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2 National policymaking, contested citizenship, and the city

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Introduction

Jerusalem and Belfast highlight the dilemmas and challenges faced by cities in societies polarised by nationalistic conflict. Political control is contested as identity groups push to create a political system that expresses and protects their distinctive group characteristics (Hepburn, 2004; Calame & Charlesworth, 2009). Such contestation exhibits a lack of trust in normal political channels and is capable of jumping tracks onto aggressive and violent pathways. A growing literature focuses on politically contested cities vulnerable to violence (such as Bollens, 2007, 2018; Brand & Fregonese, 2013; Charlesworth, 2006; Calame & Charlesworth, 2009; Gaffikin & Morrissey, 2011). Both the case studies discussed in this chapter are embedded in long-term and uncertain peace-making contexts – Jerusalem since 1993 and Belfast since 1998. The two cases present different tempos and directions of national peace-making: incremental improvement in Northern Ireland, disrupted and regressive in Israel and Palestine. This allows me to examine two cities that are similar in political contestability but different in how public authority addresses the ethno-nationalistic conflict.

I will show in these politically contested cities how national political goals face clear problems in operationalisation; as a result, they produce complex and paradoxical outcomes. 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. Due to the political contestation found in divided societies such as Israel/Palestine and Northern Ireland, government must play 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 amidst societal fragmentation. I focus here 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 chapter's concern.¹ 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 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. 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 operationalised, in urban space. Magnusson (2011, p. 5) points 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 policymaking 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 amidst political contestation fracture the national state and the city in complex, differing ways such that the city constitutes a space of semi-autonomy from the state.

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. Despite the numerous efforts at finding an Israeli–Palestinian peace since 1993, this assertion 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 – emphasising growth and development programmes that seek to maintain the demographic dominance of Jews in Jerusalem and its larger urban sphere. In the eyes of Israeli policymakers, 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 Northern Ireland and British governments. Primary goals in Northern Ireland also emphasise equality and 'good relations'. 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 programmes. Policy strategies in Northern Ireland seek peacebuilding and reconciliation by transcending the sectarian differences linked to inter-group violence and tension.

I employ 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 Good Friday Agreement, respectively. I investigate urban interventions involving economic development, borders, public services, urban violence, housing, development regulation, public space, and resident participation. I examine how the impacts of these urban policies have influenced effectiveness in implementing national policy agendas. I undertook 122 semi-structured interviews (70 in Jerusalem, 52 in Belfast) with urban professionals, political leaders, community and non-governmental organisation representatives, and academic experts. I also investigated published and unpublished analyses and data from academic, government agencies, and non-governmental organisations. I first engaged in field research in these two cities in 1994 and 1995 (74 interviews) and this provides a foundation upon which to make longitudinal appraisals.

Israel and Jerusalem: implementing hegemony

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. While Oslo produced 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. Israel's tactics regarding Jerusalem used since 1967 continued unabated. They are: (1) to facilitate the pace and increase the magnitude of Jewish development to maintain the Jewish demographic dominance, (2) to locate new Jewish developments in municipal areas annexed by Israel in 1967 to create an obstacle to political division of the city, and (3) to restrict Arab growth and development in the eastern sector to weaken their claims to Jerusalem (Bollens, 2000).

By 2015, more than 20 years after the Oslo Accord, the implementation of Israel's unilateral policy agenda had 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 mostly carried out by young lone Palestinians inspired by the general political climate, not operatives of established organisations (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs).²

The nationalistic competition over Jerusalem since Oslo has produced a significantly bigger city in terms of population, growing from 603,000 in 1995

to 865,000 in 2015 (Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, 2017). Israel's project of control in Jerusalem has intensified over the past 20 years. According to Peace Now,³ in 1992, just ahead of the Oslo Accord, Jewish settlements (neighbourhoods) 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, the 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 (Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, 2015). These large developments seek to prevent political division of the city and to separate Arab east Jerusalem neighbourhoods from each other and from the rest of the West Bank.⁴ In contrast, Arabs face severe development restrictions in the city. The city-wide Master Plan, neighbourhood outline plans, detailed plans, and the subdivision process create multiple layers of obstacles facing the Arab community that cumulatively result in the near-impossibility of Israeli-approved Arab development at levels needed for natural growth.

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).⁵ 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 amidst horrific violence and loss of Jewish life. There were 337 incidents of violence in the city from 2001–2004, a majority of events occurring along the boundary separating Jewish west from Arab east Jerusalem (Bhavnani et al., 2013). The separation barrier is over 40 miles long in the Jerusalem urban region and more than 97 per cent of its route extends beyond the 'green line' that politically demarcates Israel from the West Bank (International Peace and Cooperation Center, 2007). The wall severs from the city (by placing them east of the wall or enclaving them within walls) between 70,000–100,000 Palestinian Jerusalemites who presently live within municipal Jerusalem (Nadav Shragai, senior researcher, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, interview, 17 December 2015). Also separated from Jerusalem are another estimated 145,000 Palestinian Jerusalemites with historical ties to the urban centre (United Nations OCHA OPT, 2011). 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 (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011). However, the barrier may not be restricting Arab mobility into Jerusalem as much as security experts expected (United Nations OCHA OPT, 2013). Israel Defence 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 show that Israel's national political goal of a united Jerusalem has become problematised as it is operationalised and enacted in urban space.

Location of the separation barrier

The location of the separation barrier has caused consequences that work against Israel's political goals of strengthening control of Jerusalem. In the northeastern area of Kafr Aqab and in the eastern area of the Shuafat refugee camp is an example of this conundrum. The barrier puts these Jerusalem neighbourhoods that are *within* the municipal limits *outside* the wall. This has, paradoxically (from Israel's perspective), stimulated development in these places. This is 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, 7 December 2015). From 2006 to 2010, 20 per cent of all recorded residential construction in Arab east Jerusalem took place in Kafr Aqab (Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, 2011). By 2011, of 15 Arab neighbourhoods, Kafr Aqab had the second greatest area of square metres of built space (Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, 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, Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, interview, 3 December 2015). As many as 60,000 residents are holders of Jerusalem identity cards.⁶

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 neighbourhoods in order to maintain Jerusalem residency, this counters Israel's demographic mission to weaken the official Arab population count of Jerusalem residents. Further, the migration of Palestinians without official residency status into these areas has produced two dense Arab settlement nodes that are officially within the city. In-migration of Arabs 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 neighbourhoods (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 in either an extremely dilapidated condition or non-existent. 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, 27 October 2015). Amidst 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, 11 October 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, 17 November 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 to 1994 is the amount of unlicensed Palestinian development in Jerusalem, which is of such magnitude that it is overwhelming the Israeli legal and regulatory system aimed at restricting it. Israel's regulatory restrictions on Arab growth in the city have stimulated extensive unlicensed development by Jerusalem Arabs. According to Israeli data, the Arab percentage of city population increased from 30 per cent of city population in 1995 to 37 per cent in 2014 (Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, 2016). From 1995 to 2014, the Arab population in Jerusalem increased by 134,000, while the Jewish population increased by 113,000 (Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, 2016). This growth in Arab population in the city is not due to increased housing opportunities for them in the city authorised 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 per cent of all Palestinian units in Jerusalem are not authorised by the Israeli state. In the period 2001–2010, 70 per cent of all new Palestinian construction is estimated to have been unlicensed (International Peace and Cooperation Center [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', observes Meir Margalit (former Jerusalem municipal councillor), 'the municipality has lost control over what is happening on the ground' (interview 27 October 2015). 'There is no possibility of Israel stopping this illegal building.

Israel has lost the larger battle of Jerusalem', observes Efrat Cohen-Bar (planner, Bimkom, interview 21 January 2016). Municipal officials are aware that unlicensed housing is increasing, but for the most part look the other way. In certain Arab neighbourhoods in Jerusalem, Israeli police do not allow 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 the one hand is meeting, at least partially, objective needs for housing and bolstering Palestinian political-demographic claims. However, unlicensed development frequently occurs in haphazard, ad-hoc patterns and is not supported by community assets such as parks, neighbourhood centres, employment opportunities, utility connections, and adequate roads. Such impoverished and unbalanced community development creates ghettos and slums lacking in real opportunity and associated with feelings of hopelessness and despair (Judith Oppenheimer, Ir Amim, interview 26 January 2016). Economic decline in Arab Jerusalem has produced new depths of deprivation and neglect; the share of Arab families in Jerusalem living under the Israeli poverty line rose from 64 per cent in 2003 to 79 per cent in 2015 (Jerusalem Institute for Israeli Studies, 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 demographics and spatial dynamics can militate against its success. In other words, territoriality tends to engender territoriality (Sack, 1986).

The landscape of seeming Israeli 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. Israel's pursuit of political control meant that the location of a new Jewish neighbourhood was just as important to Israel as the pace and extent of development. Thus, the new neighbourhoods 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 of the east became vital. Yet, the extensive spatial reach of Jewish neighbourhoods adjacent to ghettoised and fragmented Arab villages provides multiple interface points where interpersonal and inter-group conflict occurs. Volatile interfaces are evident along the former border of the 1948 green line,

along interfaces between Jewish and Arab neighbourhoods created in annexed parts of Jerusalem, along the 1967 Israeli municipal border, and at checkpoints of the separation barrier. 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 Defence Force acknowledges, '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 2 February 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.⁷ Consequently, metropolitan aggrandisement through the building of suburban settlement blocs becomes a necessary extension of Israel's sole sovereignty strategy 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 (United Nations OCHA OPT, 2016). As the unilateral project enlarges its geographic scale, it is entangled in conditions of economic inequality and violence. United Nations OCHA OPT (2016, p. 18) describes 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 OCHA OPT, 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 1 January 2016). One response to this new reality is a consideration of a binational one-state strategy. Yet, moving to a binational democratic one-state would expose Israel to the demographic realities that such a state would soon have a Palestinian demographic majority, endangering the 'Jewish' nature of Israel today.⁸

Northern Ireland and Belfast: implementing peace

A historic shift in Northern Ireland governing institutions and constitutional status occurred with the April 1998 *Good Friday Agreement*. 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.⁹ 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 agreement has effectively countered regression back to full-scale organised political violence.¹⁰

The Good Friday Agreement (GFA) fundamentally restructured government in Northern Ireland and it has produced a framework of shared power between former enemies. Since the GFA, the Northern Ireland government has put forward urban peacebuilding 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, the Northern Ireland government released *A Shared Future* (OFMDFMNI, 2005), where it argues against continued community division between Protestants and Catholics and advocates sharing over separation. It states (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 underscores 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). In addition to shared future goals, Northern Ireland also emphasises *equality* and *good relations* as primary goals guiding future policy (OFMDFMNI, 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 programmes. 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 amidst destabilising political violence.

Challenges in implementing Northern Ireland's policy agenda

The goals incorporated pursuant to the GFA put forth admirable goals 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 extremely difficult. With opposing sides coming to the negotiating table having ideologically opposed perspectives, language incorporated into political and policy agreements became necessarily abstract in order to accommodate these differences. A ‘creative ambiguity’ in terminology was used to facilitate political compromise (Colin Knox, Professor, University of Ulster, interview 7 April 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 21 March 2016). Less attention was paid in the GFA to how such goals would be implemented in ways that effectively address core issues of injustice and inequality (Duncan Morrow, chief executive officer, Community Relations Council 2002–2011, interview 16 May 2016).

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 22 March 2016). The abstract nature of peace goals left ‘huge embedded contradictions’ in their implementation (Brendan Murtagh, interview 21 March 2016).

Peacebuilding goals and sectarian realities

Problems created by the abstraction of policy goals have become particularly acute when these high principles are operationalised 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. Northern Ireland’s goals confront a sectarian divided city of structural inequality reinforced by numerous interface barriers. The physical legacies of the Troubles are numerous – residential hyper-segregation of Catholics and Protestants, deep-rooted sectarian ‘ownership’ of many neighbourhoods which prevents accommodating members of one religious group in the other group’s ‘territory’, disconnection, partition, dead spaces, policeable and controllable space, and provocative symbols. Reinforcing the durability of these spatial legacies are local actors – paramilitary legacy groups and dissidents who control sectarian territories through their involvement in community organisational infrastructure, local politicians who are electorally wedded to their sectarian districts, and residents who feel secure in their segregated neighbourhoods.

Policymakers in Belfast face fundamental challenges because of the persistence of sectarian territoriality in the west, east, and northern parts of the city. This has created two cities in effect, separated by territorial boundaries that preclude normal urban functionality. 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 underutilised and vacant land. Catholics have greater objective need for new housing due to their growth rate.¹¹ Due to the difficulty of finding suitable non-contentious sites outside of traditionally Protestant areas, however, the ability to meet Catholic need is severely limited. On the other hand, 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 experience differential community needs – objective needs on the Catholic side; the need for community revitalisation on the Protestant side. The dilemma faced by government is illuminated by Jennifer Hawthorne (Head of income and communities, Northern Ireland Housing Executive, interview 14 April 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.

Since the Catholic population faces greater levels of socio-economic 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 antagonising Protestants to such a degree that inter-group relations deteriorate.

The redevelopment of the closed Girdwood Barracks site in north Belfast reveals the difficulties of operationalising peacebuilding goals. Formerly the largest British army base in Northern Ireland, this 14-acre site is close to both Catholic and Protestant neighbourhoods and redevelopment plans ignited a sectarian dispute over prospective uses. The plan sought to build a greater amount of housing for Catholics in order to meet projected demand. However, Protestant leaders argued that such housing would facilitate Catholic intrusion that would negatively affect 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 convenient leverage for their own causes (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 the 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. When abstract national peacebuilding concepts encounter sectarianised urban space, they become susceptible to clashing political interpretations and manipulations (Colin Knox,

interview 7 April 2016). The Girdwood project was eventually built, but with significantly less Catholic housing than objective need would require (Frank Gaffikin, Professor, Queen's University interview 15 March 2016).

The dynamic at Girdwood exists throughout the city when policymakers seek to intervene in the city post-GFA. The identification of land suitable for future development, where to build new and revitalise 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.

Government-funded social housing for Belfast low-income residents constitutes a particularly difficult issue facing policymakers in the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE). Decisions regarding the location of new social housing, and who will live there, are important leverage points in creating a city where the two sides are less geographically segregated (Jennifer Hawthorne, interview 14 April 2016). Yet, the building of new social housing shared between Protestants and Catholics runs up against the sharp edge of sectarian territoriality. Many neighbourhoods 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 14 April 2016). The establishment of shared housing estates commonly faces resistance by the two main Protestant loyalist paramilitary groups and by Catholic dissident republicans. 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 peace-making goal of government arising from the Good Friday Agreement 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 neighbourhoods, the development of shared spaces constitutes a central challenge, especially in deeply sectarian working-class neighbourhoods. The 'shared space' goal suffers from a level of abstraction which does not denote a methodology about how it is to be achieved in contentious geographies (Milena Komarova, research fellow, Queen's University, interview 24 March 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 peace-making goal of shared space to support their ultimately successful claims to downsize the amount of housing built for Catholics.

One way to counter ethnic space is by creating neutral 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 (Frank Gaffikin, interview, 15 March 2016; Callie Persic, Belfast City Council, interview 14 April 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 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’. Belfast opened seven new wellbeing and treatment centres that sought to distribute health services throughout the city beyond the traditional hospitals. However, four of these centres were located in areas of high religious segregation (Gaffikin et al., 2016). Consequently, the location of these centres obstructed their ability to be truly accommodating of both groups.

When seeking to implement shared space goals in Belfast, policymakers 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. 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, quasi-judicial Parades Commission was established in order 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, 23 May 2016). Parades remain, however, as potentially inflammatory events in Belfast, as witnessed in 2012–2013 when a contentious parade season resulted in many physical injuries to police officers. The flying of flags and banners similarly demarcates sectarian and nationalistic space. Whether the Union Jack, the Irish Tricolour, or numerous other symbols aligned with sectarian identity, there is the common positioning of flags 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 12 April 2016). Another robust territorial signifier in the city are the numerous political murals in the city having sectarian and paramilitary references. Government has worked with community groups and funded efforts to replace the most antagonistic murals. Some modifications and takedowns of inflammatory murals were noticeable in my 2016 research compared to 1994. Yet, inflammatory political murals remain evident, particularly in Protestant neighbourhoods; indeed, at times

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

A potent and visible indicator of the anaemic condition of shared space in Belfast are the ‘peace walls’ and interface barriers that divide neighbourhoods. Ninety-nine such barriers exist in Belfast, snaking a path some 12 miles in length between Protestant and Catholic areas (Belfast Interface Project, 2012). In an eye-catching declaration, the Northern Ireland government stated the goal of removing all interface barriers in the city by 2023 (OFMDFMNI, 2013). Although this is a significant stance by government, many interviewees expressed concerns about implementation. Absent attention to the underlying problems of territoriality, conflict, and community deprivation that stimulated the construction of the barriers in the first place, simply removing them may disrupt peacebuilding objectives. Concerns about removing the barriers by residents living near them include violence and ‘loss’ of community (Byrne, Heenan, & Robinson, 2012). Brian Rowan (journalist and author, interview 6 June 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 wall comes down, what do we put in its place?’

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

The investigation in this chapter contributes to our understanding of urban inter-group conflict and contested citizenship by focusing on the disjunctive relationship between national macro-level national policies and the local specificities of urban implementation. This study of Jerusalem and Belfast shows how the actualisation of national goals is a social and spatial as well as political process and that it takes place over an extended period and is subject to obstructions and disruptions. It is a phenomenon of multi-threaded 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 agendas of abstraction stand in contrast to actions 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.

There are inherent micro-level complexities of urban environments that are beyond the capacity of national policymakers to address in ways consistent with national policy agendas. Locally mobilised 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 operationalising grand visions in the urban system. The physicality of the city differentiates it from the broader political milieu; consequently, there exist local spatial, political, and economic dynamics that operate semi-autonomously from larger political ones. While higher-level governments advance conceptualisations, goals, and ideals in efforts to influence the constitution of urban spaces, there is 'no inherent politics to such constitutions' (Dikeç, 2007, p. 24). There exists slippage and incongruity between national policy agendas and their operative forms on the ground.

In Israel, the implementation of national policy produces spatial complications and contradictions indicative of 'intercurrence', a characteristic of policy implementation highlighted by the political development studies theoretical approach (Carpenter, 2001; Lucas, 2017; Orren & Skowronek, 2004). Spatial contradictions occur because policies are asserted 'through multiple orderings of authority whose coordination with one another cannot be assumed' (Orren & Skowronek, 2004, p. 113). Different policies produce impacts that are at times consistent with national goals but at other times exhibit unintended and counterproductive impacts upon sole sovereignty goals. 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. In addition, Israel's project of territorial control through settlement building has intensified inter-group conflict and narrowed future political options. These policies have not worked in consistent and unambiguous ways toward effectively implementing Israel's policy agenda.

In Northern Ireland, efforts by policymakers to intervene in Belfast in ways to support peacebuilding reveal the political difficulties of connecting abstract political aspirations to tangible urban changes. Peacebuilding is revealed as a process that involves not just political reorganisation but also requires effective implementation of urban policies that operationalise peace in locations where historically antagonistic groups live, work, and cope in proximate urban space. The interpretive approach to policy implementation provides 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 that was influenced strongly and distorted by sectarian and political motivations (Yanow, 1996, p. 19). Sectarian driven community interests are able to sustain conflict through their interpretation and containment of equality, good relations, and shared space goals. Local spatial and power dynamics stymie implementation of underspecified peacebuilding goals and create distance between stated intent and on-the-ground action.

Higher-level government policy agendas in Israel and Northern Ireland face challenging trajectories when translated onto urban space. Unilateral policies

have created tensions in the Israeli project when implemented in urban and regional space. In Northern Ireland's peacebuilding programme, Belfast remains an essential, yet highly problematic, component.

A national programme aimed at managing a politically contested city is more than solely the formulation of national goals, but also requires complex urban-spatial implementation having unforeseen and erratic effects on the national programme. The fact that national-urban disjunctions occur in fundamentally different national programmes – one pursuing unilateral control and the other promoting shared peace – illuminates the basic dilemma of policy interventions amidst deep-rooted political contestation.

Notes

- 1 Israeli goals pertaining to Jerusalem come primarily from its national government, while goals in Northern Ireland come from both British and Northern Ireland governments.
- 2 <http://mfa.gov.il/MFA/ForeignPolicy/Terrorism/Palestinian/Pages/Wave-of-terror-October-2015.aspx>.
- 3 Americans for Peace Now, www.peacenow.org.
- 4 International law asserts that areas in east Jerusalem unilaterally annexed by Israel are part of the West Bank.
- 5 <http://peacenow.org.il/en/settlements-watch/settlements-data/jerusalem>.
- 6 Source: Jerusalem Envelope Administration, an administrative body established for neighbourhoods beyond the barrier (Ir Amim, 2015).
- 7 Kimhi (interview, 12 December 2015) estimates that the metropolitan functional region of Jerusalem is about 50/50 per cent Israeli/Palestinian.
- 8 Population estimates for the year 2035 forecast that total population in Israel and the Palestinian territories combined will be 54/46 per cent Palestinian to Jewish (Israel National Security Project, www.israelnsp.org).
- 9 Institutionalisation of local power-sharing has been tortuous since 1998. Prior to 2007, local rule was suspended four times due to conflicts over paramilitary decommissioning and police reform. After ten years of relative political stability, power-sharing collapsed January 2020.
- 10 Police Service of Northern Ireland, www.psni.police.uk.
- 11 Greater Catholic housing needs in Belfast are evidenced in data concerning waiting lists for social (government) housing (Jennifer Hawthorne, NIHE, interview 14 April 2016; John McPeake, former head of Northern Ireland Housing Executive, 2011–2014, interview 25 May 2016).

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