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National Policy Agendas Encounter the City: Complexities of Political-Spatial Implementation

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Abstract

This article examines implementation of national political agendas in two urban settings—Israel’s program aimed at sole sovereign control of Jerusalem and Northern Ireland’s effort to build peace in Belfast. It is based on seven months of in-country research and 122 interviews conducted in 2015 and 2016. Political goals of united Jerusalem in Israel and shared future in Northern Ireland are problematized as they confront micro-scale urban dynamics and resistant patterns of community power. A national policy agenda aimed at managing a city requires a political-spatial process of implementation having erratic effects. National-urban disjunctions were found in fundamentally different national programs, illuminating the inherent disruptive quality of urban dynamics in resisting national mandates. Findings inform theories of policy implementation and urban governance, highlighting problematic characteristics of national goals when implemented in urban space and the role of ethnic and cultural interests operating outside formal urban governance institutions in impeding national directives.

Keywords

nationalistic conflict and the city, peacemaking, policy implementation, urban governance

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Examining urban arenas of ethnic, nationalistic, and religious conflict, this article focuses on problematic characteristics of national goals when implemented in urban space, and how social and ethnic interests operating within the city are capable of disrupting the implementation of national policy agendas. I will show in politically contested cities how national political goals are not clearly operationalized at the urban level. Rather, what I find is more complex and paradoxical. National political goals—whether they be partisan in promoting sovereign control or peacebuilding and conciliatory in aspiration—are transmitted to, and implemented in, cities in ways that produce ineffective outcomes, at times unintended and contradictory to the national goals themselves. This is due to two reasons—the problematic characteristics of the implementation process in actualizing national goals; and the existence of organized interests in the city unwilling to engage in formal governance institutions and able through their actions to impede policy strategies and distort intended outcomes.

Due to the political contestation found in divided societies such as Israel/Palestine and Northern Ireland, government plays an active role in seeking to manage or control the antagonistic urban area through the formulation of national political goals and mandates. Public authorities must adopt an explicit doctrine that justifies and defends their policies amid societal fragmentation. I focus in this article on national policy agendas adopted by the state regarding its desired urban outcomes in a society of conflicting ethnic groups. A state's governing agenda can either be ethnonational and exclusive or civic and inclusive (Lijphart 1977). In the first case, the morally based doctrines of an ethnonational group regarding sovereignty and cultural identity are determinative of how a government addresses the city. In the second case, government goals pursue a civic ideology that seeks to accommodate or transcend ethnonational ideologies.

What happens to the national political goals of Israel and Northern Ireland when they encounter the urban environment is the crux of this article's concern. A national policy agenda must be translated into technical prescriptions that seek to move a society, or in this case a city, toward national goals or visions. The moral and implementation dimensions of such national policy agendas have been identified as "fundamental" and "operative," respectively (Seliger 1970). The challenge for societies, and political leaders, is that operative forms of national agendas do not automatically proceed from the grand visions or ends asserted by fundamental moral assertions. For example, the moral ends of liberty and equality are espoused by proponents of both liberal economies and communism, yet they propose drastically different means as the way to achieve these ends (Seliger 1970).

National Policy Agendas and Local Implementation

The implementation of national policies and goals at the local level has been studied by numerous scholars. Pressman and Wildavsky (1973) emphasize the complexity of policy implementation, involving many interactions across different levels of government and the propensity for distortions, conflicts, and unexpected outcomes as divergent interests deliberate on how the policy should be specifically applied. Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983) develop a model to capture numerous variables for explaining successful implementation, including character of the problem, social and political context, and capacity of the legislature to structure the implementation process. Lipsky (1980) introduces a more bottom-up perspective on policy implementation, highlighting the role of implementing bureaucrats and agencies in attempting to carry out programs and guidelines that are often underspecified.

Scholars in the subfield of political development studies describe the urban political world as a complex arena of intersecting dynamics (Lucas 2017). There are many parts of the state, each with its own internal purposes, culture, and rules (Carpenter 2001). Different parts of the state will frequently conflict with one another, each pursuing different aims at the same time. “Intercurrence” takes place because the construction of policies is “the simultaneous operation of older and new instruments of governance, in controls asserted through multiple orderings of authority whose coordination with one another cannot be assumed” (Orren and Skowronek 2004, p. 113). With multiple political directives coexisting which impact urban space, intercurrency produces a political process of spatial and temporal complexity.

The interpretative approach emphasizes how policy directives and legislative language are inherently susceptible to multiple meanings and interpretations as they are implemented. Legislative goals are often formulated at an abstract level and are only tacitly communicated to reach cross-group legislative agreement. This confronts implementing actors, concerned publics, and other stakeholders with multiple meanings and a “struggle for the determination of meaning” during policy implementation (Yanow 1996, p. 19). During implementation, concurrence about the abstract language of policy directives “gradually moves toward a more complex view of policy meaning, nuanced in terms of spatial and power relations and contradictions between stated intent and action” (Yanow 1996, p. 29). Combining both top-down and bottom-up perspectives on policy implementation leads to understanding of the policy process as incorporating both central guidance and local autonomy (Pulzl and Treib 2006; Sabatier 1986; Scharpf 1978). More than the technical execution of political directives from above, implementation is a political process through which policy goals are reshaped, redefined, or even overturned.

The role of local stakeholders in influencing outcomes of the policy process, as identified by some implementation scholars, foregrounds the dynamics of urban governance. Urban regime and urban governance theories (Gross 2017; Pierre 1999, 2014; Stone 1989, 1993) describe how policy–government–economic–institutional actors come together in partnerships due to mutual interests. These theories assume that organized interests will be able and willing to enter into governing regimes or collaborative governing arrangements to increase their influence and to give them “privileged access to the political process” (Pierre 2014, p. 876). Even those groups such as the poor and minority populations who tend to lose out in governance often maintain a willingness to participate in governance (Stone 2015). In cities polarized by ethnopolitical conflict, however, willingness by local groups to participate in governance is not guaranteed due to fundamental disagreements about political control and sovereignty. Such groups may operate outside formal governance structures in efforts to resist governing mandates. Particularly problematic in implementing national goals is when deep ethnic and cultural divisions fragment and disrupt efforts at urban governance needed to manage and oversee national policy enactment.

The relationship between the state and the city—between national political goals and mandates and urban spatiality and everyday life—is not a dominant-subordinate one where national policies are logically transmitted downward, and operationalized, in urban space. Magnusson (2011, p. 5) pointed out that the “spatialities and temporalities of the city” constitute “an order not susceptible to sovereign authority” by the state. City politics and everyday dynamics commonly exceed the regulatory effort of the state (Magnusson 2011; Simone 2010). The state in its policy making and interventions seeks to impose order, schematic visions, and regularity (Scott 1999). Yet, the city presents a mosaic of local histories, geographies, and power relationships that can disrupt and otherwise distort mandates and goals established by the national state. This disjunction between state and city occurs in most places in the world, yet is of a more dramatic and contentious quality in the politically contested environments studied here. The deep societal fault-lines and political dynamics that exist amid political contestation fracture the national state and the city in complex, differing ways such that the city constitutes a space of semiautonomy from the state.

Jerusalem and Belfast

Jerusalem and Belfast illuminate the dilemmas and challenges faced by societies that are polarized by nationalistic conflict. In such cities, political control is contested as identity groups push to create a political system that

expresses and protects their distinctive group characteristics (Calame and Charlesworth 2009; Hepburn 2004). Such contestation exhibits a lack of trust in normal political channels and is capable of jumping tracks onto aggressive and violent pathways. There is a growing literature focused on politically contested cities vulnerable to violence (such as Bollens 2007, 2018; Brand and Fregonese 2013; Calame and Charlesworth 2009; Charlesworth 2006; Gaffikin and Morrissey 2011).

I selected Jerusalem and Belfast for study for three reasons. First, each city is the most populated within its country and encapsulates deep-rooted cleavages based on competing nationalisms and arguments over sovereignty or state legitimacy. Second, both provide multi-decade records of urban planning and management in contested bicomunal environments. In many polarized cities in other countries, the existence of unstable governing regimes prevents analysis of the long-term planning function. Third, both case studies are embedded in long-term and uncertain peacemaking contexts—Jerusalem since 1993 and Belfast since 1998. The two cases present different tempos and directions of national peacemaking—incremental improvement in Northern Ireland, disrupted and regressive in Israel and Palestine. The objective of this study is to examine the effectiveness of national policy agenda implementation in two cities that are similar in political contestability but different in how public authority addresses the ethnonationalistic conflict.

In both Israel and Northern Ireland, policy agendas by higher levels of government have been asserted concerning the status and future of their primary cities. In Israel's case, its long-held vision for Jerusalem is that it will always be united under Israeli rule. To support their unification goal, demographic dominance of Jews within the municipality was seen as critical. In the early 1970s, Prime Minister Golda Meir proclaimed that Israel should do all in its power to maintain the 73/27% Jewish to Arab numerical ratio then existing in the city. In 1980, the Israeli legislature passed the "Jerusalem Law," aspiring to bring Jerusalem fully under the control of Israel and to establish it as the clear capital of Israel. Despite the numerous efforts at finding an Israeli-Palestinian peace since 1993, the sole sovereignty goal pertaining to Jerusalem has been upheld as sacrosanct by successive Israeli governments. Most Israeli governments have proclaimed that Jerusalem will always be united under Israeli sovereignty, including the areas of East Jerusalem unilaterally annexed in 1967, and have rejected calls to divide the city politically. Israeli political control of Jerusalem and its urban area is linked to the significant national goals of military and political security. The pursuit of security extends into the civilian sphere—emphasizing growth and development programs that seek to maintain the demographic dominance of Jews in Jerusalem and its larger urban sphere. In the eyes of Israeli policy

makers, such demographic presence decreases the chances that political control will be wrested away from Israel in the future.

In the case of Northern Ireland, since the 1998 Good Friday Agreement (GFA), the goals of a shared future, shared space, and the ending of ethnic-religious (“sectarian”) division have been consistently asserted by government. A key policy document, *A Shared Future*, was produced by the British Government’s Northern Ireland Office in 2005 during a time of suspended Northern Irish government. Northern Ireland’s peacebuilding goals, as well as the 1998 peace accord itself, are products of multiple governmental actors both external and internal to Northern Ireland. Northern Ireland also emphasizes equality and “good relations” as primary peace goals. While the equality goal seeks to counter societal inequalities, the good relations goal aims at assuring harmony between sectarian groups in the carrying out of governmental programs. The strategy of Northern Ireland government seeks peacebuilding and reconciliation by transcending the sectarian differences linked to intergroup violence and tension.

Using Jerusalem (Israel/West Bank) and Belfast (Northern Ireland) as case studies, and employing multiple research methods during seven months of in-country fieldwork in 2015 and 2016, I investigate the relationship between national policy agendas and the spatial, economic, and social changes in the two primary cities since the 1993 Oslo Accord and the 1998 GFA, respectively. I investigate urban interventions that address economic development, borders, public services, urban violence, housing, development regulation, public space, and resident participation. I examine how these urban policies and their impacts have impacted effectiveness in implementing national policy agendas. I undertook 122 semistructured interviews (70 in Jerusalem, 52 in Belfast) with urban professionals, political leaders, community and nongovernmental organization representatives, and academic experts. I also investigated published and unpublished analyses and data from academic, agency, nongovernmental organization, social media, and popular press sources. I first engaged in field research in these two cities in 1994 and 1995 (74 interviews), and this provided a foundation upon which to make longitudinal appraisals.

Israel and Jerusalem: Sole Sovereignty

From the Oslo Accord in 1993 until the present, Israel’s policy agenda promoting its sole and unified political control over Jerusalem has continued without interruption. This is despite the period being one of repeated negotiation attempts at resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. During my first on-site field research, in 1994, the Jerusalem Municipality, as defined by Israeli

borders, had a population of 603,000 and was approximately 70% Jewish and 30% Palestinian (composed of Muslim and Christian populations) (Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies [JIIS] 1996). There was no separation barrier, and there was hope that the Oslo agreement might bring the sides together in peace, including an agreement regarding the political status of the city.

Field research in Jerusalem in 1994 documented the implementation of Israel's sole sovereignty project in Jerusalem (Bollens 2000). Whereas the Oslo peace was producing political changes in certain parts of the West Bank, there was tightening of Israel's control over Jerusalem, including restrictions on Palestinian institutional presence within Jerusalem and increased security checkpoints along the municipal border. A set of implementation tools during the early Oslo years, many part of the Israeli land-use planning system used since 1967, pursued three main goals related to Jerusalem: (1) facilitate the pace and increase the magnitude of Jewish development to maintain the Jewish/Arab demographic ratio, (2) locate new Jewish developments in municipal areas annexed by Israel in 1967 to create an obstacle to political division of the city, and (3) restrict Arab growth and development in the eastern sector to weaken their claims to Jerusalem (Bollens 2000).

More recent field research, in 2015, enables a longitudinal assessment of what has changed spatially over a 21-year period. The implementation of Israel's unilateral policy agenda has produced even greater imprints on the Jerusalem urban region but there also exist newer dynamics and impacts that add complexity and contradictions to the Israeli pursuit of sole sovereignty. Violence continues to plague daily life in the city. A wave of violence, occurring mostly in Jerusalem from September 2015 to January 2017, killed 46 Israelis and injured 645 persons. These attacks were carried out primarily by young, lone Palestinians, most of them from East Jerusalem and some from the West Bank, who have generally not been operatives of established organizations but rather young individuals inspired by the general political climate (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs).¹ Violence included stabbing attacks, shootings, vehicular ramming attacks, and a bus bombing.

The nationalistic competition over Jerusalem has produced a significantly bigger city in terms of population, growing from 603,000 in 1995 to 865,000 in 2015 (JIIS 2017). Israel's project of control in Jerusalem has intensified over the past 20 years. According to Peace Now,² in 1992, just ahead of the Oslo Accord, Jewish settlements (neighborhoods) built on expropriated land in areas of Jerusalem unilaterally annexed by Israel in 1967 were home to 125,800 Jewish residents. By the end of 2014, continued expansion of these areas led to there being 205,220 residents in these contentious developments in the eastern, southern, and northern sectors of the annexed area (JIIS 2015). These large developments constructed by the state have been built in

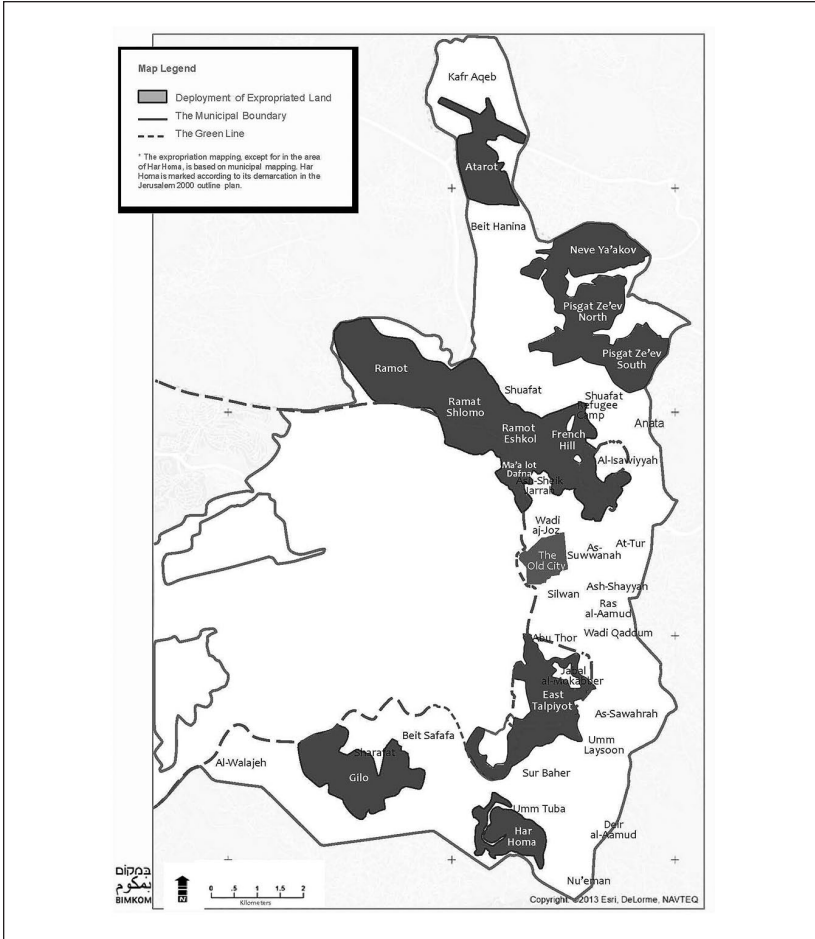


Figure 1. Jewish communities in annexed parts of Jerusalem.
 Source: Bimkom (2014).

locations to prevent political division of the city and to separate Arab East Jerusalem neighborhoods from each other and from the rest of the West Bank (see Figure 1).³ Several of these large projects continue to expand (Yudith Oppenheimer, executive director, Ir Amim, interview, January 26, 2016). In contrast, Arabs face severe development restrictions in the city. Detailed investigation of the Jerusalem Municipality planning system—including the citywide Master Plan, neighborhood outline plans, detailed

plans, and the subdivision process—reveal multiple layers of obstacles facing the Arab community that cumulatively result in the strong improbability, if not impossibility, of Israeli-approved Arab development at a level anywhere near what is needed to meet natural growth. Furthermore, an elaborate and convoluted road system functionally integrates the Jewish parts of the metropolitan area, splits Arab neighborhoods in some cases, and functionally segregates the road system from Jerusalem's Arab residents.

Outside Jerusalem, there has been extensive Israeli settlement activity in the West Bank over the past 20 years. Whereas 105,400 Jewish settlers lived in the West Bank outside Jerusalem in 1992, this had grown by the end of 2015 to 385,900. Combining East Jerusalem and West Bank figures, the number of Jewish settlers has increased from 231,200 in 1992 to 591,120 in 2015 (Peace Now).⁴

In terms of the magnitude and location of Israel-promoted development for Jewish residents, the period of 1994–2016 has witnessed intensification and deepening in the implementation of Israel's policy agenda. Whereas political negotiations come and go, the Israeli project of strengthening Jewish control over Jerusalem and the West Bank has a staying power undeterred by broader politics.

The most visible feature in the Jerusalem landscape today is the separation barrier, which started construction in 2003 for the stated purpose of security amid horrific violence and loss of Jewish life during the second Intifada. From 2000 to 2004, there were numerous attacks by Palestinians of Israeli Jews in Jerusalem, killing 210 people and wounding many more in suicide bomb attacks of buses and restaurants (Shragai 2015). There were 337 incidents of violence in the city from 2001 to 2004, a majority of events occurring along the boundary separating Jewish West from Arab East Jerusalem (Bhavnani et al. 2013).

The separation barrier cuts off thousands of Palestinians from the city. With 13 heavily guarded checkpoints along the Jerusalem barrier, the wall is more than 40 miles long in the Jerusalem urban region, and more than 97% of its route extends beyond the "green line" that politically demarcates Israel from the West Bank (International Peace and Cooperation Center [IPCC] 2007). The wall severs from the city (by placing them east of the wall or enclaving them within walls) between 70,000 and 100,000 Palestinian Jerusalemites who presently live within municipal Jerusalem (Nadav Shragai, senior researcher, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, interview, December 17, 2015). Also separated from Jerusalem are another estimated 145,000 Palestinian Jerusalemites with historic ties to the urban center who live in villages adjacent to Israel's Jerusalem municipal border (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory [OCHAOPT] 2011). Arab villages have

gone through radical upheavals in price of land, residence, and travel due to the separation barrier, resulting in substantial relocation and loss of value away from Palestinian individuals and economy (Savitch and Garb 2006). Israeli policies of separation and exclusion have caused “warehousing of Palestinian residents in the city and the abandonment of neighbourhoods” (Dumper and Pullan 2010, p. 1). For Palestinians, widespread adverse impacts of the barrier have been documented (Brooks et al. 2007). In the future, the planned route of segments of the barrier not yet constructed anticipates consolidating into the city sphere three large Jewish residential blocs built on occupied Palestinian territory east, north, and south of municipal borders. Palestinian suicide and other bombing attacks against Israelis are down since the construction of the separation barrier began. From 2000 to 2004, there were 132 such attacks in Israel killing 502 individuals, while from 2005 to December 2011, there were 18 attacks killing 59 individuals (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2016). However, the barrier may not be restricting Arab mobility into Jerusalem as much as security experts expected (United Nations OCHA OPT 2013). The Israel Defense Forces report that along the entire barrier length, about 50,000 Palestinians enter Israel illegally every day through gaps (Lis 2016).

Challenges in Implementing Israel’s Policy Agenda

Despite the continuation and deepening of Israel’s policies since 1967 aimed at sole sovereignty of Jerusalem, urban and spatial phenomena have emerged over the past 20 years that are creating greater complexities and contradictions not fully consistent with Israel’s pursuit of political control. These phenomena include the problematic location of the separation barrier, extensive unlicensed development by Jerusalem Arabs, and the complicating effects of Israeli attempts at territorial control through settlement building. Each dynamic shows that Israel’s national political goal of a united Jerusalem has become problematized as it is operationalized and enacted in urban space. The net effect of these features paints a complex picture of Jerusalem today, one that neither promotes Israel’s sole political control nor supports a genuine sharing of the city.

Location of separation barrier. At times, Israeli actions cause consequences that work against its own political goals of strengthening control of Jerusalem. The location of the separation barrier in the northeastern area of Kafr Aqab and in the eastern area of the Shuafat refugee camp is an example of this conundrum. In these areas, the barrier puts these Jerusalem neighborhoods that are *within* the municipal limits *outside* the wall. This has paradoxically (from Israel’s perspective) stimulated development in these places. This

is so because planning and building the separation barrier had threatened Palestinians in the urban region with the potential loss of their Jerusalem residency status. Consequently, Kafr Aqab has become the Jerusalem address for many Palestinians outside the city; by paying property taxes in Kafr Aqab, these residents can maintain residency in the city (Fouad Hallak, policy advisor, Negotiations Support Unit, Palestine Liberation Organization, interview, December 7, 2015). From 2006 to 2010, 20% of all recorded residential construction in Arab East Jerusalem took place in Kafr Aqab (JIIS 2011). By 2011, of 15 Arab neighborhoods, Kafr Aqab had the second greatest area of square meters of built space (JIIS 2012). Estimates are that between 70,000 and 100,000 residents now live in Kafr Aqab and Shuafat refugee camp areas within the city but outside the wall (Israel Kimhi, Director of Jerusalem Studies, JIIS, interview, December 3, 2015). As many as 60,000 residents are holders of Jerusalem identity cards.⁵

Palestinians have been able to build extensively in these two areas, taking advantage of the fact that since the barrier's construction, the Municipality has abandoned governance in Kafr Aqab and Shuafat refugee camp areas, leading to an atmosphere of unregulated growth (Ir Amim 2015). As Palestinians living outside city borders have purchased properties in these largely unregulated neighborhoods to maintain Jerusalem residency, this counters Israel's demographic mission to weaken the official Arab population count of Jerusalem residents. Furthermore, the migration of Palestinians without official residency status into these areas has produced two dense Arab settlement nodes that are officially within the city. Immigration of Arabs to the Israeli side of the barrier, caused by the threat of being outside the barrier, has also increased the density of Arab settlement in the rest of the city, driven up housing prices, and led some Arabs to migrate into Jewish neighborhoods (contrary to city objectives to keep the two groups separate). By putting the separation barrier inside the Municipality border in these two locations, Israel's actions have created consequences contrary to their political goals of weakening the Palestinian presence in the city.

The explosively growing Kafr Aqab and Shuafat camp areas are places of extreme neglect, with roads, schools, parks and infrastructure either in an extremely dilapidated condition or nonexistent. No formal institutions govern the area, and the Palestinian National Authority is disallowed by Israel from operating within the Municipality (Adel Abu Zneid, Member of Fatah Committee in Jerusalem, interview, October 27, 2015). Amid such a void, the more politically extreme political party of Hamas is gaining footholds in the area, particularly within the refugee camp itself. "We always think we are the smartest people in the room," observes Gillad Rosen (Senior Lecturer, Hebrew University, interview, October 11, 2015), "but we have manipulated

ourselves by creating a problematic ‘internal frontier’ within the city.” Amir Cheshin (Arab Advisor to the Mayor 1984–1994, interview, November 17, 2015) adds that “we have shot ourselves in the leg by building the wall inside the city.”

Arab unlicensed development in Jerusalem. Another conspicuous feature in 2016 compared with 1994 is the amount of unlicensed Palestinian development in Jerusalem, of such magnitude that it is overwhelming the Israeli legal and regulatory system aimed at restricting it. According to Israeli data, the Arab percentage of city population increased from 30% of city population in 1995 to 37% in 2014 (JIIS 2016). From 1995 to 2014, the Arab population in Jerusalem increased by 134,000, while the Jewish population increased by 113,000 (JIIS 2016). This growth in Arab population in the city is not due to increased housing opportunities for them in the city authorized by the Municipality; indeed, such opportunities are severely restricted by Israel. Rather, growth is occurring through unlicensed housing construction deemed illegal by Israel. The most cited figure for the number of unlicensed units in Arab East Jerusalem is 20,000, which would mean more than 30% of all Palestinian units in Jerusalem are not authorized by the Israeli state. In the period 2001–2010, 70% of all new Palestinian construction is estimated to have been unlicensed (IPCC 2013).

The fact that Arab growth in the city has increased during a time of strict Israeli controls over formal development exposes a major vulnerability and crack in the implementation of Israel’s sole sovereignty policy goals. “For a long time now,” says Meir Margalit (former Jerusalem municipal councilor, interview, October 27, 2015), “the Municipality has lost control over what is happening on the ground.” Observes Efrat Cohen-Bar (planner, Bimkom, interview, January 21, 2016): “There is no possibility of Israel stopping this illegal building. Israel has lost the larger battle of Jerusalem.” Municipal officials are aware that unlicensed housing is increasing, but for the most part, look the other way. In certain Arab neighborhoods in Jerusalem, Israeli police do not allow Municipality housing inspectors to enter the area due to security concerns. Although some demolitions by Israel of unlicensed housing occurs in Jerusalem, the large-scale demolition of thousands of unlicensed units would be politically difficult because Israel would need to destroy substantial urban fabric.

The extent of unlicensed Arab development over the past two decades on one hand is meeting, at least partially, objective needs for housing and bolstering Palestinian political-demographic claims. However, on the other hand, unlicensed development frequently occurs in haphazard, ad hoc patterns and is unsupported by community assets such as parks, neighborhood centers,

employment opportunities, utility connections, and adequate roads. Such impoverished and unbalanced community development creates ghettos and slums lacking in real opportunity and is associated with feelings of hopelessness and despair (Y. Oppenheimer, interview, January 26, 2016). Inequality between Arab parts of East Jerusalem and the rest of the city in terms of public services and economic opportunities is striking. Whereas the population of Arabs in the city is 37%, no more than 11% of the city budget is allocated to the eastern Arab sector (United Nations Human Settlements Programme [UNHSP] 2015). Arab East Jerusalem has experienced substantial marginalization over the past three decades; its contribution to the gross regional product of the West Bank has decreased from 15% in 1987 to below 7% in 2010 (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development 2013). This economic decline has produced new depths of deprivation and neglect; the share of Arab families in Jerusalem living under the Israeli poverty line rose from 64% in 2003 to 79% in 2015 (JIIS 2004, 2017).

The demographic-political competition in Jerusalem is strikingly asymmetric in terms of institutional capacity—a contest between well-funded and coordinated Israeli development and a poorly coordinated Arab development dynamic unsupported by Palestinian public authorities banned by Israel from operating in the city. Nonetheless, this competition is producing a demographic stalemate.

Territorial expansion. A national policy agenda aimed at political-territorial control of a city has no ending point or completion because the robust and resilient nature of urban and regional demographic and spatial dynamics can militate against its success. In other words, territoriality tends to engender territoriality (Sack 1986). Israeli actions since 1967 have at one level increased Israeli political control of the city. Growth strategies have sustained a solid, yet decreasing, Jewish majority within municipal borders drawn by Israel. Outside the city borders, “thickening” strategies pertaining to building and expansion of three major suburban settlement blocs create the spatial foundations for future Israeli annexation strategies. Yet, this landscape of domination is one of internal frictions and personal insecurity.

Within the city, major friction is due to extended Jewish penetration into disputed and contested territory in annexed parts of the city. Demographically based planning in pursuit of political control meant that the location of new Jewish neighborhoods was just as important to Israel as the pace and extent of development. Thus, the new neighborhoods after 1967 were built in “east” Jerusalem across the green line that had politically divided Jewish and Arab Jerusalem from 1948 to 1967. With the goal of political control, spatial penetration and consolidation of the East became vital. Yet, the greater the territory

that Israel has sought to control politically in the city, the more difficult it becomes for Israel to fully secure the urban environment as the two antagonistic groups are brought closer together spatially. The extensive spatial reach of Jewish neighborhoods adjacent to ghettoized and fragmented Arab villages provides multiple interface points where interpersonal and intergroup conflict occur. Volatile interfaces are evident along the former border of the 1948 green line, along interfaces between Jewish and Arab neighborhoods created in annexed parts of Jerusalem, along the 1967 enlarged Israeli municipal border, and at checkpoints of the separation barrier. These are areas of recurrent tensions due to the proximity of Arab and Jewish neighborhoods and the frequency of Jewish-Arab interactions. In the violence of 2015 and 2016, many stabbing attacks took place near the old green line, at and proximate to the Damascus Gate area in East Jerusalem. Meanwhile, the Israeli-delineated municipal border and barrier wall has created increased points of conflict between antagonistic groups at security checkpoints and other mobility crossroads.

Unilateral actions have sought to increase Jewish spatial and political claims to disputed territory, penetrated and fragmented Palestinian communities and villages, and radically changed the physical landscape of the city. Yet, these strategies have irretrievably divided the social fabric of the urban system. A former head of the strategic planning division of the Israel Defense Forces acknowledges that “there is a two-state reality in Jerusalem,” exposing the ineffectiveness of Israel’s unilateral approach to the city (Udi Dekel, managing director, Institute of National Security Studies, interview, February 3, 2016).

Intertwined with Israel’s policy agenda of political control in the city of Jerusalem is the extensive settlement of the West Bank outside the city. Israeli policy that has sustained a Jewish majority within Jerusalem confronts a metropolitan region that is as much Arab as Israeli.⁶ Consequently, metropolitan aggrandizement through the building of suburban settlement blocs becomes a necessary extension of Israel’s sole sovereignty strategy so as to consolidate its hold on the metropolitan region as a way to protect Jewish Jerusalem. Motivated by nationalistic pursuit of a greater Israel, the political-territorial project also extends itself into the further reaches of the West Bank, requiring substantial military and physical infrastructure for protection. With more than 125 official Jewish settlements in the West Bank outside Jerusalem, the need for protection by the Israeli state intensifies and becomes increasingly complex in its implementation. As of December 2015, there were 543 closure obstacles in the West Bank—including checkpoints, concrete roadblocks, earth mounds and walls, road gates and barriers, and trenches (United Nations OCHAOPT 2016). As the unilateral project enlarges its geographic scale, it becomes increasingly entangled in conditions of economic inequality and

violence. United Nations OCHAOPT (2016, p. 18) described settlement-related activities as having “undermined the living conditions of Palestinians and rendered them increasingly vulnerable.” Approximately 600,000 Palestinians in the West Bank and in Jerusalem face severe humanitarian need (Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics 2014). As settlement activity continues, violence in the West Bank has intensified. In 2015, the number of Palestinian and Israeli casualties in the West Bank and Israel was the highest since 2005 (United Nations OCHAOPT 2016).

The Israeli settlement project in the West Bank has also created problematic political realities for Israel. With extensive Jewish residential presence in the West Bank outside Jerusalem, the possibilities for there to be an effective two-state political solution is increasingly being extinguished (Daniel Seidemann, lawyer and director, Terrestrial Jerusalem, interview, January 1, 2016). One response to this new reality is consideration of a binational one-state strategy (LeVine and Mossberg 2014; Mitnick 2016; Tarazi 2004). Yet, moving to a binational democratic one state would expose Israel to the demographic realities that such a state would, over time, assume a Palestinian demographic majority, endangering the “Jewish” nature of Israel today.⁷

Northern Ireland and Belfast: Building Peace in a Post-Violent City of Conflict

In contrast with the Israel case, Northern Ireland created a peace agreement that included the core political sovereignty issues underlying violent conflict and one that has effectively countered regression back to organized violence. In the 15 years after negotiated peace (1999 to 2014), there were 100 security-related deaths; this is far lower than the 564 deaths from 1989 to 1999, 833 from 1979 to 1989, and 1,892 from 1969 to 1978 (Police Service of Northern Ireland⁸). The historic shift in Northern Ireland governing institutions and constitutional status occurred with the April 1998 Good Friday Agreement (GFA). This agreement allowed the transference of day-to-day rule of the province from Britain to a directly elected Northern Ireland Assembly, in which Protestant unionists and loyalists share power with Catholic nationalists and republicans. Major legislative decisions require concurrent majorities from both Protestants and Catholics. The GFA also states that Northern Ireland is to remain within the United Kingdom as long as a majority in the province wants to remain there.

The GFA fundamentally restructured government in Northern Ireland and has produced a framework of shared power between former enemies. Yet, peacebuilding is a process that involves not just political reorganization but also requires implementation of urban policies that operationalize peace in

locations where historically antagonistic groups live, work, and cope in proximate urban space. It is at this urban level that the peace process has met its greatest obstacles.

Since the Good Friday peace accord, the Northern Ireland government has put forward meaningful urban goals addressing the future of Belfast. The objectives of *shared future*, *shared space*, and the ending of ethnic-religious (“sectarian”) division have been asserted by successive governments. In 2005, Northern Ireland government released *A Shared Future* (Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister [OFMDFM] 2005), where it argued against continued community division between Protestants and Catholics and advocates sharing over separation. It stated (p. 4):

The division that perpetuates itself in Northern Ireland is costly both socially and economically. Adapting public policy in Northern Ireland simply to cope with community division holds out no prospect of stability and sustainability in the long run.

It further underscored that, “separate but equal is not an option . . . that parallel living and the provision of parallel services are unsustainable both morally and economically” (p. 20). Most ambitious of government goals pertaining to the legacy of separation is the proclamation by the Northern Ireland Executive in 2013 that the numerous physical barriers and walls that divide neighborhoods will be removed by 2023.

In addition to shared future goals, Northern Ireland also emphasizes *equality* and *good relations* as primary goals guiding future policy (Northern Ireland Act of 1998; OFMDFM 2010, p. 3). The equality mandate requires that government pursue equality of opportunity between persons of different religious belief and political opinion. The good relations goal states that policies must be carried out with “regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.” While the equality goal seeks to counter deeply ingrained social and religious inequalities, the good relations goal aims at assuring harmony between sectarian groups in the carrying out of governmental programs.

In its efforts to transcend the sectarian differences that are associated with intergroup violence—foregrounding sharing, equality, and good relations as primary goals—these strategies of Northern Ireland government attempt to promote peace and reconciliation and are a radical departure from the decades of discriminatory Protestant rule (1920–1972) and the period of British “direct rule” (1972–1998), which focused conservatively on maintenance of the status quo amid destabilizing political violence.

Challenges in Implementing Northern Ireland's Policy Agenda

The goals incorporated pursuant to the GFA put forth admirable goals of peace-building while remaining at a level of abstraction that has created uncertainty in their implementation. Political negotiations between antagonistic groups—both in the momentous peace agreement and in subsequent policy documents aimed at building peace—are of extreme difficulty. With opposing sides coming to the negotiating table having ideologically opposed perspectives and narratives, language incorporated into political and policy agreements became necessarily abstract to accommodate these differences. Frank Gaffikin (professor, Queen's University, interview, March 15, 2016) observes, "We have had a lot of change language and empty signifiers since 1998." A "creative ambiguity" in terminology was used to facilitate political compromise (Colin Knox, professor, University of Ulster, interview, April 7, 2016). This "discursive and ambiguous language of the peace agreement was necessary so that all could sign on" to the Agreement, observes Brendan Murtagh (Queen's University, interview, March 21, 2016). Less attention was paid in the GFA to how such goals would be implemented in ways to effectively address core issues of injustice and inequality (Duncan Morrow, chief executive officer, Community Relations Council 2002–2011, interview, May 16, 2016).

Thus, the implementation of specific policies to remedy inequalities, increase harmony and tolerance between individuals and groups, and increase mutual sharing has created tensions and political difficulties. Political discussions in Northern Ireland government at a "symbolic, rhetorical level" have not been directly useful for implementation at the "urban and specific level" (James Anderson, professor, Queen's University, interview, March 22, 2016). The abstract nature of goals in the peace accord left "huge embedded contradictions" in their implementation (B. Murtagh, interview, March 21, 2016). "After all the fuzzy technologies of politics needed to get us across the line for Good Friday," adds Murtagh, the real work came when it was "time to work out what these concepts really mean on the ground."

Peacebuilding goals and sectarian realities. Problems created by the abstraction of policy goals have become particularly acute when these high principles are operationalized in the complex environment of a city such as Belfast. The distorted urban spatial realities of Belfast created and reinforced during the violent years of "the Troubles" (1968–1998) have constituted significant obstructions to the implementation of new peacebuilding political goals. Consequently, the translation to the urban level of the political goals of sharing, equality, and good relations has been a process replete with complexities and contradictions that disrupt and restrict the effectiveness of the

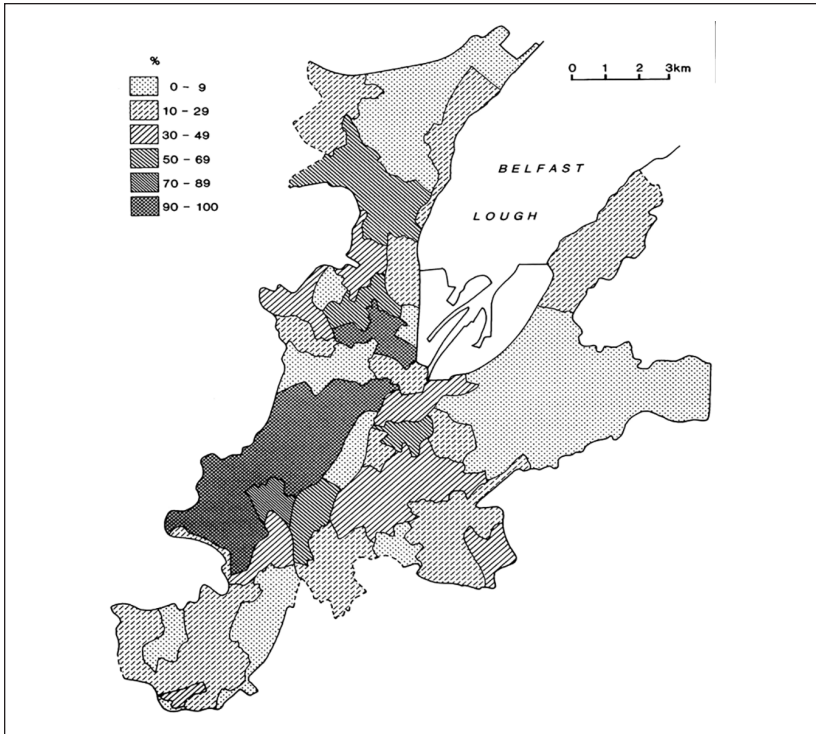


Figure 2. Distribution of Catholics in Belfast urban area (% Catholics in each neighborhood).

Source: Boal (1994).

political mandates. Northern Ireland's peacebuilding goals confront a sectarian divided city of structural inequality reinforced by numerous interface barriers. The physical legacies of the Troubles are numerous—residential hypersegregation of Catholics and Protestants (see Figure 2); deep-rooted sectarian “ownership” of many neighborhoods, which prevents accommodating members of one religious group in the other group's “territory”; disconnection, partition, enclosures, dead spaces, policeable and controllable space, and provocative symbols. Reinforcing the durability of these spatial legacies are local actors who feel they gain more by existing sectarian territoriality than in changing it. In Belfast, this includes paramilitary legacy groups and dissidents who control sectarian territories through their involvement in community organizational infrastructure, local politicians who are electorally wedded to their sectarian districts, and residents who feel secure

in their segregated neighborhoods. Whereas national goals articulate general principles, intervention in contentious urban places such as Belfast requires a more detailed calibration of the myriad conflicting imperatives found in the city. When abstract national peacebuilding concepts encounter sectarianized urban space, they have become susceptible to clashing political interpretations and manipulations (C. Knox, interview, April 7, 2016).

The fundamental challenge facing policy makers in Belfast is that the persistence of sectarian territoriality in the west, east, and northern parts of the city has created two cities in effect—one part is Catholic, growing in population, but experiencing limited land for growth in areas typically considered Catholic; the other is Protestant, stagnating in population, and living in areas of underutilized and vacant land. Catholics have greater objective need for new housing due to their growth rate.⁹ But due to the difficulty of finding suitable noncontentious sites outside of traditionally Protestant areas, the ability to meet Catholic need is severely limited. In contrast, Protestants argue for more housing, jobs, and services in their communities to bring back the vitality that has been lost in the past decades. The two communities, beset by territorial boundaries that preclude normal urban functionality, experience differential community needs—objective needs on the Catholic side, needs for community revitalization on the Protestant side. The dilemma faced by government when intervening in the sectarian city is illuminated by Jennifer Hawthorne (Head of Income and Communities, Northern Ireland Housing Executive, interview, April 14, 2016):

We have a grossly inefficient housing market in Belfast. We need 346 acres of land to house Catholics in west Belfast. On the Protestant side, we have 356 acres of land vacant. They are 320 feet apart. But we have to pay top dollar for sites in the Catholic west boundary area when we own sites 320 feet away that we can't do anything with.

When peacemaking goals such as shared future, equality, and good relations are operationalized, they face deep fractures in the urban system. Because the Catholic population faces greater levels of socioeconomic deprivation and objective housing need (Gaffikin et al. 2016), the challenge becomes how to distribute more housing and other resources to the Catholic population without it antagonizing Protestants to such a degree that intergroup relations deteriorate.

The redevelopment of the closed Girdwood Barracks site in North Belfast reveals the difficulties of operationalizing peacebuilding goals. Formerly the largest British army base in Northern Ireland, this 14-acre site is close to both Catholic and Protestant neighborhoods, and redevelopment plans ignited a

sectarian dispute over prospective uses. On one hand, the plan sought to build a greater amount of housing to be used by Catholics to meet projected demand. On the other hand, Protestant leaders argued that such housing would facilitate Catholic intrusion that would negatively impact Protestant areas, degrade good relations between the two sides, and eliminate the possibility for shared space in the area. This project shows how equality and shared future principles can be taken up by each community as a convenient leverage for their own advocacy (Gaffikin et al. 2016). The Protestant side argued that the pursuit of equality, which effectively supported a greater Catholic presence on the site, was contrary to promotion of good relations and a shared future. In contrast, the Catholic side argued that sustainable good relations could not occur without implementation of equality policies. The Girdwood project was eventually built, but with significantly less Catholic housing than objective need would require (F. Gaffikin, interview, March 15, 2016).

The dynamic at Girdwood is one that exists throughout the city when policy makers seek to intervene in the city post-GFA. The identification of land suitable for future development, where to build new and revitalize existing housing, the location of community recreation and health facilities, the intended removal of walls and sectarian interface barriers, and development of sites for economic purposes each confront the sectarian territoriality of the spatial landscape and the deeply rooted and obstructive antagonistic forces on the ground. As a result, “we acquiesce to community divisions rather than address them” (Mike Morrissey, community economic consultant, interview, April 12, 2016).

Government-funded social housing for Belfast low-income residents constitutes a particularly difficult issue facing policy makers in the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE). Because more than 90% of social housing in the city is currently segregated, decisions regarding the location of new social housing, and who will live there, are an important leverage in creating a city where the two sides are less geographically segregated (J. Hawthorne, interview, April 14, 2016). Yet, the building of new social housing that is shared between Protestants and Catholics runs up against the sharp edge of embedded and obstructive sectarian territoriality. Many neighborhoods in Belfast remain the protectorates of strong community voices who seek to maintain the status quo of separation. “People are still sitting in single-identity communities often with the strong presence of paramilitaries,” notes Hawthorne (interview, April 14, 2016). The establishment of shared housing estates commonly faces resistance by the two main Protestant loyalist paramilitary groups and by Catholic dissident republicans. If located close to Protestant areas, threats and spray-painting of “no Catholics” on buildings

have occurred. Shared estates elsewhere become captured by republicans through threats and the flying of the Irish Tricolor flag. Integrated, shared housing also exposes the policy tensions in seeking to transform Belfast's sectarian geographies. Responding to the equality mandate, new social housing should accommodate the greater objective need of Catholics. Yet, shared space and good relations goals call for a religious mix in these estates greater than would be produced using strict needs-based criteria.

Sharing space in a divided city. The most spatially specific peacemaking goal of government arising from the GFA has been the promotion of "shared spaces" where both Protestants and Catholics can have access to urban space without fear of threat and intimidation. In a city where ethnic space is inscribed through segregated and territorially bound neighborhoods, the development of such shared spaces constitutes a central challenge, especially in deeply sectarian working-class neighborhoods. The Girdwood example discussed earlier shows how the creation of shared spaces becomes highly problematic amid contesting communities. The construction of a community recreation hub in that area has been criticized as creating a "more benign peace wall" that separates more than brings together adjacent Protestant and Catholic neighborhoods (F. Gaffikin, interview, March 15, 2016). Rather than building a facility that connected to the genuine needs of the two communities, the high-quality community center with international funding was just "plopped down" in the area without real connectivity to the two communities nearby (Mark Hackett, Hackett Architects, interview, March 29, 2016; Ken Sterrett, senior lecturer, Queen's University, interview, March 23, 2016).

The "shared space" goal suffers from a level of abstraction that does not denote a methodology about how it is to be achieved in contentious geographies (Milena Komarova, Research Fellow, Queen's University, interview, March 24, 2016). Absent greater specification, the goal becomes susceptible to political appropriation and manipulation by sectarian interests. In the Girdwood case, for instance, Protestant opponents were able to wrap themselves within the peacemaking goal of shared space to support their ultimately successful claims to downsize the amount of housing built for Catholics. The least difficult way to counter ethnic space is by creating neutral and bland spaces that are not inviting to either side, yet shared space implies more—an everyday sharing of space that is safe and inviting, not identifiable as belonging to one group or the other, and hosting frequent activities to encourage interaction (F. Gaffikin, interview, March 15, 2016; Callie Persic, Belfast City Council, interview, April 14, 2016). An important component in efforts to create shared spaces in Belfast is the locating of new community facilities vis-à-vis sectarian territories. If these facilities are

established within sectarian segregated communities, the urban context of the facility will lead to the site not being welcoming to one of the groups, the so-called “chill factor.” Starting in 2005, Belfast opened seven new well-being and treatment centers that sought to distribute health services throughout the city beyond the traditional hospitals. However, four of these centers were located in areas of high religious segregation (Gaffikin et al. 2016). Consequently, although the buildings were of considerable quality and their internal design was welcoming, the location of these centers obstructed their ability to be truly accommodating of both groups.

When seeking to implement shared space goals in Belfast, policy makers must confront the presence of intimidating single-identity events and symbols such as parades, flags, and murals. Each of these phenomena constitutes a significant demarcation of sectarian identity and contains assertive nationalistic content antagonistic to the vision of a shared and tolerant society.

Parades and marches are a common occurrence in Belfast and Northern Ireland. Occurring mostly around the July commemoration of the 1690 Battle of the Boyne, triumphalist Protestant parades assert the right to use space throughout the city and prior to the GFA, frequently travelled intentionally near or through Catholic communities. In 1997, an independent, quasijudicial Parades Commission was established to regulate the routes that these parades could take. The major sponsor of Protestant loyalist parades, the Orange Order, has refused to engage with the Commission, resulting in a “frozen dispute” (Neil Jarman, Research Fellow, Queen’s University, interview, May 23, 2016). Parades remain, however, as potentially inflammatory events in Belfast, as witnessed in 2012–2013 when a contentious parade season resulted in physical injuries to one in 10 police officers (N. Jarman, interview, May 23, 2016). The flying of flags and banners similarly demarcate sectarian and nationalistic space. Whether the Union Jack, the Irish Tricolor, or numerous other symbols aligned with sectarian identity and paramilitaries, flags are commonly positioned in housing estates and on lampposts in sectarian heartlands and at contentious sites along roads and intersections. Although laws make it illegal to fly flags on lampposts along roads or on government social housing structures, police remain hesitant to involve themselves in implementing this law (Dominic Bryan, director of Institute of Irish Studies, Queen’s University, interview, April 12, 2016). Another robust signifier in the city are the numerous political murals having sectarian and paramilitary references that constitute visual claims on territory and create intimidating effects in the city. The primary government approach has been to work with community groups and to fund efforts to replace the most antagonistic murals. Some modifications and takedowns of inflammatory murals were noticeable in my 2016 research compared with 1994. Yet, inflammatory political murals remain a fact of life in Belfast, particularly in Protestant neighborhoods;

indeed, at times, even increasing in number during volatile periods (Gerard McGlade, Black Cab Tours, interview, March 14, 2016).

A potent and visible indicator of the anemic condition of shared space in Belfast are the “peace walls” and interface barriers that divide neighborhoods. A total of 99 such barriers exist in Belfast, snaking a path some 12 miles in length between Protestant and Catholic areas (Belfast Interface Project 2012). The most obvious barriers are made of solid and high walls with metal fencing above. Other types of barriers are made of different styles of metal fencing, fences and vegetation used as buffers, and the closing of roads. Although most of the largest walls were constructed during the years of the Troubles, the building of new barriers continued in the less violent years preceding the GFA and even in the years after the peace agreement. In an eye-catching declaration, the Northern Ireland government stated the goal of removing all interface barriers in the city by 2023 (OFMDFM 2013). Although this is a significant stance by government, many interviewees expressed concerns about implementation. Barriers are seen as a symptom of a dysfunctional urban system distorted by conflict, not the problem per se (F. Gaffikin, interview, March 15, 2016; M. Hackett, interview, March 29, 2016). Absent attention to the underlying problems of territoriality, conflict, and community deprivation that stimulated the construction of the barriers, simply removing them may disrupt peacebuilding objectives. Concerns about removing the barriers by residents living near them include fears of potential “loss” of community, violence, and that police would be unable to maintain law and order (Byrne, Heenan, and Robinson 2012). Brian Rowan (journalist and author, interview, June 1, 2016) comments, “can you build a peace behind walls? You can’t. Nor can you remove those walls and say ‘now we have peace.’ When the walls come down, what do we put in their place?”

The removal of barriers—a visible spatial and social legacy of the Troubles—is an important part of creating shared space in Belfast. However, the articulation of this public goal in the form of a top-down declaration shows the obstacles faced when attempting to implement this political goal amid the sectarian complexity of the city. Similar to the goals of equality, good relations, and shared space, the devil is in the operational details of how a laudable public goal such as barrier removal is to be achieved. Political pronouncements are not enough; urban peacebuilding must address sensitive spatial, social, and psychological aspects of community in the implementation phase.

Conclusion

With hostility and competition between groups defined by ethnic, religious, and nationalistic identity on the increase across the world, this investigation

contributes to our understanding of urban intergroup conflict by focusing on the disjunctive relationship between national macro-level policies and the local specificities of urban implementation. This study of national policy agenda implementation in Jerusalem and Belfast shows how the actualization of national goals is a social and spatial process as well as a political project and that it takes place over an extended period and is subject to obstructions and disruptions. In addition, implementation of national policy agendas is jointly produced through the interaction of local, city-based, actors and national elites. It is a phenomenon of multithreaded complexity subject to uneven advances and problematic paradoxes.

This study has revealed the contentious relationship between the political realm of policy agenda setting and the urban realm of implementation. There is a disconnection of the national political and the urban spatial—between the abstract and the operational. National political goals such as united Jerusalem in Israel and shared future in Northern Ireland are problematized as they are operationalized and enacted in urban space. National agendas characterized by abstraction stand in contrast to policies of implementation that require fine-tuned specificity. When political goals confront micro-scale, fine-grained urban systems consisting of established and resilient patterns of community power, their impacts become dispersed and variant.

Difficulties in implementation of national policy agendas are partially rooted in the structural features of urban realities, which act to thwart and redirect policies and agendas from above. There are inherent micro-level complexities of urban environments that are beyond the capacity of national policy makers to understand and address in ways consistent with national policy agendas. Locally mobilized and entrenched ethnic constituencies, unregulated dynamics beyond the reach of the national state, the complex social ecology of the urban environment, and urban demographic-migratory reactions to national policies each illuminate the problematic nature of operationalizing grand visions in the urban system. The contentions and complexity found within the city generate unforeseen consequences and contradictions that frustrate a governing regime's national policy agenda. The physicality of the city differentiates it from the broader political milieu; consequently, there exist local spatial, political, and economic dynamics that operate semiautonomously from larger political ones. While higher-level governments advance conceptualizations, goals, and ideals in efforts to influence the constitution of urban spaces, there is "no inherent politics to such constitutions" (Dikec 2007, p. 24). Thus, there exists slippage and incongruity between national policy agendas and their operative forms on the ground.

The implementation of Israeli national policy produces spatial complications and contradictions indicative of "intercurrence," a characteristic of policy

implementation highlighted by the political development studies' theoretical approach. Different policies produce impacts that are, at times, consistent with national goals but, at other times, exhibit unintended and counterproductive impacts on sole sovereignty motives. Several policies have problematized the implementation of Israel's policy agenda aimed at sole political control over Jerusalem. The location of the separation barrier within Israel's municipal borders of Jerusalem has incited Palestinian migratory responses that impede Israel's demographic objectives. Israel's regulatory restrictions on Arab growth in the city have stimulated extensive unlicensed development by Jerusalem Arabs. And Israel's project of territorial control through settlement building has intensified intergroup conflict and narrowed future political options. These policies have not worked in consistent and unambiguous ways toward effectively implementing Israel's policy agenda. Unilateral policies have created tensions in the Israeli project as they are implemented in urban and regional space. The operationalization of Israel's policy agenda in and around Jerusalem has problematized its political aspirations.

In the Northern Ireland case, efforts by policy makers to intervene in Belfast in ways to support peacebuilding reveal the political difficulties of connecting abstract political aspirations to tangible urban changes needed to modify spatial sectarianism and normalize the city. The interpretive approach to policy implementation provides valuable insights about the obstructions faced by the supra-local, peacebuilding policy agenda. The abstract nature of peacebuilding goals required for agreement across competing legislative camps during policy formulation resulted in a "struggle for the determination of meaning" during policy implementation influenced strongly and distorted by sectarian and political motivations. The identity dimension in Belfast remains robust, and sectarian-driven community dynamics sustain conflict in the interpretation and implementation of peacebuilding goals. Local leaders interpret equality, good relations, and shared space goals in ways to advance their own group aspirations. Underspecified peacebuilding goals become stymied in their implementation by local spatial and power dynamics that create distance between stated intent and on-the-ground action. Belfast constitutes an essential, yet highly problematic, component of peacemaking in Northern Ireland.

Findings also point to the limitations of urban regime and governance theories and demonstrate how cultural, ethnic, and social forces are able to operate outside formal governance structures in efforts to resist and distort governing mandates. In both cases, I have found cultural interests (Palestinians in the Jerusalem case; sectarian powers, especially Protestant loyalists, in the Northern Ireland case) that are unwilling and resistant to governance arrangements and through their actions able to obstruct governance strategies. These groups operate on the ground, appear not as governable, and actively counter institutional

initiatives aimed at controlling and managing the city. Palestinians have countered Israeli sole sovereignty goals through significant unlicensed development, which has impeded Israeli political-demographic objectives. Tactical migration into the city inside the barrier route (in the early years of separation barrier planning and construction) and into the gray areas outside the barrier but within the city (after barrier construction) has complicated Israeli demographic goals. Acts of violence and resistance cement differences between the two sides, and long-term boycotting by Palestinians of Jerusalem municipal elections reinforce a two-city political reality. In Belfast, Protestant loyalist local leaders operating outside the new institutional settings of post-Good Friday governance have obstructed “shared space” and “good relations” peace-building goals, enabling the physical legacy of conflict in the city to continue as a major hindrance to normalizing the city socially and territorially.

These organized interests operate outside of formal, sovereign political structures and processes that are emphasized by urban regime and urban governance theorists. Self-organized, these are “social movements and covert networks as political organizations that command different forms of loyalty and different resources” (Magnusson 2011, p. 8). In both case studies, these self-organized interests employ urban materiality and space—the grist of the city—in asserting nonsovereign authority vis-à-vis the state. Palestinians build in urban space outside the Israeli regulatory regime, and Protestant loyalists claim authority and control over neighborhood territoriality. This interplay of local political dynamics reveals the city as containing an urban order that is not solely a secondary influence that obstructs effective national policy making, but one that gravitates toward an order of its own that can at times subordinate national prerogatives.

Higher-level government policy agendas in Israel and Northern Ireland face challenging trajectories as they are translated onto urban space. Problematic characteristics of the two national policy agendas—intercurrence in Israel and conceptual abstraction in Northern Ireland—provide opportunity spaces that confrontational and mobilized ethnic and cultural groups exploit in ways to counteract national dictates. A national program aimed at managing a politically contested city is more than solely the formulation of national goals, but also a project that encounters complex urban-spatial implementation having unforeseen and erratic effects on the national program. The city and urban region—full of local history, micro-geographies, and on-the-ground relationships—are not effectively conceptualized by national politicians when they formulate national urban goals. The fact that national-urban disjunctions were found in fundamentally different national programs—one pursuing unilateral control and the other promoting shared peace—illuminates the fundamental obstructive ability of noncooperative urban groups in the city to resist and confound national mandates.

This is not only a story about Jerusalem and Belfast. The complexities and obstructions faced by national policy agendas when they encounter the city extend to numerous urban regions beyond the two cases reported here. Much urban growth today is taking place not within the planned, bricks-and-mortar, and serviced “formal” city but in burgeoning slums and informal settlements of inadequate shelter, overcrowding, insecurity of tenure, and inadequate access to improved sanitation and to safe water. One-third of all urban dwellers in the world now live in slums (UNHSP 2006). These vast peri-urban territories often exist unmanaged and ungoverned, residing at the uncertain, contestable frontiers of state control.

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Notes

1. <http://mfa.gov.il/MFA/ForeignPolicy/Terrorism/Palestinian/Pages/Wave-of-terror-October-2015.aspx>.
2. Americans for Peace Now. www.peacenow.org. Accessed July 2016.
3. International law asserts that areas in East Jerusalem unilaterally annexed by Israel are part of the West Bank.
4. <http://peacenow.org.il/en/settlements-watch/settlements-data/jerusalem>.
5. Source: Jerusalem Envelope Administration, an administrative body established for neighborhoods beyond the barrier (Ir Amim 2015).
6. I. Kimhi (interview, December 3, 2015) estimates that the metropolitan functional region of Jerusalem is about 50/50% Israeli/Palestinian.
7. Population estimates for the year 2035 forecast that total population in Israel and the Palestinian territories combined will be 54/46% Palestinian to Jewish (Israel National Security Project; www.israelnsp.org). Accessed October 14, 2016.
8. Police Service of Northern Ireland. www.psn.police.uk. Accessed August 7, 2016.
9. Greater Catholic housing needs in Belfast are evidenced in data concerning wait lists for social (government) housing (Jennifer Hawthorne, Northern Ireland Housing Executive, interview, April 14, 2016; John McPeake, former head of Northern Ireland Housing Executive, 2011–2014, interview, May 25, 2016).

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