

Introduction: Orangeism, Protestantism, anthropology

When I arrived at the Glencruix Orange Hall, Dennis¹ was already standing behind the main bar at the far end of the building. He was serving members of the Thursday Pensioners Club, men and women in their seventies and eighties who came each week to drink, play bingo, and dance to swing music. Dennis saw me from across the hall and shouted over to say he would be with me in a minute. His movements were brisk, and he looked harassed. Dennis didn't have much time for these particular pensioners, he had told me previously. Most were not members of the Orange, he explained, and they sat for long periods without buying drinks, earning the hall a meagre income. Worse still, he said, two Roman Catholic women had recently started coming along; while the pensioners merely used the hall as a venue, and were thus technically nothing to do with the Orange Order – he found their presence galling. Waiting for him to finish, I stood in the smaller front bar where local Orangemen congregated to drink, and looked at the now familiar Orange iconography covering the walls – King Billy on his horse, Rangers Football Club at Ibrox, official images of the Queen, commemorations of the Battle of the Somme, and lodge portraits of members in their regalia.

Finishing serving the pensioners as soon as he could, Dennis joined me to deliver some news that had clearly infuriated him. Rigghill Orange Hall, he declared, had made the decision to lower their Union flag to half mast for a member of their social club who was a Roman Catholic. The more he told me, the more upset he became. Pulsating with anger, Dennis proclaimed with outrage 'Rigghill Orange Hall lowered their flag to half mast for a dirty fucking fenian bastard who never worked a day in his life! The only reason he drinks in the Orange social club is because he was barred from the only other pub in the village for passing dud fivers!' Red in the face, Dennis continued by explaining that as a result of this decision, taken by three men in the social club without wider consultation, a founding member of the Rigghill Lodge was now threatening to leave the Orange Institution in protest. 'He phoned me up to complain, and he was so angry he was actually greeting! He was actually greeting! He's a lifelong founding member who has never missed a meeting in his life, and now he's threatening to leave! I'm fucking raging! The more I speak about it, the more I have smoke coming out my ears!'

Dennis had considered issuing a complaint to the relevant Orange authority at County Lodge level, but explained that he had decided not to, not because the matter was not serious, but because he did not want the wider Orange Institution to know what had happened. ‘Glencruix District would become a laughing stock!’ he spat. With anger turning to disgust, Dennis further explained that when the mother of the complainant had died, the man had not even received a sympathy card from the Orange Order. ‘If they [the Orange hierarchy] think they are going to let a lifelong member walk away, they have another thing coming!’ he roared. After finishing his account, Dennis paced the floor in an apparent attempt to devise some kind of solution. His silence was broken when an Orangeman and his wife entered the bar, prompting Dennis to retell the story from the beginning, given with heightened emotion and additional swearing. This retelling, however, was suddenly cut short when Dennis received a brief but loud call on his mobile phone. ‘Do you know what the latest is? The funeral is in St Joseph’s or whatever it’s called, *and then the purvey is in Rigghill Hall!* It’s an utter fucking disgrace!’ By this point, Dennis was so angry he was close to tears. ‘Unbelievable!’ he continued, ‘What the fuck is going on?’

Puzzled by how the situation had arisen, I asked Dennis why the Catholic man in question had been given social club membership in the first place. Wasn’t the Orange Order a Protestant-only organisation, I reasoned? Dennis replied by patiently explaining that the Orange *Social Club* was institutionally detached from the Orange *Lodge*, meaning that members of the public could join the former without needing to be a member of the latter. ‘But *I* wouldn’t do it!’ he cautioned:

I wouldn’t even let them [Catholics] in the door! If they [Rigghill Orange Social Club] want to take money off Catholics, then fair enough, *but they dinna get to touch the flag!* This is wrong because it completely refutes the Orange Institution! You work your whole life [for the Orange Institution], and for what?! So those fenian bastards can take the piss out of you? We can’t go to a Roman Catholic chapel, but they can come to us, to the Orange Hall, after a funeral?

Changing tack, Dennis began to formulate a longer-term solution. The situation, he reasoned, required a permanent change to the Laws and Constitutions of the Grand Orange Lodge of Scotland, and, to this end, he was planning to submit a motion for a law stating that the only person who could authorise the lowering of an Orange hall’s Union flag was the Master of the Lodge. Once again, Dennis was cut off in mid flow, this time by the arrival of two Orangemen who had come to Glencruix for a meeting with him. The matter appeared urgent, so Dennis asked me to cover the bar.

Clumsily pulling pints and pouring whiskies for the Orange regulars while serving ginger and limes to the pensioners, all for the first time in my life, felt both reassuring and disconcerting; it was a mark of rapport, but also a reminder of how foreign the hall had felt at the beginning of my fieldwork. After joking about my poor skills as a barman, Sandy, another Orangeman present that afternoon, began to regale the group with stories about his recent holiday in Benidorm, describing how he spent most of his time drinking in one of two establishments,

an Ibrox-themed Rangers bar, and an Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) bar. Sandy was clearly in a good mood; as soon as Dennis returned from his meeting, he smiled and nodded to his audience, indicating a wind-up was imminent. 'What's this I hear about the flag being lowered for some *fenian* in Rigghill?' he boomed with mock seriousness, looking round and winking to the others. 'Don't you fucking *start!*' Dennis barked back, 'it's *nae* funny!' Perhaps noting my surprise at his willingness to turn the situation into a joke, Sandy turned to me and said 'Dennis just tends to get upset about these things'. Graham, another Orange regular at the social club seemed to agree that Dennis was overreacting, but, in contrast to Sandy's deliberately patronising tone, told me with a serious expression how, after all, the dead man was from a *mixed* Catholic/Protestant family.

As the afternoon wore on, the discussion moved from stories about boozing in Rangers bars on holiday, to reminiscing about drunken ferry journeys while travelling to Northern Ireland for 12 July. All the while, Dennis was making and receiving calls on his mobile in an attempt to resolve the crisis at Rigghill. At one point, the men began to discuss the contrasting ways in which pubs in 'Protestant' Glencruix and 'Catholic' Chapelgeddie had marked the murder of drummer Lee Rigby, with the former offering statements of condolence, and the latter said to have put up posters with the slogan 'Another British bastard dead'. When I expressed doubt as to whether any such posters had ever appeared in Chapelgeddie, I was told in no uncertain terms that they had. Asking what motivated their display, the answer I received was as short as it was assured; the posters were put up because Catholics in Chapelgeddie hated the army and everything British. Later, the Orangemen present began to argue about a person I had never met. Feeling this to be a good opportunity to make my excuses and leave, I began to say my goodbyes, my mind reeling from all that I had heard over the course of the afternoon. Seeing me head for the door, Dennis interrupted his latest phone call, and, with a fixed stare shouted across the bar to me: 'I'll let you know how it goes with Rigghill, *and you can put that in your book, warts and all, Joe!*'

Context and questions

The incident above occurred in June 2013, about six months after my first trip to Glencruix, and about nine months into what was to become a five-year ethnographic investigation into the Orange Order in Scotland. Forming in 1795 in Ireland and arriving in Scotland in 1799, the Scottish Order today claims an estimated (but not undisputed) membership of 50,000, making it the largest Protestant-only fraternity in the country. Dennis was one of many Orangemen I came to know during my fieldwork. A retired lorry driver, Dennis was in his early seventies when I met him, a stout but immensely energetic man with a red complexion and dark hair. Dennis was, moreover, a leading Orangeman in Glencruix, a town of 37,000 people. Located roughly halfway between Edinburgh and Glasgow, Glencruix became a key field site during my research. Built on coal and manufacturing during the industrial revolution, today Glencruix has a distinctly post-industrial feel.²

While the town had clearly seen better days, Glencruix still had a strong Orange tradition, a fact that Dennis, who fondly referred to the Order as his ‘church’, was very proud of. Further, not only was Dennis a proud Orangeman, but he was also a passionate and outspoken individual. Importantly, however, while he chose to express them more strongly than did some of his fellow brethren, Dennis’s Orange views and commitments were not out of sync with the general convictions of many of the ‘grass-roots’ members I came to know during my fieldwork. What, then, are we to make of the encounter above, and the ‘Orange culture’ from which it emerged?

Why did Dennis take offence at two Catholic women attending their local pensioners social club on the basis that the venue was an Orange hall? And why would Dennis begrudgingly overlook this, but never allow Catholics to join the *Orange* social club, despite no such ban appearing in the Institution’s own laws? Why, furthermore, did the lowering of an Orange hall’s Union flag to mark the death of a local Catholic man represent the crossing of a red line, an act which, in Dennis’s words, ‘completely refuted’ the Orange Institution? Why was the holding of a wake in the Orange hall seen as adding insult to injury? And why did Dennis repeatedly express his anger – to a researcher no less – in such strongly sectarian terms? Why did Sandy try and turn the situation into a joke, a humorous opportunity for banter? And why did Graham suggest that Dennis was overreacting on the basis of the entirely serious suggestion that the deceased man was somehow only *half* Catholic? Why did Dennis feel the Orange Institution was to blame, and why, in his mind, was the only possible solution a formal change to the Order’s laws and constitutions? And why, finally, despite his fear of becoming a ‘laughing stock’, did Dennis implore me to include the incident, ‘warts and all’, when writing my book?

In asking questions such as these, this book will examine not only the ethnographic specificities of flags lowered, hate expressed, jokes made, and laws proposed, but will do so by placing such ethnographic phenomena within a wider historical, social, and political context. Here, a series of ‘isms’ familiar to those who have some knowledge of the Protestant world view of Central Scotland and Northern Ireland will necessarily take to the stage. Thus, throughout the pages that follow, mixed together in different combinations and concentrations, will be found not only the classic ‘PUL’ cocktail of ‘Protestantism, unionism, and loyalism’, but also the associated ‘isms’ of fraternalism, patriotism, conservatism, royalism and militarism, as well as that most hotly contested label, in Scotland at least, of sectarianism.

While the contestation is real, it remains true to say that the Order is ultra-Protestant, ultra-British, and, by extension, ultra-unionist, being dedicated to preserving the constitutional status quo of the United Kingdom as a fourfold family of nations made up of England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. Yet, importantly, such context – made all the more acute by ongoing debates about Scottish independence and Brexit – will not be treated as mere backdrop, nor will it be regarded as determinative, but instead will be seen as co-constitutive of the actions and intentions of my Orange informants. Furthermore, while it may be fair to regard the ‘isms’ listed above as emic self-essentialisms, I will also argue throughout this book that these local ideal types may simultaneously be deployed

as useful etic taxonomies with which to examine certain aspects of Scots-Orange sociality. As I describe below, most particularly in relation to my engagement with new debates within the anthropology of ethics and morality, using such emic concepts to engage in etic theory-building is a crucial step for those who seek to 'take seriously' the moral claims of others, for to do so allows our informants – in the truest sense of the word – to instruct us in such a way that we not only learn *about* those moral commitments, but also *from* them (Laidlaw 2014: 46. See also Robbins and Engelke 2010, da Col and Graeber 2011). Without wanting to pre-empt my argument too much, it seems worth noting at this stage that seeking to be instructed, corrected, and even rebuked by the moral commitments of Scots-Orangemen provides striking analytical insights, but also pointed ethical challenges. It is to the theoretical framing of these insights and challenges that I now wish to turn.

The anthropology of Christianity, morality, and ethics

While Scots-Orange sociality forms the empirical focus of this book, its broader conceptual focus is situated within both the anthropology of Christianity and the anthropology of ethics and morality.³ Assessed critically, one could try and make the case that this dual focus is no focus at all, promising only to produce a kind of blurry double vision by conflating the foundational questions of these two intellectual projects, namely 'what difference does Christianity make?' (Cannell 2006: 1) and 'where is the ethical located?' (Lambek 2010: 39). Such an assessment, however, problematically assumes a basic incompatibility between the study of religion and the study of ethics and morality. Thus, while these questions should not be conflated by some ethnographic sleight of hand, it would be equally stultifying to pose religion on one hand and ethics and morality on the other, or indeed transcendence and immanence (Webster 2013), as entirely separate and incommensurable forces. Instead, then, by taking up the question 'what difference does Christianity make?', this book draws inspiration from Cannell's call to attend to the dual impetuses of 'Christianities as they are *lived*, in all their *imaginative* force' (Cannell 2006: 5. Emphasis added). Equally, by attending to both lived practice and imaginative belief, this book also takes up the question 'where is the ethical located?' Yet, in marked contrast to Lambek's wariness of the tendency of religion to intellectualise or transcendentalise ethics (2010: 3), this book finds ethics and morality not only within 'everyday comportment and understanding' (ibid.), but also within the 'reified abstractions' (ibid.: 4) of Orange belief, for example, in (intellectualised) British Israelite theology and (transcendentalised) Orange ritual. What such an observation suggests, I shall argue, is that, very often, the ostensible ordinariness of 'ordinary ethics' maintains a distinctly extraordinary character, despite its occurring as part of everyday Orange experience.

In reply, a differently critical assessment would be to regard such an approach not as 'double vision' but as more akin to bifocal lenses, producing two coexisting but still distinct optical planes. Thus, in asking 'what difference does Christianity make?', certain expressions of the anthropology of Christianity could be seen (perhaps somewhat counter-intuitively, given its ethnographic grounding) as suffering

from a long-sightedness that comes as a consequence of an overly idealist attentiveness to Christian meaning-making, belief, and theology (see Hann 2007). Conversely, in asking ‘where is the ethical located?’, certain expressions of the anthropology of ethics could be seen (again, somewhat counter-intuitively, given its philosophical grounding) as suffering from a short-sightedness that comes as a consequence of an overly materialist attentiveness to action, performance, and practice (see Robbins 2016). In this assessment, a dual conceptual focus on the anthropology of Christianity and the anthropology of ethics and morality act as bifocal glasses, producing two largely discrete and non-integrated perspectives, forcing the observer to toggle between ‘transcendent’ Christian hyperopia and ‘ordinary’ ethical myopia.

Yet, as above, this assessment seems to underestimate the extent to which extraordinary sacrality and everyday profanity are co-constitutive. In making this claim that transcendence and immanence, the sacred and the profane, and the extraordinary and the everyday necessarily co-constitute each other, I want to briefly set out a third possible assessment of the bringing together of the anthropology of Christianity and the anthropology of ethics. It is a more optimistic assessment than those outlined above, but it is not, I hope, a fanciful one. Readers will have to judge for themselves, of course; I only state it here, choosing instead to contend for it within the context of the ethnography that follows. Put simply, the position I have in mind would be to assess the different perspectives that the anthropology of Christianity and the anthropology of ethics offer the wider discipline as being broadly compatible. In this assessment, such a combination of perspectives would produce neither blurred double vision, nor unintegrated bifocal vision, but the kind of sight achievable when seeing the world through varifocal glasses. Such sight is dependent, it seems, upon clearly and convincingly integrating anthropological studies of religion, which take *belief* as a core concern, with anthropological studies of ethics and morality which take *practice* as their core concern. My suggestion is that this may best be achieved by refusing to regard religious belief as a metonym for disembodied transcendence, while also refusing to regard ordinary practice as a metonym for embodied action. Indeed, the very claiming of the word ‘ordinary’ by proponents of the ordinary ethics position is to render human experiences of transcendence as somehow ‘out of the ordinary.’ A varifocal view of religion and ethics (and indeed religion-*as*-ethics), would, in contrast, take human reflections upon religious beliefs to be ‘ordinary’ ethical acts with eminently practical consequences. Religious rumination is not opposed to the ordinary, since, for Orangemen at least, religious rumination *is* ordinary. It is part of the living of everyday life.

This is to put the matter crudely, yet, in doing so, we seem better able to grasp the extent to which the anthropology of Christianity and the anthropology of ethics and morality might address a single common question, namely, ‘what should life be like?’ The question is unavoidably normative and thus imaginative, addressing in the first instance not what life *is* like but focusing instead on what life *should* be like. Moreover, as a normative question, its being asked (and answered) seems to throw us back onto empirical studies of belief, of what is believed to be good or even ‘evil’ (Clough and Mitchell 2001, Csordas 2013, Olsen and Csordas 2019) and thus to be sought after or resisted, in the partial absence of its immanent

presence in the here and now, like so many gods and spirits. Clearly, then, while beliefs may take many forms, in doing so they frequently retain a reflective and imaginative emphasis, as will be seen, for example, in the belief of many Orangemen that British Protestants are God's chosen people, or that Roman Catholicism conspires to rule the world. Yet, a key part of my argument here is that partially shifting focus away from immanent action and towards transcendent normativity is not tantamount to ignoring 'practice'. Seen from this vantage point, the question is thus also unavoidably *realist*: 'what should *life* be like?' Indeed, when taken as a kind of culturally framed moral realism (see Hickman 2019: 51–52), the question above can be seen as restating an emphasis on 'ordinary' ethical living, made manifest, for example, in the bureaucratic committee work of the Orange hierarchy as they process membership forms, collect lodge fees, or negotiate parade routes and traffic management plans with local councillors.

It is here, in a shared interest in what we might call *enacted moral normativity*, where the anthropology of Christianity and the anthropology of ethics meet, for it is this that both Christianity as religious 'values' (Robbins 2007) and ethics as 'practical judgement' (Lambek 2010: 61) strive for. And it is here, furthermore, precisely at the point where neither religion nor ethics is able to claim a monopoly over imaginative reflection or ordinary action, where we begin to ethnographically appreciate how belief may become a kind of practice, and how practice may become a kind of belief. As we shall see, this is the case among Scots-Orangemen insofar as religious transcendence is never *just* transcendence, but also finds itself indebted to the goings-on of ordinary everyday life. From this perspective, parading behind an open Bible topped with a plastic crown is not only a mystical enactment of the divine union between God and Queen Elizabeth II, but is also a decidedly routine and this-worldly statement of the right to freedom of assembly. Equally, ordinary ethics is never just ordinary, but also finds itself indebted to the goings-on of extraordinary transcendent religiosity. Thus, establishing parading routes not only involves navigating local government paperwork, but, from an Orange perspective, frequently requires one to resist the machinations of the Church of Rome and its dark spiritual efforts to bureaucratically debar loyal Protestant processions.

It is in this sense that 'the ordinary and the religious' (Robbins 2016: 6) coexist. Indeed, for Robbins:

human beings really do sometimes stand back from the flow of their lives – it's the kind of thing that, as human beings, they can do, and often enough they resort to it. Such standing back, I want to suggest, is not less basic to people's ethical existence than their ability to participate in the flow of everyday life ... For these reasons, I think the anthropological study of ethics would be impoverished if it were reduced to the study only of its ordinary, everyday forms, and in fact maybe the everyday itself does not make sense without some attention to the religious as well. (2016: 9)

The logic here seems clear. Standing back from ordinary, everyday life, to reflect upon the transcendent and the extraordinary is something that humans engage in; Orangemen ruminate on the mystical meanings of ritual initiation ceremonies,

for example. In doing so, the transcendent, and belief in the transcendent, becomes a kind of practice, an action occurring within the everyday, while retaining its extraordinary character. The opposite is also true; everyday, ordinary life may be given an extraordinary character. In drinking pints of lager with fellow initiates, Orangemen create – they instantiate – mystical bonds of Protestant fraternal love, rendering ‘normal’ practice a kind of religious belief. Remaining within this ethnographic context of Scots-Orangeism, we now seem able to reformulate our earlier question (‘what should life be like?’) in such a way that the anthropology of Christianity and the anthropology of ethics may gain real, and simultaneous, purchase on the ways in which transcendent values and practical judgements co-constitute each other.

The question, reformulated in light of the above, is this: *what should a good Protestant life be like?* Framed in this way, the question inescapably addresses both religion and ethics, and, in doing so, requires that the transcendence of belief and the ordinariness of practice be examined not side by side (for to do so would return us to our bifocal critique) but by gradations, treating religious values and practical judgements as conjoined through a shared observational perspective of imagined normativity and realised action. Clearly, while the question is being posed in such a way as to produce a figurative varifocal theoretical lens, what is being looked at through this lens is ethnographic in form. So, according to Scottish Orangemen – according to their religious beliefs, their ordinary practices, their history, their ritual, their fraternal commitments, and their politics – what should a good Protestant life be like? It is this question that this book seeks to answer.

‘The Good’ of Protestant-Orange exceptionalism

Crucially, as the ethnography with which I opened this chapter indicates, some of the answers to this question may not fit standard definitions of ‘Protestantism’ or indeed ‘The Good.’ So important is this point, that failing to fully grasp it will lead the reader to misunderstand nearly everything in the chapters which follow. This being the case, it seems worthwhile taking some time to explain what I mean here, both in relation to the theoretical context of the anthropology of Christianity and ethics, and in relation to how such ethnography might challenge the reader to rethink what makes ‘Protestantism’ Protestant or ‘The Good’ good. Importantly, I am not asking the reader to undertake anything that I have not also imposed upon myself. Indeed, this task of ‘rethinking’ is one I have been undertaking since I began to spend time with Scottish Orangemen in 2012.

Very frequently, my assumptions about ‘proper’ Protestantism and ‘genuine’ goodness have been shown, through the process of doing the fieldwork, to be largely incompatible with the assumptions and behaviours of many of my Orange informants. Not being content to wallow in ethnocentric ignorance, I have sought instead to embrace the classic Weberian paradigm of *verstehen*, a mode of interpretation that can also be found at the heart of Geertz’s (1984) famous essay ‘Anti anti-relativism.’ In practical terms, this has involved applying the basic principle of Weber’s interpretative method to my own ethnographic data. Thus, where my

assumptions about 'a good Protestant life' appeared at odds with the assumptions of my informants, it was *my* assumptions which were relinquished. The results have been insightful as well as unsettling – a process well known to anthropologists who emphasise the undertaking of fieldwork as centrally involving not only the adoption of new perspectives, but also a concomitant unlearning of previously held perspectives (see Jenkins 1994, Hastrup 2004). A few examples may be helpfully clarifying.

Prior fieldwork in Gamrie – a Brethren fishing village in north-east Scotland – had taught me that attending church, studying the Bible, and sharing one's 'born-again' testimony were all central to being a Protestant Christian (Webster 2013). My time among the Brethren also taught me that drinking in pubs, habitually swearing, and celebrating sectarian football rivalries would all disqualify a person from calling themselves a Christian, Protestant or otherwise. Gamrie's Christians, as a result, had given me a highly specific view of what normatively constituted 'a good Protestant life', and it was this view that I carried with me when embarking on new fieldwork among the Orange Order. I quickly realised, however, that this Brethren view of what a good Protestant life should look like left me ill-equipped to understand the kind of Protestantism my Orange informants were committed to. In the first instance, this was because the majority of Scots-Orangemen I met almost never attended church, only encountered the Bible when it was read aloud to them in lodge meetings, and had no experience whatever of born-again conversion as understood by the Brethren of Gamrie. Yet, my Orange informants not only regarded themselves as staunchly Protestant, but as the single most important voice of 'the Protestant people of Scotland'.

Intriguingly, it was often precisely those things the Brethren abhorred most that many of my Orange informants regarded as fundamental to their Protestant identity, namely supporting Rangers Football Club, drinking with fellow Orangemen, espousing sectarian views, embracing the politics of unionism, and performing secret Masonic-inspired rituals. Moreover, this way of life was, for my Orange informants, not only quintessentially Protestant, but also *good*. Contrary to what the Brethren of Gamrie believed, then, Old Firm matches were not sinful displays of drunkenness and hate, but, within the culture of Orangeism, were held to be opportunities for patriotic displays of national pride and Protestant fervour. Equally, campaigning against Scottish independence on religious grounds did not represent an evil attempt to pollute true Christianity with worldly politics (as the Brethren would see it), but was simply a fulfilment of one's religious duty to serve both God and Britain's anointed Protestant monarch. In the same way, taking part in Orange Masonic-style ritual was not a demonic act tantamount to devil worship, but a solemn spiritual re-enactment of ancient Biblical narratives and teachings. For my Scots-Orange informants, then, the Orange Institution defined and defended not only good Protestant *religiosity* but also, even more fundamentally, good Protestant *morality*. Importantly, as I argue throughout this book, far from justifying a kind of Durkheimian 'conflation of the moral and the cultural' (Robbins 2007: 294) whereby 'the moral ... does no distinctive conceptual work' (Laidlaw 2002: 313), such acts of defining and defending Protestantism appeared to take Orange religious

and ecclesiastical adherence as a strikingly optional expression of the morality of Orange exceptionalism.

Yet, as will become clear in the chapters that follow, none of these emic claims go far enough, in and of themselves, if we want to fully grasp the kind of ethnographic and ethical re-evaluations that Scots-Orangeism seems to demand. In ethnographic terms, then, what if being a Scottish Protestant has little or nothing to do with regular church attendance, personal Bible study, or an ‘inward experience’ of ‘born-again’ conversion? What if, instead, the religiosity of Scots-Protestantism is defined by ethno-nationalism, fraternal bonds, footballing loyalties, political commitments, and Masonic-inspired ritual initiations? And what if, in moral terms, being a Scottish Protestant has little or nothing to do with personal piety, spiritual quietism, political non-participation, and strict teetotalism? What if, instead, the morality of Scots-Protestantism is defined by ‘The Good’ of ethno-nationalist exclusion, anti-Catholic bigotry, and, in extreme cases, alcohol-fuelled sectarian hate? Put another way, what if the ideal-type of a ‘good Protestant’ is not an elderly Brethren woman attending a prayer meeting, but an Orangeman parading with his lodge, drinking in his social club, and chanting ‘The Billy Boys’ at Ibrox? Are these latter images a viable place to start when seeking to interpret the ethnography with which I began, and might such images require us to redefine ‘the Protestant good’? My claim is that they are, and they do.

By making this case, I follow Laidlaw in suggesting that ‘the anthropological study of ethics is capable of being itself a form of ethical practice’ (2014: 45). Yet, I cannot help but feel that making this case via an ethnographic study of Scottish Orangeism is going to be a ‘harder sell’ than if I were making the same case via a study of Jainism in India. My suspicion is that, while for many readers the strictures of Jain asceticism surely represents the carrying of a heavy moral burden, it also represents something that feels instinctively good, a valuing of all life in the highest possible terms, for example, or a critical attitude to avarice. In contrast, I suspect that many readers will see within Scots-Orangeism something that feels instinctively bad – contentious Orange parades which spark public disorder, or the fraternal celebration of casual anti-Catholic bigotry. Despite this challenge, I want to try and persevere in adopting this particular version of ‘the ethnographic stance’ (ibid.) which, according to Laidlaw, requires:

in a specific sense *taking seriously* the forms of life we describe: regarding them – and therefore describing them – as something we learn from as well as about; and it involves learning to think with as well as about its concepts, such that they become resources in our own critical reflection and self-constitution. (2014: 46)

If Laidlaw is correct that allowing the forms of life we study to become part of our very self-constitution is ‘a precondition ... for anthropology as ethical practice’ (ibid.) – and I am convinced that he is – then what might this mean for those of us who study the morality of hate directly, as opposed to studying its management by the State? (see Shoshan 2016). Must I become filled with sectarian hate as Rosaldo (1989), during a time of grief, found himself to be overtaken by rage? Happily, Laidlaw’s answer is no, for this ethnographic stance does not require that

the anthropologist of morality ‘adopt its concepts and values as his or her own’ (2014: 45). What then? How might I learn from a Scots-Orange morality built upon Protestant exceptionalism and anti-Catholic bigotry without fully adopting it as my own ethical subject-position? One answer, which falls short of full adoption, is to engage in a deliberate and considered refusal to reject or condemn this Orange morality. By drawing inspiration from Webb Keane’s suggestion that ‘we shouldn’t decide in advance what ethics will look like’ (2014: 444), I will argue, therefore, that Scots-Orangeism and Scots-Orange culture cannot be assumed to exist outside of established normative models of the Protestant good. If Keane is right, (and, as with Laidlaw, I am convinced that he is), then a startling implication of his proposal is that confrontational parading, fraternal drunkenness, and sectarian football chanting *can* be Protestant, that is, they *can* be understood within the anthropology of Christianity as part of certain human experiences of ‘the religious.’ Furthermore, if, as I have argued above, the moral cannot be subsumed under the religious, another, perhaps even more startling, implication of Keane’s proposal is that exclusion, bigotry, and hate *can* be moral (see Shweder 2016), that is, they *can* be understood within the anthropology of ethics and morality as part of certain human experiences of ‘The Good.’

As the reader progresses through the book, it will become clear how both of these arguments – that bigotry, for example, can be moral, or that drunkenness can be Protestant – rest upon a wider ethnographic and theoretical claim about the nature of exceptionalism. In ethnographic terms, my argument is that, for my informants, a good Protestant life is a life that affirms and protects Orange exceptionalism. The theme of exceptionalism permeated every aspect of my fieldwork. Many of my informants openly admitted that they believed British Protestants in general and Orange Protestants in particular to be historically, politically, ethnically and religiously special – a chosen people whose greatness stemmed from their being uniquely enlightened by the God of the Reformation. Moreover, for some of my informants, such a perspective meant that Orange triumphalism and anti-Catholic bigotry were both unavoidable and unassailable. Indeed, as one Orange informant explained to me, such sentiments were written into the very definition of the word ‘bigot’ – ‘by God’ – a phrase which he extended to mean ‘by God I can do no more.’

In theoretical terms, my more general argument is that the Orange Order have no monopoly over exceptionalism. Indeed, I want to suggest that the promotion of such sentiments is remarkably widespread. In essence, my argument here will be that political, religious, and ethnic difference has the potential to erupt into social conflict because people like people like themselves. Put another way, people struggle with human difference, because they value human similarity, because they feel that their particular social group (however one defines it) is special. By drawing on Barth (1969) on ethnic boundaries, the end result of this pull towards similarity, is, I argue, that people desire to be surrounded by those they regard as like them, be they loyal Protestant Orangemen, or liberal cosmopolitan pluralists. As we shall see, while some members of these social groups define similarity and difference in ethnic terms (people who look like us), others may police the boundaries of

belonging in ideological terms (people who believe the same as us), while still others may do both, drawing boundaries along ethno-nationalist and ethno-religious lines.

It needs to be stated at the outset that exploring the implications of these ethnographic and theoretical claims may take the reader to some uncomfortable places. Can bigotry really be moral, can it really be *good*? Do most people advocate, in some way, for their own exceptionalism? Regardless of my use of Laidlaw and Keane above, such pointed deployment of *verstehen* (or the ‘ethnographic stance’), while arguably residing at the very heart of the anthropological quest for cross-cultural understanding, has the tendency to trigger accusations that not only has the ethnographer developed a methodological empathy with their informants, but also that they have developed (or perhaps always had) a personal sympathy for them (see Harding 1991 and Cannell 2005). This distinction is important to maintain, however, for where empathy involves a reflexive ‘feeling into’ the informant’s world view, sympathy, by contrast, is about ‘feeling with’, and occurs largely uncritically and pre-reflexively, as if one had always cohabited within the informant’s world and world view. Put another way, where empathy is a kind of ‘reaching out’, a fostering of new understandings, sympathy is a kind of ‘digging in’, or an affirming pre-established agreement. Within this framework, the words and arguments of this book may be read as an exercise in empathy, as I attempt to feel my way into the world of Scots-Orangeism, ‘warts and all’, as per my informants’ demands.

What happens, then, if having understood the world and world view of the informant, the student of *verstehen* subsequently concludes that they do not particularly like that world and that they are not particularly sympathetic to it? (see Van Wyk 2013). One response might be to render the emic subordinate to the etic by superimposing a second-level explanation on top of the first-level explanation already gained through *verstehen*. Reacting to the ethnography above, for example, Freudian theory might superimpose upon Dennis’s words the notion of pathology (stating ‘I understand what you are saying, but you are mentally unwell’). Equally, Marxist theory might superimpose the notion of false consciousness (stating ‘I understand what you are saying, but you have been misled’). Yet, these accounts seem inadequate, for while their explanatory expressions may differ (clearly, I have oversimplified them for the sake of brevity), their shared final destination is still essentially reductionist, as seen in their refusal to countenance the analytical import of the actor’s account of their own actions. A different response would be to persist in attempts to grasp the content of the emic, but then to proceed from there to some form of ‘militant’ ethical critique (Scheper-Hughes 1995) – a critique, for example, that understands Dennis’s words, but condemns them (and, by extension, him). A researcher committed to an activist version of critical theory, for example, might simply conclude that Dennis’s words are inherently sectarian, and therefore unacceptable and unjust. Yet this kind of critique, it would seem to me, still places a stranglehold on genuine *verstehen* insofar as it fails to heed Keane’s warning that ‘we shouldn’t decide in advance what ethics will look like’ (2014: 444). In this instance, then, the analysis is not conceptually reductionist but morally ethnocentric (see Kapferer and Gold 2018: 12), affirming and reproducing the ethical view of the researcher, by placing themselves within a kind of etic (and perhaps even anthropologically emic) echo chamber.

The obvious objection here is that I am calling for a suspension of critique. And in one sense this is fair, because this *is* what I am calling for, at least in the first instance. My contention is that really powerful ethnographic description and understanding require the ethnographer to hold in the back of their mind the nagging question ‘what if they’re right and I’m wrong?’, that is, ‘what if their world view accurately and legitimately disqualifies my own?’ Here, the anthropologist does not confront poly-ontology (Scott 2007) but a singular world where my informants are correct, and I am mistaken. During my research among Scottish Brethren fishermen, this required asking myself ‘what if the world really is about to end?’, ‘what if the EU really is the anti-Christ?’, ‘what if the vast majority of the population of the world really will be sent to hell?’ Unpleasant as these questions were, they did not often require me to step into the same kind of ethno-religious bigotry that I encountered in the Glencruix Orange Social Club. The question ‘what if Catholics and Protestants really should hate each other?’ is almost impossible to ask, and for good reasons, as the history of Northern Ireland has taught us. Yet, it seems important to note that simply asking the question productively forces us into uncharted territory, not only methodologically, but also theoretically, as we struggle to come to terms with how, if at all, the anthropology of morality (see Robbins 2012, Mattingly and Throop 2018) can make sense of human experiences of bigotry and hate within its own (current) models of ‘The Good’. My suspicion is that contemporary anthropology is ill equipped for such a task.

Yet, asking and then *not answering* a question can only take us so far. How, then, might we understand the morality of Scots-Orangeism anthropologically, without resorting to analytical reductionism, ethnocentric critique, or poly-ontology? The approach I take in the chapters that follow is one that seeks to examine and understand how my informants moralise their own beliefs and actions, and those of their Orange brethren, as good and proper and valuable. In doing so, my investigation into Scots-Orange morality is not uncritical, but attempts to hear (and listen to) the Orange critique of dominant models of ‘The Good’ as they are currently used within anthropology, asking what, if anything, can we learn from voices like Dennis’s? This is not, in and of itself, a new anthropological approach; Margaret Mead (1928), for example, in her infamous account of the sexual lives of adolescent Samoans, had, as her target for critique, the social-sexual and educational mores of ‘Western Civilisation’. Similarly, Sahlins’ (1966) account of hunter-gatherers as the ‘original affluent society’ stands primarily as a critical account of Western capitalism. For Mead and Sahlins, then, one purpose of providing ethnographic accounts of exotic non-Western others is to allow these ‘others’ to offer up powerful ethical critique of Western values. Furthermore, such once-removed critiques are important insofar as they are not reductionist or ethnocentric, nor do they posit some form of poly-ontology, but instead offer the possibility of the emic correcting the etic.

My approach contains this same impulse to allow the emic to critique the etic but is also marked by some important differences. Mead, for example, offered her critique of Western sexual conservatism (via a sympathetic ethnography of Samoa) in order to advocate for the liberalisation of sexual politics. Similarly, Sahlins offered his critique of Western capitalism (via a sympathetic ethnography of hunter-gatherers)

in order to advocate for a curtailment of neo-liberal avarice. My approach is different insofar as its final destination is a specific critique of anthropological models of morality, not, as I read in Mead and in Sahlins, a more general critique of Western ethics and social attitudes. Additionally, while the final destination of my critique is anthropological theory which refuses on principle to 'learn from' (Laidlaw 2014: 46) Orange morality, the pathway of my critique is an (empathetic) ethnographic account of the moral content of Scottish Orangeism. More specifically, what I have attempted to understand and empathise with are Orange critiques of popular political discourses within contemporary Scottish society which state that 'good' morality, like 'good' religion must, by definition, be liberal, tolerant, inclusive, and pluralist. In this sense, my Orange informants and I do share a common critique of the way in which liberal pluralism monopolises certain understandings of 'The Good'. Crucially, however, my critique is motivated by a desire to better equip anthropological theory to understand and thereby learn from 'non-liberal' (see Fader 2009) and non-pluralist cultures such as Orange exceptionalism, whereas the critique of my informants is, by their own admission, motivated by a desire to propagate Orange exceptionalism.

Thus, by using ethnography to show how my informants moralised themselves and wider Scottish society, I seek to place my informants in conversation with the kind of 'anti anti-relativist' anthropology that I find in the work of Clifford Geertz and Webb Keane, and, perhaps more fundamentally, at the heart of the Weberian project of *verstehen*. As described above, the conceptual basis of this conversation is found within the notion of exceptionalism. Exceptionalism, then, acts as the varifocal lens of this book – a lens through which the 'glorious' history, 'triumphal' parading, 'fraternal' belonging, 'patriotic' politics, and 'loyal' Protestantism of Scots-Orangeism will be viewed, in all its ideational and experiential complexity. Yet, of course, such complexity does not add up to a singular Orange reality, nor do Orangemen offer a unified emic account or monolithic 'native point of view'. Indeed, I found, very often, that the opposite was the case, whereby the Institution and its members appeared always to be doing more than one thing at once, and often in combinations that seemed contradictory. With this in mind, (and at the risk of engaging in just such a self-contradiction), I want to consider how any account of Scots-Orangeism must seek to empathise with and thereby integrate several different perspectives at the same time.

Scottish Orangeism as heterogeneous, homogenous, and dualist

Members of the Orange Order commonly describe the Institution to outsiders as a 'broad church', by which they mean that the Order is diverse, drawing into its ranks people with a range of different views, experiences, and priorities. Over the course of my ethnographic research among the Order in Scotland, I came to realise that this frequently offered description was simultaneously (and somewhat paradoxically) a significant understatement and a major exaggeration. In terms of being a significant understatement, my time among the Orange Order taught me that Scottish Orangemen

commit themselves, as Orangemen, to a remarkably heterogeneous set of ideologies and practices. Indeed, described within the pages of this book are encounters with Orangemen who strongly maintain that the Order is, first and foremost, an evangelical Christian organisation which seeks to reclaim Scotland for Christ and 'the gospel'. Yet this book also describes encounters with Orangemen who openly admitted that they virtually never attended church and viewed public worship as almost entirely unimportant to the Institution as a Protestant organisation. For these members, the essence of Orangeism was, variously: its popular affiliation to Rangers Football Club; its close connection to the loyalist band scene; its support for the 'Protestant cause' in Ulster and; its defence of Britishness and the politics of unionism more generally.

Furthermore, contrary to the anti-ecumenicalism found among many conservative Protestants, a wide range of denominational backgrounds were represented within the Order, with Orangemen from the Church of Scotland, the United Reformed Church, the Episcopal Church, the Methodist Church, and those attending Congregationalist and independent evangelical churches. Equally, I met many Orangemen who were also Freemasons and who viewed the Order's similarities to Freemasonry – in structure, in ritual, and in symbol – as highly significant to their Orange identity (see Buckley 1985: 6–7, Cairns and Smyth 2002: 150, 152). I met other Orangemen who were strongly critical of the Masons, and virulently denied that there was any substantive or meaningful connection between the two organisations, either in style or in membership. In a similar manner, I met several Orangemen who, owing to their interpretation of Orange ritual, were avid British Israelites, while other members regarded the idea that British Protestants were biologically descended from the lost tribes of Israel as 'a bit heavy' and 'a lot to swallow'. I also met Orangemen from across the political spectrum, including trade union activists who self-identified as socialists, Labour Party members running for council, moderate Tory supporters, Scottish Unionist Party founders, UK Independence Party (UKIP) voters, and some with far-right sympathies. I even met an Orangeman who was a long-standing member of the Scottish National Party (SNP) and a supporter of Scottish independence, although as described in Chapter 5, this individual could be seen as the exception that proves the unionist rule.

As I built rapport with different members over time, several Orangemen I spoke with began to open up to me about their ongoing paramilitary sympathies. Indeed, a small number went as far as claiming active involvement in paramilitarism, some before and some after the signing of the Good Friday Agreement. I even interviewed one Scottish Orangeman who had served a custodial sentence for his involvement with the Ulster Defence Association (UDA). Yet I also met Orangemen, most often at Grand Lodge level, who not only condemned paramilitarism and paramilitary violence, but sought to expel from the Institution those who openly challenged this position. Moreover, and with a similar degree of variation, several of my key informants openly admitted to being (in their own words) 'bigots' who 'hated Roman Catholics'. Other Orangemen I met, however, were deeply uncomfortable with such sectarian attitudes, and sought to explain to me how their objections to Roman Catholic doctrine did not preclude them from being on good terms with

Roman Catholic individuals such as neighbours and colleagues, and, where 'mixed marriages' had taken place in the wider family, their Catholic sons-in-law, nieces, nephews and so on.

Another way to try and encapsulate this heterogeneity is to look beyond the immediate bounds of the Orange membership to include something of the variation within the other Loyal Orders, and among informal Orange sympathisers. Importantly, these other Orders and individuals were publicly recognised by Orange members as allies who were part of the wider 'Orange family', albeit to differing degrees. Such recognition was formally extended, for example, during platform speeches on parade days. Here my ethnography found an even wider ideological array among these 'loyal Protestant friends', as they were often called. Indeed, this array was inclusive of everything from the trenchant loyalism of 'Kick the Pope' bands, Rangers supporters clubs, and the Apprentice Boys of Derry, to the sterner Masonic-infused evangelicalism of the Royal Black Institution, a sister institution of the Orange Order. More than this, conducting fieldwork in the Greater Glasgow area around the time of both the Scottish independence referendum campaign and the flags dispute in Northern Ireland (see Nolan et al. 2014), I observed a further widening of the spectrum of 'Orange sympathisers'. Here, my fieldwork led me into contact with 'Maintain the Union', a loyalist campaign against Scottish independence, led by a key Orange informant of mine. The campaign had connections to the UVF-linked Progressive Unionist Party and the Rangers FC 'ultras' group, the Vanguard Bears. It was at a 'Maintain the Union' protest, furthermore, where I first came into direct contact with members of UKIP, as well as the hard-line loyalist group the Commonwealth Unionist Party (CUP), and the far-right street protest movement the Scottish Defence League (SDL). Such is the variety of Orangeism in Scotland.

But what are we to make of this variety – of Orangemen and Freemasons, of Rangers FC 'ultras' and Episcopalian ministers, of socialist trade unionists and far-right street protestors, of Bible-loving evangelicals and alcohol-fuelled bandsmen, of pro-establishment Conservative Party supporters and anti-establishment paramilitary ex-prisoners, of self-proclaimed Catholic-hating bigots and self-proclaimed Catholic-befriending progressives?

Given my stated theoretical aim to understand and learn from Orange morality in all its variety, answering this ethnographic question was one of the core challenges of this book, but it was not the only challenge. Another ethnographic challenge this book faced was describing and explaining how the remarkable ideological variety outlined above, is, within the Scottish Orange Order, framed by a no less remarkable sociological and demographic homogeneity. Importantly, according to Clawson's suggestion that fraternal associations have 'typically ... reached across boundaries, tending to unite men from a relatively wide social, economic, or religious spectrum' (1989: 11), this homogeneity renders the Orange Order as decidedly atypical. While most obviously and immediately marked by the Order being a Protestant-only institution, framing the homogeneity of Scottish Orangeism entirely by this religious criterion is to significantly underplay the extent of the sameness that unites members in other respects. Several of my informants, for example,

when describing to me the differences between the Orange Order in Northern Ireland and Scotland explained that, in strong contrast to Northern Ireland, the Order in Scotland was almost entirely urban and almost exclusively working class. As described in Chapter 1, both of these claims are strikingly accurate. Clearly, the Order in Scotland is also a male-only institution, and while there is a Ladies Orange Association of Scotland, these women are only considered to be 'associate' members, and do not have voting rights at Grand Lodge (see Butcher 2014).

Other markers of social and demographic sameness are equally notable. The Orange Order in Scotland is not only contained within urban areas, but is largely confined to the Central Belt of Scotland, and particularly to its post-industrial West. As obvious as it may sound, the Orange Order in Scotland is also almost wholly Scottish. Indeed, while there are likely to be a few others, during my five years of fieldwork I personally met only two members who were not Scottish (one was Northern Irish, and one English). Following on from this, the Orange Order in Scotland is almost completely white and, again, while there may be others, I met only one member from an ethnic minority background, a Scots-born second-generation immigrant from Mauritius. Lastly, the Orange Order is by conviction and by official Grand Lodge pronouncement, exclusively and forthrightly unionist. As already indicated above, and as discussed further in Chapter 5, I met only one SNP member and Scottish independence supporter within the Order, whose political views were regarded by my other informants as, at best, deeply eccentric, and, at worst, a despicable betrayal of everything the Institution stood for. Such is the homogeneity of Orangeism in Scotland.

Reversing my earlier question, then, we might now ask what are we to make of this homogeneity – this Protestant, unionist, white, working-class, male, Scottish, urban, Central Belt sameness? My argument throughout this book will be that any adequate understanding of the Orange Order in Scotland needs to hold in tension these two seemingly contradictory realities, namely that Orange culture in Scotland is simultaneously a dramatically diverse and a strikingly homogenous phenomenon. Intriguingly, as I have observed it, this seeming paradox is made more puzzling still by the fact that, as well as being demographically mono-form and ideologically multi-form, the Orange Order is also something of a Janus-faced entity. Here, we must grapple with the fact that not only is the Order one and many, but it is also two.

I am not, importantly, the first to notice this particular double aspect of Scottish Orangeism. Elaine McFarland, in her foundational study of Orangeism in nineteenth-century Scotland, describes this dichotomy as 'the rough/respectable differentiation in Orangeism' (1990: 26). Here, McFarland is referring to a class-based division, between the Order's skilled and unskilled industrial-worker membership. Put very simply (see Chapter 1 for more detail) nineteenth-century Orangemen with a skilled trade were generally seen as inhabiting the ideal type of 'respectable' by virtue of their desire for upward mobility, whereas unskilled Orangemen, who did not want and/or could not achieve such mobility, were readily placed into the ideal type of 'rough'. McFarland further shows how this dichotomy was popularly imagined to be constituted by a whole series of associated social markers. Thus, 'respectable'

Orangemen were domesticated, took their leisure time at home, were engaged with their families, were sober and peaceable, attended church, took a genuine interest in theology, and were content at work. 'Rough' Orangemen, on the other hand, were undomesticated, spent their leisure time in the pubs and streets, were disengaged from family life, were drunkards and brawlers, attended football matches instead of church, had no interest in theology, and were discontented at work (1990: 139). Finally, her analysis also states that the 'rough' element of the Order was mainly found among the Institution's rank-and-file membership, many of whom were only fully involved with the organisation come its annual 12 July parade. 'Respectable' Orangemen, on the other hand, were mostly found within the hierarchy of the Orange Order and were involved in its activities, and those of the Royal Black Institution, year-round (*ibid.*: 140).

It is my contention that the micro-dynamics of this dichotomy go to the very heart of Scottish Orangeism, not only in the nineteenth century, but also in the present day. This became clear to me by observing how different informants related to each other during my five years of fieldwork, but also by experiencing how these different informants related to me, particularly by making deliberate attempts to direct my time and research focus towards what they regarded as 'real' Orangeism. As I experienced it, this dichotomy largely followed McFarland's rough/respectable 'differentiation', as transposable onto the connected division between 'grass-roots' members and the Orange 'hierarchy'. In contrast to the nineteenth-century case, however, the source of this division within contemporary Scots-Orangeism was not any acute difference in the material aspirations or occupational status of skilled and unskilled workers, as post-industrial decline in Scotland had lessened this cleavage between manual workers via an attendant expansion of the levelling category of semi-skilled. In the contemporary context, then, what made one a 'respectable' or 'rough' Orangeman, it seemed, was the extent to which one valued and courted (or scorned and rejected) the social and political approval of a (broadly) liberal, pluralist, and non-Orange Scottish public. Put another way, as I experienced it, this dividing line was not occupational, but ideological.

I came to realise the sharpness of this divide in ethnographic terms, when, around the mid-point of my fieldwork, I began asking my informants what they thought I should write about in my book. I was interested to hear how they would answer such a question, hoping that it would reveal something of their foundational assumptions about what 'real' Orangeism was. For the Orange hierarchy, whose job was leading and directing the Order via internal Grand Lodge committee work and external PR management, the 'real' Order was an eminently respectable Christian organisation which sought to promote the ideals of their faith while fully supporting the rights of others to hold different views. Indeed, for those I spoke to at Grand Lodge, the Order was not only politically moderate and religiously tolerant but, at its core, an articulate, sober-minded, and charitable grouping of committed church-goers who joined together to celebrate Britishness, the Reformed faith, and the monarchy. For many grass-roots members, however, this moderate and tolerant image of Orangeism was an out-of-touch, aspirational, and condescending fantasy. Moreover, for the great majority of Orangemen I came to know during

my time in Glencruix, it was not Grand Lodge but ordinary members who represented 'real' Scottish Orangeism – an Orangeism variously defined, as above, by fraternal drinking, footballing loyalties, support for Ulster Protestants, and a loathing of Catholics in general, and Irish Republicans in particular.

What, then, was I to write in my book? How could I do ethnographic justice to such diversity, such contradiction? In pushing my informants to help me ponder this question, obtaining a singular and definitive answer was not my aim. My aim, rather, was to try and ascertain what my informants hoped I would write about, and thus, what they would regard as a fair and honest account of 'real' Scots-Orangeism. In this sense, I am persuaded that neither group of informants were motivated by a cynical desire to manipulate my fieldwork experience with the aim of imparting a falsely 'respectable' or exaggeratedly 'rough' view of the Order. (I do recognise, however, that such contrasting efforts to shepherd me through my fieldwork, while sincere, were still intentional acts of shepherding, and thus selection). Bearing this in mind, then, what kind of account did my Grand Lodge and grass-roots informants want me to write? Perhaps unsurprisingly, both groups wanted me to give an account of Scots-Orangeism which defined their ('respectable' or 'rough') version of the Institution as encapsulating the 'real' Orange Order.

Thus, Dennis and many of my informants at Glencruix, while they didn't use the phrase 'rough', came close to doing so by pushing me to write a 'warts and all' account of their life in the Order – an account which did not ignore their anti-Catholic bigotry, eschew their fondness for drink, edit out their colourful language, or overlook their politically incorrect jokes. Such airbrushing, Dennis and others explained, would prevent me from representing 'real' Orangeism (*their* Orangeism), and would, they stated emphatically, make my research 'pointless'. Importantly, other informants outside of Glencruix agreed; one Orangeman from Edinburgh, for example, aware that I had been spending significant time among the hierarchy at Grand Lodge told me bluntly, 'you've *got* to get away from there – you are being fed the party line', explaining how most Grand Lodge office bearers would try and 'shield me' from any expression of Orangeism that was 'too radical' in its paramilitary sympathies or 'too critical' of the Order's leaders. From the perspective of my grass-roots informants, then, writing a 'warts and all' account meant representing their 'rough' Orangeism as 'real' Orangeism, in all its boozing, its bigotry, and its trenchant loyalism.

In marked (but perhaps now expected) contrast, my informants in Grand Lodge answered my question about what they wanted me to write about by stating that my book should make it clear that the Orange Order in Scotland is, by and large, a respectable and respectful Christian organisation. In the run-up to the 2014 Scottish independence referendum, for example, during an evening observing the Order's leafleting campaign, I asked an informant involved in the Institution's mid-level District leadership what *he* thought I should write. His answer was as unassuming as it was heartfelt; he wanted me to write that the Order was 'a broad church' and that their members were 'not animals, but people with families and normal concerns'. Another volunteer agreed, stating plainly that 'Orangemen are not bigots' and that 'the Orange Order is pro-Protestant, not "anti" anything'.

On other occasions, this same message of ‘respectable Orangeism’ was demonstrated practically as well as being asserted verbally. In early July 2013, for example, at the end of a day of parading, a fellow researcher and I were invited as special guests to a dinner hosted by the Grand Lodge hierarchy. As the evening came to a close, one leading Orangeman bid us farewell with the parting comment ‘we’re not all that bad, are we?’ Two things struck me about his remark. First, heard within its immediate context, his suggestion seemed entirely reasonable, reflecting the tone of a civilised evening spent discussing theology and politics, and enjoying good food and wine. Second, this ‘civility’ was striking precisely because it contrasted so sharply with my experiences of Orangeism in Glencruix, where aggressive banter fuelled by rounds of lager and whisky were favoured over temperate conversation and formal dining. From the perspective of my Orange informants within the Institution’s hierarchy, then, writing an account of Scots-Orangeism which showed its members were ‘not all that bad’ meant representing their ‘respectable’ Orangeism as ‘real’ Orangeism, in all its religiosity, gentility, and magnanimity. Such is the duality of Orangeism in Scotland.

Having surveyed something of the heterogeneity, homogeneity, and dualism of Scots-Orangeism, it also needs to be recognised that these similarities and differences are contained and given shape within the Order’s own institutional structure. Indeed, it is difficult to overstate the extent to which life in the Order is governed by structure, by a set constitution, and by a system of laws, titles, ritual degrees, and so on. Central to this is a written codification of the Order as a rule-bound Protestant organisation which stands in opposition to the Catholic Church, as outlined, for example, in the 1986 version of the *Laws and Constitutions of the Loyal Orange Institution of Scotland*:

An Orangeman, being necessarily a Protestant, must be a true Christian, as Protestantism is nothing less than pure and Scriptural Christianity. And by this it is to be understood that he is not merely one who professes hostility to the distinctive despotism of the Church of Rome; but that he holds the doctrines of the Reformation. (GOLS (Grand Orange Lodge of Scotland) 1986: 2)

Within the *Laws and Constitutions* are also found a whole host of regulations which govern nearly every conceivable aspect of life within the Order, including the (albeit largely theoretical) admission of converted Catholics, the suspension and expulsion of members, the governing of social clubs, the charging of membership fees, the wearing of regalia, the management of public processions, membership of political parties, the process of lodging a complaint, the management of improper conduct, and the painting of banners, as well as 244 other rules. The Orange Order being a Protestant-only organisation notwithstanding, in many respects the Institution is similar both in style and in structure to Freemasonry, especially in its use of symbolism (see Roberts 1971: 272, Cairns and Smyth 2002: 150). The Order is organised geographically into individual ‘Private Lodges’, local ‘District Lodges’, regional ‘County Lodges’, and a single national ‘Grand Lodge’. Members of Private Lodges in Scotland progress through two Masonic-inspired ritual degrees – the Orange and the Royal Arch Purple, the first degree initiating candidates through

a series of formal questions and vows, and the second 'higher' degree involving a dramatic re-enactment of the desert wanderings of Ancient Israel in the book of Exodus (known as 'the travel'). Fully initiated members may then fulfil one of over twenty office-bearer roles, ranging from the lowly Tyler who guards the outer door, to the highest office of Worthy Master, who runs the Lodge. Other Private Lodge office bearers include an inner door guard, two instructors, a Regaliast, two standard-bearers, a Bible-bearer, a chaplain, a treasurer, a secretary, a substitute Deputy Master, a Deputy Master, and the Past Master.

As in Masonry, the use of symbolism permeates all aspects of formal Orange activity. Each office bearer, for example, has an assigned emblem used to symbolise the practical task associated with that role; a sword for the Tyler who 'protects the outer lodge room door', two crossed swords for the inner door guard who makes 'doubly sure that nothing will disturb the assembled brethren', a key for the treasurer, crossed quills for the secretary, and so on. Taking on any such role involves a prescribed ceremonial process of election and installation, comprising a vote followed by the swearing of a formal obligation. Elected officers at District, County, and Grand Lodge level largely replicate these office-bearer roles, but membership is limited to those who have already received the Royal Arch Purple degree. As well as setting down the macro-structures of the entire Institution, the Order also sets down the content of regular lodge meetings. The Loyal Orange Institution of Scotland *Manual of Ritual and Ceremony for Lodges* outlines a set formula for the opening and closing of lodge meetings, as well as a series of prayers and Bible readings to be used by the chaplain during the course of the meeting. Prayers typically reaffirm the Order's Protestant and loyalist commitments, often with critical reference to Catholicism. Opening Prayer No. 1, for example, contains the following words:

We bless Thee for the land of our birth; for the Protestant freedom we enjoy. We remember with gratitude Thy Victorious Servant, King William III, whom Thou didst raise up to deliver our land from the power of error and superstition. Bless all who seek to maintain our liberty, and may we, the members of our Loyal Orange Institution, ever dedicate our lives, body, soul and spirit, to the Precepts and Principles of the Order. Continue to Bless our Gracious Queen, Elizabeth, and all members of the Royal Family. Bless all Ministers of State. Direct their Counsels to Thy Honour and Glory, and the welfare of the people.

Here, the phrase 'power of error and superstition' acts as a kind of longhand for the Catholic Church. Similar sentiments are found throughout the phraseology of Orange ritual, with all six scripture readings outlined in the *Manual of Ritual* each followed by a commentary designed to directly refute Catholic doctrine. A reading from Jeremiah 17: 5–14, for example, gives the following brief explanation: 'This chapter speaks of God as the Judge of the heart of man. The Church of Rome empowers her priests to act as Judge at the Confessional, thus robbing God of his prerogative.' In addition to this formal codification of the Order's rejection of Catholic doctrine, the *Manual of Ritual* also positively outlines the formal procedures for opening a District Lodge and a new Lodge, as well as other 'special ceremonies' including banner unfurlings, the dedication of lodge furnishings, special prayers

for Boyne demonstrations (including prayers at a cenotaph, and prayers for Northern Ireland), and a guide for Orange funerals. Such is the constitutional structure and ritual tenor of the Order.

But what does fieldwork among a rule-bound organisation as heterogeneous, homogenous and dualist as the Loyal Orange Institution of Scotland look like? How did I come to be interested in Scots-Orangeism in the first place? How did I negotiate access? How did I fill my time during fieldwork? In the micro-interactions of the 'daily round', how did I relate to my informants, and how did my informants relate to me? It is to questions such as these that I now wish to turn, not only as a way of providing a 'biography' of the fieldwork undertaken, but also as a route to exploring some wider issues surrounding the 'ethics' of ethnographic representation, or what might be described as the morality of the anthropological method.

Representing Scots-Orangeism: the morality of methodology

I first came to be interested in the possibility of undertaking an ethnographic study of Scots-Orangeism during the closing stages of my fieldwork in Gamrie, an Aberdeenshire fishing village of 700 people and six 'fundamentalist' churches (Webster 2013). These early reflections on Orangeism occurred as a result of discussions with a group of Gamrie Christians who were broadly supportive of the Institution's stated aims, a fact that now seems strange and incongruous, but only with the benefit of hindsight. Importantly, however, these informants were not 'local' Gamrics but Northern Irish 'incomers' – farmers who were active members of the village's newest church, a Free Presbyterian Church of Ulster (FPCU). Yet, the religiosity of these Ulstermen and women contained much that was familiar to the Brethrenism of local Gamrics: an urgent focus upon born-again conversion, a deep knowledge of the Bible, and an intense fascination with the 'end times'. On this religious register, these Northern Irish Free Presbyterian farmers were 'at home' among Gamrie's Brethren fishermen.

Their Ulster religiosity, however, also contained something that the Brethren of Gamrie worked hard to elide – party politics. Importantly, this was politics with a capital 'P' insofar as their interest in current events and electoral affairs were strongly focused upon the fortunes of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), established by FPCU founder, The Rev. Ian Paisley. Here, then, was an expression of Protestantism which combined ultra-conservative evangelicalism with the 'dirty politics' (Blom Hansen 2000) of electoral campaigning, yet did so in a way that denied any religious 'predicament' (ibid.) or worldly compromise. Very quickly, however, I became aware that my Ulster informants in Gamrie *did* perceive a sharp difference between the Protestant politics of Scotland and that of their rural North Antrim homeland. For what reasons, then, did these FPCU farmers view Ulster Orangeism as a broadly legitimate extension of evangelical unionism, while condemning Scottish Orangeism as defined by drunken disorder and sectarian football rivalries? And if they were right – if Scottish Orangemen were, on balance,

more interested in alcohol and sectarianism than religious services and church parades – then what kind of Protestantism did Scots-Orangeism represent?

This reputation for impiety, in combination with what the Order in Scotland was said to *share* with the Order in Ireland – political lobbying, public parading, and ritual degree work – began to build a picture of a type of Protestantism significantly different to that which I had found among the Brethren. Thus, despite first ‘discovering’ the topic of Scots-Orangeism during my time in Gamrie, it was precisely its seeming contrast to Gamrie religiosity which drew my attention, for here was a form of ultra-Protestantism which sacralised not only the Bible, but also the sociality of fraternity, the politics of monarchy, and the ethnicity of nationality. Thus, having completed my main fieldwork in Gamrie, when the time came to embark upon a new ethnographic project, I sought access to the field in precisely the same way that I had previously, by writing formal letters to key gatekeepers – letters which attempted to explain in clear and straightforward terms who I was and what my research would involve. Writing to the Grand Master in June of 2012, this first letter explained how I was ‘planning fieldwork research into the contemporary cultural identity of Protestant fraternities, with a special focus on the Loyal Orange Institution in Scotland’. The letter went on to explain that ‘by looking at the different Orange Lodges in Scotland, the project hopes to gain insight into how the daily life of the Protestant Christian is experienced in Scotland today’.

With reference to my Christian commitment, my Protestant background, my upbringing in Canada, and my family connections to Northern Ireland, the letter continued: ‘I am interested in the Order’s belief system in the widest possible sense. The research would examine a broad range of issues including: the role of Orange Lodges in building community, the heritage of Orange Parades and Orange Bands, the politics of Scottish Unionism, the celebration of Protestant culture, the growth of the Ulster-Scots language, and the upholding of Britain’s Christian traditions’. With my background declared and my research aims stated, the letter concluded with a request to meet to discuss my proposal. Before too long, I received a reply from the Executive Officer of the Grand Orange Lodge of Scotland inviting me to Olympia House in Bridgeton to do just that – a meeting which he said would primarily involve me talking with the Grand Lodge archivist. While I accepted this offer with enthusiasm, I was keenly aware that my being redirected to the archivist indicated that my research had likely been misunderstood as primarily concerned with historical documents and artefacts, as opposed to a contemporary study of the people and culture of the Order. As it turned out, I need not have worried.

Travelling from Edinburgh to Glasgow by train, I reviewed my notebook containing a long list of scribbled questions prepared for the archivist – questions which emphasised both the contemporary focus of my research, and the breadth of the ‘Orange issues’ I wanted to explore. Orange church life, Orange social clubs, royalism, Rangers Football Club, the Conservative Party, the Scottish independence referendum, the band scene, Orange regalia, ritual, and symbolism, and how best to investigate these topics, were all included on my list. Arriving into Queen Street station with time to spare, I decided to travel to Bridgeton on foot, rather than

make the short journey by connecting train. As I walked, the cityscape morphed from the unremarkable iconography of late-capitalism – city centre shopping complexes and coffee outlets – to something that felt more distinctive to Glasgow's East End. The famous arch of the Barras Market, a string of independent jewellery and pawn shops advertising 'cash for gold', a greasy spoon cafe, a car modification shop, Scotland's oldest shellfish bar, a Catholic chapel and a sex shop sitting awkwardly opposite each other – all of this gave the district its own unique feel.

Coming into Bridgeton itself, I was struck by how this diversity was somewhat overturned by a strikingly consistent symbolic landscape, primarily brought about by a row of four loyalist pubs occupying one side of the main approach into Bridgeton Cross, the centre of the district. The first pub, the Crimson Star, flew three Union flags, with a fourth flag displaying a portrait of the Queen. Next was the Station Bar, which, as well as flying a Union flag, was also bedecked in Union bunting. Third was the Walkers Pub which flew a Union flag, an Ulster flag, and the Orange standard. The final pub was called the Seven Ways which was comparatively modest in its display which merely consisted of a long string of Union flag bunting. The pubs looked run-down but were obviously well used, with each already serving several mid-morning drinkers. A few buildings away sat Olympia House, a former Salvation Army Hall, and now the headquarters of the Loyal Orange Institution of Scotland. Built in 1927, this solid red-stone-fronted building dominated the smaller structures on either side of it, with its large blue-and-white sign, and even larger flagpole leaving passers-by in little doubt as to its ethno-nationalist proclivities.

Ringling the doorbell with some trepidation, I was met by a man in his early thirties whose stern expression and frosty reception did little to put me at ease. Explaining that I had an appointment to meet with Jonathan Henderson the Grand Lodge archivist, the man (who I later learned was called Alfie) simply said 'you do indeed' and turned to take me upstairs. Walking past a number of hanging displays of banners, flags, and regalia, Alfie knocked on the door of the archive, briefly introduced me to Jonathan Henderson, and quickly returned to the front desk downstairs. Jonathan's welcome was warm; he shook my hand (notably without the Orange 'grip' used between members) and introduced me to two other volunteer archivists, Derek and Andrew, who both greeted me somewhat more warily. Asked if my trip from Edinburgh had been smooth, I replied that it had, mentioning also how surprised I had been to see so many British and other flags flying through the centre of Bridgeton. Jonathan laughed in agreement, joking with obvious pleasure how Bridgeton could easily be mistaken for Belfast's Shankill Road. 'Now, we're going to do this the West of Scotland way' Jonathan continued, 'with the informal part before the formal part', before launching into a rather haphazard tour of the archive.

The archive room itself was tiny, and more closely resembled a rather jumbled social history museum than it did a formal research archive. Alongside and atop several filing cabinets and storage boxes were Orange objects of every conceivable type: drums, banners, sashes, medals and other regalia, ornamental walking sticks, gavels, presentation plaques, glass and silverware, commemorative ceramics and coins, as well as rows of shelves containing a small library of books on Orangeism and related topics, and various framed photographs. I had the sense that I had

only been shown a fraction of the collection, and with each object being the occasion for telling the often-lengthy story of its history, it was Jonathan who did most of the talking.

After a briefer tour of the rooms beyond the archive – which involved viewing display boards filled with clippings from *The Orange Torch*, as well as a request that I signed a huge tome of a guest book (writing ‘Downing College’ below where all the other entries had listed their Lodge name and number) – we finally arrived at what appeared to be the ‘formal’ part of our meeting. The venue for this was a boardroom overlooked by a portrait of the Queen. Despite the setting, this too felt rather informal. Jonathan and I sat down, and, as before, Jonathan did most of the talking, moving from one story or reminiscence to the next, often without much context or explanation. The names of prominent high-ranking Orangemen were frequently mentioned, with Jonathan explaining their background and particular area of interest, ranging from the work of Grand Lodge chaplains, to the Institution’s oral history project, to Orangeism in the West of Scotland, to Orangeism and the band scene, to Grand Lodge’s campaign against Scottish independence. As Jonathan spoke, I dutifully scribbled down these names and other details in my notebook, yet did so with a growing sense of concern that the kind of access I required needed to amount to more than a list of names of people to interview.

Eventually, after what seemed like a long while, Jonathan asked me about my research and its specific focus. Glad of the chance to clarify, I explained that while I was interested both in Orange artefacts of the kind he had already showed me, and in speaking to high-ranking Orangemen, I was also interested in the everyday lives of ordinary members of the Institution. I emphasised how, as a result, it would be important for me to talk with, and spend time among, rank-and-file Orangemen. At this Jonathan paused, looking thoughtful, finally breaking his silence to explain that if I felt the named contacts he had already given me were selective, this was because they *were* selective, and deliberately so. His purpose, he elaborated, was to select for me contacts who were ‘*articulate*’ (he stressed this word emphatically), and who would thus be able to put across their views ‘clearly’ and ‘well’. Jonathan’s smile was gone, he was now looking much more serious, the atmosphere feeling more awkward as a result. Not feeling able to push the point, I let the matter drop, choosing instead to ask a question about the fate of the Conservative Party in Scotland. This lightened the mood, with Jonathan proudly explaining how he was from a long line of both Church of Scotland members and Conservative Party voters, but that, in his opinion, the Scottish Conservative Party had changed, with people no longer knowing what they stood for. Labour was now the strongest unionist voice in Scottish politics, he exclaimed, in a tone that suggested he found his own words to be scandalous.

It was obvious from this first meeting, then, that while Jonathan’s keen storytelling and wealth of contacts would make him a valuable informant, he would also be a shrewd and cautious gatekeeper whose priority would be to protect the image of the Institution by only assisting me in making contact with certain approved individuals. Fortunately, while the months that passed proved this latter observation correct, my time spent within Grand Lodge was still an ethnographically rich and

informative experience. That first trip to Grand Lodge and to the archive quickly became a weekly appointment, mirroring the work schedule of Jonathan and the other volunteer archivists who came every Thursday to Olympia House to catalogue new artefacts, to document the history of particular lodges, and to discuss and debate Scottish Orangeism past and present. In this way, much of the early period of my fieldwork, during the autumn of 2012, was spent in that small, cluttered archive, as well as in the even smaller kitchenette at the end of the corridor, where the archivists and I took our coffee and lunch breaks.

So rich was this field site and the data gained there, that it forms much of Chapter 2, focusing on the social dynamics of the archive as a space where imaginations of the glorious past of Protestant history were recovered, and where Scotland's suffering under 'the menace of Rome,' past and present, were exposed. My time at Olympia House also afforded me the opportunity to meet other Grand Lodge office bearers, including the Grand Master, the Grand Secretary, and others, as well as ordinary members who had business to conduct there. Importantly, such opportunities prompted other forms of contact with Orangemen outside Olympia House including annual Grand Lodge dinners and award ceremonies, national and district committee meetings, local loyalist band practices and parades, Rangers matches at Ibrox, and weekly Sunday services at Glasgow Evangelical Church, an independent church fondly referred to by members as the 'Orange Kirk'.

Over time, as these contacts snowballed further, I began to conduct fieldwork at other sites across the Central Belt, an important development due to the Grand Lodge-centric and Glasgow-centric focus of the first few months of my research. These sites included regular visits to Glencruix where I conducted my most intensive fieldwork, not only within the Orange Social Club, but also within the homes of members, as well as in the town's Protestant churches, Orange-friendly bars, and other public spaces. Moving east, I established regular connections with a Masonic Club and a Royal British Legion Social Club, both of which were frequented by Orangemen. Additionally, I followed a full Orange marching season, while also attending parades by the Apprentice Boys of Derry, the Royal Black Institution, and independent loyalist flute bands, events which took me to different districts in Glasgow and Edinburgh, as well as to several smaller towns across the Central Belt.

Importantly, I also forged other, more occasional, ethnographic opportunities, wherever such experiences could contribute to my broader understanding of the varieties of unionism and loyalism in Scotland. I joined with individual Orange lodges and loyalist bands as they distributed leaflets door-to-door calling for a 'No' vote in the Scottish referendum. I was taken on a tour of Scottish Covenanting sites in Hamilton by a leading Orangeman as a way of learning more about how the history of the Covenanters had been incorporated into the imagination of Scots-Protestant and Scots-Orange history. I visited and interviewed the elders of Zion Baptist Church, Glasgow's staunchly Protestant (and infamously anti-Catholic) congregation, founded by the late Pastor Jack Glass, a man dubbed by the media as 'Scotland's Ian Paisley'. I attended loyalist 'flag protests' in the west of Scotland and in Edinburgh, events which were organised on social media, and held in solidarity with loyalists in Ulster protesting about the removal of the Union flag from Belfast

City Hall. I observed and photographed Scottish Defence League marches protesting about the 'Islamification' of Britain. I conducted interviews, observations and a photo survey of the Lady Haig Poppy Factory in Edinburgh, talking with armed forces veterans (including some with Orange connections) about their experiences of serving in Northern Ireland during the Troubles, as well as their views on how and why the symbol of the poppy had been interpreted differently by different sides in that conflict.

Finally, to gain more detailed comparative data about Orangeism in Northern Ireland, I conducted twelve in-depth interviews with Orangemen in Belfast, ranging from the Grand Master, to an eighteen-year-old new recruit who, as well as being an Orangeman, was also an activist for the Traditional Unionist Voice, a hard-line breakaway from the DUP. Having since moved to Northern Ireland, I have also been able to observe and document Orange parades surrounding 12 July, as well as loyalist bonfire celebrations which occur each year on the eleventh night. Of course, as is far from unique to anthropologists interested in Orangeism, I have remained (along with much of the electorate) a close observer of Northern Irish debates about Brexit, Scottish independence, Irish unity, and the ongoing 'culture wars' between the Province's 'Orange' and 'Green' communities, which, as I write this, has continued to sustain an ongoing political crisis between the DUP and Sinn Fein, leading to the collapse of the Stormont Assembly (between January 2017 and January 2020), as well as the possible collapse of the DUP's confidence and supply arrangement with the Conservative Party as a result of disagreements about how to avoid a post-Brexit 'hard border' on the island of Ireland.

Given this breadth of access to such a diverse range of Orangemen and 'loyal Protestant friends', and given the depth of access I gained with smaller groups of Orangemen, both in the Glencruix Social Club and in the archive in Bridgeton, how did I relate to my informants, and how did my informants relate to me? I have already partially answered the first question above, in relation to my comments on *verstehen* and empathy, that is, I related to my informants as a researcher who was primarily interested in understanding Orangeism from their point of view. I thus embarked on the fieldwork with the assumption that my Orange informants found their Orangeism to be intellectually comprehensible and social and morally valuable, that is, I assumed Orangeism made sense to them and was something they found to be good. As such, I related to my informants as an apprentice would relate to their master (see Jenkins 1994); I treated them with respect, and, by and large, with deference. Intriguingly, the first Orangeman I ever met during my fieldwork, totally unprompted by me, took great delight in calling me his 'apprentice'. My desire was thus to empathetically 'step into' their world, without prejudice or prejudgement, with the aim of making Orangeism 'make sense' to me, just as it made sense to them, and thereby to see how Orangeism ('warts and all') could be experienced as good. In practice, while this was not always easy (what apprenticeship ever is?), this methodology often revolved around rather simple processes of watching what Orangemen did, listening to what they said, and, where appropriate and useful, asking questions to try and correct what I suspected were my frequent misunderstandings and misinterpretations.

How, then, did my informants relate to me? How did they make sense of who I was and what I was hoping to achieve by spending so much time among them? In answering this question, it is worth bearing in mind that I did not hide the fact that I was a practising Christian, nor that I was from a theologically conservative Calvinist background. Importantly, I could not have hidden this even had I wanted to, for many of my informants were expert in the process of 'telling' (Burton 1978), that is, in establishing a person's ethno-religious background by asking a few simple sideways questions about surname, place of residence, and so on. As with previous research among the Brethren, once my Orange informants had elicited this information from me, my Free Church affiliation was both a help and a hindrance, but for different reasons. It was a help insofar as, from an Orange point of view, my religious background marked me out as ethnically British and Protestant. Yet, it was a hindrance because the Scots-Calvinist tradition in general, and the Free Church of Scotland in particular, are known for being critical of the Order's relaxed attitude to the consumption of alcohol, and also of its insistence that members take vows of secrecy and perform Masonic-style ritual. In short, while I was the right ethnicity (bolstered by my upbringing in Canada and my in-laws being from Ulster), I was, in their view, a member of the wrong Protestant denomination.

While these helps and hindrances all provided useful talking points, none of them, it seems, had very much impact on the overall shape or extent of my access. Indeed several of my informants spoke to me of academics from Catholic backgrounds who had been given permission to study the Order in the past. By far the most significant barrier to full ethnographic access, then, was the simple fact that I was not a member of the Institution (something I discuss below, as well as in more detail in Chapter 3). As a non-member, not only was I not allowed to observe those rituals reserved for Private Lodge meetings, but I was also seen as someone who might, at least potentially, choose to present the Order in a negative light, as so many journalists and other commentators have, and continue to do. Interestingly, these suspicions were most marked among the Institution's hierarchy, who were generally more guarded around me than were ordinary rank-and-file members. When attending a Grand Lodge training meeting at Olympia House one evening, one of the office bearers introduced me to the assembled committee before adding (in an only half-joking manner) 'Just be careful what you say around him! Be careful what you say!' The response – nervous laughter – was just as telling, if not more so, than the comment which provoked it. The message was clear; as an observant non-member, I needed to be treated with caution.

This guarded attitude, and its being largely confined to the Order's top-level hierarchy, was confirmed to me as I attempted to develop access with Orange social clubs. Despite Jonathan's clear admission that he only wanted me to speak to a select few 'articulate' Orangemen, after a few weeks of visiting the archive, I asked him again for help in making contact with social clubs. Jonathan remained unenthusiastic but offered to make a few enquiries. The results were disappointing, with Jonathan explaining to me the following week that while he had reached out to a few clubs, all of those he had contacted were reluctant to entertain the idea of me hanging around: 'Oh, an *academic*' Jonathan mimicked, as he relayed the

conversations back to me, 'I don't know if we want *him* around while we are trying to enjoy ourselves.' Wondering if I might have more success by representing myself to social clubs directly, I wrote a letter to Dennis, who ran the Glencruix Social Club, explaining who I was and what my research would involve. Within days I received a phone call from him inviting me to the club, and, in contrast to the aversion Jonathan had reported, I quickly established a friendly rapport with Dennis and the other club regulars, with Glencruix becoming one of the most important and revealing field sites of my ethnography.

Having been freed from the restrictions of Grand Lodge's cautious management of my time and attentions, my informants in Glencruix, as shown in the ethnography with which I began this Introduction, and as described in greater detail in Chapters 4 and 5, gave me a different perspective on Scots-Orangeism, one that was less preoccupied by the strict demands of Jonathan's desire for what he called 'articulate' expression. As such, I came to realise that what my gatekeepers at Grand Lodge were seeking to do was not so much protect the Orange Order from me (and my suspected academic misrepresentations), but rather protect *me* from the Orange Order (and its more outspoken grass-roots members). Indeed, Dennis and others clearly told me that this was the case. After an argument between Jonathan and Derek sparked by Derek's suggestion that I should interview a certain individual with significant paramilitary connections, Dennis said that he had received a phone call from Jonathan asking him to keep me away from Derek. Jonathan's aim, Dennis said, was to ensure that Derek's more hard-line Orangeism did not overly influence my research findings. What Jonathan wanted more generally, Dennis explained, was to give me a sanitised picture of the Order by ensuring I did not talk to anyone who was 'too militant'. 'But that's no good for the Orange Institution, and certainly no good for your research' Dennis asserted, restating his own view (as he often did) that what I should write instead was a 'warts and all' account of Orangeism in Scotland.

While I have already stated above that I was in agreement with Dennis that including this 'warts and all' perspective of grass-roots Orangeism had real merit, I also found myself sympathetic to Jonathan's view that the 'articulate' Orangeism of the Grand Lodge hierarchy be given serious ethnographic consideration. This is because the 'militant' Orangeism predominantly found among rank-and-file members, and the 'articulate' Orangeism predominantly found among the hierarchy are just as real as each other. Put another way, 'rough' and 'respectable' (McFarland 1990) Orangeism are *both* social facts despite being at odds with one another, with neither having a monopoly over 'true' Orangeism. Nor is the former obviously more representative than the latter, with some grass-roots members aspiring to more moderate and articulate forms of Orangeism, while various local and district leaders remain committed to more militant expressions of the same. To describe one perspective and not the other would thus be to present a picture of Scots-Orangeism that was fundamentally incomplete.

All of this is important to note here because the ideological heterogeneity, ethno-religious homogeneity, and rough-respectable dualism that made contemporary Scots-Orangeism what it was had a real and lasting impact upon how my

informants related to me, as someone who could, variously, tell their proud history, communicate their tolerant views, and attest to their biblical practices, or, conversely, describe their political passions, understand their sporting rivalries, and contextualise their ethno-religious superiority. In essence, my informants related to me as someone who was there to tell their *particular* side of the story.

In ethnographically documenting these various 'sides', my aim has always been to try and piece them together or, where this proved impossible, to place them side-by-side, in an attempt to produce a coherent picture of what makes contemporary Scots-Orangeism what it is, why it makes logical sense, and why it seems morally good to its members. In doing so, in consistently and thoroughly attempting to 'step into' their Orangeism, some of my informants began to wonder aloud if I would ever join them by becoming a member of the Order. To some, my background spoke for itself; I was a church-attending 'Protestant', I was 'British', and I had certain reservations about the prospect of Scottish independence. Others concluded I would join the Order simply because I kept hanging around Orangemen. (It was also for both of these reasons, I think, that I was approached by another Glencruix informant about becoming a Freemason). Yet, for the most part, my Orange informants focused their attentions on converting me to Orangeism, not Masonry. Colin, for example (who was the oldest regular at the Glencruix Club and someone I had particular affection for), upon hearing I was attending an Apprentice Boys of Derry parade as part of my research jokingly piped up: 'He's abandoning us!' Then, fixing me in his stare, Colin's expression suddenly became more serious: 'Never mind the Apprentice Boys' he continued, 'when are you going to join the Lodge? I've been an Orangeman for sixty-seven years, and proud of it! We are Orangeman and that's it!' 'It's in your blood!' another man offered in loud agreement. 'No. It's in your heart!' Colin retorted more quietly, still locking me in his gaze with eyes full of tears.

Colin was not the only person to suggest I join the Orange Order. I'd had the same conversation months earlier, in a setting that could not have been more different from the Glencruix Social Club, in a spacious, high-ceilinged and well-decorated flat in an affluent part of South Edinburgh. I was sitting across from George Martin, a Past Grand Master of the Order, describing to him my research aims and methods, that I was interested in contemporary Scots-Orangeism in all its forms, and sought to understand it by spending as much time as I could with 'ordinary' members of the Institution. George looked thoughtful for a moment, and then said: 'Do you know what would be really cute? You could join. You could have on the front of your book "*A View of the Orange Order from Inside*".' With a smile that seemed to contain more excitement than humour, George sat quietly awaiting my response. I replied by explaining that while I had thought long and hard about the possibility, I was still undecided. I added that I had received mixed advice from colleagues in anthropology on the matter, stating how, but not fully explaining *why*, the advice from Cambridge was that I should join, while the advice from Edinburgh was that I should not. It seems helpful now (in the way that it did not seem helpful then) to elaborate on some of these reasons.

Those in Cambridge seemed to regard the Orange Order in similar terms to an exotic Amazonian or Melanesian hunting cult – so removed from their own

daily experience that the possibility of my becoming a member represented nothing beyond an intellectually intriguing (and thus politically harmless) ethnographic experiment. The advice from Cambridge, then, was to join because doing so would give me fuller access to the Institution's ritual and social life and would thus further my research. Those in Edinburgh took a rather different view, appearing alarmed that I had even countenanced the idea of joining. These colleagues seemed to be speaking from their own perceptions of the Order, that it was a belligerently anti-Catholic organisation whose members and supporters (they did not make the distinction) were, at best, overly fond of engaging in drunken disorder and, at worst, frequently implicated in bouts of serious sectarian violence. From this perspective, while Orangeism was perhaps no less exoticised, its infamy was both better known and much 'closer to home' on the urban streets of Central Scotland than it was in the Senior Combination Room of Downing College. The advice from Edinburgh, then, was emphatic; I should *not* join, for doing so would be politically, intellectually, and personally contaminating. Intriguingly, towards the end of the interview, while I still didn't feel comfortable fully spelling out all of these details, I did venture to raise with George the issue of how my work on the Order would be viewed if I became a member. George's reaction was quick, and a reversal of his earlier suggestion about my joining the Institution: 'No, you can't – no one would believe you were objective.'

As the early stages of my fieldwork progressed, word spread that I had been weighing up whether or not to join the Order. Alfie, the shop manager and receptionist at Olympia House cornered me on the issue as I was leaving the building after one of my regular trips to the archive. 'So I hear you are thinking of joining us?' he said in his usual matter-of-fact-cum-suspicious tone. Taken completely off guard by his question (I had only discussed the possibility with two or three people), I answered more openly than perhaps was prudent, explaining that while I *had* thought about it, this was primarily because I wanted to be able to observe the Order's degree work and other rituals. If I joined, I reasoned, I could finally see what Private Lodge meetings were like from the inside. It was immediately clear to me that Alfie was not impressed by my admission, and he stated in no uncertain terms that wanting to observe the Order's rituals to benefit my research was a bad reason to become a member, and that I should only join if I really agreed with the Order's principles of defending Protestantism and unionism in Scotland. Feeling embarrassed by this mild rebuke, I said goodbye, and made a quick exit.

In the end, I decided that George and Alfie were both correct, that is, my joining the Orange Order would be intellectually inexpedient *and* personally disingenuous. In terms of the former, it would, of course, be hard to defend my work against the charge that I had given up all critical distance by deciding to 'go native', for what Orangeman would (or even *could*) give an honest and accurate account of the Institution to which they had sworn such solemn loyalty. Perhaps more problematically, however, I also felt deeply uneasy on a personal level about joining the Institution. One reason for this was because I felt I lacked the necessary patriotic and ethno-religious passions required to be an Orangeman. This became most obvious when watching Old Firm matches, which I experienced both live in the

stadium, and with Orangemen in the Glencruix Social Club. On all such occasions, many of my companions delighted in shouting vicious sectarian abuse at the Celtic players on the pitch. Having initially failed to 'take seriously' the moral worth of these performances, during my early ethnographic experiences of such matches, I found myself sitting in awkward and judgemental silence, ashamed to be in the company of those displaying such hate.

Similar ethnocentric reflexes seized me – perhaps less dramatically, but no less viscerally – during an early ethnographic moment in Glasgow Evangelical Church, when, in the context of an Orange worship service, the whole congregation began waving little Union flags as 'Land of Hope and Glory' was played on the organ. I still remember the feeling of indignation that washed over me as I bristled at the sight of what felt, at the time, to be an entirely improper melding of politics and religion. Equally, as a left-leaning resident of Northern Ireland, I also chose not to advertise the fact that I was an Alliance voter, not only because the party was widely disparaged as only attracting support from 'middle-class do-gooders' but also because the party was frequently accused by Orangemen of harbouring support for Sinn Féin's 'culture war' against Britishness in Ulster, an accusation that became particularly pointed during my fieldwork as a result of Alliance's role in triggering the Belfast City Hall 'flag dispute'²⁴ (Nolan et al. 2014). Given these marked differences in opinion between me and my informants, joining the Order seemed inappropriate, regardless of how sincerely I attempted to overcome my initial ethnographic failings and ethnocentricities.

Another reason for my unease stemmed from the fact that I did not want to cheapen or trivialise these same ethno-nationalist passions that Colin and my other close informants held so dear. Seen from this point of view, my joining the Order would have required I become a kind of ethnographic Peeping Tom, observing and recording ritual interactions that were intended to be seen only by Orangemen, not by an anthropologist play-acting at being an Orangeman, whatever their scholarly motives. At the risk of making a virtue out of a necessity, it seems to me, however, that the gaps in my ethnographic data produced by my non-member status (most notably, gaps about Orange ritual) are themselves ethnographically insightful. While I discuss this in more detail in Chapter 3, it seems helpful at this point merely to note that my non-membership of the Order, experienced by and among so many Orangemen as I conducted my fieldwork, was periodically revealing. Being asked to leave the room at a certain point in proceedings, receiving a fumbling handshake as the person I was greeting attempted to give an Orange grip that was not being reciprocated, observing the skill with which my questions about Orange belief and practice were answered in ways that avoided the breaking of a member's vows – all of these helped me understand where public Orangeism ended, and where the secrets of Orangeism began. Such experiences constantly required that I and my informants defined and redefined what made us the same and what made us different, religiously, politically, ethnically, and otherwise – efforts that were, I suggest, anthropologically instructive.

In undertaking this partial apprenticeship, I took confidence in the fact that my informants not only approved of my desire to understand contemporary

Scots-Orangeism, but went further, urging me to retell *their* Protestant history, describe *their* religious principles, and explain *their* political convictions. As I sought to do so, I found myself, even as a non-member, increasingly appropriated into the lives and works of my informants and Orange friends. This was true bureaucratically, as well as socially. In terms of the former, I quickly found myself absorbed into the Institution's own written record of itself and its dealings. Six months into my fieldwork, I was given what felt like unprecedented access to Glencruix District's minute books (including records of all their most recent meetings, some of which happened just days previously), and permission to make notes on anything I found. As I finished reading a section calling for Orangemen to resist 'Alex Salmond and his Nationalist cohorts,' I was struck to see my name printed in the entry immediately below. In full, it read:

We continue to get requests from academics and at present we have Dr Joe Webster from Cambridge University who is doing research on Protestant Fraternities in Scotland visiting us at Olympia House and our thanks to Brother Henderson for ensuring that the academics are pointed in the right direction to what we have in the archives and thanks also to the many members that we ask to give up their free time to meet these people.

While the minute itself did not contain any particular revelation about how my research was perceived, it was strange (although with hindsight, unsurprising) to see how I had been formally and thus permanently incorporated into the Order's own internal narrative and record. I was not, importantly, the only one taking notes. Be it fieldnotes or minutes, this seemed to matter less than the simple fact that some of my informants were observing me just as carefully as I was observing them, and that these observations, moreover, had begun to circulate in written form, for others to read and comment on.

At the same time that I found myself being absorbed into the bureaucratic life of the Order's hierarchy via their formal production of minutes, I also found myself increasingly drawn into the social and personal lives of ordinary 'grass-roots' Orangemen, some of whom became friends. As such, as well as talking politics and religion with the men in the Glencruix Orange Social Club, and following them out on parade, I also shared in other aspects of their lives. I joined with them for meals at their homes; I spent time with them at leisure; I shared with them in the ups and downs of working life, family life, and ill health; I sat alongside them at a funeral as they grieved the loss of an Orange brother. It was interesting, as a result, to see a narrowing of the gap between the hierarchy and the grass roots, insofar as my closest Orange informants – of all stripes, from the ultra-respectable to self-proclaimed bigots – seemed, almost without exception, to include me within the category of 'loyal Protestant friend', and, going further, to refer to me as 'almost a Brother', that is, almost an Orangeman, a designation that I took with a measure of unease and awkwardness, but nonetheless as a mark of trust and affection.

For better or for worse, the anthropological by-product of this trust and affection are the pages of this book, in all their ethnographic heterogeneity, homogeneity, and dualism. I have tried hard to do justice to all three of these elements, and

thereby to the morality of the Orange lives that it describes. Before finally sitting down to write (a process which has itself taken several years), I was heartened, if a little daunted, by something Scot Symon, Grand Lodge Executive Officer⁵ and one of Scotland's most prominent Orangeman, said to me during one of our last conversations before I left the field. With his characteristic frankness, he summarised his assessment of my research efforts by stating that 'unlike all the others who've written about Scottish Orangeism, your book will be based on facts, because you've been the only one into Grand Lodge to speak to people.' This was not, Scot stressed, because other researchers had not been permitted access – he repeatedly stated in media interviews that under his leadership the Orange Order in Scotland had an 'open door' policy – but because I had been the only one who had really taken him up on this offer. His exclusive focus on Grand Lodge notwithstanding (here again we find ourselves confronted by the dualism of Scots-Orangeism), I find myself heartened by Scot's words. This is not, importantly, because I am convinced that this book represents any kind of unchallengeable socio-scientific 'statement of fact', but rather because within Scot's statement is the reassuring affirmation that I 'spoke' to Orangemen. And insofar as 'speaking to Orangemen' can be taken as a metonym for the ethnographic enterprise, I can ask for no stronger words of endorsement. I only hope that Scot's fact-based approval is able to stand being buffeted by my decision to write what other Orange informants (well outside of Grand Lodge) demanded of me, namely a 'warts and all' account of life in the Order.

Before moving, in the next chapter, to consider how Scots-Orange morality and culture may be situated historically, as well as within contemporary Scottish society, it seems helpful to briefly summarise the ethnographic and theoretical importance of five interlocking themes, which, taken together, help us answer the central question of this book, namely, for Orangemen in Scotland, what should a good Protestant life be like? These themes are: religion, ritual, fraternalism, politics, and exceptionalism.

Religion

The theme of religion, which takes up almost the entirety of Chapter 2 but is also woven throughout the book, is presented in ways which attempt to avoid taking for granted what we mean by 'the religious.' Following an analytic of defamiliarisation, I present religion as both an ethnographic and theoretical puzzle. For Scottish Orangemen, is Protestantism a religion or a race? From the perspective of anthropology, if Protestantism *is* a race (even in part), then how might this change the way we think about religion, as a series of beliefs and practices, but also, possibly, as a substance, as an immutable essence, like blood, or bone? Here and elsewhere in the book, Orange imaginations of the spectre of Roman Catholicism necessarily take centre stage, as do human experiences of concealment and revelation, conspiracy and liberty, love and hate. Thus, if this book is about religion, this is because, for the Orange Order, the British Protestant religion *is* many things and *means* many things, just as its proffered opposite, Roman Catholicism, is and means many things too. Making sense of the interplay between this doubled religious multiplicity,

as a series of enacted moral claims and counterclaims, is central to my argument about what a good (Orange) Protestant life looks like, and thus, more broadly, what we mean when we count something as religious.

Ritual

By examining Orange ritual, Chapter 3 asks how Protestant-unionist-loyalist life within the Order is dramatised, and who is meant to see what when these dramas are performed? Drawing on Simmel's (1950) classic sociological account of secrecy, I argue that Scots-Orange ritual practice offers new insights into the relationship between revelation and concealment. More specifically, I suggest that within the Orange rituals of public parading and private 'travel', revelation may be seen to function as a kind of concealment while, conversely, concealment may function as a kind of revelation. Central to this analysis is an understanding of the way in which Orangeism is indebted to Masonic epistemology. Here, participating in Orange parades (which are, in effect, mass acts of symbolic revelation), becomes a privileged and privileging way of concealing the world, keeping esoteric knowledge secret by (literally) hiding it in plain sight. In this quasi-Masonic purview, it is only those who are 'born free' who can 'see the signs.' Yet, just as public Orange parades may be interpreted as 'revelatory concealment', so too may private Orange initiation rituals be interpreted as a kind of 'concealing revelation.' As such, during the Order's second degree – the Royal Arch Purple – it is only by donning a blindfold that one is truly able to receive one's sight. What we find in Orange ritual, then, is a dialectic of revelation and concealment, of privileged blindness-giving-way-to-sight as set against undifferentiated sight-giving-way-to-blindness. It is the outworking of this dialectic that is the main subject of this chapter.

Fraternalism

In Chapter 4 I examine a different dialectic at the heart of Scottish Orangeism, namely the relationship between a love of British Protestantism and a hatred of Roman Catholicism. Based primarily on ethnographic data collected in an Orange social club, this chapter considers how Orangemen build fraternal bonds with each other, while also asking how these bonds create (and are created by) imaginations of and encounters with various anti-fraternal others. In the context of the Orange social club, Catholicism often comes to be conflated with Irish republicanism and Scottish nationalism in ways that allow performances of fraternal love and sectarian hate not only to run in parallel, but to run together, blending into one another in ways that make them inseparable and indistinguishable. By describing this co-constitution as a 'loving hatred' and a 'hateful love', new challenges may be posed to the emerging field of the anthropology of ethics, and particularly to what Robbins (2013) has called 'an anthropology of the good'. By arguing that religious hatred *can* be included within human experiences of 'The Good', this chapter contends that the sociality of 'the negative' (Burke 1966) needs to be re-theorised as a positive, that is, a culturally generative, force.

Politics

While this book is about Orange religion, it is also, by virtue of that very fact, a book about politics. Indeed, its title, *The Religion of Orange Politics*, is worded to raise questions about how Orangemen sacralise their politics, for example, through imaginations of Britain's status as a divinely established Protestant constitutional monarchy. As with the theme of Orange religion, while discussions of Orange politics are found throughout this book, they are also given a particularly focused treatment in a single chapter (Chapter 5). Ethnographically, this chapter addresses the Order's campaign against Scottish independence, first by examining the whys and wherefores of their exclusion from the mainstream political debate. Running parallel to this analysis of the exclusion of Orangeism by the political mainstream is an exploration of Orange attempts to create a Scots-unionist counter-politics which placed Protestantism centre stage. In the context of the independence referendum, I argue that my Orange informants came to experience the activities of the Scottish National Party as an ultramontane plot, that is, as a (partially hidden) proxy war between the British monarchy and the papacy. Furthermore, I suggest that my Orange informants made sense of their membership of the Order, in part, by imagining themselves as taking up different but complementary roles in this proxy war, either as latter-day Covenanters or as latter-day loyalists, and doing so in ways that always placed religious and ethnic boundaries at the centre of political discourse. What this chapter offers, then, is a critical reflection upon the limits of politics, where 'the political' comes to be defined as neither transparent nor secular, but instead as that which is driven by a veiled nefarious religious agenda.

Exceptionalism

If, in ethnographic terms, this book is about Scottish Orangeism, then, understood in broader theoretical terms, it may also be read as a book about exceptionalism. What does it mean to be special, and how might this specialness come to be expressed in religious and even racial terms? Having adopted the famous Rangers FC slogan, Orangemen would frequently proclaim 'We Are The People!' Similarly, Orange lodges and loyalist flute bands would often take the designation 'Chosen Few' as part of their name. The 'greatness' of Great Britain was also a common refrain, while Scotland, too, was spoken of as specially blessed by God, second only to Israel according to some of my informants. Taking such ethnographic observations as a final point of departure, this book concludes by suggesting that Scots-Orangeism is best understood as a grand exercise in the imagination, construction, and reimagining of Protestant exceptionalism. Being exceptional, I argue, comes to be experienced by my Orange informants as both an imparted status and an inalienable essence – an external light shone by God upon His people (The People), who, by virtue of being the 'Chosen Few', are also already possessors of a special inward state of being. This imparted-yet-inherent exceptionalism is not only religious and political, but also understood to be material in nature. Here, the substance of

Orangeism is articulated in terms of being a member of the British Protestant ‘family of nations’ – kith and kin who inherit their exceptionalism (at least in part) simply by virtue of sharing in that ‘bloodline’. It is this blood-bought and blood-secured membership of the Order, and thus to Protestantism as a ‘race apart’, which comes to define Orangemen as truly exceptional.

Notes

- 1 Wherever possible, the names of people and places have been changed.
- 2 Only 2 per cent of jobs in the town remain within the manufacturing sector, less than a quarter of the national average. As a result, unemployment is a third higher than the national average, with 6.3 per cent claiming Jobseekers Allowance. The Glencruix workforce is also less well qualified, with only 29 per cent having a degree (national average 34 per cent) and 19 per cent having no qualifications at all (national average 13 per cent) (Scottish Government 2011).
- 3 I follow Laidlaw (2014: 116–118) in not treating ethics and morality as fundamentally different phenomena.
- 4 The flag dispute developed in response to a debate within Belfast City Council in December 2012 regarding when to fly the Union flag over City Hall. Unionist councillors wanted the flag to remain in place over City Hall 365 days a year, while nationalist councillors wanted to remove it altogether. Alliance, who at that time held the balance of power within Belfast City Council, chose not to vote down the motion to remove the flag altogether, but instead offered what they felt to be a compromise, namely flying the Union flag on eighteen designated days per year. This compromise motion was resisted by unionists but passed with support from nationalists, triggering a unionist backlash against Alliance. Forty thousand leaflets were jointly distributed by the DUP and the Ulster Unionist Party in loyalist areas, blaming Alliance for the removal of the flag. It was in this context that loyalist protests occurred across the Province, with prominent Alliance politicians receiving threats of violence. In addition to the homes of two Alliance politicians being attacked, one Alliance Party office was destroyed.
- 5 Scot has since stepped down from this particular role, and is no longer Executive Officer.