

'A Third Country': Irish Border Communities

Mary E. Daly

Copyright (c) 2023 by Mary E. Daly. Contributors of articles are permitted (provided relevant bibliographic details that credit its publication in this journal are included) to deposit all versions of articles published in *RISE* in institutional or other repositories of their choice without embargo.

Borders define and divide people and places. Inserting a border where one did not previously exist transforms the mental and physical map of individuals and communities. In 1920 the Government of Ireland Act, passed by the UK Parliament, provided for two devolved parliaments in Ireland, each with less power than the current Scottish Assembly. One consisted of six northern counties, the other of twenty-six counties. The settlement partitioned Ireland, and it partitioned the province of Ulster, with three Ulster counties remaining in what became the Irish Free State. They included Donegal, the most northerly part of the island, which shares approximately ten kilometres of common frontier with the rest of the state to which it belongs. The partition of Ireland left substantial numbers of Catholics in Northern Ireland, and smaller, though significant numbers of Protestants in Ireland. The border followed county lines, dividing farms, houses and parishes, cutting people off from traditional market towns and economic networks. The irrational nature of the border, and the disruption that it inflicted on border communities has been extensively documented by Peter O'Leary.¹

The title of this paper was prompted by speakers on a panel that I chaired at a conference in November 2021 in the border town of Monaghan. The panel consisted of women and men, living on both sides of the border, who were active in their communities. They spoke about their lives, and their sense that border communities were distinct from communities both in Northern Ireland and Ireland.² Several speakers described their home town, village or rural parish, as 'left behind', remote from both Dublin and Belfast. Their sense of grievance over this peripherality and abandonment was evident.³ In his book on the Border, Darach MacDonald describes his home town of Clones, which is surrounded on three sides by Northern Ireland, as 'marooned on the periphery of two states that barely acknowledged the other's existence'. In 1920 Clones had strong transport and trading links with the area that became Northern Ireland.⁴ A 2005 study of border communities that conducted sessions with focus groups from border communities in counties Monaghan and Fermanagh, referred to 'an invisible line' separating the border counties from the rest of Ireland and Northern Ireland.

¹ Peter O'Leary, *Unapproved Routes: Histories of the Irish Border, 1922–1972* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

² Throughout this paper I use Ireland to refer to the twenty-six county independent state, because that is the official name of the state.

³ 'Experiences of Border Minority Communities. Historical perspectives', conference held in Monaghan County Museum 5 November 2021, as part of the Irish Government's Decade of Centenaries Programme. The conference can be viewed at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=esCi-Bv4vJM&ab_channel=MonaghanCountyMuseum or on the Facebook page of the Monaghan County Museum. See also the brochure of the Clones Family Resource Centre, *Our Border Heartbeat. Listening to Border People on the Centenary of Partition!* (Clones: Abbeyset Print, June 2021).

⁴ Darach MacDonald, *Hard Border. Walking through a Century of Partition* (Dublin: New Island, 2018), 3.

They called the place where they lived a ‘no man’s land’.⁵ Katy Hayward, in her recent book on the Irish Border, has remarked that ‘[f]or a comparatively small country, the persistent neglect of the Irish border region by the power-holding centres is quite astonishing’.⁶

This paper suggests that over the past century the links that existed between the two parts of Ireland have weakened, and, in the area close to the border, longstanding commercial and personal networks have been disrupted. The border has also served to define these communities as zones of violence and crime. Catholics and Protestants, nationalists and unionists, have lived in close proximity in border communities for many generations and they continue to do so, but the introduction of the border in the 1920s, added a further division between these communities.

The first section adopts an all-island focus, looking at the relationship between Ireland and Northern Ireland, which sets a context for the remainder of the paper, focusing on border areas. This begins by examining the neglect and belated ‘discovery’ of the problems facing border areas: the local impact of partition on population and the economy, the image of the border as a zone of violence and lawlessness, and the importance of the parish and community identities, together with the question of sectarianism.

The Two Irelands

There were and there are significant differences between Ulster and the rest of Ireland. Heslinga asserts that the border marks a long-established cultural divide within the British Isles, though his views are regarded as controversial.⁷ The political distinction of Ulster became evident from the mid-1880s, when nationalists gained control of almost all parliamentary seats in the rest of Ireland. The nine counties of Ulster were balanced almost 50:50 between unionists and nationalists. But the geographical divisions between nationalist and unionist Ireland were blurred; there were pockets of nationalism in many parts of what became Northern Ireland. West Belfast, counties Fermanagh and Tyrone and Derry City, the second largest city in Northern Ireland, had majority Catholic/nationalist populations. Likewise, there were strong Protestant/Unionist communities in the Irish Free State, especially in counties Donegal, Monaghan and Cavan, though almost no areas with a Protestant majority.

One hundred years ago there was not a robust all-island economy. Trade and business were oriented from west to east, i.e. towards Britain and not north/south.⁸ Recorded exports from Ireland to Northern Ireland have fallen steadily from a peak of 18% of Irish exports in

⁵ Brian Harvey, Assumpta Kelly, Sean McGearty and Sonya Murray, *The Emerald Curtain: The Social Impact of the Irish Border* (Carrickmacross: Triskele, 2005), 104.

⁶ Katy Hayward, *The Irish Border* (Los Angeles: Sage, 2021), 74.

⁷ Marcus W. Heslinga, *The Irish Border as a Cultural Divide: A Contribution to Regionalism in the British Isles*, with a foreword by Estyn Evans (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1971). Evans, a professor at Queen’s University Belfast, championed the concept of Ulster as a distinct region of the British Isles. See Brian Graham, ed., *Ireland and Irishness: Place, Culture and Identity* (London: Routledge, 1997); Charles Townshend, *The Partition: Ireland Divided, 1885–1925* (London: Allen Lane, 2021), 275–278.

⁸ Cormac Ó Gráda and Brendan M. Walsh, ‘Did (and Does) the Irish border Matter?’ University College Dublin IBIS Working paper (2006), 21, <https://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3315685>. Accessed 15 October 2023.

1943–47 to 1.6% in 2015. In 2015 Northern Ireland supplied 1.6% of Irish imports.⁹ Brexit has resulted in a significant increase in cross-border trade, but this is from a low base.¹⁰ The sense of a common purpose among people from different parts of the island was relatively weak in 1920, as was their interaction. This is also true of population. The proportion of the population of Ireland who were born in Northern Ireland is almost identical to 1911, despite the fact that both Ireland and Northern Ireland now contain much more diverse populations. In 2011 only 1.3% of the population of Ireland was born in Northern Ireland; 2% of the population of Northern Ireland was born in Ireland, whereas 17% of the population of Ireland was born outside the island as was 11% of the population of Northern Ireland. In 2011 the 58,470 residents of Ireland who were born in Northern Ireland were significantly outnumbered by the 115,193 who were born in Poland and the 212,286 who were born in England and Wales.¹¹ The 2016 Census of Population recorded 293,000 people who were not native to Ireland working in Ireland, accounting for almost 15% of the workforce, and that figure has increased in recent years. The average person living in Ireland is more likely to encounter a native of Britain, Poland, or another EU country in their daily life than a woman or man who was born in Northern Ireland. Students in Irish universities north and south will also encounter more students from foreign countries than students from the other part of the island. In 2015/16 only 1,200 of the 212,000 students in Irish higher education institutions came from Northern Ireland, and only 2,115 of the 55,000 students in Northern Ireland institutions came from Ireland. Given the importance of higher education in forming long-term friendships, life partners (there are over 1m. children in the world born to couples who met on Erasmus programmes),¹² and career choices, the lack of north-south interaction among students in higher education is significant.

The past hundred years has seen a distancing between the two Irelands, though the links were not strong in 1920. A recent survey carried out by the research network ARINS reported that 52% of people living in Northern Ireland and 67% of those living in Ireland have no friends in the other part of Ireland, and more than half of those living in Ireland had not made a day trip to Northern Ireland in the past five years.¹³ When the *Irish Times* surveyed

⁹ Mary E. Daly, *Brexit and the Irish Border: Historical Context* (Royal Irish Academy/British Academy Briefing, 2017). <https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/documents/321/brexit-and-irish-border-historical-context.pdf>. Accessed 14 September 2023.

¹⁰ Emer Flynn, Janez Kren and Martina Lawless, 'Initial Impact of Brexit on Ireland-UK Trade Flows'. *ESRI Working Paper 714*, December 2021. <https://www.esri.ie/publications/initial-impact-of-brexit-on-ireland-uk-trade-flows>. Accessed 14 September 2023.

¹¹ *Census 2011: Ireland and Northern Ireland* (Cork: Central Statistics Office; Belfast: Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, 2014), 38. <https://www.cso.ie/en/media/csoie/census/documents/north-south-spreadsheets/Census2011IrelandandNorthernIrelandwebversion1.pdf>. Accessed 14 September 2023.

¹² Marie Clarke, Linda Hui Yang and David Harmon, *The Internationalisation of Irish Higher Education* (Dublin: Higher Education Authority, 2018), 14. https://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2018/07/report_internationalisation_of_education_2018.pdf. Accessed 14 September 2023; *An Analysis of Existing Statistics on Student Flows between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland in Higher Education* (Dublin: Higher Education Authority, December 2018), 22–26; Naoise D'Arcy, "'You Wouldn't Exist Without Europe": The Erasmus Baby Phenomenon', *The University Times*, 29 March 2021. <https://universitytimes.ie/2021/03/you-wouldnt-exist-without-europe-the-phenomenon-of-erasmus-babies/>. Accessed 12 August 2022.

¹³ Pat Leahy, 'Little Interaction between People Living North and South, New Polls Show', *The Irish Times*, 28 January 2023. <https://www.irishtimes.com/politics/2023/01/28/two-thirds-of-people-in-republic-have-no-friends-in-northern-ireland-survey-shows/>. Accessed 14 September 2023. ARINS is a joint project between the

readers' responses to this survey, they concluded that 'Southerners think Northern Ireland is as foreign as Siberia'.¹⁴

The 'Discovery' of the Border Region

The lack of awareness, indeed lack of interest, shown by people north and south in the other Ireland, has served to marginalise the concerns of people living in border communities, and that process began in the 1920s. In December 1921, Dáil Éireann, which had rejected the 1920 settlement, negotiated considerably greater autonomy from Britain, and the promise of a boundary commission to determine the boundary between the two Irelands. That commission was delayed by the civil war and the refusal of the Northern Ireland government to participate. Contrary to the heady expectations of many nationalists, it recommended only minor alterations – transferring land in east Donegal to Northern Ireland, and small areas in south Down/Armagh to the Irish Free State. The settlement was so far removed from the Irish government's expectations that they rejected it, and the existing boundaries survived. In return the Irish government secured a massive write-down – approximately 80% in its legacy debts to Britain – which were imposed as part of the 1921 Treaty.¹⁵ This was not the last occasion when an Irish government settled for greater independence or benefits for the state, at the possible cost of measures that might advance a united Ireland or meet the wishes of northern nationalists.

By 1925 the border had been determined. In the 1970s and 1980s, in response to the Northern Ireland Troubles the possibility of modifying the border began to attract attention in Britain and Northern Ireland. The motivation was to reduce the Catholic/nationalist population of Northern Ireland and improve security. The conservative think tank The Bow Group published a pamphlet in 1972 titled, *Ireland: A New Partition*, and in the 1980s British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher gave serious attention to repartitioning Ireland, drawing on research carried out by academics. There is no evidence that this was discussed with Irish politicians or officials. The project was eventually abandoned because it raised complex issues of human rights. In addition to transferring large swathes of territory along the border, it proposed creating a nationalist enclave in West Belfast that would be under the Dublin government. The redrawn border would have left Northern Ireland with a population that was 20% Catholics (compared with 39%), and Protestants would have constituted 16% of the population in areas to be transferred to Ireland.¹⁶ This shows the extent that Catholic and Protestant populations in border regions are interspersed.

Royal Irish Academy and Notre Dame University to research constitutional, institutional and policy options for Ireland, north and south, post-Brexit. See <https://www.ria.ie/arins>. Accessed 14 September 2023.

¹⁴ Wood, Marion. "‘Southerners Think Northern Ireland is as Foreign as Siberia’: Readers Respond to the North and South Research Findings", *The Irish Times*, 11 February 2023. <https://www.irishtimes.com/politics/2023/02/11/southerners-think-the-north-is-as-foreign-as-siberia-readers-respond-to-the-north-and-south-research-findings/>. Accessed 17 April 2023.

¹⁵ John FitzGerald and Sean Kenny, "‘Till debt do us part’. Implications of the Divorce of the Irish Free State from the United Kingdom, 1922–26", *European Review of Economic History* 24 (2020): 818–842. On the Boundary Commission see Robert Lynch, *The Partition of Ireland, 1918–1923* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 197–215.

¹⁶ Charles Townshend, *The Partition: Ireland Divided, 1885–1925* (Allen Lane: Penguin, 2021), 278. Liam Kennedy, *Two Ulsters: A Case for Repartition* (Belfast: Queen's University, 1986). Liam Kennedy, 'Two Ulsters: Partition, Retrospect and Prospect', *Ireland and Partition*, eds. N. C. Fleming and James H. Murphy (Liverpool:

Although there are many books and articles about the partition of Ireland, most of these focus on high-politics, and not on the impact on border communities. I do not recollect any specific discussion of border communities in the many government files that I have read relating to socio-economic issues. Eunan O’Halpin states that after 1925 the question of the border was ‘conspicuous by its absence’ from Irish intelligence records,¹⁷ though that changed after 1969. Irish economic policy commonly highlighted the economic problems of the west of Ireland. Border counties were occasionally mentioned also as areas of socio-economic deprivation, but this seemed to be an after-thought, despite the fact that they faced specific problems because of the border, which were aggravated following the outbreak of violence in 1969. Foreign investors – a key driving force in Irish economic development from the 1960s – were reluctant to venture into border areas.

Official interest in the border (apart from security matters), only emerged in 1983 when the Economic and Social Committee of the EEC issued a report on Irish Border Areas (north and south), highlighting the serious socio-economic problems – dependency on agriculture, small farms, low incomes, low levels of urbanisation, high unemployment and out migration.¹⁸ Since the 1990s border communities both north and south, have benefited significantly from an array of publicly funded programmes: the PEACE programmes targeted at Northern Ireland and border communities in Ireland, part-funded by the EU; the EU Leader programmes to assist small rural communities in developing new enterprises; and the International Fund for Ireland, established in 1986 by the Irish and British governments, with financial support from the governments of the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. The funding has supported infrastructure projects, small enterprises, and the establishment of voluntary community groups, which have resulted in an enhanced sense of border identity and common interests. Many of these groups have collected oral histories, and some are cited in this paper.

Books about the border began to appear: Colm Tóibín’s in 1987;¹⁹ Shane Connaughton’s in 1995.²⁰ Academic studies of border communities blossomed, and this research enhanced awareness of the socio-economic problems in border areas: the low participation rates in third-level education, difficulties in accessing health services, lack of urbanisation, low incomes on small farms. Many of these problems were structural, but the border was undoubtedly a factor in the low numbers attending third-level education, because it divided the potential pool of third-level students, which meant that many areas were distant from a third-level institution. Likewise, hospital services were fragmented, though cross-border agreements in recent years have mitigated that problem.

Liverpool University Press, 2021), 95–116; Stephen Kelly, ‘Margaret Thatcher, Partition and Cross-Border Security, 1979–91, *Ireland and Partition*, eds. N. C. Fleming and James H. Murphy (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2021), 203–222.

¹⁷ Eunan O’Halpin, *Defending Ireland: The Irish Free State and its Enemies since 1922* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 77.

¹⁸ EEC Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities, *Irish Border Areas: Information Report* (Brussels: Economic and Social Committee Press, Information and Publications Division, 1983); Harvey et al., 18.

¹⁹ Colm Tóibín, *Walking along the Border* (London: MacDonald, 1987); reissued on several occasions under the title *Bad Blood: A Walk along the Irish Border*.

²⁰ Shane Connaughton, *A Border Diary* (London: Faber and Faber, 1995).

In 1994, for the first time, the border was identified as a distinct region in Irish regional planning, and that remains the current position, with the establishment in 2012 of regional offices for the Border Midlands and Western Regions (BMW) in Ballaghaderreen, county Roscommon. The 2020, 'New Decade, New Approach' document agreed by the Northern Ireland Assembly, included plans for significant investments in the border region.²¹ In recent years the commemoration of the centenary of the Irish Revolution and the partition of Ireland, together with the implications of Britain leaving the EU has prompted a mass of publications, historical, cultural and sociological on the Irish border, which contrasts with the silence of earlier decades.

There is a paradox in the fact that interest in the border region, and measures to alleviate social and economic disadvantage, began to emerge at a time when many of the restrictions in the border area were easing. The Single European Act, introduced on 31 December 1992, removed all barriers to trade within the EU, which made it possible for cross-border trade to flourish. This was especially important for agriculture, enabling the establishment of a major cross-border dairy co-operative, and other agricultural processing firms. The ceasefires of the 1990s saw the removal of security barriers and the reopening of border roads and bridges.

Living beside the Border

Although partition did not have a significant impact on the lives of most Irish citizens, it did in border areas. Many long-established local and regional economic and transport networks were shattered by partition. In 1920 trading and health services were based around the nearest medium-large town, and they disregarded county boundaries.²² Border towns like Clones, county Monaghan, or Aughnacloy, county Tyrone, were cut off from their economic hinterlands. In 1925 nationalist witnesses told the Boundary Commission that Aughnacloy had lost 75% of its business following partition.²³ But despite such evidence presented by nationalist and unionist communities, north and south, to the North-East Boundary Bureau, the Boundary Commission's recommendations were based on what Lynch describes as 'largely arbitrary and contradictory' decisions, when considering the 'fate of the numerous towns which lay perilously close to the new border'.²⁴

The impact of the border was aggravated by regulations which closed the overwhelming majority of cross-border routes to motor traffic. There were 180 cross-border roads; thirty-five to forty of these roads actually defined the border, but there were only sixteen points where goods and motor vehicles could legally cross the border. In 1952 the Automobile Association issued six pages of guidance for motorists crossing the border.²⁵ The legal documents required deterred casual cross-border journeys, or short holiday visits.

²¹ Hayward, 74.

²² The Poor Law Unions, which ran the workhouses, which granted outdoor relief, and workhouse hospitals catering for many local people (not just the impoverished), were centred on market towns.

²³ MacDonald, 220.

²⁴ The North-East Boundary Bureau established in 1922 by the Provisional Government of the Irish Free State concentrated on collecting evidence from nationalist sources. Its key findings were published in 1923 in *Handbook of the Ulster Question*. Lynch, 208–209.

²⁵ MacDonald, 70.

Doctors with a medical practice on both sides – and the border split dispensary districts – could either buy a second car, lose much of their practice, perhaps leaving isolated communities without medical care, or try and maintain their practice in the face of these constraints. Border crossings often closed at six pm, and while the road remained open, the car's exit had to be officially cleared. One woman, whose father was a GP with practice on both sides of the border, has described him crossing the border late at night having attended a patient, and the following day having to drive his car across the border at an illegal crossing point, to return through an official point.²⁶

Cross-border networks deteriorated further after 1969, when many roads were cratered by the British forces, or, occasionally by paramilitaries. Ó Gráda and Walsh state 'for two decades after 1971 much of counties Cavan and Leitrim was virtually cut off from the other side of the border due to the destruction of bridges and roads at scores of "unapproved" border crossings'.²⁷ Clones and other border towns tend to attribute most, if not all their economic difficulties to the border. However, the loss of canal and railway transport, and the decline of traditional industries has been a common phenomenon throughout Ireland, and internationally, though proximity to the border probably accelerated these changes. Ó Gráda and Walsh estimated that the population decline in border counties Cavan and Leitrim in the period 1911–1996 was 29% higher (compared with counties with similar economic profiles), and that the border had a negative impact on population growth in border towns.²⁸ It also provided scope for economic enterprises, both legal and illegal. In the 1960s northern residents crossed the border on Sundays because public houses and other amenities were open in the south, in contrast to Northern Ireland. Cross-border sales of petrol, alcohol, tobacco and electrical goods continue to move from south to north, or the reverse, depending on currency values, prices and taxes, and smuggling has created considerable illicit wealth, some of it benefiting paramilitaries.

The border also impacted on local population movements. Some Protestants living in border communities migrated to Northern Ireland, though a much greater number emigrated to Britain, Commonwealth countries or the United States.²⁹ After 1969 some northern nationalists, including those suspected or convicted of paramilitary activities moved to border towns such as Dundalk or Monaghan, and some Protestants from southern border communities moved to Northern Ireland. The Protestant population in Northern areas adjoining the border fell because of attacks on local Protestants, who were often members of the Ulster Defence Regiment, and fears that the IRA were pursuing a policy of ethnic cleansing.³⁰ However, it is important not to attribute all migration to political/sectarian factors. The border communities were rural areas of high unemployment and low incomes. Migration was primarily motivated by economic factors. Some Protestants were reputed to have migrated from Ireland to Northern Ireland in order to give their children access to Protestant schools and the better educational facilities that existed in Northern Ireland until

²⁶ Dr Aine Sullivan. Her father was in general medical practice in county Cavan.

²⁷ Ó Gráda and Walsh, 20.

²⁸ Ó Gráda and Walsh, 22.

²⁹ Angela Graham's paper at the Monaghan conference.

³⁰ Catherine Nash and Briony Reid, 'New Approaches to the Irish Border', *Irish Studies Review* 18.3 (2010): 276.

the late 1960s, when free secondary education grants for higher education students were introduced in Ireland.³¹

In 1936 there were 10,168 people who were born in Northern Ireland living in counties Monaghan, Cavan and Donegal. By 1971 this had declined to 6,474. In 1911, 91.4% of the population of county Monaghan was born within the county; only 4.7% were born outside the nine-county province of Ulster. Over 2,000 Monaghan residents, more than 3% of the population, were born in the adjoining counties of Armagh and Fermanagh, which are now in Northern Ireland. By 1991 the number of Monaghan residents born in those two counties had fallen to less than 1,600, at a time when the proportion of the population who were not native to the county had increased to over a quarter. By 2016 one-fifth of the population of Monaghan had been born outside Ireland, and they vastly outnumbered Northern-born residents. Cross-border personal ties are now dwarfed by contacts with migrants from outside Ireland.³²

I grew up in Carrickmacross, County Monaghan, a town that was a border town, but also not a border town. During my childhood one wide, well-maintained road with little vehicle traffic was known as the Donaghmoyne Road. Donaghmoyne was a rural parish with a church, school and post office. If you continued along the road it ended before the village of Culloville, which was in County Armagh. There was no vehicle access (it was an unapproved road), but cyclists and pedestrians could continue, and having crossed a busy road linking two towns in the Republic, Dundalk and Castleblayney, a so-called concession road through Northern Ireland (where cars were forbidden to stop), it led to Crossmaglen. This was the long-established route between Carrickmacross and Crossmaglen, yet no signpost mentioned Crossmaglen, and local people never referred to the road by that name. Crossmaglen had been obliterated from official memory on the southern side of the border, and Carrickmacross had likewise vanished as a destination for those in Northern Ireland, though Traveller caravans continued to travel to Cross Fair, and some local people walked there from the border. Harvey et al. claim that until the 1970s, when Northern Ireland came under direct rule from Westminster, road signposts in border towns in Northern Ireland, which would have been within the remit of local authorities, rarely gave destinations south of the border, 'on the political assumption that no one would wish to go there'.³³

'Bandit Country': Myth or Reality?

By the 1970s Crossmaglen was known internationally as an IRA stronghold. In 1975, Merlyn Rees, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, described South Armagh as 'bandit country'. This designation was widely used by international journalists covering Northern Ireland, and it became the title of a best-selling book by British journalist Toby Harnden.³⁴ The border town of Dundalk, county Louth, became known as El Paso, the name of a border town in Texas which was synonymous with lawlessness. Border residents resented and continue to resent

³¹ Catherine Nash, Briony Reid and Brian Graham, *Partitioned Lives: The Irish Borderlands* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), 133.

³² The figures are taken from the Census of Ireland in the years 1911, 1936, 1971, 1991 and 2016; see <http://census.nationalarchives.ie/> and <https://www.cso.ie/en/>. Accessed 15 July 2023.

³³ Harvey et al., 44.

³⁴ Toby Harnden, *Bandit Country: The IRA and South Armagh* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1999).

this tendency to identify their communities with violence and lawlessness; they were also angry about how the Northern Ireland conflict was portrayed in the media.³⁵ If violence and lawlessness have been features of border communities in past decades, history suggests that this was a consequence of the border. In the sixteenth century the current border area marked the frontier of English authority in Ireland. Ulster was the last part of Ireland to remain under the control of Gaelic chieftains and parts of the current border were sites of battles, and skirmishes between representatives of the Tudor monarchs and Gaelic chieftains. During the nineteenth century however, the borderlands did not feature as sites of major political or social unrest. There is need for further research into border communities to discover more about the decades before 1920, but to date there is no great evidence of acute inter-religious tensions leading to violence.

This suggests that until the Home Rule crisis erupted on the eve of World War I, Catholics and Protestants in border communities had reached a state of peaceful coexistence. They interacted in some aspects of their daily lives, while living separate lives through their parish and political, social, and sporting organisations. Children in these communities were much more likely than Irish children elsewhere to attend mixed-religion schools, because Catholic and Protestant farms were interspersed in many rural communities and children attended a nearby school. There were tensions at times over land, and landlord tenant relationships, but most of those tensions had eased by the end of the nineteenth century as farmers began to purchase their holdings. Catholics and Protestants shared concerns common to small farmers. Border communities do not feature in planning for either the 1848 or 1867 failed rebellions, and the plans for the Easter 1916 Rising did not envisage any activity in Ulster or its borders. Ulster members of the Irish Republican Brotherhood were under orders to move west to Connacht and concentrate on holding the river Shannon.³⁶

David Fitzpatrick's research on the geography of the War of Independence showed that in 1921 IRA membership was low in Ulster, with the exception of Monaghan and Donegal, which ranked as moderate.³⁷ Eunan O'Halpin and Daithí Ó Corráin's more detailed account shows that border counties have the fewest deaths – with the exception of Monaghan and Louth. There were many deaths during those years in Belfast.³⁸

During 1921, however as the Northern Ireland government was established, and partition was becoming a reality, tensions increased along the border. There were attacks on British troops, policemen and the Protestant community, and attacks by Unionist paramilitaries or police auxiliaries on Catholics. These conflicts further increased during 1922 in the run up to the civil war. Some episodes, such as the Altnaveigh massacre in June 1922, where the IRA killed six Protestants, including one woman, are commonly seen as sectarian, though Mulroe, having carried out a detailed analysis of other events in that area concluded

³⁵ Nash and Reid, 277.

³⁶ Fearghal McGarry, *The Rising. Ireland: Easter 1916* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 220.

³⁷ David Fitzpatrick, 'The Geography of the War of Independence', *Atlas of the Irish Revolution*, eds. John Crowley, Donal Ó Drisceoil, Mike Murphy and John Borgonovo (Cork: Cork University Press, 2017), 534–543.

³⁸ Eunan O'Halpin and Daithí Ó Corráin, *The Dead of the Irish Revolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020), 545–546.

that it was ‘an act of revenge within a highly localised cycle of violence’.³⁹ The civil war among Irish republicans did not become a conflict between north and south, but from 1938/9 onwards republican paramilitary activity focused on the border area. During World War II a number of customs posts were destroyed, and in the years 1956–1962 the IRA mounted Operation Harvest, popularly known as the Border Campaign, a largely forgotten and unsuccessful series of cross-border incursions. While most accounts of the post-1969 Troubles focus on Belfast and Derry, the border communities experienced some of the worst effects of the violence. Nash, Reid and Graham note that ‘scars on landscape and psyches remain’.⁴⁰

The border created numerous opportunities for illegal activities. In the 1950s Sunday newspapers commonly featured stories of illegal cockfighting and illicit distillation, where participants evaded both police forces by crossing the border. Livestock smuggling has been a lucrative enterprise in border communities since the 1930s, when different price regimes emerged north and south. After 1973 EEC membership offered lucrative opportunities for such enterprises. In 1977 an estimated 5,000 pigs crossed the border illegally each week; some are reputed to have made several crossings, collecting EEC payments on each occasion.⁴¹ Oral histories speak of ‘Border cuteness’, survival skills.⁴² In the 1980s a flourishing Sunday market emerged in Jonesborough, located in a quasi-no-man’s-land beside the Dublin to Belfast road, selling cheap CDs, illegally-copied videos, electronic equipment and other goods. Jonesborough was operated as a self-declared tax free zone, outside the control of revenue officials and police in both parts of Ireland. There were similar though smaller markets in other border areas. In recent years, the different Covid regulations north and south resulted in major border crossings between Ireland and Northern Ireland, as citizens of the Republic took advantage of laxer restrictions in Northern Ireland, and Northern Ireland citizens could not be challenged or fined by the Irish authorities for breaching regulations. It was no coincidence that Irish Covid infections were often highest in border areas such as North Donegal or North Monaghan.⁴³ Stories of diesel washing, money-laundering, scams on EEC payments, double-claiming social benefits, and breaking Covid regulations serve to retain the image of these communities as outside the bounds of normal society.

The Border: Dividing Catholics and Protestants, and Co-Religionists North and South

For centuries, Catholics and Protestants have lived side by side in border communities, often with little distinction between their respective socio-economic circumstances. The Protestant community is subdivided between Presbyterians, the Church of Ireland and smaller sects. The border exacerbated denominational divisions, while also creating new divisions between Catholics in Northern Ireland and Ireland, and Protestants in Northern Ireland and Ireland. Rosemary Harris, author of *Prejudice and Tolerance in Ulster*, which is based on fieldwork carried out in the 1950s in the border community of Aughnacloy, said that the border

³⁹ Patrick Mulroe, ‘Moving Away from the “Bandit Country” Myth’, *Ireland and Partition*, eds. N. C. Fleming and James H. Murphy (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2021), 167–176, quotation: 176.

⁴⁰ Nash, Reid and Graham, 73–107, quotation: 75.

⁴¹ Desmond Norton, ‘Smuggling under the Common Agricultural Policy: Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland’. *Journal of Common Market Studies* 24.4 (1986): 297–312.

⁴² Nash, Reid and Graham, 135.

⁴³ On Covid and the border, see Hayward, 64–66.

‘crystallised the opposition to each other of Catholic and Protestant’: Catholics did not recognise the validity of the border, whereas for Protestants it was essential.⁴⁴ She saw the border as doubly-separating – dividing north and south and expanding the divisions that existed between Catholics and Protestants, though her research also highlights their common interests as small farmers. According to Darach MacDonald, ‘it intruded politically in communities that are almost indistinguishable, differentiating people with the same beliefs and allegiances, history and traditions, culture and attitudes’.⁴⁵ Denzil McDaniel, former editor of the Enniskillen newspaper *The Impartial Reporter*, described the border as ‘a hatchet coming down, destroying trust, between friends and neighbours’.⁴⁶

Dervla Murphy, author of the award-winning book *A Place Apart. Northern Ireland in the 1970s*, claimed that in County Fermanagh, ‘In both communities many of those who grew up pre-partition, still see the border as contrived and undesirable, something imposed on innocent country-folk by a bunch of squabbling politicians’. She suggested that ‘as one moves nearer the border changes in attitude are marked. Instead of Northern Protestants being seen as an amorphous, objectionable mass, people tend to comment on the good qualities of the “nice ones”, and to see them as co-victims, with the Northern Catholics of the “nasty” extremists on both sides’.⁴⁷

Nash and Reid quote nationalists in border communities in the Republic, who blamed Northern nationalists for the violence and disruption that they experienced, and there is evidence of similar distancing by Protestants in Northern Ireland and Ireland. Southern Protestants were generally noted for ‘keeping their heads down and their mouths shut’.⁴⁸ They expressed anger at Protestant paramilitaries; Protestants in the Republic maintained their distance from Protestants in Northern Ireland and cross-border Protestant ‘socials’ declined. A Protestant from Donegal claimed that he and his fellow Protestants are Protestants in the religious sense, whereas Derry Protestants are Protestants in a political sense.⁴⁹

Protestant farmers who moved to Northern Ireland were not always welcomed and continued to be viewed as Southerners.⁵⁰ In 1942, in response to fears in Northern Ireland that immigrants from the south might take jobs from the local population, the UK Parliament introduced an Order requiring any resident from Ireland to secure a work permit from the Northern Ireland ministry. This was superseded by the Northern Ireland Parliament’s 1947 Safeguarding of Employment Act, which required all Irish residents to secure a work permit from the Northern Ireland Ministry of Labour. Permits were issued to meet labour requirements in specific industries or areas and were often refused. Restrictions on the right of Irish residents to work in Northern Ireland only ended in the 1970s when EEC regulations

⁴⁴ Rosemary Harris, *Prejudice and Tolerance in Ulster: A Study of Neighbours and ‘Strangers’ in a Border Community* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1972), 20.

⁴⁵ MacDonald, 9.

⁴⁶ Panel Discussion ‘Community Perspectives on Partition’ at the online conference ‘Experiences of Border Minority Communities’.

⁴⁷ Dervla Murphy, *A Place Apart: Northern Ireland in the 1970s* (London: John Murray, 1978), 11.

⁴⁸ Harvey et al., 106.

⁴⁹ Nash and Reid, 277.

⁵⁰ Nash and Reid, 276.

provided for free movement of labour.⁵¹ These restrictions were strongly resented by Protestant migrants, who often had close family connections with Northern Ireland. These restrictions appear to have had a long-term impact, because in the early 2000s the numbers who crossed the border for work were lower than in other EU border areas.⁵²

There is evidence of similar resentment on the part of Northern nationalists who settled in county Monaghan. A focus group consisting of 'displaced persons', reported that they had lost their 'sense of belonging. In the south, you were called a blow-in or a northerner and made to feel like an outsider'. They experienced 'a loss of identity, of where their allegiances lay, except for Republicans, who felt allegiance to the Republican community'. Some claimed that they were 'a community within a community'.⁵³

The Parish and the Community

In rural and small-town Ireland, the parish was, and remains a key social unit. Schools were (and most still are) organised on a parish and denominational basis. In the past most couples married a partner from within their parish or an adjoining parish. Sporting organisations, GAA clubs, badminton, and other sports; amateur dramatic groups, marching bands, dances; and other social activities were centred on the parish. These structures sustained both a sense of community and sectarian divisions. The GAA was a cross-border but not a cross-community organisation; members of the Royal Ulster Constabulary could not join, and the organisation regularly expressed its opposition to partition. The organised sports that continued to function on a cross-community all-island basis, such as rugby, tennis or cricket were middle-class pursuits and not strongly represented in most border communities.⁵⁴ The fact that GAA matches were played on Sundays, whereas Irish Protestants, especially those who belonged to nonconformist churches, upheld Sabbatarianism,⁵⁵ meant that Protestant neighbours were unlikely to attend GAA matches or play these sports.

All the Irish churches continue to function on an all-island basis, but the border divided many parishes, and it divided parishes from neighbouring parishes. For many decades the restricted number of legally approved cross-border roads made it difficult for families living in cross-border parishes to conduct major rites of passage such as christenings, weddings and funerals in their parish church. The Church of Ireland in Drummully, county Monaghan, drew most of its parishioners from Northern Ireland. In the early 1920s the local clergyman did not register marriages with the Irish civil registrar, despite this being a legal requirement, because many of these couples viewed the Irish Free State as a foreign and hostile entity. There were additional tensions relating to the Drummully parish school and other parish schools with a traditional cross-border catchment, because pupils from Northern Ireland were unwilling to

⁵¹ Daly, *Brexit and the Irish Border*, 4. From the early 1950s, when wartime regulations were removed, Irish citizens could take employment in Great Britain without restrictions.

⁵² Harvey et al., 52.

⁵³ Harvey et al., 95. All the focus groups were drawn from the areas of Clones (Monaghan) and East Erne, a district electoral area in County Fermanagh.

⁵⁴ Cormac Moore, 'Sport and the Partition of Ireland', *Ireland and Partition*, eds. N. C. Fleming and James H. Murphy (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2021), 76–94.

⁵⁵ In Northern Ireland for many decades, all amenities, including swings in public parks were closed on Sundays.

study the Irish Department of Education's curriculum, which involved the requirement to learn the Irish language.⁵⁶

One woman, who grew up beside the border in County Louth has described the logistical nightmare of family christenings in her parish church, which was in Northern Ireland. At this time babies were baptised within days of their birth. The family had to organise two cars, one on either side of the border (and this at a time of few phones and low car ownership), drive the christening party to the border, park, carry the infant across a busy road to the second car in Northern Ireland – to travel to the church, and then go on a reverse journey.⁵⁷

Split parishes were arguably more difficult for Protestant communities that might lack the numbers to sustain a Sunday service. Kiltyclogher in county Leitrim is a border village and many of the Church of Ireland parish community lived in county Fermanagh. The border crossing road was unapproved, and therefore could not be used. The Church of Ireland rector's wife spent Sunday morning running a shuttle service from the border to the Church and back again. Parishioners crossed a footbridge that the local community had created.⁵⁸

Angela Graham is a community worker, who lives in the village of Drum, county Monaghan, the only village in Ireland with a majority Protestant population. It contains four Protestant churches – Church of Ireland, Presbyterian, Free Presbyterian (the church founded by Ian Paisley), and Plymouth Brethren – a Presbyterian hall, a Protestant (presumably Church of Ireland) Hall, two Orange Lodges and one branch of the Royal Black Preceptory, a Protestant fraternal association that is in offshoot of the Orange Order. Drum holds bible camps, and summer picnics where attendees are serenaded by marching bands, often bands of the Orange Order. Speaking at the conference in Monaghan in November 2021, she emphasised that 'faith and culture lie at the heart of our community'.⁵⁹

However, that strong 'faith and culture' can create difficulties in distinguishing between a strong affinity to one's parish (Catholic or Protestant) and sectarianism. Over the past century halls belonging to the Orange Order in border areas have been burned or defaced on countless occasions. Ulster Protestants were, and remain to some degree, very resentful at the Vatican's 1908 *Ne Temere* decree, requiring that children of a denominationally mixed marriage, should be raised as Catholics.⁶⁰ There was a tradition in border communities of not selling Protestant farms to Catholics, even if that resulted in a lower price.⁶¹ In border towns, most jobs in family businesses went to those who shared the religion of the owner. Fermanagh Protestant communities did not apply to the funding schemes to modernise their parish halls that were available from the International Fund for Ireland or the PEACE programme, because they would be required to open these facilities to

⁵⁶ MacDonald, 32.

⁵⁷ This was at a talk that I gave in Buswell's Hotel Dublin on 8 November 2016.

⁵⁸ Nash and Reid, 273.

⁵⁹ 'Experiences of Border Minority Communities'.

⁶⁰ Maria Luddy and Mary O'Dowd, *Marriage in Ireland, 1660–1925* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 46–48.

⁶¹ Nash, Reid and Graham, 118.

all denominations.⁶² When Angela Graham applied for a job in Clones, her Protestant neighbours were critical, because they regarded Clones as a Republican town.⁶³ The murder of Protestants in border communities during the Troubles (many were members of the part-time Ulster Defence Regiment) reignited fears and allegations of ‘ethnic cleansing’. Denis Bradley, a veteran of the civil rights movement in Derry, has described these communities as ‘influenced by fear [...] belief in genocidal tendency’.⁶⁴ Whether those fears are real or imaginary is in many ways irrelevant, because the fear will in itself lead to insecurity and increased sectarian tensions.

Conclusions

Although the 1920 partition of Ireland and the establishment of two political entities was not part of the post-war Versailles settlement, it is a product of that time, when efforts were made to draw national borders on the basis of ethnicity. One hundred years later, most historians agree that the Versailles model did not bring peace and harmony, but rather exacerbated divisions between communities and heightened ethnic identities and tensions.⁶⁵

Many of the disruptions that the border created no longer apply. People and goods move freely between the two Irelands, without security checks or customs restrictions. The only physical evidence of crossing the border is the different road signs; Northern Ireland gives distances and speed limits in miles, Ireland uses kilometres. Nevertheless, the border continues to matter, though its nature has changed. Katy Hayward speaks of the ‘importance of its insignificance’.⁶⁶ Nash and Reid wrote of ‘the shifting [...] dimensions of the border’ over the course of its existence.⁶⁷ The border has practically disappeared on the ground, but legacies remain. It has reconfigured community and personal identities, and it remains a potent political symbol for both nationalists and unionists.

The 2016 British referendum on leaving the EU, and the post-Brexit Northern Ireland Protocol agreed between the UK Government and the EU, which has enabled goods to continue to pass freely between Ireland and Northern Ireland (and Northern Ireland and the EU), has reignited interest in the Border. The fact that the Northern Ireland 2021 Census shows that Protestants are now outnumbered by Catholics and increasing references in the media to a Border Poll on Irish unity have increased tensions within the Unionist population of Northern Ireland, which have major implications for Border communities. Katy Hayward is correct that ‘contemporary discussion of the Irish border is rarely about the border per se, but about the legitimacy (or otherwise) of unionism in Ireland’.⁶⁸ Over recent decades, the EU, international foundations, governments, churches and community groups have worked hard to improve cross-border relations, and it would be wrong to dismiss the impact of their

⁶² Harvey et al., 82–84.

⁶³ ‘Experiences of Border Minority Communities’.

⁶⁴ ‘Experiences of Border Minority Communities’.

⁶⁵ Robert Gerwarth, *The Vanquished: Why the First World War Failed to End, 1917-1923* (London: Allan Lane: 2016), 6–8; Pieter Judson, *The Habsburg Empire: A New History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016).

⁶⁶ Hayward, 1.

⁶⁷ Nash and Reid, 266.

⁶⁸ Hayward, 7.

work. The Centre for Cross Border Studies established in Armagh in 1999, following the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement, the recent Shared Island initiative of the Irish government, and ARINS, a joint project between the Royal Irish Academy and Notre Dame University, seek to promote co-operation and greater understanding of north-south issues. These initiatives are seen by many unionists as efforts to promote a united Ireland. But it would be foolhardy to underestimate the divisions that exist between Ireland and Northern Ireland, and between and within border communities in Ireland, north and south. Events of the past hundred years have reinforced separateness and differences that cannot be ignored.

Works Cited

- An Analysis of Existing Statistics on Student Flows between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland in Higher Education*. Higher Education Authority, Dec. 2018, 22–26. <https://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2018/12/ROI-NI-Student-Flows-Report-December-2018-FINAL.pdf>.
- CAIN, *Fact Sheet in and about the Conflict in Northern Ireland*, June 21, 2007. https://cain.ulster.ac.uk/victims/docs/group/htr/day_of_reflection/htr_0607c.pdf.
- Census 2011: Ireland and Northern Ireland*. Cork: Central Statistics Office; Belfast: Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, 2014. <https://www.cso.ie/en/media/csoie/census/documents/north-south-spreadsheets/Census2011IrelandandNorthernIrelandwebversion1.pdf>.
- Clarke, Marie, Linda Hui Yang and David Harmon. *The Internationalisation of Irish Higher Education*. Dublin: Higher Education Authority, 2018. https://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2018/07/report_internationalisation_of_education_2018.pdf.
- Clones Family Resource Centre. *Our Border Heartbeat: Listening to Border People on the Centenary of Partition!* Clones: Abbeyset Print, June 2021.
- Connaughton, Shane. *A Border Diary*. London: Faber and Faber, 1995.
- D’Arcy, Naoise. “‘You Wouldn’t Exist Without Europe’: The Erasmus Baby Phenomenon”. *The University Times*, 29 March 2021. <https://universitytimes.ie/2021/03/you-wouldnt-exist-without-europe-the-phenomenon-of-erasmus-babies/>.
- Daly, Mary E. *Brexit and the Irish Border: Historical Context*. Royal Irish Academy/British Academy Brexit Briefing, 2017. <https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/documents/321/brexit-and-irish-border-historical-context.pdf>.
- EEC Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities. *Irish Border Areas: Information Report*. Brussels: Economic and Social Committee Press, Information and Publications Division, 1983.
- ‘Experiences of Border Minority Communities: Historical perspectives’, conference held in Monaghan County Museum 5 November 2021, as part of the Irish Government’s Decade of Centenaries Programme. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=esCi-Bv4vJM&ab_channel=MonaghanCountyMuseum.
- Fanning, Ronan. ‘Playing it Cool: The Response of the British and Irish Governments to the Crisis in Northern Ireland, 1968–9’. *Irish Studies in International Affairs* 12 (2001): 57–85.
- FitzGerald, John and Sean Kenny. “‘Till debt do us part’”. Financial Implications of the Divorce of the Irish Free State from the United Kingdom, 1922–26’. *European Review of Economic History* 24 (2020): 818–842.

- Fitzpatrick, David. 'The Geography of the War of Independence'. *Atlas of the Irish Revolution*. Eds. John Crowley, Donal Ó Drisceoil, Mike Murphy and John Borgonovo. Cork: Cork University Press, 2017. 534–543.
- Flynn, Emer, Janez Kren and Martina Lawless. 'Initial Impact of Brexit on Ireland-UK Trade Flows'. *ESRI Working Paper 714*, December 2021. <https://www.esri.ie/publications/initial-impact-of-brexit-on-ireland-uk-trade-flows>.
- Gerwarth, Robert. *The Vanquished: Why the First World War Failed to End, 1917-1923*. London: Allan Lane, 2016.
- Harnden, Toby. *Bandit Country: The IRA and South Armagh*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1999.
- Harris, Rosemary. *Prejudice and Tolerance in Ulster: A Study of Neighbours and 'Strangers' in a Border Community*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1972.
- Harvey, Brian, Assumpta Kelly, Sean McGearty and Sonya Murray. *The Emerald Curtain: The Social Impact of the Irish Border*. Carrickmacross: Triskele, 2005.
- Hayward, Katy. *The Irish Border*. Los Angeles: Sage, 2021.
- Heslinga, Marcus W. *The Irish Border as a Cultural Divide: A Contribution to Regionalism in the British Isles*, with a foreword by Estyn Evans. Assen: Van Gorcum, 1971.
- Judson, Pieter. *The Habsburg Empire: A New History*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016.
- Kelly, Stephen. 'Margaret Thatcher, Partition and Cross-Border Security, 1979–91'. *Ireland and Partition*. Eds. N. C. Fleming and James H. Murphy. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2021. 203–222.
- Kennedy, Liam. 'Two Ulsters: Partition, Retrospect and Prospect', *Ireland and Partition*. Eds. N. C. Fleming and James H. Murphy. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2021. 95–116.
- Kennedy, Liam. *Two Ulsters: A Case for Repartition*. Belfast: Queen's University, 1986.
- Kennedy, Michael. *Division and Consensus: The Politics of Cross-Border Relations in Ireland, 1925–1969*. Dublin: Institute of Public Administration, 2000.
- Leahy, Pat. 'Little Interaction between People Living North and South, New Polls Show'. *The Irish Times*. 28 January 2023. <https://www.irishtimes.com/politics/2023/01/28/two-thirds-of-people-in-republic-have-no-friends-in-northern-ireland-survey-shows/>.
- Luddy, Maria and Mary O'Dowd. *Marriage in Ireland, 1660–1925*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020.
- Lynch, Robert. *The Partition of Ireland, 1918–1923*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019.
- MacDonald, Darach. *Hard Border: Walking through a Century of Partition*. Dublin: New Island, 2018.
- McGarry, Fearghal. *The Rising: Ireland: Easter 1916*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Moore, Cormac. 'Sport and the Partition of Ireland'. *Ireland and Partition*. Eds. N. C. Fleming and James H. Murphy. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2021. 76–94.
- Mulroe, Patrick. 'Moving Away from the "Bandit Country" Myth'. *Ireland and Partition*. Eds. N. C. Fleming and James H. Murphy. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2021. 167–176.
- Murphy, Dervla. *A Place Apart: Northern Ireland in the 1970s*. London: John Murray, 1978.
- Nash, Catherine and Briony Reid. 'New Approaches to the Irish Border'. *Irish Studies Review* 18.3 (2010): 265–284.

- Nash, Catherine, Briony Reid and Brian Graham. *Partitioned Lives: The Irish Borderlands*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2013.
- Norton, Desmond. 'Smuggling under the Common Agricultural Policy: Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland'. *Journal of Common Market Studies* 24.4 (1986): 297–312.
- O'Connor, Tim. 'North-South Co-Operation and the Good Friday Agreement: A Story of Good Architecture'. *Brokering the Good Friday Agreement: The Untold Story*. Ed. Mary E. Daly. Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 2017. 164–170.
- Ó Gráda, Cormac and Brendan M. Walsh. 'Did (and Does) the Irish border Matter?' University College Dublin IBIS Working Paper, 2006. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3315685>.
- O'Halpin, Eunan and Daithí Ó Corráin. *The Dead of the Irish Revolution*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020.
- O'Halpin, Eunan. *Defending Ireland: The Irish Free State and Its Enemies since 1922*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- O'Leary, Peter. *Unapproved Routes: Histories of the Irish Border, 1922–1972*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.
- Tóibín, Colm. *Walking along the Border*. London: MacDonald, 1987.
- Townshend, Charles. *The Partition: Ireland Divided, 1885–1925*. Allen Lane: Penguin, 2021.
- Wood, Marion. "'Southerners Think Northern Ireland is as Foreign as Siberia": Readers Respond to the North and South Research Findings', *The Irish Times*, 11 February 2023. <https://www.irishtimes.com/politics/2023/02/11/southerners-think-the-north-is-as-foreign-as-siberia-readers-respond-to-the-north-and-south-research-findings/>.