, i.e. the *wish to move beyond*. It is, therefore, important to acknowledge the challenging non-territorial practices, such as local power-sharing in the Northern Ireland Assembly and the breaching of local conflict-inclined boundaries, which are becoming an embedded part of the Northern Irish borderland construction. A new challenging territorial discourse is getting a foothold in Northern Irish borderlands (see Kuusisto-Arponen 2003: 159-186). It will be, however, hard and long struggle between these two institutional cultures of segregation and sharing in several Northern Irish borderlands.

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