1 Introduction

Civilized society describes violence using words (barbaric, indiscriminate, gratuitous) not in their true sense, but 'in order to express revulsion'.[1] Twenty-first-century governments and the media talk about 'mindless' acts of terrorism against innocent civilians, for example; this form of violence, which has 'engrossed so much of our attention' since 11 September 2001, 'seems to go straight off the chart of "common sense" – to be not only unjustifiable, but atrocious, mad'.[2] We disengage from the causes of violence to deliberately deceive ourselves about 'the subject of human nature',[3] because the truth is that violence is a rational, social phenomenon. Unpleasant acts (murder, intimidation, rape) are not side effects of conflict and war; violence is a feature of everyday life. There is, indeed, no such thing as 'mindless violence' because violence is, by definition,[4] the *deliberate* infliction of injury to persons or property. Violence is behaviour with *intent*, and it is the task of the historian and social scientist to work out the intention of, or reason for, violence, 'however obscure this might be'.[5]

Hannah Arendt pioneered the interrogation of violence as an academic subject. In 1970 she argued that violence could be examined, independently of war studies and military history, as a 'phenomenon in its own right'.[6] Scholars of violence have increasingly followed her lead, analyzing the range of harmful acts that occur in times of war and of relative

[1] A.T.Q. Stewart, *The narrow ground: The roots of conflict in Ulster*, new ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 1989), 141.
[2] C. Townshend, *Terrorism: A very short introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 1–2.
[3] Stewart, *The narrow ground*, 142.
[4] The *Oxford English dictionary* defines violence as 'behaviour involving physical force intended to hurt, damage, or kill'.
[5] D. Muro-Ruiz, 'State of the art: The logic of violence', *Politics* 22, no. 2 (2002), 109–17 at 109.
[6] H. Arendt, *On violence* (London: Allen Lane, 1970), 35.

peace.[7] Accompanying the recent global shift, from inter- to intra-state war, is the emergence of a particularly thriving field – civil-war studies. Civil war has been central to the formation of nations in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries,[8] and, as Stathis Kalyvas explains in his landmark 2006 study, internal strife unleashes brutal and intimate violence, much of which 'lacks conventional military utility and does not take place on a battlefield'.[9] The Greek conflicts of 1943–9 are his primary illustration of the 'logic' of violence in civil war: the deliberate infliction of harm on civilians (defined by him as anyone who is not a full-time soldier) cannot be reduced to 'madness'. Political actors instead use selective violence to coerce and control, that is, to maintain or establish rule over the populace within a contested territory.[10]

1. The Irish Civil War

This book tackles hostilities of a very different scale and intensity, the Civil War in Ireland, over the acceptance of the Anglo-Irish Treaty, during 1922–3. The Treaty, ratified in the Irish parliament, Dáil Éireann, on 7 January 1922, established the Irish Free State as a self-governing dominion within the British Commonwealth. Independence on these terms was anathema to republicans committed to the Proclamation of 1916; the Treaty split the Irish Republican Army (IRA). Michael Collins's (pro-Treaty) followers within the organization made up what would become the Free State Army (or National Troops).[11] The anti-Treaty IRA, known as 'Irregulars', protested against the maintenance of Ireland's link with Britain (symbolized by the oath of allegiance to the crown) and continued to fight for a republic.[12] In the first months of 1922, the anti-Treaty

[7] R. Collins, *Violence: A micro-sociological theory* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008); C. Tilly, *The politics of collective violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); A. Blok, *Honour and violence* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001).

[8] Violence continues, in 2013, to claim lives and force displacement in South Sudan, for example; this independent state was formed in July 2011, after decades of civil war and at least 1.5 million deaths.

[9] S.N. Kalyvas, *The logic of violence in civil war* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 16.

[10] Kalyvas, *Logic of violence in civil war*, 20, 27–9, 209.

[11] M. Hopkinson, *Green against green: The Irish Civil War* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1988), 58–69. Michael Collins (1890–1922): IRB member; fought in 1916; director of IRA organization and intelligence during the War of Independence; delegate in the Anglo-Irish Treaty negotiations; Chairman and Minister for Finance of the Provisional Government; became Commander-in-Chief of the Free State Army and was killed in an ambush during the Civil War (22 August 1922).

[12] Each TD (i.e., member of the lower house, Dáil Éireann) and Senator (member of the upper house, Seanad Éireann) was required to swear an oath of allegiance to the British crown on taking his seat in the Irish parliament (Oireachtas).

members of the IRA had the advantage – 'in terms of numbers and experience' – over pro-Treaty troops.[13] Active in Munster, the province at the heart of this study, during the Civil War, notorious IRA leader and War of Independence guerrilla Tom Barry believed that, with a more efficient deployment of their 30,000 men, the anti-Treaty republicans could have seized the initiative early on and ended the war in 'three days'.[14] The republicans instead chose a fatal, defensive policy and, during a short, geographically contained war, were never able seriously to compete with the superior firepower of the Free State.

This was, indeed, a limited war: military activity was confined to the first few months, July–September 1922, and large areas of the country remained relatively unaffected.[15] Exact casualty figures are elusive.[16] Michael Hopkinson, the author of the definitive military history of the war, finds it difficult even to approximate the numbers of civil-war dead and wounded.[17] He is sure, however, that more lives were lost during the Civil War than during the War of Independence. Total casualties during 1919–21 amounted to close to 1,400 (624 British forces and 752 IRA and civilians).[18] Nonetheless, the Irish Civil War certainly was not as bloody as was once proclaimed. Figures for combined pro-Treaty and anti-Treaty losses of 4,000 recently have been replaced with more conservative estimates:[19] by June 1923, total army fatalities numbered 927 (including 77 executed by the government).[20] Numbers of dead were also low by contemporary European standards; Alvin Jackson compares total wartime casualties in the Irish Free State of 'probably little more than 1,500' with 'the 30,000 or more who died in Finland's civil war – a country with population numbers similar to Ireland'.[21]

[13] Hopkinson, *Green against green*, 58.
[14] M. Ryan, *Tom Barry: IRA freedom fighter* (Cork: Mercier Press, 2003), 195–6.
[15] There were no major battles, and the counties of Galway, Longford, Westmeath, Offaly, Kildare, Kilkenny, Monaghan, Wicklow, Meath, Cavan, Leitrim, Roscommon, Clare and Donegal saw hardly any fighting; see P. Hart, *IRA at war, 1916–1923* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 41.
[16] Daithí Ó Corráin and Eunan O'Halpin's research will soon remove much of the uncertainty surrounding Irish revolutionary deaths before the Treaty; *The dead of the Irish Revolution, 1916–1921*, forthcoming with Yale University Press, does not, however, cover the Civil War period.
[17] Hopkinson, *Green against green*, 272–3.
[18] Hopkinson, *The Irish War of Independence* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 2002), 201.
[19] F.S.L. Lyons, *Ireland since the Famine*, 2nd rev. ed. (London: Fontana, 1973), 467–8; J. Regan, *The Irish counter-revolution 1921–1936: Treatyite politics and settlement in independent Ireland* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1999), 374.
[20] J. Augusteijn, 'Irish Civil War', in S.J. Connolly (ed.), *The Oxford companion to Irish history*, Oxford Paperpack Reference (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 277.
[21] A. Jackson, 'The Two Irelands', in R. Gerwarth (ed.), *Twisted paths: Europe 1914–1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 68.

The fighting began with the confrontation between National Troops and Irregulars in occupation of the Four Courts, Dublin, 28–30 June 1922. The Civil War did spread into counties, such as Sligo, that had been 'quiescent' during 1919–21.[22] However, the conflict was most intense in the War of Independence hot spots of the south-west, including the three counties (Limerick, Tipperary and Waterford) studied in detail in this book.[23] The Free State and anti-Treaty IRA clashed in the streets of the three counties' major towns and in ambushes in rural areas, and vied for control of local barracks. The 'exciting' scenes witnessed in the besieged Waterford city – freed after 'four days strenuous battle' – may not have been typical.[24] Colonel-Commandant Prout's National Army easily recaptured even Clonmel, the republicans' 'greatest strongholds in South Tipperary'.[25] Nevertheless, it was only after a number of what the Munster press termed 'lively' encounters in the summer of 1922 – and significant loss of life – that the Free State declared victory in the localities. 'Heavy street fighting' in Limerick, during 11–21 July 1922, took 'many casualties'. Republicans initially held the four main military barracks in the town, but National Troops met the 'Diehard' offensive with 'a fortnight's aggressive firing practice'.[26] Tipperary town witnessed 'fierce fighting', and Golden was won back from the anti-Treaty IRA after an 'all night battle'.[27] Free State Army Command Reports recall other 'sharp encounters', such as a clash at Ballymacarbry, Co. Waterford, between Irregulars and National Troops led by Captain Hayes.[28]

The military phase of the war was thus intense in some areas, but short-lived. By September, once the Free State had reasserted its authority in Cos. Limerick, Tipperary and Waterford, IRA opposition to the Treaty comprised small, isolated columns of Irregulars, limited to guerrilla activity and harassment of the public. Yet the war did not end until May 1923; this study offers a new perspective on the Irish conflict of 1922–3 by focusing on violence against (and often amongst) civilians,

[22] R.F. Foster, *Modern Ireland 1600–1972* (London: Allen Lane, The Penguin Press, 1988), 512; M. Farry, *The aftermath of revolution: Sligo, 1921–23* (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2000), xii.
[23] See Map 1. Cos. Limerick, Tipperary and Waterford were selected for study for a number of historical and practical reasons; see discussion later.
[24] *Munster Express*, 29 July 1922.
[25] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 12 August 1922. See Chapter 2 on John T. Prout.
[26] P.J. Ryan, 'Armed conflict in Limerick', in D. Lee (ed.), *Remembering Limerick: Historical essays celebrating the 800th anniversary of Limerick's first charter granted in 1197* (Limerick: Limerick Civic Trust, 1997), 274–6 at 274.
[27] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 2 August 1922.
[28] Irish Military Archives (IMA), Operation/Intelligence Reports by Command, CW/OPS/1/A.

that is, the aggressive actions largely neglected by conventional military histories of the Civil War.[29] The war is losing its status as the great taboo of Irish history, but, outside the local case study, this readiness to challenge old interpretations still comes largely from a military and political perspective. John Regan tackles issues of state building and democracy,[30] for example, whilst Bill Kissane situates the Civil War in the general process of twentieth-century decolonization, explaining why divisions over the Treaty proved influential in the development of the Irish state.[31] These perspectives are useful, but insufficient; the 'martial paradigm', in Peter Hart's words, is clearly inadequate in describing the events of 1922–3.[32] Hart's research on Co. Cork has been crucial in peeling back the layers of polemic surrounding the history of the early IRA and charting local-community experiences of the 'Revolution' (1916–23) in Ireland's governance.[33] Pioneered by David Fitzpatrick,[34] the county study is, indeed, a useful model in researching these formative years. *Everyday Violence in the Irish Civil War* accordingly adds to important histories, of Cos. Clare, Cork, Longford, Derry, Dublin, Mayo, Wexford, Sligo and Monaghan,[35] by tracking violence in the under-researched, but strategic, counties of Limerick, Tipperary and Waterford, in the province of Munster, during the Irish Civil War.

2. A Three-County Study

Hart did challenge the theory that differences in actual physical geography explain the relative concentration of violence during the Irish

[29] J.M. Curran, *The birth of the Irish Free State* (Tuscaloosa, AL.: University of Alabama Press, 1980); Hopkinson, *Green against green*; S. Mac Suain, *County Wexford's civil war* (Wexford: Séamus Mac Suain, 1995); E. Neeson, *The Civil War in Ireland* (Dublin: Poolbeg, 1989); C. Younger, *Ireland's civil war* (London: Frederick Muller, 1970).

[30] Regan, *The Irish counter-revolution*.

[31] B. Kissane, *The politics of the Irish Civil War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

[32] Hart, *IRA at war*, 82.

[33] Hart, *IRA at war* and *The IRA and its enemies: Violence and community in Cork, 1916–1923* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998). The political transformation of 1916–23 (the transfer from Britain to Ireland of state power) has become known as the Irish Revolution, although Hart recognizes the wider debate in the historiography over how far these years actually should be characterized as a 'revolution'; see Hart, *IRA at war*, chapter 1.

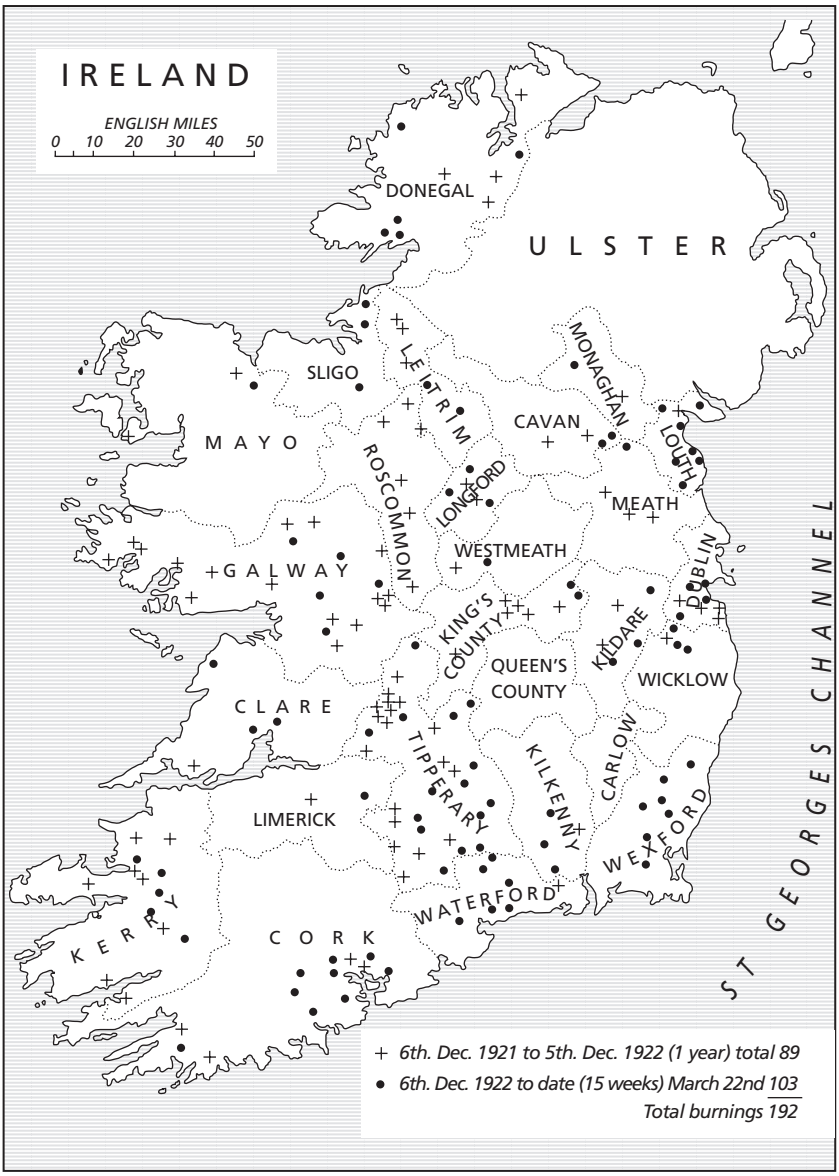
[34] D. Fitzpatrick, *Politics and Irish life, 1913–1921: Provincial experience of war and revolution* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1977).

[35] M. Coleman, *County Longford and the Irish Revolution, 1910–1923* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2006); Augusteijn, *From public defiance to guerrilla warfare: The experience of ordinary volunteers in the Irish War of Independence, 1916–1921* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1996); Farry, *Aftermath of revolution*; T.A.M. Dooley, *The plight of the Monaghan Protestants, 1912–1926*, Maynooth Studies in Irish Local History (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2000).

Revolution.[36] 'Single-cause explanations about the geographical distribution' of revolutionary activity remain unconvincing.[37] It is nonetheless true that, during the Civil War, the republicans were at times able to use their surroundings (the mountainous districts in North Tipperary, in particular) to their advantage in resisting and undermining Free State authority.[38] In addition, administrative borders are useful demarcations for the purpose of historical analysis; certain provinces, such as Munster, and counties, such as Tipperary, are known for their propensity for radical nationalism, agrarian unrest and violence in general. Maps of violence compiled by Hart (and Fitzpatrick and Erhard Rumpf before him) suggest that the strength of opposition to the Treaty and intensity of Civil War violence, in the three counties under discussion, generally correlated with levels of aggression during the Land War and War of Independence.[39]

Tipperary's penchant for violence certainly stands out in the contemporary pamphlet that inspired my research on the Civil War.[40] In an undergraduate dissertation on civil-war arson, I address the 'bad preeminence' attained by Co. Tipperary in the Irish Claims Compensation Association's (ICCA) map of house burnings during 1922–3; see Map 2.[41] Master's and doctoral dissertations (on arson and other forms of civil-war violence) draw on the wartime experiences not only of Tipperary, but also the concomitant counties of Limerick and Waterford.[42] My unpublished research thus underlines the value of the local study in understanding a war in which violence was not the sole preserve of

[36] Hart, 'The geography of revolution in Ireland 1917–1923', *Past and Present*, no. 155 (May 1997), 142–76 at 158–9.
[37] Hopkinson, *Irish War of Independence*, 201.
[38] Levels of republican strength and civilian support varied by area; see Chapter 5. Land War heroes such as the 'hillside committee' and 'Rory of the Hill' even reappeared as authors of threatening letters in circulation during the Civil War; see Chapter 4.
[39] Hart, 'Geography of revolution', *P&P*, 148–53; Fitzpatrick, 'The geography of Irish nationalism 1910–1921', *P&P*, no. 78 (February 1978), 113–44 at 142; E. Rumpf and A.C. Hepburn, *Nationalism and socialism in twentieth century Ireland* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1977), 39–40, 52.
[40] Irish Claims Compensation Association, *The campaign of fire; Facts for the pubic: A record of some mansions and houses destroyed, 1922–23* (Westminster, 1924), 2–3.
[41] G. Clark, 'The Free State in flames: New politics or old prejudices? A study of arson during the Irish Civil War', Unpublished undergraduate thesis (B.A., University of Oxford, 2005).
[42] Clark, 'Fire, boycott, threat and harm: Social and political violence within the local community. A study of three Munster counties during the Irish Civil War, 1922–3', Unpublished dissertation (D. Phil., University of Oxford, 2010); Clark, 'The fiery campaign: New agendas and ancient enmities in the Irish Civil War. A study of arson in three Munster counties', Unpublished dissertation (M.St., University of Oxford, 2007).



Map 2: Map showing mansions and houses burned, 6 December 1921–22 March 1923, as reported in the press

armed combatants, and intra-community conflicts over land and religion raged alongside the Treaty dispute. This study also relies heavily on archival evidence from Cos. Limerick, Tipperary and Waterford; *Everyday Violence in the Irish Civil War* focuses on these counties for a number of practical reasons.

The three counties cover a large portion of the province of Munster and its diverse topography (coast, mountains, fertile pasture, urban centres and pockets of industry). Worthwhile comparisons can be made within and between counties with varied, but not atypical, geographies, economies and wartime experiences. Indeed, whilst the Munster neighbours share some social and political features, including the anti-Treaty stance taken by their IRA divisions in 1922,[43] there are also crucial differences. Whilst west and north-west Waterford have a strong republican tradition, neither Waterford nor Limerick matches Tipperary's historical tendency towards radical politics and associated violence.[44] Waterford, in particular, does not share Limerick's and Tipperary's tradition of agrarian unrest.[45] I have not, in other words, hand-picked for study the most violent areas in the province; instead, I include in my analysis relatively peaceful areas (in Limerick and Waterford) in order to test the possibility that the 'everyday violence' at the heart of this book was simply a by-product of Tipperary's particularly intense civil-war experience.

The province of Munster comprises Cos. Clare, Cork, Kerry, Limerick, Waterford and Tipperary. This book offers a three-county (rather than all-province) study to, first of all, avoid the famously hard-line counties (Cork and Kerry) that experienced anomalously high levels of violence during the Irish Revolution. Hart, at any rate, has already charted successfully violence in the epicentre of the 1920s troubles, Co. Cork. And, whilst Co. Kerry has not yet been the focus of an academic study, the 2008 release of Irish Department of Justice files relating to the infamous Ballyseedy mine explosions will hopefully encourage scrutiny of

[43] Rumpf and Hepburn, *Nationalism and socialism*, 45–7, 58.

[44] Although one local historian argues that the county's quiet reputation may be misleading; 'militant nationalism' was not strong in Co. Waterford, during the War of Independence, but 'socialist activism' thrived. See P. McCarthy, 'Waterford hasn't done much either? Waterford in the War of Independence, 1919–1921: A comparative analysis', *Decies* 58 (2002), 89–106 at 106.

[45] W.E. Vaughan, *Landlords and tenants in mid-Victorian England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 283–6: when the thirty-two counties are ranked according to official nineteenth-century records of the 'number of agrarian outrages per 1000 agricultural holdings', Tipperary in particular shows consistently high rates of violence. Waterford, by contrast, was not 'convulsed' in nineteenth-century rural violence; M.B. Kiely and W. Nolan, 'Politics, land and rural conflict, c.1830–1845', in W. Nolan and T.P. Power (eds.), *Waterford: History and society: Interdisciplinary essays on the history of an Irish county* (Dublin: Geography Publications, 1992), 459–94 at 468–9.

revolutionary violence in this county.[46] In addition, key archival sources (compensation claims made to the British and Free State Governments for injuries sustained during the Civil War) are not available for all Munster counties.[47] Civil-war compensation files from Clare, amongst other Irish counties, are missing from the National Archives of Ireland. Indeed, whilst compensation claims made to the UK Government are organized and accessible via the National Archives' (TNA) CO 762 collection,[48] the National Archives of Ireland (NAI) has not catalogued its collection of compensation material from the Civil War.[49] This book brings to light many previously unseen testimonies on civil-war violence, by focusing on a manageable number of counties for which archival evidence is available.

The chronological parameters of this study also reflect practical considerations and archival exigencies. I examine acts of violence perpetrated in Cos. Limerick, Tipperary and Waterford between the ratification of the Treaty, on 7 January 1922, and the ending of the war, by the republicans' dumping of arms, on 24 May 1923. Compensation records are available for much of this period; in fact, British and Irish compensation committees invited claims for injuries suffered between the Truce (11 July 1921) and the passing of the Damage to Property Act (12 May 1923) that governed the compensation process in the Free State. That is not to say, of course, that violence ceased completely on 12 May, before the real end of the war. However, allowances were made, especially by the British Government body, the Irish Grants Committee (IGC), for late applicants. In addition, this study of violence does not rely solely on the compensation material, but draws on other sources such as the local press, government papers and military reports.

3. Categories of Violence

My research has been shaped and directed, in other words, by a vast body of administrative records of civil-war violence (and Chapter 2 explores in more detail the quirks of the compensation process). The most striking feature of the violence recorded in these sources is that it was targeted at

[46] National Archives of Ireland (NAI), Records of the Department of Justice, 2008/152/27.
[47] See Chapter 2 for a full exposition of the compensation process. After Partition, claimants from Northern Ireland could not seek compensation from the Irish Government and so there are no compensation claims from the six Northern counties. Compensation files from other Free State counties are also missing or at least inaccessible for researchers.
[48] Records of the Colonial Office, Records of the Irish Office, Irish Grants Committee: Files and Minutes.
[49] Catriona Crowe (NAI) generously granted access to unsorted boxes of compensation files from Cos. Limerick, Tipperary and Waterford.

certain social groups, namely the religious and political minority in southern Ireland. Protestants, Unionists, landlords and other representatives of British rule in Ireland were punished for their loyalty to the old regime, even after the creation of the Irish Free State; in *Campaign of Fire* (see earlier discussion, and Map 2) the London-based pressure group, ICCA, lamented the destruction of 'mansions and country houses', which had 'greatly . . . increased since the evacuation by British forces took place and the Free State Government assumed office'.[50]

The 'injustices suffered by Irish Loyalists' are not, however, the full story.[51] Catholics, small farmers and 'Free Staters' were not exempt from violence during this bitter, localized conflict. This book brings to light the wartime experiences of victims and perpetrators of violence from across Munster, examining the broad spectrum of harmful acts that occurred in local communities during 1922–3.[52] I categorize these diverse actions, including house burning, boycott, animal maiming, assault and murder, as 'everyday violence' because these acts of violence, far from being mundane, did nonetheless become commonplace in some areas. And the violence I describe in this book is violence that affected not only IRA and Free State soldiers, but also unarmed civilians, that is, men and women of all ages, classes and religions. Murder and rape did not happen every day; Ireland's Civil War was fairly restrained, at least by contemporaneous European standards. However, whilst grotesque violence and state brutality did not become the norm, Irish people and animals nonetheless experienced great cruelties during the Civil War.

My study, of '*everyday* violence' in the Irish Civil War, encompasses actions that are classified elsewhere in the historiography as '*political* violence' and/or '*social* violence'. Clarity of terms is important, because the history of Irish violence has been beset by particular difficulties and political and sectarian agendas. With the progress made since the Good Friday Agreement (1998) towards peace in Northern Ireland, historians today are better placed than those in more politically charged times to scrutinize Irish violence. Nevertheless, the role of violence in the overthrow of the British state in the 1920s remains a highly charged historical problem as evidenced, for example, in the Aubane Historical Society's reaction to the publication (1998) of *The IRA and Its Enemies*, and the

[50] ICCA, *Campaign of fire*, 2.
[51] Title of ICCA report to the House of Lords; see Chapter 2, Section 2.
[52] This book identifies the three main categories of violence during the Irish Civil War – arson, intimidation and harm (assault and murder) – which are explored thematically, in Chapters 3 through 5.