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The Troubles in Music

Diploma Thesis

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Prohlašuji, že jsem tuto diplomovou práci vypracovala samostatně a uvedla v ní veškerou literaturu a ostatní zdroje, které jsem použila.

V Kroměříži, 17.8. 2020

Kateřina Marková

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Introduction

The euphemistic term ‘The Troubles’ refers to a complex, violent conflict that occurred in Northern Ireland in the second part of the 20th century and lasted roughly thirty years.

I have chosen to elaborate on this part of recent European history because I find it a very topical subject, especially important these days in the shade of Brexit which might pose a threat of fomenting this still unforgotten conflict.

The aim of this thesis is to analyse representations of the Troubles in music. I have decided to focus on music, because I believe that it has always been a major source of public opinion during the restless times of Ireland’s history. I have chosen music because, although there are many aspects to Irish heritage, traditions and culture, music played a significant role in the shaping of the nation. In previous centuries, music and storytelling were the only easily accessible forms of entertainment on the island that had no electricity and where only a small minority of the population were literate. Also, music offers the listener a direct appeal to emotions as it has the ability to evoke powerful emotional responses. In contrast to literary reflections, musical reflections of the conflict have not yet been given much scholarly attention.

At the beginning of the thesis I will give a short overview of the history of Northern Ireland, then I will move on to a description of the origin of the conflict, its development, involved parties and the outcome. I will also include information on essential parties of the conflict, such as IRA, UVF, UDA etc., which will be mentioned in connection to the musicians and their songs.

In the second part of the thesis I will look for musicians’ response to the conflict, how they projected the conflict and their opinion on the situation into their songs. I will also focus on different treatments of the matter according to the geographical and social background of particular artists. The goal of the thesis is to describe different approaches of musicians to the political situation of Northern Ireland during the Troubles, compare such approaches with respect to the musicians’ geographical and social background as well as musical genre.

Historical Overview

The history as well as the present of Ulster was transformed by immigration of Anglo-Normans which started already in the Middle Ages. Ireland was nominally a part of the British Crown from the 12th century and its colonisation by the British started during the reign of Henry VIII and continued through the reign of Mary I. and Elizabeth I. 'Plantation of Ulster' in the first part of the 17th century meant large-scale confiscation of land in six counties in Ulster. Nowadays, Ulster is divided into nine counties. Nine of them belong to Northern Ireland (the United Kingdom). These are Antrim, Armagh, Down, Fermanagh, Londonderry and Tyrone. Remaining three – Cavan, Donegal and Monaghan are in the Republic of Ireland, although some people, especially Protestants sometimes interchange Ulster and Northern Ireland, which is observable in Loyalist songs. The majority of the colonists didn't adapt to the local population, instead they remained loyal to the British Crown and Protestantism. "By 1641 Protestants owned 41 per cent of the land and held a majority of the seats in both houses of the Irish parliament. By 1688 Catholic ownership of land had fallen to 22 per cent of the total and by 1703 the proportion had fallen to 14 per cent."[1] Therefore the division of Ireland's inhabitants according to religion has a long tradition. This division has existed much longer than national identity and allegiance division into nationalists – unionists, which only emerged in the 19th century.[2] Although concepts of national identity had existed before the nineteenth century, the emergence at the time can be attributed to The Act of Union of 1800, which united the Kingdom of Great Britain and the Kingdom of Ireland into the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. This settlement lasted until 1922. "The rise of nationalism raised fundamental questions for Ireland - not simply how to define the nation but what political consequences should follow from that definition - and nineteenth-century Ireland divided into an Irish-identifying separatist Catholic community and a British-identifying Protestant one committed to the union."[3]

The differences between the North and the South of Ireland which played a major role during the Troubles are embodied in the history of both, Ireland and the United Kingdom. These differences and historical events directly led to the Troubles and culminated in the 20th century.

[1] Joseph Ruane, and Jennifer Todd, *The Dynamics of Conflict in Northern Ireland: Power, Conflict and Emancipation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 20.

[2] Ruane and Todd, 28.

[3] Ruane and Todd, 28.

On April 24, 1916, Irish Volunteers launched an uprising in Dublin which went down in history as The Easter Rising. This led to a deployment of 16 000 British troops and imposing of martial law. Although the rebels were forced to surrender five days later, the death toll was over 500.[4]

The Easter Rising led to the Irish War of Independence which lasted from 1919 to 1921. It was concluded on 6 December 1921 with the Anglo-Irish Treaty between the government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and representatives of the Irish Republic. The treaty provided the establishment of the Irish Free State and an option for Northern Ireland to opt out of the Irish Free State.

The treaty however didn't bring peace to Ireland and another conflict over whether or not to accept it broke out in 1922. Two main parties were pro-treaty provisional Government of the Irish Free state, which eventually won the war on one side and the anti-treaty IRA, who understood the signing of the treaty as a betrayal of the Irish Republic they proclaimed during the Easter Rising.

From 1921 to 1972, Northern Ireland was an autonomous region within the UK with The Parliament of Northern Ireland as the home rule legislature. The parliament and the home rule were suspended in 1972 in response to deteriorating political situation and the British government started governing the region directly. Northern Ireland regained the autonomy only after the Good Friday Agreement in 1998.[5]

History of the Troubles

The period of restless times in Northern Ireland that lasted approximately from 1968 to 1998 went down in history as the Troubles.

The two opposing sides were the overwhelmingly Protestant unionists (loyalists), who desired the province to remain part of the United Kingdom, and the overwhelmingly Roman Catholic nationalists (republicans), who wanted Northern Ireland to become part of the Republic of Ireland.

The origin of the Troubles is inseparably linked with the history of Ireland as whole, reaching as far as the first British incursion on the island in the 12th century. However, my aim in this thesis is not to examine the causes nor the history of the conflict, but rather focus on its representation in music. In this chapter I will therefore describe the conflict briefly, focusing

[4] Paul F State, *A Brief History of Ireland* (New York: Facts on File, 2009), 234.

[5] State, 297.

on particular moments which are dealt with in the songs analysed in the second part of this thesis.

The year 1968 was a year of political activism, not only in Europe. The Civil Rights Movement in the USA was at its peak, there were demonstrations and strikes in France and of course then there was the Prague Spring. Similarly, Catholic activists in Northern Ireland came together to form civil rights groups and to express their discontentment with discrimination.

Originally peaceful marches were aggressively supressed by the predominantly Protestant state forces, such as the Royal Ulster Constabulary.

The RUC was a regular police force in Northern Ireland. Its members were always armed and trained with heavy rifles, which was one of the reasons why nationalists perceived this force as a paramilitary group under the political control of the Stormont. The other reason why the group was unpopular with the Catholics was that originally it was intended that at least a third of the force would be made up by Catholics. However, this intention was never realised and it was predominantly Protestant.[6]

Although several political marches were violently disrupted at the time, it is generally stated that the catalysing event occurred in Derry on October 5, 1968. A march organised by NICRA (Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association) to protest against discrimination and gerrymandering was carried out although it was banned, after unionists announced that they would be staging a counterdemonstration. The RUC violently supressed the march with batons and water cannons, which led to eruption of rioting.[7]

Since the British Army got involved in 1969, after the 'Battle of the Bogside' (two days of rioting in Londonderry), many violent conflicts followed resulting into an emergence of various paramilitary organizations. The government of Northern Ireland responded by introducing increasingly stringent security measures, including internment (detention without trial). It was directed at the nationalist community, therefore the overwhelming majority of those arrested were nationalists.[8] Internment without trial began in 1971 and the internees were often mistreated and even tortured. That of course caused the increase of

[6] Fay, Morrissey and Smyth, *Northern Ireland's Troubles: The Human Costs* (Sterling, VA: Pluto Press, 1999) 21.

[7] Jeff Wallenfeldt, "The Troubles," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 14 May 2019. www.britannica.com/event/The-Troubles-Northern-Ireland-history

[8] Jeff Wallenfeldt, "The Troubles," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 14 May 2019. www.britannica.com/event/The-Troubles-Northern-Ireland-history

paramilitary activities and the street violence connected with it. It was introduced during a so called 'Operation Demetrius' during which the British Army interned 342 men of all but one was Catholic.[9] "It would be February 1973 before any loyalist terrorist suspects were interned, even though by that time the UVF and UDA had murdered over one hundred Catholics."[10]

The internment was partly an answer to the Provisional IRA's offensive campaign which started in 1970. IRA (The Irish Republican Army) was an Irish paramilitary organization that fought for the end of the British rule in the Northern Ireland, reunification of Ireland and establishment of an independent republic. Provisional IRA was its larger and more militarist faction and was responsible for many bombings since its establishment in 1969 until the 90s. One of their last bombings was carried out in Warrington, England in 1993 and became the main inspiration for the Cranberries' hit "Zombie."

UDA and UVF, on the other hand, were loyalist paramilitaries which opposed IRA and fought for maintaining Northern Ireland as a part of the United Kingdom. UDA (The Ulster Defence Association) was viewed as a counterpart of IRA as they were recognized as protectors of the Loyalist community. With an estimated 40 000 members at its peak, it was the largest paramilitary group during the Troubles.[11] They took part in massive demonstrations, mounted roadblocks and intimidated people often using firearms and bombs, just as the IRA. UVF (The Ulster Volunteer Force) was established as a small paramilitary group in 1960s. The British government banned the group in 1971 (after 26 members were given a sentence of 700 years imprisonment in total) and then lifted the proscription four years later in an attempt to change the UVF's member's approach from paramilitarism to politics. However, in 1975 the organization became illegal again after its involvement in twelve people's death. In the early 90s the violence from Loyalists increased significantly with a big contribution from both UVF and UFF, who started to closely cooperate to the level where membership in these two groups were interchangeable.[12]

[9] Ruane and Todd, 130

[10] Brian Feeney, *Short History of the Troubles* (Obrien Press Ltd, 2014) e-book.

[11] Fay, Morrissey and Smyth, 19.

[12] Fay, Morrissey and Smyth, 20.

In terms of fatalities, 1972 was the worst year of the Troubles. It opened with Bloody Sunday in Derry, continued with Bloody Friday and various bombings as a revenge and led to a total number of 480 dead in that year.[13]

Bloody Sunday was an incident in Derry where British soldiers killed 26 unarmed civilians during a protest march against internment without trial. Naturally, the incident raised a wave of resentment as the protesters were shot unarmed, some of them while trying to help the wounded, others while trying to flee.[14] Bloody Sunday still remains the most controversial incident of the conflict and was reflected by many musicians.

Bloody Friday happened in Belfast, six months after Bloody Sunday. About twenty IRA bombs placed mostly on cars exploded within eight minutes, killing nine people and injuring over one hundred and thirty more.[15]

The 1980s were marked by hunger strikes. Prisoners serving sentences for the Troubles related offences were given a special category status, which meant privileges such as not having to wear the prison uniforms, work or extended visits. Between 1980 and 1985, ten republicans died on hunger strikes against ending the special category status and new waves of civil disturbance arose. One of the hunger strikers' leaders was Bobby Sands, a member of IRA who died in Her Majesty's Prison Maze in 1981.[16] Besides being elected to the Parliament[17] while still in prison, Sands wrote several letters, articles, biographical novel *One Day in My Life* (1983) and the lyrics of "Back Home in Derry," "McIlhatton" and "Sad Song For Susan." The first two were later recorded by Christy Moore.[18] After his death, Irish republicans viewed Sands as a martyr and his funeral was televised and attended by over 100 000 people.[19] Many more musicians touched on the topic of hunger strikes and internment.

On Remembrance Day of 1987, an IRA bomb exploded near the town's war memorial. It killed eleven people and injured sixty-three as they were they gathered and about to

[13] Rogelio Alonso, *The Ira and Armed Struggle (*Routledge, 2007), 174.

[14] Martin Melaugh, "Events: Bloody Sunday - Circumstances in Which People Were Killed." *CAIN*, Ulster University, www.cain.ulster.ac.uk/events/bsunday/circum.htm, 11 May, 2020.

[15] Alonso, 174.

[16] Feeney, e-book.

[17] "BBC On This Day 1981: Hunger Striker Elected MP." *BBC News*, BBC, www.news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/april/10/newsid_2453000/2453183.stm, 15 May, 2020.

[18] "Back Home In Derry." *Christy Moore*, 17 Feb. 2012, www.christymoore.com/lyrics/back-home-in-derry/, 16 May, 2020.

[19] Feeney, e-book.

commemorate the dead of two world wars.[20] This incident became an inspiration for Simple Minds' song 'Belfast Child.'

By the late 1980s, signs of an end to the conflict finally appeared when talks between Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams and SDLP leader John Hume begun. This was a big step in Northern Ireland peace process as ceasefires were declared shortly after that.

In 1994 the Provisional IRA declared a unilateral ceasefire which was followed by a ceasefire from the main unionist paramilitary groups. However, after Sinn Fein wasn't allowed into negotiations before the IRA gave up its weapons in 1996, the IRA broke its ceasefire with a massive bomb detonation in London. They resumed the ceasefire in 1997 and Sinn Fein was readmitted to the talks. These negotiations involved more parties, including the nationalist SDLP, the Irish government, the Ulster Unionist Party, the Alliance Party, the Progressive Unionist Party as well as the Ulster Democratic Party (representing loyalist paramilitaries) and the Women's Coalition.

Before the Good Friday Agreement there were many other unsuccessful attempts to end the conflict. Sunningdale agreement was signed already in 1973, however, it collapsed only a few months later as a result of continuing violence and unionist opposition. The Anglo-Irish agreement of 1985 was similarly unsuccessful.[21]

The Good Friday agreement was signed on 10 April 1998 and officially ended the Troubles. However, the agreement was followed by the Troubles' deadliest single incident, when a bomb set up by the IRA exploded in Omagh. It killed 29 people plus two unborn children and injured over 200 more.[22] The incident is dealt with in U2's song "Peace on Earth."

According to the Conflict Archive on the Internet (CAIN), 3 489 people were killed as a result of the conflict between 1969 and 1998 and 1785 of these were civilians.[23]

Music and Politics in Ireland

Using songs for protests, expressing political ideas, celebrating nation or inspiring revolt and paramilitary action is not unique for Ireland. However, in a country whose history is marked with oppressions, conquest and disunity it has become a common practice.

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[20] Feeney, e-book.

[21] State, 328.

[22] Martin Melaugh, "Events: The Omagh Bomb." *CAIN*, Ulster University. cain.ulster.ac.uk/events/omagh/events.htm, 20 May, 2020.

[23] Sutton, Malcolm. "Sutton Index of Deaths." *CAIN*. Ulster University. cain.ulster.ac.uk/sutton/tables/Status.html, 18 May, 2020.

Even the Irish national anthem 'Amhrán na bhFiann' ('The Soldier's Song') is to a great degree a revolutionary song. Written by Peadar Kearney, an author of many Irish rebel songs, The Soldier's song was sung by the nationalists during the Easter Rising 1916. The lyrics like *'Mid cannons' roar and rifles peal, We'll chant a soldier's song* could have been described as militarist and divisive, especially during the Northern Ireland peace process. The original English text was published in the newspaper *Irish Freedom* in 1912 and the whole song was translated into Irish by Liam Ó Rinn in late 1916.[24]

Therefore, long before the Troubles, there was a tradition of Irish protest and political music. As Thomas Davis wrote in 1845 in the preface of *The Spirit of the Nation*, a collection of Irish ballads encouraging Irish nationalism: "Music is the first faculty of the Irish, and scarcely anything has such power for good over them."[25] Davis himself wrote lyrics to various songs with political subtext. For example, "Song of the Volunteers" or "A Nation Once Again" from the early 1840s.[26]

The relationship of music and politics in Ireland has been known virtually since we have a knowledge of Irish music as such. It echoed Ireland's colonial relationship with Britain as it played a part in inciting resistance against the colonial rule. Any criticism of the British Crown was naturally undesirable. In 1603 The Lord President of Munster issued a proclamation preaching extermination of bards, pipers and poets by martial law. The reason was their "role in the last upsurge against the English."[27]

Ireland's division into Protestants (orange) and Catholics (green) has been projected into music as well. Songs expressing affiliation to a certain party (or denigration of the other) have been created since time immemorial. Interestingly, musically orange and green tunes often resemble each other. Ciaran Carson gives an example of an Ulster protestant song 'The Boyne Water' which is precisely the same tune as a Catholic song 'Rosc Catha na Mumhan'. He then argues that those tunes themselves have no ideological message and what makes them a 'party' tune is verbal labels and the perception of the hearer.[28] I believe that knowledge of traditional Irish tunes is passed down from generation to generation and the

[24] "The National Anthem," *Gov.ie*. Department of the Taoiseach, www.gov.ie/en/publication/52a628-the-national-anthem/, 20 May, 2020.

[25] The Writers of the Nation Newspaper, "The Spirit of the Nation," *archive.org*. https://archive.org/details/spiritnationcon00dublgoog, 25 May, 2020

[26] Terry Moylan, *The Age of Revolution (*Lilliput Press Ltd., 2001), e-book.

[27] May McCann, "Music and Politics in Ireland: The Specificity of the Folk Revival in Belfast." *British Journal of Ethnomusicology* 4 (1995): 51-75, JSTOR www.jstor.org/stable/3060683, July 16, 2020.

[28] Ciaran Carson, *Last Night's Fun* (North Point Press, 2000), 184-185.

perception of the hearer Carson describes has to do with the family religious affiliation. Also, although there is a religious difference between these two parties, they live in one land and share its history.

Nationalist songs

Some other old Irish political songs include for example "The Rising of the Moon," "The Minstrel Boy" or "God Save Ireland." These are the most popular thank to various covers by well-known artists.

"The Rising of the Moon" recalls a battle between the United Irishmen and the British Army during the 1798 Irish Rebellion. The song is still popular in Ireland as it is taught in schools and was covered by many musicians including The Dubliners or The Clancy Brothers. The Clancy Brothers were an Irish folk group that played crucial role in revitalizing traditional folk music in Ireland.[29] Musicians that claim to have been influenced by The Clancy Brothers include Bob Dylan, Sinéad O'Connor, the Pogues, Bono and the Dubliners.[30] They recorded many national folk songs including "Four Green Fields", "Kevin Barry" or "The Patriot Game."

The patriotic song The Minstrel Boy with a melody of an old Irish air was written by Thomas Moore. It highlights one's selfless devotion to the country which might be one of the reasons why this song was so popular during the American Civil War. Nowadays it is performed on funerals of members of traditionally Irish regiments in the armies of the United Kingdom and the United States. The unceasing popularity of the song is evident from its covers by John McCormack, Paul Robeson, The Clancy Brothers, The Corrs, Buffalo Springfield or Joe Strummer of The Clash.[31]

God Save Ireland is a rebel song celebrating three members of The Irish Brotherhood, who were executed in 1867 for a murder of a British police officer. The song served as an anthem of Irish nationalists until 1916, when it was replaced by The Soldier's Song. It was covered by The Dubliners, Luke Kelly or The Wolfe Tones.

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[29] Michael Gole, "The Clancy Brothers," Irish Studies, 22 Aug. 2015 irishstudies.sunygeneseoenglish.org/2015/08/22/the-clancy-brothers/, 7 June, 2020.

[30] Derek Schofield, "Liam Clancy Obituary," *The Guardian,* Guardian News and Media, 4 Dec. 2009, www.theguardian.com/music/2009/dec/04/liam-clancy-dies-obituary, 8 June 2020.

[31] "The Minstrel Boy – Symbol of Devotion to One's Country," *Irish Music Daily,* 25 Feb. 2014, www.irishmusicdaily.com/minstrel-boy, 20 June, 2020.

Other famous nationalist songs worth mentioning include “Come Out, Ye Black and Tans,” “Four Green Fields,” “Foggy Dew,” “Only Her Rivers Run Free” or “My Little Armalite” that I will analyse in the following chapter

Loyalist songs

Irish songs of loyalty to the British crown are similar to earlier productions of Restoration times in England, as it was a time when a production of aggressively anti-Catholic songs was common.[32] Loyalist songs range in themes from religion to politics, ridiculing the Catholic church and Catholic religious practice, mocking nationalist politics, and warning against the danger of the lurking Irish. They also praise and celebrate Orange heroes and victories. “Loyalist songs, although politically oppositional, show the characteristics of mainstream Irish culture; they have elements of Gaelic prosody and use commonplace tunes.”[33] This statement is in accordance to my previous comment, that although the Irish might differ in their political and religious views, they share the cultural heritage of the place where they live and to which music certainly belongs.

One of the best-known Irish loyalist songs is an Ulster ballad called The Sash My Father Wore. The song is still sung during parades on the twelfth of July in Ulster, when Protestants celebrate the victory of the Protestant King William of Orange at the Battle of the Boyne, where he defeated the Catholic King James II and began the Protestant Ascendancy in Ireland. The song glorifies Irish Protestant victories, mentioning the siege of Derry and Battles of Newtownbutler, Boyne and Aughrim.

Other famous loyalist songs are for example Derry’s Walls which describes the same events as The Sash or The Billy Boys. All these songs are used by football fans of Northern Ireland and English football clubs and although they are old, they still stir emotions among the Irish. As a response, the Irish Football Association (IFA) banned the song Billy Boys (adopted by Linfield fans) and added that this applied to “any other song or chant that is undeniably sectarian or offensive”.[34]

The usage of such sectarian songs is still an issue in Northern Ireland up to these days. For example, after an incident in March 2019, IFA condemned a video of Northern Ireland

[32] Fintan Vallely, and Liz Doherty. *The Companion to Irish Traditional Music*. (Cork University Press, 2011), e-book.

[33] Vallely and Doherty, e-book.

[34] “Irish FA Bans ‘Billy Boys’ Song for Linfield Fans,” *BBC Sport*, BBC, www.bbc.com/sport/football/27054281, 20 June, 2020.

football fans singing 'we hate Catholics' in Belfast.[35] However, not only loyalist songs are still sung and raise controversy. In 2014, John Delaney, chief executive of Football Association of Ireland, was recorded singing Joe McDonnell, which is a republican song celebrating IRA member. In his defence, Delaney stated that he does not believe every word of the song and that he is against any violence.[36]

Nowadays

Political protest songs became widely popular in Ireland during the Troubles and are being produced up to these days. Some authors, influenced by the Troubles then turned their interest to socio-political problems in different countries as well. For example, Paul Brady who in his song "The Island" compares the Troubles to Lebanon civil war. Christy Moore wrote songs about Spanish Civil War and U2, since their album *War* (1983) became engaged in socio-political problems world-wide.

U2 is probably the most famous politically engaged band in Ireland nowaday. Apart from their well-known song Sunday Bloody Sunday, which I'm going to look into with more detail in the following chapters, they have recorded many political songs on various, even non-Irish topics. Through their songs in the past 30 years they condemned the Cold War, supported Burmese pro-democracy activist Aung San Suu Kyi, responded to the siege of Sarajevo, supported the Polish Solidarity movement and much more.

Besides U2, contemporary Irish music includes other bands who are not afraid of expressing their political beliefs. One of them is Flogging Molly which combines traditional Irish music with popular contemporary genres. Their music can be described as Celtic or folk punk and often comments on politics, the economy, unemployment, immigration policies etc.

Another significant political band is the Wolfe Tones whose activity, including IRA propagandism during the Troubles I am going to describe in the following chapter. Their political engagement, however, did not stop with the Troubles. Their 2001 album *You'll Never Beat the Irish* is full of political songs such as the title song of the same name or

[35] "NI Fans Condemned for Sectarian Song," *BBC News*, BBC, 26 Mar. 2019, www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-47699713, 20 June, 2020.

[36] Steven Carroll, "John Delaney 'Sorry' If Republican Song Caused Offence," *The Irish Times*, The Irish Times, 25 Nov. 2014. www.irishtimes.com/sport/soccer/international/john-delaney-sorry-if-republican-song-caused-offence-1.2014262, 20 July, 2020.

"Ireland, my Ireland". In 2002 the band was honoured when their song "A Nation Once Again" was voted the best world music song of all time by an online BBC poll.

Musicians' response

Ever since the Troubles began until the Good Friday Agreement and beyond, artists of various fields reflected on the matter. Like writers and poets, songwriters have made a significant contribution to the documentation of the conflict. Music was not only an opportunity for the Irish to express themselves and reflect on the current situation, it also opened the door to the outside world. Through their songs, people from outside Ireland were made aware of the conflict and the lyrics provided people with the opinion of its author. "Songs such as these have opened a door to the outside world and enabled listeners from abroad to make more sense of the conflict or to even shape their own opinions on the subject."[37]

Also, after the internment and during the 1970s, it was important for Northern Irish artists to write political songs. Many songs were written to raise money for families who lost their earners.[38]

The period of the Troubles did not only have an impact on song writing, the conflict changed the whole music culture in Ireland. For example, music fans on both sides of Ireland were shocked in July 1975 when three members of The Miami Showband were killed by the UVF. The band, which was one of the most popular Irish showbands at the time, was on its way back home to Dublin after a performance in Banbridge. Their van was stopped by what appeared to be a regular military checkpoint, when a bomb exploded prematurely. This explosion killed two UVF members whose fellow gunmen then started an open fire against the band. There are still many unresolved details regarding this tragedy, but it is believed that the paramilitary group's aim was to plant a bomb on the band's van, so that the band members would appear to be IRA bomb-smugglers.[39] As an answer to this incident, many people were killed by IRA which was seeking a revenge. One of them was another musician, Protestant disc jockey Norman Kerr. As he was packing his equipment in a bar, he was shot dead by the IRA about two weeks after The Miami Showband incident. It is believed that he

[37] Katrin Pietzonka, *And the Healing Has Begun: A Musical Journey Towards Peace in Northern Ireland* (AuthorHouse UK, 2013), e-book.

[38] Pietzonka, e-book.

[39] Eimear Flanagan, "Miami Showband Massacre Survivor Plans Peace Centre," *BBC News*, BBC, 19 Dec. 2019, www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-50812488, 23 July, 2020.

was targeted because he was a friend of Harris Boyle, one of the two UVF gang members who were killed by their own bomb during the Miami Showband attack.[40]

This incident definitely influenced the music scene in Ireland. "After that atrocity, many people were too fearful to travel across Northern Ireland to attend concerts for the remainder of The Troubles."[41]

In 2019 Netflix released over an hour-long documentary called ReMastered: The Miami Showband Massacre, which shows that up to this day, this incident still attracts attention.

Musicians from Northern Ireland

Artists from Northern Ireland, who were the closest to the conflict, were the ones who could describe the impact of the Troubles on Northern Irish society and reveal how far were lives of ordinary people living in Northern Ireland affected by it. Musicians also often projected their opinions on the situation in their hometowns into their songs. Because the conflict raged basically right in their homes, there was no escape for anyone from Northern Ireland. It is therefore no surprise, that a great number of musicians who reflected on the Troubles comes from the North. In the next chapters I will describe some of these authors and their own perception of the Troubles.

Ciaran Carson

Born in Belfast in 1949, Ciaran Carson spent most of his life in the centre of the Troubles. It is therefore no surprise that the conflict became a huge part not only of his life, but it was reflected in his work too. He famously recalls his experience of living in Belfast in his wo collections of poetry, *Belfast Confetti* (1989) and *The Irish for No* (1987). Apart from being a poet and a novelist, Carson was also a scholar of traditional Irish music. He played the flute, alongside his wife, Irish fiddler Deirdre Shannon and he combined his two interests – writing and music – in *Last Night's Fun: A Book about Irish Traditional Music* (1996). He also wrote *A Pocket Guide of Irish Traditional Music* (1986). Carson worked as traditional arts officer with the Arts Council of Northern Ireland (ACNI) for twenty-five years.

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[40] David McKittrick, "Lost Lives: The Stories of the Men, Women and Children Who Died as a Result of the Northern Ireland Troubles," *Archive.org*. Internet Archive, 1 Jan. 1999, archive.org/details/isbn_9781840182279, 16 June, 2020.

[41] "Truth of Miami Showband Revealed," *IrishCentral.com*, 19 Feb. 2020, www.irishcentral.com/news/miami-showband-captain-robert-nairac, 2 July, 2020.

Each chapter in *Last Night's Fun* is titled after some traditional Irish tune and Carson's memories and stories combine with songs and tunes through the whole book. He often describes songs and tunes as a part of an ongoing conversation, something that is a natural part of a dialogue. According to Neal Alexander, Carson found "a literary format capable of approximating the social experience of a traditional pub session, with its odd mixture of formal courtesies and apparently haphazard happenings, of music and song, dance and drink, talk and craic."[42]

In a chapter called "The Ould Orange Flute" Carson deals with his experience of growing up during the Troubles. Interestingly, the chapter is named after a song that is often associated with the Orange Order but was also recorded by artists supporting Irish nationalism, such as The Clancy Brothers or The Dubliners. I think it was Carson's allusion to his own name which he describes as an oxymoron in Northern Ireland. Ciaran is a Catholic name, whereas Carson he explains as "an epitome of Protestant nomenclature".[43]

The lyrics narrate a story of Bob Williamson, a Protestant flute player, who married a Catholic woman and moved away from Northern Ireland. He took his flute with him and enrolled into a Catholic choir but his flute would only play Protestant songs.

In this chapter Carson describes his family situation regarding religion, which played a significant role in Belfast of Carson's youth. Just like Bob Williamson, Carson's great grandfather was a Protestant who turned Catholic after marrying a Catholic woman. Therefore, although Carson was a Catholic, he experienced both Catholic and Protestant parades: "Every twelfth of July for years my father would take us down Stockman's Lane from Catholic Andersonstown to the Protestant Lisburn Road to watch the Orangemen's Parade."[44] Such parades were and still are an important part of Northern Irish culture and although the majority is held by Protestant groups, Catholics parade as well. Carson describes how he attended both of these parades, listened to the music the crowd would play and sing and also recounts how he felt at the Protestant parades: "We Catholics pretended to be palefaces. We walked around in fearful nonchalance, not knowing when we would be challenged. We were uninvited symbiotic guests."[45] Carson understands these parades as a territorial claim.

[42] Neal Alexander, *Ciaran Carson: Space, Place, Writing* (Liverpool Univ Press, 2011), 155

[43] Carson, 181.

[44] Carson, 182.

[45] Carson, 184.

Paul Brady

Paul Brady was born in Belfast, but grew up in Strabane, a little town in Northern Ireland, which was extensively damaged during the Troubles. It suffered massive bombings and even became the most bombed town in the whole of Northern Ireland.[46]

His background has had an unquestionable influence on his music: "Everything I have tried to express in this time, whether in traditional music or in contemporary rock/pop has been strongly coloured by my Irish environment."[47]

Growing up in such environment, he could rarely hear traditional music on the radio, yet it is the genre he focused on during the 70s. "I had an Uncle Bernard in Irvinestown in Fermanagh and he played the fiddle. They were all mountainy men and played a lot of traditional music. I'd only see them a few times a year and the fiddle would come out. I loved it but it wasn't something I felt I wanted to attach myself to, so it surprised me as much as anyone else when I did."[48]

The Island

Although Brady opposes using art as subservient to some political ideology: "I don't actually ever feel that political art or art that is governed by political ideology or a slave to it is ever any good,"[49] his song The Island is one of the most generally recognized songs reflecting the Troubles ever written.

Written in 1985, The Island's lyrics start with a reference to the civil war in Lebanon, perhaps to make the message more general. Then the topic changes to the Troubles. Brady criticizes the focus of extremists and hard-core believers on the past and their unwillingness to put faith second for the good of the next generations. Brady himself thinks that religion "has passed its usefulness in this century. Anywhere I look around I see it doing more harm than good."[50] In the song he also suggests that to die for Ireland or faith is still very much a part

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[46] Freya McClements, "Strabane Has Unfinished Business 20 Years after Ceasefire," *The Irish Time,* The Irish Times, 21 July 2017, www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/strabane-has-unfinished-business-20-years-after-ceasefire-1.3161807, 6 July, 2020.

[47] "Paul Brady." *Troubles Archive*. www.troublesarchive.com/artists/paul-brady, 8 July, 2020.

[48] "Paul Brady: Trad Music Was a Complete Life Change for Me," *The Irish Post,* www.irishpost.com/entertainment/paul-brady-when-i-went-into-trad-music-it-was-a-complete-life-change-for-me-28929, 15 July, 2020.

[49] Pietzonka, e-book

[50] "Thumbs up for Paul Brady," *Senior Times,* 19 Dec. 2015, www.seniortimes.ie/thumbs-up-for-paul-brady/, 10 July, 2020.

of some people's ideology which they transfer to the following generations through their children[51]:

> No way our holy flag is gonna fall
> Up here we sacrifice our children
> To feed the worn-out dreams of yesterday
> And teach them dying will lead us into glory.[52]

The criticism of the clinging to the past appears in other verses as well:

> Women and children dying in the street
> And we're still at it in our own place.
> Still trying to reach the future through the past.
> Still trying to carve tomorrow from a tombstone.[53]

In the song, Brady captures the reality of everyday life in Northern Ireland during the Troubles, as he himself has experienced:

> They're raising banners over by the markets
> Whitewashing slogans on the shipyard walls
> Witchdoctors praying for a mighty showdown[54]

By the witchdoctors praying for a mighty showdown, I believe, Brady refers to political and religious extremists. Republicanism or loyalism could be seen as a kind of a religion too. One of the most famous religious extremists in Northern Ireland during the Troubles was Ian Paisley, who was a loyalist politician and Protestant religious leader. He was profoundly anti-Catholic and anti-republican, preaching fighting by all means against a united Ireland. Brady, however, doesn't take any side. He didn't write the lyrics to express his support to

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[51] "Thumbs up for Paul Brady," *Senior Times*, 19 Dec. 2015, www.seniortimes.ie/thumbs-up-for-paul-brady/, 10 July, 2020.

[52] "08 The Island," *Paul Brady*, www.paulbrady.com/shop/the-island-3/, 15 August, 2020.

[53] Paul Brady, "The Island"

[54] Paul Brady, "The Island"

either of the sides, but rather to express his disappointment and anger at the complex situation. He doesn't propose any solutions but reveals hope for the future when in the end both sides will turn to the same goal:

> And how this twisted wreckage down on main street.
> Will bring us all together in the end.
> And we'll go marching down the road to freedom....
> Freedom[55]

Tommy Sands

Tommy Sands, a member of The Sands Family is another author from Northern Ireland who expresses similar message as Brady. Although he was raised Catholic, his songs express his opposition to sectarian violence without taking sides. In an interview for *The Irish Times* he remembers his encounters with Protestants. He starts with recollections from his childhood, when there was a single Protestant boy in his school, and describes how conversations with Protestants became more serious as he grew older: "It was a great pain to me that these people I loved dearly were somehow on the opposite side to us."[56] He came to see the differences various religions and different political ideas create among people: "For a time I began to see policemen, and Protestants in general, in a different light. They may have been decent people, but they were supporting and upholding the British occupation of our country."[57]

He grew up in a small farm house in the country near borders, in a 'mixed neighbourhood', where people from both sides would come to pass evenings, and sing songs. He learned songs about emigration and the Troubles from both sides. Naturally, his experienced was projected into his music.[58]

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[55] Paul Brady, "The Island"

[56] "Shifting Sands," *The Irish Times,* The Irish Times, 10 Feb. 2013, www.irishtimes.com/life-and-style/shifting-sands-1.451719, 25 July, 2020.

[57] "Shifting Sands," *The Irish Times,* The Irish Times, 10 Feb. 2013, www.irishtimes.com/life-and-style/shifting-sands-1.451719, 25 July, 2020.

[58] "Tommy Sands," *Troubles Archive*, Arts Council of Northern Ireland, www.troublesarchive.com/artists/tommy-sands, 25 July, 2020.

There Were Roses

In a folk song There Were Roses, recorded in 1985, Sands expresses his opposition to sectarian violence through lyrics based on a true story. Unlike Brady, who uses mostly irony as a literary device, Sands, in this particular song uses pathos. The song recounts a story of two friends, one of them was Catholic and the other was Protestant. They were both friends of Sands as well, and both were killed by paramilitaries. Sands emphasizes that different religious affiliation didn't matter for these people, who grow up in the countryside:

> For the ground our fathers ploughed in,
> the soil, it is the same,
> And the places where we'd say our prayers
> have just got different names.[59]

After mentioning that the Protestant boy was killed by the Republican paramilitaries, Sands expresses the feeling of fear that filled the whole countryside area. He also sings about 'evening up the score'. This shows, that people expected a Catholic to be killed in revenge:

> Well fear, it filled the countryside,
> there was fear in every home,
> When a car of death came
> prowling round the lonely Ryan Road.
> A Catholic would be killed tonight to even up the score.[60]

In the following verse Sands states his opinion on the situation. By "centuries of hatred" he means the long-lasting conflict between Protestants and Catholics in Ireland. He criticizes the blindness of extremists and their unwillingness to try to throw away old disputes. In the last line he warns against this vicious circle of revenge, meaning that in the end, it will only hurt everyone:

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[59] "Collection of Irish Song Lyrics," *Irish Song Lyrics - There Were Roses,* www.irishsongs.com/lyrics.php?Action=view&Song_id=547, 15 August, 2020.

[60] Tommy Sands, "There Were Roses"

"Alan was my friend," he cried. He begged them with his fear,
But centuries of hatred have ears that cannot hear.
An eye for an eye was all that filled their minds,
And another eye for another eye till everyone is blind.[61]

There Were Roses was one of the first Northern Irish songs about the Troubles that doesn't express the view of on either the Protestant or Catholic sides, but manages to bring them together and share their grief, which is the same. Although it deals with a single incident within a small community, in a sense it serves as a microcosm of the whole Troubles.[62]

1999

Tommy Sands keeps the theme of both sides being hurt equally in his song *1999.* The title refers to the year Tommy Sands expected the two parties to reach some kind of a political agreement.

Sands wrote the song after he had visited the headquarters of both, the UDA and Sinn Féin in 1989: "During the course of the same week recently, I found myself in the headquarters of representatives of the two opposing lines in the Northern troubles. But when I looked out of the window of each place I saw the same picture. The houses were the same, the people wore the same and the problems were the same. At that moment I knew that eventually both sides would sit down and find a solution. The song asks the question ... When?"[63]

In the lyrics written in 1989 (therefore after the worst times of the Troubles) he expresses his regret of the situation and of the fact they didn't manage to solve it earlier:

At last you've come together after all the tears and time
It's sad you didn't do it back in 1969
We all had dreams and hopes and fears and someone else to blame
It took so long to realise our dreams were all the same[64]

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[61] Tommy Sands, "There Were Roses"
[62] Pietzonka, e-book
[63] "1999 by Tommy Sands," *Troubles Archive*, Arts Council of Northern Ireland, http://www.troublesarchive.com/artforms/traditional-music/piece/tommy-sands-1999, 25 July, 2020.
[64] "1999," *Troubles Archive,* www.troublesarchive.com/artforms/traditional-music/piece/tommy-sands-1999, 15 August, 2020.

He specifically appeals to the UVF and IRA to find common ground:

> Compromise was treachery that's the way it seemed
> Well now we're left with nothing but a future we must find
> And count the cost of the chances lost in 1989
> Oh, IRA and UVF this song is just for you[65]

Apart from "There Were Roses" and "1999", Sand wrote many more songs on the subject of the Troubles and used different perspectives. In the song "All the Little Children" he focuses on the innocent who suffered and depicts hope for the future, when all the children can play together, because 'all our blood is red'. The song "You Sold Us Down the River" deals with the disillusionment of many working-class Unionists who were let down by the British:

> You planted us in Ireland to keep it safe and sure
> And always keep the British flag a-flying
> You have no further use for me, you've gone and broke my heart
> And you sold me down the river[66]

The song was written after the author's conversation with his Protestant neighbour,[67] which proves that Sands changed his confirmed opinion and became more conciliatory regarding the conflict's two sides.

Paddy McGuigan

Paddy McGuigan was an Irish musician and songwriter. He was a member of The Barleycorn band for which he wrote "The Men Behind the Wire."[68]

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[65] Tommy Sands, "1999"
[66] Tommy Sands, "1999"
[67] "You Sold Us Down the River by Tommy Sands," *Troubles Archive*, Arts Council of Northern Ireland, http://www.troublesarchive.com/artforms/traditional-music/piece/you-sold-us-down-the-river, 25 July, 2020.
[68] "Barleycorn Feature (1971-1995)," *Irish-showbands.com*, www.irish-showbands.com/Bands/barleycorn.htm, 25 July, 2020.

The Men Behind the Wire

The song deals with the 1971 Operation Demetrius and with it connected mass internment of 342 people including Paddy McGuigan.[69]

The song begins with a description of the invasion of British army. McGuigan sings they came to 'take our sons,' which is what actually happened with over three hundred men arrested:

> Armoured cars and tanks and guns
> Came to take away our sons[70]

The next verse describes the British soldiers harshly – as marauders who hold the Irish in scorn:

> British soldiers came marauding
> Wrecking little homes with scorn[71]

The following verse points out that the men were arrested without a chance to defend themselves in front of a judge and jury – without any trial. McGuigan suggests they were simply arrested because they are Irish and if that is a crime, they are all guilty:

> Not for them a judge and jury
> Nor indeed a trial at all
> But being Irish means you're guilty
> So we're guilty one and all[72]

McGuigan sings that "Cromwell's men are here again" alluding to the period from 1649 to 1653 when the English invaded and conquered Ireland under the rule of Oliver Cromwell.

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[69] Ibid.

[70] "The Men Behind The Wire, Lyrics And Chords," *Irish Folk Songs,* www.irish-folk-songs.com/the-men-behind-the-wire-lyrics-and-chords.html, 15 August, 2020.

[71] Paddy McGuigan, "The Men Behind the Wire"

[72] Paddy McGuigan, "The Men Behind the Wire"

He sees the British presence in Northern Ireland as a similar situation. He also stresses that the whole world will find out about the British actions and suggests that "honest men" should see it as a disgrace:

> Round the world the truth will echo
> Cromwell's men are here again
> England's name again is sullied
> In the eyes of honest men[73]

The song concludes on a note of a promise to stand on the side of the arrested, help to set them free and build an independent country:

> Proud we march behind our banner
> Firm we'll stand behind our men
> We will have them free to help us
> Build a nation once again[74]

The song's lyrics startled a dispute between two Northern Irish politicians again in 2008 when an English singer Dido used it in one of her songs. Dido, who has Irish roots, used lines "Armoured cars and tanks and guns came to take away our sons. But every man must stand behind the men behind the wire" for her song 'Let's Do the Things We Normally Do.'[75] Culture Minister of Democratic Unionist Party, Gregory Campbell, accused the singer of "singing about people who were murderers, arsonists and terrorists" and wanted her to explain herself: "If she is an IRA supporter then she should come out and say it, if she is not she should say that and offer some clarity either way."[76] Barry McElduff of Sinn Féin responded that he believed "most people would expect the minister for culture, arts and

[73] Paddy McGuigan, "The Men Behind the Wire"

[74] Paddy McGuigan, "The Men Behind the Wire"

[75] Sean Michaels, "Dido Criticised for 'IRA Song' on New Album," *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 9 Dec. 2008, www.theguardian.com/music/2008/dec/09/dido-criticised-ira-song, 27 July, 2020.

[76] Natalie Lindo, "Dido Slammed for Republican Riff," *BBC News*, BBC, 11 Dec. 2008, www.news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/northern_ireland/foyle_and_west/7775976.stm, 27 July 2020.

leisure to defend and support artistic freedom and independence," and that Mr Campbell was "focusing on issues with little relevance or significance."[77]

Besides "The Men Behind the Wire", McGuigan wrote at least one more controversial song. "The Boys of the Old Brigade" which celebrates IRA and its role in the Irish War of Independence used to be one of the IRA supporting songs regularly sung among The Celtic Football Club fans. The club officials announced that every fan who will be caught chanting pro-IRA slogans will be asked to leave the club's grounds.[78]

Phil Coulter

Phil Coulter is a musician and songwriter from Derry. He was introduced to music by his father, who was one of the few Catholic Constables in the Royal Ulster Constabulary.[79]

The Town I Loved So Well

In Coulter's most famous song, the author celebrates his hometown – Derry. In the first part of the song he describes the happy days of his youth, he recalls the streets and routines of the town's inhabitants. This first part ends with the author's sadness over moving away and a reassurance of his love towards the place:

> There I spent my youth and to tell you the truth
> I was sad to leave it all behind me
> There I learned about life and I found a wife
> In the town I loved so well.[80]

The second part describes the author's horror when he returned. He saw a town on its knees. The author is being careful here. He does not state straight what it was, that brought the town to its knees. The armoured cars could easily belong to the British army as well as the paramilitaries:

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[77] Ibid.

[78] Andy Pollak, "Celt Fans Who Sing pro-IRA Songs to Be Banned," *The Irish Times*, The Irish Times, 26 Sept, 1996, www.irishtimes.com/news/celt-fans-who-sing-pro-ira-songs-to-be-banned-1.89604, 27 July, 2020.

[79] "A Beginning," *PhilCoulter.com*, www.philcoulter.com/a_life/a_beginning.html, 27 July, 2020.

[80] "Town I Loved So Well," *Irish Music Daily,* 17 May 2013, www.irishmusicdaily.com/town-i-loved-so-well, 15 August, 2020.

But when I returned oh my eyes how they burned
To see how a town could be brought to its knees
By the armoured cars and the bombed-out bars[81]

The verse follows with a line similar to one line of The Cranberries' hit "Zombie" which is: "With their tanks, and their bombs and their bombs, and their guns." It continues with Coulters lamentation over the impoverished town:

With their tanks and their guns
Oh my God, what have they done
To the town I loved so well.[82]

The first part of the last verse focuses on the people of Northern Ireland. Although the music – the joy – is gone, they are not broken. Instead they focus on bringing peace:

Now the music's gone but they carry on
For their spirit's been bruised, never broken
They will not forget but their hearts are set
On tomorrow and peace once again[83]

In the song's last line Coulter states the only thing he can do is to pray for the town he loves. Overall the song is a peaceful lament on how the town of Derry changed during the Troubles. Not even once does the author side with Unionists or Republicans and finishes the song with hope for future.

Stiff Little Fingers

Stiff Little Fingers are a punk band from Belfast. The band was formed at the height of the Troubles and their musical genre differs significantly from the previously mentioned bands. The band's songs deal with the problems connected to living in Belfast during the Troubles,

[81] Phil Coulter, "Town I Loved So Well"
[82] Phil Coulter, "Town I Loved So Well"
[83] Phil Coulter, "Town I Loved So Well"

however, they never complain nor take sides. Jake Burns, the band's lead singer, told the magazine *Vice*, no group has ever tried to use Stiff Little Fingers' songs for their own means: "We were either adopted equally by both sides or just ignored equally by both sides. The band was made up of both Catholics and Protestants and we were always very open about that. We never made a point of taking sides."[84]

Punk has always played a significant role in political music. Therefore, before I move on to analysing punk songs, I would like to give a brief introduction to punk.

Punk rock, or punk music emerged during the mid-1970s as a more aggressive form of rock music. Punk movement was not only associated with music, it soon developed into a subculture characterized by anti-establishment views, distinct fashion and aesthetic approach. Punk is often viewed in an association with teen rebellion and alienation. It is therefore no surprise, that punk songs dealing with the Troubles are the most explicit.

The Sex Pistols One were one of the first punk bands in Great Britain, that helped to initiate the whole movement of punk. Their song *Anarchy in the U.K.* is now considered a classic punk hit and was listed as number 56 on Rolling Stone magazine's list of the 500 Greatest Songs of All Time. Released in 1976 it touches on the Troubles as the lyrics mention paramilitaries such as UDA and IRA.

A significantly large punk scene grew in Belfast and bands such as Stiff Little Fingers, Rudi, The Outcasts or The Defects often expressed their experience with the Troubles through the lyrics of their songs. The singer of The Defects, Ian Murdock describes the punk community of the time as follows: "All the punks got on really well. Both Protestants and Catholics, the only real religion was punk. There was never any rivalry between us and any of the other bands either; both The Outcasts and Rudi let us support them many times. We all hung about together, and musically we just wrote about what we saw and coming from Belfast we obviously saw different things than what you would see on the mainland."[85] Jake Burns gives credit to music in general: "Many people say that punk rock brought both sides together in

[84] Tim Scott, "Talking Alternative Ulster With Stiff Little Fingers' Jake Burns," 15 Nov. 2017, www.vice.com/en_uk/article/9kqmk8/talking-alternative-ulster-with-stiff-little-fingers-jake-burns, 27 July 2020.

[85] Ian Glasper, *Burning Britain: The History of UK Punk 1980 – 1984*, (London: Cherry Red Records, 2004), 346.

Northern Ireland I would argue that you go back further and you will find that music in general did."[86]

One of the reasons for Belfast being the centre of Irish punk at the time is probably Terri Hooley and his Good Vibrations record shop. It became a place for punkers to meet and share music. Later it became a record label, releasing recordings of local punk bands.[87]

Although Belfast is considered the cradle of Irish punk, the subculture was not restricted to Belfast only and there were bands emerging all around the island. Punk in the South can, however, be described as less 'angry', than the northern, British-like one.[88] An example of such southern punk can be a Dublin band called The Boomtown Rats, led by Bob Geldof.

Alternative Ulster

Alternative Ulster, released in 1978, is probably Stiff Little Fingers' most known song. It is not a prototypical punk song, as it is does not have an aggressive tone, it does not directly criticize the government nor it comments on the political situation. The band only laments on the cultural situation in Belfast and challenges people to change it. After the incident of The Miami Showband in 1975 bands from abroad were hesitant about performing in Northern Ireland. Cultural activities were restricted to local bands to a great extent and Northern Ireland lacked artistic diversity. Through the song the band laments on the situation of young people, who have little cultural activities in Belfast:

> Nothin' for us in Belfast
> We ain't got nothin' but they don't really care[89]

The song develops the punk touch in its chorus. The singer rouses people to change Ulster. He points out its 'theirs' and people should prompt the change.

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[86] Tim Scott, "Talking Alternative Ulster With Stiff Little Fingers' Jake Burns," 15 Nov. 2017, www.vice.com/en_uk/article/9kqmk8/talking-alternative-ulster-with-stiff-little-fingers-jake-burns, 27 July 2020.

[87] "Belfast Punk Scene," *RTÉ Archives,* RTÉ, 1 Feb. 2019, www.rte.ie/archives/2019/0201/1026892-belfast-punk-scene/, 30 July, 2020.

[88] Bill Rolston, "This Is Not a Rebel Song: The Irish Conflict and Popular Music" (Race & Class, vol. 42, no. 3, 2001), 49.

[89] "Alternative Ulster," *Lyrics.com,* www.lyrics.com/lyric/844562/Alternative Ulster. 15 August, 2020.

An Alternative Ulster

Grab it and change it it's yours

Get an Alternative Ulster[90]

The following verse directly addresses the listener who is presupposed to be from Belfast. The contact is intensified by the genre of punk – the listener is shouted at.

Take a look where you're livin'

You got the Army on your street

And the RUC dog of repression

Is barking at your feet

Is this the kind of place you wanna live?

Is this where you wanna be?

Is this the only life we're gonna have?[91]

The song prods people to think about the situation in their town. The fact that there is army in the streets watching people 24/7 is alarming, no matter what side you are on. RUC members were always armed and they oversaw order. By doing so they often oppressed the arts.[92] That is meant by the 'dog of repression'. After thinking about the situation, the last three lines of the song suggests a rhetorical question whether this is really where the listener wants to live and be. In the last line the singer asks whether there is a way out of it. Whether these repressions will stop one day or whether they will live like this forever. Rather than a question it is in fact an appeal on the listener to try to change the situation.

State of Emergency

In "State of Emergency" the band criticizes paramilitary violence. However, again they do not take sides but rather criticize the violence in general. Again, the song deals with the situation in Northern Ireland, probably specifically Belfast, although there is not any particular geographical reference. The song addresses all people involved in the conflict:

[90] Stiff Little Fingers, "Alternative Ulster"
[91] Stiff Little Fingers, "Alternative Ulster"
[92] Fay, Morrissey and Smyth, 21.

You believe in something
That's only in your mind
You're looking around you
But hate has made you blind
And you've spent the last ten years of your life
In this emergency[93]

I believe that the song suggests that the conflict is mostly in minds of people but they cannot see it. There is no physical difference between Catholics and Protestants, yet these two groups still fight each other. The hate rooted in peoples' minds from their childhood disables them to think rationally. This idea is further developed in the following verse in which the singer challenges the listener to try to break out from this vicious circle. Otherwise he will spend the rest of his life blinded by hatred:

Try to break down the imaginary wall
And if you couldn't be bothered
Well then, my friend, you'll fall
And spend all the rest of your life
In this emergency[94]

Although many more Stiff Little Fingers' songs touch on the theme of the Troubles, "Alternative Ulster" and "State of Emergency" remain the band's most recognizable ones. The band took a different perspective in a song "Each Dollar a Bullet".

Each Dollar a Bullet

Although Stiff Little Fingers avoided criticism of any Irish parts, in their song "Each Dollar a Bullet" from 1979 they openly blame Irish-Americans for adding fuel to the fire. Also, unlike other Stiff Little Fingers' songs, "Each Dollar a Bullet" does not sound as a punk song from the beginning. Its first verse reminds of a folk song, with only guitar and vocals. The

[93] "State of Emergency," *Lyrics.com*, www.lyrics.com/lyric/844562/Stateofemergency. 15 August, 2020
[94] Stiff Little Fingers, "State of Emergency"

rest of the song continues in the genre of Celtic punk with heavy guitars as well as traditional Irish instruments.

The song criticizes Irish-Americans who financially supported IRA. Organizations such as NORIAD (Irish Northern Aid Committee) raised money for republican causes and allegedly used it to buy arms for the IRA.[95] In the song's chorus the band states that supporting such organizations financially is the same as actually holding a gun:

> Each dollar a bullet
> Each victim someone's son
> And Americans kill Irishmen
> As surely as if they fired the gun[96]

The third line of the chorus changes throughout the song to stress that although they contribute to it, it is not only Americans who kill Irishmen. After the second verse the chorus changes to 'Englishmen kill Irishmen' which is an obvious reproach to the British. Then the chorus changes to 'Irishmen kill Irishmen' to express the band is aware of the fact that the Irish themselves have a huge share in the numbers of victims. The last two choruses blame careless talk and ignorance for killing Irishmen. Careless talk might be interpreted as a hint to discussions of politicians or negotiations which were leading nowhere. Ignorance refers the ignorance of those Irish-Americans who think they money serve a good purpose. Possibly it might also refer to ignorance of historical context of involved paramilitaries as well as politicians again.

The first verse stresses that those Irish-Americans do not have much knowledge about what is happening in Ireland. The song mocks the Irish-Americans who call themselves Irish yet they have never been to Ireland and who send money to terrorist organization. The last line refers to an old Irish ballad "The Wearing of the Green" which was recorded by many artists including The Kelly Family (1979) or The Wolfe Tones (1985).

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[95] Ruane and Todd, 274.

[96] "Each Dollar a Bullet," *Lyrics.com*, https://www.lyrics.com/lyric/25694478/Each+Dollar+A+Bullet, 15 August, 2020

And you're all filled up with tears
"For the love of dear old Ireland"
That you've never even seen
You throw in twenty dollars
And sing Wearing of the Green[97]

The band criticizes people outside Ireland who do not have a personal experience with the conflict, but still comment on it. The following stanza also describes the conflict as it was perceived and experienced by people on both sides:

Now you've never stood on Belfast's streets
And heard the bombs explode
Or hid beneath the blankets
When there's riots down the road
No you've never had your best friend die
Or lost a favourite son
But you'll stand there and tell us
Just what we're doing wrong[98]

The following verse focuses on the fact that the affiliation to a particular party is instilled in children from an early age. As the verse proceeds it turns into a plea for people to realize that Protestants and Catholics are the same, followed by a rhetorical question why the people cannot realize that what they are doing is wrong. The last line of the verse saying they 'have hated too much too long' points to the history of the whole conflict. Again, the band does not favour any particular side and remains neutral as is typical of them:

From the minute that you're born you're told
To hate the other side
"They're not like us, they're not the same
We know because we're right"

[97] Stiff Little Fingers, "Each Dollar a Bullet"
[98] Stiff Little Fingers, "Each Dollar a Bullet"

But can't you see we're all the same
There is no right and wrong
Why can't we stop and realize
Just what we're doing wrong
We've hated too much too long[99]

In the last verse the author says that even though the conflict is a huge part of his own life, he still does not understand its motivation. He calls the Irish intelligent, friendly, kind and brave but also points out they throw themselves into a grave willingly:

It's such a part of my own life
Yet it leaves me mystified
How people so intelligent
Friendly, kind and brave
Can throw themselves so willingly
Into an open grave.

The Irish Brigade

The Irish Brigade started performing in 1981 and with their distinctive style of predominantly Nationalist songs they soon became one of the Ireland's leading rebel bands.[100] Apart from covers of old Irish ballads and rebel songs such as Only Our Rivers Run Free or Danny Boy they wrote their own songs. Many of them show support to the nationalists' cause, for example "Roll of Honour" and "Ballad of Bobby Sands" focus on and praise the hunger strikers.

Roll of Honour

The song is a celebration of ten hunger strikers who died in the Maze Prison. They are described as brave young men who fight for their rights and to free their country. Bobby Sands is described as gallant:

[99] Stiff Little Fingers, "Each Dollar a Bullet"

[100] "The Irish Brigade: the Rebel Heart of Ireland," *Irish Music Daily*, 14 July 2015, www.irishmusicdaily.com/irish-brigade, 30 July, 2020.

In those dreary H-Block cages ten brave young Irishmen lay
Hungering for justice as their young lives ebbed away,
For their rights as Irish soldiers and to free their native land
They stood beside their leader - the gallant Bobby Sands[101]

The song starts with the chorus which suggest that these ten hunger strikers are Ireland's bravest men and their names should be written on a 'roll of honour.' It also calls them Ireland's sons and appeals to the Irish to remember these men. England is labelled to be a monster and warned it will never win:

Read the roll of honour for Ireland's bravest men
We must be united in memory of the ten,
England you're a monster, don't think that you have won
We will never be defeated while Ireland has such sons[102]

Labelling England 'a monster' was what caused one of the reasons The Democratic Unionist MP Gregory Campbell call for the song to be banned in 2014. The BBC however stated it would be wrong to ban the song as "free speech is an important principle and a ban would only give it more publicity."[103]

Ballad of Bobby Sands

Ballad of Bobby Sands is similar to Roll of Honour in its tone. The song is written from the perspective of Sands, celebrates his life and deeds as well as other hunger strikers:

My name is Bobby Sands
I fought and died for my dear land

[101] "The Irish Brigade - Roll of Honour," *SongLyrics.com*, www.songlyrics.com/the-irish-brigade/roll-of-honour/, 15 August, 2020.

[102] The Irish Brigade, "Roll of Honour"

[103] Adam Sherwin, "BBC Angers Unionists by Playing 'Terror' Song 'The Roll Of Honour'," *The Independent,* Independent Digital News and Media, 16 Feb. 2014. www.independent.co.uk/news/media/tv-radio/bbc-angers-unionists-by-playing-top-40-terror-song-9132132.html.

With Joe and Francis at my side
My comrades on hunger strike we died[104]

Like in Roll of Honour, in Ballad of Bobby Sands the band blames England for the conflict and for "bringing Ireland to death:"

England with your wasted breath my land you levelled in lust to death
Like the rivers that flow through
My land blood runs red upon your hands[105]

My Little Armalite

The band's most controversial act is probably a recording of a republican song "My Little Armalite." It praises Armalite rifles which were used by republican paramilitaries such as IRA against British security forces.

The song tells a story of a republican extremist who was stopped by a Unionist soldier and called a pig which was a common practice during the Troubles. The man cannot fight back so he tries to be polite while he thinks about his rifle and a revenge he is going to get:

I was stopped by a soldier, he said, "You are a swine"
He hit me with his rifle and he kicked me in the groin
I begged and I pleaded, oh my manners were polite
But all the time I'm thinkin' of me little Armalite[106]

The man wishes he was back in "Bogside" which is a predominantly Catholic/republican part of Derry. He longs for a "Provo company," Provo is an abbreviation for Provisional IRA, so we learn that the man is a member of IRA:

[104] "The Irish Brigade – Ballad of Bobby Sands," *SongLyrics.com*, www.songlyrics.com/the-irish-brigade/Ballad-of-Bobby-Sands/, 15 August, 2020.
[105] Ibid.
[106] "The Irish Brigade – My Little Armalite," *SongLyrics.com*, www.songlyrics.com/the-irish-brigade/My-Little-Armalite/, 15 August, 2020.

And it's down in the Bogside is where I long to be
Lying in the dark with a provo company[107]

In the next verse we learn that the soldier is a member of RUC:

Well this brave R.U.C. man came marchin' up our street
600 British soldiers he had lined up at his feet
"Come out ye cowardly Fenians, come on out and fight"
He cried "I'm only jokin'!", when he heard the Armalite[108]

The song mocks RUC members implying they are only brave when there are British soldiers right behind them. The verse also suggests that the unionist soldiers were ready to fight with bravery only until they saw the republicans are equally armed. The same theme can be seen in the lyrics of "Come Out Ye Black and Tans" famously recorded by The Wolfe Tones. Republicans are called 'Fenians' in this verse. Fenians were members of Fenian brotherhood who staged an unsuccessful rebellion against the British in 1867 and they could be seen as predecessors of IRA.[109] The remaining verses repeat the same theme of unionists getting intimidated by the narrator's firearm.

Naturally, not all the musicians from the Northern Ireland who were musically active during the period of the Troubles decided to reflect on the conflict in their music. For example, one of the most famous Belfast-born singers-songwriters Van Morrison decided to distance himself from the conflict and stay apolitical his whole career.[110] Another example could be a punk-rock band The Undertones which was formed in Derry during the 1970s. Unlike majority of punk bands of the time, The Undertones distanced themselves completely from the political situation and never commented on what was happening in their hometown.

[107] The Irish Brigade, "My Little Armalite"
[108] Ibid.
[109] "Fenian," *Encyclopedia Britannica,* Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 22 Dec. 2017, www.britannica.com/topic/Fenians, 30 July, 2020.
[110] "Van Morrison: I've Got Nothing to Say about Politics and I'm Not Going to Start Now," *The Irish News,* 30 Nov. 2017, www.irishnews.com/arts/2017/12/01/news/van-morrison-i-ve-got-nothing-to-say-about-politics-and-i-m-not-going-to-start-now-1199647/, 30 July, 2020.

"Though they came from a conflict-torn city at an extraordinary time, their music was not about politics or protests."[111]

Musicians from the Irish Republic

Christy Moore

Christy Moore is an Irish folk singer known for performing socially conscious songs. Many of them were considered controversial and some were even banned. For example, a song "They Never Came Home" about a fire in the Stardust Club in Dublin, written by Moore himself. Another song that raised a wave of controversy was "Back Home in Derry".

Back Home in Derry

The song was written by Bobby Sands during his imprisonment in Maze. Moore came to the song by accident. After his gig in Derry, he was sung the verses to by a man who was just released from the prison. At the time, the name Bobby Sands was not known as it is now. In 1984 Moore recorded a shorter version of the song.[112]

The lyrics create a parallel between the struggles of IRA against the loyalist paramilitaries and the struggles of the Irish deported to Australia because of their participation in rebellions of the late 18th and 19th centuries:

> In 1803 we sailed out to sea
> Out from the sweet town of Derry
> For Australia bound if we didn't all drown[113]

Moore sings about the harsh treatment the Irish prisoners had to go through. In the last two lines of the first verse he expresses the grudge the Irish bore against the English. Possibly the same grudge Sands himself felt while writing the lyrics in the prison:

> And the marks of our fetters we carried

[111] "Teenage Kicks: The Story of The Undertones," *BBC News,* BBC, 19 Jan. 2013, www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-21097523, 2 August, 2020.

[112] "Back Home In Derry," *Christy Moore,* 17 Feb. 2012, www.christymoore.com/lyrics/back-home-in-derry/, 2 August, 2020.

[113] Ibid.

In our rusty iron chains, we sighed for our weans
Our good women we left in sorrow
As the mainsails unfurled, our curses we hurled
On the English, and thoughts of tomorrow[114]

The chorus expresses a desire to be "back home in Derry". Derry represents not only the actual town but very likely Ireland in general. Just as the Irish rebels who were sent to Australia longed to be back home, Sands wished for freedom as well. Not only for himself, but for the whole Ireland too.

The last stanza highlights the narrator's determination as he remains a republican even after twenty years of trials. The whole stanza could be interpreted as a statement of an Irish republican rebel. There is no difference between rebels of the early 19th century and rebels of the Troubles. The narrator remains faithful to his cause, he feels supported by his fellow rebels who died for the matter – "My comrades' ghosts walk behind me". As the rebels came to Australia and remained devoted to what they believed in, Sands remained loyal to the republican cause even after being locked up in prison - "A rebel I came – I'm still the same":

Twenty years have gone by, I've ended my bond
My comrades' ghosts walk behind me
A rebel I came – I'm still the same
On the cold winter's night, you will find me.[115]

Minds Locked Shut

"Minds Locked Shut" is another song about the Bloody Sunday incident. Interestingly, despite Moore's usual controversial and aggressive approach, the song is not critical and the author only describes what happened without any comments:

It happened on a Sunday afternoon
On a lovely bright crisp winter's afternoon
On a perfect day for walking

[114] Ibid.
[115] Ibid.

There was gunshots, stones and bullets[116]

Sands sings about the fear and disbelief of the people:

Fear and bewilderment
The seconds seemed so long
They're firing bullets at us
It was not supposed to be like this[117]

Interestingly, although Moore himself did not take part in the demonstration, in the song he identifies himself as one of the protestors who were shot at, as he sings "they're firing bullets at us." The pronoun us could be also interpreted as a reference to all republicans to whom Moore claims allegiance to.

The chorus contains only one phrase that repeats 4 times: "And then our minds locked shut".

The last verse lists names of all the 14 victims and ends with another reminder of the incident:

Let us remember
It happened on a Sunday afternoon
On a lovely bright crisp winter's afternoon
On a perfect day for walking.[118]

The tone of the whole song reminds of a memorial and suggests that Moore's main intention was not to judge or express his anger towards the UK but rather to help to remember the horror of the incident and all the innocent victims.

After Bloody Sunday Moore embraced Irish republicanism eagerly and became aggressive in expressing of his attitudes. He "took pride in singing for IRA prisoners and dedicating a

[116] "Minds Locked Shut," *Christy Moore,* 17 Feb. 2012, www.christymoore.com/lyrics/Minds-locked-shut/, 2 August, 2020.
[117] Ibid.
[118] Ibid.

song to a bomber."[119] However, during the 1990s he became softer in a parallel with the progress regarding the Good Friday Agreement. "In the past, Moore has seemed a truculent character, capable of bursts of rage. He feels he is a better person now."[120]

Only Our Rivers Run Free

"Only Our Rivers Run Free" was written by Mickey MacConnell, a musician from Bellanaleck near Enniskillen in County Fermanagh. MacConnell wrote the song already in 1965.[121] Later it was adapted by many musicians including Christy Moore or The Wolfe Tones. The song is a celebration of Irish natural beauty as well as a lament on the fact that it is practically owned by another country:

> I wander her hills and her valleys and still through my sorrow
> I see
> A land that has never known freedom,
> only her rivers run free[122]

The song also appeals to republicans to follow their predecessors in a fight for freedom and complains about a lack of men determined to fight for the freedom of their country:

> I drink to the death of her manhood, those men who would
> rather have died
> Than to live in the cold chains of bondage to bring back their
> rights were denied
> Where are you now when we need you,
> what burns where the flame used to be?[123]

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[119] "I Don't Lose Any Sleep as Long as There Are Great Songs to Sing," *The Telegraph*, Telegraph Media Group, 27 Apr. 2006, www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/music/rockandjazzmusic/3651875/I-dont-lose-any-sleep-as-long-as-there-are-great-songs-to-sing.html, 2 August, 2020.

[120] Ibid.

[121] "Mickey MacConnell," *Mickey MacConnell Official*, www.mickeymacconnell.com, 3 Aug, 2020.

[122] "Only Our Rivers Run Free," *Christy Moore*, 17 Feb. 2012, www.christymoore.com/lyrics/Only-our-rivers-run/, 2 August, 2020.

[123] Ibid.

Both Moore and the Wolfe Tones keep the genre of a slow ballad with elements of traditional Irish music in their covers.

Besides these three, Moore recorded many more songs touching on the topic of the Troubles. For example, "On the Blanket" in which he glorifies republicans held as prisoners and blames England or "The People Own MP" which praises Bobby Sands.[124]

U2

U2 are the first representative of the genre of rock music in this thesis, therefore their involvement in the Troubles will be discussed after a brief introduction to Irish rock.

Rock music began to emerge on a global scale in the 1960s. At the time, Irish popular music was dominated by various showbands which played predominantly covers of British and US songs. At the same time, 'beat' music started to emerge in clubs around Dublin and Belfast.

The growth of Irish rock music came in the early 1970s, with bands like Thin Lizzy, Horslips or Van Morrison's band Them.[125] However, no Irish band has made a bigger impact on a global scale than U2. Regarding depiction of the Troubles, U2 and the Cranberries are two Irish rock bands whose songs I will analyse in this thesis.

One of the most famous Irish bands, U2, has always been interested in politics and motivated by current events, which is reflected in their music. They are actively involved in charity work and participated in many benefit concerts including Live Aid in 1985. Through songs such as 'Peace on Earth', 'Mothers of the Disappeared' or 'Miss Sarajevo' they show their political opinions as well as religious beliefs. As the band's drummer, Larry Mullen Jr. told *Time* magazine, the band never considered keeping the politics out of their music: "In Ireland, the only two things we talk about are religion and politics."[126]

Their third album *War* (1983) contained political songs such as Sunday Bloody Sunday or New Year's Day and foresaw the band's future political engagement.

In 1998 the band participated on 'The Concert for Yes' in Belfast, to support the Good Friday Agreement. David Trimble of the Ulster Unionist Party and John Hume of the nationalist SDLP, who were the leaders of Northern Ireland's two main opposing political parties appeared on stage with the band. In the band's biography *U2 by U2* (2006) the band's

[124] "Lyrics." *Christy Moore*. www.christymoore.com/lyrics, 3 Aug, 2020.

[125] Rolston, 55.

[126] "U2 Lists: Top 10 Political Songs," *atu2.com*, https://www.atu2.com/news/u2-lists-top-10-political-u2-songs.html, 3 Aug, 2020.

drummer Larry Mullen Jr. states they did not hesitate to take part: "Two members of the band were born in England and were raised in the Protestant faith. Bono's mother was Protestant and his father was Catholic. I was brought up Catholic. U2 are a living example of the kind of unity of faith that is possible in Northern Ireland." The bands' guitarist added that it was a great moment not just for "all those who had struggled for so long to bring peace to Ireland, but also for music."[127]

The following referendum supported the Good Friday Agreement in May, however, IRA carried out another bomb attack only three months later. It killed 29 people and 220 were injured while doing their Saturday shopping in Omagh.[128] Bono condemned the act: "It was the most low-down act of cowardice in a history of cowardly acts carried out by both sides. I remember looking at the television in complete disbelief."[129] The band wrote their song "Peace on Earth" after the incident.

Peace on Earth

"Peace on Earth," which takes its title from the Bible (Luke 2:14), is a song about peace in general. Apart from allusions to the Omagh bombing, the song contains a strong Christian theme. Referring to religion is typical for the band, in this song they use it to soothe a religion-fuelled conflict. It starts with a plea for a peaceful world and continues with the author's anger at the situation:

> Heaven on earth
> We need it now
> I'm sick of all of this
> Hanging around[130]

The band states that "Peace on Earth" is their most bitter and angry song they have ever written.[131] The bitterness is apparent from the first verse:

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[127] Neil McCormick, *U2 By U2* (New York: HarperCollins, 2006), 285.

[128] Martin Melaugh, "Events: The Omagh Bomb." *CAIN*, Ulster University. cain.ulster.ac.uk/events/omagh/events.htm, 20 May, 2020.

[129] McCormick, 286.

[130] "U2 Peace On Earth," *U2.Com*. www.u2.com/lyrics/104, 15 August, 2020.

[131] McCormick, 286.

Sick of sorrow
Sick of pain
Sick of hearing again and again
That there's gonna be
Peace on earth[132]

The author is sick of hearing about peace. According to me, this refers to the disappointment with the Omagh bombing which came only a few months after the referendum. People believed that the end of the Troubles was near but were disillusioned by another outbreak of violence. U2's guitarist The Edge thinks the lyrics are too negative and actually wanted it to be "sick of hearing again and again that there's never gonna be peace on Earth."[133]
In the next verse Bono alludes to his growing up on Cedarwood Road in Dublin.[134] These verses could be also read as an allusion to the situation in Northern Ireland:

Where I grew up
There weren't many trees
Where there was we'd tear them down
And use them on our enemies[135]

In *U2 by U2* Bono also stated that after the Omagh bombings he came the closest to a crisis of faith. His faith was shaken as he could not comprehend the evil in people. The song includes a Christian motif as the singer speaks directly to Jesus:

Jesus can you take the time
To throw a drowning man a line?
Tell the ones who hear no sound
Whose sons are living in the ground

[132] U2, "Peace On Earth"
[133] McCormick, 299.
[134] McCormick, 299.
[135] Ibid.

Peace on earth[136]

He asks Jesus to tell 'the ones who hear no sound.' The obvious interpretation here is that he wants Jesus to explain peace to the dead – possibly the people who died because of the Troubles or any other war. 'The ones who hear no sound' and whose 'sons are living in the ground' could also refer to people who lost their children as well as their faith. They do not hear Jesus anymore. The theme of parents losing their children continues in the following verses:

No-one cries like a mother cries
For peace on earth
She never got to say goodbye
To see the colour in his eyes
Now he's in the dirt
Peace on earth[137]

He sings about a mother who suddenly lost her son. It is inspired by the mother of James Barker, one of the Omagh bombing victims. She said that until she had to identify the body she "never realised how green his eyes were".[138]

The following verse is based on an actual moment, where names of all the victims were read on the radio. Similarly to Christy Moore's "Eyes Locked Shut," U2's lyrics list the victims' names:

They're reading names out over the radio
All the folks the rest of us won't get to know
Sean and Julia, Gareth, Ann and Brenda
Their lives are bigger than any big idea[139]

The last line suggests that no 'big idea' or ideological conflict is worth killing for.

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[136] Ibid.
[137] Ibid.
[138] "Omagh Bomb: The 29 Victims," *BBC News*, BBC, 15 Aug. 2018, www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-45112942, 5 August, 2020.
[139] U2, "Peace On Earth"

The last verse centres on faith, addressing Jesus once again:

> Jesus, in the song you wrote
> The words are sticking in my throat
> Peace on earth
> Hear it every Christmas time
> But hope and history won't rhyme
> So what's it worth?
> This peace on earth[140]

The verse proposes that history is and hope do not go together. It is difficult to find hope in minds of people who are affected by history. This, I believe, is a direct allusion to the whole Troubles again – it is difficult to overcome differences rooted in nation's history. The song ends on a note of lost faith. As Bono stated: "the whole 'peace on earth, goodwill to all men' struck a sour note. It was hard to be a believer that Christmas."[141] Although the song expresses the musicians' anger the sound is rather tranquil, which is in accordance with the band's alter political presentation. Unlike for example the Cranberries, U2 express their heartbreak through soft rock. This approach was, however, not always typical for the band. Political songs of their young years, such as "Sunday Bloody Sunday", feature more angry sound.

Sunday Bloody Sunday

During their October Tour in 1981 and 1982 the band noticed a pressure from their audience which wanted them to show their nationalism. U2 however never sympathised with extremists and always highlighted peace. "Bobby Sands was dying on hunger strike in Ireland, people were shouting his name at us while we were on stage. I could not but be moved by the courage of Bobby Sands and we understood how people had taken up arms to defend themselves, even if we didn't think that was the right thing to do." [142] Bono stated that it was clear to him that the republican movement was becoming a monster in order to

[140] Ibid.
[141] Niall Stokes, *U2: Into the Heart – The Stories Behind Every Song (*New York: Thunder's Mouth Press) 156.
[142] a member of the Provisional Irish Republican Army who died on hunger strike

defeat one and he realized that the Nationalism was turning ugly in those dangerous times in Ireland. The band rather decided to turn away from the Irish tricolour to be left with just the white part. Although the song is broadly interpreted as a pro-republican song, this was the band's way to distance themselves from such a reading. And the people understood. Although the band was worried to play the song in Belfast and even told the audience they would not play it ever again if they did not like it, it drew a positive reaction.[143]

They used the white flags during their 1983 tour for the album War as well. Sunday Bloody Sunday is the opening track from this album and is still introduced by a phrase 'This song is not a rebel song' up to this day. In fact, another Irish singer Sinead O'Connor's song *This IS a Rebel Song* is said to be a reference to U2 which O'Connor openly criticizes.

The band started working on the song in 1982, ten years after the bloody incident in Derry. U2 wanted to commemorate this violent event and from the very first sketch they knew this would be a full-on anti-terrorism song. However, out of fear for their safety, the band was forced to change the original, risky lyrics. The first line which was later replaced was supposed to be "Don't talk to me about the rights of the IRA, UDA…"[144]

Instead the song starts with "I can't believe the news today, I can't close my eyes and make it go away" where authors express the feeling of the majority of the Irish and perhaps even the British on 30 January 1972. People could not believe that 14 innocent people were killed that day and 15 more were injured.

The song then continues with a question "How long, how long must we sing this song?" where the singer asks how long this conflict is going to continue. The fact that the song was performed at almost every U2 concert through the years 1983 to 2019 only shows the timelessness of the song. In a broader context it might refer to any war or any armed conflict as in 2020 we still must "sing this song".

The following verse depicts the scene of the massacre and also the inevitability of one's involvement in the situation:

> Broken bottles under children's feet
> Bodies strewn across the dead end street
> But I won't heed the battle call

[143] McCormick, 139.

[144] McCormick, 135.

It puts my back up
Puts my back up against the wall[145]

The broken bottles under children's feet are likely to refer to Molotov cocktails, which were very popular weapons among the paramilitary members and were often thrown in the streets. The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines the phrase "back against the wall" as being "in a bad position in which one is forced to do something". This is where I find the inevitability of involvement – although the singer doesn't want to take part in the conflict, he feels like he is forced to do so by the circumstances, just like in Carson's poetry. You are either Protestant or Catholic – Nationalist or Unionist, there's no in between. Although the song itself rejects such a division, it expresses how many people in Ireland feel.

This verse ends with an utterance "Cause tonight, we can be as one." Here I believe the author calls for all the people to come together as one and stop differentiating according to religion or political beliefs. The next part of the song deals with the consequences of the 'battle':

And the battle's just begun
There's many lost, but tell me, who has won?
The trench is dug within our hearts
And mothers, children, brothers, sisters torn apart[146]

The author asks a rhetorical question who has won, which is followed by the conflict's consequences. This verse might not regard just the event of Bloody Sunday where 14 people were murdered but the whole period of Troubles. In total over three and a half thousand people were killed and therefore it is disputable to talk about a victory. The phrase "trench dug within our hearts" clearly refers to the gap this whole conflict made between neighbours, colleagues and even within family members.

Bono stated that his original idea for the lyrics was to contrast the actual event of Bloody Sunday of 1972 with Easter Sunday, the main Christian festival of both denominations – Catholic and Protestant. This idea however never really came to life as the singer was still

[145] "Sunday Bloody Sunday," *U2.Com*. www.u2.com/lyrics/127, 15 August, 2020.
[146] Ibid.

too young and lacked experience with song writing: "Many of our songs were great ideas, but we hadn't yet the chops to execute them in all their complexity, so we just hinted at this. It was a song whose eloquence lay in its harmonic power rather than its verbal strength."[147]

In February 2015 the band released a videoclip for their recent song "Every Breaking Wave," which presents two youths – a Catholic and a Protestant – falling in love in Belfast during the Troubles amidst ongoing violence.[148] This only proves that the band still finds this period important and relevant.

The Cranberries

The Cranberries were a rock band formed in 1989 in Limerick. Although the band had not written significantly political songs, the song they are the most famous for is widely known for its political message.

Zombie

"Zombie" was an immediate response to two IRA bombings in England and became the band's biggest hit. The bombings took place in Warrington in February and March 1993, killed two children (aged three and twelve) and injured 56 people in total.[149] The Cranberries' lead singer Dolores O'Riordan felt deeply moved by the tragedy. In 1994 she told the magazine *Vox* she was devastated after seeing one of the mothers on TV: "I felt so sad for her, that she'd carried him for nine months, been through all the morning sickness, the whole thing and some… prick, some airhead who thought he was making a point, did that."[150]

She projected her frustration into the song. It starts directly with an image of a dying child: "Another head hangs lowly/Child is slowly taken"[151] "Child is slowly taken" could also be a metaphor for young people taken in by the conflict, joining the paramilitary groups and subsequently taken away from their families – either ideologically or literally.

In the second verse the author distances herself from the terrorists responsible for the killings and points out their usage of bombs:

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[147] McCormick, 135.

[148] "'Every Breaking Wave," *U2.com*, www.u2.com/news/title/studio-exclusive/, 5 August, 2020.

[149] Rogelio, 183

[150] Mark Savage, "The Tragedy That Inspired Zombie - The Cranberries' Biggest Hit," *BBC News*, BBC, 16 Jan. 2018, www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-42702781, 6 August, 2020.

[151] "Zombie," *Zombie Lyrics*, www.lyrics.com/lyric/13904185/The Cranberries/Zombie, 15 August, 2020.

But you see, it's not me, it's not my family
In your head, in your head, they are fightin'
With their tanks and their bombs and their bombs and their guns[152]

O'Riordan reacted to the IRA's claim they did those bombings 'in the name of Ireland' and clearly states that neither she, nor the band share the organization's beliefs. However, no terrorist groups or organizations are specifically mentioned because according to the author she does not take sides[153]:

"The IRA are not me. I'm not the IRA," she said. "The Cranberries are not the IRA. My family are not. When it says in the song, 'It's not me, it's not my family,' that's what I'm saying. It's not Ireland, it's some idiots living in the past."[154]

The following verse concerns mothers. Not only the mothers of those two killed children O'Riordan had seen an interview with, but probably all the mothers who lost their children to the conflict:

Another mother's breakin'
Heart is takin' over
When the violence causes silence
We must be mistaken[155]

Similarly, the silence caused by violence probably refers to the silence in homes of families who had lost their members because of the Troubles. The last line of the verse could mean people cannot believe the news of losing their loved ones – they must be mistaken. It could also suggest that going to war is a mistake. The song continues with a reference to Irish history:

It's the same old theme, since 1916

[152] Ibid.
[153] Savage, "The Tragedy That Inspired Zombie"
[154] Savage, "The Tragedy That Inspired Zombie"
[155] The Cranberries, "Zombie"

In your head, in your head, they're still fightin'
With their tanks and their bombs and their bombs and their guns
In your head, in your head, they are dyin'[156]

O'Riordan sings about the same old theme since the Easter Rising in 1916, which was predominantly organized by the Irish Volunteers – a forerunning group of the IRA. Also, during the 1916 uprising, apart from British soldiers and Irish rebels, mostly civilians suffered deaths and injuries, just like during the Troubles.

The 1916 is without a doubt a big milestone in Irish history and therefore Irish people still cannot forget it. Here O'Riordan creates a parallel between the 1916 and the Troubles. It is something that is still on peoples' minds. Also, for witnesses of the bombings it must be difficult to push the memory out of their head, as the line "in your head, they're still fighting" suggests. The chorus which is shouted to imitate the war turmoil goes as follows:

In your head, in your head
Zombie, zombie, zombie
What's in your head, in your head?
Zombie, zombie, zombie

Again, there is the theme of a conflict in someone's head. The word "zombie" most plausibly refers to all the people who were involved in killings as zombies and people who live in the past. Zombies who do not think about their actions and only blindly follow orders. O'Riordan asks what is in their heads – what are they thinking when they pull the trigger.

As I stated above, before the release of "Zombie," The Cranberries' repertoire had not included political songs. Moreover, the song stands out of other Cranberries' songs because of its sound as well. It has a very strong guitar riff which is not typical for the band. Their previous songs were mostly slow guitar ballads. The band's guitarist Noel Hogan said that the heavier sound was 'the right thing' for the song and that if it was soft, it wouldn't have that impact.[157] This is probably true, because we can hear the singer's sincere sorrow and plea in the screamed lyrics, highlighted by the strong riff.

[156] Ibid.
[157] Savage, "The Tragedy That Inspired Zombie"

The song's official video contains a footage of armed soldiers in the streets of Northern Ireland as well as children playing violently in the same streets. It underlines the song's overall idea – to criticize the war. The video was banned from BBC because of its violent images.[158]

The Wolfe Tones

The Wolfe Tones is an Irish folk music band. Their music shows elements of Irish traditional music and their repertoire is largely made up of Irish rebel songs. The band's political engagement and view is apparent from their name. The musicians named themselves after Theobald Wolfe Tone, a leading figure of the Irish Rebellion of 1798.[159] The fact that the band is very interested in politics is also evidenced by one of the tabs on their official website. Apart from tabs expected on musical bands' websites such as 'Shows', 'News' or 'Lyrics', The Wolfe Tones' official site includes a tab called 'History Zone' which is dedicated to The Easter Rising of 1916.[160]

The band has always been openly supporting the republican cause. Even their albums with names such as *Up the Rebels* (1966), *Rifles of the IRA* (1970), *'Till Ireland a Nation* (1974) or *Irish to the Core* (1976) suggest they are not afraid to state their opinion. Although some of the songs are widely interpreted as supporting IRA, the band has always denied that they encouraged violence. Their frontman, Brian Warfield claims that the band's records did not encourage but only reflected the struggle. In 1976 he told the Sunday Independent: "What we are doing is merely reflecting the feelings of the nationalist people in the North. We are closely identified with their struggle, and it is only natural that we reflect their emotions and feelings in our songs."[161] He believes that there was nothing in their music that could upset anyone: "We are simply telling the history of Ireland through songs, many of which we learnt at home when we were growing up in Dublin."[162] The lyrics of songs such as "The Helicopter Song", "Go on Home British Soldiers" or "Joe McDonnell" suggest otherwise. The

[158] Ibid.
[159] Pietzonka, e-book
[160] "1916 Easter Rising: Dublin," *Wolfetonesofficial*, www.wolfetonesofficialsite.com/1916-easter-rising, 7 August, 2020.
[161] "Why the End of the Wolfe Tones Is Music to My Ears," *The Irish Times*, theirishtimes.com, 12 Jan. 2002, www.irishtimes.com/news/why-the-end-of-the-wolfe-tones-is-music-to-my-ears-1.1046483, 7 August, 2020.
[162] Ibid.

Helicopter Song celebrates an escape of three IRA members from Dublin's prison, when another IRA member hijacked a helicopter to free his fellows.[163]

Go on Home British Soldiers

"Go on Home British Soldiers" is a call to the UK to withdraw their soldiers from Ireland. The song has an aggressive tone and sends a direct message from the very first verse. The first verse also points out the history of both countries and expresses Irish determination for the future:

> Go on home British Soldiers Go on home
> Have you got no fucking homes of your own
> For 800 years we've fought you without fear
> And we will fight you for 800 more[164]

The following verse starts with a threat, suggesting that British soldiers cannot beat IRA. It also contains a reference to Bloody Sunday of 1972, where fourteen republicans were killed by the British Army:

> If you stay British Soldiers If you stay
> You'll never ever beat the IRA
> For the 14 men in Derry
> Are the last that you will bury[165]

The band clearly and vulgarly states their opinion on the presence of British soldiers in Ireland. They stress they are not British but Irish and by using the first-person plural "we," they speak not just for themselves but for all republicans.

> We're not British, we're not Saxon we're not English
> We're Irish and proud we are to be

[163] Ibid.

[164] "Wolfe Tones – Go on Home British Soldiers," *SongLyrics.com,* www.songlyrics.com/the-irish-brigade/go-on-home-british-soldiers/, 15 August, 2020.

[165] Ibid.

So fuck your Union Jack We want our country back
We want to see old Ireland free once more[166]

The last stanza stresses the republicans' determination once again. They sing they will never yield to the British because they were "born to be free." They also address 'British bastards' which is in line with the overall tone of the song and the bands' demeanour.

We'll never bow to soldiers because
Throughout our history we were born to be free
So get out British bastards leave us be[167]

Joe McDonnell

The song tells the story of an IRA member who died in a hunger strike in 1981 from his perspective. The lyrics are written in the first-person singular narrative and portray him as a young man who loves his hometown – Belfast. In the first stanza we learn that he has recently married but ended up in prison.

In the chorus the author turns to the UK and points out all the crimes the country has done, suggesting those are real terrorist crimes.

And you dare to call me a terrorist
While you looked down your gun
When I think of all the deeds that you had done
You had plundered many nations divided many lands
You had terrorised their peoples you ruled with an iron hand
And you brought this reign of terror to my land[168]

[166] Ibid.
[167] Ibid.
[168] "Wolfe Tones – JoeMcDonnell," *SongLyrics.com,* www.songlyrics.com/the-irish-brigade/joe-mcdonnell/, 15 August, 2020.

The whole song gives an impression of the narrator being a patriot as he uses many possessive pronouns in first person singular, such as my country and my land. The song also calls attention to internment without trial:

> I thought about my land throughout those days
> Why my country was divided, why I was now in jail
> Imprisoned without crime or without trial
> And though I love my country I am not a bitter man[169]

In the following verses the author justifies actions of Joe McDonnell and possibly all the IRA members. The narrator says he has seen cruelty and injustice and that made him gain courage to fight for freedom at any costs:

> I've seen cruelty and injustice at first hand
> So then one fateful morning I shook bold freedom's hand
> For right or wrong I'd try to free my land[170]

The next stanza describes poor conditions in the Prison Maze where many IRA members including Bobby Sands and Joe McDonnell were held. It also comments on the reasons why the prisoners were on a hunger strike and their powerlessness when they realized it did not help:

> I was committed to the H-blocks for fourteen years or more
> On the Blanket the conditions they were poor
> Then a hunger strike we did commence for the dignity of man
> But it seemed to me that no one gave a damn[171]

The last stanza remembers Bobby Sands and other prisoners who died due to a hunger strike. In the two lines of the song the narrator gives a sigh about the fact that all the suffering and all the battles the republicans waged did not win them anything:

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[169] Ibid.
[170] Ibid.
[171] Ibid.

Ah but sad and bitter was the year of 1981
For everything I've lost and nothing's won[172]

The song raised a controversy again in 2014, when a chief executive of Football Association of Ireland was recorded singing the song after a won match.[173] Another controversy that recently brought attention of the media was a Tweet of a Derry-born Sunderland footballer James McClean from 2013. McClean described The Wolfe Tones' song "The Broad Black Brimmer" as his favourite song to listen to before a match.[174] The republican song is strongly pro-IRA as it tells a story of a boy whose father died fighting for IRA. The fact that the club made McClean close his Twitter account shows that open support of republicanism or loyalism is still undesirable in Ireland.

The Wolfe Tones are also known for their recording of a 1920s rebel song "Come Out Ye Black and Tans." The song with a famous chorus which goes "Tell them how the IRA made you run like hell away," denounces the British force recruited to the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) after the 1916 Easter Rising. The band recorded the cover in 1972 and it became a top song in Irish and UK charts in January this year. The reason was an event organised by the Irish government, which was held to "commemorate the role of the RIC and Dublin Metropolitan Police (DMP) – two forces that acquired a reputation for brutality against civilians in the aftermath of IRA attacks during the Irish War of Independence."[175] The song's regained popularity reflected a widespread criticism which forced the government to defer the commemoration event.[176]

[172] Ibid.

[173] Steven Carroll, "John Delaney 'Sorry' If Republican Song Caused Offence," *The Irish Times.* theirishtimes.com, 25 Nov. 2014, www.irishtimes.com/sport/soccer/international/john-delaney-sorry-if-republican-song-caused-offence-1.2014262, 7 August,2020.

[174] "James McClean Closes Twitter Account after Wolfe Tones Song Row," *BBC News*, BBC, 27 Feb. 2013, www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-21600688, 7 August, 2020.

[175] Brian Coney, "How Alan Partridge Helped Come Out Ye Black and Tans Top the Charts," *The Guardian.* Guardian News and Media, 14 Jan. 2020, www.theguardian.com/music/2020/jan/14/come-out-ye-black-and-tans-wolfe-tones-alan-partridge, 7 August, 2020.

[176] "Government Defers Commemoration Event for RIC after Opposition," *RTÉ Archives*, RTÉ, 7 Jan. 2020. www.rte.ie/news/player/2020/0107/21685484-government-defers-commemoration-event-for-ric-after-opposition/, 7 August, 2020.

British Musicians

In this chapter I focus on songs of musicians from the Great Britain with exception of Northern Ireland which was dealt with in the previous chapter.

John Lennon

John Lennon was one of the most popular musicians. After the Beatles broke up, he became (together with his wife Yoko Ono) a symbol of pacifism and a face of the anti-war movement during the Vietnam war.

Sunday Bloody Sunday

Another song dealing with Bloody Sunday was written by John Lennon and his wife Yoko Ono as early as in 1972. At the time, Lennon who is apart from his music known for his peace activism, lived with his wife Yoko Ono in New York and met up with radical left-wing political activists. On 5 February 1972 they joined a protest against British presence and actions in Northern Ireland. He even stated that "given the choice between the army and the IRA he would side with the latter".[177] In their song "Sunday Bloody Sunday" he expresses his anger against the incident and the lyrics of the song are much more expressive than those of the U2 song. The lyrics of the intro leave no doubt about what this song is going to be about:

> Well it was Sunday Bloody Sunday
> When they shot the people there
> The cries of thirteen martyrs
> Filled the free Derry air[178]

The authors mention specifically Derry. As he sings about thirteen martyrs, it is very likely that the song was written immediately after the incident, as the first news stated thirteen dead. The fourteenth victim died of the injuries in the hospital a few months later.

As the intro continues, Lennon and Yoko blame the British troops. The term "kids" refers to unarmed teenagers, who were the principal victims of the massacre. The authors point out that no soldiers were wounded, therefore the victims must have been unarmed.

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[177] John Blaney, Valeria Manferto, and Yoko Ono. *John Lennon: Jeho život* (Praha: Mladá Fronta, 2010), 259.
[178] "Sunday Bloody Sunday," *Sunday Bloody Sunday Lyrics*, www.lyrics.com/lyric/8515729/John Lennon/Sunday Bloody Sunday, 15 August, 2020.

Is there any one amongst you
Dare to blame it on the kids?
Not a soldier boy was bleeding
When they nailed the coffin lids![179]

One of the Unionists arguments to be a part of Britain was that they were mostly Protestant just like Britain. In their song, Lennon and Yoko slam this argument saying that in fact, they are a minority in Ireland as whole – on the sweet Emerald Isle.

You claim to be majority
Well you know that it's a lie
You're really a minority
On this sweet Emerald Isle[180]

As stated above, Lennon and his wife attended one of the protest marches and they mention it in their song:

When Stormont bans our marchers
They've got a lot to learn
Internment is no answer
It's those mothers' turn to burn![181]

The Stormont is a nickname for the parliament building in Northern Ireland and in this case, it is a metonymy for the government of Northern Ireland. In the third verse the authors refer to the British as ‘Anglo pigs and Scotties’ who were sent to colonize the North of Ireland:

You Anglo pigs and Scotties
Sent to colonize the north

[179] Ibid.
[180] Ibid.
[181] Ibid.

You wave your bloody Union Jacks

And you know what it's worth![182]

They accuse British of invading Ireland and waving their flags although they know it's worth – the price Ireland pays. This verse ends with an appeal to the British government and everyone involved: "Keep Ireland for the Irish / Put the English back to sea!"[183]

Lennon and Yoko go even further with in the last verse, where they compare Bloody Sunday to the concentration camps and state that Irish roads should be free from the 'bloody English hands.'

At the end of the song, an appeal to keep the Ireland for the Irish is repeated with an addition of one more line saying not for "London or for Rome". London obviously stands for the British crown, Rome very likely refers to either Pope – the head of the Roman Catholic church. Possibly it could be an allusion to the Roman Empire and its colonialism. Either way, I believe that what Lennon and Yoko wanted to say is that Ireland should rule itself and not let anyone dictate them rules.

In the song, Lennon and Ono argue that Protestants are minority on the island. This claim is complicated and suggests that the authors did not realize the complexity of the conflict in Ireland. They even refer to the Protestants as "Anglo-pigs and Scotties" which certainly does not help to soothe the conflict in any way. The solution of the conflict depends on the reconciliation between the Protestant and Catholic communities and such claims only inflame the situation. Although Lennon is known for spreading pacifistic views, "Sunday Bloody Sunday" can hardly be considered a peaceful song.

Paul McCartney

Being a part of the Beatles, an iconic band known for their anti-war stance, Sir Paul McCartney has always been used to expressing his political views through songs. In an interview for *The Prospect Magazine* he stated that it was actually him, who turned the

[182] Ibid.
[183] Ibid.

Beatles on to politics by introducing them to the Vietnam war.[184] However, although he was used to performing such songs, he was not the one to write them as well. With his song Give Ireland Back to the Irish he made an exception: "I wasn't really into protest songs – John had done that – but this time I felt that I had to write something, to use my art to protest."[185]

Give Ireland Back to the Irish

McCartney and his wife Linda wrote the song in 1972 as a reaction to Bloody Sunday. It was recorded by their band Wings. McCartney was appalled at British army's actions during the incident partly because of his strong familial connections to Ireland on his mother's side. Also, the band's guitarist Henry McCullough (whose brother got beaten up in a pub because of the song) was from Northern Ireland.[186]

The song was almost immediately banned after its release, which was not a surprise for the authors. McCartney was previously denied releasing it as the record label's chairman thought it 'too inflammatory.'[187] The BBC DJ and host of Top of the Pops Alan Freeman refused to mention the song by its name and rather referred to it only as "a song by a group called Wings".[188]

The lyrics in which the authors address Britain are simple. The title line 'Give Ireland back to the Irish' repeats throughout the song. Similarly to Lennon's song, McCartney asks Britain to leave Ireland to the Irish or to 'make Ireland Irish':

> Give Ireland back to the Irish
> Don't make them have to take it away
> Give Ireland back to the Irish
> Make Ireland Irish today[189]

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[184] Sean Michaels, "Sir Paul McCartney Claims He Politicised the Beatles," *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 15 Dec. 2008, www.theguardian.com/music/2008/dec/15/paulmccartney-thebeatles, 9 August, 2020.

[185] "Give Ireland Back to The Irish (Song)," *The Paul McCartney Project*, 12 June 2020, www.the-paulmccartney-project.com/song/give-ireland-back-to-the-irish/, 9 August, 2020.

[186] Ibid.

[187] Ibid.

[188] Ibid.

[189] "Give Ireland Back To The Irish," *Give Ireland Back To The Irish Lyrics*, www.lyrics.com/lyric/7235647/Paul McCartney/Give Ireland Back to the Irish, 15 August, 2020.

Unlike Lennon, McCartney does not scold Britain. He even thinks of it as 'tremendous.' That is a very different approach from Lennon's addressing 'Anglo pigs and Scotties.' McCartney also asks the country to think about their actions and to ask themselves what they are doing there:

> Great Britain, you are tremendous
> And nobody knows like me
> But really, what are you doin'
> In the land across the sea?[190]

In the following verse the authors ask the British who support unionists how they would like to be put in the same position. The verse describes a common situation in Northern Ireland during the Troubles, when people were stopped and checked by the police for no specific reason – for example on their way to work. In the last two lines the authors ask how the listener would react, which implies they have understanding for the actions of republicans. The way they put it suggests they justify those people who get stopped by the British army or RUC and try to defend themselves:

> Tell me, how would you like it
> If on your way to work
> You were stopped by Irish soldiers?
> Would you lie down, do nothing
> Would you give in or go berserk?[191]

The authors also touch on the topic of internment without trial. McCartney sings about some Irish man who 'looks just like him' to point out that Irish and British are the same and that the imprisonment is not fair:

[190] Ibid.
[191] Ibid.

And meanwhile back in Ireland
There's a man who looks like me
And he dreams of god and country
And he's feeling really bad
And he's sitting in a prison[192]

Overall, the song is a decently expressed political view without any vulgarisms or insults. It is obvious then, that what caused the song to be banned was not a vulgar language nor any swearwords but simply expressed disagreement with the foreign policy of the British government.

Billy Bragg

Billy Bragg is a British singer, song-writer and activist. He was inspired by the Clash and begun his career in a punk band. Traces of punk can be still heard even in his later songs, although his genres vary from folk to rock.[193] He joined the British army in 1981 with two stipulations – he wanted to drive a tank and he did not want to go to Northern Ireland, because he did not agree with the presence of British troops in Ireland.[194] He came to Northern Ireland later as a musician: "We did Red Wedge in Northern Ireland at the height of The Troubles. You'd roll into Derry or Belfast and just sense the sectarianism."[195] An experience he treasures the most is playing in Belfast the day Margaret Thatcher resigned: "We played the Ulster Hall the night Margaret Thatcher resigned. You can imagine what that was like; everyone just went crazy. There were people dancing in the streets. It was one of the great honours of my career that I was in Belfast the night Thatcher resigned. It was so brilliant!"[196] Thatcher's policy decisions deepened the divisions in Northern Ireland. For example, she refused to change the status of political prisoners in Maze which led to hunger strikes and consequently to significant escalations in violence.[197]

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[192] Ibid.

[193] Jeff Wallenfeldt, "Billy Bragg," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 16 Dec. 2019.www.britannica.com/biography/Billy-Bragg, 10 August, 2020.

[194] Andrew Collins, *Billy Bragg: Still Suitable for Miners* (Virgin Books, 2018) e-book.

[195] Stuart Clark, "Billy Bragg: On Brexit, Boris, Northern Ireland, Stormzy and More." *Hotpress*, Hotpress, 5 June 2019. www.hotpress.com/music/billy-bragg-brexit-boris-northern-ireland-stormzy-22775364, 10 August, 2020.

[196] Ibid.

[197] Gerry Adams, "Margaret Thatcher Made the North of Ireland a More Bitterly Divided Place," *The Guardian*. Guardian News and Media, 9 Apr. 2013,

My Youngest Son Came Home Today

Bragg covered Eric Bogle's song "My Youngest Son Came Home Today" in 1990, because he agreed with its message. In his biography Bragg said that at the time he realized that "until the killing stops, nothing's going to happen."[198]

The song is told from a perspective of a father who lost his youngest son in the conflict. His body was brought home by his friends in a coffin like a 'dead meat on a butcher's tray:'

> My youngest son came home today
> His friends marched with him all the way
> The fife and drum beat out the time
> While in his box of polished pine
> Like dead meat on a butcher's tray[199]

The second verse tells us he had a family and that he was shot dead. He was 'sanctified' by a bullet. Fighters who fight for their beliefs are often considered martyrs and saints just like people who fight for their religion. Also, members of paramilitaries such as IRA were celebrated as heroes if they died in a combat. In the last line the father says his son is a saint now or 'so they say.' This could be interpreted as the father's irritation. He lost his son and his grandchildren lost their father. His glorification will not bring him back to life:

> With a wife, a daughter and two sons
> And a man he would have lived and died
> Till by a bullet sanctified
> Now he's a saint or so they say[200]

The following verse points out the sadness of the whole situation in Belfast. It points out that many children are dying with a fake vision of glory. Those children are not only youngsters

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www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/apr/09/thatcher-legacy-bitterness-north-ireland, 12 August, 2020.

[198] Collins, e-book.

[199] "My Youngest Son Came Home Today," *My Youngest Son Came Home Today Lyrics*, www.lyrics.com/lyric/8693148/Billy Bragg, Vol. 1/My Youngest Son Came Home Today, 12 August, 2020.

[200] Ibid.

but even men who have families on their own, there are someone's sons and were fanaticized by paramilitary groups. They might get home in coffins like the narrator's son. The father understands his lost as a price for freedom:

> An Irish sky looks down and weeps
> Upon the narrow Belfast streets
> At children's blood in gutters spilled
> In dreams of glory unfulfilled
> As part of freedom's price to pay
> My youngest son came home today[201]

The song does not name a specific paramilitary organization nor religion. It is neutral in its tone and does not take sides.

Northern Industrial Town

Bragg released "Northern Industrial Town" on his album William Bloke (1996). It describes some northern industrial town where there is no space for gardens and the front doors open straight into the street.

The third verse suggests the town is probably in Northern Ireland as Bragg sings about two teams and an obligation of being a member of one of them. The verse also stresses the importance of winning of the right 'team.' These teams represent Catholics and Protestants or republicans and loyalists:

> And there's only two teams in this town
> And you must follow one or the other
> Let us win, let them lose, not the other way round
> In a northern industrial town[202]

[201] Ibid.
[202] "Northern Industrial Town," *Northern Industrial Town Lyrics,* www.lyrics.com/lyric/9780551/Billy Bragg/Northern Industrial Town, 15 August, 2020.

The following verse claims that the town only looks pretty from a distance. By singing that one would not come back to the city if 'it weren't for the rain' Bragg probably suggests that one would not want to go to the town if it was not his home. The town has nothing to offer to others:

> And the street lights look pretty and bright
> From the tops of the hills they rise dark in the night
> If it weren't for the rain you might never come down
> To your northern industrial town[203]

In the last verse the listener learns the town Bragg sings about is Belfast. Bragg lists other northern British towns to emphasize the difference between them and Belfast:

> But it's not Leeds or Manchester
> Liverpool, Sheffield, nor Glasgow
> It's not Newcastle-on-Tyne. It's Belfast
> It's just a northern industrial town[204]

The last two lines of the song seem to be an allusion to John Lennon and Yoko Ono's song Merry Xmas (War is Over) from 1971: "Merry Christmas, war is over /In a northern industrial town"

The song was written in 1996, two years before The Good Friday Agreement was signed. At the time the conflict was not nearly as strong as in the previous decades, however there was no official end to it, so the war was not really over. Lennon and Yoko's song goes "war is over if you want it," it is possible that Bragg wanted to express that if people want to end the conflict, they have a power to do so.

Although the song is neutral in the tone, a British singer stressing that Belfast is not like other British towns and that it is "just a northern industrial town" might be found offensive by the Belfast citizens.

[203] Ibid.
[204] Ibid.

Police

Although the Police were an English band, its frontman Sting as well as the guitarist Andy Summers both moved to Ireland during the 1980s in order to avoid taxes.[205] At the time Sting was married to an Irish actress Frances Tomelty, who was born in Belfast.

Invisible Sun

Sting wrote the lyrics for "Invisible Sun" in Ireland, where he was living at the time, during the hunger strikes in Belfast.[206] He said he wanted to write a song about horrors of the Troubles, but at the same time, he wanted the song to be optimistic: "I wanted to show some light at the end of the tunnel. I do think there has to be an 'invisible sun'. You can't always see it, but there has to be something radiating light into our lives."[207]

The song starts with the singer stating what he does not want in his life. He does not want to be looking into barrels of firearms anymore and he does not want to be confronted by the soldiers:

> I don't want to spend the rest of my life
> Looking at the barrel of an Armalite
> I don't want to spend the rest of my days
> Keeping out of trouble like the soldiers say[208]

The second verse continues in the same tone. The author does not want to end up in prison which he compares to hell and he does not want to be a part of a government statistics. Being a part of a chart would mean being killed and put into statistics as another victim:

> I don't want to spend my time in hell
> Looking at the walls of a prison cell
> I don't ever want to play the part
> Of a statistic on a government chart

[205] Vic Garbarini, "I Think if we Came Back," *Archive.org*, Internet Archive, 2000. https://web.archive.org/web/20180830003223/http://www.scarlet.nl/~gugten/article11.html, 12 August, 2020.

[206] Ibid.

[207] Ibid.

[208] "Invisible Sun," *Invisible Sun Lyrics.* www.lyrics.com/lyric/2759724/Invisible Sun, 15 August, 2020.

The chorus expresses what Sting meant by calling the song optimistic. He sings about this light at the end of a tunnel, there is some sun giving out heat and hope, even though people cannot see or feel it just yet:

> There has to be an invisible sun
> It gives its heat to everyone
> There has to be an invisible sun
> That gives us hope when the whole day's done[209]

As opposed to the chorus, the last verse is far from optimistic. It says that the only way to change the situation is to kill everybody. I interpret it as a description of mindsets of paramilitary groups who were killing each other on daily basis. The author says they would kill him for a cigarette, suggesting they do not need any important reason to kill:

> And they're only going to change this place
> By killing everybody in the human race
> They would kill me for a cigarette
> But I don't even wanna die just yet[210]

In Lyrics by Sting (2007) the author explains the song as follows: "Invisible Sun is a dark, brooding song about the lurking violence of those streets, patrolled by armoured cars, haunted by fear and suspicion, and wounds that would take generations to heal. I'm happy that the glimmer of hope in the song's title was somewhat prophetic and pray that the sectarian violence that destroyed so many lives is well and truly over."[211]

Just as the Cranberries' videoclip for "Zombie", the video of "Invisible Sun" was banned by BBC.[212]

[209] Ibid.
[210] Ibid.
[211] Sting, *Lyrics by Sting* (Simon & Schuster, 2007) e-book.
[212] "Sting," *Sting.com*. www.sting.com/biography, 12 August, 2020.

Simple Minds

Simple minds are a Scottish band formed in 1977. They were influenced by the art-rock of David Bowie and the electronic dance of Donna Summer. Their genres range from punk, rock and pop to folk.

Belfast Child

The originally almost seven minutes long ballad was released in 1989 on the band's *Ballad of the Streets* EP. They took the tune from a traditional Irish folk song "She Moved Through the Fair" but wrote the lyrics themselves.[213] Their inspiration was the Remembrance Day of 1987 Bombing in Enniskillen, where 11 people were killed and sixty-three more were injured.[214]

The song starts as a calm folk song without any electric guitars nor drums which join in in the second part of the song and the genre changes into rock. The song's division into two parts is not coincidental. As the band's guitarist Charlie Burchill explains: "We never talked about it but that symbolised Northern Ireland, the hope and the harsher realities of war."[215] The song is supposed to express hope for future of Northern Ireland. That is why the band decided to mention a child in the title: "Someone said 'You run the risk of over-sentimentality as soon as you mention the word child in a song.' But if you want to talk about the future, there is not a more apt symbol," Burchill explained.[216] The Belfast child is mentioned at the end of the first verse. By the time that the Belfast Child sings again is understood as the time the Troubles end. The verse also mentions the Troubles and expresses concern over the town being pulled down:

> Some say troubles abound
> Some day soon they're gonna pull the old town down
> One day we'll return here
> When the Belfast Child sings again[217]

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[213] "Street Fighting Years," *Simpleminds.com*, 29 July 2018, www.simpleminds.com/1989/05/08/street-fighting-years/, 13 August, 2020.

[214] Simon Cornwell, "Songs Released: Belfast Child," *Simpleminds.com*, www.simpleminds.org/sm/songs/sfy/bc1.htm, 13 August, 2020.

[215] Ibid.

[216] Ibid.

[217] "Belfast Child," *Belfast Child Lyrics*, www.lyrics.com/lyric/919742/Simple Minds/Belfast Child, 15 August, 2020.

In the second verse the narrator is looking for his brothers and sisters. They could be interpreted as people who lost their lives during the Troubles. Or, as in church it is a common practice to call fellow believers 'brothers' and 'sisters,' the narrator might be looking for Christians. However, they are difficult to find in the crowd, as the violence drove them away from God and consequently from church and the narrator does not see them as his brothers and sisters anymore. He also sings about how he used to have faith in God, the church and the government but now there's sadness abound. The church and government definitely played a significant role during the Troubles, possibly causing the narrator to lose his faith in them:

> Brothers, sisters, where are you now?
> As I look for you right through the crowd
> All my life here I've spent
> With my faith in God the Church and the Government
> But there's sadness abound[218]

The next verse is a call for Billy and Mary to come home. Again, those people might represent the casualties. They are gone so the streets are empty:

> So come back Billy, won't you come on home?
> Come back Mary, you've been away so long
> The streets are empty, and your mother's gone[219]

However, Billy and Mary could also represent any people. In the following verse the narrator is looking for them because they have been gone for a while. Normal people represent normal life, streets in Belfast of the Troubles did not look as streets in other towns. There were less people casually walking them. The verse also says there is a war on the Emerald Isle which is a common nickname for Ireland. The last line shows the hope for future as it says that not all is lost:

[218] Ibid.
[219] Ibid.

Come back people, you've been gone a while
And the war is raging, through the Emerald Isle
That's flesh and blood man, that's flesh and blood
All the girls are crying but all's not lost[220]

The last verse repeats that the streets are empty, but life goes on. The last two lines express the authors' optimism for the future. It suggests that one day people and normal life will return to Belfast:

The streets are empty
Life goes on
One day we'll return here
When the Belfast Child sings again[221]

Elton John

Sir Elton John, a singer, songwriter and pianist, is one of the most famous English musicians of all times. His songs are profoundly known all around the world. However, his songs "Belfast" which describes the town during the Troubles, is not that known. It's video on Youtube.com only has about 70 thousand views in contrast with hundreds of his other songs reaching tens of millions of views.[222]

Belfast

The fact the song is not very popular could be explained as an outcome of a combination of weak lyrics and a not very successful attempt to create an Irish sound. "The problem with this singer's perspective is that he is English reflecting on the Irish in an all-too-familiar and typically English way."[223] Elton John seems to be strongly influenced by stereotypes portraying Northern Ireland as a hostile, barbaric place that is difficult to understand:[224]

[220] Ibid.
[221] Ibid.
[222] *YouTube*, YouTube.com, www.youtube.com/results?search_query=Elton John, 13 August, 2020.
[223] Pietzonka, e-book.
[224] Pietzonka, e-book.

Deep inside
My soul fights a war
I can't explain
I can't cross over any more[225]

He sings that he can only see a common sense in pieces although he tries to see through Irish eyes. As if as an Englishman he is unable to understand the conflict or as if it was only Irish issue:

All I see are dirty faces
Rain and wire
And common sense in pieces
But I try to see through Irish eyes, Belfast.[226]

Singing about dirty faces is the only allusion the author makes to the people of Belfast, which could be easily perceived as an insult by the people living in Belfast.[227] Furthermore, his pronunciation with stress on the second syllable while pronouncing the town's name is usual for the Anglophile upper class living in the city. The vast majority of the Belfast inhabitants would pronounce Belfast with stress on the first syllable which again suggests an outsider's perspective based on stereotypes.[228]

[225] "Belfast," *Belfast Lyrics*, www.lyrics.com/lyric/1691387/Elton John, 15 August, 2020.
[226] Ibid.
[227] Pietzonka, e-book.
[228] Pietzonka, e-book.

Conclusion

This thesis aimed to analyse songs that were created during the Troubles in Northern Ireland and deal with the conflict in their lyrics. The Troubles was a violent conflict in Northern Ireland that lasted from about 1968 until 1998 when it was formally ended by The Good Friday Agreement. The two main parts were the predominantly Protestant Loyalists who wanted the Northern Ireland to remain a part of the United Kingdom and overwhelmingly Catholic Nationalists who desired Northern Ireland to become a part of the Irish republic. Furthermore, Loyalists were supported by the United Kingdom which sent its army to the country in 1969. Naturally, some musicians recorded songs to express their stance on the whole thing. Some of them supported paramilitaries, some called for peace, some simply expressed their grief. The aim of the thesis was to describe different approaches and find similarities among popular songs dealing with the Troubles.

The first part of the thesis deals with the historical background of the conflict. I provide its overview including causes and progress with focus on crucial events that were later treated in songs and are essential for understanding the songs' analyses in the second part of the thesis. The first part also includes a short overview of history of Irish political music including examples of Nationalist and Loyalist songs and Irish political music nowadays.

In the second part of the thesis I focus on particular songs and analyse them using the method of close reading. I was interested in the artist's geographical background, the genre of the song and also the artist's personal approach. I aimed to find and describe differences and similarities in approaches of musicians of various genres from Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland and the rest of Great Britain.

It is clear that music had the power to calm the conflict as well as inflame it. Although Jake Burns of Stiff Little Fingers claimed that music in general helped to bring people together, it is not really the case with for example the Wolfe Tones and their IRA propagating songs. Some artists decided to try to calm the conflict by preaching peace, such as U2. John Lennon, who would be expected to write a peaceful song, on the other hand came out with an aggressive song with explicit language which rather inflames the situation. Some artists, such as Paddy McGuigan, Irish Brigade or Wolfe Tones took a side and promoted either Nationalists or Loyalists views. Artists like Paul Brady, Tommy Sands of Stiff Little Fingers remained neutral and criticized the conflict as whole without taking sides. This phenomenon observed on songs by Stiff Little Fingers is especially surprising as the band's genre is punk – a genre with common political and anti-establishment lyrics. Similarly, Christy Moore who

is because of his lyrics considered a controversial person sang nationalist songs and covers of Bobby Sands. Yet, his own song "Minds Locked Shut" which deals with the Troubles is far from aggressive or controversial.

Regarding the author's geographical background, songs of artists coming from Northern Ireland are slightly more aggressive in their tone although they do not all necessarily express support for one of the sides. The exception being Paddy McGuigan who was strictly nationalist and Irish Brigade who in one of their songs even celebrated IRA firearms.

A strictly nationalist band can be found among authors from the Republic of Ireland as well. Christy Moore took the national side; Wolf Tones were openly supporting IRA. U2 and The Cranberries, two representatives of rock music expressed their anger at the situation with more peaceful approach. The Cranberries were so affected by the Troubles that not only that they changed their genre to write the song "Zombie," it also became their first political song ever recorded.

Regarding British authors, Simple Minds, Billy Bragg and Police were very careful singing about Belfast, only expressing their grief and hope for future. Paul McCartney in his song "Give Ireland Back to the Irish" stands against the British involvement in Ireland but remains careful in sending the message. John Lennon and his wife on the other hand express their criticism of the British involvement sharply, showing a lack of knowledge about the history of the conflict. Similarly to them, Elton John's song "Belfast" exposed stereotypes commonly assumed of the conflict. In the song he tried to imitate traditional Irish music just as Simple Minds in their "Belfast Child."

Some authors, influenced by the Troubles then turned their interest to socio-political problems in different countries as well. For example Paul Brady who in his song "The Island" compares the Troubles to Lebanon civil war. Christy Moore wrote songs about Spanish Civil War and U2, since their album *War* (1983) became engaged in socio-political problems world-wide.

Although the conflict has been officially over for over twenty years now, these songs can help us form a picture about how it was perceived by people of different geographical backgrounds.

Resumé

Tato diplomová práce se zabývá analýzou písní, které vznikly během konfliktu v Severním Irsku a jejich texty se tímto konfliktem zabývají. Konflikt v Severním Irsku, často označovaný jako „The Troubles," probíhal v letech 1968 – 1998, kdy byl formálně ukončen „Velkopáteční dohodou" (The Good Friday Agreement). Dvě zásadní strany tvořili loajalisté, kteří se z velké části hlásili k Protestantismu a chtěli, aby Severní Irsko zůstalo částí Spojeného Království a nacionalisté, které tvořili především katolíci a kteří chtěli Severní Irsko připojit k Irské republice. Loajalisté byli navíc podporováni Spojeným Královstvím, které do země v roce 1969 poslalo svoji armádu. Někteří hudebníci na tento konflikt přirozeně reagovali písněmi, skrze které vyjadřovali svůj názor. Některé z těchto písní podporovaly paramilitaristické organizace, jiné volaly po míru, další pouze vyjadřovaly smutek nad obětmi a rozbitými městy. Cílem této práce bylo popsat různé přístupy a najít podobnosti mezi populárními písněmi zabývajícími se tímto konfliktem.

První část práce se zabývá historickým pozadím konfliktu. Tato část zahrnuje obecný přehled včetně příčin a průběhu se zaměřením na nejdůležitější události, které jsou často vyobrazeny v textech písní a které jsou nezbytné pro analýzy ve druhé části práce. První část také obsahuje stručný přehled historie Irské politické hudby včetně příkladů známých nacionalistických a loajalistických písní, dále následuje popis současné irské politické hudby.

Ve druhé části práce se zaměřuji na konkrétní skladby a analyzuji je metodou důkladného čtení. Zabývám se přístupem jednotlivých umělců, jejich geografickým pozadím i žánrem písní. Mým cílem bylo najít a popsat rozdíly a podobnosti v přístupech hudebníků různých žánrů, kteří pocházejí ze Severního Irska, Irska a ostatních částí Velké Británie.

Někteří umělci, jako například kapela U2, se rozhodli pokusit konflikt tišit hlásáním míru. John Lennon, od kterého by se podobný přístup dal očekávat, ale na druhou stranu vydal agresivní píseň s explicitním textem, který naopak konflikt spíše rozdmýchává. Jiní umělci, jako například Paddy McGuigan, Irish Brigade nebo Wolfe Tones, si vybrali stranu a propagovali buď nacionalistické nebo loajalistické smýšlení. Muzikanti jako Paul Brady, Tommy Sands nebo Stiff Little Fingers zůstali neutrální a kritizovali konflikt jako takový, aniž by se přikláněli k jedné ze stran. Tento přístup je zvláště zajímavý u písní kapely Stiff Little Fingers, jejímž žánrem je punk – žánr známý zejména v souvislosti s kritizováním politických poměrů a všeobecné provokace. Podobně i Christy Moore, který je známý svými kontroverzními texty a který zpíval písně Bobbyho Sandse se v jeho písni „Minds Locked

Shut“ rozhodl v textu zabývajícím se konfliktem v Severním Irsku zůstat neutrálním a nepoužívat vulgární jazyk.

Co se týče geografického pozadí autorů, písně umělců ze Severního Irska mají lehce agresivnější nádech, přestože ne vždy vyjadřují podporu jedné ze stran. Výjimkou je jsou Paddy McGuigan, který se otevřeně hlásal k nacionalistům a kapela Irish Brigade, která v jedné písni dokonce oslavuje zbraně používané paramilitaristickou organizací IRA. Striktně nacionalistické kapely lze najít také mezi autory pocházejícími z Irské republiky. Patří mezi ně Christy Moore a kapela Wolf Tones, která IRU otevřeně podporovala. U2 a The Cranberries, dva představitelé rockové hudby, přistupovali k vyjádření vzteku více mírumilovným způsobem. The Cranberries byli dokonce natolik ovlivněni tímto konfliktem, že pro svoji píseň „Zombie“ změnili nejen žánr kapely, ale tato píseň se také stala jejich vůbec první písni zabývající se politikou.

Pokud jde o Britské autory, Simple Minds, Billy Bragg a Police vyjadřovali svůj smutek a naději do budoucna jen velmi opatrně. Paul McCartney v jeho písni „Give Ireland Back to the Irish“ vystupuje proti Britské účasti v Irsku. V jeho výrazu zůstává ale také opatrný. Naopak John Lennon a jeho žena Yoko Ono vyjadřují svoji kritiku Britské angažovanosti velmi ostře, přičemž ovšem zároveň dávají najevo jejich nedostatečnou orientaci v historii celého konfliktu. Podobně jako oni, i Elton John dal ve své skladbě „Belfast“ najevo stereotypy, které Britové o Severním Irsku stále mají. Stejně jako britská kapela Simple Minds se skladbou „Belfast Child,“ i Elton John se v jeho písni pokusil imitovat tradiční Irskou hudbu, aby píseň zněla více autenticky.

Někteří autoři ovlivněni, nebo snad inspirováni tímto konfliktem později přesunuli svá zaměření na sociálně-politické problémy v různých zemích světa. Například Paul Brady ve své písni „The Island“ přirovnává konflikt v Severním Irsku k občanské válce v Libanonu. Christy Moore napsal skladbu o Španělské občanské válce a U2 se od vydání jejich alba *War* (1983) začali zabývat problémy v zemích po celém světe.

Přestože byl tento konflikt oficiálně ukončen před již více než dvaceti lety, tyto písně nám mohou pomoci utvořit si obrázek o tom, jak konflikt vnímali lidé z různých částí Irska, Severního Irska i zbytku Spojeného Království.

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Abstract

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The thesis deals with the Troubles in Ireland and its reflection in music. The first part of the thesis provides historical overview of the conflict and history of political music in Ireland. The second part of the thesis deals with analysis of selected songs that were created during the Troubles and focus on the conflict in their lyrics.

Anotace

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Tato práce se zabývá konfliktem v Severním Irsku a jeho vyobrazením v hudbě. První část práce poskytuje stručný přehled konfliktu spolu s přehledem Irské politické hudby. Druhá část se zaměřuje na analýzu vybraných písní, které vznikly během tohoto konfliktu a dotýkají se ho v jejich textech.