For example, researchers need to address the issue of self-determination and to distinguish between circumstances when it may help to improve ethnic relations, and those when it will worsen them. Another case where the researcher's critical eye is needed is the presumption that democratic regimes are less prone to ethnic violence than non-democratic ones, a comforting premise which may be true but is too often unchallenged. The most striking impression emerging from the three books is a sober, but realistic, acceptance that ethnic conflict can no longer be regarded as aberrational, but as increasingly part of the routine fabric of social intercourse. As Gurr put it, "no one should expect ethnopolitical conflicts to be entirely resolved, even in the most favourable political circumstances . . .. At best, conflict resolution means steering such conflicts into political arenas where differences are accommodated in ordered and non-coercive ways."

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The Politics of Antagonism

O'Leary, Brendan, and John McGarry. *The Politics of Antagonism: Understanding Northern Ireland.* London and Atlantic Highlands, NJ: The Athlone Press, 1993.

Much recent work on Northern Ireland has seriously questioned the long-accepted analysis of the conflict there as being between an underprivileged, indeed oppressed Catholic nationalist minority and a dominant and oppressive unionist Protestant majority. Rather, it has been argued that the conflict is as much, if not more, the result of the continued pursuit by the minority of an ill-founded, old-fashioned, nationalist goal — the achievement of political unity in an independent island. Conflict, in the physical sense, has stemmed from the use, by a minority of the minority, of "armed struggle" or terrorism to pursue that goal.

That is the background to O'Leary and McGarry's book. It is part of a series entitled, "Conflict and Change in Britain — a New Audit," and, allowing for the geographical infelicity, it is a most timely inclusion. Part of the brief for the series is to balance the claims of different commentators, and to place the conflict in its historical and social context allowing intelligent judgements to be made. A careful assessment of the validity of the revisionist analysis is certainly needed.

Part of the revisionist approach has been to question the simple story of the nationalist as victim and the unionist as oppressor post-1921 within the new unit of Northern Ireland. That the Catholic/nationalist minority has been, and to an extent still is, economically and socially disadvantaged is not denied, nor is the charge that the unionist majority often behaved badly toward the minority. What is questioned is that the minority suffered systematic discrimination, were denied the means of

social and economic development, and that these "policies" still, in 1994, explain both the relative disadvantage in social and economic terms of the minority, and the continued "armed struggle." Most seriously questioned is the view that any solution to the problem must involve constitutional change to satisfy, in part at least, nationalist aspirations.

It is this new analysis which the authors clearly challenge in a detailed review of the events and issues of Northern Ireland's history, and of the attempts to understand it, categorize aspects of it, and in the end resolve it. This they do within a political science framework, which allows them to indulge to the full their weakness for terminology. To an extent, this is useful and ought to be read by all revisionists and their disciples. However, scattered throughout the book are sufficient clues to suggest that the authors are less than dispassionate observers. They challenge revisionism less by examination of the evidence than by reassertion of the old approach, and do so at times in a highly partisan manner.

Uneasiness begins in the introduction, where the authors tell us that they will use the term "paramilitaries" rather than terrorists because the former term is more accurate and less emotive — more accurate because, they say, terrorism can also be practised by the state. This, we are told, should not be taken to indicate any support for paramilitary organizations. But in the context of Northern Ireland it surely indicates an unnecessary degree of scrupulosity; the paramilitaries are undoubtedly terrorists, in that they manifestly use terrorism as their key weapon. The authors may wish to argue — though they do not actually do so in this book — that the state also employs methods that could be called terrorism, but that does not make the Ulster terrorist any less of a terrorist.

More worrying is the readiness to slip into the traditional language of nationalism. Thus we are told that the RUC "recruits overwhelmingly from the protestant population," which suggests a deliberate policy, whereas the reality is that the RUC tries strenuously to recruit more Catholics but is unable to do so, for obvious reasons.

Journalism in Northern Ireland in print or broadcasting, is subject, we are told, to "much greater editorial and political interference." I am not sure what is implied by the charge of "editorial" interference in journalism but I know of no concern over "political" interference in print journalism. As to television, apart from the controversial and rather ludicrous (in its implementation) ban on the actual voices of Sinn Fein and other groups, most of the complaints from government are post facto about matters that have already been broadcast.

The sweeping charge of "extensive gerrymandering" of local electoral boundaries in 1923 is glibly repeated with no attempt to justify or document it. Relating an incident in the Northern Parliament in 1946, where a Unionist Minister was reported as saying one thing by the newspapers but something slightly different in Hansard, the authors state as fact the nationalist allegation that Hansard was deliberately edited to obscure the original statement. In an earlier reference the authors write of ". . . the development of institutional affiliations between police

units and Orange Lodges," without citing evidence or giving the background, which is that policemen were free to join the Orange Order as individuals, and that the Order formed a new lodge specifically for policemen. It might well have been wiser to ban policemen from joining such organizations, but to talk of "institutionalised affiliations" is misleading. Perhaps most revealing of all is a snide and rather silly remark on the events of August 1969 where the authors say "the RUC's 3,000 full-time policemen were exhausted by the August riots (whether from strenuous participation or control activities)." This is the stuff of political pamphleteering, not political science.

Also of concern is a rather cavalier use of evidence that is produced. For instance, in discussing continued minority grievances under Terence O'Neill, the authors assert that the police "actually became more protestant" and then quote a decline in the proportion of Catholics in the police from 12 percent in 1961 to 9.4 percent in 1972 — taking no account of the fact that by 1972 the violence had been in full swing for some time.

Examining election results in Northern Ireland between 1983 and 1992, the authors claim that the 1992 results had shown long term benefits of the Anglo-Irish Agreement in bolstering the moderate nationalists (the SDLP) and the moderate unionists (the UUP). In fact, the striking and depressing fact is that the Sinn Fein vote has held up remarkably well under the Agreement, while Paisley's DUP has actually increased its vote. It is only by taking the 1983 figures as the base that the authors' conclusion is justified, and in 1983, two years before the Anglo-Irish Agreement, Northern Ireland was still reverberating from the IRA hunger-strike deaths.

Much of this criticism may sound petty — and the authors inevitably are handicapped by lack of space in covering such a tumultuous period — but one cannot avoid the conclusion that they have approached their task determined to reassert a pre-revisionist viewpoint.

They assert that the book is "a stand-alone" introduction to understanding Northern Ireland. Anyone taking it as such would be led to conclude that this is an ethnic post-colonial conflict in a situation where the "settlers," holding a clear majority, have established "hegemonic control" over the "natives" by excluding them from political power and economic and social progress. They were permitted to do this by the ultimate national authority, the British Government, which has itself, over the past 20 years, failed to remedy the situation despite the fact that it has been in direct control, having deprived the local "settlers" of all authority.

The use of the terms "natives" and "settlers" surely needs justification, when the "settlers" largely settled in the region four centuries ago, and when many of the "natives," in the Belfast area at any rate, arrived in the course of the nineteenth century.

To use such terminology indicates an *a priori* acceptance of the nationalist analysis. It also, though the authors do not pursue this line, strengthens the argument

that the conflict today is still that of a nationalist minority seeking to effect constitutional change against the wishes of the majority; and not that of an oppressed minority demanding full equality of civil and political rights from the state within which it lives.

This is related to one of two key weaknesses running through the authors' analysis; they underestimate, if indeed they do not ignore, the impact upon politics and society in Northern Ireland of the persistent refusal of the nationalist minority to recognize the partition settlement of 1921. For example, the whole thrust of the minority input into politics in Northern Ireland for the first 40 years of its existence was to demand the elimination of Northern Ireland — initially by a refusal to recognize the new institutions, and by boycotting the parliament of Northern Ireland. Serious campaigning for the remedying of specific grievances did not begin until the 1960s.

Second, the authors' treatment of the current violent phase, from 1969 onwards, does not adequately come to grips with the dominant feature of this phase — the violence itself. The actual violence is well documented and examined, but its impact on all political and social developments during this period is not. The authors tend to see these two decades as a continuation of the nationalist minority's struggle for fair play and political recognition, against a "hegemonic" unionist majority, and a British Government unwilling to grasp the nettle. In so doing they surely underestimate the extent to which unionists themselves have been deprived of power and influence under direct rule from London, and, more seriously, of the extent to which the prolonged IRA campaign, and the necessary, though sometimes ill-judged security response to it, have both obscured and obstructed a considerable reform process. The violence has certainly retarded economic growth, particularly in areas, such as West Belfast, where it has been concentrated. These areas are largely Catholic. O'Leary and McGarry still insist that Catholic disadvantage in employment results from discrimination and go to some lengths to cite evidence to counter any other factors that might be put forward. It is true that no single alternative explanation — other than discrimination — can explain the persistent Catholic disadvantage, but that does not prove that the aggregate of them cannot.

The continued assertion that Catholics are disadvantaged in employment today because Protestants discriminate against them is based more on ingrained nationalist belief than it is on objective analysis. Disadvantage does not automatically mean discrimination, not even in Ireland. Current figures for the Republic of Ireland, for instance, show that Catholics there too, are twice as likely to be unemployed as Protestants.

Given their general approach, it is not surprising that in considering solutions the authors plump for "placing Northern Ireland under the joint jurisdiction of the UK and Irish states" — not surprising because this has been the favored nationalist solution for at least a decade, and even longer, (see the New Ireland Forum Report of 1984, and frequent SDLP statements), though not actually the choice of O'Leary and McGarry three years ago when they argued strongly against joint-authority in

The Future of Northern Ireland (1991). But in presenting it now as their solution, the authors again seem highly selective in their evidence. For instance, one argument they cite against re-partition is that this would simply encourage the IRA to "one more push": yet when they come to discuss joint-sovereignty, where such an argument might equally or even more forcefully apply, they do not raise it.

They do acknowledge that joint-authority would have to be imposed upon the majority in Northern Ireland, but do not see that as an insuperable obstacle. After all, the Anglo-Irish Agreement, which the authors almost alone among commentators and politicians still seem to regard as a success, was so imposed.

This book is a stimulating (perhaps because it is also infuriating) contribution to the polemics of Northern Ireland. Taken as such it may indeed help toward understanding the Northern Ireland problem. But a "stand-alone introduction" to the problem it is not.

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Low-Level Conflict

Connaughton, Richard. *Military Intervention in the 1990s: A New Logic of War.* London and New York: Routledge, 1992.

Licklider, Roy, ed. *Stopping the Killing: How Civil Wars End.* New York and London: New York University Press, 1993.

Sarkesian, Sam C. *Unconventional Conflicts in a New Security Era: Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam.* Westport and London: Greenwood, 1993.

In varying ways, Richard Connaughton, Sam Sarkesian and the contributory essays edited by Roy Licklider from the proceedings of a Rutgers University conference in 1990 all address the nature of conflict amid the uncertainties of the 'new world order.' However, for all that the collapse of communism has resulted in the re-emergence of older national rivalries in the Balkans and parts of the former Soviet Union, in one sense, the overriding pattern of conflict has remained exactly the same as it did before. Connaughton, indeed, reminds us that there have been in excess of 150 limited wars since 1945 at a cost of perhaps 20 million casualties, of which 95 percent occurred outside Europe. According to Connaughton, some 85 percent have also been intra-state rather that inter-state conflicts, a calculation supported to some extent by Licklider, although the various estimates of the number of civil wars he presents in his introductory essay range from 16 to 114 such conflicts since 1945.