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ABSTRACT

Many armed groups create informal institutions to maintain social order during conflict. The remnants of these informal institutions form a key challenge for governments in postconflict societies in their attempts to reestablish themselves as credible state authorities. The persistence of paramilitary groups' informal "justice" systems in the form of so-called punishment attacks in Northern Ireland, more than twenty years on from the Good Friday Agreement, offers insights into the legacy of wartime institutions. We argue that armed actors can benefit from the social control wartime institutions grant them long after the conflict ends and both armed actors and civilians are socialized into relying on these institutions. Building on research on wartime institutions, criminal governance, and postwar state-building, we examine how the informal "justice" systems created during the Troubles (1968–98) remain at the fringes of postwar society, drawing on historical works, interviews with stakeholders, geocoded data on "punishment attacks," and survey data.

> My mummy visited me and said "Listen I've been talking to someone to try and sort it out to get someone to give you an easy shooting." I put my shoes on straight away and said "Yes, let's get it over and done with." … The first time they shot me I only moved a bit but the second time they shot me I was screaming. It went right through and hit my main artery. It busted my whole knee bone.
>
> – Teenage boy, Northern Ireland, November 2017[1]

Despite the 1998 Good Friday Agreement ending the armed conflict in Northern Ireland more than twenty years ago, paramilitary groups still use violence to maintain a degree of social control. In some neighborhoods,

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[1]Greg Dawson, "I Was Shot in the Knee as a Punishment," *BBC News*, 20 November 2017.

they continue to carry out so-called punishment attacks within their own communities. The attacks are typically directed at young men whom the paramilitaries accuse of criminal or antisocial behavior. Most infamously, these attacks come in the form of "kneecappings," as described in the quote above. The attack is eerily reminiscent of the paramilitary groups' brutal informal "justice" system developed during the thirty-year-long conflict known as "the Troubles" (1968–98), and it is not a one-off—which is a source of public concern.[2] Indeed, data from the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) show that these attacks, which they refer to as "paramilitary-style attacks," have been a consistent feature in certain locales across Northern Ireland since the Troubles, conducted by both Loyalist and Republican paramilitary groups.[3] Despite the reforms resulting from the Good Friday Agreement in 1998, which have succeeded in preventing a recurrence of the armed conflict, these violent practices persist. But why?

We argue that instead of going away, informal institutions that emerge in wartime have a sticky legacy, both because armed actors can benefit from the social control these institutions grant them long after the conflict ends and because both armed actors and civilians are socialized into relying on them. We develop our argument by drawing on research on wartime institutions, criminal governance, and postwar state-building. We explore how the informal "justice" systems created during the Troubles have long-lasting legacies at the fringes of postwar society, drawing on historical works, interviews with stakeholders, geocoded data on paramilitary-style attacks, and survey data.

While empirically focusing on Northern Ireland, this study speaks to broader debates about governance, the rule of law, and state–society relations in postwar peace and state-building. Social control in the hands of nonstate armed groups is characteristic of many postconflict societies, potentially diminishing the credibility of the state as the authority holding the monopoly on the legitimate use of force, or at least the monopoly on the use of force. There is a growing body of work on armed groups' wartime governance, but researchers are only beginning to systematically explore these informal institutions' legacies. In the conclusion, we discuss how the case of Northern Ireland can inform future research. Our study—and the growing body of work on wartime institutions and the social legacies of conflict—points to the importance of reform efforts recognizing that postwar state-building does not necessarily happen in a governance vacuum.

[2]Gerry Moriarty, "Campaign Exposes Northern Ireland Paramilitary Attacks," *Irish Times*, 16 October 2018; see also the documentary *A Mother Brings Her Son to Be Shot*, directed by Sinéad O'Shea (Paris: CAT&Docs, 2017).
[3]Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), *Police Recorded Security Situation Statistics, 1 February 2019–31 January 2020* (Belfast, UK: Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency [NISRA], 2020).

Wartime Order and Its Legacy

Armed actors control populations both by coercing and governing them. Although the Islamic State, for example, exerted its authority over large parts of Syria and Iraq through the use of brutal tactics, it also built a governing apparatus and provided public services.[4] Indeed, a growing body of research explores how, in wartime, armed groups create informal institutions to maintain social and territorial control, sometimes replacing the formal institutions of the state or developing parallel informal institutions of governance.[5] To the degree that civilians in an area have turned to nonstate groups rather than the state for the provision of public goods in wartime, such informal institutions are likely to prevail into the postwar era.

Despite war's chaotic nature, order often emerges. Wartime institutions are the governance structures nonstate armed groups establish to maintain social control and undermine or replace the state.[6] Armed groups may develop and enforce the rules that citizens are expected to obey, and citizens may turn to these wartime institutions for public goods, to ensure their security, or to adjudicate disputes. Armed groups develop wartime institutions, or "rebel governance," to varying degrees, sometimes in competition with one another, often in competition with the state, though sometimes also in cooperation with it.[7] They can also form what Ana Arjona terms "rebelocracy," becoming the de facto rulers in a given territory and thus able to regulate political, economic, and social relationships.[8] At a minimal level of providing wartime order, armed groups attempt to hold the monopoly over the use of violence and provision of security within the communities they control. In Northern Ireland, the main governance function taken on

[4]Eric Robinson et al., *When the Islamic States Comes to Town: The Economic Impact of Islamic State Governance in Iraq and Syria* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corp., 2017); Mara Revkin, "The Legal Foundations of the Islamic State" (Washington, DC: Brookings Project on US Relations with the Islamic World, analysis paper 23, Brookings Institution, July 2016).

[5]See Robert W. McColl, "A Political Geography of Revolution: China, Vietnam, and Thailand," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 11, no. 2 (June 1967): 153–67; Timothy P. Wickham-Crowley, "The Rise (and Sometimes Fall) of Guerrilla Governments in Latin America," *Sociological Forum* 2, no. 3 (Summer 1987): 473–99; Nelson Kasfir, "Guerrillas and Civilian Participation: The National Resistance Army in Uganda, 1981–86," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 43, no. 2 (June 2005): 271–96; Nelson Kasfir, Georg Frerks, and Niels Terpstra, "Introduction: Armed Groups and Multi-Layered Governance," *Civil Wars* 19, no. 3 (2017): 257–78; Klaus Schlichte, *In the Shadow of Violence: The Politics of Armed Groups* (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2009); Zachariah Cherian Mampilly, *Rebel Rulers: Insurgent Governance and Civilian Life during War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011); Paul Staniland, "States, Insurgents, and Wartime Political Orders," *Perspectives on Politics* 10, no. 2 (June 2012): 243–64; Ana Arjona, *Rebelocracy: Social Order in the Colombian Civil War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016); Niels Terpstra and Georg Frerks, "Rebel Governance and Legitimacy: Understanding the Impact of Rebel Legitimation on Civilian Compliance with LTTE Rule," *Civil Wars* 19, no. 3 (2017): 279–307; Megan A. Stewart, "Civil War as State-Making: Strategic Governance in Civil War," *International Organization* 72, no. 1 (Winter 2018): 205–26.

[6]On institutions as collections of rules and organized practices that prescribe appropriate behavior for specific actors in specific situations, see James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, "Elaborating the 'New Institutionalism,'" in *The Oxford Handbook of Political Science*, ed. Robert E. Goodin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

[7]Mampilly, *Rebel Rulers*.

[8]Arjona, *Rebelocracy*.

by paramilitary groups was related to informal "justice" systems: punishing perceived criminal behavior within their communities.

The development of informal institutions serves several purposes for armed groups, just as they do for criminal groups.[9] Gangs and organized criminal groups are associated with violent activities and do not shy away from ruling by the gun, but their operations are less costly if they can rely on "their" community's voluntary support. As such, they may provide this community with both private and public goods and, most importantly, protection.[10] For an armed group, even a minimal level of governance, such as security provision and policing, can solidify the group's strength by providing a pool of potential recruits and a safe haven for both the rank and file and leaders. Policing their own community also helps avoid defection and deter informers. Groups fighting the state need to organize against an often much stronger enemy and convince both the population in whose name they are fighting—and even the international community—that they are a viable alternative to the state. As Robert W. McColl notes, the development of "insurgent states" signals the group's strength vis-à-vis the state and provides it with "at least an aura of legitimacy," likely to boost recruitment and support and prevent defection.[11] Indeed, although armed groups, not unlike criminal groups, are specialists in the production of violence, it is less costly to control a population not only based on coercion but also consent. Conflict-affected areas where the state does not exert control are rarely ungoverned spaces. As Joel S. Migdal argues, "Social control rests with the organizational ability to deliver key components for individuals' strategies of survival."[12] These strategies, stitched together by individuals' quests to fulfill material needs and the myths and symbols they use to make sense of the world, can be met by the state (or segments of it) as well as nonstate groups. Armed groups "may be coercive, even brutal, but they may nevertheless be perceived as legitimate by many in the populations under their control."[13] Research on criminal gangs reveals similar dynamics, where gang members are both feared and revered due to the order they provide.[14]

[9]Martín Sánchez Jankowski, *Islands in the Street: Gangs and American Urban Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

[10]Jankowski, *Islands in the Street*; James Kostelnik and David Skarbek, "The Governance Institutions of a Drug Trafficking Organization," *Public Choice* 156, no. 1–2 (July 2013): 95–103.

[11]Robert W. McColl, "The Insurgent State: Territorial Bases of Revolution," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 59, no. 4 (December 1969): 613–31, 614; see also Mampilly, *Rebel Rulers*, 53–55.

[12]Joel S. Migdal, *Strong Societies and Weak States: State–Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988), 27.

[13]Vanda Felbab-Brown, Harold Trinkunas, and Shadi Hamid, *Militants, Criminals, and Warlords: The Challenge of Local Governance in an Age of Disorder* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2018), 7; see also Robert A. Blair and Pablo Kalmanovitz, "On the Rights of Warlords: Legitimate Authority and Basic Protection in War-Torn Societies," *American Political Science Review* 110, no. 3 (August 2016): 428–40.

[14]Dennis Rodgers, "Living in the Shadow of Death: Gangs, Violence, and Social Order in Urban Nicaragua, 1996–2002," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 38, no. 2 (May 2006): 267–92.

Just as formal institutions can be "sticky," so can informal institutions.[15] We argue that wartime orders are hard to dislodge due to both top-down and bottom-up mechanisms. Armed groups and civilians maintain the informal institutions that developed during a conflict either because they are socialized to rely on these institutions or, more instrumentally, they benefit from them.

Top-Down: Armed Actors

Top-down, wartime institutions are likely to prevail into the postwar era as armed actors instrumentally benefit from them or are socialized to have a certain position of influence and uphold certain norms in the community. Instrumentally, armed actors can use the legacy of wartime orders to continue to undermine the state. They may do so for political reasons, because they are opposed to a peace agreement or dissatisfied with their own position of power in the postwar state,[16] or because they want to control a territory for criminal operations. Regardless of motive, by exercising social control in areas where their armed group was rooted historically, armed actors can better control information, mobilize support, and recruit new members. Indeed, as noted by McColl, Mao's first principle in the effective location and application of guerrilla base operations is that "revolutionary activity should be concentrated in areas with previous political or revolutionary activity."[17] It takes time for any armed actor to build up an effective reputation and monitoring capacity within an area; hence there is a reluctance to relocate.[18] Put simply, it is easier to control an area where informal institutions were developed during conflict.

Socialization—a "process of inducting actors into the norms and rules of a given community, the endpoint of which is internalization"[19]—may also be at work. Members of armed groups may have become used to positions of power or a certain standing within their communities. They may find it hard to let go, even after the groups are officially demobilized, particularly if they feel marginalized in the postwar political system.[20] Research on

[15]Sven Steinmo and Kathleen Thelen, "Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Politics," in *Structuring Politics: Institutionalism in Historical Comparative Analysis*, ed. Sven Steinmo, Kathleen Thelen, and Frank Longstreth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 1–32.

[16]Stephen John Stedman, "Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes," *International Security* 22, no. 2 (Fall 1997): 5–53; Wendy Pearlman, "Spoiling Inside and Out: Internal Political Contestation and the Middle East Peace Process," *International Security* 33, no. 3 (Winter 2009): 79–109. For a top-down account of how "entrepreneurs of violence" convince ex-combatants to employ violence, see Anders Themnér, "A Leap of Faith: When and How Ex-Combatants Resort to Violence," *Security Studies* 22, no. 2 (2013): 295–329.

[17]McColl, "A Political Geography of Revolution," 155.

[18]See Diego Gambetta, *The Sicilian Mafia: The Business of Private Protection* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993).

[19]Jeffrey T. Checkel, "Socialization and Violence: Introduction and Framework," *Journal of Peace Research* 54, no. 5 (September 2017): 592–605, 594.

[20]See Francesca Grandi on how some local resistance leaders in Italy after World War II felt entitled to political leadership. Grandi, "Why Do the Victors Kill the Vanquished? Explaining Political Violence in Post–World War II Italy," *Journal of Peace Research* 50, no. 5 (September 2013): 577–93.

criminal groups points to how gang members "understand that their social status in life comes from criteria established in their community, not from criteria of the larger society, and that the best way to attain this status is to be helpful to the community."[21] Similarly, members of armed groups may have come to internalize that it is their role to uphold the norms of wartime institutions.[22] This is likely to be the case in areas where armed groups establish institutions over decades. As wartime institutions are likely to increase the pool of local recruits over time, the cadre will be predominantly local and have internalized the norms and rules in their communities. Once internalized over the course of a long conflict, such expectations and norms about one's role in society are sticky.

Bottom-Up: Civilians

Bottom-up, wartime institutions are likely to prevail into the postwar era as civilians become socialized to rely on informal institutions for their strategies of survival. In areas where armed groups developed public goods provision and did so for a long time, members of the community may have come to accept and internalize norms stipulating that governance, or certain aspects of governance, is done—and done better—not by the state but by nonstate groups.[23] There is a "normalization" of nonstate governance. It is not a given that civilians approve of the wartime order imposed by armed groups;[24] hence armed groups may have taken steps to actively build legitimacy not only by providing public goods but also by fostering inclusion, belonging, and identity.[25] Writing about the legacy of armed networks in Colombia, Sarah Zukerman Daly argues that, if recruitment into armed groups happened locally and former combatants stayed in the same areas after the war, not only are former combatants likely to remain embedded in the local community, but civilians are likely to continue to look to them as sources of authority.[26] Similarly, Regina Bateson argues that over the

[21] Jankowski, *Islands in the Street*, 200; Kostelnik and Skarbek, "Governance Institutions of a Drug Trafficking Organization."

[22] On the role of compliance, identification, and internalization in how individuals relate to their groups, see Herbert C. Kelman, "Interests, Relationships, Identities: Three Central Issues for Individuals and Groups in Negotiating Their Social Environment," *Annual Review of Psychology* 57 (2006): 1–26; on how "identification with one's violent group motivates participation in collective violence, and in turn, violent behavior increases identification with the group," see Rebecca Littman and Elizabeth Levy Paluck, "The Cycle of Violence: Understanding Individual Participation in Collective Violence," *Advances in Political Psychology* 36, no. S1 (February 2015): 79–99, 94; on how different formal institutions may lead to different types of combatant socialization, see Amelia Hoover Green, "Armed Group Institutions and Combatant Socialization: Evidence from El Salvador," *Journal of Peace Research* 54, no. 5 (September 2017): 687–700.

[23] On criminal gangs, see Rodgers, "Living in the Shadow of Death."

[24] Arjona, *Rebelocracy*.

[25] Mampilly, *Rebel Rulers*; Terpstra and Frerks, "Rebel Governance and Legitimacy."

[26] Sarah Zukerman Daly, *Organized Violence after Civil War: The Geography of Recruitment in Latin America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

course of the long conflict in Guatemala, a process of "civilian socialization" has fostered tolerance for extralegal security patrolling as a crime-prevention measure in the post–civil war period.[27]

For many postwar states, the process of (re)establishing confidence in the state's authority presents an enduring challenge.[28] Agents of the state may be perceived as either directly responsible for the conflict and violence committed or, more indirectly, unable to uphold law and order, protect citizens' security, and provide public goods, none of which bodes well for people's confidence in the authority of the state. In societies where armed conflicts end through a peace settlement and governance reforms, one might expect that civilians (again) come to be socialized into seeing the state as the legitimate upholder of law and order.[29] However, where informal wartime institutions developed, the postwar state is exerting its authority in competition with informal authorities. Indeed, the targets of socialization are "never blank slates."[30] Thus, if armed groups governed and civilians relied on them for their strategies of survival in wartime, civilians may, despite the state's reform efforts, continue to do so into the postwar period.

Two propositions follow from these mechanisms. First, whether armed actors have instrumental reasons to control certain communities or are socialized into doing so, we expect persistence in the geographic locations of informal institutions from the conflict into the postconflict period. Postwar, armed actors will seek to exercise social control in areas where well-developed informal institutions existed during the war. Second, if the persistence of informal institutions from the conflict into the postconflict period is also driven by civilian socialization, we expect civilians living in areas controlled by armed groups to be likely to rate informal authorities highly and be skeptical of formal authorities. To the degree that informal institutions are sticky, both propositions should hold long after the armed conflict has ended.

[27]Regina Bateson, "The Socialization of Civilians and Militia Members: Evidence from Guatemala," *Journal of Peace Research* 54, no. 5 (September 2017): 634–47.

[28]Thomas Edward Flores and Irfan Nooruddin, "Credible Commitment in Post-Conflict Recovery," in *The Handbook of the Political Economy of War*, ed. Christopher J. Coyne and Rachel L. Mathers (Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar, 2011), 474–97; Kristin M. Bakke et al., "Convincing State-Builders? Disaggregating Internal Legitimacy in Abkhazia," *International Studies Quarterly* 58, no. 3 (September 2014): 591–607; Pui-Hang Wong, "How Can Political Trust Be Built after Civil Wars? Evidence from Post-Conflict Sierra Leone," *Journal of Peace Research* 53, no. 6 (November 2016): 772–85; Robert A. Blair, "International Intervention and the Rule of Law after Civil War: Evidence from Liberia," *International Organization* 73, no. 2 (Spring 2019): 365–98.

[29]David A. Lake, "Building Legitimate States after Civil Wars," in *Strengthening Peace in Post–Civil War States: Transforming Spoilers into Stakeholders*, ed. Matthew Hoddie and Caroline A. Hartzell (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010).

[30]Checkel, "Socialization and Violence," 595.

Research Design: Assessing Legacies of Wartime Order

We assess these propositions—and the causal mechanisms underpinning them—in a mixed-methods case study of Northern Ireland. We proceed in three steps. First, we present a historical narrative that anchors our study within existing research on Northern Ireland and draws on fifteen semi-structured interviews (conducted in 2018) with relevant stakeholders, including affected community members and restorative justice organizations (see the online appendix).[31] This step allows us to establish how and where wartime social control developed and what it looked like, informing the measures we use in subsequent analyses. Furthermore, it allows us to demonstrate that these informal institutions developed during the conflict itself, not before.

The second step of our analysis examines our first proposition, which suggests that there is a persistent geographic pattern in paramilitary groups' social control from the Troubles until today. We assess whether paramilitary groups' social control during the Troubles is associated with the location of paramilitary-style attacks today while also accounting for other variables that can account for the occurrence of such attacks today, not least deprivation. To do so, we rely on a dataset of in-group killings from the Troubles and a unique dataset of geolocated paramilitary-style attacks that have taken place after the Good Friday Agreement. As the historical narrative shows, key to paramilitary groups' effort at establishing social control both during and after the conflict is informal "justice" systems in the form of so-called punishment attacks—both beatings and shootings—within their communities.

The third step in our analysis examines our second proposition, which suggests that civilians' socialization to rely on informal justice institutions persists into the postconflict period. To do so, we combine the geolocated data on paramilitary-style attacks in the postconflict period with data from a nationally representative survey ($N = 811$) conducted in Northern Ireland in spring 2016 (see the online appendix).[32] We conduct statistical analyses examining respondents' rating of informal and formal authorities, probing whether their perceptions are associated with the prevalence of paramilitary-style attacks in their neighborhood. Although we cannot establish causality, these analyses allow us to explore whether communities experiencing paramilitary-style attacks today are simply coerced or, alternatively, whether people have come to perceive informal authorities as an effective

[31]The data collected during fieldwork was registered and approved with University College London's Data Protection and Ethics Committee (ID 4931/002).

[32]Karin Dyrstad, Kristin M. Bakke, and Helga M. Binningsbø, "Perceptions of Peace Agreements and Political Trust in Post-War Guatemala, Nepal, and Northern Ireland," *International Peacekeeping* 28, no. 4 (2021): 606–31.

alternative to the formal apparatus of the state, which is indicative of the persistence of a bottom-up socialization mechanism.

The study is motivated by the Northern Ireland case and a quest to understand the persistence of paramilitary-style attacks there, which seems puzzling for several reasons. The Good Friday Agreement is a comprehensive peace agreement that took steps toward both disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) and security sector reforms (SSR). Decommissioning of paramilitary groups was part of the Good Friday Agreement, though the official process was not complete until 2010, and there are still dissident groups that reject the peace process.[33] The police was a key and controversial actor during the Troubles but has undergone significant reform to enhance its legitimacy.[34] Arguably, these steps, along with significant political reforms to ensure power sharing between Nationalist and Unionist political parties, have helped prevent a recurrence of the armed conflict.[35] Yet they have not prevented paramilitary groups from still exercising social control within a strong and democratic state. Thus, at the outset, Northern Ireland seems like a least likely case for observing the continuation of armed groups' social control after the war ends.[36] Alternatively, these are precisely the conditions that allow armed groups to continue to exercise social control. Thus, in the conclusion, we turn to an in-depth discussion of whether conflict termination, state strength, and regime type are scope conditions of our argument, pointing to avenues for future research. Though there is a growing body of work on armed groups' wartime governance, researchers are only beginning to systematically explore the legacies of such informal institutions.[37]

[33]Tauno Nieminen, John de Chastelain, and Andrew D. Sens, *Final Report of the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning* (Belfast, UK: Northern Ireland Office, 2011), http://www.cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/peace/decommission/iicd040711.pdf.

[34]This followed the Patten Report, which made 175 recommendations to address the Royal Ulster Constabulary's lack of legitimacy, including a name change to the PSNI in 2001. See Jonny Byrne and Neil Jarman, "Ten Years after Patten: Young People and Policing in Northern Ireland," *Youth and Society* 43, no. 2 (June 2011): 433–52; Joanne Murphy, "Tracking Change in Northern Ireland Policing: Temporal Phases and Key Themes," *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies and Management* 38, no. 1 (2015): 117–31.

[35]Roger Mac Ginty, Orla T. Muldoon, and Neil Ferguson, "No War, No Peace: Northern Ireland after the Agreement," *Political Psychology* 28, no. 1 (February 2007): 1–11.

[36]Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005).

[37]See Bateson, "Socialization of Civilians and Militia Members"; Christine Cheng, *Extralegal Groups in Post-Conflict Liberia: How Trade Makes the State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018). There is more work on the legacies of wartime violence and armed networks. On the legacies of armed networks, see Daly, *Organized Violence after Civil War*; Elisabeth Jean Wood, "Social Mobilization and Violence in Civil War and Their Social Legacies," in *The Oxford Handbook of Social Movements*, ed. Donatella Della Porta and Mario Diani (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 452–66; Anders Themnér and Niklas Karlén, "Building a Safety Net: Explaining the Strength of Ex-Military Networks," *Security Studies* 29, no. 2 (April–May 2020): 268–300.

The Troubles: "No-Go" Areas and Informal "Justice"

The communal violence that marked the beginning of the Troubles in the late 1960s paved the way for the emergence of new paramilitary groups and the resurgence of those that had been inactive since the partition of Ireland and the Irish Civil War in the early 1920s. In this section, we draw on historical works and interviews to show how, during the thirty years of the Troubles, both Republican and Loyalist groups developed informal "justice" systems in certain areas of Northern Ireland.

Central to the conflict were economic difficulties both the Catholic/Nationalist/Republican and Protestant/Unionist/Loyalist communities faced. Industrial stagnation in the 1960s undermined the historical economic dominance of the Unionist community, and grievances in Protestant working-class communities were often directed toward Catholic communities. Catholic working-class communities, on their end, faced unemployment and discrimination. The civil rights movement that emerged targeted the historical inequalities between the Protestant and Catholic communities. Although it was not intended to be a Catholic movement per se, it became one when Unionists reacted to the popular mobilizations they feared would undermine their community's position. Marches were faced with counter-marches, leading to violent clashes, most infamously during the People's Democracy March from Belfast to Derry in January 1969.[38] The police, the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), did little to defend the marchers and often sided with Unionists, becoming a symbol of an oppressive state for the Catholic community.[39] By 1969 it was clear the RUC had lost control, and the British Army was deployed to secure order. Initially welcomed by the Catholic community, the army's use of violence, most infamously during the 1972 peaceful protest march in Derry that became known as "Bloody Sunday," signaled to the Catholic community that the army was there to maintain the status quo.[40]

From the early days of the Troubles, both Republican and Loyalist groups developed informal "justice" systems, particularly in the segregated working-class areas of Belfast and Derry. They did so in response to demands from their communities, as the RUC was either unable or unwelcome to provide for citizens' security, and as a strategy of control. Barricaded areas became known as "no-go" areas where the police did not enter, exacerbating a diminution of state authority.[41] No-go areas that

[38]Members of the Nationalist community call the city "Derry," and members of the Unionist community call it "Londonderry." For simplicity, we write "Derry."
[39]Byrne and Jarman, "Ten Years after Patten"; Joseph Ruane and Jennifer Todd, "History, Structure and Action in the Settlement of Complex Conflicts: The Northern Ireland Case," *Irish Political Studies* 29, no. 1 (2014): 15–36.
[40]Paul Arthur and Keith Jeffery, *Northern Ireland since 1968*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988), 68.
[41]Niall Ó Dochartaigh, *From Civil Rights to Armalites: Derry and the Birth of the Irish Troubles* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

emerged came to be policed by local defense groups even after the barricades were dismantled. Although paramilitaries did not necessarily set up the groups, the former quickly took on the community policing role.

No-go areas in Republican communities effectively came under the control of Republican armed groups, predominantly the Provisional IRA (PIRA).[42] In Belfast's Republican no-go areas of the late 1960s, community councils that included justice, development, and welfare committees were established.[43] Cases of minor offenses came before People's Courts, which decided on the punishment to be enforced. Paramilitary groups in both Republican and Loyalist communities developed a system of punishments based on the seriousness of the offense under consideration,[44] ranging from warnings, curfews, fines/victim restitution, acts of public humiliation (such as "tarring and feathering"), punishment beatings, punishment shootings (such as kneecappings), expulsions, and assassinations.[45] In Republican areas, paramilitaries would either call on people in their homes to issue warnings or "deliver" punishment, or those accused of having committed an offense—for example, a violent crime or antisocial behavior—would be called to a formal meeting, often held at a Sinn Fein office.[46] These structures were "rudimentary justice systems,"[47] but there is little doubt they were informal governance structures.

Republican no-go areas ended after Operation Motorman in July 1972, when more than thirty thousand British Army personnel were employed to reoccupy no-go areas in Derry and Belfast.[48] The RUC was no longer deployed to police these areas, and policing was done almost entirely by the British Army.[49] The army's policing in Republican areas did not, however, include everyday forms of policing, such as, for example, addressing antisocial behavior. As a result, the social control exerted by Republican groups did not end with Operation Motorman. Areas under Republican paramilitary control became what Allen Feldman describes as "sanctuaries," areas "reserved for residence and kinship."[50] They included areas such as the Ardoyne, New Lodge, Falls, and Short Strand in Belfast, and Creggan

[42]Jeffrey A. Sluka, *Hearts and Minds, Water and Fish: Support for the IRA and INLA in a Northern Irish Ghetto* (Bingley, UK: Emerald, 2009); Richard English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Brian Hanley and Scott Millar, *The Lost Revolution: The Story of the Official IRA and the Workers' Party* (London: Penguin Books, 2010).

[43]Dermot Feenan, "Justice in Conflict: Paramilitary Punishment in Ireland (North)," *International Journal of the Sociology of Law* 30, no. 2 (June 2002): 151–72, 153.

[44]Rachel Monaghan and Suzanne McLaughlin, "Informal Justice in the City," *Space and Polity* 10, no. 2 (2006): 171–86, 176.

[45]Andrew Silke, "The Lords of Discipline: The Methods and Motives of Paramilitary Vigilantism in Northern Ireland," *Low Intensity Conflict and Law Enforcement* 7, no. 2 (Autumn 1998): 121–56.

[46]Silke, "Lords of Discipline,"124.

[47]Feenan, "Justice in Conflict," 154.

[48]English, *Armed Struggle*.

[49]English, *Armed Struggle*, 162.

[50]Allen Feldman, *Formations of Violence: The Narrative of the Body and Political Terror in Northern Ireland* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 36.

and the Bogside in Derry. It is within this context that Republican governance structures continued to exert social control in Catholic working-class urban areas throughout the conflict. The main public good was community "policing" via the informal "justice" system—though, then as now, significant doubts exist as to how just this process was and whether it worked to prevent crime.[51] Other governance functions taken on by nonstate groups in Republican areas included Irish language schools, welfare provisions to the families of political prisoners, and, as the city's buses were prevented from serving these areas, the black taxicab service.

Whereas Republican paramilitary groups emerged to defend Catholic communities and to establish a thirty-two-county Ireland, Loyalist groups emerged to defend Protestant communities from the PIRA and to maintain the Union. Although Loyalist groups were ostensibly on the side of the state, they, too, came to take on community policing roles, administering informal "justice" when they thought the state did not act quickly or go far enough. Unionist working-class communities—in area such as East Belfast, Sandy Row, Tiger's Bay, and Shankill Road—felt the absence of the RUC and looked to the paramilitary groups to take on community policing.[52] Loyalist groups' relationship with the state deteriorated with the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1985, when the British government shifted its historic alliance with the Unionist community in exchange for a stronger partnership with the Republic of Ireland, which at the time still had a territorial claim on the six northern counties enshrined in its constitution.[53] Similarly, with the Good Friday Agreement, many working-class Protestant communities felt left behind and betrayed by the state and the Unionist elite.[54]

In both communities, the development of informal "justice" systems was a direct result of the conflict. In Republican communities, the heavy-handed tactics of the RUC led people to mistrust the police and seek alternative authorities for addressing their everyday problems. As several of our interviews suggested, "you just did not call the police." This was either because the police was not present, you mistrusted them, or you feared being labeled a "tout," an informer and traitor within your community.[55] In a vicious-cycle dynamic, the strengthening of alternative authorities meant the police became unable or unwilling to enter certain areas. This strengthened paramilitary groups' control and a sense among the

[51]Interviews with community workers, former paramilitaries, and members of affected communities, 28–31 August 2018. Many campaigners argue that the terminology of "justice" system and "punishment attacks" is misplaced.
[52]Interviews, 27–31 August 2018.
[53]Jennifer Todd, "Elite Intent, Public Reaction and Institutional Change," in *The Anglo-Irish Agreement: Re-Thinking Its Legacy*, ed. Arthur Aughey and Cathy Gormley-Heenan (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011); Jeffery and Arthur, *Northern Ireland since 1968*.
[54]Interviews, 28–29 August 2018.
[55]Interviews, 28–29 August 2018.

population that the police was simply absent. The RUC was also perceived to be absent in Loyalist areas, fostering distrust.[56] As described to us by one former Loyalist paramilitary, since 1969, there was simply no (formal) policing in Belfast.[57] In both communities, paramilitary groups were initially reluctant to take on policing duties but did so in response to demand from their communities.[58]

Strategically, informal policing allowed paramilitary groups to control "their" communities. Politically, communities controlled by Republican paramilitaries served to undermine the legitimacy of the state.[59] For example, in one night in 1992 the PIRA killed a drug dealer and knee-capped another ten, an activity that allowed it to "project itself as the defender of the community."[60] Militarily, these areas provided Republican groups with sanctuary and became notorious as centers of IRA recruitment, organization, and arms concealment.[61] Control of information within the community was ensured through a combination of intimidation, punishment, and rewards, which identified and eliminated informers or "touts."[62] By the late 1970s, the British security forces confronted an insurgency that had built a deeply rooted microsociety within sections of the Nationalist community.[63] For Loyalist groups, "punishment attacks" were also a strategy to maintain discipline and control within their ranks.[64]

Although armed groups came to benefit from controlling their communities through an informal policing role, it is simplistic to conclude that paramilitary groups imposed informal "justice" systems on these communities through coercion only. During the thirty-year-long conflict, parts of both communities demanded some form of justice system, and in time came to rely on it. This developed into a "folk memory."[65]

[56]The mission outline for Operation Motorman in 1972 is clear in this regard: "Vigilante activities in Protestant areas is to be permitted as long as SF [Security Forces] access is accepted, where necessary and the vigilantes are unarmed." Mission outline by Lieutenant-General Sir Harry Tuzo, "Northern Ireland: Operation Motorman; Military Operations in the Event of a Renewed IRA Campaign of Violence, 1 July 1972–31 July 1972," DEFE70/2501, The National Archives (TNA) of the UK, London, UK.
[57]Interview, 28 August 2018.
[58]Interview, 28 August 2018.
[59]Kevin Bean, "'New Dissidents Are but Old Provisionals Writ Large'? The Dynamics of Dissident Republicanism in the New Northern Ireland," *Political Quarterly* 83, no. 2 (April–June 2012): 212.
[60]David McKittrick, "How the Guns Kept Drugs out of Belfast," *Independent*, 21 December 1995; Henry McDonald and Jack Holland, *I.N.L.A: Deadly Divisions*, rev. ed. (Dublin: Poolbeg Books, 2010).
[61]James Downey, *Them and Us* (Dublin: Ward River Press, 1983).
[62]Feldman, *Formations of Violence*, 28; Monaghan and McLaughlin, "Informal Justice in the City."
[63]Bean, "New Dissidents Are but Old Provisionals Writ Large?," 212.
[64]Andrew Silke, "Ragged Justice: Loyalist Vigilantism in Northern Ireland," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 11, no. 3 (Autumn 1999): 1–31; Monaghan and McLaughlin, "Informal Justice in the City"; Heather Hamill, *The Hoods: Crime and Punishment in Belfast* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011). See also Kristine Eck, "Coercion in Rebel Recruitment," *Security Studies* 23, no. 2 (2014): 364–98.
[65]Interview, 28 August 2018.

Persistent Paramilitary Social Control

Elements within both communities rejected the Good Friday Agreement. In the Republican communities, some believed the PIRA had failed to create a united Ireland and remove the British presence on the island, whereas members of the Loyalist community felt that too many concessions were given to the PIRA and Sinn Fein.[66] Today, there are also groups that act in the name of paramilitary groups but employ violence for criminal reasons—for example, by running extortion rackets or controlling the drug trade.[67] In this section, we statistically test whether a pattern exists in where these groups exercise social control from the Troubles until today and provide evidence from interviews and existing research on how the pattern is maintained. While deprivation, particularly in urban areas, is associated with present-day paramilitary-style attacks, we show that armed groups also rely on the legacy of wartime institutions.

We rely on a unique dataset of geolocated paramilitary-style attacks from the PSNI to establish where they have taken place after the Good Friday Agreement and then assess whether these attacks happen where informal "justice" systems existed during the Troubles. The PSNI shared their data on paramilitary-style attacks from 1999 to October 2018 with us. The data show where and when attacks happened but include no personal information about perpetrators or victims.[68] Figure 1 shows that from 1999 through 2017, there were 2,789 paramilitary-style attacks in Northern Ireland. The PSNI code most (97.7 percent) as directed toward the paramilitary groups' "own" communities: Republican groups attacking members of the Catholic community and Loyalist groups attacking members of the Protestant community. The attacks include both assaults (involving "major or minor physical injury to the injured party typically involving a group of assailants armed with, for example, iron bars or baseball bats") and shootings (which "usually result in the injured party being shot in the knees, elbows, feet, ankles or thighs and the motive is supposedly to punish the person for anti-social activities").[69] Whereas the immediate years after the Good Friday Agreement saw up to and more than three hundred attacks

[66]See Jonny Byrne and Lisa Monaghan, *Policing Loyalist and Republican Communities: Understanding Key Issues for Local Communities and the PSNI* (Belfast: Institute for Conflict Research, 2008), 62; Jocelyn Evans and Jonathan Tonge, "Social Class and Party Choice in Northern Ireland's Ethnic Blocs," *West European Politics* 32, no. 5 (2009): 1012–30, 1015; R. Allen Hays, "Policing in Northern Ireland: Community Control, Community Policing, and the Search for Legitimacy," *Urban Affairs Review* 49, no. 4 (July 2013): 557–92.

[67]See Independent Monitoring Commission (IMC), *Twenty-Sixth and Final Report of the Independent Monitoring Commission, 2004–2011: Changes, Impact and Lessons* (London: Stationery Office, 2011). This was also echoed in our interviews, 27–31 August 2018.

[68]Attacks are geocoded to the postcode centroid from 1999 to mid-2011, and from mid-2011, to the exact location. Our use of these data is in line with General Data Protection Regulation legislation. It is not possible to identify persons or addresses from our use of these data. The data collection was registered and approved with UCL's Data Protection and Ethics Committee (ID 4931/002).

[69]PSNI, *Police Recorded Security Situation Statistics*, 7–8.

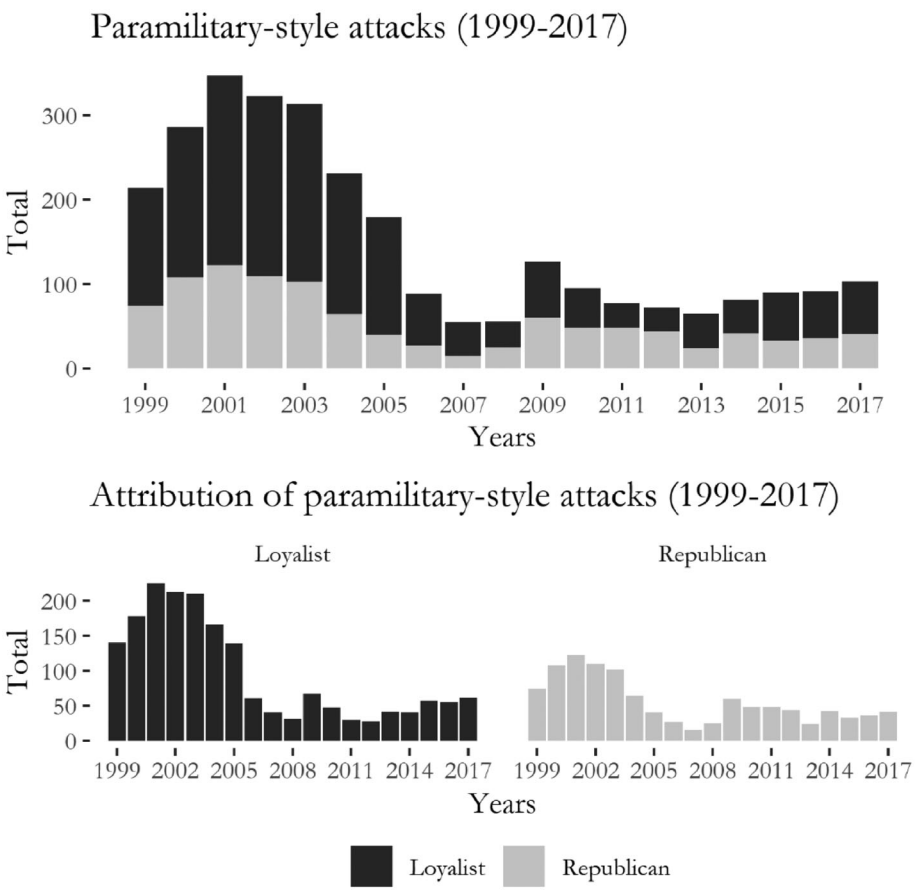

Figure 1. Paramilitary-style attacks since the Troubles.

per year—some of them due to turf wars between armed groups—yearly numbers of attacks have declined over time and remained relatively steady for the last decade.

Indeed, what is remarkable is the persistence of paramilitary-style attacks from 2008 onward. These attacks are not merely an immediate leftover of the conflict. They continue to happen after the long process of reforming the police to address its lack of legitimacy, including the Sinn Fein leadership's historic vote to recognize the PSNI as the legitimate police force in January 2007, as well as the Ulster Volunteer Force's and Red Hand Commando's announcement of the end of their campaign in May 2007.[70]

Similar data on paramilitary-style attacks do not exist for the period of the Troubles. Instead, as an indicator for the presence of informal "justice" systems during the conflict, we rely on data on deaths as a result of

[70]See Brenna Marea Powell, "Policing Post-War Transitions: Insecurity, Legitimacy and Reform in Northern Ireland," *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict* 7, no. 2–3 (2014): 165–82; IMC, *Twenty-Sixth and Final Report*.

paramilitary groups attacking members of their own community. In-group deaths represent the tip of the iceberg in terms of the informal "justice" systems paramilitary groups developed during the Troubles—ignoring non-lethal forms of punishments—and are a conservative measure for their social control. The data come from the Sutton Index of Deaths, which traces all conflict-related deaths during (and after) the Troubles.[71] We rely on and update Neil T. N. Ferguson's compilation of the data, parsing out the in-group deaths—that is, Republican groups killing Catholics and Loyalist groups killing Protestants—and their location.[72] The data include 519 in-group killings between 1969 and 1998. We are not the first to systematically examine the legacies of the Troubles in Northern Ireland or expect a persistent pattern in paramilitary groups' activities across space and over time.[73] However, our study is the first to systematically link the present-day pattern of paramilitary groups' social control to their social control during the Troubles.

To get a sense of the geographic pattern, Figure 2 shows three maps of Belfast: community divisions attributed to the level of super output areas (SOAs), in-group killings during the Troubles (1969–98), and paramilitary-style attacks over a decade on from the Good Friday Agreement (2008–18). Given the localized nature of paramilitary groups' control, we present the data and conduct the analysis at the level of SOAs. Northern Ireland has 890 SOAs, with an average population of 2,000. The maps illustrate how armed groups on both sides continue to undertake attacks directed at their own communities in specific areas of Belfast. Most illuminating for our argument, even ten to twenty years after the conflict ended, armed groups continue to carry out so-called punishment attacks in areas where paramilitary groups set up informal "justice" systems during the Troubles. They include areas such as the Falls, Springfield, Andersonstown, New Lodge, Shankill, and Sandy Row. Outside Belfast, this pattern is consistent in towns such as Bangor, Colerain, Derry, Lisburn, Newtownabbey, and

[71]Malcolm Sutton, *Bear in Mind These Dead: Index of Deaths from the Conflict in Ireland, 1969–1993* (Belfast, UK: Beyond the Pale, 1994).

[72]Neil T. N. Ferguson, "Just the Two of Us? Civil Conflicts, Pro-State Militants, and the Violence Premium," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 29, no. 2 (2017): 296–322. Malcolm Sutton's *Bear in Mind These Dead* includes profiles of people killed, including their name, whether they were Catholic or Protestant, whether the perpetrators were (suspected to be) Loyalist or Republican (dissident) groups, and the location of the killing or body. We update Ferguson's data to include in-group deaths to 10 April 1998, the signing of the Good Friday Agreement. We first identified in-group deaths in the Sutton Index of Deaths for the extended period (twenty-five deaths), then used the descriptions of each death to determine location. If the exact location was unclear, we consulted news articles from Irish and British media outlets.

[73]Ferguson, "Just the Two of Us?"; Laia Balcells, Lesley-Ann Daniels, and Abel Escribà-Folch, "The Determinants of Low-Intensity Intergroup Violence: The Case of Northern Ireland," *Journal of Peace Research* 53, no. 1 (January 2016): 33–48; Annekatrin Deglow, "Localized Legacies of Civil War: Postwar Violent Crime in Northern Ireland," *Journal of Peace Research* 53, no. 6 (November 2016): 786–99; Zoe Marchment and Paul Gill, "Modelling the Spatial Decision Making of Terrorists: The Discrete Choice Approach," *Applied Geography* 104 (March 2019): 21–31; Monaghan and McLaughlin, "Informal Justice in the City."

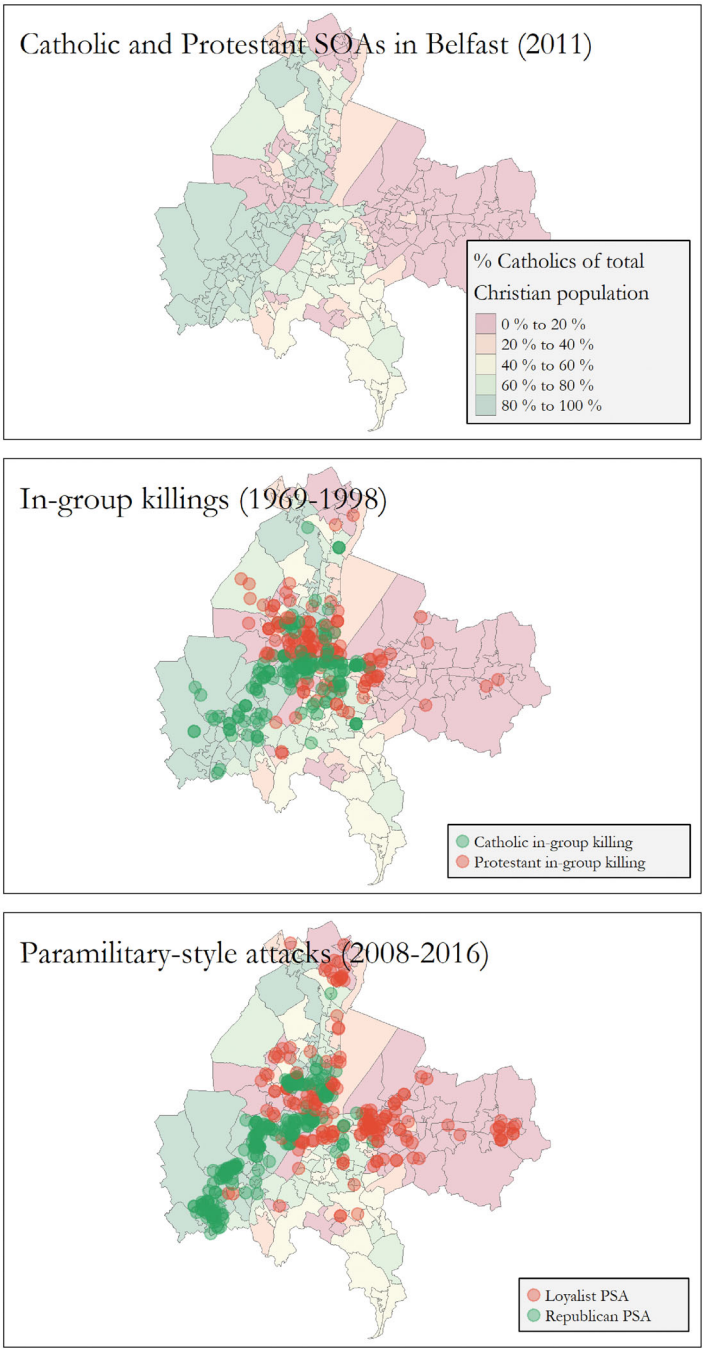

Figure 2. The maps show communal divides in Belfast according to 2001 census data (SOA level), Catholic and Protestant in-group killings from the Troubles, and Republican and Loyalist paramilitary-style attacks in the 2008–18 period.

Strabane.[74] The overlap in areas of operation is clearer for Republican than for Loyalist groups. About 60 percent of Republican paramilitary-style attacks in the 2008–18 period occurred in areas that experienced Catholic in-group killings during the conflict. Loyalist groups, which operate in more SOAs than their Republican counterparts,[75] seem less likely to operate in areas where they historically developed informal "justice" systems (about 30 percent). Both in Belfast and across Northern Ireland, Loyalist groups today operate in more areas than Republican groups, branching out to some they did not control during the Troubles, typically deprived areas that did not get their share of the "peace dividend."[76]

To probe our first proposition statistically, we examine whether our indicator for informal wartime institutions is associated with postconflict informal "justice" systems also when accounting for other variables that may explain whether an area is susceptible to armed groups' social control today.

The dependent variable is the number of paramilitary-style attacks in an SOA from 2016 to 2018. We have chosen this time period due to data availability and to give our argument a hard test: namely to see if wartime institutions have a legacy almost two decades into the postconflict period.[77] There were 245 attacks in this period, occurring in 16 percent of SOAs. Loyalist paramilitaries were responsible for 62 percent of the attacks, and Republicans, 38 percent.

The key independent variable is an SOA's number of in-group killings from the Troubles. This is not to say we believe the legacy of informal institutions from the Troubles is the only driver of paramilitary-style attacks today. Existing research argues that since the Good Friday Agreement dissidents and criminal elements among both Republican and Loyalist paramilitaries have found support in segregated and deprived communities, particularly in urban areas, left behind by the peace process.[78] We do not disagree that paramilitary groups today tap into deprivation in their respective communities, but our argument highlights the legacies of wartime institutions from three decades of conflict. To assess deprivation, and particularly urban deprivation, we include a measure for the proportion of the population in each SOA living in households whose equivalized income is below 60 percent of the country median (taken from the 2017 Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measures (NIMDM) indicators), as

[74]For further maps and statistics, see the online appendix.
[75]In the 2008–18 period, we study 174 SOAs experienced at least one Loyalist paramilitary-style attack, whereas 106 areas experienced Republican paramilitary-style attacks.
[76]Interview, 28 August 2018.
[77]The indicators we use to assess alternative explanations, drawn from the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measures (NIMDM), are not available on a yearly basis. We use the 2017 indicators, which are based primarily on measures from 2015 to 2016.
[78]Monaghan and McLaughlin, "Informal Justice in the City."

well as a dummy indicator for whether an SOA is urban (taken from the 2011 census).

Notably, if we look at the most deprived urban areas (coded as urban SOAs in the top 10 percentile of income deprivation) more than half (52 percent) did not experience any paramilitary-style attacks in the 2016–18 period (if we include rural deprived areas as well, the share is 64 percent). Nor do paramilitary-style attacks take place only in the most deprived areas. That is, deprivation alone cannot account for the occurrence of these practices. Descriptively, when we take the history of in-group killings into account, the average number of attacks per SOA is much higher in the deprived areas that have such a history (0.89) compared to the deprived areas without such a history (0.37).[79]

In the statistical analysis to follow, we also control for other variables likely to be associated with an SOA experiencing paramilitary-style attacks, including the rate of violence, sexual offense, robbery, and public order, as well as the rate of antisocial behavior incidents (both taken from the NIMDM indicators). Other controls include measures for total population and whether the area is a community stronghold, which we assess by indicating whether more than 90 percent of the area's Christian population is from either the Catholic or Protestant community (both taken from the 2011 census).[80]

Tables 1 and 2 show the results of logit regressions and negative binomial models, respectively. The logit models examine whether in-group killings from the Troubles are associated with paramilitary-style attacks in the postconflict period, and the negative binomial models examine whether they are associated with the intensity of postconflict paramilitary-style attacks.[81] As a robustness check, we run the same models using the two alternative measures for paramilitary groups' wartime social control (see the online appendix).

Though there is some variation between Republican and Loyalist attacks, we find that areas with income deprivation, urban locales, and community strongholds are generally associated with a higher number of paramilitary-style attacks. This is consistent with existing research, though the findings for violent crime and antisocial behavior are less conclusive. We find that there is a legacy of wartime order. Areas where informal "justice" systems existed during the Troubles, as assessed by in-group killings, are more likely than areas without such a legacy of wartime social control to experience paramilitary-style

[79]We see a similar pattern when we look not only at the most deprived areas (in the 10th percentile) but in the top half of income deprivation: relatively deprived areas have a higher average of paramilitary-style attacks a decade after the Good Friday Agreement if they have a history of in-group killings from the Troubles.

[80]For more information on these indicators, see the online appendix.

[81]This is appropriate given overdispersion of the dependent variable. See William Gardner, Edward P. Mulvey, and Esther C. Shaw, "Regression Analyses of Counts and Rates: Poisson, Overdispersed Poisson, and Negative Binomial Models," *Psychological Bulletin* 118, no. 3 (November 1995): 392–404. The mean for Republican and Loyalist attacks (2008–16) is 0.11 and 0.17, respectively. Though most SOAs experience no attacks, a small number experience as many as six.

Table 1. Logistic regression models for paramilitary-style assaults (2016–18).

	Republican assaults	Loyalist assaults
Catholic in-group killings (1969–98)	0.27***	
	(0.07)	
Protestant in-group killings (1969–98)		0.45***
		(0.13)
Total population	0.23	0.16
	(0.17)	(0.13)
Urban	1.99**	1.10***
	(0.63)	(0.33)
Catholic stronghold	1.78***	
	(0.36)	
Protestant stronghold		1.61***
		(0.26)
Income deprivation rate	12.54**	10.76**
	(4.54)	(3.55)
Violent crime rate	0.02	−0.04*
	(0.02)	(0.02)
Antisocial behavior rate	−0.01	0.03**
	(0.01)	(0.01)
Akaike information criterion (AIC)	289.42	529.60
Log likelihood	−136.71	−256.80
Deviance	273.42	513.60
Num. obs.	890	890

Notes: ***$p < 0.001$; **$p < 0.01$; *$p < 0.05$.

Table 2. Negative binomial models for paramilitary-style assaults (2016–18).

	Republican assaults	Loyalist assaults
Catholic in-group killings (1969–98)	0.15**	
	(0.05)	
Protestant in-group killings (1969–98)		0.18*
		(0.08)
Total population	0.18	0.17
	(0.16)	(0.12)
Urban	1.57**	0.97**
	(0.51)	(0.31)
Catholic stronghold	2.18***	
	(0.33)	
Protestant stronghold		1.41***
		(0.24)
Income deprivation rate	7.72*	8.80**
	(3.88)	(3.18)
Violent crime rate	0.04**	−0.03
	(0.02)	(0.01)
Antisocial behavior rate	−0.02*	0.03***
	(0.01)	(0.01)
AIC	423.56	741.21
Log likelihood	−202.78	−361.60
Deviance	192.83	337.53
Num. obs.	890	890

Notes: ***$p < 0.001$; **$p < 0.01$; *$p < 0.05$.

attacks long after the conflict came to an end. Not only are they more likely to experience paramilitary-style attacks, the count models indicate that areas controlled during the conflict are also more likely to experience many of them.

Existing research and our interviews indicate that both the top-down and bottom-up mechanisms drive the pattern we observe. Both Republican and Loyalist armed groups have instrumental incentives to exercise social

control. They do so to show they are politically relevant to their communities—either through compliance or fear—for operational reasons. The Republican Action Against Drugs, for example, targeted "suspected drug dealers, sex offenders, and other criminals within their communities."[82] As during the conflict, this strategy aimed to undermine the legitimacy of the state, while promoting themselves as the rightful guardians of peace to "gain the support of elements of the local population while simultaneously taking control of others through fear and retribution."[83] Neither side is free from groups acting with criminal intent, engaging in extortion or trying to control the drug trade.[84] Whether for political or criminal reasons, existing research suggests that armed actors maintain informal "justice" systems for instrumental reasons.

There is also some indication that armed actors do so as they have come to see themselves as having a certain role in the community. This was clear following the brutal murder of Paul Quinn in 2007, who former PIRA members accused of criminality. The Independent Monitoring Commission (IMC) described the suspected murderers as "accustomed over a substantial period of time to exercising considerable local influence, collectively and individually" and that they "would find it very difficult to accept any waning in this influence and respect."[85] After the conflict, the PIRA stopped policing communities and left behind a policing vacuum. Drugs, which had historically been kept out of most urban and poor neighborhoods in Northern Ireland due to the high-security situation and the "policing" armed actors undertook, became a major problem. A "new crop of Republicans" emerged after the conflict to fill the void,[86] and they ensured that paramilitary groups continued "to do what they had always done, namely doing violence against their own communities,"[87] targeting those involved in drug dealing and antisocial behavior.

Our statistical analysis, combined with interviews and existing research, provide support for our first proposition. Deprivation, community strongholds, and urban areas are, as existing research suggests, associated with present-day paramilitary-style attacks, but we show that long after the conflict officially ended, armed groups also continue to rely on the legacy of wartime institutions. Indeed, among deprived areas, the average number of

[82]John Horgan, *Divided We Stand: The Strategy and Psychology of Ireland's Dissident Terrorists* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 38.
[83]Horgan, *Divided We Stand*; see also Jonny Byrne, Mary Conway, and Malcolm Ostermeyer, *Young People's Attitudes and Experiences of Policing, Violence and Community Safety in North Belfast* (Belfast, UK: Northern Ireland Policing Board, 2005), www.conflictresearch.org.uk/reports/young-people/NIPB-North-Belfast-Youth-Survey.pdf.
[84]Interviews, 27–31 August 2018.
[85]IMC, *Eighteenth Report of the Independent Monitoring Commission* (London: Stationery Office, 2008), 23.
[86]Dan Haverty, "Paramilitaries Are Surging Again in Northern Ireland," *Foreign Policy*, 24 May 2019.
[87]IMC, *Twenty-Sixth and Final Report*, 13.

attacks is much higher where paramilitary groups can draw on a legacy of social control from the Troubles. Not only do paramilitary groups benefit from controlling the same areas they controlled during the Troubles for instrumental reasons; they were socialized into doing so over a long conflict.

Assessing Bottom-Up Support for Informal Institutions in the Postconflict Period

We proposed that if the persistence of informal institutions from the conflict into the postconflict period is driven also by civilian socialization, civilians living in areas controlled by armed groups are likely to rate informal authorities highly and be skeptical of formal authorities. Our interviews, specifically with restorative justice organizations in Belfast and Derry, provide initial evidence of such a bottom-up mechanism. People from both Republican and Loyalist communities have come to expect the "swift" or "speedy" justice conducted by paramilitary groups during the Troubles and may be disappointed by what is perceived as a "slow" criminal justice system that is too lenient and "not going far enough."[88] There is a "folk memory" of going to the IRA if there was a problem to be solved in Republican communities, and that is hard to change.[89] Kevin Bean argues that extended social and family networks, combined with local traditions and loyalties, have provided a base for electoral and other passive support for particular dissident groups.[90] Even if it is a small share of the population that holds on to deep-rooted practices of going to the local armed group rather than the police—for instance, to report an incident of antisocial behavior—this process of citizen socialization fuels armed groups' effort to exercise social control. Indeed, the fact that many community-based restorative justice organizations—which emerged after the Troubles to tackle "punishment attacks" and internal community disputes—are led by former paramilitaries speaks to the enduring legacy of wartime social control.[91] In their capacity as former paramilitaries, they have a certain standing in the community and are, thus, in a position to mediate between still-active armed groups and potential "offenders."[92]

To shed more systematic light on the perceptions of people living in areas where paramilitary groups are present, in this section, we rely on a 2016 nationally representative survey ($N = 811$),[93] combining it with the geolocated data on paramilitary-style attacks. Due to the local nature of the social control paramilitary groups exert, the number of respondents who

[88]Interviews, 27–31 August 2018.
[89]Interview, 29 August 2018.
[90]Bean, "New Dissidents Are but Old Provisionals Writ Large?," 212.
[91]See Kieran McEvoy and Harry Mika, "Restorative Justice and the Critique of Informalism in Northern Ireland," *British Journal of Criminology* 42, no. 3 (Summer 2002): 534–62.
[92]Interviews, 28–30 August 2018.
[93]Dyrstad, Bakke, and Binningsbø, "Perceptions of Peace Agreements and Political Trust."

live in areas affected by paramilitary-style attacks is relatively low, but the nationally representative sample allows for analyses of perceptions that reflect those of the population as a whole.[94]

To probe respondents' views of informal and formal authorities, we draw on a hypothetical scenario aimed at capturing which authorities people could turn to when faced with a law-and-order problem that formally is the domain of the state: antisocial behavior. As shown above, during the conflict, in certain neighborhoods it became common to report antisocial behavior to informal rather than formal authorities. Therefore, if the legacy of informal institutions from the conflict is maintained by a bottom-up socialization mechanism, we expect people in areas presently controlled by paramilitary groups to find informal authorities effective and be skeptical of formal authorities.

The respondents were presented with the following scenario: "A man lives in a neighborhood where there is a severe problem of anti-social behavior, such as vandalism and car thefts. What would he do to try to solve the problem?" The survey enumerators then asked the respondents to assess how useful it would be to turn to a particular authority for help, on a scale of (1) "this would make no difference"; (2) "this might help a little"; and (3) "this would help a lot." The question does not force the respondents to pick one authority over another but allows them to rank different authorities' effectiveness. Here, we examine how useful people would find it to turn to the police, our indicator for a formal authority, and whether they would find it useful to "contact a member of the community who has influence," our indicator for informal authorities. For the latter, if prompted, the survey enumerators were instructed to say this was an informal person of influence.[95] This is not a direct measure of respondents' perceptions of paramilitary groups but, rather, a measure of their views regarding informal authorities more generally. Overall, as shown in Tables 3 and 4, most respondents (81 percent) say it would help (either "a little" or "a lot") to contact the police, whereas 76 percent said it would help (either "a little" or "a lot") to contact "a member of the community who has influence."

To isolate the association between paramilitary-style attacks and a respondent's rating of formal and informal authorities, we conduct multivariate regression analyses. The key independent variables are the number of Loyalist and Republican paramilitary-style attacks a decade on from the Good Friday Agreement in the SOA where each survey respondent lives.

[94]Whereas 68.6 percent of respondents (556) live in areas that have not experienced any paramilitary-style attacks, 18.7 percent (152) live in areas that have experienced between one and two attacks, and 12.7 percent (103) in areas that have experienced three or more.

[95]The answer options also included "contact a community leader, like social worker, youth group leader, or similar," which is not perfectly correlated with "a member of the community who has influence" (0.50), suggesting we are capturing something different.

Table 3. Respondents' view of the effectiveness of contacting "the police."

	All respondents (%)	Catholic respondents (%)	Protestant respondents (%)
"This would make no difference"	17	20	15
"This might help a little"	46	47	46
"This would help a lot"	34	30	38
"Don't know" or refused to answer	2	3	1

Table 4. Respondents' view of the effectiveness of contacting "a member of the community who has influence."

	All respondents (%)	Catholic respondents (%)	Protestant respondents (%)
"This would make no difference"	19	19	18
"This might help a little"	48	48	47
"This would help a lot"	28	26	32
"Don't know" or refused to answer	6	7	4

The survey was conducted in 2016; hence we measure the independent variable, paramilitary-style attacks, from 2008 to 2016. There were 733 attacks over this period, with Republican groups responsible for 47 percent and Loyalist groups for 53 percent. Over 30 percent of survey respondents ($N = 255$) live in an area that experienced at least one attack in this period.

Although we cannot establish causality, a high rating of informal authorities in these areas would indicate that paramilitary groups do not operate based on coercion alone—and the possibility that these practices are also associated with a bottom-up socialization mechanism of relying on informal authorities. The analyses include models for Catholic respondents and Protestant respondents separately to examine the social control exercised by armed groups within their respective communities. We run three logistic regression models: (1) whether respondents rate the police as effective ("help a little" or "help a lot" as opposed to "make no difference"); (2) similarly, whether respondents rate informal authorities as effective; and (3) whether respondents rate the effectiveness of informal authorities higher than the effectiveness of the police. In Models 1 and 2, we create dichotomous variables, as we are interested in whether respondents have faith in the effectiveness of a certain authority. The third model is based on a binary variable constructed from the two survey questions presented in Tables 3 and 4. It is coded as 0 if a respondent rates the effectiveness of the police as equal to or higher than her or his rating of whether it would be useful to contact a member of the community who has influence.[96] Approximately 23 percent rate informal authorities as more effective than the police.

[96]Although respondents were asked about the effectiveness of formal and informal authorities independently, they were first asked to rate the police. As such, they may consciously or subconsciously rate the effectiveness of the informal authority in light of their previous response regarding the police.

We control for several alternative explanations for people's rating of informal or formal authorities. We include age to capture whether respondents were socialized during the Troubles and, thus, are more likely to be used to turning to informal authorities. We include an indicator for whether respondents experienced violence at the hands of the state during the Troubles, expecting those who did to be more skeptical of formal authorities.[97] We control for gender, expecting women to be more wary of informal authorities.[98] We also control for trust in people in the neighborhood—those who do not trust their neighbors may prefer to go to the police, and we control for general levels of trust, as skepticism of either authority may be driving general (dis)trustfulness.[99] We control for whether respondents feel discriminated against on the basis of their community or religion, expecting those who do to be more skeptical of the state. We also include SOA-level controls. The first is a control for whether respondents live in a community stronghold, assessed as an SOA where more than 90 percent of the Christian respondents are either Catholic or Protestant. Overall, 31 percent of respondents live in community strongholds. We also control for levels of deprivation, measured in 2015–16 as the proportion of population living in households whose equivalized income is below 60 percent of the national median. On average, respondents live in SOAs where the level of income deprivation per this measure is 13 percent.[100] Finally, we control for whether respondents live in urban SOAs, 61 percent of whom do.

The statistical findings support the qualitative research, while revealing differences across the two communities.[101] The models in Table 5 show that there is a negative and significant association between Catholic respondents' rating of police effectiveness in SOAs affected by Republican attacks. Given the long-held concern about being seen as a "tout" among Catholics in Northern Ireland, particularly in areas controlled by paramilitary groups, this is as expected. However, as the results for Catholic respondents in Tables 6 and 7 show this skepticism of the effectiveness

[97]See Alexander De Juan and Jan Henryk Pierskalla, "Civil War Violence and Political Trust: Microlevel Evidence from Nepal," *Conflict Management & Peace Science* 33, no. 1 (February 2016): 67–88.

[98]Sabrina Karim finds that women's preference for contacting the police in a postwar society (Liberia) is conditioned by whether the police force has female members. If the same logic holds for informal authorities, women may be more skeptical of armed groups in Northern Ireland than the police, as these groups have primarily male memberships. See Karim, "Restoring Confidence in Post-Conflict Security Sectors: Survey Evidence from Liberia on Female Ratio Balancing Reforms," *British Journal of Political Science* 49, no. 3 (July 2019): 799–821.

[99]See Ken Newton and Sonja Zmerli, "Three Forms of Trust and Their Association," *European Political Science Review* 3, no. 2 (July 2011): 169–200.

[100]NISRA, *Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measures 2017* (Belfast: NISRA, 2017), https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/deprivation/northern-ireland-multiple-deprivation-measure-2017-nimdm2017.

[101]As advised by Luke Keele et al., we do not interpret control variables. See Keele, Randolph T. Stevenson, and Felix Elwert, "The Causal Interpretation of Estimated Associations in Regression Models," *Political Science Research and Methods* 8, no. 1 (January 2020): 1–13.

Table 5. Respondents' rating of police as effective when faced with an antisocial behavior scenario.

	Catholic respondents	Protestant respondents
Republican paramilitary-style assaults	−0.19**	
	(0.07)	
Loyalist paramilitary-style assaults		−0.04
		(0.09)
Age	−0.00	0.00
	(0.01)	(0.01)
Male	−1.04***	0.27
	(0.30)	(0.30)
General trust	−0.39	−0.78*
	(0.32)	(0.33)
Trust in neighborhood	0.39	0.39
	(0.23)	(0.25)
Discriminated	−0.65	−0.73
	(0.36)	(0.43)
Victim of state violence (1969–98)	−0.43	−1.00
	(0.41)	(0.74)
Community stronghold (SOA)	0.45	0.39
	(0.35)	(0.37)
Income deprivation (SOA)	−0.02	−9.18*
	(4.22)	(4.36)
Urban (SOA)	0.48	−0.14
	(0.32)	(0.33)
AIC	320.45	332.86
Log Likelihood	−149.23	−155.43
Deviance	298.45	310.86
Num. obs.	333	399

Notes: ***$p < 0.001$; **$p < 0.01$; *$p < 0.05$.

formal authorities is not matched by a positive view of informal authorities. Although Catholics respondents' rating of the effectiveness of informal authorities is positive in areas of paramilitary control, it does not attain traditional levels of significance. We find the opposite for Protestant respondents. Although there is a positive and significant association between Loyalist paramilitary-style attacks in an area and Protestant respondents' rating of the effectiveness of informal authorities, their rating of the police is negative but not significant. Predicted probabilities of the models (Figure 3) show that the effect of Protestant respondents' rating of informal authorities as effective (would "help a lot" or "help a little") when faced with an antisocial behavior scenario is consistently strong and increases as paramilitary groups' control of an area increases, though only marginally so. The models in Table 7 reinforce the findings in Tables 5 and 6, demonstrating that Protestant respondents in areas controlled by Loyalist paramilitary groups are more likely than those living in areas without such social control to rate informal authorities as more effective than the police. This is a nonnegligible effect according to the predicted probabilities in Figure 3.

There are a few reasons why Protestant respondents in areas of Loyalist paramilitary-style attacks may be more likely than their Catholic

Table 6. Respondents' rating of informal authorities as effective when faced with an antisocial behavior scenario.

	Catholic respondents	Protestant respondents
Republican paramilitary-style assaults	−0.05	
	(0.07)	
Loyalist paramilitary-style assaults		0.30*
		(0.13)
Age	−0.01	0.01
	(0.01)	(0.01)
Male	0.11	−0.16
	(0.30)	(0.28)
General trust	0.95**	−0.02
	(0.33)	(0.29)
Trust in neighborhood	0.92***	0.22
	(0.25)	(0.24)
Discriminated	−0.28	0.20
	(0.40)	(0.48)
Victim of state violence (1969–98)	1.73*	−0.05
	(0.77)	(0.82)
Community stronghold (SOA)	0.43	0.08
	(0.35)	(0.34)
Income deprivation (SOA)	−0.16	−14.40***
	(4.23)	(4.16)
Urban (SOA)	0.21	−0.52
	(0.32)	(0.30)
AIC	312.79	366.68
Log likelihood	−145.40	−172.34
Deviance	290.79	344.68
Num. obs.	320	386

Notes: ***$p < 0.001$; **$p < 0.01$; *$p < 0.05$.

Table 7. Respondents' rating of informal authorities as more effective than the police when faced with an antisocial behavior scenario.

	Catholic respondents	Protestant respondents
Republican paramilitary-style assaults	0.03	
	(0.06)	
Loyalist paramilitary-style assaults		0.25**
		(0.08)
Age	−0.00	0.01
	(0.01)	(0.01)
Male	0.18	−0.06
	(0.27)	(0.25)
General trust	1.00***	0.47
	(0.30)	(0.26)
Trust in neighborhood	−0.19	−0.25
	(0.21)	(0.22)
Discriminated	0.70*	0.75
	(0.33)	(0.39)
Victim of state violence (1969–98)	0.12	0.37
	(0.41)	(0.74)
Community stronghold (SOA)	0.04	−0.29
	(0.30)	(0.30)
Income deprivation (SOA)	−1.13	−10.01**
	(3.79)	(3.86)
Urban (SOA)	0.19	−0.36
	(0.29)	(0.27)
AIC	366.60	429.79
Log likelihood	−172.30	−203.90
Deviance	344.60	407.79
Num. obs.	318	386

Notes: ***$p < 0.001$; **$p < 0.01$; *$p < 0.05$.

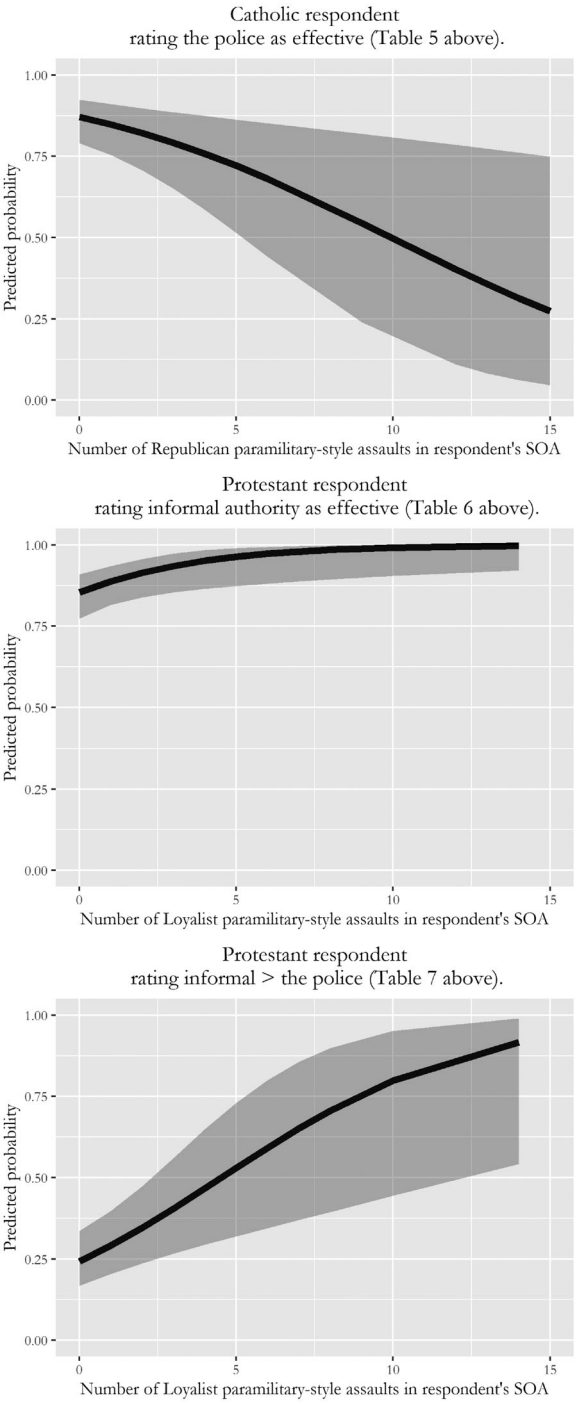

Figure 3. Predicted probabilities for the statistically significant results from the models reported in Tables 5–7. All variables are set at their mean or mode.

counterparts to consider informal authorities as effective—and more effective than the police. For one, working-class Protestants feel that they have not received their share of the "peace dividend" and have been left to fend for themselves, without official representatives—neither the state nor politicians—representing their interests.[102] Two, unlike the main Loyalist paramilitary groups from the Troubles, the main Republican paramilitary groups have publicly rejected the use of violence, including "punishment attacks." Indeed, in the Catholic community, these attacks are attributed to Republican dissident groups, which may shape people's perceptions of informal authorities more generally. Finally, Catholic respondents may be more affected by social stigma when answering these questions. According to Michael McKeown's data, sixty-six Catholic civilians and paramilitaries were killed for informing during the Troubles compared to twenty-nine from the Protestant community.[103] As it was predominantly Catholic areas that were targeted by British counterinsurgency strategies, it is also these areas that have inherited a strong stigma against informing or being a "tout." In the Protestant community, the British Army—initially at least—permitted informal "justice" activities.[104] As such, Catholic respondents may be more wary than Protestants to report that they would find informal authorities effective in handling a law-and-order problem.

All in all, these models show there is an association between paramilitary groups' social control in the postwar period and people's perceptions of formal and informal authorities. The findings suggest that the paramilitary groups' informal "justice" systems more than twenty years on from the Good Friday Agreement are not only the result of these groups' top-down incentives. They are also associated with skepticism of the effectiveness of formal authorities (among Catholic respondents) and a positive view of the effectiveness of informal authorities (among Protestant respondents). Our findings speak directly to those of the Independent Reporting Commission (IRC) in 2018, which concluded that there was fear and anger about the continuing coercive control exercised by paramilitaries in some communities, but also that the paramilitaries were "regarded by some in the community as protecting their areas."[105] Though our statistical analyses cannot causally establish that there is a socialization mechanism at work, and the differences across the Catholic and Protestant communities merit further investigation, this study is a first cut at systematically assessing the legacy

[102]Powell, "Policing Post-War Transitions."
[103]Michael McKeown, "Post-Mortem: An Examination of the Patterns of Politically Associated Violence in Northern Ireland during the Years 1969–2001 as Reflected in the Fatality Figures for Those Years," Conflict Archive on the Internet, 2009, http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/mckeown/mckeown01.pdf.
[104]See the mission outline by Tuzo, "Northern Ireland: Operation Motorman."
[105]Independent Reporting Commission (IRC), *First Report* (London: Stationery Office, 2018), 13.

of paramilitary groups' social control a decade or more after the conflict ended, encouraging further research in Northern Ireland and beyond.

Legacies of Informal Justice beyond Northern Ireland

We know armed conflicts leave legacies, though most work on postconflict societies focuses on the legacies of armed actors only as armed actors. Yet, as a growing body of work on wartime institutions and rebel governance highlights, armed actors do not just fight. They also govern, providing people with public goods that are central to their strategies for survival, particularly security. We focus on the continued efforts of armed groups in Northern Ireland to impose social control two decades after the signing of the Good Friday Agreement. Indeed, both Loyalist and Republican paramilitary groups—or individuals acting in their name—continue to orchestrate so-called punishment attacks as a way to control "their" communities. Instead of going away, armed groups operate by drawing on deprivation and the legacy of wartime institutions from the Troubles. Our study suggests that the continued existence of these informal "justice" systems in the postwar period may not be driven exclusively by paramilitary groups' top-down attempts to impose social control; this persistence is also associated with skepticism of the effectiveness of formal authorities and a more favorable view of informal authorities within certain communities.

Our findings contribute to a growing body of work that emphasizes armed actors' socialization during conflict, which may hinder their reintegration into "normal" life after conflict ends. Similarly, there is a renewed focus on how communities become used to certain types of governance and "justice" by nonstate actors during conflict. This study suggests that these dynamics are mutually reinforcing. Certain communities continue to look to informal authorities to take on some governance functions, and armed actors see their position as justified.

To what extent can findings from Northern Ireland resonate elsewhere? Most work on informal and wartime institutions focus on settings where the state is not sufficiently strong to exercise control over (parts of) the territory that it claims. However, paramilitary-style attacks in Northern Ireland occur in a strong state where the police undertake concerted efforts to prevent paramilitary groups from employing violence.[106] This is why we were initially puzzled by the case of Northern Ireland. These attacks also happen in a democratic state where the armed conflict resulted in a

[106]The PSNI set up a Paramilitary Crime Task Force as part of the Fresh Start policy in 2015. The policy seeks to provide a comprehensive framework for addressing some of the most challenging and intractable issues that have affected communities in Northern Ireland. See Northern Ireland Executive, *A Fresh Start: The Stormont Agreement and Implementation Plan* (Belfast, UK: Northern Ireland Executive, 2015), https://www.northernireland.gov.uk/publications/fresh-start-stormont-agreement-and-implementation-plan.

comprehensive peace agreement, and in which the peace process has enjoyed high support, both financially and in terms of public opinion.[107] As such, Northern Ireland is potentially a least likely case for observing armed groups' continued social control in the postwar period. Alternatively, do these conditions make Northern Ireland a most likely case? Indeed, the legacies of informal "justice" in Northern Ireland suggest three possible scope conditions that can guide future work as the research community builds up comparative research on the legacy of informal wartime institutions: state strength, conflict termination, and regime type.

First, what is particularly puzzling about the persistence of armed groups' informal "justice" systems in Northern Ireland is that these efforts at controlling communities are happening in a strong state. The state's ability to eliminate armed actors or challengers alone cannot explain the persistence of social control in Northern Ireland. Nor can it explain the variation in where paramilitary-style attacks take place. The police were a controversial and central actor during the Troubles, unable to police so-called no-go areas. But significant steps have been taken to reform the police to be representative of both Catholic and Protestant communities. Despite such efforts, the wartime orders created during the thirty years of the Troubles are hard to dislodge. The Northern Ireland case underscores that although state strength and legitimacy often go hand in hand, this is not always the case.[108] Our study speaks to the puzzling results of research that have examined international efforts to strengthen the formal institutions of the state to promote the rule of law in weak states. Robert A. Blair, Sabrina M. Karim, and Benjamin S. Morse emphasize that such programs require local community engagement that goes beyond bolstering the efficacy of the state to provide security or fight crime.[109] Our findings echo this implication. State strength may not be sufficient to explain why informal wartime institutions endure.

Second, to what extent is the manner in which an armed conflict ends consequential? Whereas our intuition is that informal institutions may be less likely to endure if there is a comprehensive peace agreement that tackles DDR, SSR, and political reforms—as these steps would weaken

[107]On financial support to the peace process, see the European Union's PEACE program at "Northern Ireland PEACE Programme," Fact Sheets on the European Union, European Parliament, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets/en/sheet/102/northern-ireland-peace-programme. On popular support for the peace agreement and peace process, see Dyrstad, Bakke, and Binningsbø, "Perceptions of Peace Agreements and Political Trust."

[108]This dynamic, specifically regarding police effectiveness and police legitimacy, is described as a "virtuous circle" by Robert A. Blair, Sabrina M. Karim, and Benjamin S. Morse, "Establishing the Rule of Law in Weak and War-Torn States: Evidence from a Field Experiment with the Liberian National Police," *American Political Science Review* 113, no. 3 (August 2019): 641–57.

[109]Blair, Karim, and Morse's research on confidence patrols programs in Liberia show that the programs reduced the incidence of some crimes and improved people's knowledge of the law. However, they did not improve trust in the police, courts, or government. Blair, Karim, and Morse, "Establishing the Rule of Law in Weak and War-Torn States."

armed groups and boost the legitimacy of the state as the upholder of law and order—one could argue that a peace agreement that grants amnesties to both sides, as in Northern Ireland, ensures that paramilitary groups remain on the scene. Our study draws on Bateson's findings from Guatemala,[110] where the armed conflict also ended in a peace agreement. Early findings following the 2016 peace agreement in Colombia indicate that paramilitary and rebel groups retain control in certain areas, and that they are reluctant to relinquish lucrative control of the drug trade and illegal mineral extraction.[111] Future research should explore whether the mechanisms identified in our study also exist in conflicts where rebels were defeated militarily, such as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam in Sri Lanka.

Third, the persistence of paramilitary groups' social control in Northern Ireland also draws attention to the role of regime type. Whereas our intuition is that armed groups' social control would be less likely to endure in a postwar state that is democratic than one that is authoritarian—as democracies may have more legitimacy—the other side of the coin is that as a democratic state, Northern Ireland and the United Kingdom tolerate dissenting voices in ways authoritarian states may not. Thus, a democracy may be the ideal environment for such wartime institutions to persist long after the armed conflict ends. The extent to which these dynamics will persist in more repressive states that employ harsher measures to eliminate them is uncertain. However, we might still expect informal "justice" systems to persist through the same mechanisms identified in our work. Indeed, although the United Kingdom is a democracy, these practices emerged and remained in place during a conflict in which the state actively sought to eliminate the groups and reduce their public and local support through a counterinsurgency campaign. Future work should explore the extent to which these institutions are sticky in more authoritarian and repressive postconflict environments.

The legacies of wartime institutions have important implications for policymakers in the United Kingdom and other postconflict states. Northern Ireland is an important case in its own right, with both observers and paramilitaries suggesting that the Brexit process has jeopardized peace.[112] Social control by paramilitary groups combined with the increasingly uncertain

[110]Bateson, "Socialization of Civilians and Militia Members."

[111]David Maher and Andrew Thomson, "A Precarious Peace? The Threat of Paramilitary Violence to the Peace Process in Colombia," *Third World Quarterly* 39, no. 11 (2018): 2142–72; Oliver Kaplan and Enzo Nussio, "Explaining Recidivism of Ex-Combatants in Colombia," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 62, no. 1 (January 2018): 64–93.

[112]See, for example, Katy Hayward, "Brexit Is Putting the North's Fragile Peace in Jeopardy," *Times*, 8 October 2018; Andrew Woodcock, "Anger over Northern Ireland Brexit Deal 'Could Creep over into Violence,' Loyalists Warn," *Independent*, 19 May 2021.

future posed by Brexit vindicate political commentators who emphasize the fragility of peace in Northern Ireland—as became evident with the riots in March–April 2021.[113] There are actors in Northern Ireland who would like a return to the violence of the Troubles,[114] and they have some support at the fringes of both communities that have been socialized over decades of conflict. The Good Friday Agreement has been hailed as a success, with other peace agreements modelled on it.[115] However, our findings point to the importance of postwar reform efforts recognizing that both decommissioning and SSR require consideration of how wartime actors do (or do not) govern, an aspect of postconflict society with which Northern Ireland still struggles.

The research in this study points to the challenges facing SSR if reform efforts do not recognize the legacies of both wartime violence and wartime institutions. Both armed actors and civilians can perpetuate these legacies, even in a strong state. Postwar state-building does not necessarily happen in a governance vacuum, and wartime institutions may persist long after a conflict ends, undermining efforts to consolidate political order. In the context of Northern Ireland, our findings support the IRC, which recommends a "Twin Track" approach that combines "policing and justice responses alongside measures to tackle the deep, systemic, socio-economic issues in the communities most affected by paramilitarism."[116] Indeed, our findings emphasize the "socio" side of persistent paramilitary control. They speak to social control by both progovernment and antigovernment armed actors in postwar cities in Syria and Iraq, for example, as well as in Libya, where armed actors exert substantial political power at a local level, including basic public goods provision.[117] Across several contemporary conflicts armed groups opposed to and aligned with the state have developed wartime institutions, which will have implications for the effort of any postwar authority to govern after a war ends.

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[113]David Mitchell, "Northern Ireland: The Politics Behind the Riots," *Conversation*, 21 April 2021; Susan McKay, "The North: 'Riots Stopped Because Prince Andrew or Philip or Something—He's Dead,'" *Irish Times,* 17 April 2021.

[114]According to the IRC, the number of paramilitary organizations and their membership appears to be increasing. See IRC, *Third Report* (London: Stationery Office, 2020).

[115]Christine Bell, "The Peace Agreements That Could Help Conflicts Today," *British Academy* (blog), February 20, 2018, https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/blog/peace-agreements-could-help-conflicts-today.

[116]IRC, *Third Report*, 12.

[117]Wolfram Lacher, *Libya's Fragmentation: Structure and Process in Violent Conflict* (London: Bloomsbury, 2019).

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Data availability statement

The data and materials that support the findings of this study are available in the *Security Studies* Dataverse at https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/XXQX2G.