Historical Narratives and European Nationalisms: Germany and Ireland in Comparison

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<u>Declaration of Authorship</u>

I, <u>Shane Christopher Nagle</u>, hereby declare that this thesis and the work presented in it is entirely my own. Where I have consulted the work of others, that is always clearly stated

Signed ....

Date ...... 15 March 2014 ....

<u>Abstract</u>

This thesis is a comparative study of nationalist history writing in Ireland and Germany between circa 1848 and circa 1930. It builds on recent historiography on the cross-European comparison of different national historical traditions in Europe and challenges the customary comparison of 'peripheral' national historical traditions with 'mainstream' ones. More specifically, it provides a comparative perspective on the development of one aspect of Irish nationalist culture, recognising that the comparative method is still under-used in Irish historiography and relocating the study of this 'marginal' tradition into a more comprehensive European frame of reference. It offers a more comprehensive understanding of the similarities and differences in the historical representation of the nation in different contexts by comparing two traditions that have been regarded as 'mainstream' and 'peripheral', respectively. The thesis is concerned with the question of to what extent, by way of this comparison, we can make judgements about a distinctive European form of national history writing manifested in 'peripheral' as well as 'mainstream' contexts. The thesis focuses on a sample of historians in both contexts whose historical work centred on the national past aiming to arrive at a medium between the primarily comparative focus and a reasonably detailed examination of the German and Irish national historiographical traditions. Individual chapters focus on the representation of the nation's 'origins' of the and foundational events in the nation's past; the relationship between religion and the nation in the national historical narratives; the application of 'race thinking' or the idea of race to the nation's past; and how the territory of the nation was historically delineated, how the relationship between region and nation and regional challenges to the unified national historical narrative were dealt with. A final, 'supplementary' chapter briefly examines transnational connections between historical representations of the nation in these contexts.

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Writing a PhD is both a solitary and a collaborative process, a strenuous one which I could not have completed this thesis without the assistance of a number of people who must be mentioned.

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Needless to say, all errors and misjudgements in the following are entirely my own.

Historical Narratives and Nationalisms in Europe: Germany and Ireland in Comparison

Contents

<u>Introduction</u>

History and nationalism have since the first stirrings of the latter been intimately, even inseparably linked. Historical enquiry both underpinned nationalism, and developed into a modern discipline in tandem with nationalism.[1] This thesis is a comparative thematic study of nationalist historical narratives in Ireland and Germany between the 1840s and the end of the 1920's.[2] The central question will be how the historical framing of the distinctive 'special path' of the nation's history which was regarded as bearing fundamental implications for the modern nation's political existence differed and paralleled. This will in turn provide an answer to the question of how far, in light of this comparison, it is permissible to speak of a specific European 'form' of nationalist historical narratives. The comparison will be framed in terms of an engagement with four crucial themes: origins, religion, national territory, and 'race' and 'Othering', all of which were interrelated, and all of which defined the writing of national history. How were the nation's historical origins in each case understood? How had inter-confessional conflict shaped understandings of each nation's historical identity? How had these nations become understood in historically in terms of their territorial extent and delineation? How were the identities of the peoples of these nations been historically defined? These are the central questions structuring this thesis.

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[1] Ilaria Porciani and Jo Tollebeek, 'Institutions, Networks, and Communities in a European Perspective', in idem (eds.), *Setting the Standards: Institutions, Networks, and Communities of National Historiography* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), pp. 5, 14.
Hugo Frey and Stefan Jordan, 'National Historians and the Discourse of the Other: France and Germany', in Stefan Berger and Chris Lorenz (eds.), *The Contested Nation: Ethnicity, Class, Religion and Gender in National Histories* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), p. 200. Eva Gkotzaridis, *Trials of Irish History: Genesis and Evolution of a Reappraisal, 1938-2000* (London, Routledge, 2006), p. 19.
[2] To speak of 'Germany' and 'the Germans' in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is to refer to a number of different territorial configurations and cultural communities, but is considered here in terms of the region of German-speaking Europe that comprised the non-Habsburg lands of the German Confederation and which became the German 'Empire' in 1871, with 'the Germans' are referred to in the same basic sense.

It is no new insight to identify the indispensability of historical inquiry (and, importantly, historical *error*) to nationalism or national identity. However, most studies of national histories have largely eschewed in-depth comparison, itself a reflection of how historical research remains structured along 'national' lines with relatively little systematic comparison. Yet in order to arrive at any generally-applicable conclusions about a historical phenomenon, and about nationalism in particular, historians must analyse comparatively, transnationally, indeed 'globally'.[3] The underlying argument of this thesis is in agreement with that of Joep Leerssen in his *National Thought: A Cultural History*: that despite a multiplicity of national paths and fine-grained differences important broad similarities in European national histories and nationalist historical narratives can be discerned.[4] If significant similarities and parallels can be found between two 'canons' of historical narratives which developed relatively independently of each other, this may permit broader conclusions about the nature of national history writing across Europe during this time. This study is located within the context of more recent efforts to render systematic comparison to the study of nationalist historiographies, and to relocate 'marginal' traditions from their isolated position into a more encompassing one. If there is a tacit assumption that the nature of European national historiography can be found by the appraisal of a handful of 'mainstream' traditions – an assumption which is itself arguably an echo of nineteenth century nationalist distinctions between

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[3] John Breuilly, 'Nationalism and National Unification in Nineteenth Century Europe', in John Breuilly (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Nationalism* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 151. Stefan Berger, 'The Comparative History of National Historiographies in Europe: Some Reflections and Results', in Susana Carvalho and Francois Gemenne (eds.), *Nations and their Histories: Constructions and Representations* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 29-30, 33. Benedikt Stuchtey and Peter Wende, 'Introduction: Towards A Comparative History of Anglo-German Historiographical Traditions and Transfers', in idem (eds.), *British and German Historiography, 1750-1950: Traditions, Perceptions, and Transfers* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 2.

[4] Berger, 'The Comparative History of National Historiographies', in *Nations and their Histories*, p. 42. Joep Leerssen, *National Thought In Europe: A Cultural History* (Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, 2006), pp. 18-20.

'historic' and 'history-less' nations – this study aims to challenge it by considering a 'peripheral' case on its own merits as a noteworthy part of a distinctive tradition of European nationalist historiographies, and by comparing it with one of the 'paradigmatic' traditions.[5] If historians are to proceed towards a genuinely pan-European view of the character and development of national historiographies, it seems reasonable to conclude that it is necessary to take a truly diverse set of cases on their own merits as objects for comparison.[6] The Irish historian Edmund Curtis, himself a (moderate) nationalist, thought that comparison 'was indispensable for good history', because it was needed 'for the essence of an understanding of history is to put things and men in their time and place and judge them by such circumstances.'[7] The comparative focus here, however, is on the *representation* of German and Irish history by German and Irish writers in the early nineteenth and twentieth centuries in terms of 'the nation'.

Literature on comparative history remains relatively scarce. Historians may no longer give credence to the notion of national 'exceptionalism(s)' or *Sonderwege*, but most continue to write predominantly within the national paradigm, even in the case of those who study nationalism or the development of nationalist mentalities. One of the first major studies to attempt to study nationalist historiographies on a comparative basis was *Writing National Histories: Western Europe Since 1800*

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[5] Monika Baar, *Historians and Nationalism: East-Central Europe in the Nineteenth Century* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 1, 2. Joseph J. Lee, 'Some Aspects of Modern Irish Historiography', in Ernst Schulin (ed.), *Gedenkschrift Martin Goehring: Studien zur europäischen Geschichte* (Wiesbaden, Steiner, 1968), p. 442. Enda Delaney, '*Directions in Historiography*: Our Island Story? Towards A Transnational History of late modern Ireland', *Irish Historical Studies*, 37, 148 (2011), pp. 83-84. Richard English, '*Directions in Historiography:* History and Irish Nationalism', *Irish Historical Studies*, 37, 147 (2011), pp. 447-460, esp. p. 458.

[6] Stuchtey and Wende, 'Introduction', in *British and German Historiography*, p. 3. Christopher L. Hill, *National History and the World of Nations: Capital, State and the Rhetoric of History in Japan, France and the United States* (London, Duke University Press, 2008), ix. Brian Heffernan, Marta Ramón, Pierre Ranger, and Zsuzsanna Zarka, 'Introduction', in Brian Heffernan (ed.), *Life on the Fringe? Ireland and Europe, 1800-1922* (Dublin, Irish Academic Press, 2012), pp. 1-10.

[7] Quoted in Gkotzaridis, *Trials of Irish History*, p. 25.

(1998), but even here the format was based on individual case studies, complemented with comparative introductory and concluding chapters, and the book focused only on Germany, Italy, France and England. Ernest Breisach's *Historiography: Ancient, Medieval and Modern* (1983, 2007), also focuses exclusively on the German, British, French and American contexts in its discussion of the modern period. Donald Kelley's *Fortunes of History* (2003) and *Frontiers of History* (2006) broadened the scope, but (the latter especially) continued to group national historical traditions along their 'mainstream' or 'peripheral' basis.[8] In more recent years considerable progress has been made due to the *Writing the Nation* project and resulting collection of edited volumes, which has aimed to chart on a cross-continental basis the development of the historical profession, to systematically compare on this basis national historical traditions, and to investigate the most important themes and issues in the historical representation of nations. Monika Baár's *Historians and Nationalism: East-Central Europe in the Nineteenth Century* (2010) is another important addition to this literature.[9]

The paucity of comparative literature is even more pronounced with respect to Irish historiography, due to the relatively belated development of the discipline, a disinclination to apply theoretical perspectives, and the extent to which the 'revisionist' controversy has framed Irish historiographical debate.[10] Irish revisionist historians, as important as their researches were, were still captive to the dictates of

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[8] Donald R. Kelley, *Fortunes of History: Historical Inquiry from Herder to Huizinga* (London, Yale University Press, 2003), p. 225.
[9] *The Many Faces of Clio: Cross-Cultural Approaches to Historiography, Essays in Honor of Georg G. Iggers*, eds. Q. Edward Wang and Franz L. Fillafer (New York, Berghahn, 2007), and *A Global History of Modern Historiography* (New York, Pearson, 2008), eds. Georg G. Iggers and Q. Edward Wang are also important recent works in this general field.
[10] Heffernan, Ramón, Ranger and Zarka, 'Introduction', in *Life on the Fringe?* p. 4.

'methodological nationalism', as John Hutchinson commented.[11] Nonetheless, a more recent examination and defence of revisionism in the Irish context has drawn parallels with continental European historiographical trends.[12] Richard English, in his history of Irish nationalism (2006), drew attention to the deficit of comparative studies of Irish history with respect to nationalism, as has R.F. Foster.[13] On the other hand, some historians of modern Ireland have been taking the importance of the comparative perspective more seriously in recent years, and such works as the edited volume *Life on the Fringe: Ireland and Europe, 1890-1922*. German historiography, by contrast, contains more in the way of comparative study, including studies comparing German nationalism with that of other contexts, and studying German nationalism from a comparative perspective, for example, and to name only a few examples, in Rogers Brubaker's *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (1922), and in *German and American Nationalism: A Comparative Perspective* (1999), as well as *British and German Historiography, 1750-1950: Traditions, Perceptions, and Transfers* (2000). Comparisons of unification and nation-state building in Germany and Italy have also been pursued at length. This application of comparative study to German history, especially modern German history, has of course had much to do with debunking the nation of a German '*Sonderweg*'. Further, the study of German nationalism has always been central to the study of nationalism 'in general', while the same cannot be said for the study of Irish nationalism. This thesis cannot elaborate on recent developments in the study of

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[11] John Hutchinson, 'Irish nationalism', in D.G. Boyce and Alan O'Day (ed.), *The Making of Modern Irish History: Revisionism and the Revisionist Controversy* (London, Routledge, 1996), pp. 100-119. Alan O'Day, 'Ireland and Europe: Theoretical Perspectives', in Colin Graham and Leon Litvack (eds.), *Ireland and Europe in the Nineteenth Century* (Dublin, Four Courts Press, 2006), p. 17.
[12] Evi Gkotzaridis, *Trials of Irish History: Genesis and Evolution of a Reappraisal, 1938-2000* (London, Routledge, 2006)
[13] R.F. Foster, 'Forward to Methuselah', in Terence Dooley (ed.), *Ireland's Polemical Past: Views of Irish History in Honour of R.V. Comerford* (Dublin, University College Dublin Press, 2010)

nationalism, given the breadth of complexity in this subject, but the area of nationalist historiography continues to command interest, and the arguments advanced more recently in favour of studying nationalism as a form of 'discourse' also provide much room for the study of how nations' histories have been represented and contested. In any case, the comparative study of nationalist historiographies in Europe in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries remains a relatively new and incomplete area of research, and is one to which this thesis aims to contribute.

Nationalist historical narratives in Germany and Ireland shared two basic 'structural' features. Firstly, they shared a similar narrative framework of the the 'special path' of the nation's history into modernity. This framework was defined by a recurring conflict between the continuity-constructing task of national historiography and the reality of a historical timeline distinguished by discontinuity and rupture as opposed to any apparent sense of continuous linear progress; on 'shattered pasts', particularly in the medieval and early modern eras, which were assumed to have caused recurring 'delay' in political and cultural development of the nation and of national unity. The tension between the discontinuous reality of the nation's past and the (nationalist) idea that the nation must necessarily possess a meaningfully continuous historical existence meant also that historiographical controversies in both contexts were also political controversies in the modern present. It is a foundational contrast, that while the 'running theme' in, for example, the national historical narratives of Britain or France was of continuous steady progress and political nationhood (or what came to be called 'Whig history'), the historical conditions of 'nationhood' in these cases

were – to differing degrees – of an opposing kind.[14] Nationalist historians in Germany and Ireland were in the position, albeit to different degrees, of needing to try to 'reassemble a glorious national history from the broken pieces of a turbulent past in order to provide a focus for national identity.'[15] The deep divisions within these two societies along religious, regional, and ethnic lines prevented, or at least complicated considerably, the emergence of a universally acceptable historical master narrative that could satisfy the search for a binding, 'universal', national historical identity.

Secondly, the nationalist historical narratives written in both contexts were defined by the 'confessionalized' nature of nineteenth and early twentieth century German and Irish society, in which social life was powerfully influenced by antagonisms between Catholic and Protestant communities. The importance of the reality of a 'confessionalized' society for how nationalist historical narratives and nationalism in general developed in these contexts should not be underestimated. Historical perspectives became, in general, closely linked if not defined by the Protestant or Catholic affiliation of the individuals in question. In Germany, nationalism, and the 'master narrative' of German history became intimately associated with Protestantism, and in Ireland with Catholicism (notwithstanding, of course, atypical though sometimes important exceptions). The 'confessionalization' of the nation's history in both societies deeply affected the way in which numerous different

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[14] Stefan Berger, 'The Power of National Pasts: Writing National History in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Europe', in Stefan Berger (ed.), *Writing the Nation: A Global Perspective* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p. 36. Benedikt Stuchtey, 'Literature, liberty, and the life of the nation: British historiography from Macaulay to Trevelyan', in Stefan Berger, Mark Donovan, and Kevin Passsmore (eds.), *Writing National Histories: Western Europe Since 1800* (London, Routledge, 1990), pp. 32-33. Michael Bentley, 'Shape and Pattern in British Historical Writing', in Stuart Macintyre, Juan Maiguashca, Attila Pok (eds.), *The Oxford History of Historical Writing, vol. IV: 1800-1945* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 205.
[15] Stuchtey and Wende, 'Introduction', in *British and German Historiography*, p. 10. Colin Kidd, 'Gaelic Antiquity and National Identity in Enlightenment Ireland and Scotland', *English Historical Review*, 109, 434 (1994), p. 1210.

historical problems were treated: the Protestant-Catholic divide in Irish and German society during the period under investigation, the reader will note, shows its importance in each of the thematic chapters of this thesis, reflecting its importance.

The distinctive features of the nationalist historical narratives of these contexts notwithstanding, both were framed by a common discourse and expressed common concerns, revealing compelling similarities in their treatment of problems such as social heterogeneity and the formation of national unity, and methods used to transform the past into stories of collective development. One of their most important purposes was to combat objections to the nation as a superior form of community and, in most cases, some form of national sovereignty as the guarantee of the modern nation's existence and development.[16] Heterogeneity within the nation (for example on religious or ethnic lines) tended to be approached as a problem or at least as a source of conflict, and solutions proposed for its neutralization. Prior forms of community which did not fit within a national narrative were to be delegitimised, so as to make the desired or achieved nation-state, the necessary and natural 'culmination' of the past.[17] A comparative study of the framing of national histories can be explored, then, through questions including: who are central actors of national histories? Who are, or what is, described as inimical to the nation? How are passing of time and periodization structured? What origins are constructed? In what ways was national history politically 'functionalized'? What links were established between national history and notions of 'national mission'?[18] These are among the questions that will be at the fore of this thesis in the individual thematic chapters.

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[16] Hill, *National History*, p. 3.
[17] Ibid, pp. 29, 42.
[18] Berger, 'The Comparative History of National Historiographies', in *Nations and their Histories*, pp. 34-38. Stefan Berger, 'The Invention of European National Traditions in European Romanticism', in *Oxford History of Historical Writing*, IV, p. 29.

Nineteenth and early twentieth century history writing on the nation is without question one of the most important elements in the history of nationalism. The modern study of nationalism has been shaped by numerous theoretical and methodological problems and disagreements, even at the level of establishing acceptable definitions for the terms 'nation' and 'nationalism'.[19] In practice nationalism has been studied as political ideology or cultural signifier, or as a form of political action, with scholars less often bringing these dimensions together. Gellner, Anderson, and others notwithstanding, most scholars have been wary of attempting to posit general theories of nationalism, in favour of analyzing individual 'case studies', or more rarely, pursuing comparative analysis. Others, such as Anthony D. Smith have made various attempts to formulate a less ambitious 'core doctrine' of nationalism which may reasonably be regarded as broadly applicable to all manifestations of the general phenomenon.[20] One of the few generally accepted conclusions in studying nationalism, however, is that it cannot be properly conceived of without its political dimension.[21] In most, though by no means all, cases, nationalists regard the nation-*state* or at least some form of national sovereignty as the ideal form of political organization for the nation. At a minimum they, like historical narratives of the nation, all emphasize collective identity: (political) autonomy, unity, a defining national culture; or, as the case often is in reality, aspiration toward these: 'self-government, a territorial home and a distinctive ethnic history are the three fundamental goals of nationalist movements'.[22] National

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[19] John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith (eds.), *Nationalism* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 3-4. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (2nd ed., London, Verso, 1991), p. 3.
[20] Anthony D. Smith, *Theories of Nationalism* (London, Duckworth, 1971), pp. 20-21. Peter Alter, *Nationalism* (London, Edward Arnold, 1994), pp. 1-3.
[21] John Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1993), p. 404.
[22] Anthony D. Smith, 'The Formation of Nationalist Movements' in Anthony D. Smith (ed.), *Nationalist Movements* (London, Macmillan, 1976), p. 15.

historiographies generally possessed an overt political significance, and their study can demonstrate how nationalism operated both as a form of political and social thought and as a distinctive cultural system.[23] In keeping in mind the vexing difficulties of defining 'nation' and 'nationalism', at this juncture the following 'working definition' of nationalism is proposed: nationalism is a belief system, ideology and understanding of politics that seeks cultural and political *autonomy* for the nation. A polity, even one which falls short of the sovereign state, which derives its legitimacy from the identity and cohesion of its constituent nation, is the irreducible political demand of nationalists.[24] Nationalism, furthermore, is the product of the interplay of often competing narratives of the nation, generally conceived of as a community which is defined as a historical and cultural collective distinguishable from other such communities and possessing, or entitled to possess, political autonomy and the allegiance of religious and 'non-national' ethnic or cultural collectives within its boundaries. It is no less important to note that nationalisms make moral and ethical claims as well, grounded upon the 'assumption that the well-being and identity of individuals depend on participation in a national culture.'[25] It is history writing of the nation as part of the 'common rhetoric of the nationalist imaginary', through a comparative focus, that is of primary interest here as far as this study can make a contribution to the study of nationalism.[26]

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[23] Michael Hughes, *Nationalism and Society: Germany, 1800-1945* (London, Edward Arnold, 1988), p. 2. Lloyd Kramer, 'Historical Narratives and the Meaning of Nationalism', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 38, 3 (1997), p. 526. Stephen J. Larin, 'Conceptual Debates in Ethnicity, Nationalism, and Migration', in Robert Denemark (ed.), *The International Studies Encyclopaedia* (Malden, MA., Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), p. 445. R.F. Foster, 'Forward to Methuselah: the progress of nationalism', in *Ireland's Polemical Past*, p. 151.

[24] Breuilly, 'Nationalism and National Unification', p. 150.

[25] Lloyd S. Kramer, *Nationalism in Europe and America: Politics, Cultures, and Identities since 1775* (Chapel Hill, NC, University of North Carolina Press, 2011), pp. 10-11.

[26] Umut Özkirimli, *Theories of Nationalism* (2nd ed., Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p. 205.

Early historiographical explanations of nationalism tended to be influenced by ideas of nations as primordial, nationalism as ubiquitous and universal.[27] The associations of historians with nationalism have discredited such views, and most modern historians would agree that nations and especially nationalisms are actively developed out of cultural practices and judgements, political contestations, and popular solidarities and animosities. Some scholars are firm that national loyalties, allegiances and communities can be dated back to pre-modern and indeed ancient societies, and that therefore the kinship communities that become ethnicities (or 'ethnic cores') or nations are natural phenomena manifested throughout history, even if the political ideology and movement known as nationalism is modern.[28] However it is generally accepted that, whatever the 'naturalness' of 'the nation' or 'national feeling', national*ism* is an always changing *process*, in some measure artificial and constructed, which is constantly reformulated and which can do as much to complicate and restrict allegiance to 'the nation' as to popularize it. 'Nationhood,' insofar as this is the outcome of nationalism, is something that is made by communities, rather than something inherent.[29] The internal heterogeneity of individual national historiographies certainly demonstrates that the history of nationalism is as John Hutchinson has argued a history of conflicts over competing narratives that seek to define 'national' communities.[30]

National history as a specific mode of defending and advocating for the nation specifically arose in the early nineteenth century out of both the Enlightenment and

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[27] Anthony D. Smith, *Myths and Memories of the Nation* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 3. Carlton J. H. Hayes, *Essays on Nationalism* (New York, 1926), p. 6.
[28] Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity* (London, Penguin, 1991), ix.
[29] Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1983), p. 57. Ernest Gellner, *Nationalism* (London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1997), viii.
[30] Homi K. Bhabha, 'Introduction: Narrating the Nation', in Homi K. Bhabha (ed.), *Nation and Narration* (London, Routledge, 1990). Kramer, 'Historical Narratives', p. 537. John Hutchinson, *Nations as Zones of Conflict* (London, SAGE, 2005)

the Counter-Enlightenment. In reaction to both pre-modern absolutist and dynastic thought and the abstract universalism of the new revolutionary thought, this history anchored itself upon existing historical narratives as well as cultural stereotypes, and the insistence that history could only be understood within a context that took 'the people' to be the primary mover of all history (that is, 'the people' of a given nation). [31] The basic characteristics of national historiography are then the assumption that the nation is the most important human group as either ideal or frame of reference, that it binds together sub-national groups while at the same time dividing humanity and that it comprises the source of identity and values and is the key historical actor.[32] Or, briefly, the fundamental assumptions underlying national historiography are that the nation is essentially 'natural' and (usually) that its political existence is necessary and inevitable, and morally just. National historiography is a specific form of historical representation which aims usually to justify the formation of nation-states, accompanies their formation, or seeks to influence existing definitions of the nation within a nation-state.[33] The idea that the nation is the central idea and the bearer of a history which shapes national identity has been central to the world-view of nationalists everywhere during the history of nationalism.[34] The role of the national past is especially important inasmuch as it is seen as a repository of 'authentic' national values, and any nation-state will be

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[31] John Breuilly, 'Nationalism and the Making of National Pasts', in *Nations and their Histories*, pp. 8-10.

[32] John Breuilly, 'Nationalism and Historians: Some Reflections on the Formation of National(ist) Historiographical Discourse', in Claire Norton (ed.), *Nationalism, Historiography and the (Re)Construction of the Past* (Washington, D.C., New Academia, 2007), p. 2.

[33] James Sheehan, 'The Problem of the Nation in German History', in Otto Busch and James Sheehan (eds.), *Die Rolle der Nation in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Berlin, Colloquium Verlag, 1985), p. 5. Stefan Berger, 'Representations of the Past: The Writing of National Histories in Europe', *Debatte*, 12, 1 (2004), p. 75.

[34] Stefan Berger, 'Introduction: Towards A Global History of National Historiographies', in *Writing the Nation*, p. 1. Susana Carvalho and Francois Gemenne, 'Introduction', *Nations and their Histories*, pp. 1-2. Immanuel Wallerstein, 'The Construction of Peoplehood', in Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein (eds.), *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities* (London, Verso, 1991) p. 78.

judged by the extent of its fidelity to such values.[35] In all cases, national history resulted from a selective construction of the past: 'the sense that a nation *must* have a history ensured in all cases that unpromising material would be pummelled into the appropriate shape.' This past, however, was never and obviously could never be *completely* invented; yet while the 'raw materials' may have already been there, the 'constructive' role of nationalist historians in fashioning the past into a specific narrative intellectually supporting the demands of the *modern* nation and nationalism, should not be underestimated.[36] Specific events in the nation's history were contested over because of their (presumed) importance for how the modern nation and the political tasks facing it were understood. In any event, what ultimately gives these histories their continuing power is the sense of identity they embody, mythical or not.[37]

The discipline and practice of historiography is regarded as scholarly historical work on a specialised subject or sub-discipline of history, based upon established methodologies and the critical treatment of primary evidence, and appropriate secondary sources. The 'methodological ground rules' or 'hallmarks' of professional historiography often argued to have taken hold in the nineteenth century were source criticism, objectivity, the desire to consult as many documents and primary sources and to read as much literature as possible to get an approximation of "how it actually

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[35] Hutchinson, *Nations as Zones of Conflict*, pp. 103, 112. Hedda Gramley, *Propheten des Deutschen Nationalismus: Theologen, Historiker und Nationalökonomen, 1848-1880* (Frankfurt am Main, Campus, 2001), p. 31.
[36] Breuilly, 'Nationalism and the Making of National Pasts', in *Nations and their Histories*, pp. 18-19, 126. Carvalho and Gemenne, 'Introduction', in *Nations and their Histories*, p. 2. Liah Greenfeld, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity* (London, Harvard University Press, 1992), p. 15. J.W. Burrow, *A Liberal Descent: Victorian Historians and the English Past* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 6.
[37] Brent O. Peterson, *History, Fiction, and Germany: Inventing the Nineteenth Century Nation* (Detroit, MI, Wayne State University Press, 2005), p. 268.

happened".'[38] The history of historiography, as is the concern here, is also the study of the ways in which history is written, the history of historical writing, broadly construed. This study considers sources produced in both academic and popular, or 'professional' and 'amateur' milieus.[39] To a certain extent, these are false or at least questionable dichotomies where this study is concerned.[40] In the period under consideration, the boundary between academic/professional and popular/amateur history was much more porous than today, not least because even the most reputable academic historians saw no necessary conflict between academic study and political engagement. In most of Europe, until the final decades of the nineteenth century, the institutionalized historical profession was still developing, at various speeds and in various ways. So while German historiography was particularly (perhaps peculiarly) university-centred, in Britain and Ireland, owing to the different status of the university (until 1845 there was only one university of any kind in Ireland, Trinity College, Dublin, which few Catholics chose to attend), and differing views of the cultural and social value of historical study, most notable history writing there was done outside of academia.[41] The kind of exhaustive multi-volume history writing that seemed to distinguish German historiography was seldom pursued in the Irish

[38] Stefan Berger, 'Professional and Popular Historians, 1800-1900-2000', in Barbara Korte and Sylvia Palatschek (eds.), *Popular History Now and Then: International Perspectives* (Transcript Verlag, Bielefeld, 2012), p. 13.

[39] Lee, 'Some Aspects of Modern Irish Historiography', in *Gedenkschrift Martin Goehring*, p. 442. Berger, 'Professional and Popular Historians, 1800-1900-2000', in *Popular History*, p. 14. Bentley, 'Shape and Pattern', *Oxford History of Historical Writing*, IV, p. 218. Wolfgang Hardtwig 'History for Readers: Popular Historiography in twentieth-century Germany', in Sylvia Paletschek (ed.), *Popular Historiographies in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: Cultural Meanings, Social Practices* (Oxford, Berghahn, 2011).

[40] 'It is sometimes said that…the difference between "history" and "fiction" resides in the fact that the historian "finds" his stories, whereas the fiction writer "invents" his. This conception of the historian's task, however, obscures the extent to which "invention" also plays a part in the historian's operations.' Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (London, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), pp. 6-7. Martin Nissen, *Populäre Geschichtsschreibung: Historiker, Verleger und die deutsche Öffentlichkeit, 1848-1900* (Cologne, Boehlau, 2009), p. 14.

[41] Mary O'Dowd, 'Ireland', in Ilaria Porciani and Lutz Raphael (eds.), *Atlas of European Historiography: The Making of a Profession, 1800-2005* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), p. 172. Stuchtey and Wende, 'Introduction', in *British and German Historiography*, p. 12.

context. Without underestimating the differences between the two forms of historiography, this distinction does however work in favour of this comparison in that it directs focus onto how nationalist historiography formed and functioned in different contexts, regardless of variation in its practice and institutional contexts. The focus is primarily on this form of historiography as writing of the past, and though some of the writers under consideration here were frankly unsophisticated even as amateurs, authors of both academic and popular works dealt with similar concerns and often used the same strategies to write national historical narratives, such as the elision of past and present, construction of a national *'telos'*, the emphasis and de-emphasis of certain events and currents, and so forth.[42] An argument made by Monika Baár on eastern and central European national historians holds true also for the historians considered here, especially the Irish ones: they 'essentially represented a "technical" school of historiography and showed more bent for craftsmanship itself than for ruminations on its philosophical and theoretical bases.'[43] Yet that is not to say that the writers considered here had fundamentally different outlooks on the *value* of history for the modern nation, rather quite the contrary. History written by renowned academic historians such as Heinrich von Treitschke could be wholly tendentious, while that of non-academic 'gentleman scholars' such as W.E.H. Lecky could be judiciously balanced and researched and lay firmer ground for further scholarly investigation. Berger has argued that though popular history bore 'clear differences to scientific history, in particular greater dramatization, more reduction, more narrativisation and a greater focus on public attention and the market', these were nonetheless not rigid distinctions true in all cases. 'The same idea of what defined good history reigned in both popular and

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[42] Berger, 'The Invention of European National Traditions', in *Oxford History of Historical Writing*, pp. 19, 27.
[43] Baar, *Historians and Nationalism*, p. 55.

professional forms of history writing', Berger argues, and 'popular and professional histories…were not dichotomous and mutually exclusive entities', rather 'the borderlines between them were continuously crossed.'[44] Indeed, professional or academic and non-professional historians could have more in common with each other than with other members of their own 'genre'. What ultimately unites the historians considered here was the motivation and intent to present narratives that gave the 'authentic' history of their nation. If the three most important 'hallmarks' of professional historical scholarship were source criticism, the use of as many documents, other primary sources and secondary sources as possible, and of course, objectivity in judgement, in practice few of the historians here combined all these hallmarks without fault. Source criticism could be employed to tendentious ends, historians could be biased in their choice of sources, and 'objectivity' did not mean the same thing then as it does today. Historians 'excused' their elisions and 'narrativising' acts through their self-image as 'guardians' of and advocates for 'their' nation.

The principal writers under consideration here will include, in the Irish context, Thomas D'Arcy McGee (1825-1868), Thomas Davis (1814-1845), John Mitchel (1815-1875), A.M. Sullivan (1830-1884), Standish O'Grady (1846-1928), W.E.H. Lecky (1838-1903), Eoin MacNeill (1867-1945), and Alice Stopford Green (1847-1929); and in the German context, Leopold von Ranke (1795-1886), Heinrich von Sybel (1817-1895), Johannes Janssen (1829-1891), Felix Dahn (1834-1912), Gustav Freytag (1816-1895), Heinrich von Treitschke (1834-1896), and Johannes Haller

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[44] Berger, 'Professional and Popular Historians', in *Popular History*, pp. 17-18. Stefan Berger, Chris Lorenz, and Billie Melman, 'Introduction', in idem (eds.), *Popularizing National Pasts: 1800 to the Present* (London, Routledge, 2012), p. 17.

(1865-1947).[45] The majority of these authors and their works will appear in each of the individual thematic chapters. Ranke is included less for the reputation he earned late in life and posthumously as the 'father' of modern history than for his place in the canon of German national history writing, and his influence on subsequent notable German historians, whether they accepted or rejected his 'legacy'.[46] While the primary focus will be on these writers, in the interest of establishing context and attempting to trace their influence other texts in addition to those written by these actors will also be considered where found appropriate. As this is a comparative study of two national historical traditions, it cannot, nor should it attempt to be a comprehensive study of either one, but rather focuses on particularly important figures in each context. This is a restricted selection, so that the arguments of these historians can be given reasonably detailed attention individually, and one that offers a broadly representative sample. By necessity, this study has been guided by the secondary literature on the relationships between historiography and nationalism in Germany and Ireland during this period, including in the choice of the principal historians to be considered. This is less a comparison of two whole national traditions of history writing than one of how, through the contributions of two groups of particularly important individuals in these contexts, a particular way of thinking historically about the nation was arrived at, which in turn shaped nationalism in each of these contexts in this period. An important criterion for choosing this particular selection of historians was their popularity and influence, both in terms of the readership of their books and their involvement in contemporary political matters. By necessity certain important figures have been left out, owing to

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[45] For the reader's reference, a brief biographical sketch of each of these individuals can be found in the Appendix, 'Dramatis Personae'.
[46] Georg G. Iggers, *The German Conception of History: The National Tradition of Historical Thought from Herder to the Present* (Middletown, CT., Wesleyan University Press, 1983), pp. 88-91.

the constraints of this kind of comparative study. Though it is necessary to be cautious of a 'rear-view mirror' approach, what is dealt with here with respect to how forms and varieties of history writing informed nationalism in these countries is a history of 'roads heavily travelled.' These writers were all well-read and their broader influence is well-attested in both Irish and German historiography. Considered as a group, the periods most often focused upon by these authors were the early and high middle ages, the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. All of the authors were actively engaged in the politics of their respective countries during their careers. All of them were in some way influenced by the reality of 'confessionalized' society in Ireland and Germany during this period; for every one of them this and the 'confessionalized' dimension of nationalist history were of fundamental importance. These authors all at least made conscious effort towards 'authenticity' and 'authority' to establish definitive interpretations of national history, or claimed the value of 'authenticity' as they understood it.[47] Nevertheless, we will be reminded throughout of Renan's dictum that 'historical error is essential to the creation of the nation', that the construction of nationalist historical narratives was the work of *selective* memory. The analysis of the reception of ideas and texts is a thorny area for historians, as there is seldom 'ready-made' source material, and possession of a book is in itself no guarantee that the book has been read at all. National historians sometimes wrote for popular audiences, sometimes only for other historians, and sometimes, intentionally or unintentionally, they reached both audiences, with the 'message' of their texts being mediated differently by different groups of readers. This is a study that aims to compare how history writing shaped certain ideas of the nation in Germany and

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[47] Stefan Berger, 'A Return to the National Paradigm: National History Writing in Germany, Italy, France and Britain from 1945 to the Present', *Journal of Modern History*, 77, 3 (2005), p. 631.

Ireland between the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As the principal concern here is comparative analysis, the focus must be firstly on the texts themselves. The most important ideas and assumptions of diverse groups of nationalists in Ireland and Germany in this period were strongly redolent of the most important ideas, judgements, and conclusions of the writers considered most prominently. By considering where appropriate the writing of less prominent historians, as a supplement to those of the principal protagonists we can gain some idea of the influence of the latter in a wider arena.

Where comparative history is concerned, Kocka's and Haupt's brief definition may be considered as comprehensive: 'in comparative history, two or more historical phenomena are systematically studied for similarities and differences in order to contribute their better description, explanation, and interpretation.'[48] The task therefore is to address both the specificities of the individual cases under comparison and shed light on the broader problem at issue; in this case, the writing of national history in Europe between the mid-nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth.[49] As John Breuilly has argued similarly, the comparative historian is necessarily dealing with questions that can and must be generalized beyond and over the two or more things that he or she is comparing.[50] Or as Peter Baldwin has claimed: 'At a minimum, good comparative histories should give insights into each particular case that would have remained unrevealed had they been studied in

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[48] Jürgen Kocka and Heinz-Gerhard Haupt, 'Comparison and Beyond: Traditions, Scope, and Perspectives of Comparative History', in idem (eds.), *Comparative and Transnational History: Central European Approaches and New Perspectives* (Oxford, Berghahn, 2009), p. 2.

[49] Deborah Cohen and Maura O'Connor, 'Introduction', in idem (eds.) *Comparison and History: Europe in Cross-National Perspective* (London, Routledge, 2004), xx.

[50] John Breuilly, *Labour and Liberalism in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1992), pp. 1-3.

isolation.'[51] The principal problem when writing comparative history is that it sometimes leans towards or turns into juxtaposition rather than truly integrated and systematic comparison. This is a pitfall which this study aims to avoid through a focus on a restricted 'sample' of writers, and on certain motifs or themes in national history writing, though some exposition of the individual cases, and their particularities, cannot be avoided.

The same essential considerations that drove nationalism in Germany did so also in Ireland. [52] Before 'German unification' nationalism in both contexts was 'oppositional' or 'emancipatory', and had often met with violent repression. German nationalism, and the German historiographical tradition that gave it such weight, had been 'born' in the fire of the Napoleonic Wars and French occupation of the German lands. [53] Insofar as nationalists in both contexts sought 'liberation' from the domination of large, imperial, multi-national polities, *both* nationalisms were to differing degrees anti-imperial (Ireland *contra* Britain, 'Germany' *contra* the Habsburg imperial legacy, 'successor' to the Holy Roman Empire[54]), and anti-regionalist; Ireland was *one*, indivisible ancient nation in its own right rather than an appendage of Britain, 'Germany' took precedence over the multiple states that collectively comprised the German Confederation. [55] The mid-nineteenth century period and subsequent decades was in both countries a formative period in the development of nationalism in each of its dimensions – political, cultural, intellectual – and one from which can be dated with certainty the growth of a more widely

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[51] Peter Baldwin, 'Comparing and Generalizing; Why all History is Comparative, yet no History is Sociology', in *Comparison and History*, p. 11.

[52] Leerssen, *National Thought in Europe*, pp. 159, 169.

[53] Iggers, *The German Conception of History*, p. 7. Otto Dann, *Nation und Nationalismus* (Munich, Beck, 1993), p. 174.

[54] This is not intended to overlook the fact that long before 1871 the German Kingdom of Prussia had annexed much for the former Poland. However, the sense that the authentic German nation (or '*Kleindeutschland*', as was often meant) was constituted *contra* an existing empire (albeit one-ruled by an ethnically German dynasty), the Habsburg Empire, was important.

[55] Thomas Nipperdey, *Nachdenken über die deutschen Geschichte* (C.H. Beck, Munich, 1986), p. 69.

popularised 'culture of nationhood'.[56] In Ireland, Catholic Emancipation in 1829 and the subsequent unsuccessful campaign for the repeal of the legislative union between Britain and Ireland were crucial events for the development of a Catholic-oriented political nationalism.[57] Institutions such as the Irish Parliamentary Party, the Land League, the Gaelic League and others came to together comprise arguably components of a 'shadow' Irish 'national' democracy that would offer an institutional basis for independence. The catastrophic Great Famine and the socio-economic misery of the Irish masses seemed to prove beyond doubt the failure of the Act of Union. In Germany, the Rhine Crisis of 1840 was a seminal event in the history of nationalism in Germany and seemed at least to confer it on the possibility of becoming a mass movement.[58] The failures of the Revolution of 1848 and the Frankfurt Parliament and the refusal of Prussia to assume its 'leading role' played important roles in setting the parameters of those debates that would be 'resolved' in 1871. The events of 1848 were seminal for the turning away of the German *Bildungsbürgertum* from 'western' liberalism. The circumstances of 'German unification' also opened a number of questions for German nationalists. The 1870's in Ireland saw the beginnings of the Irish Home Rule movement, which – though the significance of this event can hardly compare with those of 1871 in continental Europe – would create a political movement which would form part of the parentage

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[56] Hughes, *Nationalism and Society*, pp. 55, 86, 92. Mark Hewitson, *Nationalism in Germany, 1848-1866: Revolutionary Nation* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 2, 20, 31. Harold James, *A German Identity: 1770-1990* (London, Phoenix, 1994), p. 48. Hagen Schulze, *The Course of German Nationalism* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 71. Brian Vick, *Defining Germany: The 1848 Frankfurt Parliamentarians and National Identity* (London, Harvard University Press, 2002), pp. 48, 50, 208. Charles E. McClelland, *The German Historians and England: A Study in Nineteenth-Century Views* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1971), p. 6.

[57] Joep Leerssen, *Remembrance and Imagination: Patterns in the Historical and Literary Representation of Ireland in the Nineteenth Century* (Cork, Cork University Press, 1996), pp. 2, 3-4, 22.

[58] James M. Brophy, 'The Rhine Crisis of 1840 and German Nationalism: Chauvinism, Skepticism, and Regional Reception', *Journal of Modern History*, 85, 1 (2013), pp. 1-35. Jörg Echternkamp, *Der Aufstieg der deutschen Nationalismus, 1770-1840*, (New York/Frankfurt a.M., Campus, 1998), pp. 478-479, 498.

of the independent Irish state. The events of the later *Vormärz* period and of 1848 in Germany, and in Ireland Catholic Emancipation, the Repeal Campaign and the brief life of 'Young Ireland', were formative for the development of the process towards historiographical, political, and cultural 'nation-building' in these countries. With this periodization not only can we encompass most of the history of these two nationalisms, but can also attempt to consider the exact importance of the achievement of national statehood to national historiography. [59] Though the establishment of the German and Irish nation-states occurred fifty years apart, each occurred within the 'classic' period of nationalist state-building. Further, similar challenges faced the governments of both new nation-states on their foundation, including the effects of a long-standing religious divide, disputed borders, and the problems posed by the challenge of oppositional nationalism.

Nineteenth and twentieth century Ireland has often been described as having a 'colonial' history, thus the 'subaltern' status of Irish nationalism. German nationalists, on the other hand, whatever the challenges they faced, opposed a political system within which, nonetheless, the rulers of the various German states were themselves of German origin, and there was no doubt that 'the Germans' possessed a rich national culture of their own. Yet whatever the 'colonial' features of Irish society, it is a simplistic exaggeration to describe modern Irish history as 'colonial'. [60] The history of their origins notwithstanding, the social and cultural

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[59] Some recent scholarship has argued that the creation of a German state should be analytically separated from discussions of nationalism in view of the peculiarities of the relationship between German statehood and German nationalism. Konrad H. Jarausch and Michael Geyer, *Shattered Pasts: Reconstructing German Histories* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2003), p. 222. Hughes, *Nationalism and Society*, p. 101. Miroslav Hroch, 'Historical *belles-lettres* as a vehicle of the image of National History', in Miroslav Hroch, *Comparative Studies in Modern European History: Nation, Nationalism, and Social Change* (Aldershot, Ashgate, 2007), p. 98.

[60] Stephen Howe, *Ireland and Empire: Colonial Legacies in Irish History and Culture* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 23-27, 31-3337, 43-64. R.V. Comerford, 'Political Myths in Modern Ireland', in *Irishness in a Changing Society*, ed. Princess Grace Irish Library (Gerrards Cross, Smythe, 1988), p. 12. Matthew Kelly, 'Irish Nationalist Opinion and the British Empire in the 1850s

relationships between the 'ethnic' communities in Ireland were simply too complex to be reduced to a conflict of 'settler' vs. 'native'.[61] As we shall see, members of the 'settler' community played a role in the development of Irish nationalism that could not be reduced to a simple 'colonial' understanding of their place of in Irish society. Irish nationalism, long before 1922, was a mass movement with a deep and widespread cultural sphere. For German nationalists, though the nineteenth century, and particularly the period since 1871, was one which witnessed the 'triumph' of the nation, there remained a widespread understanding well after 1871 that German unification, particularly in the cultural sphere, was a continuing process rather than a final event. Even if we should not receive nationalist assumptions about their nations unquestioningly, to dismiss them too readily is to risk obscuring the details of views of society which themselves did much to shape the political culture of those societies. While it is difficult to think about nationalism without also thinking about its relation to the state, the nation-state, nationalism is fundamentally a way of thinking about the nation primarily. The question of the nation-state was certainly an important one for nationalist historians, and it is true that for most the achievement of nation-statehood was regarded as both necessary and desirable. Yet it is debatable whether the achievement of 'national statehood' necessarily fundamentally affected the content of how they thought about their nations in terms of their lengthy historical existences. The nation, after all, could only make sense historically in terms of the broad span of its existence, whether it had possessed its own 'state' in any recognizable form for any period of time, or not. The nation's history did not come to an end with the achievement of statehood.

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and 1860s', *Past and Present*, 204 (2009), pp. 127-129 131, 153. Steven G. Ellis, 'Representations of the Past in Ireland: whose past and whose present?', *Irish Historical Studies*, 27, 108 (1991), p. 294.
[61] R.V. Comerford, *Ireland: Inventing the Nation* (London, Arnold, 2003), p. 78.

The first chapter will deal with the representation of the 'origins' of the nation and foundational events in its medieval and early modern periods. The second chapter will deal with comparison of the relationship between religion and the nation in the national historical narratives, and how the narration of religious conflicts was used to confer a confessional identity on the nation in the present. The third chapter will consider and compare how the historical 'national territory' was defined. The fourth and final thematic chapter will consider how the idea of race or 'race thinking' was applied to the national past and to national historical narratives. A final, 'supplementary' chapter briefly examines transnational connections between historical representations of the nation in these contexts.

CHAPTER ONE

The Nation and its Origins

I

A national historical narrative, even if it only considers a certain period in the nation's past or a certain historical problem, inevitably commences with a discourse of origins.[1] Narratives of the origins of the nation in Ireland and Germany were centred on two 'foundational epochs' of especial importance: the medieval period (up until around the mid-thirteenth century) and the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. These periods were essential to the construction of the dominant narratives of the Irish or German nation's historical 'special path'. In the Irish case, the historical epochs were those of medieval Gaelic Ireland before and after the first Anglo-Norman invasions of the late twelfth century, and the ethno-religious conflicts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in particular the 1641 Rebellion and Confederate Wars of the 1640's. In the German case, they were the rise and decline of the early medieval Kingdom of Germany and the Holy Roman Empire from the late tenth century up to the mid-thirteenth, and the religious conflicts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, particularly the Thirty Years' War. The medieval epoch functioned as an obvious 'starting point' of the nation's historical trajectory for which there was verifiable documentary evidence, and the first place in which to

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[1] Jan Ifversen, 'Myth in the Writing of European History', in Stefan Berger and Chris Lorenz (eds.), *Nationalizing the Past: Historians as Nation Builders in Modern Europe* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p. 454-455. Comerford, *Ireland*, p. 51. Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Revival* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 65-66. Stefan Berger, 'Geschichten von der Nation: Einige Vergleichende Thesen zur deutschen, englischen, französisch, und italienischen Nationalgeschichtsschreibung seit 1800', in Christoph Conrad & Sebastian Conrad (eds.), *Die Nation Schreiben: Geschichtswissenschaft im internationalen Vergleich* (Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2002), p. 56. Ingo Wiwjorra, 'Germanenmythos und Vorgeschichtsforschung im 19. Jahrhundert', in Michael Geyer and Hartmut Lehmann (eds.), *Religion und Nation/Nation und Religion: Beiträge zu einer unbewältigten Geschichte* (Göttingen, Wallstein, 2004), p. 367.

trace the beginnings of the development of political nationhood.[2] The history of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had shaped the nation's modern history, in particular historical problem of the confessionalized society and the continued 'arrested development' of the nation's 'path' toward political sovereignty. Such was the importance attributed in both contexts to the events of this later period that developments and events prior and subsequent to them were interpreted according to how they either foreshadowed them or prolonged their significance.[3] Here was the 'continuity-constructing' task of both sets of narratives, one which was pursued with 'explaining' the historical and modern 'character' of the nation. The challenge in the representation of origins for historians in these contexts was how to represent historical periods generally thought to be distinguished by disunity and dynastic and ethno-religious conflict, or at the very least the general failure to achieve political nationhood, as the foundations of a coherent national historical narrative. In German and Irish national historiography, narratives of origins were located in these 'foundational epochs' in which the nation had 'failed' to secure its own unity, resulting in inevitable defeat and catastrophe both immediately and over the course of centuries. Even if one of these epochs, such as the medieval, could be presented as having been in some respects a 'golden age', for example in culture, it was also

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[2] Berger, 'The Invention of European National Traditions', in *Oxford History of Historical Writing*, IV, p. 32. The early years of 'professionalization' of the historical discipline in Germany and Ireland (where it finished much later) was inextricably linked with the study of the medieval past in both countries. In Ireland the work of scholars such as O'Donovan, Petrie and O'Curry was fundamental in establishing a basis of medieval primary sources. Bernadette Cunningham, 'Transmission and Translation of Medieval Irish Sources in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries', in R.J.W. Evans and Guy Marchal (eds.), *The Uses of the Middle Ages in Modern European States: History, Nationhood, and the Search for Origins* (Basingstoke, Palgrave MacMillan, 2011), p. 14. Daniela Saxer, 'Monumental Undertakings: Source Publications for the Nation', in *Setting the Standards*, pp. 47, 54.
[3] The conflicts that engulfed Ireland and Germany in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were of labyrinthine complexity, but they centred essentially on ethnic and religious hostility and contests for power and territory. The Thirty Years' War accelerated the decline of the Holy Roman Empire, formed the root of the Protestant-Catholic confessional divide in Germany and provided the conditions for the rise of the German territorial states. In Ireland the 1640's represented the last sustained period of Irish (Catholic) 'national' self-government before 1922. The English re-conquest of the 1650's consolidated the confessional division in Ireland.

regarded as having contained within itself the germ of later national decline, because of the underlying 'national disunity'.[4] The 'failure' of the medieval nation to become a nation-state, and the disastrous wars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were in both contexts seen as determining the whole course of the nation's history. Of course, the presentist application of the modern concept of 'the nation' and 'nationalism' to these periods accounted for the 'explanation' of these 'foundational epochs'. It is the 'beginnings' and 'endings' of national histories that to a large extent determine their main content. Nationalist historical narratives sought to reconcile the supposed naturalness of national origins with the novelty of the modern nation-state that is meant to rest upon them in the present or in an anticipated future. The projection of origins into the distant past endows nations with histories that are necessary for the legitimation of the nation-state.[5] Narratives of origins underpinned in each case a 'rise-and-decline' scheme and periodization of the nation's history. This proceeded from apparently promising beginnings and early cultural flourishing, and the movement towards political unity, to decline in the course of the medieval period – influenced to one degree or another by foreign elements – to a fleeting 'revival' towards the end of the medieval period, followed by disastrous events in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries – intimately connected with religious conflict – which conditioned the whole of the nation's modern history.

II

If it is true that the nation is an 'imagined community' or body of 'invented traditions', perhaps nowhere is this more so than in the historiographical and narrative construction of national origins. National origins may be congruent with historical facts or patent fictions, or somewhere in between, but the ways in which

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[4] Steven J. Mock, *Symbols of Defeat in the Construction of National Identity* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 203-204.
[5] Hill, *National History*, p. 155-156

they are narrated are always part of 'setting the scene' for national histories. 'Myths' of origins and descent do much to delineate and reinforce the boundaries between a particular community and outsiders.[6] Narratives of origins in both contexts were often entwined with the contrasting of the characteristics of the Germans and the Irish from their earliest origins as against their respective 'Others', e.g. the French, the Slavs, the English (the role of 'Othering' will be dealt with in more detail in chapter four).[7] Narratives of origins were also, naturally, very closely linked with those of homeland and national territory, particularly in the German context in the idea of *Heimat*.[8] The origins of 'the Germans' and 'the Irish' were held to be inseparable from their geographical situations: the *Germanen* (presented as the ancestors of the modern Germans) were the first inhabitants of the land that became Germany, pure and unmixed, but a land that was the 'crossroads' of Europe with few 'natural' boundaries to the west and east, and therefore vulnerable.[9] In the Irish context, by contrast, Ireland's insularity was similarly presented as being a determinant of the ethnic and national character of its 'first' inhabitants, the Gaels, as well as of all those many other groups that had settled in Ireland, peacefully or violently, throughout its history. The 'Irish' were also generally assumed, by the nationalists at least, to be a 'naturally' single and unified people by virtue of their domicile on one compact island, with a talent for assimilating newcomers.

Historians were usually keen to trace the origins of 'their' nations back as far as possible, yet the further they went, the more difficult it was to separate myth from

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[6] Smith, *Myths and Memories of the Nation*, pp. 15, 60, 267-268. Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 15.

[7] Chris Lorenz, 'Representations of Identity: Ethnicity, Class, Religion, and Gender in National Histories: An Introduction to Conceptual History', in *The Contested Nation*, p. 25. Kramer, 'Historical Narratives and the Meaning of Nationalism', pp. 526, 537. Christopher B. Krebs, *A Most Dangerous Book: Tacitus's Germania from the Roman Empire to the Third Reich* (London, W.W. Norton, 2011), p. 21.

[8] The subject of national territory will be dealt with at length in chapter three.

[9] Dietrich Schäfer, *Deutsche Geschichte, Bd. I: Frühzeit* (Jena, Gustav Fischer Verlag, 1910), pp. 3-4. Heinrich Claß, *Deutsche Geschichte* (Leipzig, Theodor Weichler Verlag, 1919), p. 4.

historically verifiable fact. It was questionable whether the origins of the nation could even provide for an unambiguous 'beginning'.[10] This was more pronounced in the German and Irish contexts given the recurrence and centrality of discontinuity and 'rupture' in both German and Irish histories which could not be ignored or glossed over.[11] Narratives of origins in these contexts *both* asserted fundamental continuities between present and distant past, *and* treated periods between that past and the present as 'discontinuities' or 'ruptures'. In part, these assumed or rather were ascribed with a 'foundational' character', as for example the Thirty Years' War in German national historiography, and the wars of the 1640s in Irish national historiography.[12] Both tactics operated by shifting present debates over legitimacy to the past and declaring them to have been 'settled' or prefigured in some way in the past.[13] The significance of origins lay in how the 'singularity' of national formation in one or the other context was constructed by moving back from the present into the past, in a kind of reverse teleology or *genealogy* of the modern nation.[14] In the sense that arguments for national independence were based on historical precedents that were extended as far back as possible into history, placing too much stock on periods of upheaval and revolutionary change as foundational events could create problems, unless these periods and events could be integrated within a narrative that connected to the nation's earliest origins, in the medieval period, or in an even earlier period, as both German and Irish historians attempted to do.

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[10] Stefan Berger and Chris Lorenz, 'Introduction', in *Nationalizing the Past*, p. 11. Joep Leerssen, "Setting the Scene for National History", in *Nationalizing the Past*, p. 76.

[11] Leerssen, *Remembrance and Imagination*, p. 225. Jarausch and Geyer, *Shattered Past*, pp. 12, 17. James Joll, 'National Histories and National Historians: Some German and English Views of the Past', German Historical Institute London, Annual Lecture of 1984, p. 6.

[12] Ifversen, 'Myth', p. 456.

[13] Hill, *National History*, pp. 33-34.

[14] Ibid., p. 159. Smith, *Ethnic Origins*, pp. 182, 196. Etienne Balibar, 'The Nation Form: History and Ideology', in *Race, Nation, Class*, p. 86. Dieter Langewiesche, *Reich, Nation, Föderation: Deutschland und Europa* (Munich, Beck, 2008), p. 18.

'History is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake', so lamented the character of Stephen Dedalus in Joyce's *Ulysses*.[15] The sense not only of a deterministic path of history but also that, at important 'foundational points' the nation's history 'according to the normative values of the national ideology, took a wrong turn, yielding disastrous results that would endure for centuries afterward and that the nation exists to reverse',[16] was important in both Irish and German contexts. The outcomes of the 'foundational events' of the nation's history, more especially those that represented 'defeat' or disaster, did, in the national historical narratives of both countries, seem to be continuously present in the nation's disturbed modernity. In the more didactic narratives, such foundational events were regarded as having established and/or reaffirmed a principle of (re)generative sacrifice that was to be fundamental to the *weltanschaaung* of nationalists in both Germany and Ireland. The emphasis on the nation's 'suffering' from its temporal beginnings also served to confer a 'philosophical' or even 'providential 'dimension on the nation's history.[17] One of the central criteria for inclusion in, and exclusion from, the nation in the modern present becomes therefore, the individual's identification with a particular historical narrative of foundational struggle and sacrifice. This is why, arguably, the early modern period as foundational period was regarded in history writing in both Germany and Ireland as ultimately of greater significance than the medieval period, and why history became such a source of contestation in Germany and Ireland, especially when linked to nationalism. Opponents of this or that historical view were regarded in both contexts not only as incorrect, but fundamentally *wrong* in a moral as well as political sense.

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[15] James Joyce, *Ulysses* (Oxford, Clarendon, 1993), p. 34.
[16] Mock, *Symbols of Defeat*, p. 2.
[17] Ibid., p. 200.

III

Though it is not necessarily correct to say that patriotic Irish history writing began in the 1840s, it was with the Young Ireland movement of this period, a collective of young intellectuals (mainly lawyers and journalists), that we see the first modern attempts to construct a theory of nationality, a cultural and not just a political idea of Irishness, such that this group became 'the grammarians of Irish nationality.'[18] We begin here with its leading member, in recognition of his fundamental influence on the history of Irish nationalism. It was Thomas Davis (1814-1845), perhaps more than any other Young Irelander who perceived the fundamental importance of history to nationalism; it is not an exaggeration to say that the history of modern Irish nationalist thought begins with him.[19] Young Ireland's origins lay in the campaign for the Repeal of the parliamentary union between Britain and Ireland led by the Catholic emancipationist (and British Liberal) Daniel O'Connell; and at the same time dissatisfaction with what was perceived as an excessively narrow focus on utilitarian parliamentary politics in the Repeal movement. The Young Irelanders, in the mainstream of nationalist movements throughout Europe at the time, set themselves to the task of 'defining' Irish nationality. While the group fragmented after an abortive attempted uprising in 1848 that ended in fiasco, the thinking and writings of its principal members would assume canonical status within Irish

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[18] Robert Kee, *The Green Flag: A History of Irish Nationalism* (London, Penguin, 2000), p. 195.

[19] John Hutchinson, *The Dynamics of Cultural Nationalism: The Gaelic Revival and the Creation of the Irish Nation-State* (London, Allen and Unwin, 1987), pp. 76, 96. D.G. Boyce, *Nationalism in Ireland* (Dublin, Gill and Macmillan, 1981), p. 154. Declan Kiberd, *Inventing Ireland: The Literature of the Modern Nation* (London, Vintage, 1996), p. 22. Comerford, *Ireland*, p. 69. Joep Leerssen, 'Irish cultural nationalism and its European context', in B. Stewart (ed.), *Hearts and Minds: Irish Culture and Society under the Act of Union* (Gerrards Cross, Princess Grace Irish Library, 2002), p. 180.

nationalism. Davis, himself a Protestant of Welsh ancestry[20] who had studied law at

Trinity College Dublin before founding *The Nation* newspaper (the Young Ireland

journal), and having become familiar with nationalist currents in continental Europe,

was also well aware of the need for a 'modern' form of Irish history writing that

could combine didacticism for the purpose of national education and mobilization

with scholarly moderation. For Davis, literature, Irish national literature, particularly

of the historical kind, was perhaps the most powerful weapon for the national cause.

Irishmen needed to understand their history properly to make sense of their present

and advance their nation in the future. In his short life (Davis died just short of the

age of thirty-one) he dealt most significantly with Irish history in the sixteenth and

seventeenth centuries. These writings are his lectures to the Historical Society of

Trinity College, Dublin, and his lengthy essay *The Patriot Parliament of 1689.*[21]

Davis's application of principles advanced in his lectures and his own attempts to

ground arguments for nationhood on historical precedent focused largely on the

record of the 'independent', 'patriot' Irish parliaments of 1689 and 1782.[22] At the

centre of Davis's attempts to construct a coherent theory of Irish nationality for the

modern age was his contention – again thoroughly in the mainstream of

contemporary European thinking – that only peoples with a *national* history, a

developed historical consciousness, truly deserved to be called 'nations'.[23] The

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[20] Helen F. Mulvey, *Thomas Davis and Ireland: A Biographical Study* (Washington, D.C., Catholic University of America Press, 2003), p. 21.

[21] Charles Gavan Duffy, 'Introduction', in Thomas Davis, *The Patriot Parliament of 1689*, ed. Charles Gavan Duffy (3rd ed., Dublin, J. Duffy, 1893), lxxxviii.

[22] Davis, *The Patriot Parliament*, xcii-xcv, pp. 39-40, 138. David Dwan, *The Great Community: Culture and Nationalism in Ireland* (Dublin, Field Day, 2008), p. 23. Alvin Jackson, *The Two Unions: Ireland, Scotland, and the Survival of the United Kingdom, 1707-2007* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 184.

[23] Thomas Davis, *Literary and Historical Essays*, ed. Charles Gavan Duffy (Dublin, J. Duffy, 1845), pp. 29-30, 48. Joep Leerssen, 'Nation and Ethnicity', in *The Contested Nation*, p. 88. Dwan, *The Great Community*, pp. 23, 31. Kee, *The Green Flag*, p. 195. Leerssen, *Remembrance and Imagination*, pp. 3-4, 22. Donal McCartney, 'The Political Use of History in the Work of Arthur Griffith', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 8, 1 (1973), pp. 16-17.

notion that the Irish, by this standard, were still an 'incomplete' nation would remain an enduring one.[24] In one of his lectures Davis had tellingly remarked: 'History well-read is a series of pictures of great men and great scenes and great acts…With rare exceptions *national history* does dramatic justice, alien history is the inspiration of a traitor.'[25] Davis's 'manifesto' for Irish national history writing was based on three basic principles: that Irish historical works be written from original *Irish* sources, that they take the form of a '"graphic" narrative of what was, not a set of moral disquisitions', and encompass social and cultural change as well as political events. He called for all historical works to be free of the 'greatest vice' of 'bigotry of race or creed.' The writers of Irish history must instead possess 'a philosophical eye to the merits and demerits of all, and a solemn and haughty impartiality".[26] This reflected his own sense that Irish nationalism must be non-confessional and not establish itself in 'racial' differences *between* Irishmen. In the first issue of the Young Ireland journal *The Nation*, of 15 October 1842, this credo was expressed: 'Nationality is our great object…which may embrace Protestant, Catholic, and Dissenter…the Irishmen of a hundred generations and the stranger who is within our gates.' Davis was himself not averse to drawing moral lessons from history, regretting that there seemed to have been so little 'application of political philosophy to our history.'[27] His colleague Charles Gavan Duffy wrote in similar terms in *The Nation*: 'the history of Ireland abounded in noble lessons, and had the unity and

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[24] Davis, *Literary and Historical Essays*, pp. 29-30. Alice Stopford Green, *The Old Irish World* (London, Macmillan, 1912), p. 9. Robert Lynd, *Ireland A Nation* (New York, Grant Richards, 1920), pp. 228-236. John Molony, *A Soul came into Ireland: Thomas Davis, 1814-1845: A Biography* (Dublin, Geography Publications, 1995) p. 28.

[25] Thomas Davis, *An Address Read Before the Historical Society, Dublin* (Dublin, Webb and Chapman, 1840), p. 30.

[26] Davis, *Literary and Historical Essays*, pp. 32-37.

[27] Quoted in Mulvey, *Thomas Davis and Ireland*, p. 201 It is necessarily a speculative exercise to consider what kind of historian Davis might have been had he lived longer. His musings on the nature of history demonstrate an appreciation of its growing importance in the context of rising nationalism in Europe, and sensitivity to the need to place Irish history writing on a more 'respectable' footing.

purpose of an epic poem. It exhibited an unbroken determination to maintain their national existence, which every generation of Irishmen took up anew'.[28]

The significance of *The Patriot Parliament*, in terms of its context and objectives, indeed that of Davis's choice to write about it, showed how in the nineteenth century Irish historiography continued to be centred on the events of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and their long-term effects.[29] This work, which dealt with a political 'precedent' for contemporary demands for Irish independence, an historical institution that could be represented as both Irish and 'national',[30] was also a challenge to claims that granting autonomy to Ireland would inevitably lead to the establishment of an intolerant Catholic and anti-English polity.[31] Davis presented the Irish Parliament of 1689, a Catholic assembly which had gathered to support the cause of King James II against his rival William of Orange, as mostly moderate and tolerant in its measures, opposed to the oppressive ascendancy of any Church, as authentically national, while still faithful to the connection of the Crown with Britain. In having 'established the principal parts of a code needful for the *permanent* liberty and prosperity of Ireland',[32] it offered not only a precedent for Irish political freedom, but also past vindication of Davis's own conception of what the Irish nation should be: tolerant and moderate in matters of religion, and composed of all patriotic Irish people regardless of their differing ancestries. This Parliament was presented as one of a number of organized attempts made by Irishmen in their

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[28] Jean-Christophe Penet, 'The Young Ireland Movement: Inscribing Ireland's Identity at the heart of "*The Nation*"', *Nordic Irish Studies*, 6 (2007), pp. 34-35.

[29] Jacqueline R. Hill, 'Popery and Protestantism, Civil and Religious Liberty: The Disputed Lessons of Irish History, 1690-1812', *Past and Present*, 118 (1988), pp. 98, 99. John Gibney, *The Shadow of A Year: The Rebellion of 1641 in Irish History and Memory* (Madison, WI, University of Wisconsin Press, 2013), p. 89.

[30] This was also the opinion of Davis's colleague John Mitchel, who wrote that 'this was the only Parliament that ever represented the Irish nation even unto this day.' John Mitchel, *The Crusade of the Period, and the Last Conquest of Ireland (Perhaps)* (New York, Lynch, Cole and Meehan, 1873), p. 81.

[31] Davis, *The Patriot Parliament*, pp. 1-2.

[32] Davis, *The Patriot Parliament*, p. 138.

modern history to reaffirm the justice and distinctness of Irish political nationhood.[33]

In this way it was situated by Davis within the broader narrative of Irish history going back to the resistance of the Irish to the first Anglo-Norman incursions of the late twelfth century, at which point Irish history began to deviate from the 'desired' course. In more recent terms, the 'Patriot Parliament's' significance was also inextricably linked – though Davis was neither a Catholic nor inclined to define Irishness in confessional terms – to the bleak historical experience of the *Catholic* Irish people since the sixteenth. 'It is no pedantry', as Davis himself wrote, 'which leads one to the English invasion, for the tap-root of the transactions of the seventeenth century.' [34] Davis's representation of the Patriot Parliament as a foundational event in modern Irish history is situated within a conception of Irish history as a struggle to realize an Irish nation, one composed of both Protestant and Catholic, Gaelic Irish and Irish of English descent, politically free of England and culturally free of Anglicization. These goals, and any past movement toward them, have been repeatedly thwarted by the reality of Irish disunity, itself a legacy of English oppression in Ireland. In Davis's account, situated within the 'rise-and-decline' path of the Irish historical 'special path', the episode of the 'patriot parliament' manifests as an episode of 'revival' preceding one of 'catastrophe' (the re-conquest of Ireland by King William followed by more than a hundred years of anti-Catholic oppression), but an episode well-situated within the course of earlier history. Its historical background expressed all the historical contradictions and problems of Ireland's past, while also offering a model for 'redemption' from that tortured history. Davis's essay on the Patriot Parliament also demonstrated that Irish nationalist historians, like their German counterparts, saw the importance in

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[33] Mulvey, *Thomas Davis and Ireland*, p. 212.
[34] Davis, *The Patriot Parliament*, p. 4.

attempting to find institutional precedents for their claims that the Irish possessed a national history in their own right.

Nationalism in Ireland developed somewhat later than on the continent. What Davis and the other Young Irelanders were to Irish nationalism, men of a previous generation had been to German nationalism: its 'founding fathers'.[35] In the period of the Napoleonic Wars, the 'national' disaster that was the French occupation of Germany and the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire, and the subsequent revival of the 'War of Liberation', philosophers and popular thinkers such as J.G. Fichte, and Ernst Moritz Arndt were articulating new ideas of the German nation that would earn them (from a later generation) that reputation.[36] They each played a leading role in defining the German nation as a community of homogeneous (or rather homogenized) descent and language, rooting the history of the Germanic peoples firmly in antiquity and the early medieval era.[37] As Davis regarded the unsullied and original 'Celt' as the truest polestar of authentic Irish nationality (this will be dealt with in more detail in chapter four), so in the Fichte-Arndt view of German history, antiquity and the medieval period up to around the mid-thirteenth century represented the 'golden age' of that history. Herein was the source of true German values, of purity, the first point of reference for German nationality, culturally and politically.[38] In their origins the *Germanen* had been ancient, pure, unmixed, and sharing a natural unity, unlike other peoples that coalesced from accident or need, or were forced together by the sword. The ideas of the nature of the *Germanen* and the

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[35] Late eighteenth-century revolutionary Irish nationalism had taken radicalism and the French Revolution as its model, early nineteenth-century German nationalism, by sharp and important contrast, had originated from and taken root in a deep-seated hostility to the Revolution, or at any rate its effects on Germany.

[36] Helga Schultz, 'Mythos und Aufklärung: Frühformen des Nationalismus in Deutschland', *Historische Zeitschrift*, 263, 1, 1996, pp. 63-65.

[37] Quoted in Hans Kohn, *The Mind of Germany: The Education of a Nation* (London, Macmillan, 1965), p. 76.

[38] Ernst Moritz Arndt, *Ansichten und Aussichten der Teutschen Geschichte* (Leipzig, 1814), pp. 32, 45, 77, 89.

German-speaking peoples of the Holy Roman Empire communicated by such figures as Arndt and Fichte would be paralleled by Davis's ideas on the nature of 'the Gaels' or Irish 'Celts'. In the course of the later middle ages and after 'Germany' entered into an age of decline that found its latest culmination in the humiliating dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire. In Arndt's view, from the fifth century to the mid-thirteenth the Germans, under such great rulers as Charlemagne, Henry I, and Otto I, all founders of the German *Reich*,[39] had been a 'world power', before its later decline thank to the various failures of later Emperors. While the Reformation had offered the opportunity for a short-lived national rally, it had failed in this respect. The Thirty Years' War of the seventeenth century represented the reasonable culmination of the long decline of Germany over the later medieval and early modern era, and the commencement of at least two hundred years of powerlessness before the territorial ambitions of other powers and cultural penetration. The invasion and humiliation of Germany by the French under Napoleon was another disastrous low point of German history and confirmed once more the necessity of future German unity. The yearning for lost Germanic glory and freedom and a virulent Francophobia were the two great pillars of Arndt's historical perspective of the German nation.[40] These narratives were expressed through a perception of German history as beset by a constant yet repeatedly frustrated aspiration to national 'self-determination', owed to both foreign enemies and the internal foe of disunity. The same determination to achieve and preserve 'national existence' that Charles Gavan Duffy had identified as the supposed *leitmotif* of Irish history defined the German nationalist historical narrative from its 'Arndtian' beginnings. With modifications, the 'Arndtian' view of German

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[39] Ibid., pp. 166, 172, 174.
[40] Jost Hermand, *Verlorene Ilusionen: Eine Geschichte des deutschen Nationalismus* (Cologne, Boehlau, 2012), p. 84. Leerssen, *National Thought in Europe*, p. 179.

history would, to a degree, become the basic narrative of German history during the nineteenth century.

The German Middle Ages, the *Deutsches Mittelalter*, continued throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth to be regarded as one of the central axes of German history;[41] whether it was regarded as representing a period in which 'the German nation' had reached over the course of three centuries reached the height of greatness or one in which it had failed in its most elementary task: to consolidate and defend its own unity.[42] For both sympathetic and sceptical observers of the medieval *Reich*, its decline in unity and power from the thirteenth century and eventual fall represented a lamentable 'failure' in German history. Where they differed was in the causes attributed to the Empire's decline and how 'German' it could really be called. To some, such as Wilhelm von Giesebrecht, the glorious '*Kaiserzeit*' had been an age in which the German Emperors controlled the destiny of Europe and the German nation had been the greatest of nations.[43] To others, if not most commentators, German medieval history represented a succession of failed opportunities to establish on a permanent basis a unified German nation-state. For all their differences however, there was no doubt among Germans historians about the formative importance of the medieval *Reich*, and most were in agreement on its 'failure' to develop as a nation-state.[44] The notion of Germany as a *Reich* remained an important and widespread one until 1945, and it was an inspiring idea that the medieval

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[41] Len Scales, *The Shaping of German Identity: Authority and Crisis, 1214-1514* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 1-53.

[42] Ibid., p. 25.

[43] Wilhelm von Giesebrecht, *Geschichte der deutschen Kaiserzeit: Bd. I, Gründung des Kaisertums* (V. Aufl., Braunschweig, Schwetschke, 1881), v-vi, p. 164. Wilhelm von Giesebrecht, 'Die Entwicklung des deutschen Volksbewusstseins', in idem, *Deutsche Reden* (Leipzig, 1871), pp. 60-90. Wilhelm von Giesebrecht, *Geschichte der deutschen Kaiserzeit: Bd. II, Blüthe des Kaisertums* (IV. Aufl., Braunschweig, Schewtschke, 1875), p. 540.

[44] Karl Lamprecht, *Deutsche Geschichte*, Bd. I (Berlin, Gaertner, 1894), pp. 13-14.

emperors had 'headed the bravest and most excellent of European peoples.'[45] For Irish historians too, the medieval Gaelic past remained an ambivalent legacy: while its cultural heritage remained prized until well into the twentieth century, even among nationalist historians few overlooked its fundamental shortcomings, such as its 'failure' to provide the basis of a unified nation-state. Only seldom, however, was Ireland's medieval history rejected as having no positive lessons to offer to the modern nation.[46] Yet it was Ireland's early modern period that was more seen as fixing the nation's course since the seventeenth century, than a medieval past which bore little continuity with modern Ireland, or better put, few continuities that nationalist historians would care to boast about. Discussions of Germany's medieval past also had a more 'state-centred' character than those of Ireland's medieval past, among nationalist historians. In the former case, historians contested over how authentically national (or not) the medieval *Reich* and its rulers had been; this framed most views of that history. Since Irish historians had no equivalent historical institution to look back on – Ireland had possessed an ancient High Kingship of its own from before the medieval period, but from the late twelfth century the island's government was closely tied and subject to that of England – their discussions of the medieval Irish nation oriented more on significance of Irish cultural distinctiveness and 'resistance' to English domination. Irish historians of nationalist stamp did not attempt to present the advance of English power into medieval Ireland as a positive

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[45] Dietrich Schäfer, *Deutsches Nationalbewusstsein im Licht der Geschichte* (Jena, 1881), p. 10. Franz Schnabel, *Deutschland in den weltgeschichtlichen Wandlungen des letzten Jahrhunderts* (Leipzig, B.G. Teubner, 1925), pp. 3-4. Scales, *The Shaping of German Identity*, p. 19. Martin A. Ruehl, '"In This Time Without Emperors": The Politics of Ernst Kantorowicz's *Kaiser Friedrich der Zweite* Reconsidered', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 63 (2000), p. 200. Carl Landauer, 'Ernst Kantorowicz and the Sacralisation of the Past', *Central European History*, 27, 1 (1994), p. 5. Scales, *The Shaping of German Identity*, pp. 19, 22.
[46] Seán O'Faoláin, *The Great O'Neill: A Biography of Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone, 1550-1616* (London, 1942)

development.[47] Ultimately, however, what should always be remembered is that the German or Irish medieval past was in large part only as 'national' as modern observers thought and argued it to be.

Leopold von Ranke, in the first chapter of his *Deutsche Geschichte im Zeitalter der Reformation*, perhaps the most popular and influential of his works on German history, and the most 'nationalistic' of his work as far as many of his readers were concerned, surveyed in the first part of the book medieval German history from the reign of Charlemagne up to the Reformation. He argued that the earliest point at which the Germans could be spoken of as a nation was the unification of the different *Stämme* (literally, 'tribes') under Charlemagne into his Empire.[48] After the dissolution of this Empire it would be Otto I of the House of Saxony who would come close to realising the idea of a *German* Empire. The birth of the German nation had its political origin in the incorporation of the *Volk* into the *Reich*, and its cultural origin in the Germans' 'inheritance' of the Rome's cultural legacy, particularly, in Ranke's view, the 'mission' to 'civilise' and Christianise Europe. The German nation, under Otto and his successors, carried forth this '*Aufgabe*', particularly in 'the East'.[49] Nevertheless, during the medieval period, 'Germany did not fully understand her position, nor fulfil her mission'; namely, to consolidate the empire as a nation, as the surrounding kingdoms and realms were establishing themselves as 'nation-states'. This 'failure' was due in large measure to the disregard of the powerful princes for the authority of the Emperor, the office of which was filled from their ranks. By the mid-thirteenth century, 'It required matchless vigour and

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[47] Darrell Figgis, *The Gaelic State in the Past and Future* (Dublin, Maunsel, 1917), p. 3.

[48] Leopold von Ranke, *History of the Reformation in Germany*, vol. I, trans. S. Austin (London, Longmans, 1845), p. 12. Aira Kemilainen, *Die Historische Sendung der Deutschen in Leopold von Rankes Geschichtsdenken* (Helsinki, 1968), p. 100.

[49] Ranke, *History of the Reformation*, I, pp. 19, 22. Kemilainen, *Die Historische Sendung*, pp. 101, 107, 110.

fortitude in an emperor even to hold his seat…The German nobles aspired after the sort of independence which those of France had just acquired.'[50] The princes not only undermined the power of the Emperor and in doing so made the Pope the greater source of political power over Germany, but in constantly contesting against each other, ensured that none of them were able to gain a leading position within the Empire, further worsening its disunity.[51] The political life of the German nation was, by the end of the medieval period, facing extinction as the position of Emperor and the glory of the *Reich* became emptier, as the independence of the princes increased, and the power of the Popes over Germany increased. For the nation 'a revolution in both its spiritual and temporal affairs' was necessary and coming. The revolution, however, as important as it was, would also bring forth epochal trauma on the nation for centuries, borne as it was out of the *origin*al 'failure' of the medieval German 'nation' to consolidate unity and independence. Thus, the two 'foundational epochs' of German history, that of the medieval *Reich* and that of the Reformation and the Thirty Years' War, are brought together, to account for why the Germans had 'failed', unlike other European peoples, to develop their own political nationhood.

The themes of a civilising Christianizing mission fatally undermined by the damaging effects of constant disunity, dynastic struggles and over-fed dynastic pride, the conflict of Church and State, and the disparity of '*Kulturnation*' and '*Staatsnation*' are nonetheless common to both Irish and German historical narratives in the particular discourses of national origins.

In the original Young Ireland circle only one former Young Irelander (not Thomas Davis) actually produced a comprehensive narrative history of Ireland from medieval origins to the present. This was Thomas D'Arcy McGee (1825-1868), whose

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[50] Ranke, *History of the Reformation*, I, pp. 24, 25, 27, 30.
[51] Ibid., p. 42.

magnum opus was the two-volume *Popular History of Ireland from the Earliest Times to the Emancipation of the Catholics*.[52] As a young man within the Young Ireland circle, having come under Davis's influence, McGee had become deeply interested in Irish history, and through his studies of old Irish manuscripts in the Library of the Royal Irish Academy, had become familiar with the leading antiquarians Eugene O'Curry and George Petrie. At this time he also became familiar with James Duffy, the publisher who disseminated Young Irelanders' historical and literary writings to a large audience. Like all of the leading Young Irelanders, he also became deeply influenced by Thomas Carlyle.[53] The writing of the *Popular History* would be a particularly important accomplishment for McGee.

McGee begins his *History* in the early, pre-Christian past, but it is only with the conversion of the Irish to Christianity that there appears 'a unity and purpose to the history of that nation'.[54] Hereafter McGee begins to give serious consideration to the 'Celtic constitution', his recurrent references to which indicated his intention to present early medieval Ireland, for all its faults, as exhibiting characteristics of at least a potential nation-state.[55] The sixth to the eighth centuries represented the 'Golden Age' of early medieval Ireland, now 'the intellectual leadership of Western Europe – the glorious ambition of the greatest nations…devolved on Ireland'.[56] Ireland's civilising 'mission' in this respect was linked to the 'nation's' uniquely receptive conversion to Christianity. The conflicts of the Gaels with the Norse invaders in the early medieval period are presented as both a struggle to unify the

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[52] Boyce, *Nationalism in Ireland*, p. 249. David A. Wilson, *Thomas D'Arcy McGee, vol. I: Passion, Reason, and Politics: 1825-1857* (London, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008), *passim*.
[53] Wilson, *Thomas D'Arcy McGee,* I, pp. 109-111.
[54] Thomas D'Arcy McGee, *Popular History of Ireland from the Earliest Times to the Emancipation of the Catholics*, vol. I (New York, Sadlier, 1863), p. 10. The notion that Irish history began with Saint Patrick remained an enduring and popular one. Justin Huntly McCarthy, *An Outline of Irish History from the Earliest Times to the Present Day* (London, Chatto & Windus, 1884), p. 22.
[55] McGee, *Popular History*, I, p. 17.
[56] Ibid., p. 41.

Irish under one nascent 'nation-state' and the defence of Christianity in Ireland and Christian civilisation in Europe in general. Yet not even the greatest of the kings of this time, Brian Boru of the southern kingdom of Dál Cais, could complete the task of unifying the nation under one ruler, one dynasty, and he left no worthy successors who would follow him. 'Herein', McGee judged, 'we have the origin of Irish disunion with all its consequences, good, bad, and indifferent.'[57] From the end of 'golden age', around the beginning of the eleventh century, through the rest of Ireland's medieval history, 'the same provincialized spirit, the same family ambitions, feuds, hates, and coalitions, with some exceptional passages, characterize the whole history...the land remained a tempting prey to such adventurers, foreign and native'.[58] When such power came to appear in Ireland in the late twelfth century, it 'was embodied in an invading host, and patriot zeal could discern nothing good, nothing inimitable in the laws and customs of an enemy, whose armed presence in the land was an insult to its inhabitants.'[59] While the Gaelic Irish idea of national unity (in the political sense) seemed to fade away while that of the English and other nations grew ever stronger; nonetheless Irish devotion to the faith remained ardent, and their culture's vitality endured. [60] The degenerating effects of the wars between the early medieval Irish and their Norse enemies remained a favoured them of nationalist historians and way of accounting for the shortcomings of Irish unity in that period. Thirty years after McGee the moderate nationalist writer P.W. Joyce recorded in his *Short History of Ireland*: '…the annals present a pitiful picture of strife and bloodshed all over the country', after the death of Brian Boru in 1014.[61]

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[57] Ibid., p. 106.
[58] Ibid., p. 103.
[59] McGee, *Popular History*, I, p. 120.
[60] Wilson, *Thomas D'Arcy McGee*, I, pp. 256, 299, 304.
[61] P.W. Joyce, *A Short History of Ireland from the Earliest Times to 1608* (London, Longmans, 1893), pp. 193, 228.

In McGee's narrative it was not until the reign of Henry VIII that the relationship between Ireland and England fundamentally changed. Henry had himself declared King of Ireland (previous English monarchs held a claim of suzerainty over Ireland, but not one of kingship), and with the ensuing extension of the Reformation to Ireland. This, in McGee's opinion, had been a 'contract' between Henry and the lords of Ireland, though 'several of the most distinguished [Gaelic Irish] chiefs withheld their concurrence.[62] This was a creative interpretation meant to suggest the actuality and effective independence of the Irish nation at the time before Henry assumed the Kingship of Ireland, a 'contract' subsequently 'nullified' by English tyranny, including the attempt to enforce the Reformation in Ireland[63] The Ulster Irish lord Hugh O'Neill, the most powerful Gaelic lord and the descendant of medieval High Kings of Ireland, attempted a rebellion during the reign of Elizabeth I which ultimately failed, but it was only in the mid-seventeenth century that the 'Old English' of Ireland, the descendants of medieval English colonists and settlers, threw in their lot with their Gaelic compatriots as the campaign to extirpate Catholicism and Anglicize Ireland reached its culmination. In the 1640s the Catholic Confederation, 'a national organization', fought 'that illustrious war which Ireland waged for her religious and civil liberties', against England's constant enmity towards 'the religious belief and the political independence of the Irish people.'[64] The 'modern' Irish nation had in a sense therefore been born in the seventeenth century with the Catholic *and* national struggle for 'independence'. It is important for the reader to note the importance in McGee's writing of Irish history of the Catholic dimension of Irishness, which is perhaps all that holds together the pieces

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[62] McGee, *Popular History*, I, p. 361.
[63] Wilson, *Thomas D'Arcy McGee*, I, pp. 359-360.
[64] Thomas D'Arcy McGee, *Popular History of Ireland from the Earliest Times to the Emancipation of the Catholics*, vol. II, (New York, Sadlier, 1863), p. 546.

of an otherwise fractured history – besides the periodic attempts made by the Irish people to rid themselves of foreign rule.

Even more popular than McGee for Irish nationalist literary culture in terms of pure popularity – though very much indebted to McGee and his *Popular History* – was his contemporary Alexander Martin Sullivan (1830-1884), politician, barrister, and journalist. A moderate nationalist of the Home Rule variety, he was one of the most influential writers, editors, and advocates in the history of Irish nationalism. Sullivan's popular narrative history *The Story of Ireland*, that aimed to overarch the division 'between imaginative literature and factual history' was extremely well-received, perhaps the *single* most important and influential work of Irish history (and Irish nationalist text) of the nineteenth century, going through at least twenty-five editions.[65] A book intended primarily for 'young people' – the content of which he admitted owed much to McGee's work – it nonetheless clearly invited a wide-ranging readership, in respect of the political purpose to which history is put throughout the book, and in its sequence of events and what is emphasized and downplayed.[66] The central themes of an ancient and early medieval 'golden age' – where kings had ruled as great sovereigns as 'liberal patrons of art, science, and commerce', within a 'Celtic constitution' over one thousand years before the birth of Christ – followed by a period of disunity and repeated foreign incursions, before a disastrous final conquest in the seventeenth century, with these eras interspersed by occasional 'national rallies', were all there, along with confident assertions that a redeemed future would come. The themes are legitimate independence and the right to it, subsequently denied by foreign oppressors, equal status with other nations, and

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[65] R.F. Foster, *The Irish Story: Telling Tales and Making it up in Ireland* (London, Allen Lane, 2001), p. 6. Leerssen, *Remembrance and Imagination*, p. 151.
[66] Sullivan's *Story of Ireland* was repeatedly quoted in *The Irish History Reader* produced by the Christian Brothers. W.E.H. Lecky and John Mitchel were also referenced. Congregation of Christian Brothers, *The Irish History Reader* (Dublin, M.H. Gill & Son, 1905), pp. 99, 127, 140, 234, 267.

an advanced capacity for liberal, enlightened self-government.[67] Sullivan claimed that the ancient Irish possessed political institutions which foreshadowed those of the contemporary age of parliamentary democracy, and 'numerous facts' testified to the 'high order of political, social, industrial, and intellectual intelligence [that] prevailed in the country,'[68] which prevailed undisturbed for several centuries. The return to Irish legislative independence would therefore be merely a return to what had originally been.[69] The course of Irish history was presented quite straightforwardly as a redemptive saga and moral story, one of repeated trials, in which the Irish people were time and again forced to resist foreign aggressors, often as a cause of their faltering patriotism, manifesting their nation anew with each struggle.[70] The perennial problem of Irish disunity had found its sure punishment in subjugation,[71] completed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, beginning with the Reformation, the commencement of 'a savage war upon the Irish nation.'[72] The significance of this period, one of 'the most peculiar importance'; was that it represented 'the last struggle of the ancient native rule'. The epoch of Gaelic Ireland had ended, another; that of 'the nation in captivity' had begun. The indiscriminate ethno-religious violence of the English in enforcing the Reformation in Ireland is represented as leading directly to the seventeenth century alliance between Gaelic and 'Old English' nobility[73] in the Catholic Confederation of the 1640s, and with it – so the narrative goes – the forging of a new Irish nation, which forgot earlier ethnic

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[67] Margaret MacCurtain, 'The Roots of Irish Nationalism', in Robert O'Driscoll (ed.), *The Celtic Consciousness* (New York, Brazilier, 1982), p. 381. Foster, *The Irish Story*, p. 9.

[68] A.M. Sullivan, *The Story of Ireland: A Narrative of Irish History* (Providence, RI, Henry McElroy, 1883), pp. 19, 20, 21.

[69] R.F. Foster, 'History and the Irish Question', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* (1983), 33, p. 170.

[70] Sullivan, *The Story of Ireland*, p. 105.

[71] Ibid., pp. 136-137, 149.

[72] Ibid., p. 186.

[73] Ibid., pp. 339, 358-359.

distinctions, and was therefore a truly foundational event: 'Few chapters of Irish history are more important, none have been more momentous in their results', Sullivan claimed, 'than that which chronicles the career of the confederation of 1642', the 'national government and legislature under which Ireland fought a formidable struggle for three years' until its bloody fall under Cromwell's armies. Sullivan concluded confidently that Providence destined the 'nation for a great purpose, for a glorious destiny.'[74] What was important, for Sullivan, was that the Irish be reminded of the truth of their history and that they never allow it to be submerged into England's history of 'falsehood, rapine and cruelty'.[75] Sullivan's *Story of Ireland* 'presented Irish history as a self-enclosed liberation narrative, in the style of European Romantic nationalism, a story whose ending was preordained, with separation from Britain both a moral imperative and historical necessity.'[76]

Writers such as McGee and Sullivan were successful and influential, but were never, unlike their German counterparts, academic historians. Academic status was often not, however, in itself a particularly meaningful differentiating factor if we consider the political, national-pedagogic character of national history writing. Heinrich von Sybel (1817-1895), one of the most prominent German academic historians of the nineteenth century, founder of the *Historische Zeitschrift* and one of Ranke's most distinguished pupils, once described himself as 'four-sevenths historian and three-sevenths politician',[77] and throughout his career strove for 'an alliance between history and politics', to advance 'progress in national consciousness.' Sybel held no

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[74] Sullivan, *The Story of Ireland*, pp. 341, 360, 363, 583. Similar narrative conflations of Catholicity and Irishness can be found in C.P. Meehan, *The Confederation of Kilkenny* (New York, 1873), pp. 17-19 and Aodh de Blacam, *What Sinn Fein Stands For* (Dublin, Maunsel, 1921), pp. 29-30. See also Marc Caball, 'History and Politics: Interpretations of Early Modern Conquest and Reformation in Victorian Ireland', in *Nationalizing the Past*, p. 165. Joep Leerssen, 'Monument and Trauma: Varieties of Remembrance', in *History and Memory in Modern Ireland*, p. 220.

[75] Foster, *The Irish Story*, p. 8.

[76] Foster, *The Irish Story*, p. 25.

[77] Quoted in Helmut Seier, 'Heinrich von Sybel', in Hans-Ulrich Wehler (ed.), *Deutsche Historiker* (Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1973), p. 133.

doubt that the origins of modern historiography in Germany lay in the age of 'national rebirth and liberation' at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The energy and elegance of modern German historiography were owed precisely to love of fatherland and political conviction. He believed strongly, at least later in his career, that historians should aim to write readable works for large audiences, to produce national historical narratives in every sense of the term.[78] In the 1860s, when he turned his attention to modern history (his first major work had been a history of the crusades) Sybel became noteworthy for his trenchant critiques of the medieval *Reich*, arguing that not only had the medieval empire failed to develop the basis of a modern German nation-state, but had actively *impeded* such development.[79] The great achievements of the '*Kaiserzeit*', such as the *Ostsiedlung*, the medieval German 'colonisation' of Eastern Europe, had been a counterbalance achieved less through the strength of the empire than in contrast to its weakness.[80] The disunity of the Empire, after failed attempts to place its government on a stronger footing, was deepened during the sixteenth century with the coming of the Reformation: the Habsburg Emperors remained true to the Catholic Church and the ancient principle of the 'universal' Christian empire, while the vast majority of the German '*Kulturnation*' was with Martin Luther. The 'Spaniard' Emperor Charles V was more concerned with his sprawling dynastic empire and his loyalty to the Papacy than his German subjects. The final blow to the medieval Empire, to the Empire as a cohesive entity, came with the Thirty Years' War and the Peace of Westphalia. This had been a historical rupture almost without parallel and one which

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[78] Heinrich von Sybel, *Über den Stand der neueren deutschen Geschichtsschreibung* (Marburg, 1856), pp. 4, 7. Utz Haltern, 'Geschichte und Bürgertum: Droysen – Sybel – Treitschke', *Historische Zeitschrift*, 259, 1 (1994), p. 64. Theodor Schieder, 'Die deutsche Geschichtswissenschaft im Spiegel der *Historischen Zeitschrift*', *Historische Zeitschrift*, 189 (1959), pp. 4, 16, 54, 55, 57.
[79] Heinrich von Sybel, *Die Deutsche Nation und das Kaiserreich: Eine historische-politische Abhandlung* (Düsseldorf, Julius Buddeus Verlag, 1862), vii, xii-xiii.
[80] Ibid., p. 64.

had carried enormous costs, but had nonetheless been necessary for a modern German nation was to be come into existence. Henceforth Catholic Austria, the Habsburg Monarchy, assumed the legacy, substance and form of the old empire, a part of Germany in name only, in every other sense the Habsburg Empire developed outside of the 'constitution' and 'laws' of the nation.[81] Germany's 'centre of gravity' moved to the north-east, to the rising state of Brandenburg-Prussia. This kind of discussion in the early 1860's about the medieval empire was of course a thinly-veiled commentary on contemporary politics: any German nation-state could not develop under Austrian leadership; the future of Germany lay with the modern Kingdom of Prussia.[82] Not until the victory of Prussia would German history restored back on the 'right' course, a legacy of centuries of interrupted, discontinuous national development overcome. In this way Sybel determines the legitimacy of German unification under Prussian leadership through explicating the 'failures' of the medieval empire and its modern heir, the Habsburg Empire, and the supposed greater 'Germanness' of Prussia. The Thirty Years' War, however catastrophic, had 'cleared the decks' for Germany's modern history, which, in this regard, bore many positive developments, culminating in the crowning achievement of unification.

These themes and conclusions reappear in Sybel's history of German 'unification', his *The Founding of the German Empire*, written after the Prussian state archives had been opened to him by Bismarck's unification in 1871, in which he frankly acknowledged in the opening pages his nationalist standpoint.[83] In the opening pages he outlined the halting progress of German nationhood since its beginnings: 'In the

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[81] Sybel, *Die Deutsche Nation*, pp. 90-92, 100.
[82] Ibid., xiii-xiv, 120, 122.
[83] Heinrich von Sybel, *The Founding of the German Empire by William I*, vol. I, trans. M.L. Perrin (New York, Thomas Y. Crowell and Co.), vi-vii.

very earliest times there seems to have been among the Germans no trace of a national consciousness…long training in politics, in economics, and in mental discipline was needed before the Germans succeeded in establishing a German national government.'[84] Here, in contrast to the outlook of most Irish nationalist historians, a view of nationalism focused on politics and the state, is apparent. The ancient Germans had known a strong sense of comradeship manifesting in a powerful sense of loyalty, but they had possessed little if any conception of the political unity and particularity of their nationality (there was apparently, for Sybel, no 'Teutonic constitution' to parallel the 'Celtic constitution'). The old *Reich* too, he reaffirmed had failed to forge a nation-state, and with the Hohenstaufen dynasty's downfall in the mid-thirteenth century, 'The victory of the universal spiritual and temporal sovereign [the Pope] was complete.'[85] The history of the *Ostsiedlung* – in which lay the origins of Prussia – only offered any evidence of a German national sentiment.[86] Still, no unified German nation could arise without the basis of a strong German state, and the failure of the Germans to match the intellectual and spiritual revival of the Reformation with a political one was perhaps the greatest of all stumbles on the path towards German nationhood. In the disastrous Thirty Years' War 'the last gasps of a national consciousness were smothered.'

Germany became Europe's battleground during the conflict, the German people the prey of cruel foreign enemies, and victims of their own disunity and deficiency of national consciousness. As the Catholic Irish had lain crushed under the feet of foreign invaders and conquerors at the end of their seventeenth century war, failed by their own disunity, so did the Germans, both Protestant and Catholic, but thanks

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[84] Sybel, *Founding*, I, pp. 3-4. Heinrich von Sybel, 'Die Deutschen bei ihrem Eintritt in die Geschichte' (1863), in Heinrich von Sybel, *Kleine Historische Schriften* (Munich, 1863), p. 41.
[85] Sybel, *Founding*, I, pp. 6-7.
[86] Ibid., p. 8.

to the oppressions of a Catholic dynasty. The Empire, amidst all this, fell to pieces, and henceforth the Habsburgs turned to building up their domains outside of Germany itself while still claiming supremacy among the Germans. He reasserted the one positive long-term consequence of the War: that it made impossible the restoration of the old imperial authority and laid the basis for the modern conflict between Prussia and Austria for German unity. [87] For both Irish and German historians, there was scarcely any doubt that the modern histories of their respective nations began in the mid-seventeenth century after the ending of catastrophic wars.

Sybel was highly influential, but in terms of enduring popular influence, no German historian of the late nineteenth century, particularly no academic historian, could stand as a rival to Heinrich von Treitschke (1834-1896). [88] Treitschke was, particularly with respect to his most notable work, *Deutsche Geschichte im neunzehnten Jahrhundert*, a popularizer of history. This five-volume, unfinished work, begun in the 1860's and the first volume published in 1879, was another account of the unification of Germany under Prussian leadership, but also a wider political and cultural history of Germany up to 1848. The work was probably the single most influential specimen of the 'orthodox' perspective of German national history between the late nineteenth century and 1945.[89] As a historian and political figure of note, Treitschke's influence was such that 'his political and social ideas helped to mould the thinking of the men who guided the destinies' of his era.[90] 'No nation has greater cause than we to hold in honour the memory of its struggling fathers, or recalls so seldom…[that] the blessing of its unity has been achieved', he

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[87] Sybel, *Founding*, I, pp. 11-13, 14-15, 25.
[88] Georg Iggers, 'Heinrich von Treitschke', in *Deutsche Historiker*, pp. 174-188.
[89] Helmut Walser Smith, *The Continuities of German History: Nation, Religion, and Race across the Long Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 170.
[90] Andreas von Dorpalen, *Heinrich von Treitschke* (London, Yale University Press, 1957), vii. Iggers, 'Treitschke', p. 174. Ulrich Langer, *Heinrich von Treitschke: Politische Biographie eines deutschen Nationalisten* (Düsseldorf, Droste Verlag, 1998), pp. 133, 360.

had written in the preface to the first volume.[91] This attitude, both triumphalist and insecure about the nation, permeated Treitschke's work: after the foundation of the Wilhelmine *Reich*, Treitschke observed with increasing apprehension the suppposed decline of patriotism and revival of its old enemy, German particularism.[92] The *History*, on which Treitschke first began work several years before the events of 1871, became a 'literary battlefield of the struggle for German unity', the story of a struggle 'the most arduous' of its kind ever known.[93] Treitschke was convinced that where the Germans were concerned, 'National character is exactly what they lack in comparison with their neighbours, for their unity is so young.'[94] It was the historian's duty 'to win from knowledge of past experiences light for the guidance of the present.'[95] The book, though written by an academic historian, was an openly popular and partisan one. It was not based on anything like the kind of exhaustive archival research demanded by Ranke, and its conclusions clearly did not even aim at the pretence of 'objectivity.'

The *Deutsche Geschichte* was designed merely to serve as a historical guide for German patriots, not as a 'bloodless' piece of history, and in this goal it was a model of success. Treitschke began with a lengthy survey of German history up to 1648, and during the eighteenth century. He opened his narrative with a paragraph that

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[91] Heinrich von Treitschke *Deutsche Geschichte im neunzehnten Jahrhundert*, Bd. I (Leipzig, S. Hirzel, 1879), v-viii. Dorpalen, *Heinrich von Treitschke*, pp. 218-219. Stefan Berger, *The Search for Normality: National Identity and Historical Consciousness in Germany Since 1800* (Oxford, Berghahn, 1997), p. 30. Gangolf Hübinger, 'Historicism and the "Noble Science of Politics" in Nineteenth-Century Germany', in *British and German Historiography, 1750-1950*, p. 206.

[92] Dorpalen, *Heinrich von Treitschke*, pp. 208, 218.

[93] Treitschke, *Deutsche Geschichte*, I, p. 7. Dorpalen, *Heinrich von Treitschke*, p. 219. Peter Winzen, 'Treitschke's Influence on the Rise of Imperialist and Anti-British Nationalism in Germany', in Paul Kennedy and Anthony Nicholls (eds.), *Nationalist and Racialist Movements in Britain and Germany before 1914* (London, Macmillan, 1991), pp. 154-155. Andreas Biefang, 'Der Streit zum Treitschke's "Deutsche Geschichte", 1882/1883: Zur Spaltung des Nationalliberalismus und der Etablierung eines nationalen-konservativen Geschichtsbildes' *Historische Zeitschrift*, 262, 2 (1996), pp. 394-395.

[94] Heinrich von Treitschke, *Politics*, vol. I, trans. B. Dugdale and T. de Bille (London, Constance, 1916), p. 74.

[95] Treitschke, pp. *Deutsche Geschichte*, V, 411.

encapsulates the importance of both discontinuity in German national histories and a sense of teleological progression, the importance and difficulty of making *Kulturnation* and *Staatsnation* congruent in Germany: 'Despite the antiquity of her history, Germany is the youngest of the great nations of Europe…twice has she been through the struggle for the principles of national power and free civilisation…first in our own days did she as a unified power resume her place in the ranks of nations.'[96] Treitschke too connected the old imperial ideals with the frustrated progression of German nationhood,[97] and the Reformation with another failed effort towards national sovereignty and unity. German nationhood would from hereon be threatened by a Germanic power – the Habsburg Empire – though one that had turned its back on the Germanic world in its fidelity to Catholicism and its 'multi-national' character. With the Reformation the whole political nature of Germany as it existed at the time was changed, the 'territorial princes justified their right to existence by their work as protectors of the German faith.' This linking of legitimate political power and authority with fidelity to the 'national' faith was also found in Irish nationalist historical writing, particularly in how the Catholic Confederation of the 1640's was regarded as a 'national' alliance, its leaders as national heroes. The conflicts of the sixteenth century paved the way for 'the most deplorable period of German history', in which 'the empire voluntarily quitted the circle of the great powers and renounced all share in European politics', and with the Thirty Years' War, 'in a disturbance without parallel, the old Germany passed away…The entire life of Germany lay open without defence to the influence of the superior civilisation of the foreigner.'[98] Though Germany, more than any other nation had been 'forcibly

[96] Treitschke, *Deutsche Geschichte*, I, p. 3.
[97] Heinrich von Treitschke, *History of Germany in the Nineteenth Century*, vol. I, trans. Eden & Cedar Paul (London, Jarrold & Sons/G. Allen & Unwin, 1915), p. 3.
[98] Treitschke, *Deutsche Geschichte*, I, pp. 3-5.

estranged from itself and from its own past', though 'this horrible confusion seemed to foreshadow the destruction of the German name', the end of the medieval Empire 'proved the beginning of a new life.' The modern history of Germany, and the resurgence of Germany as a nation, would be owed to two forces deriving from the conflicts of the early modern period: 'the force of religious freedom, and the force of the Prussian state.'[99] It would be in Prussia, in fact, that would take place 'the necessary reconstruction of the ancient national state of the Germans…the long and bloody task of the liberation of Germany from foreign dominion.'[100] Here is the identification of Prussia with Germany that so characterized Treitschke's history writing.[101] Whatever faith the younger Treitschke may have had in 'the people' as the engine of German unity had faded away by 1866, when it became clear that Prussia would be completing the work of unification.[102] The origins of the modern German nation, as Treitschke saw it, were also those of the Prussian state. For Treitschke, insofar as his *magnum opus* was a history of nineteenth-century Germany, the age of unification, it necessarily had to be one written from the Prussian 'Standpunkt': nineteenth-century German history was that of the final end of the two-hundred year struggle between the House of Austria and the German states led by Prussia.'[103]

It was not *necessary*, even in nineteenth century Germany, to be a professor in order to be a popular and respected historian. The career of Gustav Freytag bore that out,

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[99] Treitschke, *History of Germany*, I, pp. 5, 6.
[100] Ibid., pp. 36, 38, 71.
[101] Mark Hewitson, '*Nation* and *Nationalismus*: Representation and Imperial Identity in Wilhelmine Germany', in Mary Fulbrook and Martin Swales (eds.), *Representing the German Nation: History and Identity in Twentieth-Century Germany* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2000), p. 44. Smith, *Continuities of German History*, pp. 170-171. Helmut Walser Smith, *German Nationalism and Religious Conflict: Culture, Ideology, Politics, 1870-1914* (Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press, 1994), p. 24.
[102] Walter Boehlich, 'Nachwort', in Walter Boehlich (ed.), *Der Berliner Antisemitismusstreit* (Frankfurt a.M., Insel, 1965), p. 244.
[103] Biefang, 'Der Streit zum Treitschke's "Deutsche Geschichte"', p. 395.

and his writing underlines the degree to which even in the country of Ranke, there was much overlap between professional/academic and popular history.[104] Freytag left no doubt that the Germans, as with any other *Volk*, were obliged to explain and judge the past in accordance with the needs and demands of their present.[105] His five volume cultural history *Bilder aus der deutschen Vergangenheit* (1859-1867) was one of the most popular and widely-read histories in Germany during the nineteenth century, running to thirty editions after its initial publication, by the century's end.[106] In contrast to the works of Treitschke, Sybel, and others, it gave far more attention to the experiences of 'ordinary Germans' throughout history than to the deeds of kings and princes. In the first chapter, where he deals with the *Germanen* of antiquity, Freytag draws a line of continuity between their struggles against the Roman Empire and those of Luther and his adherents against the Papacy. This sixteen-hundred year stretch of history encompassed the 'adolescence' of the German nation, a history full of blood and massacre, incredible deeds and immeasurable sufferings.[107] Freytag was confident that his readers had the right to consider themselves as the 'sons' of the *Germanen*;[108] who had been a *Volk* of 'unlimited vitality': they possessed a limitless love of freedom and an innate willingness to sacrifice for moral ideals. In the reign of Charlemagne the Germans became for the first time a single political community,[109] Charlemagne was a great German king and his rule was a 'golden age' for the Germans, in its way, but still contained within itself 'the same great

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[104] Benedict Schofield, *Private Lives and Collective Destinies: Class, Nation and the Folk in the Works of Gustav Freytag (1816-1895)* (London, Modern Humanities Research Association, 2012), p. 129.

[105] Gustav Freytag, *Bilder aus der deutschen Vergangenheit, Bd. V: Aus der neuer Zeit, 1700-1848*, in idem. *Gesammelte Werke*, Bd. XVII (Leipzig, S. Hirzel, 1888), p. 492. 'Es ist das Recht der Lebenden, alle Vergangenheit nach dem Bedürfnis und den Forderungen ihrer eigenen Zeit zu deuten.'

[106] Nissen, *Populäre Geschichtsschreibung*, p. 271.

[107] Gustav Freytag, *Bilder aus der deutschen Vergangenheit, Bd. I: Aus dem Mittelalter*, in idem, *Gesammelte Werke*, XVII, pp. 28-29.

[108] Ibid., pp. 34-35, 95.

[109] Ibid., pp. 94-95, 328.

historical tragedy'. Charlemagne, though a German ruler, had not founded a truly German Empire, much less a nation-state. By the early thirteenth century, under the Hohenstaufen emperors, the medieval *Reich* had attained a glory that it had not known since Charlemagne. Yet the fall of that same dynasty would mark the beginning of the *Reichs* decline and the end of the first period of German history.[110] The medieval period saw the 'feeling of national cohesion and honour of duty' in relation to the *Reich* nearly completely disappear, even though the Germans in this time carried forth their culture to 'the East'. The Germans still possessed 'the unbroken energy of a *Volk* of great ideas and strong wills', even if they were politically disunited.[111]

If the medieval era between the fall of Rome and the demise of the Hohenstaufen marked the first foundational epoch of German history in the *Bilder*, the period between the beginning of the Reformation and the end of the Thirty Years' War marked the second, and arguably the more important, one. Freytag's narration of German history from 1648 to 1848 pivots on how the German 'nation' overcame the devastation inflicted by the Thirty Years' War and its baneful legacies which had for two hundred years locked the nation into 'political paralysis.'[112] For Freytag the steady rise of Prussia after and as a consequence of the Thirty Years' War was the single most convincing demonstration of the vitality of the Germans (the *Protestant* Germans) as much as it was of the Hohenzollern dynasty.[113] German struggle and sacrifice in that war, as he told the story, was a way to confer additional glory on

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[110] Freytag, *Bilder*, I, pp. 347, 349, 506.

[111] Gustav Freytag, *Bilder aus der deutschen Vergangenheit, Bd. II: Vom Mittalter zur Neuzeit, 1200-1500*, in idem, *Gesammelte Werke*, XVII, pp. 3, 4.

[112] Gustav Freytag, *Pictures of the German Past in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, vol. I (London, 1863), pp. 5-6. Kevin Cramer, *The Thirty Years' War and German Memory in the Nineteenth Century* (London, University of Nebraska Press, 2007), p. 2.

[113] Freytag, *Pictures of the German Past in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, I, pp. 8, 185.

Prussian leadership of a unified Germany.[114] The War, for all its horror, had finally forced the Germans to abandon the obsolete forms of the medieval Empire.[115] Freytag's idea of Germanness was firmly rooted in what he regarded as the history of the German struggle for liberty that had begun with the Reformation. The War, despite its terrible consequences had, in the sense of forcing a confrontation between Germany and the Empire in fact led in the long-term led to the revival and anticipated eventual victory of a unified German nation-state. The War 'gave peculiar tendency to the character of the people.' It 'shattered into ruins the popular strength, but it also certainly removed the dangers which threatened German development'. In this way a story of catastrophe became one of triumph, how the Germans became 'politische Männer', the beginning of a long test of German strength that culminated in the nineteenth century.[116] The struggle of German history up to that point from the Reformation had been as much one against foreign enemies as against German disunity and particularism.[117] The obverse of Freytag's sense of optimism and triumph was an inclination to remind his readers of the troubled and violent path that the Germans had been forced to take towards cultural unity, the historical consequences of particularism as opposed to unity.[118] Rupture and discontinuity continued to cast their long shadows, yet Freytag also thought that the German 'character', despite all this, had remained remarkably consistent: 'the

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[114] Gustav Freytag, *Bilder aus der deutschen Vergangenheit, Bd. IV: Aus dem Jahrhundert des grossen Krieges, 1600-1700*, in idem, *Gesammelte Werke*, XVII, p. 242.

[115] Ibid., pp. 11-12.

[116] Ibid., p. 188. Gustav Freytag, *Pictures of the German Past in the Fifteenth, Sixteenth, and Seventeenth Centuries*, vol. II (London, 1862), pp. 200-202, 383. Cramer, *The Thirty Years' War*, pp. 193, 194. Freytag, *Bilder*, V, pp. 1-8. Cramer, *The Thirty Years' War*, p. 195.

[117] Gustav Freytag, *Pictures of the German Past in the Fifteenth, Sixteenth, and Seventeenth Centuries*, vol. I (London, 1862), pp. 162-166. Gustav Freytag, *Pictures of the German Past in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, vol. II (London, 1863), pp. 305-306.

[118] Cramer, *The Thirty Years' War*, pp. 195-196.

Germans have changed far less than commonly thought, over the two thousand years of our history.'[119]

The purpose of this survey has been to show that nationalist historians in both Germany and Ireland in the mid and later nineteenth century were confronted with similar challenges when it came to writing of the foundational events of their histories, dealt with them in similar ways, and that certain 'themes' were recurrent in both contexts. In particular, these included a tendency to dwell on disunity during the 'foundational epochs' as a means of explaining the interrupted character of the nation's history, which carried with an assumption that 'national unity' was broadly the norm in these periods. The medieval nation, lacking a political centre and rent apart by its own lords and princes and overawed by foreign rulers, had not developed as neighbouring nations had. National history was therefore assumed to be deficient if not wholly lacking in a sense of permanence, even as it was argued to possess continuity as well. In responding to the apparent incongruence of the cultural nation and the political nation, they also highlighted, however, the cultural achievements of their respective nations at the beginning of the Middle Ages, which themselves served to accentuate the woefulness of political disunity and weakness in relation to the nation's 'Others'. They looked for precedents for political nationhood as much in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in the form of the various 'national' movements of that period and so linked national identity with religious allegiance (as will be seen in more detail in the second chapter). Though the burden of the foreign 'Other' with respect to the origins narrative was far heavier for Irish historians given the nature of the medieval Anglo-Irish relationship, German historians also associated foreignness with those historical influences that had arrested the 'natural'

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[119] Freytag, *Bilder*, I, x.

progress of 'the Germans' towards unified nationhood. While for most German historians who dealt with it, the Thirty Years' War was regarded as the prologue to the story of 'Germany's' modern revival and rise to greatness, it was also regarded as the most telling example of the consequences of German disunity, which seemed to be ever present, even after the great days of 1871. In contrast, the events of the 1640s in Ireland, though they were equally foundational for Irish history as the Thirty Years' War was for German history, could hardly be presented as the prologue of a narrative of revival and rise to greatness, given that their most immediate consequence was two further centuries of oppression; though they could be, and were, presented as having comprised a first 'national' movement for Irish freedom. Yet this only underlines how in both contexts the past, however traumatic and unpromising was made to serve the needs of the present. But in both interpretations of these events in German and Irish history, as shall be seen in more detail in chapter two, the national community was identified closely with allegiance to a particular confessional one, which had profound consequences for how nationalism was conceived of in both contexts.

IV

So far, the historians that have been considered all belonged to the mid- and late nineteenth century. Of course, however, some of the most important historians in these two traditions were twentieth century figures. In Ireland and Germany both, and throughout Europe, the ways in which national historians viewed the past could change in the context of concerns of changing political circumstances. The second decade of the twentieth century was a period of particularly significant change for both Germany and Ireland. Ireland had by 1922 finally achieved independence (albeit at the cost of partition and continuing constitutional links to Britain and the

Commonwealth) and could begin formally institutionalizing the historical narrative that had been formed and popularized since the previous century in such texts as not only the ones above but also in Alice Stopford Green's *History of the Irish State* and the works of Eoin MacNeill, and through state control of education. MacNeill also wrote a fourteen page sketch of Irish history for the *Official Handbook of the Irish Free State* (in which he cited both 'professional' and 'popular' sources), of which all but just under three pages was concerned with pre-seventeenth century history. This reflected that MacNeill was a medievalist rather than a modern historian and as a nationalist thought the medieval period of Gaelic Ireland to be far more meaningful than the 'conquered', 'Anglicized' Ireland of the modern period.[120]

Germany at this time was faced with an uncertain future as a truncated, weakened, politically fragmented republic. German historians were confronted with the biggest rupture or upheaval since Prussia's defeat of Austria in 1866 and the establishment of the 'second' *Reich* in 1871. In reality, or at least until 1933 and the beginnings of the 'racial state', these events did not bring about any fundamental re-evaluation among most German historians of the 'master narrative' of their history. German historians remained almost entirely committed to nationalism broadly similar in complexion to how it had been before 1914, now flavoured with a powerful sense of grievance and victimhood that had not been present since the early nineteenth century. There was also an appropriately more pronounced tendency toward 'racialized' Othering and in that sense a degree of overlap with *völkisch* nationalism. In the context of Germany's post-1918 misery, it was naturally not uncommon for German historians to open themselves to a more positive evaluation of the medieval *Reich* than had been the custom of their predecessors, of the previous and self-

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[120] Eoin MacNeill, 'History', *Official Handbook of the Irish Free State* (London, Ernest Benn Ltd., 1932), pp. 41-63.

satisfied 'Wilhelmine' generation. Germany's imperial past now held a particular appeal in a new period of internal disunity and 'foreign domination', The same of course went for the attempt to somehow restore Ireland's Gaelic heritage in the Irish context after the achievement of independence in 1922, in order to accentuate the new state's cultural distinctiveness. This tendency vis-à-vis the medieval German *Reich* was manifested in one of the most popular and widely-read (if not the single most popular and widely-read) German histories of the 1920's and 1930's, the medievalist Johannes Haller's (1865-1947), *Epochen der deutschen Geschichte*, first published in 1923.[121] Haller was one of the most significant, and certainly the most widely read, representative of the 'traditional' nationalist historical narrative in his generation. First, however, we shall take note of one of the foremost Irish historians of the period, also a medievalist, Alice Stopford Green.[122] The daughter of a wealthy Protestant family that had produced many clergymen, Green never became an academic historian, though became well-regarded as a 'gentlewoman scholar', having been formatively influenced and mentored by W.E.H. Lecky (though he preferred to discuss with her avenues of research on seventeenth and eighteenth-century history, Green became known as a medievalist) and Eoin MacNeill, the Professor of Early Irish History at University College, Dublin,[123] as well as her deceased husband, the English historian J.R. Green, a social historian known for his radical democratic, libertarian views.[124] The most important mark of distinction as

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[121] Heribert Müller, 'Der Bewunderte Erbfeind: Johannes Haller, Frankreich und das Französische Mittelalter', in *Historische Zeitschrift*, 252, 1991, pp. 265. Haller's principal work was *Epochen der deutschen Geschichte*, first published in 1923.

[122] Sandra Holton, 'Gender Difference, National Identity, and Professing History: The Case of Alice Stopford Green', *History Workshop Journal*, 53 (2002), p. 121.

[123] Mary O'Dowd, 'Popular Writers: Women Historians, the Academic Community and National History Writing', in *Setting the Standards*, p. 361.

[124] Holton, 'Gender Difference, National Identity, and Professing History', p. 121.

not only a historian but a nationalist historian that she gained was her elevation to the Senate of the Irish Free State in 1922.[125]

Green's major works on Irish history all argued for the sophistication and richness of Irish ancient and medieval civilisation and by implication for the independence of contemporary Ireland. [126] It was Green's opinion that 'the history of the Irish people has been left unrecorded, as though it had never been'.[127] Her aim was to chart the 'rise and fall' of medieval Ireland, counteracting a heritage of historical writing centuries old which framed Irish history in terms of constant disorder and backwardness, and Ireland as a kind of colony rather than a nation in its own right.[128] In evoking Thomas Davis, she noted that historical consciousness was for the Irish 'the very condition of thought',[129] which made it utterly imperative that they possess the *right* understanding of history. Green hoped that 'Ireland will have a history like other nations'; that Irish history 'will not always remain to the modern nation an unknown world.'[130] Green argued that in spite of the constant predations of the Anglo-Normans and later the medieval English, and their arresting influence on Irish historical development, the Irish had possessed and preserved a historically continuous nationality. It was only with the 'calamity' of the Tudor conquest did the defeated Irish begin to lose 'the memory of their former civilisation [which] was deliberately blotted out as though it had never existed.' The history of English rule in Ireland was one of a continuous onslaught against Irish nationhood. [131] It was

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[125] Nadia Clare Smith, *A 'Manly Study'? Irish women historians, 1868-1949* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), pp. 37, 41.
[126] Green, *The Old Irish World*, p. 9.
[127] Alice Stopford Green, *The Making of Ireland and its Undoing, 1200-1600* (London, Macmillan, 1909), ix.
[128] Ibid., x-xii.
[129] Green, *The Old Irish World*, p. 2.
[130] Ibid., p. 35. Alice Stopford Green, *History of the Irish State to 1014* (London, Macmillan, 1925), viii.
[131] Green, *The Making of Ireland*, pp. 462, 467, 489.

primarily in *Irish Nationality*, her most popular work, a volume of around 250 pages published in 1911 (on the eve of the 1912 Home Rule Crisis), in which the essentials of Green's narrative of Irish history are most strongly distilled. In beginning the narrative Green affirmed the Gaelic Irish as the first historical inhabitants of Ireland, and the long continuity of Irish life over five centuries outside the boundaries of the Roman Empire. 'To the Irish' – the contemporary Irish, Green's readers – it is stated, tellingly, that 'interest in the Gaels lies in their conception of how the create an enduring state or nation.' The Gaelic Irish had developed a distinctive idea, one of the earliest in history, of nation and state, one fundamentally democratic. 'Irish history', Green claimed, 'can only be understood by realising this intense national life with its sure basis on the broad self-government of the people.' Besides a 'democratic' polity, in the institution of the High Kingship, brought to greatness at the beginning of the eleventh century by Brian Boru, the Irish had possessed a visible symbol of their 'national' unity, a recognisable unified state form. The early Irish had attained, according to Green, a sense of nationality unequalled anywhere else outside of Greece and Rome: 'one race, obedient to one law, united in one culture and belonging to one country.' [132] The Irish, Alice Stopford Green maintained, had until the late twelfth century, at least, retained the essential continuity of their culture, civilisation, and polity, and foreign elements, 'gradually absorbed into the Irish population, lost the sense of separate nationality.' On the other hand, these foreign influences had presented a constant threat. The incursions of the Anglo-Normans marked a far greater point of discontinuity and rupture, the

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[132] Alice Stopford Green, *Irish Nationality* (London, Williams & Norgate, 1911), pp. 9-28. This tendency to favourably compare the ancient ancestors of the modern nation with classical civilisation, Greece and Rome, and towards presenting the ancient 'polity' of the modern nation's 'ancestors' as eminently 'democratic' or at least 'gemeinschaftlich' appears as a common point in Irish and German national(ist) historiographies. Dietrich Schäfer asserted that not only had the *Germanen* been of equal greatness to the Greeks and Romans, but had outdone them in 'Fernwirkung'. Dietrich Schäfer, *Deutsche Geschichte, Bd. II: Neuzeit* (Gustav Fischer Verlag, 1910), p. 464.

first real stunting of the development of the Irish nation, though the Irish remained unconquered until the seventeenth century, 'astonishing proof of the vitality of Irish culture, the firm structure of their law, and the cohesion of the people', and 'the rich national civilisation which the Irish genius had built up'. The English still remained a malign influence, frustrating full coalescence of the Gaelic Irish and Irish of English descent, even as the 'drift of the peoples to a common patriotism' gradually occurred. The Tudor conquest and the wars of the seventeenth century brought the downfall of the Gaelic polity and the old Gaelic society and high culture. Throughout this period, the 'great object of the [English] government was to destroy the whole tradition [of the Irish], wipe out the Gaelic memories, and begin a new English life.' Yet still, in spite of all these disasters, Green maintained that, among the mass of the people 'the national tradition was still maintained with unswerving fidelity',[133] particularly in rejecting the Reformation and continuing to adhere to Catholicism, despite the terrible cost of their national self-assertion in the seventeenth century. This sustained the new Irish nation, composed of the defeated Gaelic and Old English peoples, in its later abasement. For Green, Irish history offered one enduring lesson: the continuous demand of the nation for self-government and the striving for unity. The Irish had proven in their history that there was no necessary relationship between a history of statehood and the right to be recognized as a nation. It is no surprise that this work, *Irish Nationality*, was most popular during the War of Independence.[134] In her final major work, *History of the Irish State to 1014*, Green restated many of the conclusions of her earlier works, such as the authentic Gaelic identity of the ancient Irish, and the early and medieval past as the ages in which Irish nationality had displayed its purest expression. Now, what Green had been

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[133] Green, *Irish Nationality*, pp. 78, 86, 111-113, 119, 132, 141.

[134] Smith, *A 'Manly Study'?* p. 50. R.B. McDowell, *Alice Stopford Green: A Passionate Historian* (Dublin, Allen Figgis and Co., 1967), p. 86

saying and writing of the medieval Irish for twenty years could be vindicated with reference to their recent achievement of independence, to a nation-state that could (and did) claim itself as the successor of Gaelic Ireland, before its downfall.[135] Green herself played an active role in Irish nationalist politics between 1912 and 1921, and supported the independence movement, though she was not a radical republican and willingly accepted the Irish Free State, despite its limitations.

Johannes Haller, a native of the ethnic German community of Russian Estonia, was like most German historians of note an academic, yet his most popular works were brief, single-volume surveys, aimed at a popular audience, the most popular and influential being the often reprinted *Epochen der deutschen Geschichte*.[136] He began this work by noting the importance of certain 'critical turning points…when the new begins, the old is abandoned; the direction changes.'[137] Haller was hopeful that through the study of these most fundamental turning-points the German people could arrive at a historically-informed understanding of their present parlous state, and hopefully derive some positive response.[138] At the same time, a tone of pessimism overlaid this first edition of the work: he seemed to be of the opinion, as expressed both in the introduction and ending, that the normal course of German history had really been a series of frustrations in the path to national statehood rather than continuous progress towards this goal, and a final 'end' of German history. This was how German history continuously repeated itself, as reflected in all of the key turning points he identified: the rise of the early medieval Empire, its later decline and the period of territorial fragmentation, German colonisation in the East, the rise

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[135] Green, *History of the Irish State*, pp. 36, 38, 57, 85, 93.
[136] Donald R. Kelley, *Frontiers of History: Historical Inquiry in the Twentieth Century* (London, Yale University Press, 2006), p. 96.
[137] Johannes Haller, *The Epochs of German History* (London, Routledge, 1927), viii. Johannes Haller, *Epochen der deutschen Geschichte* (Berlin, J.G. Cotta, 1923), p. 2.
[138] Haller, *Epochen*, p. 7.

of the Habsburgs, the reformation and the religious schism, the Thirty Years' War, the rise of Prussia, the Napoleonic conquest, and the movement towards unification. While Haller expressed the opinion in one of his essays that 'the history of the world is the work of the *Völker*', one in which they struggled amongst each other and rose and fell (and despite his later support for Nazism, which was enthusiastic compared to that of other historians), he did not accept that there was a specific trans-historical, timeless racial 'essence' to German nationality. Rather, German nationality was what Germany's peculiar history had made of it, and had been particularly shaped by external influences.[139] He even denied that the Germans had ever been an 'unmixed' people – on the contrary, they had been strongly mixed with other 'national' elements from their earliest history[140] – but also maintained that nations had a lasting and unchangeable character derived from centuries-long experience of common history and culture.[141] Finally, not least had German history – and nationality – been shaped by the contentious and indistinct nature of German territory and borders, Germany's geographical particularity.[142] These notions were of course far from new and had great currency during the First World War and the inter-war period.

Haller had an at least sympathetic view of the medieval *Reich*; he thought that the failure of the empire was as much to be blamed on the particularism and myopia of the German territorial princes, their challenges to the Emperors and dalliances with foreign rulers.[143] The later medieval era did not present a completely dismal picture, either, for this period also saw the *Ostsiedlung*, and 'The beginning of this movement marks an epoch which must count among those of the most far-reaching

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[139] Johannes Haller, 'Die Eintritt der Germanen in die Geschichte' in Johannes Haller, *Reden und Aufsätze zur Geschichte und Politik* (Stuttgart, J.G. Cotta, 1934), pp. 1, 3, 36-37.
[140] Ibid., pp. 36-37.
[141] Ibid. Berger, *The Search For Normality*, p. 25.
[142] Haller, *Epochen*, p. 13. Mueller, 'Der Bewunderte Erbfeind', p. 278.
[143] Haller, *Epochen*, pp. 42, 52, 87.

importance in German history.'[144] The *Ostsiedlung* was nothing less than 'the greatest achievement of the German people, one which alone would assure the Germans 'a place among the pioneers of civilisation...one might well say – if it is permissible to speak of a mission in life of whole peoples, specially assigned to them – that history tells us that the German people was called to civilise its eastern neighbours.'[145] On the other hand, he does credit the enduring significance of the *Ostsiedlung* with the fact that, he claimed, *Kaiser* and *Reich* had nothing to do with it. The upheavals of the sixteenth century and seventeenth centuries were but the logical conclusion to the events of the thirteenth in the Empire, its decline after the extinction of the Hohenstaufen dynasty. The sixteenth century, particularly from the time of the Reformation, had presented an opportunity, again one frustrated, for national revival, but Germany became mired in violent confessional conflict, this being probably the most important factor in modern German history; still affecting Germany in the present.[146] Events that occurred later, such as the final dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire in 1806, rather than being 'epochal' were rather 'aftershocks' of the events of the seventeenth century. Haller sought to chart the development of German nationality through more than a thousand years of history, from their earliest origin, to the miserable present, which had been punctuated by less then fifty years of strength and power. The leading role of Prussia had been necessary for German unification, for due to the particular circumstances of German history the national movement could only have succeeded under the leadership of the strongest of the 'national' German states, but Prussia's achievement in 1871 had unfortunately not defined German history. Germany, after a brief period of greatness,

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[144] Haller, *Epochs*, p. 76.
[145] Ibid., p. 83.
[146] Haller, *Epochen*, pp. 191-214, 235.

had seemed by 1922 to have sunk back into the mire of disunity and weakness. The least the German nation could do, must do, if it was ever to recover its strength was, for Haller, to understand where and why their national development had repeatedly 'gone wrong' during their history.

<u>**V**</u>

The historical texts surveyed so far were among the most important contributions in both countries to the delineation of the dominant narrative of Irish or German national history. However they form only part of the story, and historical works produced 'outside' of these 'traditions' were also significant, either for becoming popularly accepted and incorporated in the dominant narrative, or indeed by being rejected. This section will deal with two later nineteenth century histories, one of Ireland and one of Germany, that were exemplars of texts written from outside the dominant tradition that had the above effects. These were W.E.H. Lecky's (1838-1903) *History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century* (1892), and Johannes Janssen's *History of the German People at the Close of the Middle Ages* (*Geschichte des deutschen Volkes seit dem Ausgang des Mittelalters*, 8 vols., 1878-1894).

For W.E.H. Lecky, as for many writers of Irish history before and since, the direct impetus for his engagement with Irish history was his dissatisfaction with the immoderate, intemperate nature of so much of its discussion.[147] He was spurred in particular by his anger with the Scottish historian James Anthony Froude, who wrote a two-volume *History of the English in Ireland* (1872, 1874), which portrayed Irish

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[147] Lecky's 1868 essay 'Thoughts on History' manifests his view that the historian had to be artistic, but was obliged to ensure that accuracy and truthfulness were always paramount. He does not claim to offer any particular method of writing history, and rejects any distinctions made between history as literature and history as science. He cautions against projecting ahistorical judgements onto the doings of historical personages. W.E.H. Lecky, 'Thoughts on History', in Lecky, *Historical and Political Essays* (London, Longmans, 1908), pp. 1-14. In a later lecture, Lecky appealed to his listeners to study history with due attention to both sides of a given historical conflict. W.E.H. Lecky, 'The Political Value of History', in *Essays*, pp. 23-26, 38-39. See also Smith, *A "Manly Study"?* p. 9.

history in the blackest of terms and did just about everything possible not only to offend Irish readers. Lecky highlighted in the preface to his *History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century* (five volumes, comprising the sections in Lecky's earlier *History of England* on Irish history) that 'furious partisanship' that distinguished most Irish historiography.[148] Lecky, personally unsympathetic to political nationalism by the time he wrote his Irish history (though he had not been so earlier in life) nonetheless criticised in powerful terms centuries of English and British misrule for failing to establish a stable government over Ireland, impeding the growth of a stable Irish national sentiment, and for mercilessly exploiting the country. While Lecky saw no necessary link between the tenor of his history and his own (non-nationalist) judgement of the state of contemporary Irish politics and society, his whole engagement in contemporary politics can be said to have arisen directly from his immersion in Irish history and a compulsion to defend Irish history from 'Hibernophobic' calumnies. Lecky's interpretation of Irish history was admired, to his occasional irritation, by virtually all strands of contemporary Irish nationalist public opinion.[149] He considered the unthinking application of English ideas to Irish problems as one of the continuing sources of evil in Irish affairs. In an early essay he had asserted that patriotism and national feeling existed independently of class and circumstance, being inspired by history, common memories and common hopes.[150] Lecky's history would not (could not) be a 'Whiggish'-accented one of a twisted path towards the (inevitable) triumph of the nation-state, but rather dealt with the 'degrading influences of great legislative injustices, and the manner in which they

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[148] W.E.H. Lecky, *History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century* (London, Longmans, 1913), vol. I, v-vi.

[149] Donal McCartney, *W.E.H. Lecky: Historian and Politician, 1838-1903* (Dublin, Lilliput, 1994), p. 2. Helen Mulvey, 'The Historian Lecky: Opponent of Irish Home Rule', *Victorian Studies*, 1, 4 (1958), p. 342. Terry Eagleton, *Scholars and Rebels in Nineteenth-Century Ireland* (Oxford, Blackwell, 1999), p. 68. Gibney, *The Shadow of A Year*, p. 126.

[150] Mulvey, 'The Historian Lecky', p. 343.

affect every element of national well-being.'[151] He could at any rate study Irish history as 'morbid anatomy', as the story of missed chances for progress frustrated by centuries of bad English and British misgovernment and sectarianism, and in some way he could speak for reconciliation of the different historical strains of Irish society and Irishness.

Lecky began his *History* by conceding that had Ireland been left to herself in the medieval period a stable and unified Irish state would probably have developed along wider European lines. English invasions prevented the establishment of an Irish kingdom, 'which would necessarily have taken place if the Anglo-Normans had not arrived, and, instead of that peaceful and almost silent amalgamation of races, customs, laws and languages which took place in England…the two nations remained in Ireland for centuries in hostility.'[152] Ireland's political development had been stunted, but the country had not been conquered as England had been in 1066. Thus the country remained stuck in a state of 'arrested development'. The reality of continuous, direct English rule over all of Ireland did not appear until the reigns of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I, and Lecky likens the methods and effects of their reigns in Ireland to what would now be called genocide.[153] Lecky made no apologies whatsoever for the means by which English rule had become a reality in Ireland.[154] From the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries 'traditions were slowly forming which coloured the whole texture of Irish thought', traditions irrevocably conditioned by the brutal ferocity and injustice of the English subjugation of Ireland. In Lecky's judgement, however, it was not until the mid-seventeenth century, that critical period of Irish history, that the conflict between Irish and English gained a

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[151] Lecky, *History of Ireland*, I, p. 1.
[152] Ibid., p. 3. This passage is cited verbatim in the nationalist writer and politician Erskine Childers's highly influential 1911 book *The Framework of Home Rule* (p. 7).
[153] Ibid., pp. 5, 6. Smith, *A "Manly Study"?* p. 9.
[154] Eagleton, *Scholars and Rebels*, p. 67.

recognizably national aspect. Lecky described the uprising of the Irish Catholics, rebels and later Confederates, in the 1640's as not the outcome of 'any single cause, but represented the accumulated wrongs and animosities of two generations', as 'a defensive religious war entered into for the purpose of securing toleration, and ultimately an establishment, of the religion of the Irish people', and he contrasted the behaviour of the Irish armies in the Confederate Wars favourably with that of the English (though he does note the 'inferior civilisation' of the Gaelic soldiery). Lecky's concern to correct various misconceptions of Irish history in the early modern period was itself indicative of their importance in contemporary Irish political debate.[155] In the first volume's introduction, the conflicts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries appear as a furious whirlwind in which the forces of race, nationality and religion and contests for land were all of varying importance, but what defined them all was the mutual incomprehension of the opposing forces, Irish and English, and the furious brutality of the English towards the Irish in their determination to bring the latter to heel, so as they could never again be a threat. Lecky's *History* secured him a place – whether he wanted it or not – in the eyes of many of his Irish contemporaries as an intellectual supporter of Irish nationalism.[156] His contentions that Irish history demonstrated that national character was formed by political and social circumstances, and the folly of attempting to govern by the same methods and institutions nations wholly different in character and civilisation, were useful.[157] The highly influential book *The Framework of Home Rule* (1911) authored by the nationalist writer and politician Erskine Childers's credits Lecky's judgements extensively in its historical sections. His *History of Ireland in the Eighteenth*

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[155] Benedikt Stuchtey, *W.E.H. Lecky: Historischen Denken und politisches Urteilen eines Anglo-Irischen Gelehrten* (Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1997), p. 121.
[156] McCartney, *W.E.H. Lecky*, pp. 54, 55, 65, 75, 76, 77. Smith, *A "Manly Study"?* p. 10. Stuchtey, *W.E.H. Lecky*, p. 163.
[157] McCartney, *W.E.H. Lecky*, pp. 152-153.

Century, Childers was sure, counted among the 'Nationalist textbooks'.[158] Though Lecky was a Protestant and brought a 'Protestant angle' to his writing, his *History* achieved considerable popularity among Catholic readers.

German national historiography was, as we have noted, a mostly Protestant affair, so much so that sincere Catholic allegiance and competence as a historian were seen as mutually exclusive. Nonetheless, a few Catholic German historians were able to exercise some influence. Sybel had conducted a kind of historiographical quarrel with the Catholic historian Julius von Ficker over the medieval *Reich*. Ficker maintained that the medieval empire had provided an appropriate political framework for the development of German nationhood, the only such framework possible for the Germans in the Middle Ages, and indeed its only meaningful expression. Therefore the Germans could not claim any real historical sense of nationality, political or cultural, distinct from the development of the Empire or without reference to the importance of the imperial idea. To Ficker, nothing could be more wrong than the idea that the founding of the old empire had in some way frustrated the development of the German nation or caused its decline; the old *Reich* could not conceivably be regarded as 'un-German'.[159] The kind of views expressed by Ficker, who had none of the inclination towards public historico-political controversy that Sybel possessed, find a much more popular expression in the twelve-volume history of medieval Germany written by the leading Catholic historian Johannes Janssen (1829-1891).

Janssen held the Reformation responsible for the general unrest and the fracturing of German society that occurred during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries,

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[158] Erskine Childers, *The Framework of Home Rule* (London, Edward Arnold, 1911), viii.
[159] Julius Ficker, *Das Deutsche Kaiserreich in seinen Universalen und Nationalen Beziehungen* (Innsbruck, 1862), p. 63. Wolfgang Weber, 'Völkische Tendenzen in der Geschichtswissenschaft', in *Handbuch zur Völkischen Bewegung*, p. 844.

including the political emasculation of the Empire as would occur in the seventeenth century. He sought to demonstrate how the Reformation had wrecked the German *Kulturnations* most glorious age. [160] It had been the Catholic intellectuals and reformers of the sixteenth century who had by contrast, so Janssen argued, opposed the 'separatism' of the German princes and who had upheld 'Germany's mission to be the defender of the universal Church and as such the leading realm of Christendom.[161] For Janssen, the Germans had derived whatever claim to nationhood they had possessed from the historical grounding of the empire. To the empire alone the Germans owed their status as a nation, they had not been one prior to its founding. The empire's ruler had been *both* King of Germany *and* Holy Roman Emperor. The imperial age was the golden age of German history, until its decline the Empire 'was the centre of all European national life'.[162] The decline of the Empire happened as a result of the power struggles between the Hohenstaufen emperors and the territorial princes. The result was that 'the general interests of the nation suffered', and 'the ties which bound the different German races were slackened'. The Habsburgs attempted to restore the unity and strength of the Empire, but were frustrated by the German territorial princes 'who, indifferent to the glory of the Empire, thought only of themselves and their own interests.'[163] The Empire had been the true bulwark of peace and culture in Europe. With the Empire's decline, 'Germany not only lost its European supremacy, but became a stranger to all the great questions of European politics.' With the decline of the empire, swathes of

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[160] Thomas A. Brady Jr., *Communities, Politics, and Reformation in Early Modern Europe* (Boston, Brill, 1998), 360.

[161] Johannes Janssen, *History of the German People at the Close of the Middle Ages*, vol. I, trans. M.A. Mitchell and A.M. Christie (London, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1896), p. 7. Johannes Janssen, *Geschichte des deutschen Volkes seit dem Ausgang des Mittelalters*, Bd. I (XXth Aufl., Freiburg, 1913), p. 8.

[162] Janssen, *History*, I, pp. 517, 521, 525.

[163] Janssen, *History of the German People*, II, pp., 116-118, 124. Janssen, *Geschichte des deutschen Volkes*, I, pp. 608-609.

historically German territory were lost. [164] While the (Habsburg) Emperor Maximilian I took it as his duty to restore the empire, the princes remained indifferent. Janssen took this as a contrast to the sentiments of the mass of the people, and he blamed the princes not only for hindering Maximilian's efforts, but for 'conspiring to place the sceptre in the hands of the French King…most prominent among them who promoted this scheme was the House of Hohenzollern, the very one which of all the princely houses he had especially favoured.'[165] The contrast with the likes of Sybel, Freytag and Treitschke could hardly be more marked: the princes, especially the Protestant Prussian Hohenzollerns, had been pro-French traitors; the Habsburg Maximilian was a patriotic nation-builder. Even in his reply to his critics Janssen freely admitted his feelings of sympathy towards the Empire, and regarded the personage of the Holy Roman Emperor as having embodied, in victory and defeat, the fate of the German nation, and repeated his charge of 'the conspiracies of German princes with the foreigners'.[166] Janssen professed to have merely written, without any theological or political goal whatsoever in mind, the 'Geschichte unseres Volkes' from a standpoint of social and cultural history.[167] This claim of objectivity reflected rather Janssen's view of the kind of history he was writing against. In contrasting the anti-national motives of the princes and positing the Reformation as an aberration in the course of German history, the central actor of Janssen's work, pointedly entitled *Geschichte des deutschen Volkes* is 'the German people' (assumed to have been in natural sympathy with the Habsburgs and the old Church) and its cultural creativity, which the Protestant Reformers, allied with the

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[164] Janssen, *History of the German People*, II, pp. 188-189. Janssen, *Geschichte des deutschen Volkes*, I, pp. 609-617.
[165] Janssen, *History of the German People*, II, pp. 223, 263. Janssen, *Geschichte des deutschen Volkes*, I, p. 619.
[166] Janssen, *An meine Kritiker* (Freiburg, 1882), p. 158.
[167] Ibid., p. 3.

princes, maimed with their 'reformation from above'. Luther had been, at least at one point, Ranke admitted, 'the most popular man in Germany', but after the Peasants' War the Reformation became the ally of the particularist state and the possession of the princes rather than the people.[168] Janssen, while accepting the 'from Luther to Bismarck' thesis, turned it on its head, seeing in it the explanation of the 'wrong path' German history had taken since the foundational events of the sixteenth century. It suffices to say that Janssen's *History* was not written to undergird the national claims of the new German state established under a Protestant dynasty in 1871. Though his book ran to many editions, it did not succeed outside of its 'intended' audience the way Lecky's *History* did, and underlined the way in which German historiography was arguably *more* 'pillarized' along confessional lines than Irish historiography. Janssen's *Geschichte* underlined how not even when it came to the question of origins, could historians arrive at an agreed narrative.

<h2 style="text-align:center"><u>VI</u></h2>

'The search for origins whether in a universal or particular setting, represented', as Monika Baár argues, 'a perennially popular theme …Origins provide a cornerstone of every nation's self-legitimization and consequently historians have shown a keen dedication to this theme'.[169] For the historians considered here origins and foundational events were of the utmost importance, opening up as they did the 'perennial themes' of German or Irish history, such as the failure of the cultural nation and the political nation to develop in tandem, the role of outside forces in the nation's history, and the effects of a confessional division formed in the context of violent conflict. The search for origins was also, however, the search for *unity*,[170]

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168 Janssen, *An meine Kritiker*, pp. 116-122. Brady, *Communities, Politics, and Reformation*, p. 361.
169 Baar, *Historians and Nationalism*, p. 193.
170 Edmund Curtis, *A History of Ireland* (5th ed., London, Methuen and Co., 1945), vi.

more specifically for a 'golden age' in which the nation had been one and powerful, rather than weak and fragmented.[171] This seeking of unity may be regarded as a characteristic of nationalism 'in general', yet it was an especially pressing matter for nations that had been very much lacking for unity, political and cultural, for much of their history, as was the case for 'Germany' and 'Ireland'. The search for unity was in this sense necessarily an 'inventive' act, common to both 'scholarly' and 'amateur' historians. The object of this search remained at all times elusive, and it was for this reason that the significance of manifestations of unity in the foundational epochs was often overestimated. Irish historians sometimes over-emphasised the 'unified' quality of Gaelic Ireland and more often the 'unity' apparent among the (Catholic) Irish of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. German historians over-emphasised the national 'unity' manifested by the *Ostseidlung*, and in a later age brought by the Reformation and the defence of the Protestant cause. Some over-emphasised the 'national unity' conferred by the medieval *Reich*. That which did not fit into the narrative, was of course a target for exclusion, whether on 'ethnic' or religious grounds. The 'ancestors' of the modern nation in the early medieval past were held to have created a political or social community which expressed in some way the national spirit or the nation's needs, yet also to have 'failed' in their goal to establish a unified 'national' state. Influences outside of the nation had played a part in this, whether the Roman imperial legacy which seemed to have bewitched the medieval German Emperors or the Norse and Anglo-Norman invaders whose incursions had arrested the development of an Irish state in the medieval period. The views held by these historians of the nation's origins were also linked with those of the significance of the nation's geographic

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[171] Of medieval Irish history Hayden and Noonan wrote, 'Of a country so circumstanced there can be little continuous history.' Mary Hayden and George A. Moonan, *A Short History of the Irish People* (Dublin, Talbot Press, 1927), p. 177.

nature: Irish insularity and Germany as *Mitteleuropa* had both determined the nation's political and cultural history from its origins. In both contexts, the cultural achievements and 'mission' of the early medieval 'nation' were positively emphasised. Medieval kings and princes and early modern heroes were seen as being constitutive of the nation's historical character, herein lay the 'ancestry' of the modern nation.[172] If the shortcomings of the Irish or the Germans under these rulers were not glossed over, on the other hand the examples of 'national independence' and the cultural sophistication of the nation to be in their time offered both a defence against charges of cultural backwardness and thereby an argument of sorts for national sovereignty. The early modern foundational period of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries saw the beginnings of a national community deeply entwined with a particular religious or confessional identity, be it Catholicism in the Irish context or Protestantism in the German context, and had been a period distinguished by epochal violence and upheaval which irreducibly affected the subsequent history of the nation. Narratives of origins in both contexts underpinned a broader narrative based on rupture and a cyclical process of 'rise-and-decline' and the idea of a 'broken' development which needed to be recovered for national regeneration.[173] This meant that even the teleological accent of nationalist histories in these contexts was uncertain; even the nation's historical *telos* was seen as vulnerable to those characteristics of the nation's history that made it a cycle of disaster and revival. So, even the fall of the *Kaiserreich* in 1918 could be accounted for in the larger frame of German history, as was argued by Haller. Political as well as cultural precedents for national statehood of some sort also had to be found, whether in medieval Gaelic Ireland, the Kingdom of Germany, the Irish Catholic Confederation of the 1640's, or

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[172] Justin McCarthy, *Ireland and her Story* (New York, Funk & Wagnalls, 1903), p. 20.
[173] Smith, *Ethnic Origins*, p. 195. Colin Kidd, 'Gaelic Antiquity and National Identity', pp. 1197-1214.

the different Protestant German princes' leagues founded in defiance of the Holy Roman Emperor, or indeed the German states that had formed on the ruins of the medieval *Reich*, in particularly Austria and Prussia. This act of 'precedent-seeking' in the foundational periods of the nation's history expressed the basic act behind origins narratives: the attempt to establish or overlay continuity over rupture, to establish a history of national unity over a highly fractured and heterogeneous past.[174] The nation was held in its origins, regardless of any failings to establish or consolidate a political existence, to possess a lasting character derived from centuries-long experience of common history and culture and the enduring nature of national enmities. [175] From the discourses of origins they propounded, these historians, Irish and German, believed that Irish or German political nationality was expressed less in 'abstract' or 'universal' ideas of 'the State' than ties of ethno-cultural fellowship and community that were linked to a particular form of political organization. In the German case, this usually meant a particularly 'national' form of monarchy which owed something to the concept of the *Reich*; in the Irish case, a 'national' concept of democratic self-rule identified with the political forms and traditions of Gaelic Ireland up to their 'catastrophic' demise at the end of the sixteenth century, or on the independent parliaments of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries for those more sceptical about Gaelic Ireland, or indeed on both for those wishing to bring together the two great cultural streams of Irish history. Historians in both countries over numerous generations, in response to the humiliations and despair of the nation in past and the present, turned to 'golden ages' of unity and prosperity, and attempted to draw lessons from periods of decline and disaster. The dominant narrative of national history writing in both contexts departed

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[174] Michael Mays, *Nation-States: The Cultures of Irish Nationalism* (Plymouth, Lexington Books, 2007), pp. 11, 17.

[175] Paul Lawrence, *Nationalism: History and Theory* (Harlow, Pearson, 2004), p. 23.

from recollection of an early medieval 'golden age' towards later decline, brief 'national' rally in the context of the Reformation or opposition to the Reformation, and then disastrous, yet nonetheless foundational, seventeenth century conflict. German historians, like their Irish counterparts, fashioned a narrative of the past that suggested a sense of common fate, focused political energies on the nation-state, commanded individual sacrifice for the greater whole, and rejected foreign influences. As in the 'Irish mode of historical thought', a central theme in the 'German conception of history' was the idea of a tortured history leading to a *telos* of redemption, national renewal and greatness.[176] The historical writings explored here illustrate also how national historical narratives are always contested within, and can be used to frame differing ideas of nationality, by recourse to different periods of the nation's history, and particularly with respect to the period which had introduced the element of religious division into the historical national identity equation, the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It may also be argued that the medieval past had greater modern political significance and historiographical importance in the German conception of history than in the Irish mode of historical thought', because of the greater gulf that seemed to exist between the medieval and modern past in Ireland. It could at least be said that medieval German history maintained a tangible legacy in the form of the states of Austria and Prussia and the idea of the *Reich*; whereas in Ireland the medieval Gaelic past was more distant, had left behind no institutional heritages as in central Europe, and was of course inaccessible for another reason: the moribund state of the literary Irish language from the seventeenth century, and the near-death of the language altogether in the nineteenth century. The role of foreign actors in the nation's history was also

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[176] Jarausch and Geyer, *Shattered Past*, pp. 341, 476, 580.

obviously quite different in both countries: the German lands had never been so deeply and continuously subjected to the rule of another country as Ireland had, even if German nationalist historians associated the 'villains' of their narratives with foreign 'Others'. It is a further irony, however, that while Ireland as a European state (the Kingdom of Ireland) and institutions such as the Parliament of Ireland were creations of centuries of English rule, pride was still taken in them by numerous historians insofar as they were markers of Irish distinctiveness and historical foci of national politics, even though in their (medieval) origins they were distinctively foreign and the work of hostile outsiders.[177] German historians were also, however, whether they stood for Austria or Prussia as the 'authentic' modern embodiment of the 'original' character of the nation, faced with the need to 'write out' the 'un-German' aspects of these territories' histories. Irish historians for the most part did not actively reject such institutions as the Catholic Confederation, the Patriot Parliament, or 'Grattan's Parliament', as precedents, perhaps as they were the only possible examples of 'political' nationality. Nonetheless, discourses of origins were more state-centred in the German context, given that the Germans had possessed some form of political organization of longer than the Irish had.

In the most important regards the challenge of the medieval period was essentially the same in each context: accounting for the failure to achieve political nationhood while presenting eventual achievement of national sovereignty as the necessary or desirable outcome of that same history, forging a past of warring dynasties and petty territories into a 'national' history. The often fractious 'origins' of the modern nation, the 'setting of the scene', cast long and often troublesome shadows over the

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[177] '…the political State has seldom…been representative of the majority who believed themselves to be the true and historic Irish nation…*Yet even as it was, the Kingdom of Ireland…has had historic greatness and national appeal, and to restore it…has been the aim of most of our leaders since the Union of 1800.* (my emphasis) Curtis, *History of Ireland*, vii.

nation's envisioning in the modern age. A recurrent sense, in both sets of narratives throughout the period in diverse authors, though in differing degrees, was that in part because of the forms the origins and foundational events of the nation's history took the nation's history *as process* kept falling short of a *final* culmination. If anything, the return to origins and foundational events, however much it was a search for unity and explanation of the particular 'character' of German or Irish history, opened as many questions as it could resolve. The question of origins, finally, related directly to all the other central problems of German and Irish history: the Protestant-Catholic divide, the question of the historical delineation of the nation's territory, and the matter of 'race' and 'Othering' in regards to the nationalist historical narrative.

CHAPTER TWO

The Nation and Religion in History

I

Ranke, in the opening to his *Deutsche Geschichte im Zeitalter der Reformation* wrote – in words that could apply to the histories of Germany and Ireland equally – that religious and political histories of a given nation were 'indissolubly connected, fused into one indivisible whole.'[1] It is difficult to imagine an Irish historian of the same period, either Protestant or Catholic, disagreeing with this statement if applied to Irish history. This chapter will investigate the significance of representations of religion and confessional identity and antagonism – Protestant or Catholic allegiance and Protestant-Catholic conflict – in German and Irish national historical narratives and their relevance to how the nation's historical identity was defined. It will examine how the historiographies treated confessional allegiance as fundamental to the definition of the nation.[2] This chapter considers more closely the significance of the historical Protestant-Catholic divide in the Irish and German historiographical contexts. What is distinctive here in these contexts is not the experience of a confessional divide but how deeply that division in these countries penetrated to the core of the question of national identity.[3] In Ireland, politico-religious difference came to be conceptualised not just as a division within a nation but as one *between* nationalities, on one island;[4] but in Germany too, *Konfession* became a battleground of national identity. An important source of the heterogeneity that existed in the nation's past and which complicated the delineation of a single dominant national

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[1] Ranke, *History of the Reformation*, I p. 1.

[2] Genevieve Warland, 'Wars of Religion in National History Writing at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century', in *Nationalizing the Past*, p. 107.

[3] Nagle, Shane, 'Confessional Identity as National Boundary in National Historical Narratives: Ireland and Germany Compared', *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism*, 13, 1 (2013), pp. 38-57.

[4] Comerford, *Ireland*, pp. 93, 99.

historical narrative was religious or confessional identity and conflict.[5] The chapter compares how within the historical narratives 'Irishness' became associated with Catholicity (or at least a kind of cultural anti-Protestantism) and 'Germanness' with Protestantism (and anti-Catholicism).[6] The common nineteenth-century conception of nations as 'God-given', with a central role in 'God's design' often gave national historical narratives an implicitly religious character. Historical narratives inspired by Christian motifs of virtuous suffering and resurrection, where a past of sacrifice and suffering led to a future or present of freedom, independence, and greatness were also popular.[7] The importance of the early modern era for the historical 'nationalisation' of religion meant specifically that the national religious identity became closely associated with resistance to foreign aggression, defence of unity, and national revival after some period of decline or defeat, or even survival.

One particular contrast should be noted early on: the historiographical 'Catholicization' of Irishness had had as much to do with English perceptions and stereotyping of the Irish as any effort made in this cause by Irish writers themselves. English commentators were content for their own reasons to accentuate the historical Catholicity or rather 'Popery' of the Irish. A parallel in the German context is harder to detect, and it could not have had quite the same significance. Yet it should be remembered that the historical 'nationalization' of Irish Catholicism or 'Catholicization' of Irishness in the nineteenth century was not a foregone conclusion; insofar as this identification was pioneered by nationalist historians, it

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[5] Warland, 'Wars of Religion', pp. 110, 115. Joel F. Harrington and Helmut Walser Smith, 'Confessionalization, Community, and State-Building in Germany, 1555-1870', in *Journal of Modern History*, 69, 1 (1997), pp. 92-93.
[6] Richard English, *Irish Freedom: The History of Nationalism in Ireland* (Oxford, Pan Macmillan, 2007), p. 42. Frey and Jordan, 'National Historians and the Discourse of the Other: France and Germany', in *The Contested Nation*, p. 211.
[7] Heinz-Gerhard Haupt and Dieter Langewiesche, 'Nation und Religion: zur Einführung', in idem (eds.), *Nation und Religion in der deutschen Geschichte* (New York, Campus, 2001), p. 16.

involved an active choice to represent Catholicity as a unifying element of national history and to downplay that which tended against this. In Germany, not too dissimilarly, historians, whether Protestant or Catholic, seemed determined to keep the old cultural antagonism of their 'confessions' alive and relevant for the definition of 'Germanness'. In general terms, those historians who sought to take confessional affiliation out of definitions of 'Irishness', significantly, usually themselves Protestant, did so by downplaying the actual importance of specifically religious conflict in Irish history (John Mitchel was an exemplar) while others such as Lecky and Standish James O'Grady, were more prepared to criticise the 'deficiencies' of Irish Catholicism, and to defend sometimes rather patrician claims for Protestant leadership of the modern nation. Of the Irish historians considered in this thesis, only O'Grady could be regarded as having had an anti-Christian perspective on Irish history, believing that Christianity had weakened the vitality of the ancient heroic nation and that a revived code of virtues derived from Ireland's heroic pre-Christian age was needed for a revival of the nation in general.[8]

II

In both Ireland and Germany, nationalism was from the start closely tied to religious or confessional identity. From its beginnings German nationalism was self-consciously Protestant.[9] Ernst Moritz Arndt had declared that 'Germany is the land of Protestantism', because 'Protestantism seems to be purely Germanic…it

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[8] Standish James O'Grady, *History of Ireland: Critical and Philosophical* (Dublin, E. Ponsonby & Co., 1881), pp. 59-60, 101, 345-346, 414.

[9] Wolfgang Altgeld, 'Religion, Denomination and Nationalism in Nineteenth-Century Germany', in Helmut Walser Smith (ed.), *Protestants, Catholics, and Jews: 1800-1914* (Oxford, Berg, 2001), p. 52. Wolfgang Altgeld, *Katholizismus, Protestantismus, und Judentum: über religiös begründete Gegensätze und nationalreligiöse Ideen in der Geschichte des deutschen Nationalismus* (Mainz, M. Grünewald, 1992), p. 66.

effortlessly attracts all things Germanic.'[10] In the nineteenth century most proponents of the German *Kultur-* and *Staatsnation* regarded the reality of the confessional division in the German lands as an especially important problem in creating the German nation-state.[11] At the same time, however, the confessional division, originating in early modern ethno-religious conflicts, was seen to underpin the demand for the *Staatsnation*, as those conflicts had set the course of the particular cultural developments that created the modern German *Kulturnation*.[12] The history of the Reformation offered a possible basis for a national narrative, but such a narrative was inherently exclusionary of Catholic Germans.[13] Catholic Germans would be led to oppose the outcomes of German unification not simply because they feared becoming a minority in a *Kleindeutschland*, but also because they had a specific historical idea of their own of the German nation making them averse to German nationalism as then generally understood. What defined the worldview of almost all German nationalists at the time was a certainty that the route to personal and national *Bildung* was Protestantism.[14] Catholics' *Grossdeutsche* allegiance, and that towards the memory of the old *Reich* was 'continued' in the nineteenth century in the sense of an orientation towards the Habsburg Empire; at any rate the certainty among Protestants that this was so contributed to their view of Catholicism.[15] While

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[10] Quoted in Altgeld, 'Religion, Denomination and Nationalism in Nineteenth-Century Germany', p. 52. Altgeld, *Katholizismus, Protestantismus, und Judentum*, pp. 134-135.

[11] Altgeld, 'Religion, Denomination and Nationalism', p. 53.

[12] Dann, *Nation und Nationalismus*, p. 33.

[13] Georg von Below, 'Die Ursachen der Reformation', *Historische Zeitschrift*, 116, 3 (1916), pp. 404, 449. Barbara Stambolis, 'Nationalisierung trotz Ultramontanisierung oder: "Alles für Deutschland, Deutschland aber für Christus": Mentalitätsleitende Wertorientierung deutscher Katholiken im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert, *Historische Zeitschrift*, 269, 1 (1999), pp. 58-60. Cramer, *The Thirty Years' War*, p. 11.

[14] Altgeld, 'Religion, Denomination and Nationalism', p. 57. Manuel Borutta, 'Enemies at the Gate: The Moabit *Klostersturm* and the *Kulturkampf*', in Clark and Kaiser, in Christopher Clark and Wolfram Kaiser (eds.), *Culture Wars: Secular-Catholic Conflict in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 227.

[15] Altgeld, *Katholizismus, Protestantismus, Judentum*, p. 164. Nikolaus Buschmann, 'Auferstehung der Nation? Konfession und Nationalismus vor der Reichsgründung in der Debatte jüdischer,

in German history Catholicism was identified with supra-national, cosmopolitan ideas, and much was made of how the opposition of the Papacy, in its political ambitions, had frustrated the goals of the early medieval emperors and brought the old empire to its decline, Protestantism originated – supposedly – in a context of national resistance.[16] Thus the contemporary distrust of Catholicism, and the political campaign of the *Kulturkampf*, could be presented as manifesting 'truths' of German history. There is a parallel here to the historical 'nationalisation' of Irish Catholicism in historical narratives, which was based not only on the reality of persecution of Irish Catholics and the image of the Protestant Reformation as merely an arm of English statecraft; but also on the more tenuous idea that Irish Catholicism had inspired the development of a sense of Irish nationalism since the sixteenth century. Thus 'being Catholic' or at least a certain distrust of Protestantism became closely associated with being Irish, and Protestant-Catholic conflict could be claimed to represent a deeper 'national' antagonism. The historical narrative of the Protestant Irish became, at least outside of the northern region of Ulster, marginalized within one that emphasised Irish history as one of a conflict between noble 'Catholic Ireland' and villainous Protestant England.

This is an irony given that not only were many notable Irish nationalist thinkers and writers from Protestant backgrounds, but also because the first stirrings of Irish nationalism in the eighteenth century came from the Protestant minority, with a 'patriot' conception of the Irish nation that had been, for all its non-sectarianism, in

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protestantischer, und katholischer Kreise', in *Nation und Religion in der deutschen Geschichte*, p. 355. Christopher Clark, 'The New Catholicism and the European Culture Wars', in *Culture Wars*, p. 35.

[16] Frank Becker, 'Protestantische Euphorien: 1870/71, 1914 und 1933', in Hartmut Lehmann (ed.), *Nationalprotestantische Mentalitäten in Deutschland, 1870-1970: Konturen, Entwicklungslinien und Umbrüche eines Weltbildes* (Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005), p. 24.

reality, culturally and intellectually, a product of the same.[17] This Protestant heritage was taken both as demonstration of the comprehensive character of Irishness as well as increasingly obscured in the nineteenth century within a narrative that stressed the sacrifices and sufferings of the Irish *Catholic* nation throughout history. This was also of course influenced by the increasing activity of the Irish Catholic Church in the nineteenth century after Emancipation. In contrast to Germany, the Protestant dimension of nationality in Ireland lost much of its importance during the nineteenth century, though the 'confessionalized society' in Ireland survived much longer than in Germany. In Germany, nonetheless, confessional alignments with respect to one's view of the 'national question', were usually more straightforward.[18]

In both the Irish and German contexts, the significance of religion in the nation's history, as well as specific developments, and events, were crucial for the overall shaping of the historical narrative, specifically in the second of the 'foundational epochs' of each 'national tradition'. In the dominant narrative scheme of German history, historians conceived of the Reformation as a point of origins for modern Germany. It was a historical rupture, was also argued to bear continuity with much earlier history, with Protestantism being linked to older and more authentic German religious devotion, freed from the corrupting influences of Papal power and non-German culture. Continuities were drawn sometimes between the spartan purity and rough-hewn virtue of the religious practices of the ancient Germanic tribes and the simplicity of Protestantism.[19] It was a short step towards Martin Luther being

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[17] Ian McBride, '"The common name of Irishman": Protestantism and Patriotism in eighteenth-century Ireland', in Tony Claydon and Ian McBride (eds.), *Protestantism and National Identity: Britain and Ireland, c. 1650-1850* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 237, 248. English, *Irish Freedom*, p. 94. Ian McBride, *Scripture Politics: Ulster Presbyterians and Irish Radicalism in the Late Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 13.

[18] Frank Becker, 'Konfessionelle Nationsbilder im Deutschen Kaiserreich', *Nation und Religion*, p. 403.

[19] Altgeld, *Katholizismus, Protestantismus, Judentum*, p. 48.

conceived of as another in the succession of German patriots, which remained a highly popular trope even in highly differing histories. [20] If Germanness was somehow perfectly suited to Protestantism and vice versa, then the Reformation could only have originated in the Germanic lands,[21] thus the German nation had a claim to the cultural leadership of all Europe. Catholic German historians, on the other hand, regarded the Reformation as a profound rupture with centuries of German history in which the Germans had been the leading power of Western Christendom, and regarded Luther as a revolutionary rather than a nation-builder. Both sides thought in 'national' and indeed European terms about the Reformation, and agreed on its foundational importance, or at least that it gave a new dimension to older antagonisms (for example Germany vs. Rome, the regions of Germany vs. *Kaiser* and *Reich*, and so on).[22] The conflicts of the sixteenth and seventeenth century, as Kevin Cramer has argued, comprised a subject that allowed historians to describe the course of German history as being anchored in the *Kleindeutsch* vs. *Grossdeutsch* conflict, a subject with which historians could delineate lines of internal and external exclusion.[23] For Protestant and Catholic German historians alike, their respective confessional identities were regarded as being more authentically German than the other. Catholic and Protestant German historians alike saw in German religious profundity part of the substance of German 'superiority' over other nations.

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[20] Karl Lamprecht, *Deutsche Geschichte*, Bd. V (Berlin, Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1911), p. 270. Heinrich-August Winkler, *Germany: The Long Road West, vol. I, 1789-1933*, trans. Alexander J. Sager (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 52.

[21] Maike Oergel, 'The redeeming Teuton: nineteenth century notions of the 'Germanic' in England and Germany', in Geoffrey Cubitt (ed.), *Imagining Nations* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1998), p. 82.

[22] Winkler, *Germany*, p. 16.

[23] Cramer, 'Religious Conflict in History: The Nation as the One True Church', *Religion und Nation, Nation und Religion*, pp. 35-36. Friedrich Wilhelm Graf, 'Die Nation – von Gott "erfunden"?', in Gerd Krumreich and Hartmut Lehmann (eds.), *"Gott mit uns": Nation, Religion, und Gewalt im 19. und frueher 20. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000), pp. 303-304.

As in German writing, Irish historians emphasised the significance of the nation's religious history in conferring a sense of continuity on the national narrative that was otherwise lacking, as well as the 'alienness' of the 'other' religion or confessional allegiance. In the Irish context, Catholic historians in particular could take pride in Ireland's role in the flourishing of Christianity in the early medieval period and the nation's 'unique' devotion to the Church since its conversion, as well as the 'unique' receptivity shown by the medieval Gaels and their descendants to Christianity. The near-complete failure of the Reformation in Ireland, among the native Irish (Gaelic or otherwise) was often remarked upon, sometimes by Protestant writers. As the Catholic Counter-Reformation was associated in German Protestant historiography with the attempts by the 'Spanish' Habsburg Emperor Charles V to tighten his control over his German lands, regardless of the confessional allegiance of his German subject; Protestantism in Ireland was generally dismissed as having sprung from English expansion and land-grabbing. The Tudor and Stuart rulers of Ireland and the Cromwellians could be seen as a latter day reincarnations of the pagan Norse marauders who had wrought havoc on the early Irish church.[24] To the extent that Catholic historians had critical things to say about the Catholic Church's role in Irish politics, these tended to be balanced against the importance attributed to the people's Catholic devotion in the preservation of their cultural identity and the oppressive character exhibited by Protestantism in Ireland. So it was possible for Protestant or secular-minded historians, therefore, like W.E.H. Lecky, to contextualise Irish devotion to Catholicism within a long history of Irish resistance to oppressive English rule and to acknowledge the 'special position' of Catholicism without associating it with Irishness in an exclusionary way, i.e., without excluding

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[24] Joyce, *Short History of Ireland*, p. 382.

Protestants *as* Protestants. 'Religious opinions', Lecky acknowledged, 'grow out of different states of society, reflect their civilisation, and are altogether moulded and coloured by their modes of thought.'[25] Even as convinced a Protestant as he, generally quite disdainful of Catholicism in general, could find worthy qualities in Irish Catholicism, and he was a trenchant critic of much of what had been done under the banner of Protestantism in Irish history. Some Catholic historians and writers did, of course, saw no reason to defend or contextualize the Irish association with Catholicism and associated Irishness and Catholicity in a way that left little room for Protestants in their conception of the Irish nation. As the Thirty Years' War was refashioned through history writing into a German war, into an epic confrontation between the forces of reaction and liberty, legitimacy and revolution; the early modern ethno-religious conflicts of the Irish became a story in which a new Irish nation was condemned by foreign tyranny to a long night of oppression, hopefully to be ended in the future. Patrick Pearse, though not a dogmatic Catholic, expressed in his writings a view of national freedom conceived in near 'theological' terms.[26] The truly Irish were the descendants of those who suffered righteously throughout the long, sorrowful course of Irish history; Pearse's nationalism, or at any rate his rhetoric, cannot be understood without reference to the bleak historical experience of the Irish Catholic people.[27] In both contexts, therefore, the religious dimension of the nation's history was one which, interpreted in a certain way, could undergird conclusions about the national 'character' and the cultural 'mission' of the modern nation in the wider world.

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[25] Quoted in Eagleton, *Scholars and Rebels*, p. 69.
[26] Patrick H. Pearse, *The Sovereign People* (Dublin, Whelan and Son, 1916), pp. 7-8. Sullivan, *The Story of Ireland*, p. 580. Foster, *The Irish Story*, p. 8.
[27] Pearse, *The Sovereign People*, pp. 5, 7. Patrick Maume, *The Long Gestation: Irish Nationalist Life, 1891-1918* (New York, St. Martin's Press, 1999), p. 217.

III

We have seen that at the centre of the Young Ireland 'project' for Irish history was a determination to remove from its writing 'the bigotry of race and creed.' Thomas Davis set an example for a more generous-minded writing of Irish history, but he had not quite 'de-confessionalized' that history either. In a (unpublished) lecture on the history of the seventeenth century he attributed Irish rebellion of that era to English tyranny and referred to the contempt for the Irish people and furious hatred of Catholicism that distinguished the English Reformation in Ireland, and then to 'the Catholics that is the people of Ireland.'[28] While this comment does not itself exactly identify Irishness and Catholicity as one and the same, it certainly does associate the two allegiances as being closely connected and is all the more significant for having come from the pen of a mid-century Protestant of the Church of Ireland. Still, elsewhere Davis attempted to accentuate the 'national' dimensions of Protestantism as they arose in the eighteenth century by focusing on the Protestant 'Patriot' movement of the time, and to present the Protestant presence as another one of those historic 'migrations' which formed the Irish nation – not native to the country, but inescapably a part of its historical development, for better or worse.[29] In any case, however much Davis may have been motivated to expunge 'bigotry' from the writing of Irish history, it seems that he nonetheless regarded allegiance to Catholicism or Protestantism as meaningful factors in Irish history.[30] Even more than that, perhaps, as Boyce has argued, that behind Davis's non-confessional nationalism lay a fear of the possible consequences of a Catholic ascendancy in Ireland, and a sense of the 'leadership' of Protestants in the cause of Irish nationalism.[31]

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[28] Mulvey, *Thomas Davis and Ireland*, pp. 9-10.
[29] Davis, *Literary and Historical Essays*, p. 94.
[30] Comerford, 'Political Myths', p. 14.
[31] Boyce, *Nationalism in Ireland*, p. 164.

The most stridently Catholic nationalist of Davis's Young Ireland contemporaries was probably Thomas D'Arcy McGee, though the force of his Catholic partisanship and sense of anti-Protestantism varied over time, lessening towards his writing of the *Popular History of Ireland*. Still, one of the keystones of D'Arcy McGee's nationalism, throughout his life, was a basic sense that the Irish were in their innermost nature a Catholic people. He produced some of the strongest, most unambiguous historiographical interpretations of the synthesis of Irishness and Catholicism in the nationalist canon, not just in his tellingly titled *Popular History of Ireland from the Earliest Times to the Emancipation of the Catholics*,[32] but also in his earlier (more stridently anti-Protestant) *History of the Attempts to Establish the Protestant Reformation in Ireland* (1853), published five years into his American exile.[33] On the first page of this work he laid down explicitly the alien, foreign nature of Protestantism in Ireland: 'The Anglican church is as far from the hearts of that people as ever...In Ulster it still flourishes; but we must remember that it was transplanted in its maturity to that confiscated soil.' Of the Protestant confessions he said, 'all have been tried in Irish soil, and all have failed.'[34] McGee's agenda here was to construct the synthesis of Irishness and Catholicism and explicate the inescapable 'foreignness' of Protestantism in the Irish nation. McGee, in his writings, elided sixteenth century inter-confessional conflict into a conflict of nationalities. Protestantism in Ireland is presented as having in its roots been about nothing more than oppression and land-grabbing. Henry VIII is compared to pagan tyrants who had slaughtered the early Christians, just as the Norse barbarians of old

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[32] It can hardly be thought coincidental that D'Arcy McGee's *magnum opus* was so titled. David A. Wilson, *Thomas D'Arcy McGee, vol. II: The Extreme Moderate, 1857-1868* (London, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2011), p. 193.
[33] Wilson, *Thomas D'Arcy McGee*, I, p. 130.
[34] Thomas D'Arcy McGee: *History of the Attempts to Establish the Protestant Reformation in Ireland, and the Successful Resistance of that People* (Boston, MA, Patrick Donahoe, 1853), p. 11.

had slaughtered Irish Christians and ransacked their holy places, and responsible for having 'introduced that vicious confusion into the civil affairs of Ireland which has not yet been eliminated.'[35] Henry VIII had few defenders among Irish historians, but P.W. Joyce, comparing him to other English rulers the Irish had suffered under, and noted that had Henry's successors followed his 'considerate and conciliatory' policy and methods, they may not have made their sovereignty over Ireland totally alien to the people; such as in trying to force Protestantism and English culture on the Irish.[36] By the mid-seventeenth century, the Irish church hierarchy was all that remained of the old Gaelic order – McGee noted with satisfaction that the Irish Church, unlike the Irish nobility, had never accepted Henry VIII's legitimacy as King of Ireland[37] – and was alone the authentic leadership of the nation (the only remaining estate of the 'Celtic constitution') and it was under its auspices that the Catholic Confederation of the 1640's was formed.[38] The rebellions and wars of the Irish between the 1540's and the 1640's were merely defensive, motivated by the desire to maintain Catholicism and resist Protestant oppression. When the 'Old English' Catholic lords finally decided to make common cause with their Gaelic counterparts, it was because they finally 'began to feel the general glow of an outraged people, too long submissive under every species of provocation.'[39] The narrative of massacres of Irish Protestants by Catholics during the Rebellion of 1641, one of the principal weapons in the historico-political armoury of English and anti-nationalist Irish Protestant writers was, on the other hand, to McGee, pure fabrication designed to expedite the Protestant's work of land-grabbing and persecution.[40] His old Young Ireland

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[35] McGee, *History of the Attempts*, pp. 39, 45.
[36] Joyce, *Short History of Ireland*, pp. 388, 390, 393, 394.
[37] McGee, *History of the Attempts*, p. 38.
[38] Ibid., p. 106.
[39] McGee, *Popular History*, II, p. 503.
[40] Ibid., p. 572.

contemporary, Charles Gavan Duffy agreed that the rebellion was simply the natural result of the tyranny that preceded it.[41] McGee's brand of narrative synthesis of Irishness with Catholicism and 'othering' of Protestantism – though more muted in *Popular History*[42] – became highly popular and influential. It was not unpopular among those nationalist writers who contributed to the *Nation* newspaper and whose nationalism had been moulded in the Young Ireland movement and the ideas of Thomas Davis, such as A.M. Sullivan. A memoir written of him by his brother Timothy Daniel ('T.D.') Sullivan noted that A.M. had written in *The Nation* in 1853: 'in the history of our country's past nationality and Catholicity are inextricable.' In T.D.'s own words, 'Nationality and Catholicity are the two lamps of his soul.'[43] Writings of this kind, like Sullivan's, often presented a rather romanticised picture of an the unifying force of Irish Catholicity in associating different ethnic groups with varying and often rival interests, presenting for example the Catholic Confederation in this manner. Nevertheless, the historical example of the Catholic Confederation, at least for Catholic writers, was an attractive one insofar as it could be presented in such a way as to support the claim that allegiance to Catholicism had shaped the national self-understanding of the Irish. Another clerical nationalist writer, Thomas Nicholas Burke,[44] a particularly determined opponent of James Anthony Froude, had expressed such inferences more boldly in his *Lectures on Faith and Fatherland*: 'no people on the face of the earth have been so thoroughly formed into their national character as the Irish' by Catholicism.[45]

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[41] Charles Gavan Duffy, *Young Ireland: A Fragment of Irish History, 1848-1850* (London, Cassell, Petter & Co., 1880), p. 105.
[42] McGee, *Popular History*, II, p. 670.
[43] T.D. Sullivan, *Memoir of A.M. Sullivan* (Dublin, 1885), p. 7.
[44] Kevin Collins, *Catholic Churchmen and the Celtic Revival in Ireland, 1848-1916* (Dublin, Four Courts Press, 2002).
[45] T.N. Burke, *Lectures on Faith and Fatherland* (Dublin, Cameron & Ferguson, 1873), p. 261.

What authors such as McGee and Sullivan and even Davis demonstrated was that the difficulty in attempting to produce a national narrative in the Irish context that did not involve the nation's religious past and religious conflicts in that past lay in the fact that because the nation lacked a history of continuous political existence, the meaning of its history had to be found in its cultural dimension. Religion, of course, was an integral part of that dimension. An appreciation of the same dilemma in relation to German history shapes Ranke's *Deutsche Geschichte im Zeitalter der Reformation*, in which the Reformation is judged early on to be 'the most important event of our fatherland'. Here also he addressed the historical causes for the modern social division in Germany between Catholics and Protestants and the particular importance of religious affairs in German history. This *History* sought to investigate and reconstruct historical processes through which the German *Kulturnation* had developed from the Reformation. Ranke believed that only the development of the centuries-old potentialities and forces inherent in the historical foundations of German life could form the basis for any 'true' or 'genuine' modern German nation.[46] Whatever his rejection of German political nationalism – at least before the events of 1866-1871 – his history of Germany in the age of the Reformation is one of the historical development of German cultural particularity. Even for Ranke the historical conception of the nation, indeed the idea of the nation, the nation as a timeless and eternal *value*, a kind of *telos*, stood at the centre of his conception of history, thus, according to Hayden White, he 'required that every other form of social organization be regarded as an imperfect attempt to realize what he conceived actually to have been achieved in his own present…he considered it the task of the

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[46] John Edward Toewes, *Becoming Historical: Cultural Reformation and Public Memory in Early Nineteenth-Century Berlin* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 380.

historian to write history in such a way as to re-enforce the principle of nationality as the sole safeguard against a fall into barbarism.'[47]

The central argument staked out in the opening pages of the book is that the particularity of German history rested most of all in the depth of German involvement in religious or ecclesiastical matters and their relationship to the state.[48] It was apparent that since the Germans had lacked any form of unified political existence that might be regarded as national since the mid-thirteenth century, so German national particularity had to be established upon other grounds.[49] Since straightforward political history was in itself insufficient to give the Germans 'a harmonious and vivid narrative of their own past history',[50] another centre of gravity for the national narrative had to be found. This appears as the Protestant Reformation. The national mind, as it came to be expressed in the Reformation and Protestantism, had to be substituted for the absent political constitution of the nation.[51] This is what was meant by his claim that the history of Germany possessed to an unparalleled degree 'the outstanding characteristic of traversing all the centuries in an unbroken continuity' a statement then qualified by the observation that historical continuity as such could be 'narrated' but never 'proved'.[52] The 'unbroken continuity' he referred to was the Germans' perennial concern with the importance of religion for the national community and the relations of church and state. The investigation of this form of continuity could help to 'reveal the content of

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[47] White, *Metahistory*, pp. 172, 173, 174.
[48] Toewes, *Becoming Historical*, p. 392.
[49] Peter Lambert, 'Paving the "peculiar path": German nationalism and historiography since Ranke', *Imagining Nations*, p. 92.
[50] Leopold von Ranke, *A History of England, principally in the seventeenth century*, vol. I, (Oxford, Clarendon, 1875), v.
[51] Patrick Bahners, 'National unification and narrative unity: the case of Ranke's *German History*', in *Writing National Histories*, p. 60.
[52] Quoted in L. Krieger, *Ranke: The Meaning of History* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1977), pp. 137, 163.

German history and to experience the effective vital spirit of the nation within it',
and 'to give body to an otherwise vague national consciousness'.[53] On the first page
of this *History* Ranke asserted: 'it is impossible to conceive a nation worthy of the
name…whose political existence is not constantly guided by religious ideas.'[54] He
argued, 'Germany is a striking example to what an extent the popular mind of a
Western nation received direction from ecclesiastical principles.'[55]

This *History* is concerned not only with the relationship between religion and the
development of national consciousness, but how politico-religious conflicts both
supported and impeded this development. The course of German history had turned
on the conflict between the Emperors and the Papacy, between the German
Reformation and the Counter-Reformation. Ranke expressly denied, early in the text,
that the Papacy had ever held legitimate authority over the Holy Roman Empire. The
contest between Popes and Emperors had not advanced the power of the Emperors
and the Empire: as the Emperors' power waned, the Papacy's increased, which
weakened the Empire further.[56] By 1300, Rome 'avowed her claim to hold the reins
of secular as well as spiritual authority.' 'What trace of independence can a nation
retain after submitting to receive its head from the hands of a foreign power?' asked
Ranke. Now the Papacy possessed, having prevailed over the *German* Emperors
'uncontested, the supreme sovereignty of Europe.' Even as the Middle Ages waned
'circumstances at length occurred which awakened in the German nation a
consciousness of the position for which nature designed it', 'the nation' would

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[53] Quoted in Krieger, *Ranke*, p. 162. Ranke's scholarship throughout his career as an historian was informed by his religiosity, owed to his strongly Lutheran background in strongly Lutheran Saxony. Roger Chickering, 'Ranke, Lamprecht, and Luther', in C. Ocker, M. Printy, P. Starenko, and P. Wallace (eds.), *Politics and Reformations: Histories and Reformations, Essays in Honour of Thomas A. Brady, Jr.* (Leiden, 2007), pp. 23-25.
[54] Ranke, *The History of the Reformation*, I, p. 1.
[55] Ibid., pp. 2, 118.
[56] Ibid., pp. 6-10, 16.

remain 'exasperated by a constant sense of wrong and injustice', attempts made 'to constitute the Germanic body' repeatedly came to nothing.[57] The imperial idea had become an anti-national influence; and the same influence of Papal power an enduring force in German history.[58] The decline of imperial authority and growing might of the Popes had precipitated 'a grave discussion on spiritual affairs had become inevitable.'[59] The discussion became the Reformation, the most epochal event of German history. In its early days, Ranke claimed, 'A nobler prospect for the unity of the nation and for the further progress of the German people…certainly never presented itself.'[60] Naturally, the Papacy opposed any attempt to forge a compact between Protestants and Catholics in Germany, not because it could have no accommodation with heretics, but because the prospect of German unity 'was threatening and disastrous' to Rome.[61] German attempts to judge on 'the important affair which occupied the whole mind of the nation' were sabotaged by the Papacy, and 'such was the origin of a division which has never been healed; which has constantly been kept open by the same foreign influences that originally caused it.'[62] At length and repeatedly German disunity is identified with damaging foreign influences and disunity with weakness of the German people. The *History* closes with the reminder that the history of the Reformation was followed by that of the Counter-Reformation, and in Germany, a catastrophic conflict.[63] Yet despite this, and though 'the original efforts filled the age which we have considered, could not with complete freedom and energy be resumed again', the Reformation had

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[57] Ranke, *History of the Reformation*, I, pp. 18-20, 24, 74.

[58] Ibid., p. 122.

[59] Ibid., p. 110.

[60] Ibid., p. 317. Leopold von Ranke, *Deutsche Geschichte im Zeitalter der Reformation*, Bd. I (Leipzig, 1894), p. 101.

[61] Ranke, *History of the Reformation*, I, p. 318. Ranke, *Deutsche Geschichte*, II, p. 103.

[62] Ranke, *History of the Reformation*, I, p. 333. Ranke, *Deutsche Geschichte*, II, p. 123.

[63] Leopold von Ranke, *Deutsche Geschichte im Zeitalter der Reformation*, Bd. V (Berlin, 1843), p. 501.

nonetheless been indispensable to an independent development for the nation in the future, and had indeed 'connected the beginnings of our history with its farthest future.'[64] At the centre of the *History* stands the continuity-building effect of the age-old antagonism between Germany and Rome and the Reformation, and the intellectually and politically emancipating power of German Protestantism. Martin Luther, appropriately, was the hero of Ranke's narrative. Luther's career resonated with the historical demands of the German national genius for self-determination and self-expression, while Catholic actors are associated with foreignness and mere political motives.[65] Germany had made its bid in the sixteenth century to become an organized political self under the guidance of universal moral values had been internalized in the Protestant religious conscience.[66] On the other hand, as Ranke conceded, the confessional divide, even if it was largely aggravated by foreigners, remained a problem among present-day Germans for 'national consciousness.' The Reformation, for better or worse, had defined the epoch in which *Kaiser* and *Reich* became separated, with whatever remained of German imperial unity from the medieval era transforming into a system of territorial states joined only by nominal allegiance to the Empire.[67] Still, having been the result of 'peculiar German genius', it could not have attained the success it did without the rise of the princely states.[68] Through the Reformation the German nation had continued its historic task to defend Christianity from its enemies. Ranke's history of the Reformation left two great certainties to the reader: the German nation was a Protestant one, and German national freedom depended on the breaking of the power of 'Rome' over Germany.

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[64] Ranke, *Deutsche Geschichte*, V, p. 502.
[65] Ranke, *Deutsche Geschichte im Zeitalter der Reformation*, Bd. III (Leipzig, 1894), p. 84.
[66] Toewes, *Becoming Historical*, p. 402.
[67] Ranke, *Deutsche Geschichte*, V, p. 313.
[68] Ibid., p. 315.

It was a commonplace tactic among both German and Irish historians, therefore, to attribute the confessional divide in the nation's past to the effects of foreign interference and predations in the past, rather than admit the possibility that that the primary cause lay within some 'deficiency' of the nation. The Irish historian John Mitchel (1815-1875), as a Protestant who rejected so many of the political and social notions and ideas of his community, was determined to neutralize confessional difference as a source of conflict *within* Ireland and to make Irishness independent of one's own confessional allegiance. In doing this he attributed, with near complete certainty, past conflicts of Protestants and Catholics in entirety to the malignancy of British rule in Ireland. Mitchel became one of the most influential Irish nationalists of the century, rivalling even Davis, not least because of his unrestrained militancy and hatred of Britain and all that comprised 'British civilisation'.[69] While Lecky would condemn him for his 'blind, savage, and stupid hatred of England',[70] Patrick Pearse, leader of the Easter Rising of 1916, would regard him as one of the most important of all Irish nationalists. As the son of a Presbyterian and later Unitarian minister in Ulster who may have taken part in the 1798 Rebellion, and formerly a lawyer who had defended Ulster Catholics in court after violent clashes with Protestants and experienced the anti-Catholicism of the British state for himself, John Mitchel was by any measure an unusual figure as Irish Protestants went. In his years of exile in America Mitchel had authored his *History of Ireland from the Treaty of Limerick to the Present Time* (1868-1869), which, interestingly, was itself a continuation to the history of Ireland up to 1690 that had been written by a seventeenth-century Catholic Irish Jacobite cleric called MacGeoghegan. Mitchel

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[69] Patrick Maume, 'Young Ireland, Arthur Griffith, and Republican Ideology: The Question of Continuity', *Eire-Ireland*, 34, 2, 1999, p. 161. Michael Huggins, 'John Mitchel and his Biographers', *Irish Historical Studies*, 38, 150 (2012), pp. 259-265.
[70] W.E.H. Lecky, *Leaders of Public Opinion in Ireland*, vol. II (London, Longmans, 1903), p. 298.

rejected the grand historical narratives of his age which took for granted the onward march of human progress and perfectibility. He took a more cyclical view of world events, believing that the powerful would inevitably one day be brought down, and that their place would be taken by nations presently weak or oppressed (the Christian accent of such a view of history seems obvious). In Mitchel's *History* animosity between the confessional communities in Ireland appears as the enemy of all the people of Ireland, but the narrative itself is generally unsympathetic to the historical narrative of Irish Protestants and suffused with a kind of religious language that identified Ireland's true enemy, 'England', as the source of all evil in Irish history.

Mitchel began his *History* in the eighteenth century, with the close of the ethno-religious conflicts of the seventeenth, and he noted early the gradual rise through the eighteenth century of 'a strong sentiment of Irish nationality'. The Protestant minority, 'having now totally put down the ancient nation under their feet', aspired 'to rise from a colony to a nation, and to assert the dignity of an independent kingdom.' This early colonial patriotism aspired only to the defence of Protestant rights in Ireland; yet it held the ancient *Catholic* nation in contempt. Mitchel did not miss an opportunity to highlight Protestant hypocrisy. Their object 'was not so much to convert Catholics to Protestantism, as to convert the goods of Catholics to Protestant use.' Writing of the first half of the eighteenth century Mitchel judged: 'It is impossible to exaggerate, and hard to conceive in all its horror, the misery and degradation of the Catholic people throughout this whole period'. [71] Mitchel associates the increased liberality of some elite Protestant attitudes towards Catholics in the 1780s with the growth of national sentiment among Protestants.[72] The efforts from this time of Protestant nationalists eventually came to constitute 'the charter of

[71] Mitchel, *History of Ireland, from the Treaty of Limerick to the Present Time*, vol. I, (London, Cameron & Ferguson, 1869), pp. 19, 20, 83.
[72] Ibid., p. 122.

Irish freedom, embracing all the points necessary for the perfect independence of the country…enlightened liberality made a wonderfully rapid progress in our native Parliament during the era of its glory.' The Protestants of Ireland had realized, for the first time that their true enemy was not their Catholic countrymen, but their British co-religionists. Mitchel, regarding the problem of Protestant-Catholic conflict as merely a manifestation of 'English' tyranny and not as a deeper Irish problem referred, to the 'grand English policy of sowing dissensions and bad feelings between Catholics and Dissenters.' Those few Protestant leaders who endeavoured 'to heal the animosities of ages',[73] represented a singly important truth: that Britain would never tolerate a union of confessions in Ireland. Ultimately, they were a minority even among their own: '…This radical vice is enough to account for the short life of Ireland as an independent nation.'[74] Regarding the inter-confessional violence that took place during the Rebellion of 1798, the great event in the history of Protestant involvement in Irish nationalism, Mitchel accounted for it as simply the regrettable effect of rebellion among a brutalized people, and highlighted the violence of the government troops and loyalist militia.[75]

In Mitchel's *History*, neither Protestantism nor Catholicism is associated with Irishness so as to 'exclude' the other. The principal point to grasp is that Mitchel wants to make clear that much of seventeenth and eighteenth-century Irish Protestantism was simply a cloak to cover mere rapacity and tyranny, and that the true source of division in Irish society was not really religious antagonism, which could be reconciled and in any case had been caused by 'foreign' influence, but a clash of cultures which was permanent; one between the Irish and the British.

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[73] Mitchel, *History of Ireland*, I, pp. 140, 259-260.
[74] Ibid., p. 243.
[75] Mitchel, *History of Ireland*, II, pp. 293-294.

Protestant-Catholic hatred in Ireland was in fact an arm of British oppression, to uphold religious bigotry and inequality was to stand as an enemy against the Irish nation. The Irish nation could only be emancipated and realized through the end of Protestant-Catholic antagonism, which could only be made possible through unrelenting opposition to British rule. There was absolute certainty in Mitchel that Britain, and only Britain, had been the source and the cause of all religiously-inspired hatred in Irish history. Mitchel both identified himself with the ancient – Gaelic and Catholic – Irish nation that had resisted and suffered throughout his history, and he railed against those 'Catholic writers who are so determined to be impartial, that they lean to the party to which they abhor',[76] while also taking pride in the Protestant contribution. Mitchel was not a secular nationalist but it was his hope that the disuniting implications of religious or confessional allegiance in Ireland could be overcome by a commitment to Irish culture and nationalism.[77] In an earlier work Mitchel had remarked: 'Whatever god or demon may have led the first of them to these shores; the [Protestant] Anglo-Irish and Scottish Ulstermen have now far too old a title to be questioned'. While the origins of Irish Protestantism may have been 'too sanguinary', he added, 'yet, *now*, amongst the national institutions…the church, so far as it is a spiritual teacher, must positively be reckoned.'[78] The possible implication of this was that Irish Protestants 'excused' themselves from the burden of the past when they stopped playing the role of Britain's 'garrison' in Ireland. In Mitchel's *History* Britain was nothing less than a force for evil in Irish history – 'While England lives and flourishes, Ireland must die a daily death, and suffer an endless martyrdom', 'If Irishmen are ever to enjoy their

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[76] Mitchel, *The Crusade of the Period*, pp. 9, 32, 183.

[77] Quoted in Bryan P. McGovern, *John Mitchel: Irish Nationalist, Southern Secessionist* (Knoxville, TN., University of Tennessee Press, 2009), p. 15.

[78] Quoted in Boyce, *Nationalism in Ireland*, p. 251.

rights as human beings, the British Empire must first perish'[79] – and the Irish nation is the 'martyr-nation', the subject of an epic story of trial, redemption, and eventual justice.[80] Mitchel, like most other Irish historians of his time, 'would not let go of the penal days',[81] being either unwilling or unable, or both. In very clearly blaming Ireland's sectarian past on British misrule and on Britain's loyalists in Ireland, he sought to eliminate confessional allegiance as a factor in national identity. If his position was somewhat ambivalent in the Irish context, it hardly had any parallel in the German context, where both Protestant and Catholic historians were generally much more forthright in 'confessionalizing' Germanness.

The position of W.E.H. Lecky on Ireland's religious history was not entirely dissimilar to Mitchel's. Lecky saw much to criticise in Catholicism. Even if it had 'contributed much both to the attractive charm and the sterling excellence of the Irish character', it was still 'on the whole a lower type of religion.[82] However, Lecky did not blame the problems of Irish history on the Catholicism of the Irish, at least not nearly as much as he did on the record of English and British (Protestant) policy in Ireland.[83] He regarded the confessional division as perhaps the worst element working to hinder progress in Irish history, yet regarded its primary cause as the persecution of Catholicism.[84] He could hardly have been called sparing in his condemnations of the record of Irish Protestantism, from its arrival in Ireland up to the nineteenth century.[85] As a direct result of Protestant oppression, 'Catholicism

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[79] Mitchel, *History of Ireland*, I, vii-viii. G. Kearns, '"Educate that Holy Hatred": place, trauma, and identity in the Irish nationalism of John Mitchel', *Political Geography*, 20, 7 (2001), p. 907.

[80] McGovern, *John Mitchel*, p. 21. Kearns, '"Educate that holy hatred"', pp. 905-906. Enda Delaney, 'Narratives of Exile and Displacement: Irish Catholic emigrants and the national past, 1850-1914', in *Ireland's Polemical Past*, p. 110.

[81] Kearns, '"Educate that Holy Hatred"', p. 906.

[82] Lecky, *History of Ireland*, I, p. 402.

[83] Theodore Koditschek, *Liberalism, Imperialism, and the Historical Imagination: Nineteenth-Century Visions of a Greater Britain* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 184.

[84] Lecky, *History of Ireland*, I, pp. 402-403. McCartney, *W.E.H. Lecky*, p. 9.

[85] Lecky, *History of Ireland*, I, p. 403.

acquired an almost undivided empire over the affections and imaginations of the people.' In contrast to the intolerance of Irish Protestantism, 'it is a memorable fact that not a single Protestant suffered for his religion in Ireland'.[86] While he sometimes claimed that in truth Protestant-Catholic conflict had had far less to do with Anglo-Irish conflict than was commonly supposed, he did not dispute that the war of the 1640s had been an ethno-religious one, and more interestingly, he argued that the principle of Irish independence had first been effectively established by the *Catholic* rebels and Confederates of the 1640's and later the *Catholic* Irish Jacobites. It was after the crushing of these Catholic parties 'the banner which dropped from their hands was caught up by Protestants'.[87]

When he came to the eighteenth century, his favourite period of Irish history, Lecky's warm approval of Grattan's late eighteenth-century parliament was precisely because of its tolerance and developing liberality towards the Catholics. He hammered the Protestant clergy in his writings for their anti-national hostility, while at the same time attacking the Catholic bishops for handing over the country as a weapon in the service of the Vatican in its conflict with Protestant England.[88] In Lecky's *History of Ireland*, at least, the problem of confessional animosity in Ireland appears less as the result of a cultural antagonism than as one of oppressive, tyrannical government, but the measure of 'blame' for the extent of Protestant-Catholic antagonism within Ireland is weighted against the Protestants' historical record. The significance of religion and religious conflict in Irish history is emphasized and downplayed at various points, so that it becomes an important part of that history but nonetheless influenced and conditioned more by the nature of the

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[86] Ibid., pp. 407, 409.
[87] Lecky, *History of Ireland*, II, p. 229.
[88] McCartney, *W.E.H. Lecky*, pp. 19, 20.

political relationships between Ireland and Britain. Thus for example Lecky downplays, perhaps surprisingly, the importance of religion and confessional conflict in the sixteenth century (in this period land ownership was the more important issue, Lecky thought), while emphasizing it for history during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It is also worth remembering that despite his relatively tolerant frame of mind, as expressed in his *Leaders of Public Opinion of Ireland*, his *History of Ireland*, and in other works; his own idea of the Irish nation remains culturally Protestant and Anglo-Irish, taking for granted Protestantism's intellectual superiority and aptitude for political and social leadership (not entirely unlike Protestant German historians did). In the Irish context, however, the choice of a Protestant writer could result in that writer being regarded as the 'defender' of the historical record of Irish Catholicism, as happened to Lecky, who ended up in the strange company of the writers who regarded English anti-Catholicism as just another manifestation of an ingrained, centuries-old, irreconcilable English hatred of the Irish that had been the continuous guiding element of English policy in Ireland, and Irishness and Catholicity is indivisible.[89] A *selective* mixing of Catholic and certain Protestant views of Irish history would express much of the character of Irish nationalists' disposition towards Irish confessional antagonism as the nineteenth century advanced. By contrast, as we shall see, the 'battle lines' were drawn much more clearly in the German context.

In both Irish and German contexts, the significance of Protestant-Catholic antagonism and confessional antagonism was linked with the question of which community bore responsibility for the important events of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In Ireland, this debate centred on the 1641 Rebellion, the

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[89] T.N. Burke, *Ireland's Case Stated* (New York, P.M. Haverty, 1873), pp. 15, 19, 48, 85, 94-95, 103.

Protestant 'massacre narrative' of the Rebellion and the motives of both the Rebels and the later Catholic Confederates; and in Germany, on the causes of the Reformation, responsibility for the Thirty Years' War and the motivations of the various parties in the conflict. The question of whether or not the Irish Catholic rebels of 1641 had indeed planned and executed, as generations of Protestant commentators and historians had maintained since, a general massacre of Irish Protestants in Ulster, was regarded as central to the historical 'case' for Irish nationalism, and indeed that against it.[90] The partisans of each side tended either to accept the veracity of the 'massacre' narrative wholly, or reject it entirely as propaganda and justification for English persecution of the Irish, with little nuance. Even Lecky, who came the closest to providing nineteenth-century Ireland with a 'professional' historian of note and considerable scholarship, when carrying out his research on the 1641 Rebellion failed to examine the original text of Protestant testimonies on the rebellion, apparently regarding them as too untrustworthy to merit attention. [91] In A.M. Sullivan's account, however, the Rebellion of 1641 is represented simply as natural and just retribution for the Plantation of Ulster and the depredation of the old Gaelic and 'Old English' Catholic nobility, gentry, and common people of the province over the course of decades. The defensive nature of the rebellion is emphasized, and contrasted with the disloyalty and avarice of the rebels' enemies. Sullivan dismissed out of hand the alleged wholesale massacres of Protestants in Ulster by the Catholic rebels. He referred to them as 'monstrous fictions', and agreed with Thomas D'Arcy McGee's judgement that not a single 'public document or private letter [at the outset of the rebellion]…so much as allude

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[90] J.P. Prendergast, another 'nationally-conscious' historian who wrote on the Rebellion of 1641, said of Froude after reading *The English in Ireland*: 'I would withdraw the term cold-blooded hypocrite and substitute bloodthirsty fanatic.' Quoted in Gibney, *The Shadow of A Year*, p. 119.

[91] Lecky's overall view of the veracity of the testimonies relating to the 'massacre narrative' was sceptical. Gibney, *The Shadow of a Year*, pp. 129, 147.

to those tales of blood and horror afterwards so industriously circulated and so greedily swallowed.'[92] McGee, for his part, had practically glossed over completely even the accusation of a massacre of Protestants by Catholics in his *Popular History*. In his earlier *History of the Attempts to Establish the Protestant Reformation in Ireland* he had conceded that in some instances the Catholics had 'certainly showed a revengeful and merciless spirit in refusing quarter' to Protestants, but insisted that such actions had occurred in the context of far worse massacres of Catholic civilians by Protestant soldiery. He added, 'Instances of individual revenge, of unnecessary bloodshed, no doubt there were…but a general or even local 'massacre' never occurred.'[93] In Sullivan's judgement the reports of massacres of Protestants were fabricated in their entirety to 'justify' already conceived plans for more plantations in Ireland, for more robbery of the native Irish, whether Gaelic or 'Old English'.[94] In a lengthy footnote he reasserts his denial that there was any planned massacre of Protestants by Catholics, highlighting 'the baseness and wickedness of the massacre story', conceding only that there may have been excesses normal in wartime, citing the work of two eighteenth Protestant historians in his defence, who apparently did not lend the 'massacre story' very much credence. He does not go into specifics regarding those 'recent historians' who were 'citing original documents'. Against the deceitful machinations of the English, Sullivan contrasts the Irish commitment to 'righteous ends by righteous means', and to 'fair and honourable warfare',[95] and in contrast to his dismissal of massacres of Protestants by the Irish, he makes much of the ferocious and wholesale massacres of the Catholic Irish by the Protestant English and Scottish soldiery. John Mitchel, in his *The Crusade of the Period*, in which he

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[92] Sullivan, *The Story of Ireland*, pp. 349-350.
[93] McGee, *History of the Attempts*, pp. 103-105.
[94] Sullivan, *The Story of Ireland,* pp. 352-355.
[95] Ibid., pp. 355n-356n, 357.

tore into Froude's *The English in Ireland*, scornfully denied the veracity of the massacre narrative.[96] Another noted Protestant historian, J.P. Prendergast, also seemed to agree that in its substance the massacre narrative was an English invention, adding that the Irish of the time 'lacked gall to supply a wholesome animosity to the eternal enemies and revilers of their name and nation.'[97] Lecky reiterated that *fear* had been the most central motivation for the Rebellion of 1641, and even when the Rebellion came, its immediate objectives were merely tolerance for Catholics and a just land settlement. Lecky denied that the Rebellion was distinguished in its beginning by a planned massacre of tens of thousands of Protestants, yet he conceded that there were individual outrages,[98] and argued that certain Irish historians diminished themselves when they attempted to deny that there were *any* outrages at all, or dealt only with the crimes of the English. Still, 'the most savage national and religious hatred predisposed the English [at the time] to exaggerate to the utmost the crimes of their enemies'. It could not be forgotten that the Protestant 'massacre' narrative had been circulated 'for the purpose of preventing the subsequent peace by representing the whole Irish nation as so infamous that any attempt to make terms with them was criminal.'[99] It embodied just the sort of 'history' that offended Lecky, but that history could be just as easily written by Catholics as Protestants, which too attracted Lecky's complaint. It was ultimately however, the writings of individuals like Mitchel, Sullivan, and McGee that had the most popular and lasting influence. It was they (and others) who maintained that the Catholic Confederation of the 1640's had been, for all its shortcomings, a 'national' government; Lecky, by contrast, paid it less attention in the introduction to the first

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[96] Mitchel, *The Crusade of the Period*, pp. 28, 31, 38. Gibney, *The Shadow of A Year*, p. 121.

[97] John P. Prendergast, *The Cromwellian Settlement of Ireland* (New York, P.M. Haverty, 1868), pp. 63-64.

[98] Lecky, *History of Ireland*, I, pp. 45, 60.

[99] Ibid., pp. 59-60, 70, 75.

volume of the *History of Ireland*. However, Lecky had no doubt that the 'Cromwellian Settlement' was 'the foundation of that deep and lasting division' that was 'the chief cause of the political and social evils of Ireland.'[100]

In parallel to the debates in Irish historiography about causation and responsibility for the Rebellion of 1641 and the 'national' significance of the Catholic Confederation, causes of the German Reformation, responsibility for the Thirty Years' War, and the actions of historical personalities involved in these events, were causes of dispute in German nationalist historiography. We have noted that the writing of Irish nationalist history was to a certain extent non-confessional in respect of the influence achieved by writers of Protestant background. In the German context, even if their influence was restricted, Catholic historians did not allow the conventional Protestant narrative to go wholly uncontested, as for example in disputes regarding the history of the Reformation and the Thirty Years' War. The Protestant narrative had practically invited a Catholic counter-narrative. The principal fault-line in German national historiography, at least in the nineteenth century, was more than anything the Protestant-Catholic antagonism. Janssen's *Geschichte des deutschen Volkes*, strongly disliked as it was by Protestant historians, had in its own way contributed to that deep 'chasm'[101] between Protestant and Catholic history writing described by Weber as the 'most passionate struggle' within the bounds of Bismarck-era historiography.[102] Janssen described the reformers of the sixteenth century as 'the revolutionary party', who exploited the 'anarchy' in the Empire preceding the election of Charles V as Emperor, and maintained that already before this happened 'Luther's alliance with the revolution party was [now] an

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[100] Lecky, *History of Ireland*, I, pp. 99, 100-101, 108.
[101] Martin Spahn, *Der Grosse Kurfürst: Die Wiedergeburt Deutschlands im 17. Jahrhundert* (Mainz, Franz Kirchheim, 1902), p. 4.
[102] Gabrielle Clemens, *Martin Spahn und der Rechtskatholizismus in der Weimar Republik* (Mainz, 1983), pp. 27-28.

accomplished fact.'[103] Luther's famous 1520 *Address to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation*, which Protestant commentators regarded as a kind of sixteenth-century declaration of German national independence against Rome, Janssen regarded as 'the actual declaration of war of the Lutheran-Hutten revolutionary party…With unsparing energy Luther endeavoured to stir up German national feeling against Italy and in favour of his own cause…Luther's address to the German nobility was a martial summons to the fiercest onslaught.'[104] Protestant historians, for their part, regarded Janssen's *History* as proof that there could be no such thing as *national* German Catholic historiography. Janssen was accused of 'religious fanaticism', 'refined tendentiousness', 'systematic sophistry', and the purveyance of 'poisonous bouquets', as 'ultramontane'.[105] It was not even well-received by all Catholic historians, Martin Spahn, for one, regarded it as too partisan. He rather, more like Protestant historians, had regarded the Reformation as the result of the moral *Verdorbenheit* and the *Wissenschaftsfeindlichkeit* of the medieval Church, and his conclusions were gratefully received by Protestant historians.[106] Still, Janssen, along with others such as Julius von Ficker and Onno Klopp (1822-1903) were among the sharpest critics of the idea that Protestant Prussia was historically destined to lead German unification (which they found mendacious) and that Catholicism was an anti-national element in German history.[107] The Holy Roman Empire, up to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries at any rate, was regarded as a fundamentally sound political system which had preserved German liberty and

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[103] Janssen, *History of the German People*, vol. III, p. 116.

[104] Erich Marcks, *Luther und Deutschland* (Leipzig, 1917), p. 18.

[105] Brady, *Communities, Politics, and Reformation*, p. 361.

[106] Clemens, *Martin Spahn*, pp. 28, 30.

[107] Ficker, *Das Deutsche Kaiserreich*, pp. 168-175. In particular, Klopp drew attention to the alliances Frederick the Great had pursued with the French and the Hohenzollern dynasty's enmity towards the imperial authority within Germany since then, and even during the time of the French Revolution and Napoleon's empire. Onno Klopp, *Die gothaische Auffassung der deutschen Geschichte und der Nationalverein* (Hannover, F. Klindworth Verlag, 1862), pp. 40-41, 48-49. See also Cramer, *The Thirty Years' War*, p. 32.

defended German interests, and the Protestant cause in the Thirty Years' War had been one of rebellion (in league with the French) and despotism.[108] Catholicism was a guarantee of national unity against Protestantism, which had always pursued particularistic interests to the expense of the nation,[109] German Catholics had the more historically valid claim to be the heirs of true historical 'Germanness', and the empire as having been the institution that had given expression to German national identity.[110] Their writings 'mirrored a prevailing mood of apprehension among Germany's Catholics about the fate of the German Confederation'[111] up to and after the foundation of the *Kaiserreich* under a Protestant dynasty and the perception that German Catholics were 'second-class citizens', looked down upon as a backward and 'foreign' element within the nation (which seemed to be confirmed by the anti-Catholic measures of the *Kulturkampf*).

The figures of Emperor Charles V and Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden, and of course later figures such as Frederick the Great, excited particular controversy between Protestant and Catholic writers. Charles was regarded by Protestant writers as a foreigner, a scion of the dynasties of Spain and Burgundy, who had thwarted the Reformation in Germany from the start, rejected the German national 'Sonderbildung' of the Reformation, betraying his German subjects and condemning them to terrible ethno-religious warfare and centuries of political impotence and disunity.[112] Catholic writers saw him quite simply, in contrast, as a just and faithful ruler who had been beset by power-hungry, opportunistic traitors who had wrecked

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[108] Klopp, *Die gothaische Auffassung*, p. 29. Cramer, *The Thirty Years' War*, p. 33.

[109] Buschmann, 'Auferstehung der Nation?', p. 346.

[110] Onno Klopp denied that the Reformation in Germany had, as in other northern European countries, paved the way for national unity. Rather it had paved the way for the dissolution of the *Reich*. Neither support for, nor opposition to, the German Reformation had worked to the benefit of the nation. Klopp, *Studien*, pp. 118, 122, 223. Cramer, *The Thirty Years' War*, p. 34.

[111] Cramer, *The Thirty Years' War*, p. 35.

[112] Max Lenz, Nationalität und Religion' (1907), in Max Lenz, *Kleine Historische Schriften*, I: *Vom Werden der Nationen* (Munich, Oldenbourg, 1922), p. 254.

any prospect for German unity within the Empire – the German princes. Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden was seen among Protestant writers as a Germanic hero who had tried to rescue Germany from Catholic tyranny, or at least as a defender of Protestant Germany, and through his enshrinement as a *Protestant* hero the claim could be put forth that the Protestant cause had been not just a German cause but a supra-national, European one, for the spiritual and political freedom of all European lands from the Roman yoke.[113] German Protestantism, wrote Johannes Haller in 1932, could write 'no better name on its shield than that of the Swedish king who three hundred years ago fought and fell for the survival of the Protestant faith.'[114] Even Ranke had claimed that the Protestant German princes had entered into an alliance with Gustavus Adolphus, 'because it was his mission to save Protestantism and to restore the old state of affairs in the Reich'.[115] So Gustav Freytag could write, prior to unification of the new German state that would be led by Protestant Prussia, that Germany eventually 'would inevitably take its rightful place alongside Great Britain in the forefront of a hegemonic Protestant civilisation.'[116] 'In the year 1813', he went on, 'we find the conclusion of that great struggle which began in 1517…From this life and death struggle of 300 years, Germany passed from the bondage of the Middle Ages into Freedom…From the time [of Martin Luther] to the march of the German volunteers against Napoleon', he continued, 'the German spirit carried on a great defensive war against foreign influence, which issuing from Rome well-nigh overwhelmed those who had once been the conquerors of the Roman Empire.'[117] For

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[113] Heinrich von Treitschke, *Gustav Adolf und Deutschlands Freiheit* (Leipzig, S. Hirzel, 1895). Johannes Haller, 'Gustav Adolf, Deutschland, und Europa' (1932), in Johannes Haller, *Reden und Aufsätze zur Geschichte und Politik* (Stuttgart, J.G. Cotta, 1934), p. 172.

[114] Treitschke, *Gustav Adolf*, p. 180.

[115] Quoted in Kemilainen, *Die Historische Sendung*, p. 127.

[116] Larry L. Ping, 'Gustav Freytag's *Bilder aus der deutschen Vergangenheit* and the Meaning of German History', in *German Studies Review*, 32, 3 (2009), p. 549.

[117] Quoted in Ibid., pp. 550-551, 553-554.

Freytag, German history took the form of a stark and inescapable confrontation between Protestant (native Germanic) and Catholic (foreign, Latin, degenerate) cultures, and Luther had revealed more than any other before or since the greatness of the German *Wesen*. To reduce him to nothing much more than the leader of a faction was a great error.[118] As Larry Ping has put it, 'It is scarcely an exaggeration to describe sections of the *Bilder* as a *Kulturkampf* in print.'[119] To Catholic writers Gustavus Adolphus had been merely a foreign invader in league with France whose only real concern was the expansion of his own power, into northern Germany.[120] In a brief pamphlet on *Gustav Adolf in Deutschland* (1865), Johannes Janssen reflected on the first page that Gustavus Adolphus, who had 'put his foot on the neck' of the Germans, had become a 'celebrated national hero' and 'ideal hero of belief', who had given his life for the cause of 'German independence' among the Germans of the nineteenth century, or at any rate, the Protestant historians. This judgement was of course closely linked with the error that perceived the Thirty Years' War as a war of religions for Protestant freedom rather than the foreign-backed civil war and rebellion against the legitimate authority of the *Kaiser* and *Reich*. Both sides, in both contexts, had usable heroes on which to project their own ideological statements,[121] and both sides, in both contexts, consistently portrayed the other in their assessments of the early modern era as having been motivated more by power-political than sincerely religious concerns, as so many Catholic Irish historians did when they wrote of the Reformation in Ireland. In the Irish context, writers (generally Catholic

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[118] Gustav Freytag, *Bilder aus der deutschen Vergangenheit, Bd. III: Aus dem Jahrhundert der Reformation, 1500-1600*, in idem. *Gesammelte Werke*, XVII, pp. 52, 69.

[119] Larry L. Ping, *Gustav Freytag and the Prussian Gospel: Novels, Liberalism, and History* (Oxford, Peter Lang, 2006), p. 211.

[120] Johannes Janssen, *Gustav Adolf in Deutschland* (Frankfurt am Main, 1865), pp. 3-4.

[121] Olaf Blaschke, 'Der "Dämon des Konfessionalismus": Einführende Überlegungen', in Olaf Blaschke (ed.), *Konfessionen im Konflikt: Deutschland zwischen 1800 und 1970* (Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2001), p. 43.

ones) emphasised the 'national' character of the rebellion of the sixteenth century Catholic hero Hugh O'Neill and the 'faith and fatherland' motives of the 'rank-and-file' participants of the 1798 Rebellion. For German historians, Charles V stood for continuity, either for a glorious old empire or German decline under foreign influences; Gustavus Adolphus for new beginnings, either of a 'modern' and truly German nation – which might also be seen as the 'recovery' of the ancient Germanic spirit of freedom – and a link to the rise of Hohenzollern Prussia, or the sundering of Germany from the political and cultural world in which it had been anchored for centuries. As in Irish nationalist (or anti-nationalist) historiography, German historians, whether Protestant or Catholic, could not, for the most part, divorce historical judgement of the religio-political events of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries from contemporary political (and cultural) judgements.

The link drawn between Catholicism and 'anti-German' forces in past and present, itself an expression of a more general fear of 'German disunity', even after 'unification', was perhaps nowhere more belligerently expressed (in the milieu of the cultured *Bildungsbürgertum*) than in the writing of Heinrich von Treitschke.[122] For Treitschke, the political and cultural unity of Germany only appeared conceivable in contrast to Catholicism. He did fully believe that the Germans were peculiarly suited, even destined, to be the people of the Reformation and of Protestantism. In an essay on 'Martin Luther and the German Nation', he made clear that the Reformation had created the moral and intellectual backbone of the idea of the German nation, the new religion being rooted in 'the innermost centre of the people's nature'.[123] The

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[122] Recent studies have confirmed that such fears were by no means unfounded, at least in the early years of the *Kaiserreich*. Hermand, *Verlorene Illusionen*, p. 183. Oliver Zimmer, *Remaking the Rhythms of Life: German Communities in the Age of the Nation-State* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 174. Nipperdey, *Nachdenken,* p. 213.

[123] Heinrich von Treitschke, "Luther und die Deutsche Nation", in Heinrich von Treitschke, *Historische und Politische Aufsaetze*, IV, (Leipzig, 1897), pp. 384, 385.

Reformation represented, excepting only perhaps the medieval *Ostsiedlung*, the first truly collective effort of the entire German nation.[124] Though Luther came to occupy the status of a leader of the nation that supplanted either Kaiser or *Reich*,[125] the national resurgence of the Reformation was not fully realised: 'the nation was unable to secure the universal victory on German soil of its own special work, the Reformation, and was likewise unable to rejuvenate its own national state'.[126] In his *Politics*, in the essay on religion, Treitschke claimed that,

> 'A nation without religion has never existed, nor ever can exist...without the community of religion the consciousness of national unity is impossible...though confessional differences can by endured by a great *Volk*, if not without great difficulty – how much blood has this cost us in Germany! – continued existence of several religions within one nationality, involving an irreconcilabe and ultimately intolerable difference of outlook upon life, can only be a transitional phenomenon.'[127]

The German national religion could only be Protestant Christianity, as Germany, culturally and intellectually, was Protestant, to such a degree that even German Catholicism had been formed by its exposure to German Protestantism. German Protestantism could claim the unique achievement of having 'nationalised' Catholicism, in Germany. 'Protestantism is the form of Christianity suited to Germany', yet 'the educated German Catholic stands nearer to his Protestant compatriot in his religious conceptions than he does to his Spanish or South American co-religionist.'[128] Protestantism embodied 'the actual setting free of Germany' from the foreign yoke of the Papacy, and 'was the direct outcome of an

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[124] Ibid., pp. 390.
[125] Ibid., p. 378.
[126] Treitschke, *History of Germany*, I, p. 4.
[127] Treitschke, *Politics*, I, p. 334. Heinrich von Treitschke, *Politik*, Bd. I, ed. M. Cornelicius (Leipzig, S. Hirzel, 1897) pp. 326-327.
[128] Treitschke, *Politik*, I, p. 353. Erich Marcks, writing in 1917, agreed: German Catholicism was the most excellent of the entire Catholic world. Marcks, *Luther und Deutschland*, p. 34.

internal conflict waged in an honest conscience.'[129] Treitschke is referring here of course to Luther, who deserved to be honoured as the hero and teacher of the entire German nation.[130] He represented a kind of general, transhistorical symbol of German defiance to all enemies of the nation.[131] Modern Germans had Luther and the Reformation to thank for *Wissenschaft*, the separation of Church and State, the liberation of Germany from 'foreign' domination, the German language, and German culture.[132] Through Luther, the Germans had laboured for the cause of all peoples, as well. To Treitschke, Luther, or the image of Luther as the adversary of Rome, gave form to the truth that 'the historical world is the world of the will, because the destiny of a people is fixed not in thought but in the deed.'[133] The Reformation and Protestantism satisfied 'the untamable independence of the German character.'[134] German devotion to Protestantism embodied what German history otherwise lacked in continuity, and the conceit of a defiant stand throughout centuries of history against foreignness and rootless, degenerate cosmopolitanism, and a strong means of ethnic and cultural 'Othering'. The eighteenth and nineteenth century 'awakening' of the German nation in the nineteenth century and its prelude was rooted in Protestantism. Frederick the Great, Treitschke's other great hero, had been the resolute defender of German Protestantism throughout his reign, whose 'establishment of the Protestant-German power was the most serious reverse that the Roman See had experienced since the rise of Luther. King Frederick had in

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[129] Heinrich von Treitschke, 'Martin Luther and the German Nation', in Heinrich von Treitschke, *Germany, France, Russia, and Islam*, trans. G.H. Putnam (London, G. Allen & Unwin, 1915), p. 236.
[130] Ibid., p. 259.
[131] Treitschke, 'Martin Luther und die deutsche Nation', p. 394. Hartmut Lehmann, '"Er ist wir selber: der ewige Deutsche"': Zur langhaltenden Wirkung der Lutherdeutung von Heinrich v. Treitschke', in *Nation, Religion, und Gewalt*, p. 92.
[132] Lehmann, '"Er ist wir selber: die ewige Deutsche"', pp. 93-94.
[133] Treitshke, 'Luther und die deutsche Nation', p. 386, 388.
[134] Treitschke 'Martin Luther and the German Nation', p. 240.

truth...been fighting for the freedom of the human race.'[135] The Catholic German dynasties, by contrast, were 'estranged from German life by hereditary association with France as well as the rigidity of Catholic unity.'[136] For the Prussians who led the liberation of Germany from the godless Napoleon, Treitschke was certain, 'The old German God, to whom they prayed, was the God of the Protestants.'[137] There was little space left for Catholic Germans in Treitschke's writing, if any at all, as indicated by his hostility to Catholicism.

Yet it is of certain note that the conventional Protestant German historical narrative found some acceptance among Catholic writers towards the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, an example of this being Martin Spahn, a leading figure in the Catholic *Zentrum* Party and later among the '*Rechtskatholiken*', and one of the most important representatives of 'borussischen Katholizismus.'[138] His conception of German history had been shaped by his reading of the great Protestant national historians of the late nineteenth century, particularly Treitschke. As part of his own efforts to integrate Prussian history into the narrative of German history and represent it as the *Vorgeschichte* of the *Reichsgründung*, he argued for the Hohenzollern Empire as the direct continuation of the medieval empire, of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation and sought to find a reconciling middle way between Protestant and Catholic historiographies of German history. In the controversy over Janssen's *Geschichte* he took an oppositional position to his fellow Catholic, and his judgements of Germany's history during the Reformation, the seventeenth century, and the post-Westphalia age were well-received by Protestant contemporaries. As much as he hoped for the re-inclusion of Catholics into the

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[135] Treitschke, *History of Germany*, I, pp. 69-70. Treitschke, *Deutsche Geschichte*, I, pp. 60-61.
[136] Treitschke, *History*, I, p. 64. Treitschke, *Deutsche Geschichte*, I, p 55.
[137] Ibid., p. 511. Ibid., p. 434.
[138] Rainer Hering, *Konstruierte Nation: Der Alldeutsche Verband 1890 bis 1939* (Hamburg, Hans Christians Verlag, 2003), p. 81.

contemporary life of the nation he desired a revival of the creative energies of Catholicism in Germany and a strengthening of Catholic influences in the cultural life of the nation.

On the other hand, however, Spahn had also written a number of lengthy articles for the *Catholic Encyclopedia* on German historical matters, including entries on the Thirty Years' War, Prussia, Emperor Charles V, the *Kulturkampf* and a very lengthy and comprehensive entry on German history from 1556 to 1618 Here one can detect a definite Catholic inflection in his writing of German history, as when he explains the primary cause of the Thirty Years' War has having been the decay of imperial unity thanks to the 'gross lack of patriotism', and consequently, other nations began to prey on German territory.'[139] Charles V's abdication of the imperial throne in 1556 was 'a serious break in the continuity of the political and religious history of the German people.' It resulted from the 'separatist tendencies of the princes', the supposed defenders of the Protestant German nation: 'the common consciousness of nationality was…dulled in the princes by political selfishness.'[140] His judgment of Gustavus Adolphus was not overly friendly: the Swedish king was a mere conqueror, and an unwanted one at that.[141] In any case, it suffices to say that Spahn did not regard Catholicism and Germanness as incompatible; yet he also prioritized his own version of the conventional narrative, regarding the *Kaiserreich* as 'a development that had been in progress for many centuries'.[142]

The Mitchel-McGee-Sullivan influence finds strong expression in the writing of Patrick Pearse, the twentieth-century Irish nationalist, militant separatist

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[139] Martin Spahn, 'The Thirty Years' War', in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, eds. Charles Herbermann *et al.*, vol. XIV (New York, The Encyclopedia Press, 1913), p. 648.
[140] Martin Spahn, 'Germany: From 1556', in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, eds. Charles Herbermann *et al.*, vol. VI (New York, The Encyclopedia Press, 1913), pp. 500, 502.
[141] Spahn, 'The Thirty Years' War', pp. 652, 655.
[142] Spahn, 'Germany', p. 512.

revolutionary, and leader of the Easter Rising of 1916. This in itself is a neat historical irony, as Sullivan and McGee at any rate, by the time they wrote their histories, were though nationalists firmly opposed to violence on moral and pragmatic grounds, which earned them much detestation from revolutionary-minded nationalists. Yet their historical writings would form an important part of the ideological 'armoury' of the successful militant separatists of the twentieth century. In the last several months of his life, between Christmas 1915 and early 1916, Pearse had sought to establish a historical-moral precedent for the national uprising he had committed himself to in four brief pamphlets (each only around twenty pages long): *Ghosts*, *The Separatist Idea*, *The Spiritual Nation*, and *The Sovereign People*.[143] In these pamphlets the 'sacralization' of the Irish nation, and an implicit association between the history of the Irish nation with that of the Irish Catholic people, finds its strongest expression. Pearse outlined his conception of nationhood and national freedom as literally sacred: 'national freedom bears the marks of unity, of sanctity, of catholicity, of apostolic succession.'[144] His brief sketch of the unbroken continuity of Irish resistance to England since the late twelfth century further on, during the 'eight hundred years of oppression', while studiously avoiding mention of the words 'Protestant' and 'Catholic' had the 'Sullivanite' character of a redemptive saga of struggle and sacrifice, which had ensured the continued existence of the Irish nation.[145] In Pearse's words, 'Irish nationality is an ancient spiritual tradition…Politically, Ireland's claim has been for freedom…any undertaking made in the name of Ireland to accept in full satisfaction of Ireland's claim anything less

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[143] Joost Augusteijn, *Patrick Pearse: The Making of a Revolutionary* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p. 289. Pearse's pamphlets have been described as comprising a '*tour de force* of partisan interpretation of history.' Ruth Dudley Edwards, *Patrick Pearse: The Triumph of Failure* (London, Gollancz, 1977), p. 252. Sean Cronin, *Irish Nationalism: A History of its Roots and Ideology* (London, Continuum, 1981), p. 107.

[144] P.H. Pearse, *Ghosts* (Dublin, Whelan and Sons, 1915), pp. 4-5.

[145] Augusteijn, *Patrick Pearse*, p. 290.

than the generations of Ireland have stood for is null and void, binding on Ireland neither by the law of God nor by the law of nations.'[146] Those who had repudiated the need for separation had failed not only ignobly but shamefully, immorally, even evilly.[147] Pearse sought not only to retrace the historical experience of the supposed unbroken continuity of Irish resistance but also to condemn the shameful, sinful failure of those who thought nationhood could be achieved without separation. Pearse was always motivated by the certainty that, 'nationality is spirituality...a spiritual unity', no 'mere agglomeration of individuals, but a living organic thing, with a body and a soul'.[148] The nation was the most natural of human associations, God-given while empires (i.e. Britain's) were profane, if not the work of evil.[149] This is language taken straight from Mitchel. Pearse permits no discontinuity in Irish history as far as the timeless idea of 'Separatism' is concerned. To a remarkable degree, in Pearse's writing, historical change is removed from Irish history; everything worth commenting on has its place in relation to the idea of 'Separatism'.[150] A reading of these pamphlets shows that Pearse's final and unequivocal acceptance of the necessity of the use of physical force, of violent struggle, was in no small measure owed to his own view of Irish history, which had been owed to Mitchel in particular.[151] Yeats, during a debate with Pearse at Trinity College in 1914, had lamented that he seemed to elevate hatred of England over love of Ireland.[152] Pearse, however, with his view of history, could confidently assert that a love of good is a hate of evil. Such evils as England's rule in Ireland, England's

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[146] Pearse, *Ghosts*, pp. 6-7.
[147] Ibid., p. 3.
[148] P.H. Pearse, *The Spiritual Nation* (Dublin, Whelan and Son, 1916), pp. 5, 6.
[149] Pearse, *The Sovereign People*, p. 7.
[150] Graham Walker, 'Irish Nationalism and the Uses of History, *Past and Present*, 126 (1990), pp. 208-209. Nikolas Braun, *Terrorismus und Freiheitskampf: Gewalt, Propaganda, und politische Strategie im Irischen Bürgerkrieg, 1922-1923* (Munich, Oldenbourg, 2003), p. 99.
[151] Augusteijn, *Patrick Pearse*, p. 292.
[152] Dudley Edwards, *Patrick Pearse: The Triumph of Failure*, pp. 226-227

empire, needed to be destroyed, and destruction could open the way to the building of greater things.[153]

Pearse succeeded in giving a strikingly new religiosity to definitions of Irishness. While he was not intolerantly Catholic, he and the other leaders placed their Catholicism at the centre of their thought and action and did not deny the 'special nature' of the Irish Catholic people.[154] The steadfast belief of Irishmen in their religious convictions was to Pearse 'one of the main strands of the long-tormented chronicle of Ireland's history'.[155] Whatever it had been before 1916, Catholicism was to be 'a binding and defining force for Irish Republicans'.[156] Aodh de Blacam, a prominent Irish nationalist writer during the War of Independence – and Protestant convert to Catholicism – was dismissive of the historical record of both Protestant nationalists and anti-nationalist Ulster Protestants. 'Irish Protestants', he made clear, 'have to accept the fact that they live in a country where the Catholic religion colours the lives of the people'.[157] Few of his Catholic contemporaries would, probably, have disagreed with him.

IV

There was at least in one quarter in German and Irish history writing of this period where serious attempt was made to genuinely 'de-confessionalize' the nation's history: *socialist* history writing of the nation. Two exemplars of this in Ireland and Germany were the long-standing stalwart of German socialism Franz Mehring and

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[153] Pearse, *The Sovereign People*, pp. 17-18.

[154] Paul Bew, *Ireland: The Politics of Enmity, 1789-2006* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 379.

[155] Pearse and MacDonagh quoted in Boyce, *Nationalism in Ireland*, p. 310.

[156] Quoted in Ibid., p. 325. Richard English, *Ernie O'Malley: IRA Intellectual* (Oxford, Clarendon, 1998), pp. 90-91, 93, 94.

[157] Aodh de Blacam, *Towards the Republic: A Study of New Ireland's Social and Political Aims* (2nd ed., Dublin, Maunsel & Co., 1919), pp. 83, 84, 86, 105. Blacam, *What Sinn Fein Stands For*, pp. 32, 222.

his *Zur deutschen Geschichte* and James Connolly's *Labour in Irish History* (1910).[158] In these writings, both authors produced comprehensive narrative histories of their countries along the lines of their common socialist ideology. As such both historiographies were extremely political, intended to shape popular socialist views of the modern nation in both Ireland and Germany (and Connolly at least became a popular influence *far* outside the narrow bounds of early twentieth-century Irish socialism). Both authors located the beginning of their histories in the period of the Reformation, and both argued that the Protestant-Catholic conflicts of the period, as they had been ever since, were in fact the result of contests for control over land and wealth rather than truly being conflicts over religion, and much less the religious 'identity' of either the German or Irish nation. Thus in the foreword to *Labour in Irish History* Connolly associated the beginnings of the encroachment of the 'feudal-capitalist system' into Irish society and culture with the Tudor 'conquest' of Ireland, a system 'as foreign to the genius of the Gael as was the English ruler to Irish soil.'[159] Its success in penetrating 'the Irish mind', however, meant that in Connolly's estimation 'the whole concept of orthodox Irish history for the last 200 years was a betrayal and abandonment of the best traditions of the Irish race.' [160] Mehring, beginning his German history properly with the German Reformation, maintained however that 'the basis of Catholic culture was the ignorance and exploitation of the popular masses', and that the Papacy's power was that of the suppression of 'German

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[158] Franz Mehring was one of Germany's leading socialist intellectuals from 1891 to his death in 1919, variously a journalist, historian, Prussian parliamentarian, and member of the revolutionary *Spartakusbund*. Based in large part on lectures to the SPD *Parteischule*, *Zur deutschen Geschichte* comprises volumes 5-7 of Mehring's *Gesammelte Schriften*. Parts of his history of Germany have been published in English as *Absolutism and Revolution in Germany, 1525-1848* (London, New Park Publications, 1975).

James Connolly may be said without exaggeration to have been the most notable socialist in Irish history. He played a formative role in Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, the Irish Labour Party, the Dublin Lockout and Strike of 1913, and the Easter Rising of 1916 as one of its leaders, after which he was one of those executed for treason.

[159] Jams Connolly, *Labour in Ireland* (Dublin, Maunsel and Roberts, 1922), xxvii-xxviii.

[160] Connolly, *Labour in Ireland*, xxix.

particularity', which 'would have to be kept poor and ignorant if art and science were to flourish under Papal protection in Italy'. What the Catholic German Humanists of the period had failed to grasp was that 'only the victory of German barbarism over Latin civilisation could open the way to the historic rise of the German nation.' They, to their further guilt, 'deeply detested the Reformation as a movement of the masses. They did not have the slightest interest in or understanding of the needs of the masses.' German historical progress was for Mehring inextricably linked with the Reformation, but that had nothing to do with the supposed intrinsic 'Germanness' of Protestantism. The immediate catalyst of the Reformation was Papal exploitation of the German principalities.[161] The reasons Mehring gave for the inability of the Germans, though aware of their exploitation, to throw off the Papal yoke, were those of a historical materialist: the early modern German economy was too undeveloped to have supported the consolidation of a strong central monarchy which could have acted against the Papacy. The Germans 'could only achieve groupings of interests by provinces, in other words political disunity…The German Emperors of the Habsburg house could not achieve the transformation from a feudal medieval to a modern monarchy'. The German 'vassals' of the Emperor 'grew to become almost completely independent princes as the logical consequence of the economic fact that they were…the representatives at least of provincial centralisation.' It was 'this chaos of the most varied classes and factions of classes, with their conflicting interests', rather than anything else, which underpinned the conditions in Germany that led to the Reformation, which Mehring still described as 'the rebellion against Rome that

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[161] Franz Mehring, *Absolutism and Revolution in Germany, 1525-1848* (London, New Park Publications, 1975), pp. 9-10. Franz Mehring, *Deutsche Geschichte vom Ausgang des Mittelalters* (1910), in idem, *Gesammelte Schriften Bd. V, Zur deutschen Geschichte bis zur Zeit der Französischen Revolution 1789*, eds. T. Hoehle, H. Koch, J. Schleifstein (Berlin, Dietz Verlag, 1964), pp. 28-29.

had been simmering in the German nation for decades.'[162] Mehring grouped the parties that would comprise the struggles of the Reformation into three divisions: 'conservative Catholicism, bourgeois reformism, and plebeian revolution.' The latter two camps represented 'the great mass of the nation which rose in a passionate rebellion against Papal exploitation.' He also categorized the groupings of religious communities of Jesuitism, Calvinism, and Lutheranism on historical-materialist lines: 'Jesuitism was Catholicism reformed on a capitalist basis', Calvinism was the 'bourgeois-capitalist religion', and Lutheranism 'was the religion of economically backward countries that had been most heavily exploited by Rome, but had the least prospects of either annihilating or dominating Rome.'[163] The Reformation had been both a revolution and a counter-revolution: after the Peasants' War Luther became 'a crawling servant of the princes', and the Reformation, 'after the revolutionary fire had been extinguished with the blood of the peasants, became a campaign of robbery and plunder by the German princes and their ever growing emancipation from the Imperial authority…The masses, the peasants and the town plebeians gained not the slightest benefit from the robbery of Church property.'

Connolly too regarded the early modern era, specifically the seventeenth century, as foundational for Irish history in modernity: 'Modern Irish History properly understood may be said to start with the close of the Williamite Wars in the year 1691. All the political life of Ireland during the next 200 years draws its colouring from and can only be understood in the light of that conflict'.[164] His perception of the actual significance of the confessional divide in Irish history is indicated by his judgement that the conflicts of this period had, objectively speaking, been of no real

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[162] Mehring, *Absolutism and Revolution*, pp. 11-12.
[163] Ibid., pp. 14, 24. Mehring, *Deutsche Geschichte*, pp. 42-43.
[164] Connolly, *Labour in Ireland*, p. 9.

concern to the mass of the Irish people on either side who wasted their lives in them; the people had failed to seize the opportunity at this time to strike for their freedom from England, unsurprisingly, as they were led by the nobility, and not even the native Gaelic nobility, but the 'foreign' nobility whose claim to 'their' land had never been legitimate.[165] In the remainder of this chapter on 'The Jacobites and the Irish People', Connolly goes on to apply in a summary way they key precept of historical materialism to Irish history. Connolly asserts that up to as late as the 1690's, the 'prevailing method of economic production and exchange' was feudal ownership of land. The parties in the war of James and William were two groups of foreign feudalists fighting for Irish land. The Irish people had no part in these wars other than as 'cannon fodder'. Connolly continued, downplaying the significance of the Catholic-Protestant divide for Irish history, 'the social system thus firmly rooted in the soil of Ireland – and accepted as righteous by the ruling class irrespective of religion – was a greater enemy to the prosperity and happiness of the people than any legislation religious bigotry could devise.'[166] In Connolly's judgement, the only man in Irish history to have ever come close to forging an actual Irish nation out of its distinctly unpromising materials had been the eighteenth century revolutionary Wolfe Tone. This was because he, Connolly claimed, had 'built up his hopes upon a successful prosecution of a Class War, although those who pretend to imitate him today raise up their hands in holy terror at the mere mention of the phrase.' Tone, he continued, 'was as effective in uniting the democracy of Ireland as the "patriots" of our day have been in keeping it separated into warring religious factions.'[167] Connolly favoured the United Irishmen above all because as they were, as he titled

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[165] Ibid., p. 11.
[166] Ibid., pp. 15-18, 21.
[167] Connolly, *Labour in Ireland*, pp. 85, 86.

his chapter on them, pre-eminently 'Democrats and Internationalists.' Connolly's chapter on the nineteenth century Catholic emancipationist Daniel O'Connell was titled, by contrast, 'A Chapter of Horrors'. Connolly found O'Connell to be another false patriot, because of his religious 'bigotry' and because the country landowner 'felt himself to be much more akin to the propertied class of England than to the working class of Ireland.'[168] Mehring, for his part, also disregarded the idea that the Protestant-Catholic wars of sixteenth and seventeenth century Germany were in any sense either a national struggle of the Protestant German princes against the Emperor, or a Catholic crusade to restore the Imperial unity. His attitude towards Luther, as we have seen to say the least un-deferential, certainly distinguished his historiography as opposing the Protestant interpretation of German history, but he was equally unsympathetic to that which emphasised the Catholic 'character' of the Germans. He attacked the historical heroes of both sides equally: the great hero of nineteenth century Protestant German historiography, Gustavus Adolphus, had been in fact 'solely motivated by the economic and political interests of the Swedish monarchy…a foreign conqueror.' The Catholic Emperors of the House of Habsburg were simply stooges of the Popes, and their whole Empire had no other foundation than its role as defender of the Papacy's earthly interests. Where Mehring was in agreement with the Protestant (and Catholic) historians though was his judgement that 'No great advanced nation has had to suffer comparable destruction, Germany was thrown back two hundred years in its development. It took two hundred years to regain the economic position it could claim at the beginning of the Thirty Years' War…The last vestiges of the authority of the Emperor and the Empire had irrevocably disappeared.' Nevertheless, this had been 'a historical necessity, for the

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[168] Ibid., pp. 145, 157.

princes represented the centralization of the modern state as far as was at all possible under German economic conditions.'[169] Without the application of the principles of historical materialism to Irish history, Connolly argued, that history 'is but a welter of unrelated facts, a hopeless chaos of sporadic outbreaks, treacheries, intrigues, massacres, murders, and purposeless warfare.' [170] If he scrupulously avoided confessionalizing tendencies in his Irish historiography, he often distinguished between the 'authentic' Irish nation and its 'Others' on the basis of ethnicity or 'race'. He repeatedly distinguishes between Gaelic Irish and 'Old English' or new English 'foreigners', as if they had throughout their histories between something like armed camps constantly in conflict, with no other relations. Indeed, early in the book he makes plain his view that his work is a contribution and not a challenge to the contemporary 'Gaelic Revival'.[171] If nothing else, the contribution of Connolly and Mehring shows that there were historians in Germany and in Ireland during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries seeking a national historical paradigm that was 'de-confessionalized'.

VI

Historians in both countries considered the significance of religion in the nation's history in both its political and cultural dimensions. There were of course occasional exceptions to this rule, but they did not seriously affect the character of the 'confessionalized' historical understandings of the nation as they developed. In both countries, either Protestant or Catholicism acted as a '*Sammlungspunkt*', one of the few sources of unity available for potentially differing and even conflicting notes within the general nationalist historical narrative. In Germany, the historical role of

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[169] Mehring, *Absolutism and Revolution*, pp. 25-35. Mehring, *Deutsche Geschichte*, pp. 48-49, 51.
[170] Connolly, *Labour in Ireland*, p. 215.
[171] Ibid., xxxv.

Protestantism appeared to offer, at least to Protestant historians, an ideal and concrete foundation for modern German culture and state power, expressed in the achievement of Luther and the Reformation in subordinating church to state; it had formed the intellectual foundation and core for the German significance of Prussia; formed the foundation for the modern *Kulturnation*; and had given expression to a distinctively German form of religiosity and Christianity.[172] In the Franco-Prussian War, the Catholic identity of the Second French Empire was stressed; much was made of the fact that the doctrine of papal infallibility was promulgated only days before Napoleon III's declaration of war against Prussia.[173] Prussia's victory was seen as the conclusion of what had been begun by Luther in 1517, as the historical vengeance of the Germans over Rome:[174] 'The Battle of the Teutobergerwald, Luther's confrontation with the Catholic Church, the Thirty Years' War, and the Wars of Liberation against Napoleonic France were linked by nineteenth-century Protestant historians in a continuous and coherent history that defined the struggle with Rome and Catholicism as the most crucial historical force shaping modern German identity.'[175] From 1870, the subjection of church to state made possible by the Reformation could perhaps serve to remind Germans of the days of the early medieval empire of the Saxons and Hohenstaufen, which had been the master of Popes and of Rome. As in Ireland, where a Catholic-oriented narrative of the national past lent support for nationalist militancy, violence done in the wage of the nation, so the 'Protestantization' of 'Germanness' gave a similar effect. It aided the

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[172] Lenz, 'Nationalität und Religion', p. 240. Altgeld, *Katholizismus, Protestantismus, Judentum*, p. 205.

[173] Becker, 'Protestantische Euphorien: 1870/71, 1914 und 1933', p. 21.

[174] Günter Brakelmann, 'Kriegsprotestantismus, 1870/71 und 1914-1918: Einige Anmerkungen', in *Nationalprotestantische Mentalitäten*, p. 103. Altgeld, *Katholizismus, Protestantismus, Judentum*, p. 203. Wolfgang Hardtwig, 'Von Preussens Aufgabe in Deutschland zu Deutschland's Aufgabe in der Welt: Liberalismus und Borussianisches Geschichtsbild zwischen Revolution und Imperialismus', *Historische Zeitschrift*, 231, 2 (1980), p. 316.

[175] Cramer, *The Thirty Years' War*, pp. 217-218.

conceit, particularly popular during the First World War, that the Germans, in contrast to their enemies, were truly Christian, and more profoundly so than other nations. If the Germans were a chosen people, than France in particular was the great enemy against whom they were fighting a war, a nation godless and unbelieving.[176] This of course had a vintage going back to the beginning of the nineteenth century when the figure of Napoleon had been depicted as a 'devil and enemy of Christian humanity.'[177] Friedrich Meinecke, in his 1914 war pamphlet *The German Uprising of 1914*, wrote: 'In 1813 the service of one's country became a divine service, pursued with truly religious fervour and devotion, and a new dignity of moral consecration enveloped the Prussian state as champion of the German nation.'[178] The First World War was from its beginning presented by nationalists of all shades of opinion as yet another existential struggle for the survival of the nation, as an 'uprising' of the nation against its attackers. In this climate the historically constructed Protestant nature of the German people could be fully expressed. As Doris L. Bergen has put it, 'The outbreak of war in 1914 might be described as the peak of the love affair between German Protestantism and the German nation.'[179] Even writing in 1920's, Haller could confidently state that 'Austria, the Catholic great power is vanquished', while 'the German Reich created by Protestant Prussia, though fallen, will rise again.'[180] Almost all German historians after 1871 identified Christianity and Protestantism as synonymous and in respect of their idea of the

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[176] Michael Jeismann, *Das Vaterland der Feinde: Studien zum Nationalbegriff und Selbstverständnis in Deutschland und Frankreich, 1792-1918* (Stuttgart, Klett-Cotta, 1992), p. 141.

[177] Ibid., p. 77.

[178] Friedrich Meinecke, *The Warfare of a Nation: Lectures and Essays* (London, 1916), p. 8.

[179] Doris L. Bergen, "'War Protestantism' in Germany, 1914-1945", in *Nationalprotestantische Mentalitäten*, p. 116. Jeismann, *Das Vaterland der Feinde*, p. 301. Erich Marcks could still maintain in 1917, however, that the confessional division remained the 'curse' of German history. Marcks, *Luther und Deutschland*, p. 21.

[180] Johannes Haller, 'Die Reformation; Fluch oder Segen für das deutsche Volk?' in Johannes Haller, *Reden und Aufsätze zur Geschichte und Politik* (Stuttgart, J.G. Cotta, 1934), p. 171.

national idea defamed Catholicism as un-German.[181] In Ireland, few nationalists, from the popularisation of Irish national histories in the mid-nineteenth century to the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1922 ever denied that Irish Protestants were in some sense part of the nation – this would have been difficult if for no other reason than the historical examples of notable Protestant nationalists. But at the same time it was advantageous for both Catholic and Protestant historians to maintain, to one degree or another, the particularly Catholic character of the Irish nation, or at least the historical 'Otherness' of Protestantism. It was less the fine points of Catholic doctrine that made Catholic identity important to the historical narrative than the apparent ease with which *Irish* Catholicism could be presented as a central part of the Irish nation's resistance to persecution and one of the few, if not the *only*, truly continuous element of Irish national life through history. However much they may have decried inter-confessional antagonism and its effects in Ireland, succeeding generations of Irish nationalists were compelled to 'co-opt or graft the identity of Catholic on to the identity of Irish'.[182] The role of the Catholic Church in the expansion and preservation of English and British power over the Irish, from the twelfth century to the twentieth, was either obscured or explained away. The history of Irish Catholicism as the religion of an oppressed minority within an aggressively Protestant state (the United Kingdom) but which was also the religion of the majority in Ireland did not make its historiographical 'nationalisation' particularly difficult. From 1922, of course, the historically Catholic character of the Irish nation could be expressed institutionally: The highly popular *Short History of the Irish People* (1921, 1927), a largely moderate nationalist narrative that became a textbook for Irish school pupils for decades to come; was essentially the work of a conservative and

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[181] Gramley, *Propheten*, p. 175.
[182] Foster, 'Forward to Methuselah', in *Ireland's Polemical Past*, p. 144.

constitutionalist-minded Catholic nationalist. This work accepts, for example, the peculiar receptivity of the ancient Irish to Christian revelation, the continuity of Irish religious devotion to the Catholic Church, and the ingrained (Catholic) Irish disinclination to intolerance: 'from any desire to persecute persons of other creeds for their religious beliefs the Catholics of Ireland have always been singularly free.'[183] Yet the authors also take care to acknowledge the Protestant contribution, especially of Ulster Protestants, particularly to the revolutionary tradition.[184] Green's *History of the Irish State to 1014* (1925) notes for example the importance of the image of Saint Patrick and his deeds, such that he became 'the very embodiment of the national soul, its surety and defender', and the 'purity' of Irish devotion to Christianity since its earliest times.[185] As the notable nationalist politician Justin McCarthy noted in his popular Irish history, Patrick 'found in Ireland a people in whose temperament the spirit of veneration had always played a leading part.'[186] Charles Gavan Duffy noted that during this time 'Ireland may be said to have been a Christian Greece, the nurse of science and civilisation.'[187]

German Protestant historians, while they prided themselves on Protestantism's entwinement with *Bildung*, also attributed an explicitly exclusionary cultural significance to Protestantism. Like their Irish (often, though not always Catholic) counterparts they situated the 'national' religion in a discourse of 'national resistance' – the drive for 'German freedom' – from foreign influences and oppression (from Rome or France) which culminated in 1871, before experiencing a new threat in 1918. As in the Catholic or Catholic-oriented or anti-Protestant narrative of Irish history, the Protestant narrative of German history was centred on

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[183] Hayden and Moonan, *A Short History of the Irish People*, pp. 38, 39, 297.
[184] Ibid, p. 427.
[185] Green, *History of the Irish State*, pp. 119, 129.
[186] McCarthy, *Ireland and her Story*, p. 16.
[187] Duffy, *Young Ireland*, p. 83.

notions of 'redemptive' 'struggle and sacrifice'. In a speech before the Prussian Upper House in 1873, Bismarck had described his confrontation with the Catholic Church as a continuation of that between the Hohenstaufen emperors and the Popes of the time.[188] He, unlike Emperor Henry IV, would never 'walk to Canossa'. If by 1914 the German confessional divide had lost much of its earlier rancour[189] – in 1916 the conservative Protestant historian Georg von Below had even asserted that German Protestants and German Catholics now fought with equal fervour for nation, fatherland, *Volkstum*, and of course, 'German freedom'[190] – the outbreak of war nonetheless solidified the identification of Germanness with belligerent Protestantism. In any case, Johannes Haller could still maintain in the 1920's: 'What the world knows as German progress is in essentials of Protestant origin, despite the many German Catholics.'[191]

In Ireland, the consolidation of 'pillarized' interpretations of the national past correlated both with the growth of Protestant-Catholic animosity in the nineteenth century and to the growing strength of nationalism. The views of the two principal Christian communities in Ireland came to be distinguished, as Paul Bew has noted, by 'mutual contempt.'[192] Whether or not nationalist historical narratives were 'to blame' for this, few aimed to seriously challenge the 'confessionalized' narrative of Irish history. The seal was set on this animosity with the Partition of Ireland in 1922. Irish nationalists now had the opportunity of establishing a Catholic Ireland, which they duly did. Eamon de Valera's 1937 Constitution of Ireland explicitly mentioned

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[188] See Ruehl, '"In This Time Without Emperors"', p. 211; quoted in G. Craig, *Germany: 1866-1945* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1978), pp. 71-72.

[189] In Laechele's opinion, 'By the turn of the century German Protestantism had essentially lost its confessional character.' Rainer Laechele, 'Protestantismus und völkische Religion im deutschen Kaiserreich', in *Handbuch zur Völkischen Bewegung*, p. 150.

[190] Below, 'Die Ursachen der Reformation', p. 455.

[191] Haller, *Epochs*, p. 125. Haller, *Epochen*, p. 210.

[192] Bew, *Ireland*, viii.

the historically 'special position' of the Catholic Church in Ireland.[193] Even notable figures of the 'Irish-Ireland' movement that had such influence on figures like Pearse, which emphasised culture rather than religion as the determining force in Irish history, were often less hesitant to identify Irishness and Catholic identity as coterminous than earlier generations had been. Not least, of course, because most of the leading proponents of the Gaelic Revival or 'Irish-Ireland' movement were Catholics. What was more common for Irish historians – and they could be both Protestant or Catholic, but were usually the latter – was to represent Protestant as synonymous with 'perfidious Albion' and the injustices inflicted on the Irish throughout history, thereby 'othering' Protestantism as not just foreign, but implicitly anti-national and a source of violence against the nation in its history. As the Irish historian W.F. Butler wrote in 1919, from the seventeenth century in Ireland, 'the test of nationality becomes almost a religious one.'[194]

Religion or confessional allegiance became comprehensively nationalized in both contexts and in this respect the historical writing of the relationship between nation and religion played a dominant role. A nineteenth-century Catholic German historian wrote in 1882, 'our history writing, Protestant as well as Catholic, considers the past from the political and religious viewpoint of the present, and finds in them weapons for current battles'.[195] The ease with which this statement could be applied word for word to Irish history writing of the same period, either Protestant or Catholic, is in itself striking. Similarly, Lecky might have drawn a few wry glances from a few of his German contemporaries with his remark, made with barely concealed repugnance, that 'Ireland is now the only civilised country where public opinion is

[193] Bew, *Ireland*, p. 455.
[194] W.F. Butler, *Confiscation in Irish History* (2nd ed., Dublin, Talbot Press, 1919), p. 235.
[195] Quoted in Cramer, *The Thirty Years' War*, p. 38.

governed, not occasionally but habitually, by theological considerations'.[196] Writing

in the 1920's, the decade of the partition of Ireland between mostly Protestant North

and mostly Catholic 'South', Johannes Haller expressed a view that few Irish

historians could have disagreed with if applied to their own country's history:

'Nothing has so powerfully influenced the course of German history as this

difference of religious faith. It is still at work today; indeed it has increased in

acerbity in recent times. Everyone knows what a pernicious effect it has had on our

national destinies.'[197] As late as 1933 he could maintain that assessments of the

German Reformation remained confessionally 'pillarized' or at least not reconciled,

that confessional division remained a 'peculiarity' of Germany.'[198] In 1920 the

author of the official history of the Pan-German League had complained of the

'unselige Glaubenspaltung' that ran through the 'fatherland' like a 'rift', and

continued to obscure the meaning and correctness of the pan-German idea.[199] In both

Ireland and Germany, from the mid-nineteenth century up to the First World War

and inter-war period politico-religious conflicts were fought within historiography,

and the antagonisms present within historiographical arguments reflected not just the

confessional division within each society, but the contemporary political significance

of that division for each country.

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[196] W.E.H. Lecky, *History of the Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe*, vol. II (London, Longmans, 1865), p. 17.
[197] Haller, *Epochs*, p. 124. Haller, *Epochen*, p. 208.
[198] Haller, 'Die Reformation', pp. 153, 158, 159.
[199] Otto Bonhard, *Geschichte des alldeutschen Verbandes* (Berlin, Theodor Weicher, 1920)

CHAPTER THREE

The Nation and National Territory in History

I

There can be no nation without a 'homeland', without 'national territory', without a 'repository of national history.'[1] The narrative of the historical 'homeland' supports otherwise abstract concepts of 'state' and 'nation' with an historical and physical context: in the national territory, the nation's ancestral and cultural origins can be connected with the contemporary (or anticipated) political activity of the national state, and the 'historical identity' of the nation's people. The territorial borders of a nation and nation-state become associated with a linking together of past and present and a process of delineating lines of inclusion and exclusion. Those 'spaces that come to be inhabited by communities whose experiences and sense of distinctive identity' are sufficiently cohesive to become what has been called by Anthony D. Smith 'ethnoscapes.'[2] As a result territory becomes 'an intrinsic part of the character, history, and destiny of the culture community, to be commemorated regularly and defended at all costs, lest the "personality" of the ethnic or regional community be impugned.'[3] From this, certain terrains and regions are believed to provide the unique and indispensable setting for the events that shaped the community.[4] Nationalist elites and intellectuals, historians in particular, mobilize 'the myths and images of a primordial homeland to reinforce the depiction of the nation as an ancient community of belonging, an organic singularity "rooted" to a particular

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[1] Guntram Herb, *Under the Map of Germany: Nationalism and Propaganda, 1918-1945* (London, Routledge, 1997), p. 6. Kramer, *Nationalism in Europe and America*, p. 57.
[2] Anthony D. Smith, *Ethno-Symbolism and Nationalism: A Cultural Approach* (London, Routledge, 2009), pp. 49-50.
[3] Smith, *Myths and Memories*, p. 151.
[4] Anthony D. Smith, *The Nation in History: Historiographical Debates on Ethnicity and Nationalism* (Hanover, NH., University Press of New England, 2000), p. 154.

place.'[5] The stories that nationalists tell about land and place are many and various, ranging from narratives connecting a particular culture to the unique environment that produced it, narratives about first occupancy, and 'blood and soil' narratives about the sacrifices made to people a particular place.[6] A sense of the nation's rootedness to its soil, its territory, and its attendant particularity was important, even among those historians who did not espouse a strictly racialist conception of history. Indeed, the historical synthesis of *ethnos* with territory might be seen as a more 'acceptable' alternative to racial identification, although it could often serve simply as another kind of 'rationalization' for the same, given the importance of the idea of historical 'rootedness' within a defined territory.[7] This sense of 'rootedness', and the concept of '*Heimat*', was of fundamental importance to national thought in Germany, particularly in its *völkisch* variant, but the sense of the nation's past as being linked to a specific narrative of space and place, territory and locality, was undoubtedly important in the Irish context as well. As the existing or anticipated territorial borders and the historical, cultural, and political boundaries of the state are desired by nationalists to be coterminous, nationalist historical narratives have been fundamental to establishing nationalist claims on given territories.

II

As noted in the first chapter, in both contexts, the fact of the original geographical 'peculiarity' of the nation – Irish insularity, Germany as *Mitteleuropa*, a land between east and west, a land almost without 'natural' borders[8] – was regarded as a most significant element in the nation's history. The problem of regional identities in

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[5] Robert J. Kaiser, 'Homeland Making and the Territorialization of National Identity', in Daniele Conversi (ed.), *Ethnonationalism in the Contemporary World* (London, Routledge, 2002), p. 230.

[6] Kearns, '"Educate that Holy Hatred"', p. 886.

[7] Tatiana Zhurzhenko, 'Border and Memory', in Doris Wastl-Walter (ed.), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Border Studies* (Ashgate, Farnham, 2011), p. 39.

[8] Bernd Faulenbach, *Ideologie des deutschen Weges: Die deutsche Geschichte in der Historiographie zwischen Kaiserreich und Nationalsozialismus* (C.H. Beck, Munich, 1980), p. 27.

particular was also of great significance for nationalism in both countries. These regional allegiances were also conditioned by a strong loyalty toward another nation, certainly in the Irish case in Ulster, and as also in the case of Alsace-Lorraine or German Silesia. For these reasons, and others, the supposed national-historical significance of certain regions was of especial importance in both the Irish and German contexts. As much as regional distinctions and identities became increasingly considered in the course of the nineteenth century as backward anomalies that managed to resist the national idea, they were nonetheless very enduring, as acknowledged by their opponents.[9] While as Celia Applegate puts it, 'The devaluation of regions and their pasts in the nineteenth century thus emerged naturally alongside the triumph of national historiographies',[10] a regional identity could in fact stand as a successful rival to a national one. In the course of the nineteenth century historians in Ireland and Germany were confronted with claims that the borders of their country were not coterminous with national boundaries, claims which in turn required contestation. Historians in both contexts employed the common technique of downplaying the significance of any differences in the historical experience of contested territories or regions from that of the wider nation. They narrated these territories as central to the historical development of these nations; as it were, as 'cockpits' of their historical development, and denied the legitimacy of any regional allegiance (especially if it was linked with professed belonging to *another* nation) that conflicted with allegiance to their nation. 'Historical narratives characteristically echoed the homogenizing and centralizing

[9] Winson Chu, '"Volksgemeinschaft unter sich": German Minorities and Regionalism in Poland, 1918-1939' , in Neil Gregor, Nils Roemer, Mark Roseman (eds.), *German History from the Margins* (Bloomington IN, Indiana University Press, 2006), p. 104. Joost Augusteijn and Eric Storm, 'Introduction: Region and State', in idem (eds.), *Region and State in Nineteenth-Century Europe: Nation-Building, Regional Identities, and Separatism* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p. 1.
[10] Celia Applegate, 'A Europe of Regions: Reflections on the Historiography of Sub-National Places in Modern Times', *American Historical Review*, 104, 4 (1999), p. 1160.

propensities of the age,' as Monika Baár argues, 'by providing historical validation for the unification of provinces that were deemed to belong to the national territory.'[11] Notions of an enduring, unchanged historical claim to certain contested territories or regions could thus take primacy over the preferences of the inhabitants of these territories as to whether or not they wished to be a part of the German or Irish nation. Thus the 'territorializing' purposes of historical narratives were often linked in both contexts with a conception of the nation, in which a discourse of national enmity in relation to the nation's 'other(s)' was fundamental. The territorializing dimension of the German nationalist historical narrative was markedly affected by the fact that a very great proportion of the German *Kulturnation* had lived for centuries outside of Germany's core territory, whether conceived of as the Holy Roman Empire, the German Confederation, or the *Kaiserreich*. The German communities of eastern Europe – a 'diaspora' of sorts, perhaps[12] – formed an extra-territorial part of the German nation, but one which, owing to long-standing notions about the geographical imprecision or indeterminacy of German borders, was regarded as being of fundamental significance for definitions of what 'Germany' was. The importance of 'the East' to how ideas of 'Germanness' were formulated was fundamental, and particularly important insofar as the leading German powers of Prussia and Austria had originated in medieval German 'colonisation' of and settlement in 'the East'. The *Ostsiedlung* was regarded

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[11] Baar, *Historians and Nationalism*, p. 225.

[12] Even if the German communities of Eastern Europe did not form a diaspora in any conventional sense, German nationalists in Germany – and some who had a 'diaspora' heritage, such as one of this thesis's protagonists, Johannes Haller, generally did regard them as in some sense an extra-territorial part of the (*kultur*-)nation. Pieter Judson, 'When is a Diaspora not a Diaspora? Rethinking Nation-centred narratives about Germans in Habsburg East-Central Europe', in K. O'Donnell, R. Bridenthal, N. Reagin (eds.), *The Heimat Abroad: The Boundaries of Germanness* (Ann Arbor, MI, University of Michigan Press, 2005), pp. 219-240.

by nineteenth century writers as a 'national' achievement and therefore became a central theme in German nationalist thinking about national territory.

There was of course one particularly important difference with respect to the historical 'nationalization' of territory in these contexts. The sense of the Germans as being a historically expansionist and 'colonising' people, in the East', which of course could (and was) used to legitimise modern imperialism and colonialism, did not have a counterpart in the Irish context. The Irish had rather been the 'victims' of expansionism and 'colonising' movements, though even this obscures the degree to which such inward movements became regarded by some important writers as forming a necessary part of the history of the Irish nation, and of course, the reality that they had nothing to do with modern nationalism. On the other hand, what is interesting about German historical narratives of German expansion in 'the East', whether it is described as settlement or colonisation is how closely linked they were to perceptions over the fundamental meaning of 'Germanness', and how 'the East' was considered both part of German '*Europa*' and a 'place apart'. Ultimately, in both the Irish and German contexts, narratives on the historical 'nationalization' of territory were another area for arguments about the cultural and historical identity of the German or Irish nation. Though to different degrees, the historical 'nationalization' of Irish or German territory was regarded, due to the circumstances of Irish or German history, as a necessary exercise. The role of the global Irish diaspora that arose from the mid-nineteenth century with respect to the focus of this chapter can be dealt with briefly. It had little apparent importance for how Irish historical writers, even those writing from within the diaspora, dealt with the historical 'nationalization' of Irish territory, of the homeland. The diaspora did not substantively challenge the importance of ideas of the significance of Ireland's

'island-ness' to the definition of Irishness. Whatever the significance of the Irish diaspora for Irish nationalist politics, it could play but little role in how Irish nationalist writers in Ireland dealt with how the territory of the nation's homeland was historically defined, for example with respect to the problem of 'Ulster'. It is true that for Thomas D'Arcy McGee (who in addition to his *Popular History of Ireland* – written in Canada – and *History of the Attempts to Establish the Reformation in Ireland* also authored a *History of the Irish Settlers in North America* and a *Catholic History of North America*) and John Mitchel, 'exile' or diaspora experience over a period of decades in North America was a formative chapter of their lives. It was during his North American life that each man wrote the works of history which are considered in this thesis. Yet their diaspora experiences were not the total sum of their lives, and the essential features of each man's nationalism had been established long before their departures from Ireland. For them, as for others, the writing of Irish history was one valuable, even essential way in which they as long-time 'exiles' could 'reconnect' with the homeland and further maintain their relevance to nationalism back there. For Mitchel, if not McGee, as far as his Irish-American audience counted the purpose of the *History of Ireland* was primarily to inspire them to activism 'of aiding our kinsmen of Ireland in their supreme struggle.'[13] Enda Delaney has correctly pointed out the that a 'defining feature of Irish Catholic diasporic identity between the Great Famine and the First World War was a shared sense of a national past',[14] the polestar of which was the history of the homeland more than anything else. It is difficult to judge how immediately important diasporic experience was to the writing of McGee's and Mitchel's histories.[15]

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[13] Quoted in McGovern, *John Mitchel*, p. 122.
[14] Delaney, 'Narratives of Exile and Displacement', p. 103.
[15] Wilson, *Thomas D'Arcy McGee*, II, p. 184.

McGee's *Popular History* may have been written in British North America, but this did not stop the book from earning McGee an enduring place in the literary history of Irish nationalism, being particularly important to A.M. Sullivan and his *Story of Ireland*, which should not be underestimated given the enduring popularity and circulation of the latter writer and his work.[16] The *Popular History* became widely used in late nineteenth-century Irish classrooms (in schools run by the nationalistic Christian Brothers[17]) and earned him election to the Royal Irish Academy in 1864. The same points can be made for John Mitchel's Irish history, written during his American 'exile'. How a book was read was not necessarily determined by where it was written: an Irish reader back home did not need to share McGee's scepticism from the 1850s about the prospects of Irish independence to be satisfied that the *Popular History* fully justified Irish claims to nationhood. Ultimately, however, the significance of the 'diaspora' experiences of such men to their writing of Irish (nationalist) history and historical nationalization of Irish territory, though an interesting question, is one beyond the scope of this thesis to answer. The focus in this chapter with respect to Irish historical narratives is limited to how these historians, wrote the historical narrative of Irish territorial 'nationness'.

The historical nationalization of territory involved affirming and denying claims to its legitimate ownership and therefore the possession of political power.[18] Therefore it involved in both cases affirming and challenging 'foundational myths' associated

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[16] Boyce, *Nationalism in Ireland*, p. 249.

[17] John Coolahan, 'Perceptions of Ireland and its Past in nineteenth-century national school textbooks', in *Ireland's Polemical Past*, p. 76n.

[18] As Bernard Yack puts it, 'It is only with the rise of beliefs about the right to national self-determination that people begin to assume that a given territory must belong to one and only one nation.' Yack, *Nationalism and the Moral Psychology of Community* (London, University of Chicago Press, 2012), pp. 91-92.

with specific territories.[19] One of those has already been noted in the previous chapter: the narrative of the 'massacre' of Irish Protestants in Ulster in 1641 which justified the rejection of their modern descendants of Irish nationalism. The historical claims of certain peoples or states to 'contested territories' regarded as essential to the nation were 'written out' of the national narratives, be it in the case of the Ulster Protestants in the Irish context, or in the German context, the Poles of Prussia or the people of Alsace-Lorraine with their hybridized French-German cultural differences. German historians were constantly vexed by the historical and contemporary problem of regional allegiances, or the old nemesis of 'German particularism'. The conflict between *Kleindeutsche* and *Grossdeutsche* ideas of 'Germany' was one between narratives of German history that were centred on regions and territory, and in particular the question of whether Prussia or Austria was the more 'authentically' German. Historians took it upon themselves to argue for the 'calling' or 'leading role' of Prussia or Austria to defend and spearhead German unity, and even after the Prussian-led unification of 1871 the historiographical 'nationalization' of Prussia and Prussian history remained seen as important. The post-1871 'German Empire' was in most respects, a 'prussifizierter Staat',[20] yet the unification of Germany, achieved as it was by Prussian military means and the exclusion of Austria from German affairs, was by no means universally popular. It still seemed necessary to provide some kind of historical legitimation to Prussian leadership of Germany after 1871, and to demonstrate the positive importance to *Germany* of historical Prussian territorial expansion in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Even after 1918, as well as after 1871, it remained necessary to show that 'Prussia' and 'Germany' were not separate, antagonistic entities.

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[19] James Loughlin, 'Creating "A Social and Geographical Fact": Regional Identity and the Ulster Question, 1880's-1920's', *Past and Present*, 195 (2007), p. 165.

[20] Hermand, *Verlorene Ilusionen*, p. 162.

In Ireland, the problems surrounding the historical nationalization of territory became centred on one region, ironically the least pro-nationalist: Ulster. It was in the later nineteenth century, particularly from the 1880's, that 'Ireland' and 'Ulster' began to be spoken of as two different entities. The Northern Province and particularly the region around Belfast had developed a distinctiveness based on its mostly Protestant population, and its industrialized modernity, both of which demarcated it from the rest of Ireland. Ulster Protestants, to the extent that they regarded themselves as Irish, were opposed to political nationhood. The nationalist-historical task became not only to argue Ireland's claim for separation from the United Kingdom, but also to argue for the status of Ireland as a *single* undivided country, and against Ulster Protestant claims to be considered as a separate nation or otherwise to be excluded from the boundaries of the Irish nation. To accept such claims would be to call into question the fundamental notions of what Ireland and Irishness meant. At the very least, it was necessary to establish that Ulster had possessed no meaningful historical existence separate from the rest of Ireland and to show that Ulster Protestant claims to separation could not be legitimated in that way, precisely because the notion of a separate Ulster seemed to call into question the fundamental tenets of Irish nationalism. A minority of Irish nationalists, as will be seen, were more willing to dispense with 'Ulster', but their reasons for this reflected historical assumptions and arguments about 'Ulster' that were widely held.

German and Irish historians faced differing tasks – historically legitimating unification on the one hand, separation of a single national territory on the other – but they both involved establishing an historical legitimacy for the territorial claims of their nations. Writers in both contexts performed a kind of narrative historical mapping of the nation, one that emphasized conflict and loss of land, and the hope of

its regain or redemption. German historians often placed emphasis on the origins of Prussia and Austria as German 'colonies', as 'Mark' territories of the German nation outside of the boundaries of the old *Reich*,[21] where the peculiarities of German history became most strongly defined and where the '*Volk*' dimension of German history supposedly found its strongest expression. [22] In the Irish nationalist conception of history Ulster was presented as having for centuries been the 'most Irish' part of Ireland, but one that as of modern times needed to be 'redeemed' for Ireland. 'Ulster' was regarded as both the 'heartland' and a place 'out of step' with the 'natural' historical development of Ireland – the Irish nation – since the early seventeenth century. This idea, which became a conceit, reflected the reality that in the course of the nineteenth-century, Irish nationalism had, in its orientation towards popular Catholicism and social origins, become an increasingly 'southern-centric' movement.[23] While, in general, a sense of the historically-mandated 'indivisibility' of the national territory would become a fundamental characteristic of the nationalist 'world-view' in both Germany and Ireland, the historical realities made it clear that the synthesis of *Kulturnation* and *Staatsnation* was a goal beyond realization. The difficulties that nationalists in each context had in conceiving of the nation without some of its historic 'contested' territories would account for many of the more negative traits of both nationalisms during the twentieth century, but these were in some sense determined by how the national territory had been historically delineated.

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[21] Nipperdey, *Nachdenken*, p. 207.

[22] Dieter Langewiesche has also highlighted the importance of the expression of French occupation and oppression during the Napoleonic Wars to the birth of early German nationalism in Prussia. Dieter Langewiesche, 'Reich, Nation, und Staat in der jüngeren deutschen Geschichte', *Historische Zeitschrift*, 254, 2 (1992), p. 355.

[23] Oliver MacDonagh, *States of Mind: A Study of Anglo-Irish Conflict, 1780-1980* (London, Allen & Unwin, 1983), p. 20. Clare O'Halloran, *Partition and the Limits of Irish Nationalism: An Ideology under Stress* (Dublin, Gill & Macmillan, 1987), xiv, p. 4. John M. Regan, 'Southern Irish Nationalism as a Historiographical Problem', *Historical Journal*, 50, 1, 2007, pp. 197-223.

III

It is a contrast in relation to the history of German nationalism that despite the apparent significance of the 'Ulster' problem, the majority of Irish nationalists in fact thought it unnecessary do too much thinking about national territory. The fact of Ireland being an island was taken as self-evident proof of where Ireland's national boundaries lay.[24] In numerous nationalist historical narratives the island of Ireland is presented as, to the first historically traceable peoples who settled there – that is, the progenitors of the Gaels – as the 'isle of destiny', as a promised land, fated to be settled, occupied, and fought over by heroic peoples down throughout the ages.[25] 'The history of Ireland is as stormy as its [geographic] situation', was the opening sentence of Thomas D'Arcy McGee's *History of the Attempts to Establish the Protestant Reformation in Ireland*. This was not regarded as undermining the 'truth' of the nation's 'oneness' by virtue of the island's 'oneness', however. Ireland's insularity and proximity to and relationship with the larger eastern island were to McGee two of the three fundamental axes of Irish history.[26] The sense of Ireland as a 'perfect geographical entity' dovetailed with an emphasis on the separateness of the character of Irish history and the Irish people from that of the neighbouring island. Alice Stopford Green noted at the outset of *Irish Nationality*: 'It is commonly accepted that the fortunes of the island and its civilisation must by nature hang on those of England. Neither history nor geography allows this theory…The two islands had a different history…and developed apart their civilisation.'[27] Irish historians, for the most part, even if they could not accept the possibility that Ireland was divisible,

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[24] MacDonagh, *States of Mind*, pp. 15, 18. Comerford, *Ireland*, pp. 14, 49. M.W. Heslinga, *The Irish Border as a Cultural Divide: A Contribution to the Study of Regionalism in the British Isles* (Assen, Van Gorcum, 1962), p. 41. John Bowman, *De Valera and the Ulster Question, 1917-1923* (Oxford, Clarendon, 1982), p. 11.

[25] Sullivan, *The Story of Ireland*, pp. 12-13.

[26] McGee, *History of the Attempts*, pp. 19-20.

[27] Green, *Irish Nationality*, pp. 7, 8.

accepted more widely the importance of downplaying the obvious regionally-based heterogeneity in Irish 'national' history. The reality of the history of waves of non-Irish settlement, particularly in Ulster, had introduced a conflict of different historical communities on a single 'compact' territory.

In 'Germany', nationalists had from the beginning been confronted with the obvious near-absence of clearly identifiable 'natural' national borders, particularly in the east and west, and the consequences of this for the Germans' relations with surrounding peoples. This was linked with understandings of the Germans as a migratory people with a natural '*Drang nach Osten*' – a nineteenth-century nationalist construct which bore little if any relation to the historical realities of medieval settlement and migration – extending outside their 'historic' 'core territory', which introduced instability into conceptions of the German nation's historical territory. Ideas about what lay outside present German boundaries, in 'the East', often stood at the centre of the defining of German national identity.[28] 'The East' became regarded as a centuries-old German 'sphere of influence' the region where the superiority of German *Kultur* was demonstrated by interactions with the Slavic peoples, and the achievements of the medieval *Ostsiedlung*. Yet it was also regarded as a region in which the Germans had long had to struggle for their very existence. If in the Irish context the boundaries of the nation seemed to be self-evident, in the German the question from the start was 'Where do they begin?' and 'Where do they end?' The question of Germany's historical boundaries was to prove 'one of the most intractable problems in nineteenth century Germany.' The reality was, as Abigail Green has argued, that older regional allegiances persisted in strength long after 1871, along with a sense of the artificiality of a German 'nation-state' sundered from

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[28] Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius, *The German Myth of the East: 1800 to the Present* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 4. p. 123.

Austria.[29] The question of how to reconcile region and nation into one coherent historical narrative was an enduring and inescapable one for German historians. As Johannes Haller aptly noted in his *Epochs of German History*: 'German history begins under the aegis of particularism…Here we have to deal with a fundamental trait in the nature of the German people, which has to be reckoned with whether one likes it or not.'[30] Ranke had regarded the different *Stämme* and their different states as a fundamental constituent of German history, and the esteem with which he held these states in the past was reflected in his view that they should be preserved and cultivated as true expressions of German nationality.[31] The territorial states had been not only the political but also the cultural constituents of modern Germany, forming 'a mosaic of divergent historical and cultural heritages'.[32] Regional allegiances continued after 1871 to play a central role in the national feeling of Germans from all over the new *Reich*.[33] The very name *Reich* for the German nation-state expressed non-unitary character. regions.[34] As in Ireland, certain regions were a potential rival for the nation, but could also be seen in more positive terms, as 'cockpits' of the nation's historical development. Prussia (in some ways the most un-German part of 'Germany') was seen as both a setting in which the particularities of German 'national' history – such as the confessional divide, the interaction between the princely territory and the imperial authority, the *Drang nach Osten*, the

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[29] Abigail Green, *Fatherlands: State-Building and Nationhood in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 1, 4. It has been argued in more recent years that the German Empire of 1871 arose out of secession (of Prussia and her allies from the traditionally Austrian-dominated German Confederation) and partition. David Blackbourn, *The Long Nineteenth Century: A History of Germany, 1780-1918* (New York, Blackwell, 2003), pp. 184-185.

[30] Haller, *Epochs*, pp. 7, 8. Haller, *Epochen*, p. 22. Claß, *Deutsche Geschichte*, p. 5.

[31] Kemilainen, *Die Historische Sendung*, p. 22.

[32] Green, *Fatherlands*, pp. 98, 337. Alon Confino, *The Nation as a Local Metaphor: Wuerttemberg, Imperial Germany, and National Memory, 1871-1918* (Chapel Hill, NC, University of North Carolina Press, 1997), p. 14.

[33] Celia Applegate, *A Nation of Provincials: The German Idea of Heimat* (Oxford, University of California Press, 1990), p. 14.

[34] Dieter Langewiesche, *Nation, Nationalismus, Nationalstaat in Deutschland und Europa* (Munich, Beck, 2000), pp. 55-56, 78.

distinctiveness of Germans as an 'imperial' nation, the reality of 'Germany' as a territorially fragmented nation,[35] and so on, had realized fullest expression – and as a borderland between Germany and 'the east', with both positive and negative implications. What the 'insular' Irish and the 'borderless' Germans had had in common in their history, however, was a turbulent relationship with their neighbouring nations, a history of constant interaction and conflict, the results of which for how the national territory and 'homeland' was 'nationalized' are considered in this chapter.

IV

In Ireland, as with so many other historical problems, the territorial problems of the twentieth century found their roots in the ethno-religious wars of the seventeenth century.[36] The moderate nationalist historian Stephen Gwynn had expressed with a single sentence how fundamental had been the confluence of confessional allegiance and division of territory along ethno-religious lines in Irish history. In the seventeenth century, he wrote, 'The land was taken from Catholics as Catholics and given to Protestants as Protestants.'[37] As a result the historical Irish map was one of ethno-religious and 'national' conflicts recurring through the centuries. The focal point of all this had been the region most affected by such conflicts, the region of Ulster. The Young Irelander Thomas MacNevin, noting the problematic 'distance' of Ulster from the rest of Ireland, even in his time, wrote in 1846: 'it is in Ulster that the effects of the Plantation are most striking. The new people have kept aloof from the ancient inhabitants; difference of creed, difference of habits, and difference of

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[35] It was not until the 1860's, after the Austro-Prussian War, that Prussia's territories became contiguous.

[36] Heslinga, *The Irish Border*, p. 21.

[37] Stephen Gwynn, *The History of Ireland* (London, Talbot Press, 1923), p. 320.

tradition…have kept them sundered.'[38] While for McNevin Ulster 'participated largely in all that made Ireland beautiful, wealthy, and civilised', the province 'was a well-chosen victim for the passions of conquest, a fit subject for the cupidity of her despoilers.'[39] This double sense of both the Irishness and foreignness of Ulster, or of its 'captive' status, would be an important one. The historical character of Ulster as having been for centuries the 'most Irish' part of Ireland was accentuated, with unionist intransigence of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries being regarded as an odd and unfortunate interlude, while at other times Ulster was regarded as the part of Ireland most 'damaged' by British rule, even as irredeemably 'anglicized'.

One early example of the attempt to integrate Ulster into the wider Irish historical narrative and to accentuate Ulster's 'Irishness' was in John Mitchel's biography of the sixteenth century Ulster leader Hugh O'Neill, a historical hero of nationalist Ireland. Here Mitchel attempted to establish a proud historical and Irish national identity for the province in the early modern period, shortly prior to the Ulster Plantation. In his introduction, Mitchel strikes a conciliatory note, conceding that at the very least the Ulster Protestants of non-Irish ancestry possessed 'now far too old a title to be questioned…a deep enough root those planters have struck into the soil of Ulster, and it would now be ill striving to un-plant them.' The divisive historical legacy of the ethno-religious divide is contrasted against the possible reconciling force of a common allegiance to the national territory, the soil of Ulster and Ireland on which Irishmen of all creeds fought and bled for the nation's dignity and freedom. In the biography the entire importance of the Ulster magnate O'Neill was in his status as an authentic national leader and hero, and Ulster was presented indeed as

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[38] Thomas MacNevin, *The Confiscation of Ulster in the Reign of James I, commonly called the Ulster Plantation* (Dublin, James Duffy, 1846), p. 147.
[39] Ibid., p. 166.

the birthplace of the modern Irish nation.[40] The power of Ulster in O'Neill's time was the strength of Ireland. He strove to 'heal the feuds of rival chiefs and out of these discordant elements to create and bind together an Irish nation'.[41] His demands included the 'entire and undisturbed control by the Irish chiefs over their own territories and people.' For his victories over the English 'O'Neill was celebrated everywhere as the deliverer of his country and the most zealous champion of the Catholic religion.'[42] O'Neill, during his short, glorious Irish career, had made himself a threat to English power in Ireland greater than any previously seen.'[43] In Mitchel's biography of Ulster's Irish hero, the most 'particularist' province of Ireland and in his own time the most 'anti-national' had been the first to have grasped the essentiality of a conception of Ireland as a single political unit. O'Neill's war ultimately failed, and he chose to live the rest of his days in self-imposed exile in Rome rather than submit, but this noble Gaelic prince of Ireland's last unconquered province had for a time all but freed Ireland and united its peoples. As O'Neill of Ulster had led and re-defined the Irish nation in his time, so two hundred years later would (*Protestant*) Ulster be the crucible of the first 'modern' Irish nationalist movement, the 'patriot' Volunteer movement of the late eighteenth century and the United Irish Society would be the first to recognise that the enemy of all Irishmen was Britain, and that only an Ireland of Protestants and Catholics united could rid itself of Britain.[44]

Mitchel's interest in O'Neill reflected also the influence of the Carlylean ideal of heroism on his thinking and writing, and for another reason Ulster's 'Britishness' since the seventeenth century was anathema to Mitchel: from the 1840s, Mitchel

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[40] John Mitchel, *The Life And Times of Aodh O'Neill* (New York, P.M. Haverty, 1868), vii-viii, ix.
[41] Ibid., pp. 49, 77.
[42] Ibid., pp. 130, 145.
[43] Ibid., pp. 161, 170.
[44] Mitchel, *History of Ireland*, I, p. 158.

developed a strongly anti-modernist, anti-capitalist strain of thinking, entwined with his convinced Anglophobia. But Ulster in the nineteenth century, in becoming the most 'British' part of Ireland, had also become the most industrially and economically modern, a place in which heroic warrior princes and noble revolutionary intellectuals had no place, even in the popular memory of the majority of the populace. This alienation of modern Ulster from Mitchel's own intellectual position made the historical nationalization of Ulster all the more necessary and urgent, and for Mitchel as an 'ecumenical nationalist' the principal means for this task were the Gaelic leader and Catholic champion Hugh O'Neill and the Protestant Patriots of the eighteenth century. Mitchel's biography of O'Neill would exercise a definite influence on one of the most canonical texts of Irish nationalist history writing, Sullivan's *The Story of Ireland*, in which O'Neill is celebrated as a national leader, 'ineradicably Irish, with one unalterable purpose of freeing Ireland from the thraldom of English rule.'[45] Sullivan described the Ulsterman as leader of 'one of the greatest struggles ever waged against the Anglo-Norman subjugation'.[46] As with Mitchel, Sullivan represented O'Neill's return to his native Ulster after a youth spent at the English court as the most formative event in his life: 'the touch of his native soil, intercourse with neighbouring Irish chieftains, and the force of sympathy with his own people, now surrounding him, were gradually telling upon him.'[47] In Sullivan's narrative, as in Mitchel's account, 'Ulster was the stronghold of the native cause'.[48] Thomas D'Arcy McGee too dealt with Ulster's history in a similar manner to Mitchel and Sullivan, for example by paralleling the (Catholic) Ulster hero Hugh

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[45] Ciaran Brady, 'Pitying the plumage: commemorating the flight of the earls in contemporary and historical context', in Thomas O'Connor and Mary Ann Lyons (eds.), *The Ulster Earls and Baroque Europe: Refashioning Irish Identities, 1600-1800* (Dublin, Four Courts Press, 2010), p. 374.
[46] Sullivan, *The Story of Ireland*, p. 235.
[47] Ibid., p. 237.
[48] Ibid., p. 271.

O'Neill with the (Protestant) Ulster-based Patriot movement of the eighteenth century: 'from the old headquarters of Hugh O'Neill sent forth anew an unequivocal demand for civil and religious liberty.'[49]

In his telling of O'Neill's life, as in Mitchel's and Sullivan's, O'Neill progresses from being before the 1590s a loyalist of Elizabeth as a result of many years spent at the English court, and one who fought for the Queen in Ireland for a time – 'A patriot of Ulster rather than of Ireland' – to in the space of a few years becoming the most formidable single foe the English ever faced in Ireland, an uncrowned king even, up to his defeat and self-imposed exile. The *Short History of the Irish People* described Hugh as a 'National Irish champion', the first for several centuries.[50]

A direct consequence of O'Neill's rebellion was the Anglo-Scottish plantation of the first decades of the seventeenth century, which the Crown adopted as a 'colonial' solution to its 'Ulster' problem. Even W.E.H. Lecky, self-professed Unionist, had found something critical to say of the origins of the Ulster Unionist community in the Anglo-Scottish Plantation: 'The new colonists, also planted in Ulster territory, though far surpassing the natives in industrial enterprise, were of a class very little fitted to raise the moral level of the province, to conciliate a people they despised, or to soften the shock of a great calamity.'[51] For him also, Ulster had served as a cockpit of Irish history, in both positive and often negative ways: while Ulster had been the homeland of the eighteenth-century nationalism that Lecky had so admired, it had also been the centre of some of the worst chapters of Irish history, from the outbreak of the 1641 Rebellion and the ensuing Confederate Wars to the Rebellion of 1798. While outside Ulster the former event had possessed the character of a

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[49] McGee, *Popular History*, II, p. 653.

[50] Ibid., pp. 419, 436-437, 470. Hayden and Moonan, *Short History of the Irish People*, pp. 245, 248, 271.

[51] Lecky, *History of Ireland*, I, p. 22.

'defensive religious war', within Ulster the rebellion was 'speedily disgraced by crimes which, though they have been grossly, absurdly, and mendaciously exaggerated, were both numerous and horrible.' We have already seen his rejection of the Protestant 'massacre' narrative of the 1641 Rebellion, the importance of which was its elevation to the historical foundational myth of nineteenth and twentieth century Ulster Unionism.[52] Lecky, going after a more recent working of the Ulster Protestant historical narrative, attributed at least a great share of direct responsibility for the outbreak of the 1798 Rebellion on the intense persecution within Ulster of Catholics by Protestants.[53] The particularly unsettled history of Ulster in comparison to the rest of Ireland, Lecky thought, belied somewhat the historical claims of modern Ulster Unionists about their community's exemplary loyalty to Britain compared to the treachery of the Catholic southern Irish.[54] Insofar as Lecky challenged the historical 'distinctiveness' of Ulster in relation to the rest of Ireland, he did not present Ulster as a kind of historical cockpit of Irish nationality, rather the opposite. At the end of the final part of the *History* he makes clear both his disillusionment with the history of British misrule and aversion to conventional nationalist pieties: 'The Union has not made Ireland either a loyal or a united country. *The two nations that inhabit it still remain distinct.*'[55]

For others, such as the southern Protestant Standish O'Grady, Ulster's cultural 'leading role' in the Irish nation and the sense that Ireland had always been one indivisible nation, had been realities for many centuries, stretching back even to the very beginnings of recorded history. While O'Grady admitted that the Irish 'never

[52] Ibid., pp. 46, 47, 99.
[53] Lecky, *History of Ireland*, III, pp. 445-446.
[54] Andrew Mycock, 'A Very English Affair? Defining the Borders of Empire in Nineteenth-Century British Historiography', in Hugh Dunthorne and Michael Wintle (eds.), *The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Britain and the Low Countries* (Brill, Leiden, 2013), pp. 54-55.
[55] Lecky, *History of Ireland*, V, p. 492.

achieved a vital and stable political unity', what they had always possessed had been a vital 'ideal of the race', which gave them a deeper unity. For O'Grady, this was the 'dominant conception of the Irish race, as forming a single homogeneous nation'. In the ancient and early medieval sources, in 'ever tending towards the conception of a single and uniform national existence', the leaders of ancient Irish petty-kingdoms became *national* figures. For O'Grady, 'all the celebrated local traditions of the island were swept into the treasure-house of bardic memory', to become 'this astonishing bardic history of *Ireland*.' The special significance of Ulster in O'Grady's history writing was reflected in the idea that Ulster was the place of origin not only of many of the great heroes of early Irish history, but also of those values and virtues that formed so much of what was great in 'ethnic' Irish character, such as familial loyalty, aristocratic leadership, and martial valour. From Ulster's past had come some of the most noble and pure elements in Ireland's history.[56] Ulster occupies a large place in *History of Ireland: Critical and Philosophical*, which is concerned in its 'political' dimension with how the embryonic political unity of Ireland and the sovereignty of the High King of Ireland developed during the pre-medieval period. This development came in fact at the cost of 'Ulster's' provincial independence, which had been prized by its rulers, as the province was brought firmly into the orbit of 'southern' kings who in turn became the paramount kings of Ireland.[57] Nonetheless, what is not doubted is that this was necessary for the advancement of pre- and early medieval political unity, in this fashion 'Ulster' still occupies a central place in the narrative of the development of a unified, all-island Irish nation, a development of course arrested in the late twelfth century with the coming of the first Anglo-Normans. At the turn of the early Middle Ages was

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[56] Standish J. O'Grady, *History of Ireland: Critical and Philosophical* (Dublin, E. Ponsonby and Co., 1881), p. 373.
[57] Ibid., pp. 245-246.

completed 'the extension into the North of Ireland of the political and military authority of the High King.'[58]

The 'main current' of early Irish history, or 'ethnic' Irish history as O'Grady would have called it, was the progression of the power and authority of a single kingship over the entirety of Ireland – a development in which 'Ulster' played its allotted part, however regrettable 'heroic' Ulster's decline may have been, and it is in this vein that O'Grady concluded *History of Ireland: Critical and Philosophical*. In *History of Ireland: Cuchulainn and his Contemporaries*, the great Ulster hero is, and dies, as an *Irish* hero, on his death in battle, 'that pillar of heroism, and that flame of the warlike valour of Erin, was extinguished.' He was 'the great hero of the Gael.'[59] One gets a sense in reading O'Grady of 'ethnic' Irish history as proceeding from a conflict of political unity and regional particularism, arriving at a path of consolidation of the former and the apparent development of a unified Irish kingdom along broader European lines, up to the rupture of the late twelfth century. Then regional particularism regains its position as the High Kingship erodes and becomes meaningless. There is a certain parallel here in how German historians conceived of their country's history as being irreducibly formed by constant and recurring conflict of national authority with the particularistic allegiances of the various *Stämme*, in which the latter had been ascendant in Germany for a much greater stretch of time than the former. As they understood Germany to be a nation composed of many *Stämme*, so O'Grady often wrote of Ireland as a 'nation of nations', possessing an historical and 'ethnic' unity but also an ancient polity that contained within itself the potential for disunity and internal 'particularistic' conflict.

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[58] O'Grady, *History of Ireland: Critical and Philosophical*, p. 372.

[59] O'Grady, *History of Ireland: Cuchulainn and his Contemporaries* (Dublin, E. Ponsonby and Co., 1880), p. 342.

In discussing how in German nationalist historical thought territory was 'nationalized', how the homeland narrative was constructed, one must give some consideration to the concept of '*Heimat*.' Heinrich Claß, a prominent pan-Germanist leader of the *Kaiserreich* era, opened his *Deutsche Geschichte* – one of the most popular such works of the time – with the question: 'from where did the men that we view as the ancestors of the Germans in the present come? What is their *Heimat*?'[60] The question was itself a powerful one and had a long tradition in thinking about German history. '*Heimat*', like '*Volk*', is an enigmatic term which means at its most basic 'homeland', but carries its own particular connotations of 'rootedness.[61] It was a term applied to one's home village, to one's province or territorial *Vaterland* be it kingdom, principality, or duchy, or to Germany in its entirety, or to all these places.[62] '*Heimat*' evoked the centrality of regionalism and territorial fragmentation in German history as well as in any attempt to produce a German historical narrative centred on the unified *Kulturnation* and *Staatsnation*. 'For almost two centuries', wrote Celia Applegate, 'Heimat has been at the centre of a German moral – and by extension political – discourse about place, belonging, and identity.'[63] For these reasons there was a particular obligation on German historians to at least attempt to 'nationalize' the regions and place the national *Heimat* above others.[64] As Peter Blickle has put it, 'German nationalism and the notion of *Heimat* have always played

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[60] Claß, *Deutsche Geschichte*, p. 2. Chickering has judged that this author provided the Pan-Germans with 'a coherent if unoriginal schema of historical analysis.' Roger Chickering, *We Men Who Feel Most German: A Cultural Study of the Pan-German League, 1886-1914* (London, George Allen & Unwin, 1984), p. 76.

[61] Celia Applegate, 'Senses of Place', in Helmut Walser Smith (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Modern German History* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 50-51.

[62] Applegate, *A Nation of Provincials*, p. 11.

[63] Ibid., p. 4.

[64] Alon Confino, *Germany as a Culture of Remembrance: Promises and Limits of Writing History* (Chapel Hill, NC, University of North Carolina Press, 2006), p. 39.

into each other.'[65] Alon Confino has emphasised the importance of *Heimat* to allowing 'the Germans' to think of themselves as a single nation while preserving their longer-standing regional identities.[66] The reverse was also the case: the national character and significance of given German region also had to be accentuated and narrated. This was even the case with the most powerful of the nineteenth century German states, Prussia, particularly because of Prussia's historical background as a part of the 'German East'. Ranke dealt in much of his writing on German history with the relationship between the region and the nation. He wrote extensively on the history of Prussia in his German historiographical works from his appointment as professor of history at the University of Berlin in 1825 and later to the post of official state historiographer of the Kingdom of Prussia, particularly in his *Prussian History* and his biography of Frederick the Great. The central theme of the *Prussian History*, besides any discussion about the relations of regional *Heimat* and supra-regional nation in German history, was an account of Prussia's ascent to a position of leadership within the Holy Roman Empire. Prussia had been, Ranke wrote, a most invaluable acquisition of territory for the German nation since its medieval beginnings.[67] If Irish historical narratives faced the task of placing 'Ulster' and 'Ulster's' heroes at the centre of the national historical narrative, the dominant 'German conception of history' dealt with the task of placing Prussia and Prussian heroes at the centre of the German national story.

Ranke remarks, in the opening of his *History of Prussia*, that one of the most important forces in German history had been the interrelationship between the regions, the territorial states of the Empire – repositories in much of German history

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[65] Peter Blickle, *Heimat: A Critical Theory of the German Idea of Homeland* (Rochester, NY, Camden House, 2002), p. 47.
[66] Confino, *Germany as a Culture of Remembrance*, p. 35.
[67] Kemilainen, *Die Historische Sendung*, p. 112.

of 'the freedom of the national genius' – and the totality of the German nation as a political and 'spiritual' 'unity'. The medieval princes, far from being the fountainhead of particularism within the *Reich*, had resisted Imperial despotism and defended the *Kulturnation*. They had spearheaded the Reformation; after the Thirty Years' War they were faced with the duty of opposing 'the influence which foreign states had acquired during the war' and rebuilding their territories so as to 'promote order and to increase the general welfare and influence of the nation at large.'[68] It would be Brandenburg-Prussia that would most effectively meet these challenges. How, then, in the space of less than two hundred years, the Hohenzollerns had progressed from being lords of a peripheral borderland[69] to the kings of one of the leading German states, was the question at hand. Brandenburg-Prussia's peculiarities were owed to its beginnings in the medieval *Ostsiedlung*, the result being that it had been a 'frontier' region for much of its history where the 'peculiarities' of German history were especially apparent.[70] The German Teutonic Order, which established the medieval military state that would become the modern Prussian state, had carved out a polity which possessed world-historical as well as national significance: the Order spread and defended Christianity in the east as well as *Deutschtum*.[71] In the wars of religion and the Thirty Years' War the Hohenzollerns had stood for Protestantism and the autonomy of the German lands against Catholic imperial rule, and later, through the restoration of their state, 'the honour of the German name'

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[68] Leopold von Ranke, *Memoirs of the House of Brandenburg and History of Prussia during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, vol. I, trans. Lady Duff Gordon (London, 1849; reprinted New York, 1969), pp. 1-2, 4-6, 10. Leopold von Ranke, *Neun Bücher Preussische Geschichte*, I/I (Berlin, Veit, 1847), pp. 11-12.

[69] Joachim Eilbach, 'The Composite State in the Classic Narratives of Ranke, Droysen and Hintze: Regional Identity in 17th century Prussia between Brandenburg and Poland', in S.G. Ellis and Raingard Esser (eds.), *Frontiers and the Writing of History, 1500-1850* (Hannover, Wehrhahn Verlag, 2006), p. 167.

[70] Ranke, *History of Prussia*, I, p. 12. Ranke, *Neun Bücher*, I/I, pp. 13-14.

[71] Kemilainen, *Die Historische Sendung*, p. 114.

would 'be restored.'[72] The narrative, in which he narrowed the historical focus from the Empire to one of the constituent territories that followed the 'national' path,[73] charted the reconstruction of the Hohenzollern realm and the unification of its constituent territories of Prussia and Brandenburg. This had required the breaking of Polish power over the Prussian Duchy and the legacy of 'provincial ideas' and territorial disunity. Their success in this respect was presented as a 'rectification' of the losses to Polish rule earlier in the sixteenth century.[74] In the late seventeenth century, when Louis XIV preys upon German territory to expand the borders of France, the Hohenzollern ruler makes common cause with his erstwhile enemy, the Habsburg sovereign, to defend Germany from the '*Erbfeind.*'[75] The Great Elector is one of the central 'heroes' of Ranke's Prussian historiography: the re-founder of the Hohenzollern state after the Thirty Years' War, the founder of Brandenburg-Prussia, the guarantor of (Protestant) inter-confessional peace, the defender of Germany from foreign aggression. The parallels between the historical significance attributed to the Great Elector − and later successors such as Frederick the Great − as German 'national' hero (praised by a *völkisch* nationalist writer in 1920 as the 'most German' of all the Hohenzollern[76]) and Hugh O'Neill as Irish national hero, as rulers whose national identity was entwined with their regional identity, are apparent, even if Hugh O'Neill's reign ended in defeat and disaster, while those of the Great Elector and, of course, Frederick the Great, most certainly did not.

The primary focus in the *Prussian History* is the conditions under which a modern state was formed, a state which went on to become the crucible of the modern German Empire, a true nation-state. Here, the region, the Prussian *Heimat* appears

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[72] Ranke, *History of Prussia*, I, pp. 34-35, 46. Ranke, *Neun Bücher*, I/I, pp. 48-49.
[73] Kelley, *Fortunes of History*, p. 138.
[74] Ranke, *History of Prussia*, I, p. 53.
[75] Ranke, *History of Prussia*, I, p. 87. Ranke, *Neun Bücher*, I/I, pp. 49-50, 56.
[76] Bonhard, *Geschichte des alldeutschen Verbandes*, p. 191.

both as the heart of the nation and the nation in microcosm, as in Irish narratives of Ulster the province was presented as the historical heartland of the Irish nation. The influences of Poland and the Habsburg Holy Roman Empire, such as they were dealt with, were that of antagonistic forces which had to be overcome in order to develop a unified state out of Brandenburg and Prussia. The 'borderland' status of Brandenburg-Prussia is downplayed in the narrative the further it progresses; as the territory becomes the 'cockpit' of modern German history, the political centre of 'Germany' is shifted from the Habsburg Empire to the north-east. The conquest of Silesia from the Austrian Empire by Frederick the Great in 1741 is presented as the liberation of 'oppressed [Protestant German] inhabitants.'[77] Ranke asserted that had it not been for Frederick II and the Prussian state, Germany would have remained in the eighteenth century as it had for most of the seventeenth – little more than the prey of neighbouring nations.[78] The selective interpretation of the life and career of a great regional leader who becomes a national leader is something common to both German and Irish historical narratives, and appears also in treatments of the Irish ruler Hugh O'Neill as 'national hero' rather than provincial dynast. In Mitchel's narrative that which did not accord with the idea of Hugh O'Neill's as national hero, as 'the first, for many a century, to conceive and almost realize the grand thought of creating a new Irish nation' – his constant willingness to negotiate for peace with the English Crown, his earlier service for Elizabeth I, his ruthlessness towards allies as well as enemies – is either downplayed or glossed over. Similarly, Prussian figures such as the Great Elector and especially Frederick the Great are presented, to various degrees, as forerunners of German nationhood, and such inconvenient facts as the latter's Francophilia were glossed over or dismissed.

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[77] Ranke, *History of Prussia*, vol. II, p. 162.
[78] Ranke, *History of Prussia*, vol. III, pp. 1-4.

Ranke's account of the history of Prussia, his presentation of the challenges faced by the Prussian rulers – territorial disunity, inter-confessional divisions, and so on – and how they overcame them, could be seen as a microcosmic account of German national history. In his *Deutsche Geschichte im Zeitalter der Reformation* too he considered the history of Prussia from the perspective of Prussia's significance for the German nation, at the same time regarding Prussia as an integral part in the centuries-old 'German mission' of Christianizing and spreading civilising culture in the east.[79] The coming of the Reformation, and later the Teutonic *Ordenslands* reconstitution as the Duchy of Prussia under a Hohenzollern lord – even if under vassalage to the King of Poland – are presented as positive developments. The vassalage of the new Duchy to the Kingdom of Poland is explained away as an acceptable price for the maintenance of 'the Germanic principle' in the old *Ordensland*, through 'a hereditary German sovereignty'. While that part of the territory which fell to direct Polish rule 'had to endure indescribable oppressions', Ducal Prussia 'gradually became completely German…here was an independent centre of German culture, from which the grandest developments of German nationality have sprung.'[80] Ranke also found Frederick the Great's achievements for the Prussian state to have had immeasurable importance as a service done for the German nation. Frederick had 'worked for the emancipation of the nation', and 'made the Germans proud to have had a hero arise from their midst.'[81]

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[79] Kemilainen, *Die Historische Sendung*, pp. 132, 136. Even Ranke had, however, in his *History of the Romance and Teutonic Peoples* drew continuities between the medieval *Ostsiedlung* and the pre-medieval *Völkerwanderung*, and maintained that 'Germanization' had led to the civilizing of culturally 'backward' peoples. Wolfgang Wippermann, *Der 'Deutsche Drang Nach Osten': Ideologie und Wirklichkeit eines politischen Schlagwortes* (Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1981), p. 36.

[80] Ranke, *History of the Reformation in Germany*, III, p. 536.

[81] Quoted in Kramer, *Nationalism in Europe and America*, p. 76.

Nevertheless, Ranke's narrative is a relatively balanced one, and certainly did not claim for Prussia a transhistorical 'destiny' since its origins to unify the Germans. A more fitting parallel to the work of such Irish historians as John Mitchel appears in the far less sober treatment of Prussia's origins and role in German 'national' history appears in Treitschke's 1862 essay on the history of the *Ordensland* of the medieval Teutonic Knights. This work, often republished, the central passages of which were extensively cited by German historians and nationalist publicists for decades after, unambiguously linked Prussia's historical 'fate' with that of German unification. [82] From this work on the *Ordensland* and the Teutonic Knights were produced and popularised various myths which could then fuel an aggressive, belligerent nationalism towards Poland and other Slavic countries. In the opening of this work, which 'combined *belles-lettres* with historical narrative',[83] the author began by deploring what he took as the ignorance of most Germans of great state of the Teutonic Knights, the *Ordensland*, and their feats of conquest and 'culture-bearing' in 'the east'.[84] For Treitschke, modern Germany had in large part been founded on the effects of this movement. There was even something near-mystical about the 'Germanness' of Prussia: 'A spell rises from the ground which was drenched with the noblest German blood in the fight on behalf of the name of Germany'.[85] The *Ordensland* of the Teutonic Knights was a medieval 'ethnic' community exclusively for Germans in the midst of the Empire's decline into fragmentation and

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[82] Eilbach, 'The Composite State', p. 191. Michael Burleigh, 'The Knights, Nationalists, and the Historians: Images of Medieval Prussia from the Enlightenment to 1945', *European History Quarterly*, 17, 1 (1985), p. 41. Wippermann, *Der 'Deutsche Drang Nach Osten'*, p. 92.
[83] Liulevicius, *The German Myth*, p. 90.
[84] Heinrich von Treitschke, *The Teutonic Knights*, trans. Eden and Cedar Paul (London, George Allen and Unwin, 1942, originally published 1862), p. 18. Heinrich von Treitschke, 'Das deutsche Ordensland Preußen' (1862), in Heinrich von Treitschke, *Historische und Politische Aufsätze* (Leipzig, S. Hirzel, 1865), p. 1.
[85] Ibid., p. 19. Ibid., p. 2.

impotence.[86] As the Empire declined during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, 'Prussia' (the *Ordensland*) alone remained a proud bastion of Germanness.[87] As Wippermann points out, the synthesis of social-Darwinist ideas with historical events gave the 'Germans as bearers as culture' theory in this narrative a particularly aggressive accent, and remained a popular interpretation for long after Treitschke.[88] Treitschke contended that this 'New Germany' advanced to 'political and military union with the rest of Germany', though he then went on to compain that the unification of Prussia and Brandenburg had failed to occur centuries before the 1600s.[89] For Treitschke, the victory of the Poles over the Teutonic Knights in the fifteenth century, starting with the pivotal Battle of Tannenberg, represented the beginning of a period where 'the foundations of decent human behaviour were undermined', of an 'unnatural state of affairs, where Slavs should rule Germans'. The eighteenth-century partitions of Poland in which the Kingdom of Prussia were involved became, therefore, not the aggrandisement of a single kingdom at the expense of the homogeneous Germanness of the German lands, but the righteous restoration of what had been 'robbed' from the nation centuries previously.[90] Treitschke concedes that Prussia was a 'borderland', but in his writing too the non-German aspects of Prussia are 'written out' of the story of the rise of Prussia as the most 'authentic' of all German territories. As a result of Frederick the Great's victory over the old Polish enemy, the Kingdom of Prussia could become a state freed from the particularism and fragmentation that characterized the rest of Germany.[91] Prussia had been the first German territory to accept the Reformation and Protantism,

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[86] Treitschke, *Teutonic Knights*, pp. 25, 39. Treitschke, *Ordensland*, p. 18.
[87] Treitschke, *Teutonic Knights*, p. 71. Treitschke, *Ordensland*, p. 26.
[88] Bonhard, *Geschichte des alldeutschen Verbandes*, p. 139. Wippermann, *Der 'Deutsche Drang Nach Osten'*, p. 92.
[89] Treitschke, *The Teutonic Knights*, pp. 52, 58.
[90] Ibid., pp. 158-160, 162. Treitschke, 'Ordensland', pp. 66, 67.
[91] Liulevicius, *The German Myth*, p. 93.

enabling its progress towards becoming a modern state.[92] Throughout this work Treitschke presented the Teutonic Knights and their *Ordensland* as the forerunners of the German Great Power of Prussia of the present day. He emphasized how in contrast to the positive mission of *Kulturarbeit* of the Teutonic Knights, inspired by their German nationality, the Slavs were only united by hatred of the Germans.[93]

Prussia was certainly not the only historical region of 'Germany' that interested Treitschke. He had later, around the time of the Franco-Prussian War, written a pamphlet dealing with the dispute between French and German nationalists over the borderland region of Alsace-Lorraine entitled *What We Demand From France*, a bestseller that 'illustrates the heart of German Francophobia.'[94] From the late nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth, Alsace-Lorraine was the fault line of Franco-German relations, a border region between France and the new German state during an age of increasing nationalism and a territory which changed hands four times between 1870 and 1945. For German nationalists, the people of the territory were Germans in language, culture and history, whether they cared to admit it or not. The conflict between French and German nationalists over Alsace-Lorraine was one not just of competing conceptions of history, but competing conceptions of national belonging as well. In the German nationalist mind, it was France that had been the oppressor that had for centuries preyed on Germany's western territory, one that had for centuries done everything to keep Germany weak and divided. The events of 1871 were merely a reversal of this lengthy history. To Treitschke, the region had been part of the German political and cultural world of the Empire for centuries before its annexation by France in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries through

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[92] Treitschke, *The Origins of Prussianism*, pp. 142, 143, 144. Treitschke, 'Ordensland', p. 60.
[93] Liulevicius, *The German Myth*, pp. 91, 92.
[94] Hugo Frey and Stefan Jordan, 'Traditions of Hate among the Intellectual Elite: The Case of Treitschke and Bainville', in C. Germond and H. Tuerk (eds.), *A History of Franco-German Relations in Europe: From "Hereditary Enemies" to Partners* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), p. 62.

the imperial ambitions of Louis XIV.[95] In light of the region's cultural heritage and deep historical connections to the German lands, they were part of the new German Empire by (historical) right. Not only the French claim to Alsace-Lorraine, but the possibility of any sense of belonging to Alsace-Lorraine that disregarded the province's place in the German *Reich*, was void, indeed anathema:

> 'We Germans, who know Germany and France, know better than these unfortunates themselves what is good for the people of Elsass, who have remained under the misleading influence of the French connection outside the new Germany...we cannot permit a German people, thoroughly degraded and debased, to serve against Germany, before our eyes, as a vassal of a foreign power...If we neglect our duty, the French will act with all that vigorous and passionate hatred which characterizes nations in their decay; and will hurl themselves on Elsass in the rage of their reawakened detestation of Germany, resolute to crush out every trace of the German nature...The German territory which we demand is ours by nature and by history.'[96]

Here, the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine is presented as merely the rectification of illegitimate earlier conquests of German territory by, with an aggravated mistrust of Germany's 'hereditary enemies', above all France. Accusations of German expansionism, therefore, are hypocritical and unjust.[97] Treitschke's agenda in this pamphlet is more than about merely making arguments for German rule over Alsace-Lorraine. His attempts to prove the historical 'Germanness' of the territory over centuries, broken only by a relatively brief French occupation, has as much to do with staking claims for a general German dominance over continental Europe as with

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[95] Christopher Fischer, 'The Trophy of Titans: Alsace-Lorraine between France and Germany, 1870-1945', in Tibor Frank and Frank Hadler (eds.), *Disputed Territories and Shared Pasts: Overlapping National Histories in Modern Europe* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 224-246; 224-225, 230.
[96] Heinrich von Treitschke, *What We Demand From France* (London, 1870), pp. 20-21, 23, 42, 57.
[97] Dorpalen, *Heinrich von Treitschke*, pp. 169, 171, 172.

any specific territorial claims(s).[98] Similarly, when German nationalist historians looked to the east, the 'five hundred years' of Slavic rule in German-held Poland was given 'the role of an interlude.'[99] A most important distinction made by Treitschke in *What We Demand From France* was between 'German *Kultur*' and 'Western Civilisation', which would become particularly popular before and during the First World War.[100]

In his *Deutsche Geschichte* too Treitschke's Francophobia and presentation of Prussia as the 'cockpit' of modern German history found further expression, but here also the actual geography of Germany is itself mapped as a history of confrontation between Germans and their foreign enemies, and of such central developments in German history as the presence of the Protestant-Catholic antagonism. While Prussia had been a country forged solely by German deeds, 'The old German south-eastern Mark', that is Austria, 'separated from Middle Germany by the powerful Slav realm of Bohemia, went its own way early in the Middle Ages', becoming mired in the 'racial compost' of non-Germanic, Slavic lands.[101] In the north, by contrast, was found 'that proud colony of united Germany [Prussia] which had been watered with the blood of all the German tribes...The great jumble of people which was Austria could never be completely Germanised...it was Prussia alone which could rouse Germans to once more become a great nation.'[102] Thus Prussia's inalienable historical claim to the leadership of Germany, the right to forcibly unite the German lands outside the Austrian Empire under the Prussian banner.[103] Frederick the Great

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[98] Ingo Wiwjorra, 'Die deutsche Vorgeschichtsforschung und ihr Verhaeltnis zu Nationalismus und Rassismus', in Uwe Puschner, Walter Schmitz, Justus H. Ulbricht, (eds.), *Handbuch zur Volkische Bewegung, 1871-1918* (Munich, K.G. Saur, 1999), p. 200.
[99] Ibid., p. 201.
[100] Frey and Jordan, 'Traditions of Hate', in *A History of Franco-German Relations in Europe*, p. 63.
[101] Treitschke, *History of Germany*, I, pp. 5, 6, 11.
[102] Ibid., pp. 31, 32, 37, 359.
[103] Ibid., p. 61.

had achieved the redemption from Poland of lands that had been 'won from the barbarians', 'atonement was made for the wrong done to this German land'.[104] In places Treitschke tellingly slipped into the present tense as he began to hector his readers on the dangers of 'particularism': 'We must get rid of the German national cancer, the childish petty territorialism...there must be one singly supreme authority in the empire'.[105] For Treitschke it had been a certainty that Germany had not only been the battleground for the other nations of Europe, but its territorial fragmenation – to which, he repeatedly made clear, the worthless German princes with the sole exception of the Prussian Hohenzollerns had repeatedly been a party – also the guarantee of the established state order, as his disgusted reflections on the the German Confederation (1815-1866) showed. Only with breaking this old system, predicated on 'the vacillation of the nation between patriotic aspirations and particularist traditions', where 'everywhere...it was preached as an irrefutable truth that particularism was the glory of Germany', could Germany have become a nation. The Confederation had been merely another expression of 'foreign dominion'.[106] Yet it must also be remembered that Treitschke's historical narrative of German territory was of course a selective one; it was not intended to underpin territorial claims on every region of Europe that had once been part of 'Germany' or had been in some way linked to 'Germany' or populated mostly by Germans. His remarks on the racially degraded and 'mongrelized' character of the Habsburg Empire were designed to justify the *exclusion* of that territory from the boundaries of the political German nation. In this respect, though Treitschke would come to be regarded by both adherents and enemies of expansionist *völkisch* nationalism as one of its

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[104] Treitschke *History of Germany*, I, p. 76.
[105] Treitschke, *History of Germany*, I, pp. 359-360; II, p. 92.
[106] Ibid., pp. 94, 97, 122, 132.

progenitors and ideologues, he did not agree that it was either the right or in the interest of the *Kaiserreich* to pursue any further expansionist aims within Europe.[107] This underlines what we have already seen with respect to our Irish writers: the 'nationalization' of a given historical territory took place within the framework of a wider understanding of what in its definition the nation was.

Historical narratives which aimed to 'nationalize' a given region were often written by authors who came from the same territory. John Mitchel, of course, was an Ulsterman, as would important later figures such as Eoin MacNeill. Individuals such as Ranke and Treitschke (both natives of Saxony) were Prussians 'by choice'. For Gustav Freytag, his own background not just as a Prussian but as a native of the border region of Silesia, his background as a 'Kind der Grenze', was a fundamentally important influence in his life. In his memoirs he would express his gratitude at having been born Prussian, Protestant, and Silesian. In his writings, running throughout his literary career, the Germans' eastern neighbours are consistently presented as inferior and dangerous. The rise of Prussia, a German territory carved out on eastern soil, is presented as providential. 'For two centuries', he wrote, 'both Germans and foreigners placed their hopes on this new State; equally long have Germans and foreigners, first with scorn and then with hatred, called it an artificial superstructure...which had unjustifiably intruded itself among the powers of Europe.' Certainly Freytag disagreed that the country was an 'artificial superstructure', but nonetheless Prussia possessed a 'peculiar nature' and had engendered 'a new phase of German character.'[108] Prussia, surrounded by enemies, was moulded by its precarious position. Thus Prussian expansion toward the east is presented in defensive terms, as an act of necessity:

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[107] Wippermann, *Der 'Deutsche Drang Nach Osten'*, pp. 33, 93.
[108] Freytag, *Pictures of German Life in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, II, pp. 48-50.

'During many hundreds of years the much-divided Germans were confined and injured by ambitious neighbours; the great King [Frederick the Great] was the first conqueror who extended the German frontier further to the east. A century after his great ancestor [the Great Elector] had in vain defended the Rhine fortresses against Louis XIV, he again gave the Germans the emphatic admonition, that it was their task to carry laws, education, freedom, cultivation, industry into the east of Europe...Frederick William had freed the Prussian territories of the Teutonic Order from the Polish suzerainty.'[109]

Again, in the restatement of the Germans' *Kultur* mission in the east, the non-German peoples of Prussia are either 'written out' of the narrative, or are, at best, made merely the passive subjects of this central 'theme'.[110] The two strongest pillars of Freytag's *Bilder* were, after all, the forces of Protestantism and Prussia, as he freely admitted: 'It is no accident', he wrote, 'that it is only easy for a person who is both a Protestant and a Prussian to regard the historical development of the last two centuries with pride and a cheerful heart.'[111] The actions of Frederick the Great had throughout his reign exemplified the gradual evolution of the national consciousness towards maturity, responsibility, and political unity.[112] One of the three acts of the drama of German history as told in the *Bilder* had been the moral regeneration of the German people under the leadership of the Hohenzollern dynasty.[113] Earlier in the *Bilder* Freytag had written that the 'failure' of 'the Germans' to settle the 'fertile territory' had been a 'shame on German history…which we still feel today', as this had led to the settlement of 'the east' by 'slavische Stämme'.[114] Freytag, for his part, romanticised the *Ordensland* less than others, yet he emphasised strongly its role in advancing *bürgerliche* culture in 'the East', and how, whatever its faults, the Order

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[109] Freytag, *Pictures of German Life in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, II, p. 98.
[110] Ibid., pp. 305, 308.
[111] Quoted in Ping, 'Gustav Freytag's *Bilder aus der deutschen Vergangenheit*', p. 562.
[112] Ping, *Gustav Freytag and the Prussian Gospel*, p. 207.
[113] Ibid., p. 236.
[114] Freytag, *Bilder*, I, pp. 36-37.

had left behind itself in history 'a great, civilised land, a powerful citizenry, and a German aristocracy'; it had, in short, laid the medieval foundations for the modern Prussian state.[115] Freytag's deep pride in the history of the *Ostsiedlung*, the German settlement in Silesia, from which his family had sprung, which unsurprisingly coloured deeply his view of the history of 'the Germans' in 'the East'.[116] This is another example of the tendency displayed by nationalist historians in both contexts to merge autobiography or family history with the history of a chosen region, whether they were native to that region or not.

The *völkisch* nationalist and historical writer Heinrich Claß, in his *Deutsche Geschichte*, had gone further back than other authors, bluntly identifying the eastern campaigns of Emperor Otto I (r. 962-973) as '*Kolonialpolitik*' and the reconquest of 'ancient German ethnic territory.'[117] He was himself one of the most belligerent advocates of German colonial expansion in eastern Europe and globally in extreme German nationalist circles in the *Kaiserreich* and the Weimar Republic. A former student of Treitschke's, he perceived German history in terms of a contrast between the healthy results of territorial expansion and the weakness, division and fragmentation resulting from its absence: Germany was surrounded by actual or potential enemies and had to subdue them or perish. Claß had agreed with his old teacher that the beating heart of German national life had been in the north-east, in Prussia.[118] Otto Hintze, another Prussophile nationalist historian, had in his essay of 1916 'Germany and the World Powers' outlined the 'classic' German nationalist historical narrative of the German sense of place.

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[115] Freytag, *Bilder*, II, pp. 181, 182, 231, 232.
[116] Ibid., p. 179.
[117] Claß, *Deutsche Geschichte*, p. 25.
[118] Ibid., pp. 68, 69. Wolfgang Niess, *Die Revolution von 1918/1919 in der deutschen Geschichtsschreibung* (Berlin, Walter de Gruyter, Gmbh, 2013), p. 61.

'The principal cause', he claimed, 'by which dislike of the Germans is explained...lies in the simple fact that we live at the centre of Europe and have more neighbours than any other nation...So much feeling of distrust, of fear, of covetousness, of race-antagonism, and of a perhaps even sharper enmity of kindred peoples and races, are bound up in our thousand year-old history with this sense of nearness...*Our geographic destiny is our historico-political destiny*...we are compelled to maintain an attitude of strength worthy of attention, if we wish to to escape being trodden down and crushed in the struggle of nations – as unfortunately was our fate for so many centuries.'

He continued further: '...To speak of "Prussia" and "Germany" in antithesis is misleading...Prussia's political spirit has become the spirit of the new German Empire.' [119] With regard to Poland, Hintze re-stated the old conceit about how Frederick the Great had merely reclaimed old German territory, motivated above all by the requirements of the security of his realm.[120] Hintze's essay expressed all of the main precepts of the German nationalist historiographical outlook on national territory going back to the mid-nineteenth century. [121] This historical nationalization of German territory, which denied the claims of other peoples to certain territories while raising those of the Germans to be inviolable, as a means of advancing expansionist claims obviously did not lose attraction after 1918.

The influence of the writings of such figures as Treitschke and Freytag and others, manifested in such publications as the German 'Intellectuals Manifesto' of 1915 which had as one of its demands expansion in those eastern territories 'cultivated by Germans for the last seven hundred years', and another that Germany destroy 'the

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[119] Otto Hintze, 'Deutschland und das Weltstaatensystem', in Otto Hintze *et. al.* eds., *Deutschland und der Weltkrieg* (Berlin, Teubner, 1915), pp. 6-7, 10-11.

[120] Ibid., pp. 18-19.

[121] Though identification of Prussia with Germany remained an important current of historicist nationalism into the early decades of the twentieth century, it was by no means universally accepted. For Otto Hintze (as had been the case for Ranke) it was simply enough that Prussia had assumed the leading role in the restoration of Germany because Prussia had been the strongest and most powerful of the German states. Otto Hintze, 'Geist und Epochen der Preussische Geschichte' (1903), in Otto Hintze, *Gesammelte Abhandlungen, Bd. III: Geist und Epochen der preussischen Geschichte* (Leipzig, 1943), pp. 9-11.

French menace once and for all'.[122] Friedrich von Bernhardi, a former student of Treitschke's, in his belligerent manifesto *Germany and the Next War*, when dealing with 'Germany's Historical Mission', claimed that 'The Germany of today...is a mutilated torso of the old dominions of the Emperors; it comprises only a fraction of the German peoples.'[123] Thus, for the author, 'Our first and positive duty consists, therefore, in...not surrendering a foot's breadth of German soil to foreign nationalities.'[124] He repeated enthusiastically the 'Borussian' conceit that part of the reason for Prussia's historical success was that the territory had arisen on the basis of conquest rather than piecemeal incorporation, had arisen from a repository of the best German stock of the medieval period. [125] Historical understandings of relationships between the region and the nation and their meaning for the latter retained a strong hold in the German context long after 1871.

The same can be said as well for the Irish context, where in the opening decades of the twentieth century, the work of Eoin MacNeill, A.S. Green and others extended the denial of a potentially 'anti-national' historical Ulster distinctiveness backwards from the early modern period to the early medieval period and to late antiquity. Green had concluded *Irish Nationality* with the following rallying call: 'the people of Ireland once more claim a government of their own in their native land that shall bind together the whole nation of all that live on Irish soil, and create for all a common obligation and a common prosperity…The natural union approaches of the Irish Nation – the union of all her children that are born under the breadth of her

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[122] *The Pan-German Programme: The Petition of the Six Associations and the Manifesto of the Intellectuals*, ed. and trans. E. Bevan (New York, George H. Doran Co., 1915)

[123] Friedrich von Bernhardi, *Germany and the Next War*, trans. A.H. Powles (New York, Longmans, 1914), p. 76. Friedrich von Bernhardi, *Deutschland und der nächste Krieg* (VI Aufl., Berlin, J.G. Cotta, 1913), p. 82.

[124] Bernhardi, *Germany and the Next War*, p. 77. Bernhardi, *Deutschland*, p. 83.

[125] Bernhardi, *Germany and the Next War*, p. 62. Bernhardi, *Deutschland*, p. 66.

skies'.[126] In *History of the Irish State to 1014* she turned her attention against a common argument employed against historical narratives of Irish territorial unity: the argument that there had always been in Ireland, stretching back to the country's earliest history, conflict between the territorial kingdoms of the north and the south. Green denied this, claiming that there was no such conflict of any significance until the first foreign invasions.[127] In a near echo of Mitchel she added, in reference to early Irish history: 'the nation feeling was here [in the north] more intense...the fidelity of the north to the cause of self-government was no less marked in the eighth century than in the eighteenth.'[128] MacNeill's account in the final chapter of his *Phases of Irish History*[129] of the medieval, thirteenth century, 'national' 'Irish rally' against the English, noted that the Irish revival had begun in Ulster.[130] Even those Anglo-Norman and English lords who had gone over to Ireland to conquer Ulster had within a few generations become as thoroughly Gaelicized in culture as any of the Gaelic Irish, and just as disinclined to obey the commands of English kings and viceroys. The Ulster leaders had spearheaded as well the attempt to establish Edward Bruce, brother of King Robert I of Scotland, as king of Ireland.[131] The Irish revival of the Middle Ages was throughout its course, driven forward by the Gaelic princes of Ulster, in MacNeill's time the most un-Irish and British part of Ireland. MacNeill, himself an Ulsterman, did much to transform his home province into an historical

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[126] Green, *Irish Nationality*, pp. 253, 254.

[127] Green, *History of the Irish State*, p. 58.

[128] Ibid., p. 303.

[129] An anonymous reviewer in *The Irish Monthly* wrote of this work: 'An Irishman will read the book with ever-increasing self-respect, finding in our many centuried history a life and movement, a coherence and dignity of which we may well be proud.' Anon, '*Phases of Irish History* by Eoin MacNeill', *The Irish Monthly,* 47, 557 (1919), p. 628.

[130] Eoin MacNeill, *Phases of Irish History* (Dublin, M.H. Gill, 1920), pp. 328, 331.

[131] Ibid., pp. 333-334.

'ethnoscape' belonging (exclusively) to the Irish nation.[132] For MacNeill, to suggest that Ulster was not truly a part of the Irish nation was almost to call into question the very existence of the Irish nation.

<div align="center">**V**</div>

The immediate post-war period and the early 1920's was a period of caesura for both Germany and Ireland, and critically important for the nationalisms of these countries. In this period, and indeed throughout Europe, territorial changes resulting from disputed and unpopular treaties in the aftermath of armed conflict stood at the epicentre of contemporary political affairs. Germany's defeat in the world war and the subsequent peace settlement left the boundaries of Germany significantly truncated compared to what they had been in 1914. The most grievous losses were regarded as Alsace-Lorraine and the Saarland in the west (the Rhineland was also under Allied military occupation during the 1920's), northern Schleswig-Holstein, and most of the provinces of Posen, West Prussia, and much of Upper Silesia, in the east. As a result of the Versailles settlement all of these territories were transferred to Germany's neighbours (mainly France and Poland) and Germany also lost its overseas colonies. Germany did however retain parts of Silesia, and East Prussia. A further condition of the peace settlement was that any union between Germany and the new Austrian Republic was forbidden in perpetuity. This in particular outraged public opinion in both Germany and Austria, which was heavily in favour of such a union, and saw its prohibition as a hypocritical and vengeful breach of the principle of national self-determination encapsulated in President Wilson's 'Fourteen Points'. It is difficult to overestimate the significance of these events for the history of Germany's brief inter-war democracy. The belligerent, expansionist and racialist

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[132] Eoin MacNeill, 'The North Began, *An Claideamh Soluis*, November 1913, p. 6. MacNeill also placed the Irish Volunteers of 1913 as direct heirs of the 'patriot' Volunteers of the late eighteenth century.

dimensions of German nationalism were greatly magnified by them. On probably no other issue were nationalist opinions in Germany, even German public opinion in general, so united as in hostility to the territorial changes and a determination that they be reversed.[133] While the basic ideological content of German nationalism (excepting perhaps its most extreme manifestations, conditioned as they were by distinctively twentieth-century racialist ideas, and of course in fascism) was not fundamentally changed by the outcomes of the war, they infused it with a powerful sense of grievance that had not been really present since the early nineteenth century. The year 1921 had seen the concession of independence for most of the island of Ireland, secured through the Anglo-Irish Treaty and the establishment of the Irish Free State. Yet this had come at the cost of the partition of the island. Northern Ireland would remain within the United Kingdom. The Treaty also preserved significant political and constitutional ties between the new Irish state and the developing British Commonwealth. Though the Treaty was narrowly ratified by Dail Eireann, few of its supporters, either in the nationalist elite or in the wider public, were satisfied with it as it stood, accepting it only as providing a 'stepping stone' to full independence, while its opponents rejected it completely. Within months of the Treaty's signing the Irish Civil War (1922-1923) erupted. Yet the reality was that violent opposition to the Treaty was provoked much less by partition – already a fact by then – and the precarious position of the northern nationalist Catholic minority than the constitutional implications of the Treaty. By no later than 1925 partition had been at least grudgingly accepted as a regrettable reality by the Irish state and most of Irish public opinion.[134] In nationalist rhetoric, what now appeared beside or

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[133] Richard J. Evans, *The Coming of the Third Reich* (London, Penguin, 2003), pp. 62-67.

[134] Prior to his death in 1922 Michael Collins had, despite his role as one of the Irish upholders of the Anglo-Irish Treaty, secretly organized an IRA offensive against Northern Ireland, which failed. Eamon Phoenix, 'Michael Collins: The Northern Question: 1916-1922', in Gabriel Doherty and

instead of the emphasis on Ulster's historic 'Irishness' were qualifications to the effect that Ulster, and its Unionist inhabitants, at least in modern history, had been gravely, perhaps irrevocably 'damaged' by British rule and 'Anglicization', now described by influential nationalists as a new 'Pale'.[135]

This was usually to come *after* partition, however. P.S. O'Hegarty's fifty-page pamphlet *Ulster: A Brief Statement of Fact* (1919) may be considered as an exemplar of the twentieth century nationalist view of the Ulster question, of both the 'moderate' and 'advanced' camps. The book saw the history of the province as being shaped by the interactions and conflicts of indigenous and foreign elements, but denied the 'two nations theory' advanced by opponents of Irish nationalism. The pamphlet's opening sets out clearly its intent: 'The dawn of history in Ireland finds the whole people of Ireland with a common language, common ideals and traditions, common social and political institutions, and a common literature.' From the beginning of Irish history Ulster had played a pre-eminent part in national life: 'In that rich and free civilisation the Northern Province was not the least of the provinces...[Ulster] was as advanced, and as characteristically Irish, as any of the other provinces.' Ulster, O'Hegarty had asserted, had up to the end of the seventeenth century played *the* leading role in the national struggle against England: 'Its [Ulster's] chiefs kept their independence until 1603...In the four and a half centuries since the invasion Ulster had been foremost in the struggle...In almost every case in which after the invasion the Irish national instinct tried to express itself in unity, the leader was a Prince of Uladh...Ireland's best brain and her sharpest

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Dermot Keogh (eds.), *Michael Collins and the Making of the Irish State* (Cork, Mercier Press, 1998), p. 116.
[135] O'Halloran, *Partition and Irish Nationalism*, p. 6. In the later Middle Ages the Pale had been that area of Ireland which had been under the direct control of English government and law. By the reign of Henry VIII its extent was limited to Dublin, the surrounding county, and its close environs. To identify 'Ulster' as a new 'Pale' was to identify it as that area in which British rule was strongest and locally accepted.

spearhead.'[136] Yet even when Ulster was colonized from England and Scotland it was no more than a century until the national spirit reasserted itself there: 'In the eighteenth century the Gall in Ulster had followed in the footsteps of the Gael, and out of Ulster of the Gall, as out of Uladh of the Gael, had come the anti-English impulse...The Gall had come to be Irish...with his interest centred in Ireland, his feelings centred in Ireland, all his traditions and hopes bound up in Ireland.'[137] It was if the soil of Ulster itself had an assimilative quality, as did, thought O'Hegarty, the qualities of 'Irishness'.

In *History of the Irish State to 1014*, her last major work, Alice Stopford Green had added her voice to the argument for the presence in early Irish history of a complex system of government based on ranks of kings, headed by the kings of provinces and above them to the High King, whose authority extended over the entire country.[138] There was in Irish history no necessary opposition between regional allegiance and national loyalty; this was a modern fiction brought about by the wrong-headed denial of national self-government and independence. Green extolled the regional autonomy of Ireland that existed under centuries of Gaelic government, implying that it presented an old model for modern federalism or decentralized government. What might have been seen as mere territorial fragmentation, a manifestation of the political primitiveness of the Gaelic Irish, was in fact demonstration of the freedom-loving nature of the Gael.'[139] Instead of being evidence of backwardness and absence of nationality, Gaelic 'particularism' is presented as simply the love of freedom that seamed with natural all-island patriotism.[140] The Gaelic Irish system had permitted the diversity and autonomy of the regions and provinces that formed the Irish nation

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[136] P.S. O'Hegarty, *Ulster: A Brief Statement of Fact* (Dublin, Maunsel, 1919), pp. 5-6, 7-8.
[137] Ibid., pp. 14-15.
[138] Green, *History of the Irish State*, pp. 84, 85.
[139] Green, *Irish Nationality*, pp. 14, 15.
[140] Green, *Irish National Tradition*, pp. 4, 5.

while still providing a common centre for national unity, whereas it had been the brute force of English state-building that had forged a rigidly centralized Irish polity from the end of the sixteenth century onwards in order to perpetuate English control over Ireland. What, then, in Green's time, was the real source of threat to Irish regional identity in the present? An authentic Irish nationalism based on 'Gaelic' concepts, or British government, which could never be more than indifferent to Irish nationality? Green's contemporary Mary Hayden, in her own history of Ireland candidly admitted that 'particularism' had been the most important fact about the political constitution of Gaelic Ireland since its ancient beginnings until the collapse of the Gaelic political and social order at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Yet in this respect Ireland was not fundamentally different from much of the rest of Europe in the same period, where regional particularism and indistinct, changing boundaries had been the norm.[141] That medieval Ireland had been territorially fragmented has in itself no significance for modern Ireland, or at least no more than would be seen to be the case for any other modern European nation.[142] Irish historians did their best to emphasise the role played by Ulster in national life over the course of many centuries and by suggesting that the Gaelic political system provided models for that of any modern Irish century, so that Gaelic 'decentralization' appeared as a precursor of federalism, which could have a particular appeal in the Irish context. Historical historiographical discussions of national territory, in Ireland and Germany, were closely linked with political arguments and ideas about the territorial configuration of any Irish state.

Alsace-Lorraine, which had been transferred to French jurisdiction under the territorial provisions of the 1918 peace settlement that had so enraged German

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[141] Hayden and Moonan, *A Short History of the Irish People*, p. 24.

[142] In a footnote Hayden added later, interestingly, that, 'the evolution of "Ulster" is a peculiar historical study, Ibid., p. 26n.

nationalists, was one particular 'flashpoint' of nationalist sentiment. As Alsace-Lorraine had come into the new *Reich* in 1871 not by its own determination but by military annexation, and had been placed under the jurisdiction of Berlin (even though not incorporated into the Kingdom of Prussia), the question of Alsace-Lorraine's historical national significance for Germany remained to be proven. The historian Dietrich Schäfer, another former student of Treitschke's (and a veteran of the Franco-Prussian War), regarded the annexation of the territory, regardless of the cultural affiliations of its inhabitants, as quite a simple matter, one of 'regaining…what was lost to the Reich by robbery.'[143] As for Alsace-Lorraine, as far as Schäfer was concerned, it was not possible to speak rightfully of wrongs done to France by Germany. Alsace-Lorraine had been continually, from 860 to 1648, in its full extent an integral part of the German *Reich*. It was to be counted as one of the great achievements of the medieval emperors that they had conquered the region for the 'deutschen Wesens'.[144] Only as a result of the most brutal wrongs done by Louis XIV in the second half of the seventeenth century had at least a third of the region's territory been annexed to France.[145] The annexation was the result of a long chain of French crimes and violence, for which not only France's rulers had been responsible, but the whole French *Volk*. The forty million Germans who had gained victory over the *Erbfeind* could not place the wishes of one and a half million provincials who had in any case lived for generations under 'foreign rule' above their own needs.[146] In terms of '*völkische Zugehörigkeit*', the land was indisputably German, had always

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[143] Charles E. McClelland, 'Berlin Historians and German Politics', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 8, 3 (1973), p. 26.
[144] Georg von Below, *Deutsche Reichspolitik einst und jetzt* (Tübingen, J.C.B. Mohr Verlag, 1922), p. 8.
[145] Schäfer, *Deutsche Geschichte, II*, p. 186.
[146] Dietrich Schäfer, *Die Grenzen deutschen Volkstums* (Berlin, 1919), pp. 7, 8.

been, and remained so in the present.[147] For Hermann Oncken, writing in 1922, the history of Alsace-Lorraine demonstrated that borderlands, as well as being receptors for foreign cultural and intellectual influences, could also stand with the highest zeal for the preservation of national particularity, as was the historical rule in the case of Alsace-Lorraine.[148] Oncken, unlike Schäfer,[149] was a supporter of the Weimar Republic, but he too desired the return of Alsace-Lorraine to Germany. While the domination of French *Kultur* ultimately meant for the Alsace-Lorrainers only subjection, the true freedom conferred by German *Kultur* would ensure 'freedom' and 'individuality', and the preservation of their 'historically constituted self.'[150] For Martin Spahn, Alsace-Lorraine had historically been the western 'Mark' of the *Reich* and a borderland between German and French cultures, as opposed to a part of France proper. It was the common 'fate' of both Germany and France to contest over the region.[151] The question of the 'Germanness' of Alsace-Lorraine or any other region that had been incorporated into the new *Reich* or earlier into one of its constituent states was linked with perceptions of the German character. For Schäfer, for example, generally speaking, charges that the Germans were a nation of conquerors was false. The Germans had never been such, and the *Ostsiedlungen*, with the exception only of the Teutonic Order's conquest and the partitions of Poland, had been wholly peaceful movements that had in fact not been driven by the Emperors, the great dukes, or the territorial princes; but rather resulted from Slavic rulers inviting the 'culture-bearing' German settlers into their realms to establish the

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[147] Ibid., pp. 8, 10.
[148] Hermann Oncken, 'Staatsnation und Kulturnation: Elsass-Lothringen und die deutsche Kulturgemeinschaft (1922)', in Hermann Oncken, *Nation und Geschichte: Reden und Aufsaetze, 1919-1935* (Berlin, G. Grote, 1935), p. 260.
[149] 'In place of the Empire came the Republic. It promised peace, freedom, and bread. It brought discontent, slavery, and hunger…It is difficult to identify a single area in which the Revolution has brought improvements.' Quoted in Niess, *Die Revolution von 1918/1919*, p. 110.
[150] Oncken, 'Staatsnation und Kulturnation', p. 265.
[151] Martin Spahn, *Elsass-Lothringen* (Berlin, Ullstein Verlag,, 1919), pp. 26, 367.

'Germanic civility' of urban life and commerce.[152] The dismemberment of Poland had been justified to prevent further Russian expansion into Europe. In any case, Poland by this time, Schäfer argued, was no longer even a national state; the Poles themselves had always regarded themselves as simply a '*Herrenbevölkerung*' ruling over a multi-ethnic rabble.[153] Once again, the historical basis and legitimacy of the Polish nation-state is denied, while that of Germany – Prussian-led Germany – is presented as inviolable.

In Haller's *Epochs of German History*, the 'geographical element' in German history and its troubling consequences for Germany in the present had been a running thread. Germany's geographical position in the centre of Europe, was fundamental to the nature of German history: 'the German Reich was brought into existence mainly through external influences, almost one might say chance events…Germany's history was from the beginning determined by her geographical situation.' To Haller, 'battle along two fronts has been the constantly recurring theme of German history. This is due to Germany's situation between two great neighbouring peoples that differ from her in character, and from whom she is separated by only weak lines of demarcation or by none at all.'[154] Thus, even from the outset of German history, the nation's possession of certain border regions surrounding the core territory was seen as essential to the nation's survival. For Haller, 'the tasks of a country are set by geography, by its situation and physical character...the constant fact which has principally determined political history in all ages is geography.'[155] In the German case, this maxim manifested itself in Germany's 'encirclement' by actual or potential enemies and the absence of clear borders to west and east, and thus the necessity of

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[152] Schäfer, *Die Grenzen*, pp. 28, 29. Schäfer, *Deutsche Geschichte*, I, pp. 340-341. Dietrich Schäfer, *Osteuropa und wir Deutschen* (Berlin, 1924), p. 48.
[153] Ibid., pp. 97-98. Schäfer, *Deutsche Geschichte*, II, pp. 226-229.
[154] Haller, *Epochs*, pp. 5-6, 13, 14. Haller, *Epochen*, pp. 18, 30.
[155] Haller, *Epochs*, pp. 13, 14.

expansion, strictly for the purpose of 'defence'. A weak Germany could only be prey for the ambitions of surrounding rulers, the stage on which the game of European power politics was played. Had not, after all, the French aimed throughout the eighteenth century to make the German princes their permanent vassals, and had they not achieved this for a time in the west under Napoleon? Were it not for Prussia, 'The state of things first brought about by the Thirty Years' War, that Germany formed the chess-board on which the Great Powers fought out their games, threatened to be perpetuated.'

Haller too ascribed some kind of fated role to Prussia: 'Expansion or downfall seemed to be its motto, and indeed its strange geographical condition seemed to prescribe some such guiding principle.' In this sense, Prussia gave strongest expression to how German geography determined German history. On the other hand, Haller denied that the Prussian acquisition of Polish territory was either the result of a natural historical development or a national policy. [156] Rather, this development had merely been the result of a 'favourable opportunity.' Nonetheless, it had been a fortunate one: 'The national movement in Germany needed a state to adopt it and take over its aims, and in that event there was no limit to its potentialities...At both ends of Europe Prussia stood guard over the most threatened outposts, constituted by the sheer necessity of the struggle for existence the champion of the whole German race.' [157] In the subtext of this lay the certainty that what Germany needed in the present was a powerful, national government that could re-dedicate itself to the age-old task of defending nation from its enemies, east and west. In the wider context of German affairs in the 1920s, and given the popularity of his writings, such arguments as those outlined by Haller would prepare much of

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[156] Haller, *Epochs*, pp. 156-159, 163.
[157] Ibid., pp. 193, 196, 207.

the ground intellectually and culturally for later German expansionism. One does not need to associate Haller or those who preceded him straightforwardly with Nazism to recognise that they contributed to a particular understanding of the German past and present that were congruent with extreme forms of nationalism. Likewise, one does not need to 'blame' certain Irish nationalist historians to recognize that their writings shaped the mentalities of Irish nationalists regarding Ulster and Ulster Protestants.

The fledgling Irish government was itself not averse to irredentist publicising. In 1923, in what may be regarded as one of the last official noteworthy expressions of Irish pan-nationalism by the government of the Irish Free State, the *Handbook of the Ulster Question* was published, which set out to 'prove' the 'fact' that 'Ulster' 'belonged' to the Irish nation. In the introduction the authors claimed: 'From the historical section of the book it is clear that the real cause of division in Ulster was not a difference of race but a difference of religion, and that this religious difference was persistently exploited by persons and parties whose interests demanded the frustration of the forces continuously making for national unity.'[158] In contrast to ethnic differences, religious differences could be dismissed as the hangover of a troubled past caused by unjust government which should not frustrate the principle of national self-determination. Those opposed to the full exercise of national self-determination were either foreigners or the proxies of foreigners. From the outset the possibility of the Ulster Protestants lying outside of the boundaries of the Irish nation, or constituting a nation of their own, is denied. The *Handbook* refutes any notion of ethnic or 'racial' difference between the inhabitants of North-East Ulster and the rest of Ireland, even by resorting to its own racial categorizations, as with the claim that, 'The Anglo-Saxon element in Ulster is of microscopic dimension.' The

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[158] *Handbook of the Ulster Question* (Issued by the North-Eastern Boundary Bureau, Dublin, 1923), v.

settlers of the seventeenth-century Plantation of Ulster had been almost entirely Scottish, therefore Gaelic. The authors of the *Handbook* criticised Ulster Protestants for assuming that Ulster's history began with the seventeenth century Plantation – 'To rule twentieth-century issues by seventeenth-century precedents is to block the road to any hope of progress' – even as they argued that the history of Ulster going back to its earliest recorded origins was of greater significance. The writers added, appropriately: 'The best defence of the Planters, if not of the Plantation, is that penned by John Mitchel, a man of their own blood, in the preface to his *Life of Aodh O'Neill'*. The writers of the *Handbook* argued for a continuous 'movement towards unity' that 'was part of a process which had been at work in Ireland since the day when the Norman invaders became "more Irish than the Irish"', [159] a process frustrated and delayed only by the effects of English and later British misrule. The point is continued later on with more assertion: 'The apostles of the theory of a homogeneous Six County area, with a separate national consciousness, are forced to distort and obscure the facts'. It is claimed that 'A nation is a living organism…shaped first by geographical conditions, then by history, then by a sense of common interests and purposes.' The 'Ulster problem' clearly challenged all these conceptions of the nation by denying Ireland's 'natural' unity as an island, the possibility of a common historical experience, and the political unity provided by common interests and purposes. The historical-political section ends with the assertion that 'Ireland as a whole is a nation, and North-East Ulster is merely a small portion of Ireland which for the moment refuses to assent to the political implications of that nationhood.'[160] Whatever one thinks of the respective merits of the Versailles settlement and the Anglo-Irish Treaty, the arguments made by Irish

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[159] *Handbook of the Ulster Question*, pp. 11, 17.
[160] Ibid., pp. 39, 43.

opponents of partition and German revanchists were hardly very dissimilar, if we consider how they were focused on a kind of selective history that dismissed the historical experiences of communities that rejected their place in the Irish or German nation as irrelevant.

For the most part Irish nationalists simply could not admit even the possible justice of Ulster Unionist objections. P.S. O'Hegarty, therefore, for all his admiration for the historical role played by Ulster within Irish national history and his claims that there could be no 'Ireland without the north', no Irish nation without the northern Protestant tradition included,[161] wrote in *Ulster: A Brief Statement of Fact*:

> 'If the Unionists of Ulster should refuse to recognize their Irish citizenship, they can only do so by proclaiming themselves a colony…And in that case they have no rights in Ireland, being merely a colony which has not succeeded in ousting, or conquering, the original inhabitants. Rights in a country are dependent upon citizenship, and where citizenship is denied, and its obligations refused, there are no rights. Aliens in a country, not adopting its nationality, have no rights…No claim to separation from Ireland can be substantiated by any section of the Irish people: it can only be made by a foreign colony, alien to the soil, deriving its authority from an external force and basing its claim upon force. No such claim can, or ever will, be entertained by the Irish people.'[162]

A refusal to recognize the claims of the northern Protestant unionists to separateness, and the presentation of them as a colonial garrison and foreign intruder impeding the path to unity and independence, allowed nationalists to remain certain of the correctness of their understanding of the problem. Ulster Unionists, as was maintained or implied by some, were merely traitors to their own history who had forfeited any legitimate claim to be considered the rightful possessors of the province. The historical attachments of unionists to this territory, the Ulster

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[161] Keiron Curtis, *P.S. O'Hegarty (1879-1955): Sinn Fein Fenian* (London, Anthem Press, 2010), p. 133.
[162] O'Hegarty, *Ulster*, pp. 33, 46.

Protestants or 'Ulster Scots', were considered to be inferior or conditional.[163] It was as if the strivings of a minority of northern Protestants in the late eighteenth, the nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries to Irish legislative independence had invalidated any modern northern claim whatsoever to separation from the rest of the country.[164] O'Hegarty reiterated: 'The pro-Union, anti-Nationalist temper of the Ulster Unionists is an artificial temper, and it is the antithesis of the more natural temper evolved by their forefathers in the eighteenth century.'[165] 'England' had sundered the cultural and geographical integrity of the Irish nation in order to maintain its presence; the Ulster Protestants were at best mere dupes and proxies.[166] To Aodh de Blacam, writing in 1921, while the Ulster Unionist may have been a 'perverted Irishman', he was still an Irishman, and even if he were a foreigner it would not matter, since 'the growth of a foreign population on a corner of the nation's soil does not give that corner the right to secede',[167] regardless of how long that population had been established. Sean Milroy, parliamentarian and advisor to the Irish government on the north during the time of the boundary discussions had said: 'The most militant stand of Ireland against absorption by the English, and the one which was last to be subdued, was that of Ulster.'[168] In the same publication Eoin MacNeill submitted similar remarks, conflating the question of partition with that of ethnic kinship: 'The idea that the Ulster Protestants are racially distinct from the Catholics…does not stand the test of inquiry…history shows this present sentiment is the outcome of the persistent and unscrupulous policy of British

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[163] O'Halloran, *Partition and the Limits of Irish Nationalism*, p. 18.
[164] Green, *History of the Irish State to 1014*, p. 93.
[165] O'Hegarty, *Ulster*, p. 17.
[166] Curtis, *P.S. O'Hegarty*, p. 122.
[167] de Blacam, *What Sinn Fein Stands For*, p. 222.
[168] Sean Milroy, 'Why the North-East should join us', in W.G. Fitzgerald (ed.), *The Voice of Ireland: A Survey of the Race and Nation from all Angles* (Dublin, Virtue & Co., 1923), p. 222.

Statesmen, pursued solely in "the English interest."'[169] In an essay published in 1922 Milroy had earlier claimed that: 'To call this area Ulster is to betray an ignorance of the subject and to reveal a dishonest purpose. It is only a section of the province of Ulster and has no basis historic, political, economic or religious to warrant its being regarded as a unit'.[170] The fact that Ulster had been the last of the four provinces to be conquered by England, at the end of the sixteenth century, was seen as almost trans-historically relevant.[171] In 1925 Green wrote in her *History of the Irish State*, optimistically if nothing else: 'The loyalty of the old Irish to a nation of diverse peoples, made one by their fidelity to the land that bore them…has remained among the Irish people the most generous in its inspiration and in the breadth of its fellowship.'[172] Thus it could be dismissed as 'one of the shibboleths of latter-day unionism', that Ulster had always expressed 'devoted loyalty' to Britain, since 'the most cursory knowledge of history disposes of this contention as a pure fallacy.'[173] In order to defend the notion of a common historical experience for all the people of Ireland, that of any separate one for Ulster is denied and disparaged as a political myth. This, of course, became a political myth of its own, one based in part on the distinctive (though not wholly separate) modern historical experiences of the south and west, which undergirded a pastoral and Catholic-oriented nationalism in which the Protestant aristocracy and rural gentry had played an important role in originating and developing. The true sense of Irishness reposed in the 'plain people' of Ireland, above all in the rural expanses of the west and the south – where Gaelic language and culture had endured longest – in people who could trace their 'authentically'

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[169] Eoin MacNeill, 'From the Plantation to "Partition": A Brief Historic Review', in *The Voice of Ireland*, p. 201.
[170] Sean Milroy, *The Case of Ulster* (Dublin, Talbot Press, 1922), pp. 13, 16, 43, 44.
[171] T.M. Healy, *Stolen Waters: A Page in the Conquest of Ulster* (London, 1913), p. 6.
[172] Green, *History of the Irish State*, p. 94.
[173] *Handbook of the Ulster Question*, p. 13.

Irish ancestry back over the course of many centuries. They had remained unsullied by Anglicization, which had infested the north-east and caused the Ulster Protestants to 'forget' their Irishness, all this was particularly fundamental to some nationalists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century Gaelic Revival.[174] In no way was the inability to accept partition limited merely to 'advanced nationalists'. John Redmond (1856-1918), foremost representative of the non-militant, non-separatist, constitutional nationalist tradition from the beginning of the twentieth century to its eclipse in 1918, had made clear in 1913, that 'The two-nation theory is to us an abomination and a blasphemy.'[175] A reasonable consequence of such thinking could be found in statements made by Michael Collins in 1921: 'the medieval Pale finds its present-day counterpart in Belfast and its surrounding country. All that must be redeemed for Ireland…North-east Ulster had been created and maintained not for her own advantage, but to uphold Britain's policy'. To Collins the whole concept of 'Northern Ireland', resulting from the unjust Anglicization of over a million Irish people, was an oddity. His solution was 'to impregnate our northern countrymen with our national outlook', for 'the tendency of the sentiment in the North-East, when not interfered with, was national, and in favour of freedom and unity.'[176]

A German parallel to the Irish government's *Handbook* was Friedrich Meinecke's brief, twenty-five page pamphlet *Geschichte der links-rheinischen Gebietsfragen* (*History of the Questions Regarding the Left Bank of the Rhine*), written in 1918 in protest against the decision by the Allies to transfer Alsace-Lorraine, and also

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[174] Bruce Stewart, 'On the Necessity of De-Hydifying Irish Cultural Criticism', *New Hibernia Review*, 4, 1 (2000), p. 32. As Conor Cruise O'Brien put it, 'The revivalists sought in Ireland the kind of dignity and kind of wealth that the industrialized world, the modern world had lost; the Ireland they loved had an enormous West Coast and no northeast corner.' Conor Cruise O'Brien, '1891-1916', in Conor Cruise O'Brien (ed.), *The Shaping of Modern Ireland* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1960), p. 21.
[175] Quoted in Denis Gwynn, *The Life of John Redmond* (London, 1932), p. 232.
[176] Michael Collins, *The Path to Freedom* (Dublin, Talbot Press, 1922), pp. 91, 97-98.

against further French territorial ambitions (as Meinecke claimed) against Germany. He began uncompromisingly: 'When Germany incorporated Elsaß and a part of Lothringen in 1871…she was firmly convinced that it was her sacred duty to win back two peoples originally and essentially of German race, peoples which were a part of the old Empire and which had been torn from it by various historical misfortunes.' He accused France of 'attempting by means of historical arguments' – false ones – 'to limit and to annul the consequential application of the free right of self-determination.' French historical claims to German territory were 'dubious and uncertain' if not 'purely arbitrary'.[177] At this point Meinecke gave full rein to his ire: 'All the questions in dispute today arise from the ancient desire of France – a desire which had already begun to manifest itself during the later Middle Ages – to seize the frontier of the Rhine and thereby tear communities which are purely German in blood, in speech, and in national sentiment out of their natural relation to the rest of their people!' Alsace-Lorraine had been, Meinecke maintained, since the year 1500 – if not earlier – one of the strongest bastions of German culture. The only reason the territory had ever been a part of France was because of the belligerent and unjustified expansion of French rulers. Meinecke described the period of Alsace-Lorraine's incorporation in the French state as one of 'great misfortune' for 'the German Elsassian', who had been 'forced further and further away from a vital connection with the great community of German civilisation. He confidently asserted that the 'New Germany' would 'have nothing in common with the spirit of national intolerance', while making clear that 'neither can she endure to see children of her own blood torn from her side.' He concluded, '*an irreparable wrong was committed against German Elsaß and Lothringen when they were forced under the dominion of*

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[177] Friedrich Meinecke, *Geschichte der links-rheinischen Gebietsfragen/History of the Questions Affecting the Left Bank of the Rhine* (Berlin, Reichsdrückerei, 1918[?]), pp. 2, 4.

a foreign nation and alienated from the great body of German civilisation (Meinecke's emphasis). This wrong must not be committed again.'[178] In reading Meinecke's pamphlet against the *Handbook of the Ulster Question* or, say, O'Hegarty's *Ulster* pamphlet, we can see that while the names of contested territories in Europe may have been different, the nationalist historical discourse on contested territories had a particular form, centring on the themes of the injustice of the 'other', the inviolability of the nation's territory and a 'writing out' of regional affiliations and loyalties as illegitimate or in some way illusory.

Yet for some, even if only a minority, of Irish nationalists Ulster was practically a hopeless case. D.P. Moran, for one, who saw Irishness, 'Gaelicism' – 'the foundation of Ireland is the Gael, and the Gael must be the element that absorbs'[179] – and Catholicity as being coterminous, regarded Ulster Protestants in general as an alien entity apparently impervious to assimilation.[180] He once claimed, in his typically provocative way, that given their history the Ulster Protestants 'ought…to be grateful to the Irish nation for being willing to adopt them.' He added: 'We believe that most of these people are not Irish: they are in relation to Ireland as foreign as born Englishmen…'[181] The descendants of planters and immigrants had never attained a normal, natural relationship with their host country.[182] Yet still, despite these statements to the effect that the Ulster Unionists were 'resident aliens' he too refused to accept that they had any right to choose to separate themselves from the Irish nation; they were a fundamentally rootless people who owed their position merely to Britain's might who might still be assimilated one day by an Irish

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[178] Ibid., pp. 4-18.
[179] Moran, *The Philosophy of Irish Ireland* (Dublin, UCD Press, 2006, originally published 1905), p. 37.
[180] Paul Delaney, 'D.P. Moran and *The Leader*: Writing an Irish Ireland through Partition', *Eire-Ireland: Journal of Irish Studies*, 2003, p. 8.
[181] D.P. Moran, *The Leader*, July 1st 1916.
[182] Delaney, 'D.P. Moran', p. 8.

nation 're-Gaelicized'. For Moran's close colleague the essayist Arthur Clery the people of Ulster in general (even Catholics), were so corrupted by Anglicization that it would be utterly senseless for the (southern) Irish nation to try and incorporate them. Their 'bad pedigree' as the 'descendants of colonists' was what accounted for their rejection of the Irish nation.[183] Douglas Hyde, founder of the Gaelic League, speaking as early as 1891 on the theme of how Ulster Protestants had failed to accept their place within the Irish nation as the descendants of earlier foreign settlers had done centuries before, had aid of 'Ulster' that it was a place 'where the Gaelic race was expelled and the land planted with aliens, whom our dear mother Erin, assimilative as she is, has hitherto found it difficult to absorb'.[184] Again, examples of how the historical narrative of Irish national territory permitted pragmatic acceptance of the reality of partition whilst at the same time enabling the denial that there was any legitimacy, historical or otherwise, in the refusal of Ulster Protestants to accept their place in the Irish nation. The perceptions of figures such as Moran of Ulster are reflective of a turn-of-the-twentieth-century reaction against older precepts of Irishness that had been owed to Protestant intellectuals from the early nineteenth century onwards like O'Grady.[185] O'Grady, who associated the far-reaching political and social changes taking place in the Ireland of his time with the loss of 'heroic' values sought to embed himself and his community firmly within the Irish nation through turning to 'heroic' conceptions of Irish nationality, and found them in particular, as we have seen, in historical narratives of the great Ulster leader Cuchulainn. This is but one example of how certain perceptions of Ulster, its

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[183] Arthur Clery, *Dublin Essays* (Dublin, Maunsel, 1919), pp. 34-35, 49-50. Patrick Maume, 'Nationalism and Partition: The Political Thought of Arthur Clery', *Irish Historical Studies*, 31, 222 (1998), pp. 227-230, 239. O'Halloran, *Partition and the Limits of Irish Nationalism*, p. 34.
[184] Douglas Hyde, 'The Necessity of De-Anglicizing Ireland' (1891), in C.G. Duffy (ed.), *The Revival of Irish Literature and Other Addresses* (London, G. Allen & Unwin, 1894), p. 127.
[185] R.F. Foster, *The Oxford History of Ireland* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 173.

historical terrains and its historic significance were defined by the increasing 'southern-centricity' of Irish nationalism up to the start of the twentieth century. [186]

German historians were always deeply concerned with the peculiarity of Germany's geographical position and the prevalence and strength of regional allegiances in the German lands. Since the days of Arndt, the 'father' of German nationalism, they had been vexed by the task of delineating Germany's boundaries, the extent of the national territory. The continued contemporary relevance of territorial changes for the Germans was also pertinent. The 'East' as both territorial region or sphere of influence and cultural space held particular importance, as we have seen, for German national self-understanding, regarded as both one of the crucibles of the German cultural and political nation yet also as the frontier of the nation and where it was at most risk from foreign threats. This was reflected in how both historiographical supporters and opponents of Prussia thought and wrote about the history of that territory, and there is a parallel here in Irish nationalist historical understandings of 'the North' and that region's place in Irish history. In Ireland, the nation's borders did not become a real political issue until the first decades of the twentieth century; in Germany, they had always been a problem, indeed a European one. The story of Germany's history was narrated as one of contest between the aspirations and concerns of Germans, and those of the Germans' many neighbours, particularly the French to the west and the Slavs to the east and south. The indistinctness of German borders made numerous regions battlegrounds for German historians, including Alsace-Lorraine, Schleswig-Holstein, Bohemia, and areas of Prussia, while in Ireland, the problem of contested territory was centred on Ulster. In the German

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[186] This was aptly expressed in the formalistic, legal terms of Articles 2 and 3 of the Irish Constitution of 1937, which laid explicit claim to the territory of Northern Ireland, while making it clear that until such time as reunification happened, the Irish state's authority would stop at the border – *kulturnation* and *staatsnation* would remain 'apart'.

context, even more so, the problem of defining national territory was always central to the instability that continually affected nationalism. Germany's boundaries had been so variable throughout history that historians and historical writers felt more than justified in making claims that were sometimes explicitly irredentist and belligerent. The territorial integrity of other nations and the territorial identity of certain historic regional groups was often denied, these communities 'written out' of Germany's national story, while any and all threats towards *Germany's* historic territorial integrity was regarded simply as an unconcealed aggressive attack on the Germany by the nation's 'hereditary enemies' in east and west. Historians in Germany and Ireland, nationalist and otherwise, were ultimately no more able to serve the problem of contested territories than nationalist geographers, linguists, ethnographers or politicians. However much they tried, they could not render cultural borders into political borders.[187] They wrote in the context of political realities – very different ones in the two countries – which they had little role in effecting or changing. Yet, however impotent their writings may have been in this respect, they nonetheless played a major role in influencing and communicating public policy and opinion, and furthermore, historians' reflections on the nation's historical territory were intimately linked with the fundamental ideas of what it meant to speak of the German nation or the Irish nation. To take only one dimension of this, the historical nationalization of territory in these contexts was evidently linked to the question of how the nation was to be defined; whether in primarily 'civic' or 'ethnic' terms. Discussions of the nation's historical territory often belied the assumption or claim that 'race' or 'race thinking' counted for little or nothing.

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[187] Leerssen, *National Thought in Europe*, p. 175.

CHAPTER FOUR

Historical 'Self' and historical 'Other': 'Race', Descent, and National Enmity in the Nation's History

I

In the course of the nineteenth century, political language became suffused with racial idioms and distinctions, as did historical narratives of the nation.[1] If these narratives worked to define who was to be included within the nation, they also had the function of defining who and what was to be excluded. National communities often define other groups as the negation of their own self-image, with 'history' being a most powerful means of framing this definition.[2] 'Having an enemy', it has been argued, 'is important not only to define our identity but also to provide an obstacle against which to measure our system of values and, in seeking to overcome it, to demonstrate our own worth.'[3] 'Race thinking' in reference to the past not only defined the nation's character, but also to the definition of the nation's 'Others', and to ideas of national *enmity*. This was something significant to nationalist historical narratives throughout Europe in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and in the contexts of Germany and Ireland. In both Ireland and Germany the demarcation of the national community vis-à-vis external others was entwined with *internal* delineations against certain social, linguistic, cultural, or religious groups whose traditions and customs made them seem in some way alien to the core community.[4] The act of 'Othering', the ways in which German and Irish nationalists, including

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[1] George L. Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution: A History of European Racism* (New York, Fertig, 1985), xii. George L. Mosse, 'Racism and Nationalism', *Nations and Nationalism*, 1, 2 (1995), p. 163. Kelley, *Fortunes of History*, p. 178.

[2] Baar, *Historians and Nationalism*, p. 256. Uwe Puschner, Walter Schmitz, Justus H. Albricht, 'Vorwort', in *Handbuch zur Völkischen Bewegung*, xviii. Jacques Barzun, *Race: A Study in Modern Superstition* (New York, Harper and Row, 1937), p. 5.

[3] Umberto Eco, 'Inventing the enemy', in Umberto Eco, *Inventing the Enemy and Other Occasional Writings* (London, Harvill Secker, 2012), p. 2.

[4] Baar, *Historians and Nationalism*, p. 258.

nationalist historians – as in every country in Europe during the age of nationalism – had as much to do with indirectly defining the national community itself as with defining what was *not* of that community. The importance of the 'Other' for the nation's own historical self-image shall become particularly apparent, for example, in how German and Irish nationalist historians dealt with the problem of cultural mixing and change in the nation's history. Those harmful characteristics ascribed to the nations' 'Others' in this respect were more often than not reflections about how the Irish or German nation was characterized. Yet for all its 'othering' usefulness, 'race' was not always accepted as a particularly meaningful category of the nation's history. 'Race' could be considered as another manifestation of 'nation' and could accentuate the nation's distinctiveness.[5] However, 'race' was itself historically contingent and variable and the very malleability of the concept was problematic – exactly how was the significance of 'race' as an actor in the nation's historical past to be judged? To which extent was 'race' a determining factor in the development of cultural communities? Was a nation's 'racial' character immutable or changeable? Such questions were central for the application of 'race thinking' to nationalist history in these contexts as well as others.

The abstract and constructed nature of the concept of 'race', which was used to denote different things sometimes at the same time, throws up many problems of definition.[6] From the beginnings of its usage(s), 'the term "race" was highly unstable and was applied with a staggering imprecision.'[7] In simple terms, understandings of race may be broadly distinguished between those that view races as fixed, objective 'biological' categories of common descent defined by common physical

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[5] Berger, 'The Power of National Pasts', p. 46.
[6] Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution*, p. 45. Felicity Rash, *German Images of the Self and the Other: Nationalist, Colonialist, and Anti-Semitic Discourse* (New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p. 37.
[7] Bruce Nelson, *Irish Nationalists and the Making of the Irish Race* (Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 2012), p. 6.

characteristics, with 'scientific' grounding; and those that found the 'meaning' of 'race' primarily in common attitudes, morals, political ideas, cultural characteristics, historical peculiarities and of course national identity.[8] But, again, the line between these understandings was always blurry at best, and ultimately, all such terms as 'nation', '*Volk*', and 'race' are at their most basic level related 'boundary-demarcating collective concepts'.[9] For the purpose of this discussion, the latter, 'culture-oriented' notion of 'race' is employed, 'race' as a group of people(s) united not just by ancestry but by history and cultural traits and experiences. The concept of *Volk* might be regarded, as Leerssen has put it, as 'the socio-political manifestation of race'.[10] The narratives under consideration here are replete with discussions of 'race', '*Volk*', and 'people'; but considered usually in the sense of historically-formed cultural communities generally coterminous with nations. It is for this reason that the question of 'race' in the nation's history – however ambiguously defined the concept – was important, because 'race' was regarded as a kind of philosophical element in national history.

II

In both the Irish and German contexts 'race' (understood in the above, 'cultural' sense) and 'nation' existed in a complicated relationship. Historical conceptions of a German 'racial' identity or heritage were potentially useful in providing a focal point for 'natural' German historical unity in the midst of political disunity and fragmentation. The early Germanic *Frühzeit*, for example, however historically distant it was, appeared to some nationalists to offer a counterpoint to those periods

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[8] George L. Mosse distinguished between self-consciously 'scientific' and explicitly 'mythical', 'spiritual', or 'idealistic' forms of 'race thinking'. Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution*, xii, pp. 45, 77.
[9] Rash, *German Images of the Self and the Other*, pp. 36-37; Peter Walkenhorst, *Nation, Volk, Rasse: radikaler Nationalismus im Deutschen Kaiserreich, 1890-1914* (Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007), p. 80.
[10] Leerssen, 'Nation and Ethnicity', p. 99.

of medieval, early modern and modern German history which had been defined by such points of conflict as religious, political, and regional differences, or an 'archetypal state of national originality', in which Germanness had been 'pure and unadulterated'.[11] The 'founders' of the modern German national idea, Fichte, Jahn, and Arndt, had each given the *Volk* concept centrality in their thinking, outlining 'a moral philosophy of *Deutschtum*'.[12] If Fichte's *Addresses to the German Nation* amounted to a moral appeal for the renewal of the German nation, it was based in such notions as that the Germans of the present were defined in relation to the *Germanen* of the distant past, their progenitors.[13] In contrasting 'Germanic' (Germans, Scandinavians, Dutch, Anglo-Saxons) and Romanized 'Latin' peoples, and presenting the history of Europe as a theatre of conflict between them, the basis for 'racial' interpretations of 'national' history was laid.[14]

On the other hand, notions of German racial commonality still did not necessarily substantiate arguments for a German nation-state. Whatever moral or historical philosophies of *Deutschtum* may have had to say, while all (ethnic) Germans may have been racially Germanic, not all racially Germanic peoples had belonged to the historical German *nation*. It could not be seriously maintained either that German culture had not been formatively developed through interaction with those of other peoples. The difficulty in attempting to 'nationalize' Germanness as 'race' – as was likewise the case in the Irish context – lay not just in demonstrating the homogeneity of 'the Germans' in the present as a single *historical* community (the Germans were,

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[11] Rainer Kipper, *Germanenmythos im Deutschen Kaiserreich: Formen und Funktionen historische Selbstthematisierung* (Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2002), pp. 15-16. Brian Vick, 'The Origins of the German *Volk*: Cultural Purity and National Identity in Nineteenth-Century Germany', *German Studies Review*, 26, 2 (2003) p. 242. Echternkamp, *Der Aufstieg*, p. 324.
[12] Steven E. Ozment, *A Mighty Fortress: A New History of the German People* (London, Granta, 2004), p. 194. Leerssen, 'Nation and Ethnicity', p. 82. Kipper, *Germanenmythos*, pp. 60-61.
[13] Kipper, *Germanenmythos*, pp. 58-59.
[14] David James, *Fichte's Social and Political Philosophy* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 176, 180.

after all, up to 1871, a people of many different 'tribes' or *Stämme*), but in how to present German (or Irish) 'racial character' as a cohering force in the nation's history.[15] In the generations after Fichte and Arndt, many varied German histories were repeatedly faced with determining 'how, exactly, the historical imagination should construct "Germany".'[16] German historians were consistent, however, in defining the nation by reference to a discourse of national *enmity* – i.e. 'we' are not what 'they' are, indeed 'we' are superior to 'them' – directed predominantly against neighbouring nations. Yet this same sense of superiority was also to a great deal the result of a historical narrative of centuries of German disunity, weakness and powerlessness in the face of other, more dominant nations and this context accounted for much of what constituted German nationalist 'race thinking'. The same was the case, to a significant degree, in the Irish context. If most Irish nationalists generally disagreed over the particulars of 'Irishness', most could agree that Irishness was defined in contrast to the character of the nation's 'Other': 'England' or Britain (the terms were used practically interchangeably). The sense that there was, to quote Ranke, an essential 'secret something' about Irishness that was always somehow there, did much to define attitudes towards the problem of the Ulster Unionist community. If this group really was not Irish in some essential way, then it could only be 'foreign', the outpost of another nation on Irish soil. To define the nation's historical identity in the sense of an irreducible 'character' or antagonism towards another nation ruled out opting in or out of one's own nation.

In the Irish context, applying conceptions of an Irish 'race' to Irish history, even from a nationalist standpoint, was inherently difficult and ambiguous, since not even

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[15] In his *Politics* Treitschke referred to the various German *Stämme* as 'our different races'. Treitschke, *Politics*, I, p. 289. Treitschke, *Politik*, I, p. 286. Till von Rahden, 'Germans of the Jewish *Stamm*: Visions of Community between Nationalism and Particularism, 1850 to 1933', in *German History from the Margins*, p. 36.
[16] Lambert, 'Paving the "peculiar path"', p. 93.

within the most 'Gaelicized' narrative of Irish history it could not be disputed that the Irish were a product of a number of different ethno-cultural elements with different origins, throughout their history.[17] Conceptions of 'the Irish race' existed both synonymously with the idea of the historical Irish nation, or in veiled contest with it. The question of how to reconcile the notion of an Irish 'race' with the reality of the different historical ethno-cultural communities that had developed within Ireland was never really solved. The ethnic substance of 'the Irish race' – primarily the Irish language and much of traditional Gaelic culture – seemed to have largely disappeared or entered a moribund state by the mid-nineteenth century, yet in a period where ideas about national distinctiveness were so closely linked to ideas about 'racial' distinctiveness, some form of the latter had to be 'invented' or 'recovered' for Ireland and the Irish. The reality that the Irish had throughout their history been repeatedly 'racialized' to their disadvantage by their historical 'Other' made an Irish (national) racial discourse all the more important and necessary. Irish historical writers were faced with two basis positions: the Irish were a race in the sense of being a perennially continuous community of 'Celt' or 'Gael' into which other identities had to be assimilated or rejected; or they were the result of the joining of a number of different historical 'kin-groups' over the course of centuries These two basic positions, insufficient as each was in itself, were actually often blurred together. As in the German context, 'race thinking' with respect to Irish nationalist history writing had much to do with attempting to escape a divided and divisive past. Some of the most notable and eloquent exponents of 'the Irish race' would include (as will be seen) those Protestant intellectuals who employed an historical vision of the Gaelic past and Gaelic culture as a potential means of

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[17] Colin Kidd, *British Identities before Nationalism: Ethnicity and Nationhood in the Atlantic World, 1600-1800* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 146.

integrating more deeply their community into the course of Irish history. 'Race' in the nation's history could be used to solve a contemporary 'crisis' of identity whilst simultaneously underlining the ethnic heterogeneity running through Irish history that inescapably influenced discussions about the Irish race. For this reason Protestant intellectuals devoted perhaps more consideration to the question of the Irish 'race' than many of their Catholic counterparts, who could largely 'take for granted' their own 'racial identity'. As in Germany, and in most countries throughout Europe during the period, nationalist ideas of race generally often ended up being directed against the established political and state order. While Irish national historians often claimed that the 'racialization' of Irish history had long been a British imposition designed to dismiss Irish claims to nationhood, they would respond with their own versions of this narrative designed to have the opposing effect. 'Race thinking' in German nationalism could be mobilized against both the pre-1871 German political order *and* the post-1871 *Kaiserreich*, on the grounds for example of the latter's 'exclusion' of millions of Germans from its boundaries. Much of the impetus behind the rise of *völkisch* nationalism in Germany from the last decade of the nineteenth century had been the dissatisfaction of extreme nationalists with the policies of the state. In that sense *völkisch* nationalism, despite a position of influence within government circles wholly out of proportion to its numbers and a strongly middle-class social profile; may be described as having been hostile to the 'official' nationalism of the new German 'nation-state'.[18] The founding principle of *völkisch* nationalism was a 'racial' understanding of nationality in both the 'cultural' and 'biological' senses, coupled with a certainty that it was neither desirable nor possible for the German nation-state to accept non-Germans as citizens. Yet *völkisch*

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[18] Langewiesche, 'Reich, Nation, und Staat', pp. 372-373. Geoff Eley, *Reshaping the German Right: Radical Nationalism and Political Change after Bismarck* (London, Yale University Press, 1980), p. 48.

nationalism, despite Germany's indisputable 'great power' status, was contained within itself a certainty that the *nation* as opposed to the state was in a condition of decline, of degeneration, and that the 'national' state had to be fundamentally changed to truly be 'national'. In Ireland at the turn of the twentieth century, a sense that Irishness had to its detriment become exclusively associated with liberal politics and that the very existence of the Irish nation was in peril, underpinned a broad cultural nationalist movement known as 'Irish-Ireland' which centred on linked programmes of the 'Gaelicization' and 'de-Anglicization' of the Irish nation, and a sense of a 'battle of civilisations' between 'Ireland' and 'Britain'. As Aodh de Blacam put it, 'It is not to be supposed that Gaelicism is a narrow racial cause…We merely mean that *the Gael is the normal national type*, and that divergence of that type is a mark of foreign influence, interests or allegiance.'[19] With the rise of these newer forms of nationalism in Ireland and Germany, historical narratives became increasingly 'racialized', in the sense that the nation's history was centred more on the 'authentic' Irish and Germans, their role in history, and the 'mission' of their modern 'descendants' to 'save' the modern nation.

So narratives of 'race' could offer a trans-historical, cultural underpinning for 'the nation', valuable where the reality of continuous political nationhood over the course of centuries was sparing or absent.[20] Yet the question of how 'race' or 'race thinking' was to be historically and politically instrumentalized for nationalist goals was a complex one. Inevitably, the definition of the historical German or Irish 'self' was linked that with that of an ethnic 'Other'. In the Irish context, England or Britain; in the German, by contrast there were numerous possible 'Others', notably

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[19] de Blacam, *Towards the Republic*, pp. 14-15.
[20] Leerssen, 'Nation and Ethnicity', p. 89. John Brannigan, *Race in Modern Irish Literature and Culture* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2009), p. 28.

France, the Slavic East, 'Romanism', and of course (though not always) 'Jewry'.[21] France, especially, was regarded as a nation that had always profited from German particularism, weakness and disunity, going back to 1648 and earlier, indeed, as Germany's *Erbfeind*, the 'hereditary enemy'. The Slavic peoples long possessed a status of 'Otherness' going back to the medieval origins of the 'national narrative', entwined with the German image of the east and the '*Drang nach Osten*'. Jews, to the extent that they appeared in major German national historical narratives as having any real significance, occupied their own particular place, where their rootedness and communal and intellectual links to foreign nations, particularly in 'the east', were emphasized. They were also presented as an ethno-cultural source of 'German particularism'.

Finally, the 'Othering' function of 'race' discourses in national history, and its facility in conferring a kind of pseudo-philosophical content to the nation's history, meant that an aggrandizing focus on the achievements, potentialities, and character of one's ('national') race in history could be couched in terms of a trans-historical 'national mission' with the nation seen to represent and embody certain values throughout its history.[22] The nation could for example be represented as the repository of an ideal ('racially'-grounded) type or ideal of nationality or national consciousness throughout history, often interacting in a kind of dialectical conflict with those of the 'Others', or as a 'martyr' nation.[23] 'In the hyperbole of discourse on ethnic difference and conflict', argues R.V. Comerford, 'culture is regularly further

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[21] Puschner, Schmitz, Ulbricht, 'Vorwort', xviii.

[22] Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution*, xiv, p. 49.

[23] Otto Hintze, in a 1903 essay contrasted the meaning of the word 'nation' in England or France, which signified merely the 'staatlich geeinten Volkes', with its German significance, where it encompassed all the German '*Stämme*', as well as the wider German community. The German *Stämme* were formed from very different ethnic foundations and that therefore the German nation, much more so than most others, was a product of culture and history rather than any immutable race substance. Otto Hintze, 'Rasse und Nationalität und ihre Bedeutung für die Geschichte' (1903), in Otto Hintze, *Soziologie und Geschichte: Gesammelte Abhandlungen zur Soziologie, Politik und Theorie der Geschichte* (Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1964), pp. 60-65.

magnified into "civilisation"',[24] and nationalistic claims raised of cultural pre-eminence in European history that had later been 'suppressed' and 'denied'. This inevitably meant that whatever significance 'race' had in the historical narrative, it implicitly had an exclusionary, dividing, 'othering' potential *within* the nation, inasmuch as national identities were seen as singular and exclusive and in relations of conflict to one another.

III

If Young Ireland represented the beginning of modern Irish nationalism, then the problem of the relationship between 'race' or 'race thinking' and 'nation' was present from the start within Irish nationalism. Thomas Davis and other leading Young Irelanders were of course members of a community who sought to recover an ancient Gaelic culture that seemed to be in terminal decline and which they regarded as the foundation stone of any revived Irish nation. The first issue of the *Nation* recorded its founders' aspiration for the unification of the 'Celtic' and 'Anglo-Irish' peoples of Ireland. It would seem, then, that from the start the Young Irelanders felt compelled to deny that there was any such thing as a *single* Irish race, understood in terms of ancestry and descent. Yet Young Ireland nationalism was predicated on the belief that only *one* particular Irish *culture*, namely a revived Gaelic culture purged of English influences could be the basis of any true Irish nation, also as the only force which could unify the different cultural and religious communities of Ireland. The corollary of this was a deep-seated Anglophobia that expressed the contradiction between a pluralist conception of the Irishness and the importance of 'othering' a nation and culture that had itself contributed much to the creation of one of the ethnic communities of Ireland.

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[24] Comerford, *Ireland*, p. 7.

In the nineteenth century, Young Ireland's project of the revival of 'Irishness' had as its starting point contesting against a discourse which had traditionally been employed *against* the Irish 'race' for centuries, to emphasise and 'prove' the fact of Hibernian inferiority and by implication the justification for English and British sovereignty in Ireland. Young Irelanders wanted to refute such perceptions, but to a significant degree this became almost inevitably about simply reversing common value judgements of the Irish, presenting them as positive rather than negative attributes. The 'othering' of the 'Anglo-Saxon' as bloodthirsty, cruel, irreligious and possessing no cultural worth of his own that had not been gained or stolen from by other peoples, followed on almost logically. Nationalists in Ireland were after all working within 'the framework of a highly contested intellectual discourse that often represented racial and national characteristics as fixed and immutable', and which pervaded nineteenth century European culture.[25] Like their European contemporaries Irish nationalists attributed special qualities of virtue to their nation that were not manifested by others. So John Mitchel referred to the 'deep religion and boundless wealth of…golden glories of Tradition',[26] that distinguished the 'Irish race', and in the first instance he meant by this the *Gaelic* Irish. He referred fondly to the 'generosity, levity, impetuosity, and recklessness which have marked the Celtic race since the beginning.'[27] Mitchel's idea of what characterised the 'Irish race' was, like that of his fellow 'non-Gaelic' Protestant Thomas Davis, apparently strictly cultural in nature, not necessarily linked to ancestry or having a Gaelic name (or even being able to speak Irish), so that this 'racial' identity is abstracted into forming the character of a whole nation, or at least for those willing to extol their Irishness and of

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[25] Nelson, *Irish Nationalists and the Making of the Irish Race*, pp. 53, 59.
[26] Mitchel, *The Life and Times of Aodh O'Neill,* v-vi.
[27] Mitchel, *History of Ireland*, p. 308.

course, the Irish national cause.[28] While extolling the nature of 'the Celt', Mitchel seems at times to almost gloss over the historical facts of the reality of ethnic heterogeneity in Ireland and the violent circumstances of its origins.[29] For Mitchel, 'race' appears in Irish history as a set of cultural characteristics and a principle by which to distinguish Irishness from Englishness or Britishness rather than as a fixed category of belonging based on blood. However, the historical relationships underpinning 'race' in modern Ireland, if dwelled upon for too long, could undermine the message of nationalist solidarity among present-day Irishmen.

Mitchel, as with other Young Irelanders, including Davis, developed a schema of Ireland's history which represented the unification and coalescence of the different ancestral communities of Ireland into a single nation with its own unique distinctiveness – grounded in the Gaelic cultural heritage – as not only the most important feature of Ireland's history, but also the desired outcome of Ireland's historical development. The implicit contradiction in how this composite, developing 'Irish race' – within which 'the Celts' were the central stem – was sharply demarcated from its ethnic and historical 'Other', the 'Norman' or 'Saxon' race which had itself contributed to the making of the composite Irish nation was never really resolved. Yet to the Young Irelanders at least, culture was seen as offering a way out of this quandary: the superiority of *Gaelic* culture was emphasised, both its originality and its 'universal' quality: the 'Gaelicization' of medieval Norman and Saxons who supposedly became 'more Irish than the Irish themselves' was seen as proving this superiority.[30] In contrast to their modern descendants, they had recognized the superiority of *Gaelic* culture over their own, and allowed themselves

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[28] Julie M. Digger, 'Black Ireland's Race: Thomas Carlyle and Young Ireland', *Victorian Studies*, 18, 3 (2006), pp. 479, 480.
[29] Mitchel, *The Life and Times of Aodh O'Neill*, vii-viii.
[30] Penet, 'The Young Ireland Movement', p. 38.

to be absorbed within that culture. Nonetheless, 'the Celt' was the leitmotif of Thomas Davis's writings, and he was constantly caught between his celebration of the Celtic origins of the Irish and his assurances that Irishness depended less on ancestry than on sentiment, or that it did not depend on ancestry at all.[31] The grounds on and the extent to which he was prepared to 'other' the 'Saxon' and 'Norman' suggested, however, that he regarded descent as a still relevant criterion of nationality? *The Nation* consistently characterized 'the English', both past and present, as 'the Saxon' or 'the Norman', as callous, greedy, bloodthirsty, pitiful and oppressive, and lacking in true culture of his own. The exceptions to this habit, where those of recognizably 'Norman' or 'Anglo-Saxon' heritage are celebrated, tends unsurprisingly to be when representatives of these groups become part of the 'national' story. Thus Davis celebrates the mixed Gaelic and Old English composition of the 'patriot parliament' of 1689, the 'racially' plural character of the assembly, precisely because of his claim that 'No parliament…sat here before or since, so national in composition and conduct.'[32] The seventeenth-century descendants of the medieval 'Normans' and 'Saxons' who had come to Ireland as invaders had become Irish by, if nothing else, virtue of their rejection of England. In an essay written by Davis on Henry Grattan, the eighteenth century Protestant leader of the 'Patriot' movement and nineteenth century 'nationalist' hero, which is unsparing in its acclamation of Grattan, he sidesteps the matter of Grattan's 'race'.[33] Grattan's 'Britishness', his 'Anglo-Irishness', is practically glossed over in this instance by Davis, he is claimed as a national champion by virtue of his 'enmity' towards British imperialism, which is regarded as manifestation of his Irish 'racial'

[31] Comerford, *Ireland*, p. 70.
[32] Davis, *The Patriot Parliament*, pp. 18-19, 35, 40.
[33] Davis, *Literary and Historical Essays*, p. 94.

character.[34] As difficult as it may have been for Young Irelanders to reconcile the contradictions of their conception of the Irish 'race', a 'racialized' discourse was essential, not least because it underpinned the 'Othering' discourse of an irreducible Irish-English dichotomy. A fundamental reason for the whole Young Ireland enterprise was a sense that the Irish were becoming irredeemably Anglicized, and that this was a shameful, dishonourable condition.[35] The sentiment 'that in Anglicizing ourselves wholesale we have thrown away the best claim which we have upon the world's recognition of us as a separate nationality' would be a central tenet of subsequent Irish nationalists.[36] Statements such as this one reflect an Irish variant of a pan-European discourse of 'degeneracy' and a contest of nationalities.

The Young Ireland narrative underlined Mitchel's later *History of Ireland*. If in his biography of Hugh O'Neill he had celebrated the Gaelic heritage of the Irish nation and nationalism, in his later *History* he wished to celebrate *both* the Anglo-Irish contribution to 'Irishness' and the Gaelic heritage. The 'goal' of Ireland's historical development was for him as well the dissolution of 'racial' distinctions *within* Ireland while expounding the cultural gulf between Ireland and Britain. This is made possible through pan-Irish *enmity* towards Britain. Mitchel sought to explain how during the eighteenth century the two 'races' in Ireland, 'Gaelic' and 'New English' – he even conceded that there were, in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, not only two races in Ireland, but also, effectively, two *nations* as well[37] – were able to amalgamate, so he thought. Those who had scorned the mass of the Irish nation, indeed their own Irishness sometimes, manifested it in their rejection of

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[34] Ibid., p. 202.
[35] 'Editorial – Unsigned Article from *The Nation* (1842)', in D. Dworkin (ed.), *Ireland and Britain, 1798-1922: An Anthology of Sources* (Cambridge, Hackett, 2012), p. 58. Seamus Deane, *Strange Country: Modernity and Nationhood in Irish Writing since 1790* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1997), pp. 50-51.
[36] Douglas Hyde, 'The Necessity of de-Anglicizing Ireland', p. 70.
[37] Mitchel, *History of Ireland*, I, pp. 11-12, 13-14, 62.

Britain. It was the responsibility of the modern 'English in Ireland', like their medieval forebears, to prove their place in the nation through voluntary assimilation and dedication to the nation's cause against the '*Erbfeind*.' The nationalism of Mitchel's people, the liberal Protestant Irish, had originated in the erstwhile 'colonists' choosing to finally identify their interests with those of the mass of the nation.[38] In steering away from straightforward identification of nation with blood descent – 'in truth it had become very difficult to determine the ethnological distinction between the inhabitants of this island'[39] – Mitchel lays emphasis instead on the 'composite Irish character' that formed towards the end of the eighteenth century. The 'patriots' of the period manifested their Irishness in their 'hostility' to 'England'.[40] Nonetheless Mitchel's approach towards 'race' in his *History* also demonstrated – as did comments on 'the ancient and irremovable feeling of Englishmen, and the contemptuous falsehood of their estimate of the Irish people'[41] – that in general the structure of his *History* was firmly rooted in an England vs. Ireland dichotomy. In an 'Othering' discourse based on assumptions of essentially perennial and immutable 'characteristics' underpinning the histories of nations, the overarching theme of Irish history in Mitchel's *History* was an unrelenting centuries-old conflict between 'Ireland' and 'England', one started and perpetuated by English malevolence. Mitchel's *History*, his body of writing in general, ranked among the most popular and influential in the canon of Irish nationalist writing. Its appeal lay in the simplicity of its message: since the first conflicts of Irish and English, it had been the mission of the latter to oppress, exploit, and destroy the Irish nation. 'England' had shown the Irish nothing but tyranny and oppression; they were wholly lacking in

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[38] Mitchel, *History of Ireland*, I, pp. 238-240.
[39] Ibid., pp. 308-309.
[40] Ibid., pp. 196, 308.
[41] Ibid., p. 210.

any of the cultural virtues of other peoples, they cared for nothing but their own ends, for which they were willing to destroy an entire nation. Even worse, they had actually succeeded in degrading the Irish to the point that the latter actually needed to be taught, in spite of their history, to hate England.[42] Mitchel would have agreed fully with Daniel O'Connell's comment, which is repeated like a refrain throughout the latter's own essay on Irish history, that 'No people on the face of the earth were ever treated with such cruelty as the Irish.'[43] It was absurd to think that the Irish nation would be willing and able to commit itself to the cause of freedom if it failed to understand the true nature of its enemy. The *History* provided a compelling example of how 'race' and the 'Othering' of the nation's enemy could be employed in a nationalist historical narrative. One's own nation could also be historically and 'racially' defined through writing about the history of that nation's 'Other' or its historical characteristics and deeds, without having to go into much detail about the more difficult matter of how the nation defined its own culture, its own 'character'.

IV

The tendency to apply 'race thinking' and in particular racialized 'Othering' was a characteristic that provided a point of commonality for otherwise very different specimens of nationalist historiography. The function that Anglophobia fulfilled in Irish nationalist history writing was fulfilled in the German context by a hostility towards France and the French role in German history as Germany's 'Other'. This was apparent in such highly respectable works of historiography as Heinrich von Sybel's four-volume *History of the French Revolution*. Here, in tandem with putting the Revolution on historical trial, Sybel engaged in an 'othering' of the French nation in general, its mind, character, and history. Sybel's comment in the preface that there

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[42] McGovern, *John Mitchel*, p. 30.
[43] Daniel O'Connell, *A Memoir on Ireland: Native and Saxon* (5th ed., Dublin, James Duffy, 1843), p. 14, 59, 61, 83, 85, 88, 103, 108.

had hitherto been no study of the Revolution from a perspective of German affairs was not a mere passing historiographical reflection.[44] The French Revolution had been of the most fundamental importance for the '*Entstehung*' of a popular (political as well as culture) sense of 'Germanness' and definitions of German national self-understanding. This work of Sybel's, like Mitchel's, is replete with 'othering' of the nation's *Erbfeind*, obviously directed at the French but also at the Slavs, the Poles in particular. In a chapter in the first volume of the *History* he remarked, for example, of the historical relationship between Poles and Germans: '…on the Eastern frontier of the Empire, the Prussian State arose in the contest for German nationality, and religious freedom; and in the most complete external and internal antagonism to Poland. The enmity lay in the very nature of things'.[45] Mutual enmity was inherent and natural in the history of Germany and Germany's neighbours, as in Mitchel's narrative of Irish history, the whole story of the nation's relations with 'the Other' is reduced to one of enmity, one about the contest for nationality. Prussia, the crucible of German nationality since at least the sixteenth century, had been forced to stand alone against Germany's 'hereditary enemies' to east and west: 'having liberated Eastern Germany from Poland, undertook, almost single-handed, to support the West of Germany against the oppressor of Europe – Louis XIV.'[46] What the French had produced in their revolution, the founding event of their modern nation, had been, in Sybel's final judgement, a distillation of all the worst elements of the historical French 'racial character'. The Revolution 'declared war…against all moral laws whatever, and thereby unfitted itself to fulfil its infinitely important mission…and crushes instead of fulfilling the claims of our national life.' The source of the

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[44] Heinrich von Sybel, *History of the French Revolution*, vol. I, trans. W.C. Perry (London, 1867), ix.
[45] Sybel, *History of the French Revolution*, II, pp. 186-188. Heinrich von Sybel, *Geschichte der Revolutionszeit, 1789-1800*, Bd. I, (Berlin, J.G. Cotta, 1897), pp. 186-187.
[46] Sybel, *Geschichte der Revolutionszeit*, I, p. 189.

aberrant course of the French Revolution lay primarily in the character of French society. The French had never even been in their nature a democratic, republican people.[47] While the ancient Germans and their 'descendants' the German people, had known true freedom – the Germans had initially interpreted the Revolution as an expression of Germanic thought[48] – the French people had always been ruled by tyrants. There is a parallel here to the distinction made by the Young Irelanders and later nationalists – freedom and solidarity-loving Irish people lived in a liberal state while Britons were in bondage – and 'the English' – yoked together throughout their history through brute force and violence. The French Republic, Sybel claimed, had degenerated into a tyrannical Empire because the spirit of Louis XIV, of true French history, could not be extinguished. Sybel's perception of 'France' was not so much different from that of Ernst Moritz Arndt in 1814, who described French history as being that of Paris and the royal court, appropriately enough given the innate servility of the French people.[49] Whatever virtues the French may have possessed, they were also superficial and arrogant and prone to unwarranted, 'un-German' hubris. Where the German *Wesen* demonstrated a drive towards the independence and particularity of the self and the people, that of the French demonstrated one towards the compulsion of an imposed (flawed) sense of equality; Germanic 'freedom' was contrasted with a French obsession with 'levelling.' The French had forgotten that 'nature, which has set out the peculiarities of each nation, will not allow its creations to be abused as tools of human ambition',[50] and had been reminded of this at their great cost. Sybel, living and writing in a time when it

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[47] Sybel, *History of the French Revolution*, II, pp. 189-190, 193, 198-200, 201-202. Sybel, *Geschichte der Revolutionszeit,* I, pp. 6, 9, 15; III, pp. 3, 10.
[48] Klaus von See, *Freiheit und Gemeinschaft: völkisch-nationales Denken in Deutschland zwischen Franzoesischer Revolution und Ersten Weltkrieg* (Heidelberg, Winter, 2001), p. 16.
[49] Arndt, *Ansichten und Aussichten*, p. 451.
[50] Sybel, *History of the French Revolution*, I, pp. 176-177. Sybel, *Geschichte der Revolutionszeit*, I, pp. 174-175.

seemed that Germans would soon be faced with the task of *national* governance; wanted to stress that the French in particular were no model for the Germans for how to build a successful nation-state,[51] that revolutionary change was antithetical to the historical character of the Germans. By deconstructing the foundational event of modern French national history Sybel presented France as a country fundamentally sundered from its history, undermining French claims for leadership of Europe in the present. The implication was that the Germans had preserved more of their past and were therefore more able to claim themselves as an authentic nation. Even if he did not go so far as to claim that it had been Prussia's role or right to unite and lead Germany since its own beginnings, Sybel, in placing Prussia at the centre of the Germans' historical experience of the Revolution, he advanced Prussian claims to the leadership of Germany in the present; and by comparing the Habsburgs to the Bourbon dynasty, he denied Austrian claims to the same.[52] Francophobia and conservative hostility to revolution are entwined by Sybel in this work.[53] The pivot of European history appeared to turn on conflict of nationalities, more specifically turned on German-French and German-Slav contest; the Germans had a historic right be a great power but this could not be bought freely. The dichotomy of 'the ideas of 1789' against 'the ideas of 1914' rooted in 'French ideas' and 'German ideas', respectively, that became so popular during the Great War, finds 'respectable' antecedents in such texts as Sybel's *Geschichte der Revolutionszeit*.

From the early nineteenth century to well into the twentieth, Franco-German 'hereditary enmity' was a most popular theme for German historians interested in comparing 'national characters' and examining that of the Germans, not least

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[51] Heinrich von Sybel, *Was wir von Frankreich lernen können* (Bonn, 1872), pp. 2, 5, 6, 11, 16. Ernst Breisach, *Historiography: Ancient, Medieval, and Modern* (3rd ed., London, University of Chicago Press, 2007), p. 236.
[52] Sybel, *Geschichte der Revolutionszeit*, I, pp. 178, 180-182.
[53] Sybel, *Geschichte der Revolutionszeit*, VI, vii-viii. Berger, *The Search for Normality*, p. 22.

because it seemed to be a perennial theme of German history.[54] 'France' and 'Germany' were seen as archetypes of very differing courses of historical development: state and nation had become congruent in France in the early medieval period, in Germany this did not happen, as was generally agreed, until 1871.[55] Indeed, such was the importance of 'France' to the German national(ist) historical self-understanding as it developed during the nineteenth century that it united otherwise differing and indeed conflicting strands of German historical writing.[56] Johannes Janssen, for example, who differed from the likes of Sybel and Treitschke in so many respects, authored in 1883 a brief tract on *Frankreichs Rheingelüste und deutsch-feindliche Politik in früheren Jahrhunderten*, which he opened with the theme of France's constant territorial predations over nearly a millennium on Germany's western boundary, ancient French enmity towards the Germans.[57] Here too German 'national' history is anchored within a narrative of a past defined by 'natural' ethnic conflict between two discrete and antithetical nations. As Mitchel and many other writers did of the English, Sybel and many other German writers directed a litany of charges against the French and narrated them as the nemesis of the Germans throughout history, constructing a pseudo-philosophical and Manichean narrative out of the 'racial' conflict between the nation and its other. So one particular book which ran to at least five editions (first published in 1872) written by T.D. Sullivan, A.M. Sullivan's brother, entitled *The Story of England*, contained

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[54] Dietrich Schäfer wrote in 1910, '…the antagonism between Germany and France is irreconcilable, and certainly no one living can maintain that this perception is basically false.' Schäfer, *Deutsche Geschichte*, II, pp. 170-171. Peter-Michael Hahn, 'Frankreich und das Reich während des 17. Jahrhunderts im Spiegel der deutschen Geschichtswissenschaft des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts', *Historische Zeitschrift*, 247, 1 (1988), p. 80.

[55] Faulenbach, *Ideologie des deutschen Weges*, p. 38. Bonhard, *Geschichte des alldeutschen Verbandes*, p. 190.

[56] Berger, *The Search for Normality*, p. 26.

[57] Johannes Janssen, *Frankreichs Rheingelüste und deutsch-feindliche Politik im früheren Jahrhunderten* (2nd Aufl., Freiburg, 1883), p. 1. Martin Spahn, 'Reich oder Staat?' (1925), in Martin Spahn, *Für den Reichsgedanken: Historisch-Politisch Aufsätze, 1915-1934* (Berlin, 1936), p. 34.

such remarks as the following, from which might be gleaned the book's tone: 'The historical truth of the matter is that the Irish were an organized, civilised, and educated nation several centuries before the English emerged from barbarism; that Ireland was a school of learning and piety when England was a swamp of ignorance and scene of brutal disorder; and that Irishmen were a free and victorious race when Englishmen were conquered and enslaved.'[58]

The 'othering' of France from 'Germany' reached perhaps its crescendo (at least in the nineteenth century) in the writing of Treitschke. France is represented throughout history by Treitschke not only as a source of 'anti-national' influences on Germany, and naked aggression, but as a thoroughly degenerate nation (this was particular apparent in his *What We Demand From France*). Indeed, for Treitschke, the whole project of German political nation-building was in an important sense about the *overcoming* of the French revolutionary tradition.[59] In France's eighteenth-century age of glory under Louis XIV, Germany had been helpless to resist French political hegemony and cultural influence. Even after, from the time of the Revolution, France remained a malignant influence.[60] A sense of deep insecurity about the cohesion of the German nation and the prospects of revival of reviled 'German particularism' permeated Treitschke's writings, and it is partly in this context that the French appear as such a corrosive influence. In both the Irish and German contexts, there was a particular attitude towards cultural amalgamation: assimilation of foreign

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[58] T.D. Sullivan, *The Story of England: A Narrative of English History from the Landing of Julius Caesar to the Reign of Henry VIII* (Dublin, 5th ed., 1888), p. 132. This book, unsurprisingly, earned an outraged review from *The Spectator*, which referred to its 'vocabulary of insult and vituperation', a 'monstrous and unscrupulous libel', and the book in general as a 'deliberate fabrication'. *The Spectator*, 12th October 1872, pp. 22-24.

[59] Between Fichte and Sybel and Treitschke, J.G. Droysen had contested that the period of the 'Wars of Liberation', when the German people rejected the 'utopian abstraction' that was French Vernunftsrecht for the principle of the Volk, had marked the true 'Revolution' of the German nineteenth century, the result being 'a direction, a goal, a plan' for the German people, who had now found their historical 'Berufung.' Kelley, *Fortunes of History*, p. 130.

[60] Treitschke, *History of Germany*, IV, pp. 554-555.

cultures and communities *into* the German or Irish nation to the extent that this 'proved' the nation's greatness was regarded quite positively, while dissolution of 'Germanness' or 'Irishness' into foreign cultures was not. In the Irish context, the *voluntary* (supposed) assimilation of successive waves of foreigners into Gaelic culture and society featured very prominently, indeed was a staple of the nationalist historical narrative, from which was derived the conceit of the innate strength and the superiority of native Irish culture. In the German context, too, the medieval advancement of German culture and its adoption in the east in the middle ages was obviously regarded as evidence of German superiority, and even Treitschke celebrated the Germans' 'innate' ability to assimilate the best of foreign cultures and to thus develop an intrinsic 'understanding' of other peoples.[61] The Germans had been 'endowed with a natural understanding of the Latin world', had brought 'the Romance nationalities' into existence, had been the bearers of inherited civilisation, demonstrating a greater understanding of and receptivity to the 'essence' of other cultures than any other people.[62] On the other hand, unfortunately, Germans had displayed in their history a tendency to adopt foreign customs and practices rather than uphold their own, even those of inferior peoples, such as the Slavic nations.[63] As in Irish narratives, the adoption by Germans of or their assimilation into foreign cultures was presented in negative terms.[64] After 1648, particularly, during the nadir of their history the Germans had supposedly, 'accustomed themselves to look on

[61] Treitschke, *History of Germany*, I, p. 20. Treitschke, who used both the terms '*Nationalität*' and '*Volk*' made clear in *Politics* that 'The word "nation" will be used by preference in the political sense.' Treitschke, *Politics*, I, p. 271. Treitschke, *Politik*, I, p. 269.
[62] Schäfer, *Deutsche Geschichte*, I, p. 5.
[63] Treitschke, *History of Germany*, I, pp. 25, 26.
[64] Treitschke, *Politics*, I, p. 275. Treitschke, *Politik*, I, p. 273.

their fatherland with the eyes of the stranger',[65] a tendency they had not fully overcome by 1871, Treitschke thought.[66]

Treitschke's arguments about the Jews, in particular, illustrated that while the assimilation *of* certain cultural elements *by* the Germans had been beneficial to an extent, others would always be merely a source of national degeneration. Unless 'our Jewish fellow-citizens make up their minds to be Germans without reservation', he stated in his pamphlet *A Word On Our Jewish Question* an 'era of German Jewish mixed culture' would 'follow after thousands of years of Germanic morality.'[67] His view of the threat posed by 'Jewishness' was linked directly with his evaluation of the historical conditions of the German people: the Jews were dangerous to the German nation not only because of their own qualities, but because the 'energetic national pride' that could resist their influence was, in Treitschke's judgement, rather lacking among Germans.[68] If Jews wanted to truly be Germans, they must necessarily assimilate and renounce completely all aspects of their Jewish heritage.[69] Treitschke addressed 'the Jewish question' in national terms that shaded racial expressions, employing a discourse of national enmity which was also directed within the parameters of the nation: his antisemitism was nationalist rather than racist, first and foremost. His perceptions of 'the Jewish question' seem to have as much to do with his view of 'Germanness' as anything else.[70] To complete the picture, Treitschke associates Jewishness with Frenchness, 'the Jew' 'was chiefly

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[65] Treitschke, *History of Germany*, I, p. 25.
[66] Treitschke, *Politics*, I, pp. 275, 290. Treitschke, *Politik*, I, p. 273, 287.
[67] Heinrich von Treitschke, *Ein Wort über unser Judentum* (Berlin, 1880), pp. 2, 11. Rahden, 'Germans of the Jewish *Stamm*', p. 27.
[68] Treitschke, *Ein Wort*, p. 4.
[69] Christhard Hoffmann, 'Die Verteidigung der liberalen Nation: Mommsen gegen Treitschke im "Berliner Antisemitismusstreit", 1879-1880', in Alexander Demandt, Andreas Goltz, Heinrich Schlange-Schoeningen (eds.), *Theodor Mommsen: Wissenschaft und Politik im 19. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2005), pp. 70-71.
[70] Treitschke, *Ein Wort*, p. 21. Treitschke, *Politics*, II, p. 556. Smith, *The Continuities of German History*, p. 175. Boehlin, 'Nachwort', p. 250. K. Holz, *Nationaler Antisemitismus: Wissenssoziologie einer Weltanschaaung* (Hamburg, HIS Verlagsgesellschaft, 2001), pp. 11-25, 540-552.

attracted towards the French [nation]…from a sense of inner kinship'.[71] The Jews were fundamentally, unless they assimilated, an invariably corrosive influence on national life.[72] Their history proved that 'if a national culture could not succeed in creating a national state, then it could not claim a timeless right to existence.' In his *Deutsche Geschichte*, sidestepping the obvious novelty of the new German nation-state, Treitschke projected the recent state-building abilities of the Germans back into centuries of history and crowed over the failures of other nations in that respect, including the Poles.[73] Treitschke's view of the Jews was to be, to varying degrees, the prevailing view in German national historiography in the decades after him.[74] On the other hand, while sometimes employing 'racialized' discourses, at other times Treitschke indicated a certain scepticism towards 'race' as a historical category.[75] In his *Politics* he frankly admitted the imaginary nature of 'blood relationships'[76] and the possible benefits of cultural amalgamation (as long as any amalgamation was driven by the Germans themselves). In the modern age of the nation, however, such peoples as the French, Slavs, and Jews had nothing of worth to add to 'Germanness'.[77] National greatness in the modern age required homogeneity of

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[71] Treitschke, *History of Germany*, VII, p. 177.

[72] For notoriously racist pan-Germanist leader, Heinrich Claß, the fact that 'pure personalities' like Treitschke's had become anti-Semites had given credit to anti-Semitism. Claß, *Deutsche Geschichte* (1919), pp. 320-322, 683. By no later than 1918, antisemitism had become a central element of *völkisch* ideology. Hering, *Konstruierte Nation*, p. 345; Rainer Hering, '"(…) ist der Einfluss der Jüden auf sittliche-geistigem Gebiete (…) nach viel verderblicher": Antisemitismus in der populären Geschichtsdarstellung von Heinrich Class', in Werner Bergmann and Ulrich Sieg (eds.), *Antisemitscher Geschichtsbilder* (Essen, Klartext, 2009), p. 198. Rash, *German Images of the Self and the Other*, p. 93.

[73] Treitschke, *Politik*, I, p. 63. Treitschke, *Deutsche Geschichte*, IV, p. 58. Smith, *The Continuities of German History*, pp. 170, 171. Walter Bussman, 'Treitschke als Politiker', *Historische Zeitschrift*, 177, 2 (1954), p. 254.

[74] U. Wyrwa, 'Genese und Entfaltung antisemitischer Motive im H. v. Treitschke's "*Deutscher Geschichte im 19. Jahrhundert*"', in *Antisemitscher Geschichtsbilder*, p. 83.

[75] This did not stop Treitschke from becoming one of the intellectual 'role models' of the *völkisch* nationalists of the pan-German League. Sylvia Jaworska, 'Anti-Slavic imagery in German nationalist discourse at the turn of the twentieth century: a prelude to Nazi ideology?' *Patterns of Prejudice*, 45, 5 (2011), p. 442. Chickering, *We Men Who Feel Most German*, p. 80.

[76] Treitschke, *Politics*, I, p. 281. Treitschke, *Politik*, I, p. 278.

[77] Wyrwa, 'Genese und Entfaltung', p. 100. Smith, *The Continuities of German History*, p. 172.

nationality, of *Volk*, and a congruence of nationality and polity. He was ultimately convinced that, the Germans were 'not to be confounded with any other people, although the frontiers of Germany have undergone so many changes in history.'[78] In the second volume of Treitschke's *Politics*, in the chapter on 'The Reich' we can glimpse his association of Francophobia with his hostility to revolutionary change in Germany history as something basically 'un-German'.[79]

Mitchel, Sybel, and Treitschke present quite similar ideas about national enmity and its relation to the nation's own 'racial' identity, such as the naturalness and necessity of enmity between nations, a characterization of their own nation as the defender of 'freedom' against oppression, and a characterization of the nation's 'Other' as irredeemably 'alien'. W.E.H. Lecky presents a counterpoint, since he aimed to take a studiously moderate, even sceptical tone when dealing with 'race' in Irish history. In his *History of Ireland* he downplayed the significance of 'race' in terms of a simple dichotomy of 'Celtic' Irish vs. 'Saxon' English, considering it to be of a 'wholly superficial' kind. He claimed: 'although the Celtic element has contributed something to the peculiar development of Irish character and history, the part which it has played in later Irish history has been greatly exaggerated.'[80]

However, Lecky's own 'racial' identity, that of the Irishman of British and Protestant descent, his consciousness of his particular origin and his community's role in Irish history and its relations with the 'native' Irish, the problems for a national narrative associated with a history of cultural amalgamation *within* the nation, played itself out elsewhere in earlier formative writing. In *Leaders of Public Opinion in Ireland* Lecky had maintained the presence of 'profound difference in national type, character and

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[78] Treitschke, *Politics*, I, p. 280. Treitschke, *Politik*, I, p. 278.
[79] Treitschke, *Politics*, I, p. 271.
[80] W.E.H. Lecky, *History of Ireland*, I, pp. 397, 401.

interests that separates the Irish from the English people'. Here he sought most clearly to amalgamate the two great strands of his historical thinking: a certainty that history was driven by laws with a belief that in certain circumstances notable individuals could 'direct' this process. 'There were, indeed', he continued, 'two distinct nations in Ireland, differing in race and creed, and in a great degree language, opposed to each other in interests, sympathies, and traditions'.[81] In the 1861 edition of the work, writing of early eighteenth century Ireland, Lecky expressed a view that he would come to later reject in the *History*: 'The two religions mark the lines of the antagonism but do not seem to have been the cause of it. The war was one of races and not of creeds.'[82] The first volume of *Leaders* is largely a great tribute to Lecky's hero of Irish history, the eighteenth-century Protestant politician Henry Grattan, who in Lecky's writing bears all the noblest qualities of the that group,[83] including a devoted loyalty to his Irish nationality alongside a fidelity to the connection of the common Crown between Ireland and Britain, in the context of the Empire as a kind of 'joint enterprise'.[84] He is consistently praised for displaying 'the compatibility of an ardent love of independence with a devoted attachment to the connection'[85] of the Crowns of Britain and Ireland. For Lecky, Grattan was the foremost representative of Lecky's own (ethnic) 'imagined community', the patriotic Irish gentry, and in his own time he longed for some new Grattan: 'They [the eighteenth-century Protestant Irish] valued the Irish Parliament not merely as the centre and organ of a strong national feeling, but also as an instrument for keeping the government of Ireland in the hands of the Irish gentry…the Irish Parliament was on the whole a vigilant and

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[81] W.E.H. Lecky, *Leaders of Public Opinion in Ireland*, vol. I (London, Longmans, 1903), ix, p. 18.

[82] W.E.H. Lecky, *Leaders of Public Opinion in Ireland* (London, Longmans, 1861), p. 18.

[83] Lecky, *Leaders*, I (1903), p. 101.

[84] Lecky, *Leaders* (1861), p. 41n.

[85] Lecky, *Leaders*, I (1903), p. 104.

intelligent guardian of the material interests of the country.'[86] Lecky's own patriotism and conception of Irishness was always deeply entwined with his own *Anglo-Irishness*, and more importantly a judgement that this community comprised the natural and best leadership of the Irish nation. He would have certainly disputed with Mitchel that Grattan was in any way a 'Celt', he rejected anti-English sentiment as part of any Irish nationalism. This is made clearer in comparing Lecky's mini-biography of Grattan with that of Daniel O'Connell, the foremost 'Celt' of his day, which comprised the entirety of the second volume of the 1903 revised edition of *Leaders*. Lecky represents O'Connell as firmly rooted in a community and ancestry that was practically the antithesis of Grattan's.[87] Yet even 'with all the impulsiveness, the quickness, the tact, and the versatility of the Celtic temperament', wrote Lecky, 'O'Connell combined most eminently other qualities which are more commonly associated with the Teutonic type…a steady ambition, never losing sight of its aim; a firm, practical grasp of the realities of things'.[88] Evidently O'Connell's more estimable qualities, to Lecky, were the less 'Celtic' or more 'Teutonic' ones, and he noted that the latter's 'great services he rendered to his country' had to be balanced against 'the fearful elements of discord and turbulence he evoked', such that 'it may be questioned whether his life was a blessing or a curse to Ireland.'[89] Lecky's life and politics, for the most part, straddled the worlds of Young Ireland patriotism and the unionism of most of the Protestant 'Ascendancy', a conflicted position was represented by the contrasts of Grattan and O'Connell. Though he regarded the moderate constitutionalist and anti-revolutionary Grattan as the exemplar of the patriotic Irishman, Lecky also knew that the Protestant community had provided

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[86] Ibid., pp. 281, 286.
[87] W.E.H. Lecky, *Leaders of Public Opinion in Ireland*, vol. II (London, Longmans, 1903), pp. 4-5, 201.
[88] Ibid., p. 6.
[89] Lecky, *Leaders*, II, p. 326.

some of Ireland's most determined revolutionaries. But such men are not dealt with, except perhaps as secondary actors, in *Leaders*. This 'Anglo-Irish'/'Gaelic Irish' contrast apparent in *Leaders* itself threw into light one of the perennial problems facing those who wished to write a unifying national historical narrative in Ireland, the continued presence of 'racial' distinctions, even in the highest and most refined levels of national life. Lecky knew very well that the 'Celtic' masses he was defending from Froude's calumnies were more than ever alienated from the Crown and Empire. The majority of the Protestant gentry scorned, thanks in no small measure to Ireland's post-1800 history, their own Irishness. While in certain passages in his *History* Lecky downplayed the importance of 'race' and a Celtic-Saxon dichotomy in Irish history he still possessed honed awareness of the 'battle of civilizations' *within* Ireland. While Lecky may have been inspired by elements of Young Ireland patriotism as a young man, his Grattan-O'Connell comparison in *Leaders* showed that 'race' could hardly be a unifying element in the Irish 'national' historical narrative for him. As Lecky demonstrated, Irish historians, unlike German historians, could not engage in ethnic 'othering' without in some way making at least an implicit point about the nature of communal relations *within* the bounds of the Irish nation. In the German context, ethnic 'othering' was generally applied to those considered to have no real place in the nation anyway, such as Slavs, Jews, and of course, the French.

VI

In Lecky's judgement – and as expressed in his *Leaders of Public Opinion* – the histories of 'diseased' nations like the Irish inevitably resulted in biography,[90] the study of a small number of men who expressed the life of the nation in their own time. In the absence of political continuity and nation-statehood the 'character' of the nation could be and was often expressed in these contexts in the biographies of its leading historical figures. The use of biography also allowed authors to project onto that which they were studying their own prejudices and opinions more easily, made it easier to incorporate a perspective of 'race' of one kind or another into the national historical narrative. The role of 'character', both collective and individual, the latter varying from heroism in battle to leadership in politics, supposedly represented the inherent nature of a people and provided narrative interest to emphasis on the strength and role of nations. A focus on historical personages gave discussions of 'race' in history a greater grounding and also provided a measure by which to judge the significance of 'race' in history. This tied into another important element in *German* national historiography specifically, alluded to above: the conception of the *Volk*, the *völkisch* idea. The primary importance of this conception, as George Mosse argued, was that it 'signified the union of a group of people with a transcendental "essence".' The concept of '*Volk*' represented: 'man's innermost nature, and represented the source of his creativity, his depth of feeling, his individuality'.[91] While not *all völkisch* 'thinkers' were historians, nor all German historians especially interested in the *Volk*, much of the importance of the concept lay in its usefulness as a source of historical *continuity* and emblem of historical

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[90] As a mature historian, however, Lecky was much less interested in the exploits of 'great men' than processes of intellectual and cultural change.

[91] George L. Mosse, *The Crisis of German Ideology: Intellectual Origins of the Third Reich* (New York, Schocken Books, 1962), p. 4.

distinctiveness, national peculiarity. If one may distinguish between an ubiquitous discourse of *Volk* as something synonymous with 'nation', and a more developed *völkisch* ideology or belief system, it is apparent that in the former sense, many mainstream nationalist historians such as Treitschke and Freytag thought about German history in terms of the '*Volk*', and at least regarded *völkisch* rhetoric with some importance. In the *Geschichte des alldeutschen Verbandes*, a publication of the Pan-German League, these men were plainly regarded as early exponents of the pan-German or *völkisch* idea.[92] 'Rootedness' was something constantly invoked' by *völkisch* writers: 'In the *völkisch* interpretation of history, the *Volk* was a historical unit that had come down to the present from a far and distant past…the *Volk* that had endured for centuries could not be destroyed nor permanently subjugated.'[93] This sense of antiquity 'conveyed the connotation of youth, of the moment of inception, when the pure, unadulterated, heroic and virtuous qualities of the *Volk* had been first thrust forth into history.' The aspirations of the modern *Volk* would have to be re-identified with its heroic past, 'Sybel had reaffirmed this imperative when he wrote that a nation had to cherish its historical ties, otherwise its *Volk* would come to resemble a tree deprived of its roots.'[94] As the history of Germany was clearly not that of a continuous nation-state, the point of departure for German history seemed to be necessarily the 'national' community of the Germans, from its origins – and their struggle with different *Völker*, struggle and enmity was central to this conception of history – from here sprung the substance of all history, on this nations and states arose.[95] To consider the individual characteristics that defined the '*Volk*': rootedness,

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[92] Bonhard, *Geschichte des alldeutschen Verbandes*, pp. 175-177.
[93] Mosse, *The Crisis of German Ideology*, p. 16.
[94] Ibid., p. 67. Sybel, 'Die Deutschem bei ihrem Einttrit', p. 44.
[95] Heinrich Class, *Deutsche Geschichte*, x-xi. Martin Spahn, 'Vom Volke zur Nation' (1925), in Martin Spahn, *Für den Reichsgendanke: Historisch-Politisch Aufsätze, 1915-1934* (Berlin, 1936), p. 44. Julia Schmid, *Kampf um das Deutschtum: Radikaler Nationalismus in Österreich und dem*

originality, endurance, antiquity, heroism; all these motifs can be found to be attributed to historical narratives of the 'Irish race', though the word *Volk* itself is distinctively German. As Johann Gustav Droysen expressed it, the *Volk* idea 'is a result of history, and it organises its own existence…Without the idea human existence would not have an essential direction. The idea of the *Volk* is the constant, unifying, form-giving force, but it is not original, it is built on historical development. It does not remain the same, it is moving in history.'[96] What is absent from this particular description of *Volk* are any of the 'racial' notions expressed in terms of 'blood' and 'heredity' advanced by later *völkisch* theorists.

The historical category of the *Volk*, and its relation to the individual, stand at the centre of Gustav Freytag's *Bilder aus der deutschen Vergangenheit*:

> 'The course of life of a nation consists in the ceaseless working of the individual on the collective people, and the people on the individual…Spirit, nature, character are influenced and directed by and through political life, and the part which the individual has in the state gives him the highest honour, the most manly fortune…The clearest eye and the most ingenious judgement of the individual is contracted in comparison with the great unity of the people.'[97]

The *Völker* were the actors of history on which nations and states arose and fell, and their nature was expressed in certain historical personalities within them, and in Freytag's narrative, not only great personages, but 'the people' in general. Freytag sought to integrate the dimension of German history defined by emperors, kings, princes, and high politics with that defined by the sufferings and strivings of the

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Deutschen Reich, 1890-1944 (New York, Campus, 2009), pp. 179, 183. Echternkamp, *Der Aufstieg*, p. 337.
[96] Quoted in Frey and Jordan, 'National Historians and the Discourse of the Other', in *The Contested Nation*, p. 202.
[97] Freytag, *Pictures of German Life in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century*, I, pp. 1, 3. Freytag, *Bilder*, V, pp. 1-3.

German people as a whole.[98] In the first volume he claimed: 'in the soul of every man one may also find in miniature an image of the personality of the nation.' Freytag's interest in 'the German people' – more specifically the patriotic and Protestant *Bürgertum* – was underpinned by his conviction that their cultural unity had in fact long existed, since the Reformation, and provided the basis of any German political unity.[99] The 'story' of German history centred on the development of a national German citizenship and cultural community, on the basis of the unity of the *Volk*.[100] The corollary of this inner development was the Germans' journey towards the overcoming of foreign influences and foreign domination. Freytag, linking ancient, early modern, and recent past into a single, seamless nationalist narrative which incorporated the role of 'the Other', asserted: 'From the time [of Martin Luther] to the march of the German volunteers against Napoleon, the German spirit carried on a great defensive war against foreign influence, which issuing from Rome well-nigh overwhelmed those who had once been the conquerors of the Roman Empire.'[101] Here Freytag 'others' both Catholicism and Frenchness, and asserts the two as synonymous. As Luther united the Germans in opposition to Rome,[102] Frederick the Great renewed the great mission of the Germans first began under the great medieval emperors 'to carry laws, education, freedom, cultivation, industry into the east of Europe.'[103] The German *Volk* was consistently contrasted with the over-refined, effete, morally degenerate Latin peoples, and the barbaric and

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[98] Schmid, *Kampf um das Deutschtum*, p. 179. Quoted in Lynne Tatlock, 'Realist Historiography and the Historiography of Realism: Gustav Freytag's *Bilder aus der deutschen Vergangenheit*', *The German Quarterly*, 63, 1 (1990), p. 59.

[99] Ping, 'Gustav Freytag's *Bilder aus der deutschen Vergangenheit*', p. 550. Ping, *Gustav Freytag and the Prussian Gospel*, p. 208.

[100] Freytag, *Pictures of German Life in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, I, p. 8.

[101] Cited in Ping, 'Gustav Freytag's *Bilder aus der deutschen Vergangenheit*, pp. 553-554.

[102] "…powerfully did he [Luther] draw the whole nation along with him; he became their hero and model; the inward life of millions seemed concentrated in one man." Freytag, *Pictures of German Life in the Fifteenth, Sixteenth, and Seventeenth Centuries*, I, p. 111.

[103] Freytag, *Pictures of German Life in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, II, p. 98.

nation-less Slavic peoples (Freytag's own family hailed from Germany's eastern 'frontier'), a dichotomy which was presented as a fundamental, trans-historical truth. Though Germans had not always prevailed over the Slavs at every turn, they still possessed what the Slavs lacked, they key to their historical survival and flourishing as a nation: a greater *Kultur*. So it had been since the days of the first King of Germany, Henry, and the first *German* Holy Roman Emperor, his son Otto.[104] In the *Bilder*, some of the most important events in German history appear to be caused or take place in direct response to 'foreign influences'. 'The fate of Germany was decided by the election of Charles V', Freytag argued, in reference to Germany's early modern history, and Charles was 'least of all a German'. In the nineteenth century, it was France above all:

> 'Again did evil arise from France, and again did a new life spring from struggle against the enemy. It was not the first time that that country had inflicted deep wounds on German national strength, and had unintentionally awakened a new power which victoriously arrested her progress…For the German this period in the life of his nation has special significance. It was the first time that for many centuries political enthusiasm had burst forth in bright flames among the people.'[105]

The rise of German national feeling was the consequence not only of French aggression against Germany, but the 'natural' enmity of the two peoples. In Freytag's narrative, the 'great men' were significant as studies of the German *Volk*, and the most important were Luther, Gustavus Adolphus (sixteenth century King of Sweden), and Frederick the Great. The difficulties of presenting Gustavus, a foreign king who had been willing to subordinate German interests to Sweden's, and had even acted in concert with the French – the *Erbfeind* – and the Papacy were resolved by emphasising instead his heroic role as the saviour of Protestantism from the

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[104] Freytag, *Bilder*, II, pp. 159, 160.
[105] Freytag, *Pictures of German Life in the Fifteenth, Sixteenth, and Seventeenth Centuries*, I, p. 166. Freytag, *Pictures of the German Life in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, II, pp. 160, 211.

aggression of the Habsburgs. Protestant Christendom had found its greatest expression among the Germans, and, of course, Gustavus possessed Germanic ancestry through his Gothic forebears. While Gustavus was a Germanic ruler, the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V, a 'Spaniard', had enlisted the aid of every foreign nation in Europe in the service of its goal of yoking Protestant Germany to Catholic rule. [106] In employing Gustavus's Germanic 'racial' origins in the service of rendering continuity and cohesion to German 'national' history, Freytag identified Gustavus as a predecessor of and model for the dynasty which would eventually forge the German nation anew, the Hohenzollerns, along with identifying Protestantism as fundamentally German. The application of '*Deutschtum*' as a means of 'explaining' German history is not at all limited to particular periods, rather, it is a recurring theme, fittingly given Freytag's intent to chart the course of the '*Volksseele*' throughout the course of German history. In an early passage discussing the ancient *Germanen* encountered by Tacitus Freytag asserts that the Germans of the nineteenth century present were fundamentally the descendants of the ancient *Germanen*. [107] This heritage was 'indestructible' and made the modern German *Wesen* as original as it was in its earliest origins, and had accounted for the Germans' ability to assimilate other peoples into their *Kulturnation*. [108] Freytag leaves no doubt that the Romans regarded the ancient Germans as a great race, manly, freedom-

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[106] Freytag, *Gustav Freytag and the Prussian Gospel*, pp. 270, 271. The twentieth-century historian Dietrich Schäfer referred to Gustavus as a 'Nordic hero' and 'Scandinavian *Germanen*.' Schäfer, *Deutsche Geschichte, II*, p. 158.

[107] As satisfying for German nationalists as this notion might have been, it was strongly opposed by one of nineteenth-century Germany's greatest historians, the Theodor Mommsen, who criticized the 'Tacitean myth' as pure conceit. Theodor Mommsen, 'Reden zur Feier des Geburtstages des Friedrich des Grossen, 1886: Die Germania des Tacitus', in idem, *Reden und Aufsaetze*, p. 151.

[108] Freytag, *Bilder*, I, p. 35.

loving, and proud.[109] The *Germanen* of antiquity, the ancestors of the modern Germans, were a *Volk* of unbounded '*Lebenskraft*'.[110]

For Treitschke too Luther was a near-unrivalled hero of German history, not simply because he had broken the chains of Rome over the Germans, but because in him was concentrated all that was virtuous about the German nation. Treitschke did not accept that Gustavus Adolphus's 'foreignness' necessarily counted against him, because he was at least indisputably of Germanic descent, a 'Goth', and in Treitschke's account keenly aware of this: 'He [Gustavus Adolphus] rejoiced to know that in his own veins ran pure the blood of Gothic heroes.' Gustavus had done the German nation an inestimable service in defending it from the predations of the Habsburgs even though his ultimate aim may have been the expansion of his own kingdom. Treitschke, like Freytag, 'nationalized' Gustavus Adolphus primarily by presenting him as of Germanic descent and as the heroic defender of the Protestant (and essentially Germanic) Reformation, therefore making him a great Germanic historical personality.[111] With the rise of Frederick the Great, modern Germany had finally gained 'a heroic figure upon which the whole nation could gaze with wondering admiration…which…forced the Germans to believe once again in the wonders of the heroic age…he restored truth to a place of honour in German statecraft, as of old had done Martin Luther in the spheres of German thought and belief.'[112] In a single passage, Treitschke brings these three great Germanic and national heroes together into a continuity of the manifestation of '*Deutschtum*' throughout the centuries. There is a parallel in the Irish context, where in the writings of Young Irelanders and Mitchel and popular Catholic writers like Sullivan and

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[109] Freytag, *Bilder*, I, p. 51.
[110] Ibid., p. 95.
[111] Heinrich von Treitschke, 'Gustavus Adolphus and Germany's Freedom', pp. 261, 266, 286.
[112] Treitschke, *History of Germany*, I, pp. 57, 58.

McGee, the different generations of Irish 'national' heroes from the Catholic warrior prince Hugh O'Neill to the Protestant patriots of the eighteenth century were integrated into a single historical thread defined by their 'nationalism'. In McGee's *Popular History*, we find the following depiction of Hugh O'Neill, towards the end of his war against the English Crown as assuming the status of a ruler of Ireland in the manner of the old High Kings, and accepted as such by both Gaelic and 'Old English' lords. [113] In Sullivan's *Story of Ireland* Hugh O'Neill represents the embodiment of 'the last struggle of the ancient native rule to sustain itself against the conquerors'. The chapter dealing with O'Neill's war in Sullivan's narrative is revealingly titled: 'How Hugh formed a Great National Confederacy and built a Nation once more on Irish soil'. [114] Henry Grattan, that scion of Protestant Anglo-Ireland, appears perhaps surprisingly in a quite favourable light in McGee's *History*, there is no doubt left that 'he was an Irishman, proud and fond of his country, and a sincere lover of the largest religious liberty.' [115] As Lecky and Mitchel had done with the Protestant Irish patriots such as Grattan and Wolfe Tone, Treitschke narrated Frederick as representing the dawning of a new age; as the heir of previous fighters for 'German freedom' against foreign enemies, be they French, Poles, or Germany's enemies in the Habsburg Empire. 'In the mouth of Frederick', wrote Treitschke, 'the old and greatly misused expression "German freedom" acquired a new and nobler meaning…it was to signify the formation of a great German power which should defend the fatherland'. Even when he was *not* acting out his historically-ordained tasks, Frederick was no less an authentic patriot and his well-known preference for French culture was downplayed or simply presented as a strange oddity, an anomaly

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[113] McGee, *Popular History*, II, p. 436.
[114] Sullivan, *The Story of Ireland*, pp. 339, 271.
[115] McGee, *Popular History*, II, p. 649.

resulting from Germany's historical subjection to and penetration by foreign influences since the Thirty Years' War.[116] Treitschke's 'Germanization' of Frederick and Prussia and the Prussian dynasty represents how a discourse of '*Volk*' or '*Deutschtum*' presupposing cultural and political unity was employed in his narrative. The ways in which, in both contexts, particular individuals were incorporated into the nationalist historical narrative underlines how 'race' or *Volk* and 'race thinking' were subordinated to the definition of the nation rather than the other way around. Gustavus Adolphus was a German hero as much because of his deeds done for the Protestant German nation as his purported ancestry. The Habsburg dynasty, though of Germanic ancestry, and had 'othered' themselves from the nation, in view of *Kleindeutsche* writers, primarily because of their Catholicism. Irishmen of English ancestry and Gaelic provincial dynasts alike were elevated to heroic status because of their supposed enmity towards England. It was the 'moral' or 'philosophical' function of 'race' as a means for expressing national 'enmity' that occluded the inconsistencies brought up by thinking about 'national' history in terms of descent and ancestry.

Freytag's *Bilder aus der deutschen Vergangenheit* was one of the most important German nationalist historical narratives within which the *Volk* was the central concept. From 1878 to 1881, one of the most important such narratives produced in an Irish context, was the three-part *History of Ireland* of Standish James O'Grady (1846-1928), one of 'the most enigmatic and influential figures of late-nineteenth century Irish cultural history'. In contrast to Freytag, O'Grady did not attempt to survey the entire span of Irish history; rather his interest was focused on the pre-medieval and early medieval periods of that history. O'Grady too, however, placed

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[116] Treitschke, *History of Germany*, I, pp. 58, 60, 61, 93.

the heroism and virtue of the people, the Irish people, at the centre of his histories. His ambiguous politics aside, O'Grady would still come to have a significant influence on such diverse individuals as Yeats, AE Russell, and Patrick Pearse (though it took him a long while to achieve real success – his historical works, in a marked contrast to Freytag's, were commercially unsuccessful and little-noted on publication), and become regarded as the 'Father of the Celtic Revival'.[117] O'Grady rejected a sharp distinction between history and literature; or rather he simply did not believe the two to be antithetical. What mattered to him was 'the essential qualities of historical characters and the nature of the impression which they made on their contemporaries.' If this is somewhat reminiscent of Freytag's predominant concern in his not with high politics and diplomacy but the 'lived experience' of 'the people', Freytag would have wholly rejected O'Grady's reluctance to distinguish between historiography and literature.[118] In the simplest terms, the first volume of *History of Ireland*, the introductory essay notwithstanding, reads more like literature while the second, pointedly titled *History of Ireland: Critical and Philosophical*, reads much more like the work of an author determined to be taken seriously as an historian. O'Grady admitted in the preface to *History of Ireland: Critical and Philosophical*, that while the first volume had been written with the intent of 'bringing remote times and men vividly before the mind's eye, and within the reach of common human sympathies', the second offered 'an altogether different order of historical

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[117] Gregory Castle, 'Nobler forms: Standish James O'Grady's *History of Ireland* and the Irish Literary Revival', in Lawrence L. McBride (ed.), *Reading Irish Histories: Texts, Contexts, and Memory in Modern Ireland* (Dublin, Four Courts Press, 2003), p. 157.Sean Farrell Moran, 'History, Memory, and Education: Teaching the Irish Story', in *Reading Irish Histories*, p. 214. Sean Farrell Moran, *Patrick Pearse and the Politics of Redemption: The Mind of the Easter Rising, 1916* (Washington, D.C., Catholic University of America Press, 1994), p. 52; W.B. Yeats, *The Autobiography of William Butler Yeats* (New York, Macmillan, 1926; New York, Collier, 1974), p. 284. O'Grady himself, troubled by ill mental health in his later years, died in England in 1928, in any case disillusioned by the political course Irish nationalism had taken. Foster, *The Irish Story*, p. 14.

[118] Nissen, *Populäre Geschichtsschreibung*, p. 301.

composition...critical, not constructive or imaginative.'[119] O'Grady had written: 'To express *the whole nature of a race or nation,* the artist needs that absolute freedom which is only supplied by a complete escape from positive history and unyielding despotic fact.'[120] 'In history', he repeated, 'there must be sympathy, imagination, creation.'[121] In this way only could that supreme form of civilisation, 'the ideal of the race', be realised.[122] O'Grady saw the historian's task as grasping the inner significance of events to create a unifying event. On the other hand, in the same essay he argued fervently for the historical veracity of his source material.[123] O'Grady's 'ideal of the race', so forcibly expressed in the ancient and early medieval bardic literature which first ignited his interest in Irish history, could ameliorate the effect of the manifest failure of the Irish to achieve stable and lasting political unity throughout their history.[124] The result of his aim was, so argues one scholar, the first notable 'popular interpretation of Ireland's mythical past.'[125] As noted in the previous chapter, the mythical warrior hero CúChulainn, of whom O'Grady wrote a great deal, served as the embodiment of the heroic Irish of the distant past who were the centre of his *History of Ireland*.

As Freytag did in his *Bilder*, O'Grady wrote history not only to create an inspiring national narrative, to inspire the modern Irish towards the 'recovery' of ancient noble and heroic ideas and to extol the pre-eminence of these ancestors among the peoples of Europe, but to situate his own particular community within the Irish historical

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[119] O'Grady, *History of Ireland: Critical and Philosophical*, iii.

[120] Standish J. O'Grady, 'Introduction to *The Bardic History of Ireland*', in Standish J. O'Grady, *Selected Essays and Passages* (Dublin, Talbot Press, 1918), pp. 42-43.

[121] Standish J. O'Grady, *History of Ireland: The Heroic Period* (London, Sampson Low, Searle, Marston & Rivington, 1878), iv.

[122] Lucy Pereira, 'The Victorian Fathers of the Irish Literary Revival: The Treatment of the Deirdre Myth by Samuel Ferguson and Standish James O'Grady', in *Irish Studies Review*, 14, 1 (2006), p. 81.

[123] Michael McAteer, *Standish O'Grady, AE, and Yeats: History, Politics, Culture* (Dublin, Irish Academic Press, 2002), p. 37.

[124] Pereira, 'The Victorian Fathers of the Irish Literary Revival', p. 84.

[125] Joost Augusteijn, 'The Origins of Irish Nationalism in a European Context', in *Life on the Fringe?* p. 33.

narrative. O'Grady's historical writing centred on the heroic times of Irish antiquity and ancient heroes, the 'kings, the chieftains, and knights of the heroic age of Ireland.'[126] This preoccupation was itself characteristically modern: he wanted to demonstrate that the Irish had always been at least capable of uniting under a 'national' leadership characterized by intelligence and beneficence, even if they had generally failed to do so.[127] In O'Grady's recurrent concern with the warrior ethos or martial values we find an Irish counterpart to the 'ideal of masculinity' present in contemporary continental Europe explicated by Mosse, itself an appeal for personal and national regeneration.[128] O'Grady, like Lecky, regarded the Protestant aristocracy and gentry as the natural leadership stratum of Irish society, but was equally conscious of the 'alienation' of much of this community from its own Irishness during the course of the nineteenth century. His romantic form of history, centred on the recovery of heroic values and virtuous elite leadership, on 'an imaginative reconstruction of the past which would thrill the blood', was if anything directed more to this readership than any other.[129] In choosing not to write about those historical periods which had formed the divisions present in modern Irish life, O'Grady went back as far as the pre-Christian period, though this was necessarily in large part an 'imaginative' exercise. For O'Grady, Irish history did not begin with the coming of Saint Patrick. 'Foreigners are surprised', he wrote, 'to find the Irish claim for their own country an antiquity and a history prior to that of neighbouring countries', and that, uniquely, 'The indigenous history of the surrounding nations

[126] Standish J. O'Grady, 'Introduction to The Bardic History of Ireland', p. 26.

[127] Donald MacNamara, 'Editor's Introduction', in Standish O'Grady, *History of Ireland, vol. II, Critical and Philosophical* (Dublin, Maunsel Press, 2011), xxvii.

[128] O'Grady, *History of Ireland: Critical and Philosophical*, p. 391. Joseph Nugent, 'The Sword and the Prayerbook: Ideals of Authentic Irish Manliness', *Victorian Studies*, 50, 4 (2008), p. 589. Foster, *The Oxford History of Modern Ireland*, p. 240. Geraldine Higgins, 'Carlyle's Celtic Congregation: Reviving the Irish Hero', in C.C. Barfoot (ed.), *Victorian Keats and Romantic Carlyle: The Fusions and Confusions of Literary Periods* (Amsterdam, Rodopi, 1999), p. 217.

[129] Martin Williams, 'Ancient Mythology and Revolutionary Ideology in Ireland, 1878-1916', *The Historical Journal*, 26, 2 (1983), p. 310.

commences with the Christian ages – that of Ireland runs back into the pre-Christian.' What remained preserved, throughout the ruptured course of Irish history, were timeless virtues of 'warlike prowess, physical beauty, generosity, hospitality, a love of family and nation, and all those attributes which constituted the heroic character'.[130] These attributes were part of an enduring 'racial' identity and heritage, which in the present men of various ancestries could possess. O'Grady's Irish past was a mirror for the present generation, regardless of political position:[131] 'The gigantic conceptions of heroism and strength, with which the forefront of Irish history is thronged, prove the great future of this race and land, of which the mere contemplation of the actual results of time might even cause the patriot to despair.'[132] Anyone of whatever political persuasion who wanted information on the heritage of Gaelic Ireland and could not read Gaelic would likely have turned to O'Grady's writing. [133] As in Freytag's *Bilder*, in O'Grady's *History* certain historical personages, and even (in O'Grady's case) mythical ones, such as CúChulainn the 'Hound of Ulster', have the significance of illustrating certain historical life-patterns themselves indicative of the political and social order that produced them. [134] O'Grady saw that the only way to free 'Irishness' from the divisive and narrowing influence of confessional allegiance was to relocate how it was to be defined through a narrative on the 'racial' character and virtues of the unsullied Irish of the distant past. This is not fundamentally unlike how Freytag wrote the *Bilder* in order to defend the claim of the Protestant (preferably North German) *Bildungsbürgertum* to be the cradle and substance of the modern German nation. Tatlock has shown that

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[130] O'Grady, 'Introduction to the Bardic Literature of Ireland', pp. 37, 38, 39.
[131] Donald MacNamara, 'Editor's Introduction', in Standish O'Grady, *History of Ireland, vol. I: The Heroic Period, and Cuchulainn and his Contemporaries* (Dublin, Maunsel Press, 2011), ix.
[132] O'Grady, 'Introduction', p. 43.
[133] Williams, 'Ancient Mythology and Revolutionary Ideology', p. 311.
[134] McAteer, *Standish O'Grady*, pp. 39, 40.

whatever Freytag asserted about the integrity of his *Bilder* as historiography, he took an explicitly subjective view of history, with his sources carefully selected to undergird his conception of German history as the flourishing of the *Bürgertum*.[135] Historiography as having a specific contemporary purpose was a point of commonality for the romantic O'Grady and the realist historian Freytag. There are also parallels between O'Grady's writing and that of other German writers.

In applying 'race thinking' to Irish history, O'Grady's focus was of course on 'race' as a politico-cultural idea rather than a notion of fixed ancestries of blood. He claimed early Ireland as the homeland and the final repository of the ideal of chivalry and the warrior ethos of Europe.[136] In situating his ancient Irish within a wider European context, that of the declining Western Roman Empire, he asserted, rather like Dahn did of the ancient *Germanen*, that it had been these Celts, rather than the degenerate Latins, who had comprised its vital lifeblood.[137] As Dahn in his historical epic *Struggle for Rome* claimed that the Empire foundered on the onslaughts of the Germanic tribes, O'Grady maintained that the Irish brought about its ruin when they swept into Britannia and Gaul as conquerors, subjugating the degenerate Romanized native populations with ease. Dahn and O'Grady, in their narratives, shared disdain for Roman Christianity: it had been a force for disunity and had weakened the original cultural vitality of the peoples it reached.[138] Even so, while ancient 'Britain' fell to pieces under repeated foreign onslaughts, there had arisen in Ireland from this time a conception of national solidarity manifested in the High Kingship. O'Grady seems to undermine here a stock-in-trade anti-Irish argument; that the Irish, not

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[135] For example, he placed various fictional accounts and stories on an equal footing with eye-witness accounts, using them to demonstrate the continuity of 'German values' such as 'loyalty, sense of duty, sentimentality, warmth, enthusiasm, industry, democratic sensibilities.' Tatlock, 'Realist Historiography', pp. 60, 66.

[136] Standish J. O'Grady, *The Story of Ireland* (London, G. Allen & Unwin, 1894), p. 25.

[137] Ibid., p. 36. O'Grady, *History of Ireland: Critical and Philosophical*, p. 368.

[138] O'Grady, *The Story of Ireland*, p. 70.

having experienced the benefits of civility conferred by Roman rule, had been conditioned for backwardness and barbarity. In an article published in the *English Historical Review* in 1889 O'Grady asserted confidently that 'The history of Ireland in the eleventh and twelfth centuries is the history of a race evolving its monarchy.'[139] This interpretation subverted the notion that Gaelic Ireland had always merely 'the scene of wasteful tribal confusions…girt by a little illuminated fringe of Danish order and civilisation.'[140] In *History of Ireland* he refers rather to the strivings of a nation 'fulfilling its part in the great national confraternity of the world.'

O'Grady's contrasting of Celtic, Irish heroism in history, even in the distant past, with British or Anglo-Saxon degeneracy, and his aspiration for a modern return to such heroic values were leitmotifs of his historical writing. A transitional figure in many respects, O'Grady sought to provide a potentially inclusive history for the divided Ireland of his day based on an idealized distant past, and his historical notability lay much less in his immediate popularity (which was lacking), than in his influence on the like of Yeats, and the power of his Irish warrior narrative to *fin-de-siécle* Irish nationalism.[141]

O'Grady's *History of Ireland* and interest in ancient history as the locus of national history owes much in terms of the broader cultural background to the work of a German historian published a generation before. In 1835 the renowned Romantic historian and linguistic scholar Jacob Grimm had published the three-volume *Teutonic Mythology*, which, despite its name, was a comprehensive history of Germanic antiquity. There are interesting parallels between O'Grady's work and this

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[139] Standish J. O'Grady, 'The Last Kings of Ireland', *English Historical Review*, 4, 14 (1889), p. 287. O'Grady, *History of Ireland, The Heroic Period*, p. 39. F.J. Byrne, 'The trembling sod: Ireland in 1169', in Art Cosgrove (ed.), *A New History of Ireland, vol. II, Medieval Ireland, 1169-1534* (Oxford, Clarendon, 1987), p. 4. McAteer, *Standish O'Grady*, p. 22.
[140] O'Grady, 'The Last Kings of Ireland', p. 289.
[141] Clare O'Halloran, *Golden Ages and Barbarous Nations: Antiquarian Debate and Cultural Politics in Ireland: c. 1750-1800* (Cork, Cork University Press, 2004), p. 185.

one. In this work Grimm had sought the historical roots of Germanness in the distant, pre-medieval past, and had an ambiguous outlook on the specific political nationalism of the 1840s and 1850s, distrusting, as he and his brother Wilhelm Grimm were, of Prussian claims to represent the German nation.[142] The first part of *Teutonic Mythology* was concerned with the religious world of the *Germanen*, the second and third with their mythical outlook, and view of nature and the afterlife. The material in which the Grimms were interested and which formed the basis of this work included myth, legend, epic narrative, folk tales, rituals, laws, and most of all, the history of the Germanic languages. As O'Grady would, Grimm pointed out that in the early medieval period the coming of Christianity had actually meant cultural dilution and subjection to a foreign philosophy, culture, and power, in the form of Rome.[143] He emphasized how invaluable were historical accounts from the pre-medieval period, in the German context, the *Germania* of Tacitus.[144] In the preface of the second edition to *Teutonic Mythology*, Grimm criticized the dismissive tendencies of German scholars when it came to the study of the *Germanen* on their own terms.[145] To Grimm, 'to deny the reality of this mythology is as much as to impugn the high antiquity and continuity of our language: to every nation a belief in gods was as necessary as language.'[146] Nothing could have been further from the truth than the idea that whole centuries of pre-medieval German history were filled with 'soulless barbarism'. Rather, 'one has only to recognise the mild and manly spirit of our higher antiquity in the power and purity of the national laws'. With a statement that seems to foreshadow O'Grady, Grimm wrote, 'the popular tradition of

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[142] Toewes, *Becoming Historical*, p. 318.
[143] Jacob Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology*, vol. I, trans. J.S. Stallybrass (London, George Bell & Sons, 1882), p. 4.
[144] Ibid., p. 9.
[145] Jacob Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology*, vol. III, trans. J.S. Stallybrass (London, George Bell & Sons, 1883), v.
[146] Ibid., vi.

today hangs by threads which ultimately link it without a break to ancient times.'[147]

It was essential that this tradition be understood on its own terms, on its own merit, and not adulterated in any way by the application of foreign concepts or prejudices.[148] Yet no national tradition could truly be regarded as 'pure': 'Every nation seems instigated by nature to isolate itself, to keep itself untouched by foreign ingredients', and yet, 'nations border upon nations, and peaceful intercourse or war blend their destinies into one. From their combinations will come unexpected results, whose gain deserves to be weighed against the loss entailed by the suppression of the domestic elements.' Grimm, like O'Grady, also thought to compare the *Germanen* favourably with other peoples: 'All that is left to us of the Celtic religion, even in stray fragments, bespeaks a more finished mental culture than is to be found in German or Norse mythology…But in respect of genius and epic matter our memorials are incomparably superior.'[149] Like O'Grady would Grimm emphasised the Christianity throughout Europe was from the start of every conversion commingled with earlier mythologies, which irrevocably shaped the character of individual 'national' variations of Christianity.[150] For Grimm, all the evidence supplied by serious and fair study of German mythology demonstrated that the *Germanen* had been a fundamentally virtuous people, rich soil from which a nation could grow.[151] Their religious rites, for example, had made it both necessary and natural that the Reformation would begin in German-speaking Europe.[152] Their ancient texts and traditions had been comparable to anything produced by the ancient

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[147] Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology*, III, vii-viii, xi.
[148] Ibid., xiii. Toewes, *Becoming Historical*, p. 332.
[149] Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology*, xxiv, xxx.
[150] Ibid., xxxviii. Toewes, *Becoming Historical*, p. 349.
[151] Toewes, *Becoming Historical*, p. 355.
[152] Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology*, III, xlvii-l. Toewes, *Becoming Historical*, pp. 357-358.

Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans.[153] Concluding the lengthy preface, Grimm wrote, 'Having observed that her Language, Laws, and Antiquities were greatly underrated, I was wishful to exalt my native land.'[154] With such thinking O'Grady would no doubt have found himself in full agreement; his histories could not have been written had it not been for Romanticism. Even if the Grimms had not had to deal with the same kind of cultural ambivalence that O'Grady would, for Jacob Grimm, his own engagement with the German past had been born out of an enduring sense of the 'shame and humiliation' inflicted on Germany at the beginning of the nineteenth century by the French occupation. The importance of the past, in this regard, was that it could serve as an 'invisible defensive umbrella against the enemy's arrogance.'[155] Jacob Grimm had of course been a central figure in German Romanticism, and fully believed in the importance of intuition in the recovery of the distant past, given its 'otherness'. The past's 'otherness' demanded 'scholarly reconstruction' in order to serve 'the revitalization of indigenous identity in the present.' In the study of the ancient past was to be found 'the communal being of Germanic culture.'[156]

The confluence of history and literature in the synthesis of a national narrative centred on a narrative of *Volk* or entwining of race and nation identifiable in O'Grady, and to a lesser extent in Freytag, is also present in one of the most popular German historical narrative ever to employ the concept of the *Volk*, Felix Dahn's immensely popular historical novel *Kampf um Rom* (*Struggle for Rome*), which reached one hundred and ten editions by 1918.[157] *Kampf um Rom* centred on the conflict of the Gothic Kingdom of Italy and the Byzantine Empire of Emperor

[153] Toewes, *Becoming Historical*, p. 330.
[154] Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology*, III, lv.
[155] Toewes, *Becoming Historical*, p. 320.
[156] Ibid., pp. 323, 330.
[157] Schmid, *Kampf um das Deutschtum*, pp. 183, 188.

Justinian at the dawn of the medieval period.[158] The purpose of the narrative however was a critique of the inadequacies of the Germans in the present, lacking as they were those marks of distinction that were to be celebrated in their Gothic 'ancestors'[159] – as with O'Grady, there is a contrast between ancient virtue and modern decadence – warn them against the errors of disunity and anti-national cosmopolitanism that had led to the downfall of the Goths – again, similarly to O'Grady who intended his work to be a unifying narrative – and sound a rallying cry for a national revival – once again, this was central to O'Grady's purpose. Written just after Italian unification, the book expressed Dahn's hopes for German unification. Throughout the text war and struggle, the contest of 'nations' for survival, and indeed for supremacy over each other, are praised as essential to the forging of great nations.[160] Dahn's praise of the Germans' 'ancestors', his narrative of early German history and the *völkisch leitmotif* of his writing made him a hero to the *völkisch* movement.[161] Perhaps no single figure of such popularity did more to characterize and define the *Germanenbild* of his time as Dahn.[162]

The book is from the outset suffused with a discourse of national enmity: Italians are 'deadly enemies'; Greeks (Byzantines) are 'despicable', a 'race of vipers'. The 'Romanized' and Hellenized' tendencies of the Goths in Italy represent their degeneration. For this decline to be reversed a revival of 'nationality' was needed. Fidelity to one's own race and nationality is presented as 'the highest sentiment of the human heart', and 'the strongest power in the human soul.' It was better that the

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[158] Hans Rudolf Wahl, *Die Religion des deutschen Nationalismus: Eine mentalitätsgeschichtliche Studie zur Literatur des Kaiserreichs* (Heidelberg, Winter, 2002), p. 59. Schmid, *Kampf um das Deutschtum*, p. 187.

[159] Kipper, *Germanenmythos*, p. 124.

[160] Wahl, *Die Religion des deutschen Nationalismus*, pp. 69-70.

[161] Schmid, *Kampf um das Deutschtum*, pp. 188-189.

[162] Kurt Frech, 'Felix Dahn: Die Verbreitung völkischen Gedankenguts durch den historischen Roman', in *Handbuch zur Völkischen Bewegung*, p. 685.

Goths should die glorious in battle against their enemies than to become like them.[163]

To compound his image of Roman villainy, Dahn even has a Jewish character express admiration and gratitude to the fair and just Goths for bringing an end to the incomparable tyranny of the Romans.[164] Repeatedly, cultural mixing is portrayed as unnatural and damaging, the Goths' decline is linked repeatedly with their habitation in Italy, a foreign land, among foreigners.[165] However, perhaps the greatest villain in the story is actually a Goth, the cowardly and treacherous Theodahad; who conspires with the Romans to betray his people to the Emperor, so that his family might be permitted to rule in Italy.[166] Conflict among nationalities is natural and not to be condemned; what is abhorrent is betrayal of one's own people, which, pointedly, included 'miscegenation' for Dahn, which weakens the 'purity' of one's own race.[167] In the second volume, the Goths, unsupported by their fellow Germanic peoples, are defeated by the Byzantines, who invade Italy. This conquest is presented as such a tyranny that the Goths and Italians are finally united in opposition as a result.[168] Yet this is still an unnatural combination, and in the end the Goths are ultimately defeated. In the course of the final volume, Dahn introduced the character of the Norse king Harald, who serves as a kind of voice of conscience for the Gothic protagonists, his racial kindred. He upbraids them for their continued Romanized tendencies and reminds them that they will always be strangers in Italy. So, unsurprisingly, after their final defeat the last remaining Goths choose to leave Italy,

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[163] Felix Dahn, *The Struggle For Rome*, vol. I, trans. L. Wolffsohn (London, 1878), pp. 9-12, 13-14, 15, 16.

[164] Ibid., pp. 282-288. Mosse has argued that a latent anti-Semitism underpinned the work, where there is a distinction between the good Jew in the service of the Goths, and the morally and physically repulsive 'dirty Jew'. Mosse, 'The image of the Jew in German Popular Culture: Felix Dahn and Gustav Freytag', in *Publications of the Leo Baeck Institute, Year Book II* (1957), pp. 218-227.

[165] Dahn, *Struggle for Rome*, I, p. 41, 116-117.

[166] Ibid., p. 334-335.

[167] Kipper, *Germanenmythos*, p. 135.

[168] Dahn, *Struggle for Rome*, vol. III, pp. 43, 54-55.

with the help of the Norsemen returning to their natural and true home in the North.[169] Even though the Goths are defeated, the 'race', through a shedding of foreign ways, survives, and may yet be revived. O'Grady and Dahn both regarded the personages that drove their narratives – the ancient Irish warrior heroes and kings for O'Grady, the Goths and their enemies for Dahn – as essentially historical, but they become in these works characters intended to impart ideas and values that had everything to do with modern nationalism rather than actual early Irish or early German culture and society.

One would only need to substitute every use of the word 'Goth' in the *Struggle for Rome* for 'German' to understand its significance and utility for German nationalism. A demand and claim is put forth by Dahn in this narrative for the all-encompassing willingness of the German to suffer and sacrifice for the nation. A perspective which justified the employment of all means for the preservation and strengthening and preservation of the national *Volkstum* is elevated to the level of foundation for all political action.[170] The abandonment of the Goths by other *Germanen*, who stand on the side of the Byzantines, is presented as a cause of the Goths' defeat; the Byzantines owed their victory only to the might of Germanic warriors who fought for them, degenerated as they may have been. The other side of this claim is, therefore, that no foreign enemy can succeed in destroying or subjugating the Germans out of its own power, so long as the Germans hold together and remember their common nationality, a conceit that goes back to Arndt, if not further, and one

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[169] Here also is an illustration of the typically *völkisch* emphasis on the centrality of nation's native land for its historical identity, but also an example of the broader historiographical nationalist tendency to unite 'race' and 'national territory', or to present the nation and its geographical setting as fundamentally indivisible.

[170] Wahl, *Die Religion des deutschen Nationalismus*, pp. 71, 75.

which long retained currency, in pan-German, *völkisch* circles. [171] A bourgeois nationalist self-consciousness and set of virtues, which would have been entirely foreign to the actual late antiquity/early medieval Goths whom Dahn admired, was carefully delineated. The work, for all its pretence in representing actual historical events, projects in an imagined historical space the desires, hopes, dreams, and fears of a nineteenth-century bourgeois nationalist, as was so common in nineteenth-century national historical narrative in general. As with O'Grady's work, in *Struggle for Rome*, history seems to be the product and sum of individual achievements and sacrifices – and therefore able to be repeated and replicated. [172] Dahn nonetheless remained convinced that the fundamental structure of his book could stand the test of serious scholarly question and examination, in terms of its 'authenticity'. He was convinced of the fundamental distinction between historiography and literature apparently evidenced in his work. He does not share however Freytag's confident liberal sense of optimism and of inevitable progress, of history as possessing a teleological progression; rather, history is a sequence of rise and decline and inevitable degeneration from greatness and loss of heroic values. [173] The same sense of history as cycle of rise, degeneracy, and fall, is present in Standish O'Grady's historical thought and was a common inheritance of both nationalist historiographies.

IX

In the twentieth century, the entwined discourses of 'race' in the nation's history and of national enmity, as well as the ambiguous view of cultural amalgamation remained enduring, particularly, of course, in the context of open violent conflict. The continued importance of the Franco-German antagonism and attendant discourse

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[171] Arndt, *Ansichten und Aussichten*, p. 116. Bonhard, *Geschichte des alldeutschen Verbandes*, p. 134. Wahl, *Die Religion des deutschen Nationalismus*, p. 86.
[172] Frech, 'Felix Dahn', p. 693.
[173] Kipper, *Germanenmythos*, pp. 127, 129, 137.

of national enmity running through Sybel's and Treitschke's writings is borne out in the beginning of one of Johannes Haller's most important and popular works, written in 1930: 'It is a frequent occurrence in the life of nations, almost the rule, that neighbours are not friends…we must expect to see them play their parts on the scene of history as permanent opponents.' This is the opening of *France and Germany: The History of One Thousand Years* (*Tausend Jahre deutsch-französischer Beziehungen*).[174] Haller's starting point in this work was a judgement that the connections between France and Germany, so close were they; made it possible and appropriate to speak for both nations of an intertwined fate, going all the way back to the two nations' common origins in Charlemagne's empire. Yet not, however, of a common or entwined *fortune*; rather, the fortunes of the French and German nations changed and varied as befitting the two nations' position as permanent, or at the very least historical, opponents. When France's power and prestige rose, Germany's fell; when Germany's rose, France's fell. Beginning the narrative, Haller staked an 'Arndtian' claim of Germany rather than France manifesting greater, more direct continuity with the Carolingian Empire. After the fall of that Empire, it was its eastern half which remained Germanic, whereas the western half was absorbed into the alien and inferior population of what became France. Herein the French and German nations came into existence, and 'Thus for about a thousand years the German and the French nations have been contrasted and have stood as opposites.' It was natural that 'From the very first day of the existence of a German realm and a

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[174] Johannes Haller, *France and Germany: The History of One Thousand Years*, trans. D. von Beseler (London, Constable, 1932), p. 1. This work in its English translation found at least one Irish reviewer in a leading journal. W.J.W., 'Review of *France and Germany* by Professor Johannes Haller', *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review*, 22, 85 (1933), pp. 173-174. Johannes Haller, *Tausend Jahre deutsch-französischer Beziehungen* (Stuttgart, J.G. Cotta, 1930), p. 1.

French realm they were antagonistic to each other'.[175] From around 1250 'the roles of the two countries were exchanged: Germany occupied the place hitherto belonging to France…she abdicated as a great Power for centuries, while the French kingdom…became the leading Power in Europe.'[176] To Haller, then as always, 'The French believe in certain old traditions, attaching hopes and wishes to them that can only be fulfilled at the expense of Germany.'[177] This became clear again, and with more force than ever before, hundreds of years later, in the aftermath of the Thirty Years' War, when Louis XIV stood as a kind of overlord over a ruined Germany, free to annex western regions as he saw fit. It was from this time, Haller claimed, that *'The seed of Franco-German hereditary enmity had sprung up* (Haller's emphasis).'[178] French influence over Germany remained powerful and as always anti-national until the rise of Prussia. Still, a truly national German animosity towards France remained in the distant future, and the nadir of German history was reached in the Napoleonic conquest, as Haller makes clear, when the German people and their worthless rulers (with the exception of the King of Prussia) meekly accepted Napoleon's supremacy over Germany. Haller too saw an essential continuity between the imperial ambitions of Louis XIV and those of Napoleon. He too held the entire French nation responsible for Germany's abasement: 'The great mass of the nation…had no objection to the conquests, and especially those on German soil', they 'were nothing but the complete fulfilment of the very old national idea that the dominion of Europe was due to the French by virtue of their origin.'[179] While French expansion into Germany had been motivated by age-old imperial

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[175] Haller, *France and Germany*, pp. 6, 7. Haller, *Tausend Jahre*, p. 5. Arndt, *Ansichten und Aussichten*, p. 171.
[176] Ibid., p. 14. Ibid., pp. 11-12.
[177] Haller, *France and Germany*, p. 32.
[178] Ibid., p.64. Haller, *Tausend Jahre*, p. 52.
[179] Haller, *France and Germany*, pp. 94, 96, 97, 98, 101, 103. Haller, *Tausend Jahre*, pp. 76-82, 84.

ideas, later German conquest of French territory – the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine – were motivated by nothing more than the need to erect a bulwark to defend Germany from future French threats.[180]

Prussia's victory in 1870 had changed the course of Franco-German history: no longer would Germany's fortunes be, as they had been since the mid-thirteenth century, subject to the whims of France. Yet little was changed within the French nation, so that 'In 1914, too, its [France's] war aims were the same as they had been at all times during the last three centuries.' This was the enduring continuity of the Franco-German relationship, the hereditary enmity, throughout history.[181] It was fitting enough that Haller admitted that he wrote the work precisely to inspire young German patriotic readers to revise the boundaries set by the Treaty of Versailles.[182] In his foreword he made clear that it was not his intention in the book to contribute to 'gelehrte Forschung', but rather to demonstrate to German readers 'the fact' that France had in its attitude to Germany always been motivated by the same drive for conquest and domination.[183] In *Epochs of German History* Haller had displayed an obvious concern with 'the *Volk*' as historical actor:

> 'the character of a people, its innate qualities and defects and the limits of its capacity
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> are revealed in the course of its centuries of active life, of achievement and failure… if
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> the nature and character of a people undergo modification, is it not then above all that it
>
> becomes an imperative duty for anyone who has to do with the nation as it is to
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> recognize these changes and trace them to their origin?'[184]

In this work Haller often decried the absence of a strong and popular spirit of nationality in German history, especially amongst German rulers, itself cause and

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[180] Haller, *France and Germany*, pp. 219, 221, 222, 223.
[181] Ibid., p. 267, 274. Haller, *Tausend Jahre*, pp. 219, 226.
[182] Alice Gallin, *Midwives to Nazism: University Professors in Weimar Germany, 1925-1933* (Macon, GA, Mercer University Press, 1986), p. 31.
[183] Haller, *Tausend Jahre*, vii.
[184] Haller, *Epochs*, pp. x-xii. Haller, *Epochen*, pp. 8-9.

effect of historical German political impotence. Yet this did not negate his judgement that some historical conception of Germanness (in the sense of *Volk*) was natural and necessary for any nation, that such was undermined without some underlying sense of ethnic commonality and unity.

In the Irish context in the early twentieth century, historians continued to advance *implicitly* racialized discourses while disputing the value of racial categorizations or distinctions ('race' understood in the 'biological' sense), grappling with the problem of cultural amalgamation while advancing a discourse of national enmity. Eoin MacNeill, who was strongly opposed to 'biological' notions of race that were so current in Europe in his time, claimed that 'every people has two distinct lines of descent – by blood and by tradition', while asserting that what was called *a* 'race' was often really 'a mixture of various races…though not in every case the same proportions.'[185] He conceded the potential benefits of assimilation of diverse cultural elements for one's own nation, for this tendency was true of every people 'that has developed and maintained a distinctive nationality…Herein lies the justification of nationality, of intense, distinctive, and highly developed nationality. In it resides the elemental power of transformation.' Such notions are themselves evocative of at least implicit claims of a national 'character' that was in some respects superior to others. He continued: 'In every intense and distinctive development of a nation, there dwells the actuality or potentiality of some great gift to the common good of mankind…With all the singularity of [Ireland's] insular character, it maintained the fullest intercourse with other countries…among all this world-intercourse grew up the most intense national consciousness.' On the one hand, cultural amalgamation demonstrates the innate vitality of the culture and *Volk* that is driving the

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[185] MacNeill, *Phases of Irish History*, pp. 1, 2.

amalgamation, while on the other it opens the door to the possible dilution of the nation's original culture. Successive waves of newcomers had all, for better or worse, become 'part of the Irish body politic.'[186] They were usually little more than marauders without any sense of a nationality of their own – in Ireland the Normans did not even display that talent for state-building that distinguished them elsewhere – and so they too soon embraced a true national culture, that of the native Gaelic Irish,[187] a judgement which would be echoed in subsequent years by the historian Edmund Curtis when he commented that 'The race-indifference of the Norman was one of his greatest assets.'[188] MacNeill's colleague Green agreed: 'It is evident that the Norman settlers found a civilisation and culture in which they could adapt themselves.' Curtis again concurred: 'In the clash of the two civilisations, it was the Irish world alone which moved. The native princes, though content politically with their local lordships, aspired to rebuild the common culture of the whole race'.[189] However Green displayed some willingness to give the non-Irish a certain amount of credit, as well: 'The Norman-French may claim the credit of the only effort ever made to offer to the Irish terms of intellectual partnership, and accepting Irish civilisation as valid to lead the way to a fraternal union.'[190] The later middle ages had witnessed 'the rise of a genuine Anglo-Irish civilisation, in which both races were gradually united in a common patriotism.'[191] MacNeill, meanwhile practically omitted the Hibernicized 'Old English' from his essay on the medieval 'Irish Rally', and to the extent that they were featured, they were generally represented as opponents of the 'national' revival, though he concedes that the stubborn race pride

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[186] MacNeill, *Phases of Irish History*, pp. 226, 227, 244, 265.
[187] Ibid., p. 307.
[188] Edmund Curtis, *A History of Medieval Ireland from 1110 to 1513* (London, Macmillan, 1923), p. 50.
[189] MacNeilll, *Phases of Irish History*, p. 295.
[190] Green, *Irish National Tradition*, pp. 19, 22.
[191] Green, *The Making of Ireland*, p. 462.

of the Gaelic princes also played a part,[192] another judgement which would be echoed by Curtis: 'The race-pride and over-fed memories of the Irish kings were to be in the end their doom.'[193] For Green and MacNeill, there was no single Irish 'race' – in any 'biological' or 'scientific' sense – that corresponded with the Irish nation. MacNeill, in his work *Celtic Ireland*, described it as 'folly' to judge the achievements and failures of a people 'as the inevitable consequences of immutable racial character', which was 'but the habit of a people, that can be changed as a vesture.' Nothing in national history, he repeated, 'is explained by mere heredity. Acquired habits, events, institutions, education, external associations, can degenerate and regenerate a nation.'[194] The parallels with MacNeill's contemporary, who was less reticent in employing rhetoric of 'race' and 'racial' difference, are apparent. He and Green consistently maintained that the most important basis of Irishness was common fidelity to the land of Ireland. However this conception was clearly bound up with numerous value judgements, moral judgements, which determined what did and did not belong within the boundaries of Irishness. This was intended to be an inclusive rather than exclusive conception, even if at the same time it regarded 'authentic' Gaelic Irish culture as the stem of nation.'[195] Green had made a great deal of the distinction between Gaelic and Roman conceptions of state and politics as fundamentally different, the former based on true liberty, the latter compulsion and brute force (and inherited by the 'Teutonic' peoples, such as the Anglo-Saxons), which was 'opposed to their [the Gaels'] whole habit of thought and genius.'[196] Green points out the incorporation of foreign elements could be regarded positively to the extent that it brought some benefit to the nation; but it is usually the same

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[192] MacNeill, *Phases of Irish History*, pp. 354-355.
[193] Curtis, *A History of Medieval Ireland*, pp. 34, 378, 385, 393.
[194] Eoin MacNeill, *Celtic Ireland*, ed. D. O'Corrain (Dublin, Academy Press, 1981), p. 17.
[195] Green, *History of the Irish State*, p. 352.
[196] Green, *Irish Nationality*, pp. 13-14, 32.

foreign elements that are blamed for national failures and decline in history. The nineteenth century Irish nationalist historian and Dominican priest Father T.N. Burke had employed a telling metaphor when making his judgement on the nature of 'race' and cultural amalgamation in Irish history: 'If you throw a poisonous snake into the grass of Ireland, he will be sweetened, so as to lose his poison, or else he will die.' Burke continued, 'Even the English people, when they landed, were not two hundred and fifty years in the land until they were part of it…And so, any evil that we have in Ireland, is only a temporary and a passing evil, if we are only faithful to our traditions, and to the history of our country.'[197] MacNeill was for his part that the history of Ireland presented something quite unique: 'Ancient Ireland', he wrote in *Celtic Ireland*, 'has a singular place in the history of Europe….In ancient Ireland alone we find the autobiography of a people who came into history not shaped in the mould of the complex East, nor forced to accept the law of Imperial Rome'.[198] He also strongly distinguished between 'nation' and 'state': 'A nation is a species of the genus civilisation; a state is a species of the genus government.'[199] The state had no legitimacy unless it defended and served the civilisation of the people, whether it called itself 'national' or not. While MacNeill may have believed that a nation was a 'brotherhood of adoption as well as of blood', he gave short shrift to the 'Anglo-Irish' contribution to the idea of the Irish nation, believing that the eighteenth century Protestant nationalists were false models for those of his day. The Irish had to recover their Gaelic past, traditions, and modes of thought.[200] For this reason, among others, he rejected the straightforward identification of 'nationhood' and 'statehood'

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[197] Thomas N. Burke, 'Selections from "The History of Ireland, as Told in Her Ruins", in *Lectures on Faith and Fatherland* (1874)', in Dworkin, *Ireland and Britain*, p. 69.

[198] MacNeill, *Celtic Ireland*, xi. de Blacam, *What Sinn Fein Stands For*, xiii.

[199] Quoted in Donal McCartney, 'MacNeill and Irish-Ireland', in F.X. Martin and F.J. Byrne (eds.), *The Scholar Revolutionary: Eoin MacNeill (1867-1945) and the Making of the New Ireland* (Shannon, Irish University Press, 1973), p. 82.

[200] Boyce, *Nationalism in Ireland*, p. 242. Sean Cronin, *Irish Nationalism*, p. 100.

that seemed to have become a cardinal belief in 'official' Irish nationalism, even as he shared the desire for an Irish state. He certainly made efforts to assure his readers that medieval Ireland before 1175 had known a unified and cohesive political system of its own that could at least be regarded as a state in embryo. Furthermore this political apparatus had been at least as sophisticated and considerable older than, any other in Europe.[201] MacNeill, respected historian and scholar, devout Catholic, had the greatest claim to the paternity of 'Irish-Irelandism', even if he rejected its excesses. MacNeill's 'anti-English cultural attitudes spilled over naturally into anti-imperialism in politics.'[202] The cultured Anglophobia of the scholar MacNeill had its counterpart in the aggressive pamphlet writing of the Irish-Ireland ideologue D.P. Moran. He wrote of the immediate need for a cultural rather than a political revolution to sweep away the damaging legacy of what he saw as more than a hundred years of false Anglo-Irish patriotism which had forgotten the native culture and risked turning the entire nationalist project into a hollow and contradictory illusion.[203] For Moran, the revolutionary tradition of the eighteenth century had consisted in so much pretentious cant that threw the Irish nation into muddle-headed confusion, and had ever since 'imposed itself upon the people as a thing embodying all the attributes of Irish nationality.'[204] The Irish Irelanders and the Gaelic League sought a 'revolution' which would in fact be the rejection and reversal of centuries of Anglicization and the revival of Ireland's ancient Gaelic cultural heritage. Moran launched a powerful critique of the whole 'revolutionary' project of the eighteenth century which had acted as a lodestone for the political world-view of most

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[201] Stephen H. Harrison, 'Re-fighting the battle of Down: Orpen, MacNeill, and the Irish nation-state', in Michael Brown and Stephen H. Harrison (eds.), *The Medieval World and the Modern Mind* (Dublin, Four Courts Press, 2000), p. 180.
[202] McCartney, 'MacNeill and Irish-Ireland'. pp. 84, 96.
[203] Richards, 'Polemics on the Irish Past', p. 122.
[204] Moran, *The Philosophy of Irish Ireland*, pp. 33, 37, 38.

nineteenth century nationalists. This, Moran thought, had cut the Irish off from their true history and Anglicized them just as if not more than anything done by centuries of English misrule. As Moran's contemporary, the Gaelic League leader Douglas Hyde, put it, the Irish people were breaking a cultural unity which had defined their national existence and could be traced back 'nearly eighteen hundred years', with the result that the people were 'cut off from the past, yet scarcely in touch with the present.'[205] The project of 'de-Anglicization' would amount to a revolution in itself, but one actually worth pursuing and furthermore truly Irish. Historians in the German context also engaged in the same kind of exercises for their own country's history and their people's historical interactions with foreign elements. They all saw no apparent contradiction between the incorporation of foreign elements into the native culture to the extent that it strengthened that culture, and unceasing 'national' struggle for freedom against the same countries from which these elements originated. Even if Moran's views were not universally shared, for such notable figures as Michael Collins, who imbibed most of their history from Davis, Mitchel, MacNeill and Green it was apparent that only a government 'completely Irish in race' commands the legitimacy and sovereignty of the Irish people, and by implication, the completely Irish are defined as Gaelic and Catholic.[206] English culture and English styles of governance were inherently unsuited to the Irish people. 'The extent to which', Collins wrote, 'we become free in fact and secure our freedom will be the extent to which we become Gaels again…We have to build up a new civilisation on the foundations of the old.'[207] He appealed to his readers 'to reconstruct our ancient civilisation…to avoid the errors, the miseries, the dangers, into which other nations,

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[205] Douglas Hyde, '"The Necessity for de-Anglicizing Ireland" (1892), in *The Revival of Irish Literature* (1894)', in Dworkin (ed.), *Ireland and Britain*, p. 76. Richards, 'Polemics on the Irish Past', p. 125.
[206] Michael Collins, 'Clearing the Road: An Essay in Practical Politics', in *The Voice of Ireland*, p. 47.
[207] Collins, *The Path to Freedom*, pp. 115, 118-119, 120-121.

with their false civilisations, have fallen.'[208] A popular history published in 1921, at the height of the Irish independence struggle, *The Story of the Irish Race*, accepts fully the confluence of 'race' and 'nation' and the nation's (authentic) history. The author presents the history of English and British rule in Ireland as in essence a campaign of attempts to 'annihilate' the Irish race.[209] The emphasis is on seeking out and resurrecting the 'authentic mind' and morality of the Gael.[210] If, as Edmund Curtis, Professor of History at Trinity College, wrote around the same time that 'the time has come when every race strain of Ireland will be blended into one complete but many coloured tapestry',[211] the understanding was that the thickest threads of the tapestry were those woven from Ireland's Gaelic culture. In any case, Curtis's views generally stood at the more moderate end of Irish nationalism.

X

In Ireland, the historical conception of 'race' in relation to the nation was always caught between notions of an Irish originality and distinctiveness and the reality of different ethno-cultural communities in Ireland. In Germany, during the course of the nineteenth century, originality came to be regarded in terms of continuity and purity, and an increasingly uneasy attitude towards foreign influences and cultural mixing. The development of *völkisch* thought towards the end of the nineteenth century marked the completion of a transition towards a much more exclusionary form of nationalism that synthesised pseudo-scientific notions of 'blood' purity with historical narratives on cultural purity and superiority. The basis of this variant of nationalism had been formed in large part by earlier 'mainstream' nationalist historical narratives, as *völkisch* nationalists themselves claimed. In general terms,

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[208] Ibid., p. 42.
[209] Seumas MacManus, *The Story of the Irish Race* (New York, 1921), p. 399.
[210] Brannigan, *Race in Modern Irish Literature and Culture*, pp. 32-34.
[211] Edmund Curtis, 'The Race-Texture of Ireland', in *The Voice of Ireland*, p. 78.

the Irish historical narrative with respect to 'race' was distinguished by a tension between two conceptions. On the one hand, inclusion in the historical Irish nation was taken to be independent of one's actual ancestral descent. On the other, Irishness was implicitly assumed to be synonymous with the Gaelic heritage, or more importantly, a sincere, often uncompromising and absolute rejection of the cultural and ethnic manifestations of Englishness or Britishness. The Protestant had made important contributions to the definition of Irishness, yet the place of this community within the nation was not always readily accepted. Protestant pseudo-nationalism obscured the reality that 'the foundation of Ireland is the Gael, and the Gael must be the element that absorbs', had 'put a few more nails in the coffin of the Gael.'[212] The movement from Young Ireland to the more exclusivist 'Irish-Ireland' may be said to mirror developments in Germany, where a (relatively speaking) more 'cosmopolitan' form of nationalism earlier in the century, sympathetic in some cases to the claims of other nations adjoining Germany lost ground to one openly supremacist and hostile to 'Others', onto the rise of integral and later *völkisch* and 'pan-German' nationalisms, which prided themselves on violent exclusivity.[213] Though the historical background to 'the nation's' encounters with other cultures was clearly different in these contexts, ultimately, as a result of nationalist conceptions of history, modern nationalist attitudes towards the nation's 'racial' and cultural 'character' were shaped by a view of the incommensurability of national identities.

It must never be forgotten that 'race' is itself a construct. Yet the weaving of 'race' into the national historical narrative was necessarily a different enterprise in the Irish context given the Irish historical experience. Germany had in its history never experienced the kind of internal migration and waves of 'colonial'-style settlement

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[212] Moran, *The Philosophy of Irish Ireland*, pp. 37, 42; Boyce, *Nationalism in Ireland*, pp. 228-229.
[213] For a view questioning the idea of German nationalism as racist from the start see Vick, 'The Origin of the German Volk', pp. 241-256.

of different 'racial' groups into the country that had occurred in Ireland. Germans may have had their different tribes, but they were all Germanic. In the Irish context, attempts to historically synthesise 'race' and 'nation' were sometimes part of the endeavour of self-consciously Anglo-Irish intellectuals to secure their place in the nation by laying claim to and celebrating an ancient Irish heritage. On the other hand, racialized 'Othering' served largely the same purposes in both contexts, offering an axis point for national unity, but one that could still disadvantage certain groups within the putative nation. The problem of cultural amalgamation was also dealt with similarly in both contexts – if it strengthened one's own nation in some way, it was acceptable, if not, it was the penetration of foreign influences. The state as an expression of nationality or *Volk* had a greater significance for German historians than it generally did for their Irish counterparts; for whom the history of the state in Ireland, with perhaps some brief interruptions, was generally that of an oppressive and foreign rule. For Dietrich Schäfer, for example, there was no doubt that the course of German history was defined by the history of the development of the German 'Staatswesens': the development of the German nation and the 'German state' were in this sense indistinguishable.[214] Johannes Haller's historical concept of the German nation was so dependent on the existence of the *Reich* that, at best, there could only be a rather ambiguous meeting of *Volk* (or race) and nation in German history.[215] The absence of 'the Jews' as a theme in Irish national historical narrative(s) is another obvious point of difference. There simply was no minority community in the Irish context that carried the role of 'the Jews' in the German context. The Ulster Protestants were an internal 'Other', but still not comparable. In

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[214] Schäfer, *Deutsche Geschichte*, I, pp. 8, 9.

[215] Gallin, *Midwives to Nazism*, p. 30. Haller's views were not universal, however; even in 1922 some conservative nationalist historians still maintained that the 'ferments of national decomposition' present in the German state stemmed in large part from the 'failures' of the medieval 'Kaiserpolitik'. Below, *Deutsche Reichspolitik*, p. 53.

respect of the 'Othering' of those nations to which 'the Germans' were opposed, the Jews figured less prominently then such historical enemies as the French, the Slavs, or the ancient Romans. To the extent that Jews were dealt with and regarded as a meaningful actor in German history, however, they were usually made the 'Other', as a source of cultural contamination, degradation, and fragmentation, an anti-national element and a particularly insidious one at that, given their own unique history of 'rootlessness' and ability to insinuate themselves into other nations.[216] Yet a form of antisemitism grounded on historical narratives and cultural and intellectual prejudices, on a historical dialectic of *Deutschtum* and *Judentum*,[217] was certainly no less popular and dangerous than a form of antisemitism grounded upon 'biological racism', however, and would become an important resource of *völkisch* antisemitism and nationalism. Still, in the historical narratives, the more enduring and more powerful threat appears as France, the Slavic east, and the Latin south, for these sources had for centuries posed a real threat to the very existence of German nationality and statehood. For Wolfgang Wippermann, German anti-Slavism was a remarkable compound of an exaggerated sense of German superiority and a deep-rooted fear that the 'Slavic horde' would one day overrun Germany, and was entwined with views of German history in 'the east'.[218] In both contexts, the question of 'race' in the nation's history, and associated discourses of national enmity were represented through a selection and appraisal of important historical personages, usually 'great' men. As Treitschke put it in his essay on Gustavus Adolphus, 'To nations, as to men of genius, there comes an hour in which an inner voice speaks to

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[216] Even in such *völkisch* narratives as Heinrich Claß' *Deutsche Geschichte*, while the Jews appear as *one* antagonist of the German nation in the second half of the nineteenth century, a 'durchgängiges antisemitisches Bild der Vergangenheit' is not presented. Bergmann and Sieg, 'Geschichte als Akklamationinstanz und Waffe', in *Antisemitscher Geschichtsbilder*, p. 19.

[217] Werner Bergmann, 'Völkischer Antisemitismus im Kaiserreich', in *Handbuch zur Völkischen Bewegung*, pp. 449-450, 461.

[218] Wolfgang Wippermann, 'Antislavismus', in *Handbuch zur Völkischen Bewegung*, p. 513.

them, saying, "Now or never shalt thou manifest thy best, thy most individual, qualities to the world."'[219] In associating the national story in whole or in part with great historical figures the path was smoothed towards the understanding of history as *judgement* of history. The national narrative became also a kind of cultural-racial *bildungsroman*, as for example in Freytag's *Bilder*, a work 'of growth and moral transformation', in which historical development is conceived in terms of 'moral growth both for the individual and the collective psyche'.[220] The drama of particular individuals' lives becomes that of the nation in a particular era, be it struggle against a foreign 'Other', cultural renaissance, or the forging of unity. The negative qualities that were ascribed to 'the Other' were usually those that were denied to be the present in the German or Irish nation, a signal of the importance of 'the Other', even if only implicit, for the nation's self-definition. A sense that Irishness or Germanness contained within it an ideal, historically-defined conception of freedom superior to that of other nations was another parallel between the two contexts. There is also a sense in both contexts that while nations are historically contingent and variable, the 'principle' of nationality is of considerable age, along with the 'nature' and character of these 'racial' communities of origin that constitute nations. It is unsurprising that both Haller and Freytag, as Germans who came from regions in which Germans lived in close proximity with Slavs, framed their views as historians about 'Germanness' and the importance of 'race' in German history in terms that raised conflict of 'races' as a determining historical principle. In Ireland, historians such as Lecky – part of a community that had for centuries formed cultural interface and been formed from cultural amalgamation – also expressed how cultural 'liminality' informed Irish historical writing about 'race'. In his *Leaders of Public Opinion*

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[219] Treitschke, 'Gustavus Adolphus and Germany's Freedom', p. 265.
[220] Ping, *Gustav Freytag and the Prussian Gospel*, pp. 205, 206.

Lecky seemed to take very seriously the 'racial' differences of Irish and English, yet in the Irish sections of the *History of England* and the *History of Ireland* he downplayed the 'racial element' in Irish history, but *Leaders* and *History* had been written far apart, at different stages of Lecky's political and intellectual development, and expressed rather differing purposes. McNeill, though eschewing with distaste ideas of nationality based simply on blood kinship, clearly held an idea of 'unsullied' Irishness founded on the Gaelic heritage. For Standish O'Grady, of Gaelic descent yet more a part of 'Anglo-Ireland', the Irish 'race' was the leitmotif of his historical writings, yet it seems to express primarily a (desired) community of heroic values rather than of 'blood'. In both contexts, the act of 'Othering' was presumed to be able to do something to heal over the greatest social, cultural, and intellectual 'fault-line' of Irish and German society at the time, namely the confessional division. Protestant and Catholic German and historians could and did find common ground in (if nothing else) a shared anti-French and anti-Slav sentiment and general certainty of German cultural superiority. In Ireland, we find notable Protestant figures such as Standish O'Grady and the younger W.E.H. Lecky expressing a certain amount of disdain for or dissatisfaction with 'the English' that brought them closer to Catholic contemporaries than they otherwise would have been. Ultimately, this underlines how the application of the category of 'race' to national history was part of a wider narrative designed to support a particular overall view of the nation. For this reason German historians saw no apparent inconsistency in claiming a Swedish king as one of their great heroes while dismissing the Habsburg dynasty as a group of mongrelized foreigners. Thus Irish historians could both affirm that Irishness was not dependent on ancestry as such while also affirming that one could not be truly Irish without adhering to a certain historical idea of the

same. However, the unifying effect of 'Othering' where the confessional conflict was undoubtedly more powerful in the Germany than Ireland, where a very sizeable portion of Irish society rejected out of hand any vision of Irish nationality based upon or closely linked to Anglophobia and the 'connection' with Britain. Though 'racial' identifications of the nation's historical identity could confirm as well as undermine the confessionalization of historical identity, 'racial thought' or the 'ethnicization of the national past offered perhaps the most powerful and 'profound' alternative to Protestant- or Catholic-influenced conceptions of 'true' Irishness and 'true' Germanness.

It is ironic perhaps that it was precisely these different inconsistencies in how 'race' or 'national character' were brought into the national narrative that in fact underlay the centrality, the fundamental importance of 'the other', in both contexts. Historians in both contexts assumed that the nation, owing to its cultural heritage, possessed a capability for self-government, and a distinct and virtuous idea of nationality to offer, which had been suppressed and denied by the national 'Other', but remained existent.[221] The sense of the nation as beset by an implacable, dangerous enemy became important to the mental world-view of nationalists in both countries. The 'racialized' discourse of national enmity worked to obscure the inconsistencies and problems of synthesising 'race' into the national historical narrative. In this sense, this 'Othering' was possibly the most important function of 'race'. Ultimately, however much 'race' in national historical narratives in these contexts tended to be a very hazy thing, its significance was indisputable and lasting.

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[221] Tatlock, 'Realist Historiography', p. 67.

CHAPTER FIVE

Connections – The Comparative *and* the Transnational

I

This study has been concerned with discovering and explaining the commonalities in different traditions of national history writing through comparison of two such traditions. It disputes 'exceptionalist' interpretations of these traditions, while accepting that this self-perception was important for those who produced and popularized such historiographies. Any attempt to understand the nature of nationalist historiography in Europe demands the systematic investigation of similarity and difference between manifestations of this historiography, which developed separately and each of which were concerned with separate histories. However, nationalist history writing was also transnational, and this study is implicitly and necessarily transnational as well as comparative. Historians and historical writers, as part of the European 'Republic of Letters', judged the historical and historiographical tradition and worth of their own nation relationally, in comparison to that of others.[1] The work of national historians was never read only in their own countries; these books were read throughout Europe, not only informing 'outside' views of a given nation's history, but influencing the way historians in other countries considered their own nation's history.

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[1] Peter Wende, 'Views and Reviews: Mutual Perceptions of British and German Historians in the Late Nineteenth Century', in *British and German Historiography*, p. 173. Joachim Fischer '"*Kultur* – and our need of it": The image of Germany and Irish national identity', *The Irish Review*, 24 (1999), p. 66. Stephen Conway, *Britain, Ireland, and Continental Europe in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 135.

II

These two approaches, comparative and transnational, should be regarded as complementary, yet they are not quite the same thing.[2] In simple terms, transnational history is concerned primarily with the movement and exchange of ideas, cultural and technological products, and of course people and their lived experiences, rather than articulating and attempting to systematically explain similarity and difference. The transnational dimension is understood here primarily as lending further weight to this comparative study. The many political, cultural, and intellectual facets of nationalism, not least that of the writing of national history, have always been transnational in the sense of being a pan-European, 'supranational' phenomenon.[3] Though the unit of study when dealing with nationalism is of course 'the nation',[4] transnational history enriches comparisons by reminding historians that they are possible and important: the writing of national history has been a 'common language' in Europe and beyond up to the present day. The reception of such foreign components and models for national history varied between comprehensive adoption, selective appropriation, and self-conscious rejection.[5] Irish historians, at least the more scholarly-minded, were conversant with European (including German) historiographical trends, read and collected these books. The study of early and early medieval Ireland was critically influenced by the work of German historical scholars, as was recognised by Irish scholars. The work of Eoin MacNeill, to take one particularly notable example, was deeply indebted to the scholarship of numerous German Celtic scholars who did much to bring the 'ancestors' of the modern Irish

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[2] Jürgen Osterhammel, 'A "Transnational" History of Society: Continuity or New Departure?', in *Comparative and Transnational History*, p. 39.

[3] Jürgen Kocka, 'Comparison and Beyond', *History and Theory*, 42, 1 (2003), p. 41.

[4] M. Werner and B. Zimmermann, 'Beyond Comparison: *Histoire croisee* and the Challenge of Reflexivity', *History and Theory*, 45, 1 (2006) pp. 30-50.

[5] Berger, Lorenz, Melman, 'Introduction', pp. 11, 12.

into the historical light of the present, in the most positive terms.[6] Douglas Hyde, founder of the Gaelic League, central figure in the Gaelic revival, and first President of Ireland, also acknowledged the invaluable contribution of German scholars.[7] The work of Heinrich Zimmer is referenced at length in MacNeill's *Phases of Irish History,* and the author goes on to note with satisfaction in the chapter on 'Ireland's Golden Age', the interest held by German scholarship in the Irish (Celtic) past. In contrast to such scholarship he contrasted, in a veiled swipe at English historians, the error-filled polemical writing of defenders of Anglo-Norman feudalism in Ireland.[8] As early as 1814 the Brothers Grimm had published a volume of Irish myths and legends entitled *Irische Elfenmärchen* (albeit their translations were from English translations from the original Irish), acquainting German readers with what would come to be an invaluable part of the intellectual and cultural repository of Irish cultural nationalism. The German reviewer of Edmund Curtis's *History of Medieval Ireland from 1110 to 1513* (1925) in *Historische Zeitschrift* praised the work for its overall *wissenschaftliche* treatment of its subject; though Curtis was no less nationalist in his perspective of Irish history for this.[9] Even if they were only limited in number, there were prominent German historians and historical writers who wrote about Ireland in ways that suggested sensitivity to Ireland's separate national historical experience, even if they were not always supportive of modern Irish claims to national statehood. Irish historians familiar with German scholarship regarded German historians not only as being at the cutting edge of historical study but as pioneers in the exploration of early medieval Irish history. The German university

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[6] Lee, 'Some aspects of Modern Irish Historiography', pp. 437-438.
[7] Douglas Hyde, 'Irish Literature', in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, eds. Charles Herbermann *et al.*, vol. VIII (New York, The Encyclopedia Press, 1913), p. 123.
[8] MacNeill, *Phases of Irish History*, pp. 164-166, 240.
[9] F. Liebermann, 'A History of Medieval Ireland from 1110 to 1513, Edmund Curtis', *Historische Zeitschrift*, 131, 3 (1925), p. 536.

model attracted some interest in Ireland during the nineteenth century among members of the Catholic elite, who were interested, even if only briefly, in the possibility of its application in Ireland.[10]

A common referent by which German and Irish nationalist historians measured the value of their historiographies, at least in much of the nineteenth century, was the idea of 'England'. It seems paradoxical, though is nonetheless the case, that although 'England' was conceived of as the 'Other' of Ireland, there was an important debt to what were regarded as 'English' 'norms' of nationhood in Irish nationalist thought, as was also the case with respect to German perceptions of England.[11] Of course the nature of the historical relationship between Ireland and England and between Germany (or, more correctly, the German polities of central Europe) and England was fundamentally different for both countries. The same went for the relationship of Irish and German historical writing to English historical writing. For German historians English historiography was one potential model to accept, reject, and refashion.[12] For Irish historians, however, of whatever political standpoint this historiography was formative not just because the histories of Ireland and England (later Britain) were linked in fundamental ways, but because the writing of Irish national history (as opposed to writing it merely as an adjunct of English history) was in an equally important sense about challenging and neutralizing prevailing English accounts of Irish history. Nonetheless, a transnational commonality between Ireland and Germany in this period is that ideas of 'England' were fundamentally important to national self-perception in both Germany and Ireland, and this was

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[10] Aidan Enright, 'Catholic Elites and the Irish University Question, 1860-1880: European Solutions for an Irish Dilemma', in *Life on the Fringe?* pp. 183-192.
[11] Hutchinson, *The Dynamics of Cultural Nationalism*, p. 62. For a more general historical analysis of England as the 'birthplace' of nationalism see in particular Liah Greenfeld's *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity*.
[12] McClelland, *The German Historians and England*, p. 13.

reflected in nationalist history writing as well. Nineteenth-century Britain was perceived throughout Europe as *the* archetypically successful modern nation-state. 'Anglocentric' ideas of what it meant to be a politically constituted nation, whether accepted or rejected (and it was possible for individuals to do both at the same time) shaped nationalism in Europe nowhere more so than in Ireland and Germany.[13]

III

A number of nineteenth century 'British' historians – including Buckle, Macaulay, Froude, Carlyle, Scott and others – became formative influences for conceptions of how national history was to be written in both Ireland and Germany. But the 'British' influence in fact went back to the eighteenth century, to Burke and Hume in particular.[14] The German translation of *Reflections on the Revolution in France* had been particularly popular at a time when French armies were occupying Germany.[15] The circumstances of this German reception of Burke reminds us that the origins of German nationalist history writing had arisen in the same context as that of German nationalism more broadly, the Napoleonic occupation of Germany,[16] and that German historians too were concerned with disputing foreign judgements of their nation's history. German advances in the historiographical science were linked to notions of German cultural superiority and the overcoming of the (above all

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[13] 'The Irish mind was enveloped in, and to some extent suffocated by, an English mental embrace. This was quite natural…the relationship with the dominant power contributed fundamentally to the making of the Irish mind.' Joseph J. Lee, *Ireland, 1912-1985: Politics and Society* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 627-628.

[14] To Ranke, Hume was one of, if not *the*, earliest writer of an authentic national history. Herder placed him as a historian in the same rank as Thucydides and Tacitus. See Jürgen Osterhammel, 'Nation und Zivilisation in der britischen Historiographie von Hume bis Macaulay', *Historische Zeitschrift*, 254, 2 (1992), pp. 282, 284; Stuchtey and Wende, 'Introduction', p. 6. Fania Oz-Salzberger, 'Adam Ferguson's Histories in Germany', in *British and Germany Historiography*, p. 51.

[15] The eighteenth century had been a time of great ferment in Irish historiography, too, when writers such as Charles O'Conor added to conceptions of Ireland as a separate entity with a historical worth and dignity of its own. See Kidd, 'Gaelic Antiquity and National Identity'; and Colin Kidd, 'Identity before Identities: Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Historian', in Julia Rudolph (ed.), *History and the Nation* (Cranbury, NJ., Associated University Presses, 2006).

[16] Georg von Below, *Die deutsche Geschichtsschreibung von den Befreiungskriegen bis zu unseren Tagen: Geschichte und Kulturgeschichte* (Leipzig, Quelle & Meyer Verlag, 1916), p. 12. Schäfer, *Deutsche Geschichte*, II, pp. 295-296.

political) backwardness of Germany in relation to the 'great nations' of western Europe. Ranke himself had remarked 'that historical studies grew out of German opposition to the absolute rule of Napoleonic ideas.'[17] Ulrich Muhlack argues that it was, at least in the first half of the nineteenth century, a commonplace among German historians that 'German historiography should learn from the national historiography of the French and the English'.[18] The comparison with British precedents was particularly important and lasting: the 'chorus of praise for English models, especially political models,' reached its highest crescendo in Germany in the mid-nineteenth century.[19]

In Ireland the development of the writing of historiography could hardly have run independently of the history of the island's political and cultural relationship with the neighbouring island. The first historical conceptualizations of the Irish nation, written in the seventeenth century by Catholic scholars such as Geoffrey Keating had been in the context of the consolidation of English government over Ireland and had been concerned not just with establishing the distinctness, but also the moral and historical *superiority*, of Ireland. A selective prizing of the Gaelic Irish past remained a common characteristic of various patriotic and nationalist movements henceforth, irrespective of their political standpoints. The nineteenth-century historical enquiries of Young Ireland were firmly rooted in this tradition, and remained concerned with freeing Irish history from the shadow imposed by Britain. We have noted the significance of Froude's Hibernophobic Irish historiography to Lecky and his Irish historiography, the ultimate result being a work that was 'the better because more thorough and scientific…an original history of eighteenth-century Ireland.' A more

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[17] M.A. Fitzsimons, 'Ranke: History as Worship', *Review of Politics*, 42, 4 (1980), pp. 535-536.

[18] Quoted in Muhlack, 'Universal History and National History', pp. 28, 44, 45.

[19] McClelland, *The German Historians and England*, p. 168.

positive (defining) influence for Lecky had been that of Henry Thomas Buckle's intellectual-cum-cultural history, the *History of Civilization in England* (1857).[20] Buckle's conception of history in terms of the primacy of development and changes of intellectual processes over long periods had been formative for Lecky. Buckle also elicited quite a reaction in German circles as well, even if it was generally only harsh criticism. Johann Gustav Droysen, in a coruscating essay pointedly entitled 'The Elevation of History to the Rank of a Science', tore into Buckle, judging that his work was 'well-adapted to remind us how very unclear, contradictory and beset with arbitrary opinions the foundations of our science are'.[21] Thomas Carlyle was another figure of commanding (and common) importance particularly in his moralistic, cyclical perspective of history and his emphasis on heroic individuals as a force in history.[22] His inordinate admiration for Oliver Cromwell[23] and often contemptuous attitude to the Irish notwithstanding, Carlyle had been an important influence on the leading Young Irelanders, particularly John Mitchel. Mitchel dismissed (as Treitschke also would in his later years) Macaulay's *History* as utterly transparent in its political inclinations and glorification of contemporary England. Throughout his life he held a Carlylean abhorrence of modern, utilitarian, industrial society and the attendant loss of heroism.[24] Young Ireland 'shared Carlyle's scepticism about theories of progress that defined Ireland backward in time relative

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[20] Stuchtey, *W.E.H. Lecky*, pp. 116, 159. McCartney, *W.E.H. Lecky*, pp. 12, 30, 75, 76.

[21] J.G. Droysen, 'The Elevation of History to the Rank of a Science: Being a Review of the *History of Civilisation in England* by T.H. Buckle', in J.G. Droysen, *Outlines of the Principles of History*, ed. and trans. E.B. Andrews (Boston, 1897), pp. 64, 66.

[22] Thomas Carlyle, *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and The Heroic in History* (London, Carlyle House, Memorial Trust, 1840), p. 197.

[23] Carlyle once memorably described Irish history since the mid-seventeenth century as 'a scene of distracted controversies, plunderings, excommunications, treacheries, conflagrations, of universal misery and blood and bluster, such as the world before or since has never seen'. Thomas Carlyle, *Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches, with Elucidations*, vol. II (London, Methuen & Co., 1904), pp. 48-49. Digger, 'Black Ireland's Race', p. 463.

[24] English, *Irish Freedom*, p. 159.

to a norm of national development defined by Britain.'[25] On Lecky, also, Carlyle's

moralistic outlook on history had a guiding effect.[26] Richard English has pointed out

that Carlyle's assertion: 'The wisdom, the heroic worth of our past, we can recover',

finds its echo in Thomas Davis's arguments about the necessity of saving all that

remained of the past.[27] Carlyle's interest in Germany and role in introducing English

readers to the principles of German historiography and philosophy as well as his

authorship of a monumental biography of Frederick the Great, are also well-

known.[28] Carlyle may have been deeply authoritarian in his thinking, anti-

democratic, and prone to a racialist reading of history, but he was also 'one of the

most important outside influences upon the development of Irish nationalist ideas',[29]

and through Carlyle, the Young Irelanders were naturally further exposed to broader

European, particularly German currents.

Whether or not England was the 'birthplace' of nationalism,[30] certain English 'norms

of nationhood' as expressed in historical writing, whether positively or negatively

received, had a direct influence on historicist thought on the nation in both Germany

and Ireland. In Germany, particularly during the early nineteenth century but all the

way to its last decade, if not indeed longer[31] – despite the growing Anglophobia of

German nationalists towards the end of the century – Britain was held up as a prime

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[25] Digger, 'Black Ireland's Race', p. 462.

[26] McCartney, *W.E.H. Lecky*, p. 64.

[27] English, *Irish Freedom*, p. 158.

[28] Thomas Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus*, ed. R.L. Tarr (London, 2000), xxiii-xxiv, xxxiv-xxxv. The editor of a single-volume German edition of the mammoth Frederick biography was convinced that Carlyle had understood that it was Prussia's vocation to unite Germany and revive a decadent Europe through the strengthening of German culture. See K. Linnebach, 'Einleitung', in Thomas Carlyle, *Friedrich der Grosse* (Berlin, M. Warneck, 1913), xviii-xix. John Burrow, 'Historicism and Social Evolution', in *British and German Historiography*, p. 253.

[29] English, *Irish Freedom*, p. 159.

[30] Greenfeld, *Nationalism*, pp. 14, 23.

[31] Erich Marcks, *Deutschland und England in den grossen europäischen Krisen seit der Reformation* (Stuttgart, J.G. Cotta, 1900), pp. 27-29. McClelland, *The German Historians and England*, p. 216. Stefan Berger and Peter Lambert, 'Intellectual Transfers and Mental Blockades: Anglo-German Dialogues in Historiography', in Stefan Berger, Peter Lambert, Peter Schumann (ed.), *Historikerdialoge: Geschichte, Mythos, und Gedächtnis im deutsch-britischen kulturellen Austausch, 1750-1900* (Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003), p. 24.

model of the successful nation-state.[32] England or Britain, having served as a point of orientation for German intellectuals since the eighteenth century,[33] was long seen as a frame of reference or model by which to compare Germany's historical development towards nationhood. G.G. Gervinus, at the closing of his *Introduction to the History of the Nineteenth Century* (1853), wrote: 'The history of Germany from the time of the Reformation has followed the same regular course, though slower, than that of England or France…If England, as we have said before, passed through different phases of her development in various degrees of perfection, the same progress, although in another way, has taken place in Germany.'[34] Gervinus also shared 'the common view that "the original Germanic constitution was developed best among the Anglo-Saxons"'.[35] For Ranke too, Britain and France provided a 'norm' of national development in history.[36] Of all the national histories Ranke studied and wrote, England's exhibited more than any other that sought-after centuries-old continuity of political nationhood.[37] Ranke noted the English propensity towards conservatism and continuity, which reflected their Germanic ancestry.[38] English history, as Ranke noted at the end of his *History*, was 'a history of *one* piece,' from its early beginning to British imperial glory of the nineteenth century.[39] As McClelland noted:

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[32] Stefan Berger, 'Britischer und deutscher Nationalismus im Probleme und Perspektiven', in U. von Hirschhausen und J. Leonhard (ed.), *Nationalismen in Europa*, p. 107. Berger and Lambert, 'Intellectual Transfers and Mental Blockades', p. 31.

[33] Leerssen, *National Thought in Europe*, p. 96.

[34] Georg Gottfried Gervinus, *Introduction to the History of the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1853), pp. 134, 135.

[35] Quoted in McClelland, *The German Historians and England*, p. 87.

[36] Bahners, 'National unification and narrative unity', p. 59.

[37] Osterhammel, 'Nation und Zivilisation', p. 281.

[38] Ranke, *History of England*, I, viii, xii.

[39] Osterhammel, 'Nation und Zivilisation', pp. 281-282. White, *Metahistory*, pp. 163-164, and James Campbell, 'Stubbs, Maitland, and Constitutional History', in *British and German Historiography*, p. 111.

'Germans probably felt more sense of kinship with the English than any other people in Europe…To a remarkable extent, German thinkers defined German national characteristics not in contrast, but in comparison to the English, by seeking the similarities rather than the differences…the German fascination for England, like the later turn against her, was bound up in the first stirrings of German national consciousness.'[40]

German reception of Burke was given its own adaptation, whereby 'it stressed the remote past and the essential continuity of English history into the present. Discontinuities…were minimized to make England appear as the living model of slow, organic change-within-continuity.'[41] The success of Anglo-Saxon England was posited as 'evidence' for the unique state-building abilities and greatness of the Germanic peoples; as vindicating the idea of 'Germanic freedom'.

It seems unsurprising that given the depth of this 'love affair' with England or rather their image of it, that when German historians turned away from English models and examples, they did so with equal fervour. Heinrich von Treitschke, notwithstanding a typical Anglophilia in earlier life,[42] heaped coruscating scorn on England and the English, on 'perfidious Albion', as an older man. This was of course historically flavoured: 'The hypocritical Englishman, with the Bible in one hand and a pipe in the other, possesses no redeeming qualities', he knew no honour or any 'distinction of right and wrong.'[43] An Anglophobic Irish nationalist of the same period would have agreed. Charles Gavan Duffy put it typically in remarks printed in both his history-cum-memoir *magnum opus*, *Young Ireland: A Fragment of Irish History* (1880) and his later introduction to Davis's *The Patriot Parliament*: 'English writers are in general agreed that the paramount nation exhibited singular wisdom and

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[40] McClelland, *The German Historians and England*, pp. 4, 11.
[41] Ibid., pp. 33, 37, 44.
[42] McClelland, *The German Historians*, p. 176.
[43] Quoted in Greenfeld, *Nationalism*, pp. 377-378.

benevolence. Through constantly changing and troubled times they were always right; right when they did in Ireland the exact reverse of what they were accustomed to at home; right, by a singular good fortune when they set aside rules of morality and justice, which elsewhere are of permanent authority.'[44] Elsewhere he wrote: 'some generous English historians can recognise in resistance, continuing through so many generations in Ireland, only a turbulence and discontent native to the Celtic race. In the case of any other country they would probably feel no insuperable difficulty in understanding why the dominion of strangers was odious, or why the desire to overthrow it was regarded as honourable and praiseworthy.'[45] In his *Deutsche Geschichte* Treitschke had added, focusing again on the motif of English hypocrisy: 'In the halls of Parliament, one heard only shameless British commercial morality, which, with the Bible in the right and hand and the opium pipe in the left, spreads the benefits of civilization around the world.'[46] In his *Politics*, he charged that it was the English who were full of national prejudices, guilty of chaining Europe in a latent status of permanent warfare in order to serve their own selfish ends. Erich Marcks would claim in 1910 that: 'A German no longer studies England as he had once done: in order to learn from her directly, in order to imitate her. In some things he will wish to learn from England against England. We no longer believe in the simple transferability even of that which is worthy of emulation.'[47] The apogee of German nationalist Anglophobia was reached (in the period under consideration) during the First World War. In an essay on 'The Spirit of German *Kultur*' published in *Deutschland und der Weltkrieg*, the Berlin theologian Ernst Troeltsch asserted that 'This *Kultur* war [against Germany] is primarily the work of

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[44] Duffy, 'Introduction', xi.
[45] Duffy, *Young Ireland*, p. 87.
[46] Heinrich von Treitschke, *Deutsche Geschichte im neunzehnten Jahrhundert*, Bd. IV (Berlin, 1883), p. 381. McClelland, *The German Historians and England*, p. 184.
[47] Quoted in Berger and Lambert, 'Intellectual Transfers and Mental Blockades', p. 34.

England, in whose political intrigues against Germany it has long been easily recognizable', and that among the English the feeling of national superiority, and indeed supremacy, of the English right to dominate the world and determine the character of civilisation, was practically universal.[48] In an article for the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* written in September 1914 Johannes Haller described 'England' simply as 'truly our most deadly enemy.'[49] Eduard Meyer (brother of Kuno) paid special attention to Irish history in his *England: seine staatliche und politische Entwicklung und der Krieg gegen Deutschland* (1915); arguing that Ireland offered evidence of English hypocrisy and self-deception, and presented a brief survey of Irish history that would have been quite agreeable to an Irish nationalist. He referred to the Irish Jacobite War of the seventeenth century as a 'national uprising of the Irish for the restoration of their freedom', sharply criticised Lord Macaulay's presentation of seventeenth century Irish history while positively appraising that of Ranke – 'the correct outlook briefly and correctly formulated' – and wrote (approvingly) that 'embittered hate and determination to restore the right of the people to decide its own fate fills the breast of every Irishman'. The Irish, he claimed, in contrast to the English and their false patriotism, truly possessed a fatherland.[50] In the following year, in his introduction to George Chatterton-Hill's *Irland und seine Bedeutung für Europa* (1916),[51] Eduard Meyer referred to Ireland's 'glorious national and cultural past', pointed out the important role Germans had played and continued to play in the writing of Irish history, asserted that English misgovernment in Ireland and their

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[48] Ernst Troeltsch, 'Der Geist der deutschen *Kultur*', in Otto Hintze *et. al. eds.* Deutschland und der Weltkrieg (Berlin, Teubner, 1915), pp. 52-53, 60-61. Meinecke, *Warfare of a Nation*, p. 28.

[49] Matthew Stibbe, 'German Historians' Views of England during the First World War', in *Historikerdialoge*, p. 241.

[50] Eduard Meyer, *England: seine staatliche und politische Entwicklung und der Krieg gegen Deutschland* (Berlin, J.G. Cotta, 1915), pp. 49, 51, 55.

[51] George Chatterton-Hill was a Germanophone Irish nationalist activist and writer resident in Germany during the First World War, tasked with raising German support for Irish nationalist claims.

national egoism showed 'the true face of the English', and for his German readers pointed out that Ireland offered a testimony to the fate the Germans could likely expect if they were defeated by England.[52] For their part, intellectual leaders of the Irish separatist movement of 1916-1921, such as Patrick Pearse were utterly convinced of the reality of a transhistorical gulf between English and Irish cultures, between Englishness and Irishness, even as they denied (as they had to) the many interactions of the two histories and cultures that did not fit neatly in their narrative.

The variances in the German and Irish nationalist attitudes towards 'England' had their parallels, though their inner contradictions were more strongly distilled in the Irish case. The first Irish nationalists, of the late eighteenth century, were in most respects a creation of or 'Anglo-Irish' culture in Ireland, with a discourse of their rights as 'English subjects'. Yet the 'Anglo-Irishman' who would prove to be the most famous of Irish republican revolutionaries, Wolfe Tone, would name hatred of England as central to his political credo. Young Irelanders in the nineteenth century perceived themselves as the direct heir of the 'Patriot' and United Irish movements. Thomas Davis too had been, up to 1838, considered by some contemporaries as 'more like a young Englishman than a young Irishman.' As Robert Kee puts it, 'It was the very sense of provincialism thrust upon him by his country of birth that he felt undignified and that he set out to overcome by elevating it into a sense of [Irish] nationality.'[53] It is noteworthy that in their admiration for such institutions and precedents as the Catholic Confederation of the 1640's, the Patriot Parliament of 1689, and Grattan's Parliament and constitution, the Young Irelanders anchored their nationalism in that 'very English' institution, parliamentary government and constitutional monarchy. Daniel O'Connell perhaps summed up unwittingly some of

[52] Eduard Meyer, 'Geleitwort', in G. Chatterton-Hill, *Irland und seine Bedeutung für Europa* (Berlin, Curtius, 1916), xiii, xiv.

[53] Kee, *The Green Flag*, p. 195.

the inner peculiarities of Irish nationalism, at least in its relationship with and perception of 'England', in comments made in a public address of 1843: 'there shall be no bargain, no compromise with England – we shall take nothing but Repeal, and a Parliament in College Green.' The parliament O'Connell demanded was of course a restoration of 'Grattan's Parliament' under the sovereignty of the 'English' monarch – but with, importantly, Catholic and thus perhaps in some sense 'Gaelic' representation. Young Ireland's basic *political* goal was always, like O'Connell's the repeal of the legislative union and the re-establishment of an Irish parliament akin to that of 1782, under the common Crown – and later, among more radical members, of a republic along European or American lines – *not* of any kind of revived Gaelic polity. This is not to say, of course, that Young Irelanders did not attempt to ground their demands for a future Irish legislature on past *Irish* precedents, nor is it to downplay the importance to Young Ireland and other nationalists of source traditions such as the Gaelic idea, or that of Anglophobia or the republican tradition, or to claim that Irish nationalism was unwittingly created by Britain or defined only by what it was against. Yet even in its prized historical heritage Irish nationalism was from its beginnings indebted to 'anglicized' ideas of good government and political nationhood, as *adapted* in Ireland and Irish circumstances. Perhaps this could only have been the case given the nature of the historical relationship between Ireland and England, but it never meant that Irish nationalists were prepared to concede that Ireland was anything less than a nation in its own right, and a nation gravely and repeatedly wounded down throughout the centuries by 'England'. Even A.M. Sullivan in his *The Story of Ireland*, as we have seen, equated the ancient Gaelic polity with contemporary parliamentary government – of the Westminster type – in

order to give weight to the Irish historical claim for nationhood.[54] It may be said that all this was simply another indication of the 'transnational' character of 'national thought' as it developed across Europe in the first half of the nineteenth century.[55] The communication of ideas, inspirations and ideals that constituted the spread and propagation of national ideologies crossed borders and frontiers.[56] It was necessary for aspirant and emerging nations such as the Irish and German ones to prove their merit, in comparison to established nations that were European and global powers. Monika Baár has argued that: 'The self-asserting strategies inherent in the self-congratulatory rhetoric of established nations and those intrinsic to the rhetoric of non-dominant nations made recourse to the same criteria.'[57] Germany and Ireland, then, as 'belated nations' were clearly two countries where the content of nationalism as well as the nature of national historical writing was strongly influenced – though of course unequally – by perceptions of 'England'.

While the literary cross-currents between Germany and Ireland may have been much less dense than those between Germany and Britain, and between Ireland and Britain, this is not to say that there were none. Though up to the late eighteenth century, 'Ireland had been largely an unknown quality' among German writers, the nineteenth century, particularly the first half, saw a growing interest in Ireland.[58] Barthold Georg Niebuhr (1776-1831), in his time a leading German classical historian, wrote on British misgovernment in Ireland and of the necessity for

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[54] A.M. Sullivan, *The Story of Ireland*, pp. 20-21.
[55] Leerssen, *National Thought in Europe*, p. 169.
[56] Joep Leerssen, 'Viral nationalism: Romantic intellectuals on the move in nineteenth-century Europe', *Nations and Nationalism*, 17, 2 (2011), p. 257.
[57] Baar, *Historians and Nationalism*, p. 64.
[58] Eoin Bourke (ed.), *'Poor Green Erin': German Travel Writers' Narratives on Ireland from before the 1798 Rising to after the Great Famine* (2nd ed., Peter Lang, Frankfurt am Main, 2013), p. 1.

Catholic Emancipation.[59] German interest in Irish affairs probably peaked between the 1820s and c. 1840, during the career of Daniel O'Connell. In the early decades of the century, when censorship was prevalent in the German states, political argument was often only possible by way of commentary on foreign affairs, thus there was an interest in events in Ireland.[60] It has recently been stated by Eoin Bourke that '…even a small and troubled country like Ireland could become not only an object of pity but also in some respects a political and social model', even if only a model of what not to become, for German observers. As the Prussian historian Friedrich Raumer, who visited Britain and Ireland, and was generally sympathetic to Britain, put it, 'Ireland is the most deplorable example in recent history of the world of a great and noble people labouring for centuries under such injustice and obtuseness, and also of all the highly ordained forms of constitution frequently being divested of all substance by the farce of partisanship and prejudice.' Nineteenth-century German travel writers, even when repelled by much of what they witnessed in Ireland, were occasionally struck by apparent similarities between conditions of the common people in Ireland and the German states.[61] German historical writing on Ireland in the nineteenth century was also influenced by the confessional biases of individual authors; a reflection of how interpretation of other nations is often conditioned by the definition of one's own nation (and vice versa – the definition of national 'Self' and national 'Other' is inevitably transnational). The publicist, politician and historian Jakob Venedey (1805-1871) published in 1844 *Irland*, a two-part work comprised of a 'Geschichte des irischen Volkes' up the 1830's, and a commentary on

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[59] Barthold Georg Niebuhr, *Life and Letters and Selections from Minor Writings*, ed. and trans. S. Winkworth, vol. III (2nd ed., London, Chapman and Hall, 1852), pp. 97-108.
[60] Patrick O'Neill, *Ireland and Germany: A Study in Literary Relations* (New York, Peter Lang, 1985), p. 131. Bourke, *'Poor Green Erin'*, p. 2.
[61] Bourke, *'Poor Green Erin'*, pp. 3, 32, 64, 114, 137, 246.

contemporary Irish affairs and the career of O'Connell, whom he greatly admired.[62]
This work has been described as 'undoubtedly the most knowledgeable and
thoughtful contemporary commentary on the Irish Question'[63] by a German writer.
Venedey, believing that no *wissenschaftliche* history of Ireland had hitherto been
written, set out to make a contribution of his own to the infant field of Irish national
history writing – and the result was a text that could be added to the canon of
nineteenth century Irish nationalist literature. In writing on the contemporary state of
Ireland, Venedey compared the administration of the country directly with that of
other countries, including the German territorial states, not to Ireland's favour,
though the blame lay with the manner in which England had misgoverned Ireland.
He compared the justifications made for the English as to why they should rule
Ireland with those made for the French as why they should possess the German
Rhineland. He interpreted the medieval English expansion into Ireland as a drive to
'Germanize' Ireland – but he saw this not as meaning the annihilation or subjugation
of the Gaelic Irish but rather the establishment of '*Recht*' and '*Ordnung*' in Ireland, a
task in which the English had manifestly failed. The English, however, for all their
'Germanic' nature throughout their history had woefully failed to establish *Recht* and
Ordnung in Ireland. Venedey even described the process by which the medieval
Anglo-Normans became 'ipsis Hibernis hiberniores' – accepting one of the oldest
stock-in-trade arguments of Irish nationalist writers – as 'das Gottesgericht der
Geschichte'. In coming to the period of the Reformation, Venedey commented, in
what might be called a typically German conflation of religious allegiance and
national identity: 'It is more than a coincidence, that the Reformation did not

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[62] O'Neill, *Ireland and Germany*, pp. 133-134.
[63] Bourke, *'Poor Green Erin'*, p. 422.

overstep the boundaries of the Germanic peoples.'[64] On the other hand, he sees in the Irish rejection of the Reformation and adherence to Catholicism a natural consequence of their misrule by England over centuries, and argued that 'The Irish temperament contradicts the spirit of persecution…the Irish are devout but also highly intelligent.' In his work, Venedey offered a conclusion that no Irish nationalist of the time would have disagreed with: 'Ireland's future, however, depends on the reconciliation of the Old Irish and New Irish, and if it does not succeed in one way or another then Ireland – the whole of Ireland, both north and south – will head once more towards an epoch of destruction and barbarism.'[65] Venedey aside, as the nineteenth century progressed, German historical writers became less interested in Ireland, and the ones who wrote about the country were generally less sympathetic to Irish claims of nationhood or were only engaged in Ireland to the degree that Irish matters held relevance for English or German affairs.[66] Yet given the importance of German perspectives of 'England' for constructions of 'Germanness' writing about Ireland in the context of the historical evaluation of 'England' had a significance in thinking about how the German nation should order its affairs. In 1847, Heinrich von Sybel had written a lengthy essay on 'Edmund Burke und Irland' (Burke was a centrally important figure in Sybel's intellectual formation). Sybel offered another overview of Irish history up to the nineteenth century that would have been quite agreeable to Irish nationalists, even if his political conclusions as to Ireland's contemporary state differed deeply from theirs. The medieval English colonists, Sybel wrote, had treated the native Irish as if they were wild animals and had denied them all rights, before they had in turn been

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[64] Jacob Venedey, *Irland*, I (Leipzig, 1844), pp. 4, 6, 36, 40, 67, 68.
[65] Venedey quoted in Bourke, *'Poor Green Erin'*, p. 458, 472.
[66] O'Neill, *Ireland and Germany*, p. 137.

brought low by the oppression of English monarchs. The extension of the Reformation to Ireland had brought the Gaelic Irish and the 'Old English' together, before they were both subjected to a new 'hateful slavery.' The rebellions of the seventeenth century were followed by 'terrible subjugation' and 'horrible defeat' ('furchtbare Unterwerfung' and entsetzliche Niederlage') and finally a political settlement that was 'without equal in hatefulness and hardness.' Once again, England's Irish subjects were treated with despotism and exploitation. The Protestant patriot movement of the eighteenth century he described as a 'Volksbewegung', and he gave a positive appraisal to the steps taken by 'Grattan's Parliament' to alleviate the Penal Laws that oppressed the Catholic masses of Ireland.[67] However, Sybel also believed that the Union had since its enactment been a positive development, and expressed little sympathy for present Irish nationalist political demands.

We have noted earlier the importance of English history to Ranke's scholarship, yet Ranke had also, as has been argued recently by Andreas Boldt, demonstrated an often sympathetic understanding of the special nature of Irish history in his *History of England*, treating Ireland as a nation in its own right rather than merely an extension of England: for example, he viewed the synthesis of Catholicism and national consciousness in Ireland as something essentially unique in Europe, and judged that 'the great religious and political strife in which Europe was engaged [in the seventeenth century] found its fullest expression in Ireland.'[68] He even gave a fair, or at the least a reasonable hearing to the Rebellion of 1641: 'the national religious constitution which the Scots had attained by their example induced the Irish to attempt the same thing, but in the Catholic sense appropriate to their cause. No

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[67] Heinrich von Sybel, 'Edmund Burke und Irland', in Heinrich von Sybel, *Kleine Historische Schriften*, I (1869), pp. 462-465.
[68] Ranke, *History of England*, vol. IV, p. 556. Andreas Boldt, *The Role of Ireland in the Life of Leopold von Ranke (1795-1886): The Historian and Historical Truth* (Lampeter, Edwin Mellen Press, 2007) pp. 174, 185.

doubt the old Irish antipathy of the natives against the Saxons was stimulated thereby; how could it be otherwise?'[69] The Irish commitment to the Jacobite cause, the recognition of James II, and the convening of the 'patriot parliament', was in essence a national one: 'When the elements of which a state is composed tear themselves asunder, and each of them awakens to a consciousness of its own distinct existence, how utterly fruitless is the endeavour to establish and maintain peace with them!' The war in Ireland, unlike in Protestant Scotland, assumed the characteristics of an early modern 'clash of civilisations': 'the object aimed at in Ireland was the complete transformation of the mode of government which had previously existed'.[70] Boldt has gone so far as to claim that Ranke was responsible for 'effectively creating modern Irish historiography',[71] though it may well be argued that he overstates his case, since not even Lecky, probably the most scholarly of nineteenth century Irish historians, had given much obeisance to Ranke.[72] On the other hand, even if Ranke had little influence in historiography of Ireland, he was a sufficiently well-known figure to be awarded an honorary doctorate by Trinity College, in 1865, which was the first such honour he received from a non-German institution.[73] In 1886 – the year in which Gladstone tabled the First Home Rule Bill – in *England und Irland: Eine zeitgemässe Betrachtung*, the *völkisch* writer Hermann von Pfister, a nationalist writer who was incidentally one of the first German scholars to assert that the term 'völkisch' was synonymous for 'national',[74] argued that the German people had in

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[69] Ibid., p. 284, 289.
[70] Ranke, *History of England*, IV, pp. 542, 555.
[71] Boldt, *The Role of Ireland in the Life of Leopold von Ranke*, p. 226.
[72] Yet it is also worth noting the importance of Ranke's *History of the Popes* for Lecky's intellectual mentor Buckle in how the work helped the latter to articulate his own conception of history. In this way, it might be said that Ranke exercised an indirect influence on Lecky. Patrick Bahners, '"A Place among the English Classics": Ranke's *History of the Popes* and its British Readers', in *British and German Historiography*, p. 153.
[73] Bourke, *'Poor Green Erin'*, p. 748.
[74] Günter Hartung, 'Völkische Ideologie', in *Handbuch zur Völkischen Bewegung*, p. 23.

many regards good grounds to follow closely the development of affairs in 'that unfortunate island'. For not only had Ireland 'played a role in our earliest history, but Ireland called also for the sympathy of continental Europe, the country forming an important part in the 'general state of society'. Writing of the devastation inflicted on Ireland in the seventeenth century in the context of the wars of the period he added; 'What one Christian *Volk* did in inflicting such unspeakable suffering on another defies all description.' By the end of the century 'Ireland, bleeding out of a thousand wounds', lay completely under the power of England. The mass of the Irish people were reduced in their own country to the status of 'tenants and labourers completely without rights' and for a hundred years 'this yoke in its unbearable form' beleaguered Ireland.[75] The Irish, for their part held out of their own conviction strongly to the faith of their ancestors with 'genuine moral courage.'[76] Pfister regarded England as an inalienable ally of Germany and English strength as the ultimate guardian of Germany against its continental enemies, but was sure that England's future strength could only be secured by reconciliation with Ireland.[77]

Naturally, the period of 1914 to 1918 and the 1920's produced a renewed interest in Ireland, Irish nationalism, and the possibility of Irish-German co-operation, with the publication of much historical-political literature of a polemical kind. More sympathetic nineteenth-century German historians such as Ranke and Venedey had defended the 'Irish nation' from the label of barbarity or the charge that the Irish did not truly constitute a nation of their own. Even those historians who viewed Ireland as constituting in the present an integral part of the United Kingdom credited the country for its role in the civilising of Central Europe in the early Middle Ages,

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[75] Hermann von Pfister, *England und Irland: Eine zeitgemässe Betrachtung* (Berlin, Adolf Reinecke, 1886), pp. 5-6, 12, 13, 14.
[76] '…wahrhaft sittlichem Mute.' Pfister, *England und Irland*, p. 15.
[77] Ibid., p. 31.

during the reign of Charlemagne, for example. In 1916, the Austrian linguist and scholar of Celtic languages, Julius Pokorny (1887-1970), a long-time and staunch supporter of Irish nationalism, who believed that Germans and Celts were akin to each other as fellow 'Aryans', published *Irland* in 1916, a strongly nationalist Irish history, first translated into English for Irish readers in 1933, and which had been widely praised in the German press. This book, as Pokorny's biographer states, aside from being totally one-sided, was one of the few books on Irish history by German writers that had not been written 'through an Anglo-centric filter.'[78] He, along with such figures as Kuno Meyer and Thurneysen wished to reverse prevailing Hibernophobic stereotypes of the Irish, emphasizing the civilising influence of Irish culture on early medieval Europe and the culpability of the English in destroying this great culture.[79] During the 1920's and 1930's, particularly but not exclusively amongst more hard-line strains of German nationalist thinking, interest in Ireland persisted, and in certain hands German *völkisch* thought was even applied to the course of Irish history:[80] 'Identification with a small, oppressed people that was fighting against a great empire was, in the eyes of conservatives, easily transferred to the situation of defeated Germany.'[81] The interest of German academics in Ireland and in Gaelic culture was valued by early Irish governments as well as, with the publication of Thurneysen's *Irische Helden- und Königssagen bis zum 17. Jahrhundert* financed in 1921 by Dáil Eireann. The Irish government was also involved in the financing of Pokorny's *Die älteste Lyrik der grünen Insel* in 1923.

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[78] The only full-length English study of Pokorny of which I am aware is Pol O'Dochartaigh's *Julius Pokorny, 1887-1970: Germans, Celts, and Nationalism* (Dublin, Four Courts Press, 2004), pp. 42, 95.
[79] Ibid., p. 43.
[80] O'Neill, *Ireland and Germany*, pp. 251-253, 25-256. For a comprehensive overview of such literature see Pol O Dochartaigh, 'Nazi Historiography and the Partition of Ireland', *Irish-German Studies*, 2004, pp. 62-72.
[81] O'Dochartaigh, *Julius Pokorny*, p. 59.

In Ireland in the nineteenth century, both *The Nation* and the *Dublin University Magazine* had been at the forefront of the translation and popularization of German literature for Irish audiences. The founders of both publications were attracted by the special prominence that literature appeared to hold in German national life. The Young Irelander James Clarence Mangan became widely known for his efforts in the translation and popularization of German literature, and Davis had distinguished his 1840 speech to the Historical Society of Trinity College, Dublin with references to Herder and Lessing. In the second issue of the Young Ireland journal *The Nation* a writer remarked that 'some of the greatest works that have ever seen the light have, within the last few years, been published in Germany and France.'[82] The German example of a national literature developed out of the shadow of a foreign oppressor (France) was also present. In the twentieth century, as Irish nationalism advanced towards demands for full cultural and political separation from Britain, influential figures such as Arthur Griffith and George 'AE' Russell were important Irish nationalist admirers of Germany. Irish nationalist papers, particular more Catholic-accented ones, during the First World War extolled 'German earthy patriotism and high-spirited idealism' in contrast to English decadence. The Catholic (nationalist) cleric Canon Patrick Augustine Sheehan (1852-1913), who became a highly popular writer and indeed a literary 'celebrity', was an ardent admirer of German '*Kultur*'.[83] The noted Irish nationalist Roger Casement praised 'the honesty and integrity of the German mind, the strength of the German intellect, the skill of the German hand and brain, the justice and vigour of German law, the intensity of German culture, science, education and social development', and concluded from all this that: the world of

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[82] Andrew Cusack, 'Cultural Transfer in the *Dublin University Magazine*: James Clarence Mangan and the German Gothic', in Andrew Cusack and Barry Murnane (eds.), *Popular Revenants: The German Gothic and its International Reception, 1800-2000* (Rochester, NY, Camden House, 2012), pp. 87-88, 89.
[83] Fischer, '"*Kultur* – and our need of it"', pp. 67, 75-76.

European life needs today, as it needed in the days of a decadent Roman world empire, the coming of another Goth, the coming of the Teuton.'[84]

IV

In viewing the transnational operations of the multi-directional 'English' influence in these countries we may get a better idea of just how much we can speak of a 'common European path' for the intellectual development of 'national thought' in modern Europe. The interpretation of Irish historiography as being practically wholly isolated from wider European trends in the nineteenth century, and the conclusion that German historians were either ignorant of Ireland or did not care to write about Irish affairs, certainly do not tell the whole story of the transnational links between these two countries during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

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[84] Roger Casement, *The Crime against Europe: A Possible Outcome of the War of 1914* (Philadelphia, Celtic Press, 1915), p. 14.

CHAPTER SIX

Conclusion

As Paul Lawrence notes in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Nationalism*, 'a satisfactory answer to the question: "how does history writing inform nationalism?" has yet to be supplied.'[1] This thesis has sought to contribute towards answering that question, focusing upon how the drive to understand 'the nation' influenced the writing of history, and how historical thought and writing in turn shaped understandings of 'the nation'. The historical 'master narrative' of the nation continues to excite and influence historiographical argument in each of these countries, where nationalism has had a difficult history and where it continues to shape society. In 1975, a leading German historian, Thomas Nipperdey, condemned another leading German historian, Hans-Ulrich Wehler, as 'Treitschke redivivus', in a review of the latter's work on the *Kaiserreich*. In 1989, in Ireland's leading historical journal *Irish Historical Studies*, the historian Brendan Bradshaw levelled a strong criticism against the 'excessive' revisionism of Irish historiography, which he believed purposely glossed over the 'tragic' dimension of that history. He called for a return to an 'emancipatory' understanding of the nation's past, in order, he admitted, 'to recover the vision of its two great luminaries, Eoin McNeill and Edmund Curtis'.[2] Not surprisingly, Bradshaw's appeal attracted much criticism. The point is that up to the present, fundamentally differing and perhaps even incompatible ideas of what it is to write the nation's past continue to affect German and Irish historiography. This thesis has argued that the *representation* of Irish and German 'national' histories was in many respects quite similar. Historians in both

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[1] Paul Lawrence, 'Nationalism and Historical Writing', in John Breuilly (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Nationalism* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 713-726.
[2] Brendan Bradshaw, 'Nationalism and Historical Scholarship in Modern Ireland', in Ciaran Brady (ed.), *Interpreting Irish History: The Debate on Historical Revisionism* (Dublin, Irish Academic Press, 1994), p. 216.

contexts proceeded from a sense of their nation as possessing a fractured past, a 'belated' or 'arrested' development, a past of historical weakness vis-à-vis its powerful neighbours, the absence of a nation-state since the Middle Ages or even earlier, and manifesting serious religious and regional heterogeneities. The thesis has aimed to show that the enterprise of nationalist history writing in these two countries, as different as they and their historical experiences were, was nonetheless driven by parallel concerns and took parallel forms of discourse and narrative. In particular, the project of producing a more or less hegemonic national historical narrative in Germany and Ireland was fraught with difficulty in four fundamentally important areas: establishing a narrative of origins that could historically mandate nation-statehood, overcoming the legacy of the confessional divide, integrating historicist 'race thinking' and historical narratives of the nation, and historically mandating the territorial outline of the nation. The differences in the historical experiences of Germany and Ireland are apparent, the one as almost the inverted 'mirror image' of the other – the one a geographically peripheral actor, the other the 'crossroads' nation of Europe, the two fifty years apart in the achievement of nation-statehood – notwithstanding, historical writers in both countries were, in how they viewed the significance of history writing for shared a basic common idea. It is of course correct to say that differing trajectories of historiographical development are important, yet it can also be said that the Irish case fitted into a broader European pattern of mostly amateur and popularizing historiography, and examples such as Lecky, MacNeill and Green attest to the gradual development occurring in Irish history writing before the consolidation of the profession. The claims made within the German tradition to scholarly supremacy, as should be clear by now, were sometimes not much more than that. As much as a 'bilateral' comparison can, this

one broadly lends supports to the proposition put forward by historians in recent years, stated in the introduction, on the idea of a distinctively European form of nationalist history writing.

It is immediately striking that all of the historians dealt with here, were, to some extent, political actors in their respective countries: all of them were somehow involved, to some extent, in important political arguments and controversies of their own times. In this way, in addition to their work as historians, they all had a place in the debates and events that framed and influenced nationalist politics in Ireland and Germany, however moderate or passionate their own nationalist allegiances may have been. In this sense, many, indeed most of the historians dealt with here were, in a very real sense, nation-builders in their respective countries, intimately connected with the politics of nationalism in Ireland and Germany. In Germany as well as Ireland, history writing was essentially and inescapably political; as Donal McCartney put it with respect to Ireland: 'had the historical notions been other than they were, the history of Ireland in the nineteenth century must have been other than it was – so inseparable are historical myths and political reality.'[3] In fact, in the Irish context in particular, probably more so than in Germany where alternative poles of national identification were more present and more tenable, identification with a particular narrative of the Irish past came to be the determining factor in identification with the Irish nation, perhaps more so than any other.

The writers of nationalist historical narratives in the contexts of Ireland and Germany were faced with the difficult task of reconciling the evidently repeated revolutionary upheavals their nations had experienced in their histories with the continuity-constructing dimension of their form of history writing. With one noteworthy

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[3] Donal McCartney, 'The Writing of History in Ireland, 1800-1830', *Irish Historical Studies*, 10, 40 (1957), p. 362.

exception (John Mitchel), none of these individuals were amenable to revolution as a means of effecting political change in the present (many of them had become alienated from youthful radicalism in their later years, when they wrote their 'great works' of history). It was important to them to show that the foundational events in their respective nations' histories, even if they could be considered as ruptures and upheavals, were firmly situated within a narrative that extended back to the nation's earliest origins. One means of ensuring this, often employed by the historians considered here was 'Othering' along 'racial' lines, assuming the deep historical existence of changeable but still fundamentally constant 'national characters'. Most of the historians considered here had a broadly optimistic view of the inevitability of the political nation, though there were exceptions. For Lecky, the hope of a progressive Irish historical development seemed to have practically died out at the end of the eighteenth century as an ultimately failed constitutional 'revolution' gave way to a violent and destructive attempted one. The Catholic German historians who rejected the historical assumptions of the '*kleindeutsche*' narrative and continued to adhere to a positive interpretation of Germany's 'imperial' past were in a sense on the 'losing' side. Germany was conceived more of as a benevolent and peaceful '*Kulturträger*' [4] motivated only by intentions to 'reclaim' territories that had 'originally' been German. The distinctive imperial polity that had ruled over German during the medieval period was, as we have seen, regarded by numerous German historians as having been responsible for the 'arrested development' of German 'national' history. Of course this is not to deny the violent sentiments of figures such as Treitschke in particular, who saw German empire in 'the East' as both just and historically necessary, and which were remembered and put to use by *völkisch* and

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[4] Wolfgang Wippermann, *Die deutschen und der Osten: Feindbild und Traumland* (Primus, Darmstadt, 2007), p. 123. Faulenbach, *Die Ideologie des deutschen Weges,* p. 81.

pan-Germanist groups to ultimately horrific effect. Nonetheless the German self-image communicated by these German writers was of a fundamentally freedom-loving nation, indeed one with a 'special' understanding of the true nature of freedom (such notions were particularly widespread and attractive, as noted, during the First World War). This did much to account for the aggressively defensive accent of popular German nationalism particularly during the inter-war period. The Irish writers considered here, almost needless to say, almost all considered imperialism as – again, with justification – fundamentally unjust and a curse on Irish historical development. Imperialism was something that had been done to and not by the Irish. Even if this was a point that could be sustained, the Irish habit of historical thought demanded the dismissal of all claims made by and on behalf of the Protestant north-east corner of the nation to separateness, and justified this in such a way as to lend support to violent nationalism. In both contexts, the significance attributed to religion and the problem of inter-confessional division in the nation's history increased possibilities of internal exclusion while also sharpening the moralistic claims of nationalism in either country. All of the principal actors considered here were politically conservative (meant primarily in the 'socio-economic' sense), and held a certain religious outlook to be central to their historiographical endeavours and to history writing in general, even if they denied or opposed confessional sectarianism on their part. In both contexts, the 'professionalization' of national history writing was closely linked with medieval historiography in particular, as the search for reliable, historically authentic primary sources upon which a national history could be built was directed towards the earliest period in which such sources could be found, the Middle Ages. In both contexts, again, as we have seen the relationship between 'scientific' and 'amateur' forms of national historiography was

a complex and often porous one. On the other hand, 'un-scientific' historiography maintained dominance in Ireland for far longer than in Germany; or, 'professionalization' came much later, and this naturally influenced the way Irish history was written: generally speaking, with far less attention to developed ideas about the correct practice of historical research, and lacking much in the way of an institutionalized academic context. Irish historians could rarely rival their German counterparts in the production of huge, truly comprehensive, multi-volume histories. Yet the German 'way' of historiography, a point of pride for Germans in general, which in reality had always developed within the context of political developments and was, especially from the mid-nineteenth century, very closely linked to political partisanship, itself became a kind of dogma, jealously guarding ownership over the German national story from 'outsider' narratives.[5] Even the most 'scientific' of historians, regardless of their milieu, could and did feel a 'wholehearted identification with their subject matter',[6] which historians of today would find problematic, to say the least. Indeed, Ranke's 'most distinguished' pupil, Heinrich von Sybel, turned away from his master's 'bloodless' form of historiography and had demanded that historians stand their ground on such 'earth-shattering questions' as nations and nationality. It is also interesting that some of the most successful historians came to have an influence among groups that they themselves rejected strongly. For example, W.E.H. Lecky, by the time of writing his Irish historiography an opponent of political Irish nationalism, came to be cited in the arguments of such luminaries of Irish separatist nationalism as Erskine Childers and Arthur Griffith, while Treitschke became a hero figure of sorts for just those racist, pan-Germanist, *völkisch* nationalists he had regarded as a potential threat to the stability of the

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[5] Iggers, *The German Conception of History*, pp. 6, 12, 17.
[6] Baar, *Historians and Nationalism*, p. 296.

Kaiserreich. Alexander Martin Sullivan, who held no pretentions to being a mere scholar, was hardly more open about the political purpose of his history than Treitschke the university historian was. The German historical novelist Felix Dahn believed himself to be dealing not only with historical events and personages, but with an early medieval forerunner of the modern German nation of his time and place. Standish O'Grady sought to 'imaginatively' reconstruct the ancient Irish world, but even he could never reject the drive towards and demands for authenticity, as shown by the differences between *History of Ireland: The Heroic Period* and *History of Ireland: Critical and Philosophical*. Gustav Freytag wrote self-consciously as a 'proper' historian, but he chose to do so by inserting, throughout his *Bilder aus der deutschen Vergangenheit*, narrativised 'character sketches' carefully plucked and adapted from German history. The point is that the meaning of a text is often mediated, determined by its readers, and the most important books are often those which are most (intentionally or not) misunderstood. Once again, it is notable that the most influential of these historians became so not because of any innovative ambitions which they *may* have held, but because of their 'masterful and appealing style',[7] an ability to appeal to an already present group of readers while at the same time 'guiding' those readers towards certain judgements of national history. Importantly, whatever the nuances of their arguments, none of these historians questioned the idea that nations, because they existed, were entitled to self-determination, to political sovereignty, to actualize themselves politically. This meant that their historical arguments, even if they were sceptical towards nationalism or certain variants for specific reasons, could still be pressed into the service of nationalist argumentation. Even Lecky, for example, did not reject the principle of

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[7] Baar, *Historians and Nationalism*, p. 302.

nationalism *as such* – such an exemplary liberal hardly could – which in practice meant the idea that a nation had a right to determine its own affairs. Of course, sometimes when national historians wrote the histories of nations to which they felt antagonistic, they were compelled to deny certain of their political claims, but this was because they conflicted with the claims of *their* own nation rather than because they were opposed to the principles of nationalism. What all these historians would have agreed upon was that the nation was a moral principle and a moral community: its characteristics under certain situations may have left much to be desired, but the principle of the nation was an ethical and moral one.

The first chapter established the importance of origins narratives in the German and Irish contexts, specifically the foundational epochs of the early medieval period and the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and their significance for how the nation came to be historically defined. The second chapter drew attention to the centrality of antagonistic confessional interpretations of the nation's history in each context and how the national historical narrative became closely identified with the Protestant interpretation in the German context and the Catholic interpretation in the Irish context. The third chapter drew attention to the relationship between 'race' and nation in nationalist history writing in both countries and established that while 'race' seemed to serve as a ready-made criterion for national difference, it did not necessarily easily merge with nationalism in either context. Yet the 'racialized' discourse of national enmity worked to at least obscure the inconsistencies and problems of synthesising 'race' into the national historical narrative in its facility for 'Othering'. The final thematic chapter dealt with the historical nationalization of territory, or the territorialisation of the nation's history, and the linked issue of regionalist challenges to the delineation of a nationalist historical narrative and

identity in Germany and Ireland. The survey chapter on 'connections' aimed to draw out the 'transnationality' of nationalism in which the efforts of nationalist historians of both Germany and Ireland were enmeshed. The depth of Irish historians' engagement with 'the nation' as historical and contemporary presence places Irish history during this period firmly within the mainstream of European history. Indeed, much of what made Irish history distinctive, certainly in the minds of the Irish historians dealt with here, seemed to make that history appear far more similar in character to the history of central and eastern European nations than to the histories of Ireland's near neighbours. Ireland, on the other hand, provided a 'case study', unique in 'Western Europe', for the effects on 'national' progress and development of the same historical 'facts' which had defined so much of central European history. If nothing else this study makes clear that at least one supposed 'peculiarity' of Irish historiography, the enduring and central importance of the religious and political affiliations of those who wrote it, affiliations that were entwined with each other, was in fact nothing of the sort.[8] Nothing, indeed, 'is more international than the construction of national identities.'[9]

On the significance of national historiography to nationalism, this comparative study has confirmed nothing so much as the reality that since 'the nation' first became understood as a primary political principle, nations have been both 'constructed' and more importantly, 'zones of conflict'. This study has demonstrated that, contrary to the most basic principle of nationalism, attempts to construct a single, dominant historical narrative of the nation which could provide an accepted 'definition' of the nation were practically beyond realisation. The act of creating a nationalist historical narrative presupposed the emphasis and elision of certain events and occurrences in

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[8] Gibney, *The Shadow of A Year*, p. 13.
[9] Baar, *Historians and Nationalism*, p. 304.

the nation's history, and above all *interpretations* of events and occurrences, which identified with a certain idea of what it meant to be Irish or German and therefore excluded, to one degree or another, either implicitly or explicitly, certain groups. Too many Germans, too many Irishmen, were unable to accept Renan's dictum that sometimes it was necessary to forget as well as to remember. This inevitably brought forth counter-conceptions of the nation's history and its 'definition', which in turn made the 'dominant' conception of each more adamantine in its certainty, even to the point of myopia. It is a further irony that the 'fault lines' of national history, in both contexts, often lay upon those cultural resources regarded as most integral to national identity, in particular religious or confessional identity, and ethnicity or at any rate a sense of common ancestry. In both countries, religious identity could not but be integral to constructions of national history, but this clashed with the reality of the deep confessional divisions that underlay modern German or Irish society. In the Irish context, attempts to construct a single historical Irishness clashed with the particular multi-ethnic origins of Irish society as it was. Though this was not so much an issue in the German context, the preoccupation with historically defining a single 'pure' 'Germanness', rooted in racial thinking of the later nineteenth century, promised to bedevil 'the Germans'' relations with other peoples in Europe, as it most certainly did. That the comparative method has been conspicuously underused in Irish history and historiography scarcely needs assertion and elaboration; the value of this particular comparison is lies in making clear just how much the context and processes of the development of 'national thought' in Ireland paralleled the same in continental European societies, in this case, what became the German Empire in 1871, and a German republic in 1918. As well as also throwing light on a historical phenomenon that played a central role in German history – nationalism or 'national

thought' – this comparison may hopefully enrich further study of the relation of German delineations of national self-understanding to those of societies in western Europe outside of the classic comparators of France and Britain (often, in actual practice, England). This comparison has shown that there is a strong argument to be made for the presence of a 'general template' of national historiography in this era, characteristically, as we have seen in this comparison, manifested in a narrative structured around three major phases: the ancient and early medieval 'golden age' of national unity, freedom, and cultural flourishing, the later medieval period associated with decline and a loss of liberty and unity, and a subsequent period (or periods) typified by the struggle for the restoration of liberty and unity, often the early modern era.[10] With respect to the relationship between nationalism and the state, it appears that for even those historians who defined statehood as essential to the full realization of nationhood, the actual achievement of nation-statehood did not necessarily create the nation anew. For *völkisch* historians in Germany – and if one thinks of '*völkisch*' more as a discourse than a closed ideology, we must include 'mainstream' historians such as Treitschke and Freytag for whom, at least, *völkisch* rhetoric was of some importance – and 'Irish-Ireland' historians, in particular, that statehood meant nothing unless it was established on the 'true' historic nation, whether it was the German *Volk* or Gaelic Ireland. Further, maybe more importantly, achievement of 'national' statehood, whether in 1871 or 1922, did not fundamentally change the content and emphases of historical narratives that had formed and developed earlier, rather statehood was (necessarily) 'historicized' as best as it could be to augment the 'nationalization' of the new nation-state.

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[10] Baar, *Historians and Nationalism*, p. 295.

What does this thesis and its conclusions have to offer to the continuing debates on the 'nature' and origins of nationalism, the modernity or deeper 'ancestry' of nationalism, and the significance of the 'ethnic' dimension of nationalism? The significance attributed to historians in nationalism would seem, certainly at first sight, to lend support to interpretations stressing the 'objective' importance of 'myths and memories of the nation', or 'memories, values, myths, symbols, and traditions',[11] and ethnic heritages to nationalism. Yet the internal heterogeneity of individual national historiographies certainly seems to demonstrate that the history of nationalism is as Hutchinson has written, a history of conflicts over competing narratives that seek to define 'national' communities, that nations are 'zones of conflict'.[12] This brings us to another point: we must not forget or downplay the ways in which nationalist historians have themselves been willing to deliberately 're-define' certain 'myths and memories', highlight some and obscure or attack others, and to downplay or dismiss as well as emphasize the importance of ethnic heritages. Nationalism is something distinctively modern, which requires a society that can be mobilized on a mass basis, and the appeal to the nation's past in the service of political aims is likewise part of the "modern" discourse of nationalism'. It is precisely the modern discourse of nationalism that redefines this or that 'national' symbol as such, so that what matters is not its existence but the meaning given to it in the age of nationalism. So the significance of history writing to nationalism can just as well, if not better, be explained with reference to those interpretations which emphasise the 'inventive' characteristics of the development of nationalism. Even when writing within a particular cultural heritage long predating them, modern national historians have defined 'the nation' in ways that would have seemed

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[11] Smith, *Ethno-Symbolism and Nationalism*, p. 30.

[12] Bhabha, 'Introduction: Narrating the Nation', Kramer, 'Historical Narratives', p. 537. John Hutchinson, *Nations as Zones of Conflict* (London, SAGE, 2005)

incomprehensible to members of the pre-modern 'ethnic cores' that formed 'their' nation in the modern era. This is at least implicitly accepted by Hutchinson in his arguments that 'nations are modern political entities, created by nationalists who employ historical revivals in order to overthrow ethnic traditionalists.' National historiography might be called 'Janus-faced', (selectively) approaching aspects of the nation's 'ethnic heritage' to provide it with a new form of legitimation, whilst at the same time constantly putting that past to the service of the fundamentally modern goal of national self-determination, and the recognition of that right. Ten years prior to the writing of this thesis, Konrad Jarausch and Martin Geyer published an important work on the 'shattered pasts' of German history, focusing in particular on the dimension of the history of German nationalism. This thesis has shown that in countries such as Germany and Ireland, where there were many 'shattered pasts', history writing was indispensable for nationalism, yet could never ultimately solve the problems with which it was confronted, and indeed sometimes aggravated old and created new ones. 'Nationalist genealogies [of the nation] are', as Özkirimli argues, highly complex constructs which, despite their claim to offer linearity and continuity, are marred by ambiguity, discontinuity, and disruption...the choices of the nationalist discourse are actually the sedimented and contingent outcomes' of continuous argument over the definition of 'the nation'.[13]

This thesis was written at a time when both Germany and Ireland, very different countries located in the centre and on the periphery of Europe respectively, entered into a period in which events occurring early in the last century will be widely remembered, commemorated, and held up to further study, all of which will be significant for future understandings of the modern German and Irish past in these

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[13] Özkirimli, *Theories of Nationalism*, p. 210.

countries. This thesis has attempted to hold up a light not only to the ways in which historians have understood their tasks and the histories of their nations; but the irreducible importance, for better or worse, of how the histories of nations are written, and what this means for nations in their modern present. Nationalism is meaningless, quite simply unthinkable, without a specific form of historical investigation, representation and narrative that displays certain fundamental general features in different 'national' contexts. If history is sometimes a nightmare from which nations struggle to awake, to paraphrase Stephen Dedalus, we must understand as best as we can the deep and enduring significance of the relationship between 'history' and 'the nation'.

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Appendix – 'Dramatis Personae'

Dahn, Felix Ludwig Julius

Felix Ludwig Julius Dahn was born in February 1834 in Hamburg in a family of mixed Franco-German descent, and died in 1912. He studied law and philosophy at Munich and Berlin, held positions at Munich, Wuerzberg, and Königsberg, and later in life was a leading member of the *Alldeutscher Verband*, the Pan-German League. His more important academic works included the multi-volume *Prehistory of the Germanic and Roman Peoples* (1883) and *The Germanic Kings* (1861-1911). However, he was most well-known for his extremely popular historical novel *Ein Kampf um Rom* (1876, later published in English in three volumes as *A Struggle for Rome*). Dahn's status as a respected historian makes *Ein Kampf um Rom* − a fictionalized account of historical events which incorporated numerous historical facts − an important source for considering the importance of historiography for the development of German nationalism during the late nineteenth century. In his final years he took a prominent role in the campaign for the building of the *Völkerschlachtdenkmals* in Leipzig to commemorate the centenary of the 'Battle of the Nations' in 1813.

D'Arcy McGee, Thomas

Thomas D'Arcy McGee was born in April, 1825 to a Catholic family. In 1842, aged seventeen, he sailed to the United States via Quebec, where he worked for the *Boston Pilot*, an influential Irish-American newspaper. A few years later he returned to Ireland where he became politically active and edited the Young Ireland newspaper *The Nation*. He participated in the ill-fated Young Ireland 'Rebellion' of 1848 and escaped arrest on potential treason charges by fleeing back to the United States. Here he resumed his journalistic career. However, he became disillusioned with American

life and politics and moved to Canada in 1857. McGee worked energetically throughout the remainder of his life for the development of a unified and autonomous Canadian nation, within the British Empire, becoming one of the 'Fathers of the Canadian Confederation'. McGee, though he would come to reject revolutionary republicanism, certainly never discarded his own Irish nationalism, and his devotion to Catholicism, his equation of Irishness with Catholicity, also became more pronounced in his later years. McGee's characteristically strident denouncements of revolutionary Irish republicanism in later life led to his death by assassination in Ottawa in April 1868, at the age of forty-two. His principal publications were *History of the Attempts to Establish the Protestant Reformation in Ireland*, *The Catholic History of North America*, and the two-volume *Popular History of Ireland: From the Earliest Times to the Emancipation of the Catholics*. This work was published to great critical acclaim on both sides of the Atlantic in 1863, earning McGee unanimous election to the Royal Irish Academy in 1864. The work deeply influenced subsequent Irish historical writing, most notable Sullivan's *Story of Ireland*, and both through this and in its own right achieved a significant popular influence in Ireland.

See David A. Wilson, *Thomas D'Arcy McGee, Volume One: Passion, Reason and Politics, 1825-1857* (London, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008), and idem, *Thomas D'Arcy McGee, Volume Two: The Extreme Moderate 1857-1868* (London, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2011)

Davis, Thomas Osborne

Thomas Osborne Davis was born in October 1814. He studied Law at Trinity College, receiving his degree in 1836, and being called to the Irish Bar in 1838. Between 1841 and early 1842 he published historical and contemporary essays in the *Citizen* (later the *Dublin Monthly Magazine*). It is likely that Davis would have been aware of wider European, including German, influences from English translations of

German books and pieces on Germany that appeared in such publications as the *Dublin University Magazine*. Davis was involved with the Repeal campaign of Daniel O'Connell, though he would become disillusioned with the latter's politics. He was a co-founder of *The Nation* in 1844. Davis died at the age of thirty, in 1845. Davis's principal works, in addition to various historical essays and ballads published in *The Nation* and the songs *A Nation Once Again* and *The Lament for Owen Roe O'Neill*, included *The Patriot Parliament of 1689* (1843), *Letters of a Protestant on Repeal* (five letters originally published in *The Nation* between 1842 and 1843, edited by his contemporary Thomas F. Meagher and re-published in 1847), *Literary and Historical Essays* (edited by C.G. Duffy and published in 1846). An edited collection of his poems appeared in 1846, and two of his prose writings edited by T.W. Rolleston in 1890 and 1914. Arthur Griffith produced another edition of Davis's work in 1914, and a centenary edition appeared in 1945. Davis produced a small number of scattered notes which indicate an intention to embark upon a biography of Wolfe Tone, an intention never realised. Davis's understanding of the nature of history may be gleaned from introductory comments to one of his *Addresses*: 'If you would influence the future, you must know the past…philosophy may be the compass, but history is the chart of the politician. Feeling and ambition urge us to study our native history'.

See Helen F. Mulvey, *Thomas Davis and Ireland: A Biographical Study* (Washington, D.C., The Catholic University of America Press, 2003)

Freytag, Gustav

Gustav Freytag was born in July 1816 in Kreuzberg, Prussian Silesia. He studied philology at Breslau and Berlin, and already as a young man was 'repelled' by Ranke's scientific and objective approach to history. This determination to write a different kind of history would determine the course of his career as a historian.

Freytag never achieved much academic distinction, but nevertheless became one of nineteenth-century Germany's most famed historians and writers. In respect of his literary achievements, his 1855 novel *Soll und Haben* brought him great success. From 1867 to 1870 Freytag was a deputy in the National Liberal Party in the Prussian Reichstag, but later became disillusioned with the policies of Bismarck. Freytag's five volume *Bilder aus der deutschen Vergangenheit* (1859-1867) was one of the most popular historical works of the nineteenth-century Germany. Though a self-consciously popular and cultural-historical work composed largely of a number of 'vignettes' of 'ordinary Germans' in the nation's early modern and late modern history, it was highly-regarded by contemporary German historians in the universities, particularly by Freytag's friend and correspondent Heinrich von Treitschke, because of its nationalistic, pro-Prussian and Protestant accent. Freytag and Treitschke shared, along with Heinrich von Sybel, a deep distrust of and opposition to Ranke's species of 'bloodless' history. It is fitting, then, that in the closing passage of the entire *Bilder*, Freytag claimed the historian's right to make sense of the past in terms of the necessities and challenges of the present. In 1872, he began *Die Ahnen*, a series of historical novels which ran to six volumes. The *Bilder* was soon translated and published in English as *Pictures of the German Past*. Freytag remained active in Prussian and German political life in the years after the unification. He died in 1895.

See Larry L. Ping, *Gustav Freytag and the Prussian Gospel: Novels, Liberalism, and History* (Oxford, Peter Lang, 2006)

Green, Alice Stopford

Alice Stopford Green was one of the foremost historians and nationalists of early twentieth-century Ireland. She was born in May, 1847, in Kells, County Meath. From 1874 to 1877 she lived in London, and married the notable English historian

J.R. Green. The marriage was short-lived, J.R. died in 1883, but during this time she aided him in the writing of his *Short History of the English People* and would oversee re-publication of the work after his death. Green did not become an Irish historical writer and nationalist until the 1890's, and her intellectual influences as Irish historian would centre on Eoin MacNeill and W.E.H. Lecky. The two historians, the university scholar MacNeill and the proficient amateur Green became something of an unofficial partnership. Green saw her task as having as much to do with presenting MacNeill's scholarly researches in a readable form to a broad public as with presenting her own study and judgement, and Green's manuscripts were closely read by MacNeill. She was also vocal in her opposition to British policy in South Africa during the Boer Wars and the Congo Reform movement. Her first major work on Irish history, *The Making of Ireland and its Undoing*, was published in 1908, a social and cultural history of medieval Ireland.. Her most popular work was *Irish Nationality* (1911), a short volume dedicated to 'The Memory of the Irish Dead', in which she surveyed Irish history from ancient times to the nineteenth century, through a nationalist lens. Green, being of Protestant background, besides other Irish nationalist activities, took seriously efforts to make Home Rule more palatable to Ulster Unionists. She supported the Irish nationalist movement during the War of Independence but was not a 'doctrinaire' republican, and became one of the first Senators of the Irish Free State. Her other major works on Irish history in addition to the above-mentioned works were *The Old Irish World* (1912), and *History of the Irish State to 1014* (1925), and in the last years of her life she worked on history textbooks for the new Irish Free State.

See Lawrence L. McBride, 'Alice Stopford Green', in *Encyclopedia of Historians and Historical Writing, Volume I*, ed. K. Boyd (London, Fitzroy-Dearborn, 1999)

Haller, Johannes

Johannes Haller was born was born in October 1865 in Russian Estonia to an ethnic German family. The German community in Estonia existed at this time under the pressure of St. Petersburg's 'Russification' policies, towards which Haller would later recall experiencing a 'physical resistance'. His writings as a historian were constantly concerned with the conflicts of different nations; he would believe that the essence of history was at root nothing other than the struggle of nations for existence. Another important legacy of his Baltic background had been his perception of the Germans as an 'aristocratic', or 'ruling' people, and attendant scepticism of democracy and parliamentary government, which were 'western ideas'. He had studied history at the University of Tartu in Estonia and later continued his studies in Berlin and Heidelberg. Between 1892 and 1897 he worked for the Prussian Historical Institute in Rome, at Marburg, and then at the University of Giessen, 1904-1913. Haller dealt mainly with the medieval history of Germany and France, as well as the history of the Papacy. A great admirer of Bismarck, during the First World War he had called for far-reaching annexations of Russian territory. His single-volume *Epochen der deutschen Geschichte*, first published in 1923 at the height of Germany's post-Versailles abasement proved to be his most popular, widely-read work, and it is unmistakably nationalist and opposed to the settlement which founded the Weimar Republic. Though later editions of *Epochen der deutschen Geschichte* would be marked by Haller's eventual movement towards National Socialism, and though he had been one of the few German historians to immediately and enthusiastically greet the Nazi '*Machtergreifung*' in 1933; Haller had in fact long been sceptical of the more racially-deterministic *völkisch* assessments of German history. His *Tausend Jahre deutsch-französischer*

Beziehungen, first published in 1932, was another popular work which achieved a wide circulation. With Germany's defeat in 1945 his faith in Nazism and the certainties of German nationalism in general had collapsed.

See Peter Lambert, 'Johannes Haller', *Encyclopaedia of Historians and Historical Writing*, *volume I*, ed. K. Boyd (London, Fitzroy-Dearborn, 1999)

Janssen, Johannes

Johannes Janssen was born in Westphalia, in April 1829, to a staunchly Catholic family in a mostly Protestant region. He was educated at the universities of Münster, Bonn, and Berlin, as well as the Catholic University of Leuven, afterwards gaining a position at Frankfurt-am-Main. He was ordained as a Catholic priest in 1860, became a Prussian parliamentary deputy in 1875, and in 1880 received the appointment of domestic prelate to Pope Leo XIII. As a result of the *Kulturkampf* in particular, he became a determined critic of Bismarck and the Prussian government, and a stout supporter of the ultramontane party in the Church, besides his membership in the Catholic *Zentrum* Party. He died in Frankfurt in December 1891. He was most well-known for his *Geschichte des deutschen Volkes seitdem Ausgang des Mittelalters* (eight volumes, 1878-1894), later translated into English and published from 1896, which enjoyed 'phenomenal' success, running to fifteen editions between 1876 and 1890. In preferring to concentrate on *Kulturgeschichte*, in the preface to the fifteenth edition he described his aim 'to depict the German national life in all its varying conditions, and stages, and phases of destiny.' *Geschichte des deutschen Volkes* ignited an historiographical controversy given its strongly supposedly anti-Protestant as well as pro-Catholic arguments and the author's active involvement in Catholic politics. One of Janssen's antagonists, Max Lenz, disputed his whole claim to be a historian. Though Janssen's *Geschichte* was by no means simplistic or one-sided, it did tend to favour a Catholic-oriented narrative of German history. In this as well as

his Catholic identity, Janssen was, despite his success in book sales, an 'outsider' in German historiography.

See John Tonkin, 'Johannes Janssen', *Encyclopedia of Historians and Historical Writing, volume I*, ed. K. Boyd (London, Fitzroy-Dearborn, 1999)

Lecky, W.E.H.

William Edward Hartpole Lecky was born in March, 1838, in Dublin. His father was a landowner and minor gentleman descended from seventeenth-century English settlers. He was studied at Trinity College, Dublin, from where he graduated BA in 1859 and MA in 1863. At Trinity he had become impressed with the patriot and nationalist movements of the late eighteenth century as well as with some of the ideas of Thomas Davis. In 1861 Lecky published his first book, *Leaders of Public Opinion in Ireland*, a brief sketch of the lives and work of Jonathan Swift, Henry Flood, Henry Grattan and Daniel O'Connell. Two surveys of intellectual history followed: *A History of the Rise and Influence of Rationalism in Europe* (two volumes, 1865), and *A History of European Morals from Augustus to Charlemagne* (two volumes, 1869). Lecky then devoted himself to his *History of England during the Eighteenth Century* (eight volumes, 1878-1890). It is worth noting that enough of the book was concerned with Irish affairs to justify the subsequent publication of its sections on Irish history as a separate five-volume *History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century*. While Lecky never lost his intellectual belief in the justness of Irish patriotism, nor abandoned his judgment that the Act of Union had failed Ireland, he opposed the Home Rule movement, which he regarded as a plebeian movement with little in common with the respectable nationalism of the eighteenth-century gentry and aristocracy. In this sense his opposition to Irish self-government had much to do with a deep pessimism about the state of Irish society and politics in the late nineteenth century. Nonetheless, Lecky became regarded as one of the

foremost nineteenth-century advocates of Irish nationalism, a reputation that persisted into the twentieth century among members of the independence movement. W.E. Gladstone, no less, gave Lecky's *History* much of the credit for his own certainty of the historical justice of the cause of Irish Home Rule. Lecky's academic honours included the degree of LL.D. from Dublin, St Andrews' and Glasgow, the degree of D.C.L. from Oxford and the degree of Litt.D. from Cambridge. In 1894 he was elected corresponding member of the Institute of France, though he turned down a chair in history at Oxford, expressing his life-long aversion to the practice of academic history. A volume of Lecky's *Historical and Political Essays* was published posthumously in 1908. The Lecky Chair of Irish History at Trinity College, Dublin, was established in 1913.

See Benedikt Stuchtey, 'W.E.H. Lecky', *Encyclopedia of Historians and Historical Writing, volume I*, ed. K. Boyd (London, Fitzroy-Dearborn, 1999)

MacNeill, Eoin

Eoin (or John) MacNeill, who has been described as 'the father of the modern study of early Irish medieval history', was born in May 1867 to a northern Catholic family. He was a founding member of the cultural nationalist organization the Gaelic League, in 1893, and edited its first publication, the *Gaelic Journal*. In later years he would lead the politicization of the League. In 1908 he gained an appointment to University College, Dublin, as Professor of Early Irish history. Through the Gaelic League MacNeill deepened his involvement in political nationalism. He was the first to call for the formation of a nationalist militia dedicated to the implementation of a Home Rule settlement, was instrumental in the organization of this force, and became one of its first leaders. However, he was strictly opposed to the idea of an armed rebellion except in the case of a British attempt to suppress the movement. For this reason, he actively opposed the plans made for an uprising in 1916, though

this did not fatally weaken his status in the nationalist elite, on the political side of the movement. In any case MacNeill himself was arrested after the Rising, court-martialed and sentenced to life imprisonment. He was released from prison in 1917 and was elected as a Sinn Fein M.P. in the 1918 general election. In line with Sinn Féin policy, he refused to take his seat in the British House of Commons and sat instead in the newly-convened Dáil Éireann. In 1921 he supported the Anglo-Irish Treaty, and in 1922 attended the Irish Race Convention in Paris. Following the establishment of the Irish Free State, he became Minister for Education in its first government, a crucial development in the birth of the new state. In 1924 MacNeill represented the Irish government on the Boundary Commission set up to renegotiate the border between Northern Ireland and the Irish Free State. He aimed to do so conscientiously, but was nonetheless an ineffective negotiator, and the Commission's activity did not result in any significant redrawing of the border. He also resigned on 24th November 1925 as Minister for Education, a position unrelated to his work on the Commission. He lost his Dáil seat at the June 1927 election and never returned to politics, and devoted himself to scholarship once more and later became Chairman of the Irish Manuscripts Commission. He died in Dublin of natural causes at the age of seventy-eight. An essayist primarily, his most important works included *Phases of Irish History*, *Celtic Ireland*, and a study of St. Patrick.

See Michael Tierney, *Eoin MacNeill: Scholar and Man of Action, 1867-1945* (Oxford Clarendon Press, 1980)

Mitchel, John

John Mitchel was born in November 1815 in Ulster. From his father, a Presbyterian and later Unitarian clergyman, he gained early exposure to ideas of religious tolerance and support for Irish nationalism. At the age of four, he began a classical education, and went up to Trinity College in 1830, taking his degree in 1834. He

declined a career as a minister, becoming a bank clerk and later a lawyer. It was towards the end of the 1830's that he became involved in O'Connell's repeal campaign. Mitchel began to write for *The Nation* in 1843, and it was with Davis's encouragement that he wrote his first book, his biography of Hugh O'Neill. After Davis's death Mitchel joined the editorial staff of *The Nation*. From this time on, in 1845, he threw himself wholly into nationalist activity, and wrote many historical and political articles and reviews. It was during his time at *The Nation* that he struck up an unlikely friendship with Thomas Carlyle. Mitchel's witnessing of the horrors of the Great Famine, and what he saw as 'genocidal' policy of the British government enraged him, driving him towards incitement to rebellion. He left *The Nation*, dissatisfied with what he saw as the over-pacific attitude of his collaborators, and founded *The United Irishman*, where his writing against the government became increasingly subversive. After he began to openly incite rebellion in February and March of 1848, Mitchel was charged with sedition and later treason-felony in April, being found guilty by what was widely-known to be 'packed' jury. Mitchel was sentenced to transportation for fourteen years, sent first to Bermuda and later to Tasmania. In 1853 he made his escape to America, where he resumed his literary career. His revolutionary Irish nationalism and Anglophobia unchecked, he founded *The Citizen* newspaper in New York. In *The Last Conquest of Ireland (Perhaps)*, of 1861, Mitchel laid down in writing his view that the effects of the Great Famine had been exacerbated by a deliberate and genocidal British plan to decimate the population of Ireland. During the American Civil War Mitchel was an ardent supporter of the Confederacy. Mitchel was able to return in Ireland in 1875 and even secured election as MP twice, though each time the vote was invalidated on the grounds that he was a convicted felon. In any event he died that same year. Mitchel

was not a subtle writer, but nonetheless an eloquent and effective one, particularly when he wrote to attack the character or views of an opponent. His principal historical and political writings include *The Life and Times of Aodh O'Neill*, *An Apology for the British Government in Ireland*, *Jail Journal*, *The Crusade of the Period*, *The Last Conquest of Ireland (Perhaps)*, and the *History of Ireland from the Treaty of Limerick to the Present Time*.

See Bryan P. McGovern, *John Mitchel: Irish Nationalist, Southern Secessionist* (Knoxville, University of Tennessee Press, 2009)

O'Grady, Standish James

Standish James O'Grady was born in September, 1846, in rural western County Cork. His father was a Protestant clergyman, and he was a cousin of Standish Hayes O'Grady, a noted figure in the recovery and study of Celtic literature. The O'Grady's were a large, old, and notable aristocratic and gentry family in Cork, and the given name 'Standish' was apparently something of a family tradition. Standish James followed his father to Trinity College, though he found himself temperamentally unsuited to a career in the Church and qualified as a barrister in 1872, yet rarely practiced. His life-long interest was in writing. His reading of the eighteenth century *General History of Ireland* by Sylvester O'Halloran sparked an interest in Irish history that had previously been absent. His writings on Irish history were unconventional – though in some senses quite ahead of their time – and attracted little commercial success, though would come to have a profoundly important influence on W.B. Yeats, AE Russell, and others, leading him to be regarded as the 'Father of the Celtic Revival'. This was surprising in the sense that O'Grady was admittedly ignorant of the Gaelic language and reliant on translations. Though O'Grady was too basically conservative to be a political nationalist, his imaginative recovery of the heroic ancient and early medieval Irish past accounted for his

importance among more 'advanced' nationalists. He was prepared to discuss politics with nationalists rather than dismiss them as disloyal malcontents, and he held a high opinion of the Irish nationalist leader Charles Parnell. O'Grady's principal works in addition to his journalistic output and a number of historical novels included his *Story of Ireland*, *History of Ireland: The Heroic Period, and Cuchulainn and his Contemporaries*, and *History of Ireland: Critical and Philosophical*. It was in this latter work in particular where O'Grady sought to expound his idea of history.

See Michael McAteer, *Standish O'Grady, AE and Yeats: History, Politics, and Culture* (Dublin, Irish Academic Press, 2002)

Sullivan, Alexander Martin

Alexander Martin Sullivan (known as 'A.M.') was born in County Cork in 1830. Entering into journalism in 1850, Sullivan became assistant editor of *The Nation* in 1855, and subsequently editor and proprietor. From 1861 to 1884, in conjunction with his brother T.D., he made *The Nation* into one of the most influential forces in Irish nationalism. While Sullivan was a devotee of Young Ireland, the paper was steered under his leadership towards a strongly Catholic-oriented nationalism that differed markedly from the paper's original ethos. He later entered into a legal career in order to support his family, and was called to the Irish bar and made QC in 1881. As a barrister he defended Irish nationalists such as William O'Brien during sedition trials. He was elected MP as a Home Rule for two different constituencies in 1874 and 1880. He left politics in 1882 owing to ill health. In earlier years he had been a nationalist representative on the Dublin Corporation, and had been instrumental in the erection of the Grattan and O'Connell Monuments in Dublin. As a moderate nationalist of the constitutional stamp, Sullivan opposed violence and attempts at insurrection mainly on the grounds of their being counter-productive and ineffective, but he retained a personal sympathy for nationalists of varying hues. Despite his

lifelong activism for the nationalist cause, Sullivan is an obscure figure today. Though not a trained historian, Sullivan authored one of the most popular and widely-read nationalist histories of the nineteenth (and twentieth) centuries), *The Story of Ireland*. He died in 1884 at the age of fifty-four.

T.D. Sullivan, *Memoir of A.M. Sullivan* (Dublin, 1885)

Ranke, Leopold von

Leopold von Ranke was born in December 1795 to a Lutheran family in what was then the Electorate of Saxony. In 1814, he entered the University of Leipzig, to study Classics and theology. During this time he also became an expert in philology and the translation of classical authors into German. At this time he showed little interest in works of modern history, however, he had come to adulthood during the Napoleonic Wars and as a result his historical studies had begun to develop in conscious opposition to 'the dictatorship of Napoleonic ideas.' Beginning with his first book in 1824, the *Geschichte der romanischen und germanischen Völker von 1494 bis 1514* (*History of the Latin and Teutonic Peoples from 1494 to 1514*), Ranke showed his determination to writer history on a European scale and to investigate the roots of modern European civilization. The book is best remembered for Ranke's comment that the task of the historian was 'to show what actually happened' ('*wie es eigentlich gewesen*'). Ranke's statement that history should embrace this principle is still taken by many historians as a foundational principle. There has been much debate over the precise meaning of this phrase. Ranke certainly never meant, as has been assumed, that the historian should only document facts without offering any reasoned any interpretation of these facts. Ranke rather meant that the historian should both discover the facts and find the 'essences' behind them. Under this view, Ranke's principle had been to 'show what *essentially* happened'. Following the

success of his first work, Ranke was given a position in the University of Berlin and later became the official Historiographer of Prussia, in 1841. In 1831 he had founded the *Historisch-Politische Zeitschrift*. In 1849, Ranke published *Neun Bücher preussicher Geschichte* (published in English as *Memoirs of the House of Brandenburg and History of Prussia, during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*), in which he examined the fortunes of the Hohenzollern dynasty and state from the Middle Ages to the reign of Frederick the Great. His most popular work was *Deutsche Geschichte im Zeitalter der Reformation*, written in the 1840's. After his retirement from academic life in 1871, Ranke continued to write on a variety of subjects relating to German history, and in 1880 started his six-volume *Weltgeschichte*, which began with ancient Egypt and the Israelites. By the time of Ranke's death in Berlin in 1886, at the age of 90, he had reached only the 1100s, though his assistants later used his notes to continue up to 1453.

Ranke, given his basic conservatism and position in the Prussian bureaucracy was not a political nationalist in favour of unification, and did not greet unification with any especial enthusiasm. His extensive study of other national histories in Europe besides Germany's makes clear that he was no narrow 'chauvinist'. Nevertheless his idea of the special moral character of each state may be said with more justification to have possessed a nationalist inflection. His *Deutsche Geschichte im Zeitalter der Reformation* (though it does not deal *solely* with the early modern history of the modern 'German lands'), was one of the few works of Ranke that was acclaimed by such historians as Treitschke and Sybel, for its nationalist accent. If Ranke was not in his own time regarded as primarily a German national historian, his successors were bolder in placing his dictates in the service of historiographical nationalism. The entirety of Ranke's prodigious output, the *Gesammelte Werke*, runs to fifty-four

volumes, nine of which comprise his last major work. In addition to his major works, other important works included *Serbische Revolution* (1829), *Fürsten und Völker von Süd-Europa im sechzehnten und siebzehnten Jahrhundert*, *Die römischen Paepste in den letzten vier Jahrhunderten*, and *Hardenberg und die Geschichte des preussischen Staates von 1793 bis 1813*.

Helen Liebel-Weckowicz, 'Leopold von Ranke', *Encyclopedia of Historians and Historical Writing, volume I* (London, Fitzroy-Dearborn, 1999)

Spahn, Martin

Martin Spahn was born in March 1875 in East Prussia. He was the oldest son of Peter Spahn, leader of the Catholic *Zentrum* Party in the Reichstag. He studied history at the universities of Bonn, Berlin and Innsbruck. By 1901, at the age of twenty-six, he gained a professorship at Bonn but was then quickly invited to move on to the University of Straßburg. Spahn was for his own part not an ultramontane, but until the 1920's one of the 'Reform Catholics' who wanted German Catholics to take a renewed and greater part in the political and intellectual life of the new German nation-state, accepting the fact of unification under the leadership of Prussia. Spahn had, for example, taken a sceptical and critical stance towards Janssen's *Geschichte des deutschen Volkes* that was well-received by Protestant historians. In 1920 he moved on to a position at Cologne, but by 1924 devoted himself full-time to his duties as a Reichstag deputy. Between 1908 and 1918 he was a Straßburg councillor, for the *Zentrum* Party between 1912 and 1918, and between 1910 and 1912 he was also a Reichstag deputy for *Zentrum*. In 1921 he joined the *Deutschnationale Volkspartei* and later went over to the NSDAP in 1933, where he remained as a Reichstag deputy until 1945. In the 1920's and 1930's he authored various revisionist and irredentist historical and political tracts. Spahn's most important works included *Verfassungs- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte des Herzogtums*

Pommern von 1478 bis 1625 (1896/1897), a biography of Otto von Bismarck first published in 1915, *Mitteleuropa und das deutsche Volk* (1925), and a collection of essays published in 1934 entitled *Für den Reichsgedanken*. He also authored a number of essays dealing with German historical subjects for the *Catholic Encyclopedia.* Spahn died in May 1945 in northern Austria.

Gabrielle Clemens, *Martin Spahn und der Rechtskatholizismus in der Weimar Republik* (Mainz, 1983)

Sybel, Heinrich Karl Ludolf von

Heinrich Karl Ludolf von Sybel was born in December 1817 in Düsseldorf, in a Protestant family long-established in Westphalia which had included theologians and pastors. His father was a jurist, and had been a civil servant under both the French and the Prussians, before being raised in 1831 into the Prussian hereditary nobility. Sybel was educated at Berlin, and was subsequently said to have been Ranke's most distinguished pupil. In starting his career as a medieval historian, his first major work was the *Geschichte des ersten Kreuzzuges*, an English version of which was published in 1861. This work was followed by a study on *The Origins of the German Kingship*. In 1844 he first became an opponent of Catholic ultramontanism, and then moved to the University of Marburg. During his time here he became involved in politics, winning a seat at in the Hessian *Landtag*. He witnessed events of the year 1848 in Frankfurt, but did not succeed in getting elected to the *Nationalversammlung*. From this time he became a convinced supporter of a *kleindeutschland* solution, the unification of Germany under Prussian leadership, and his experience of the events of 1848 were decisive in turning him towards the study of modern history. His *Geschichte der deutschen Revolutionszeit, 1789-1800*, the fruit of nearly thirty years of work altogether, was first published in English between 1867 and 1869. The work contained important reflections on German history and on

the nation in general as historical actor and contemporary ideal, with comparisons on the historical character and development of the French and German peoples. In 1859 Sybel established the *Historische Zeitschrift*, the first dedicated historical journal and the model for all subsequent similar publications in Europe and beyond. In 1861, Sybel moved from Munich to Bonn in the Prussian Rhineland, where he remained until 1875. While at Bonn he became an active member of the Prussian Lower House. In 1875 he was appointed by Bismarck to run the Prussian State Archives, and commissioned to write a history of the establishment of the *Kaiserreich*. This became his crowning and last major work, with its suggestive title, *Die Begründung des deutschen Reiches durch Wilhelm I* (1889-1894). In his career Sybel aimed to provide a nationalistic interpretation of German history with a foundation of scholarship and authenticity. He espoused a conception of history at the centre of which stood the 'Geschichte und Succession der Völker'. In addition to his major works, some of Sybel's numerous political and historiographical essays were collected and published as *Kleine historische Schriften*, *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, and *Vorträge und Abhandlungen*.

See R.F. Southard, 'Heinrich von Sybel', *Encyclopedia of Historians and Historical Writing*, *volume I*, ed. K. Boyd (London, Fitzroy-Dearborn, 1999)

Treitschke, Heinrich Gotthard von

Heinrich Gotthard von Treitschke was born in Dresden in September 1834. His father was a high-ranking officer of the Saxon army. After studying at Leipzig and Bonn, and publishing an article on 'The Foundations of English Liberty' in *Preussische Jahrbücher* in 1859 and submitting his doctoral dissertation that year, he began lecturing on history and politics at Leipzig. He became very popular with his students but his pro-Prussian leanings, and hostility to the Saxon government, made it impossible for him to continue a career there. By 1863 he became a professor at

Freiburg, and in 1866, the year of the Austro-Prussian War, he moved to Berlin, became a Prussian subject, gained a post at the Humboldt University (over the objections of Ranke, who lobbied against the appointment) and became editor of *Preussische Jahrbücher*. In 1871 he became a deputy of the new German *Reichstag*, and for the rest of his life remained an important figure in German public life. As a political figure he strongly supported repressive Prussian legislation against Socialists, Poles, and Catholics and championed colonial expansion, a cause in which he developed a strong Anglophobia. Treitschke was particularly regarded by the Prussian political elite, if not always by his fellow historians, and his lectures at Berlin became something of a 'training ground' for the generation of nationalists who came to maturity during the *Kaiserreich*.

Treitschke's devotion to the German nation rang clear in all his historical works, not least in his principal work, the five-volume *Deutsche Geschichte im neunzehnten Jahrhundert* (1879-1895). He also wrote a number of biographical and historical essays, which were published in *Historische und Politische Aufsätze*, *Zehn Jahre deutscher Kämpfe*, and *Deutsche Kämpfe, Neue Folge*. Not all of his historical and political output was concerned solely with Germany, some articles dealt with other countries, but all tended to seam with his own nationalist assumptions and preconceptions, and were often concerned with what lessons the historical experiences, good or bad, of other countries could provide for the Germans. Among the more notable of Treitschke's individual essays included *What We Demand From France* and an essay from 1862 on the history of the medieval Teutonic Knights and *Ordensland* in medieval Prussia. He died in April 1896 aged sixty-two.

Yeong-Han Cheong, 'Heinrich von Treitschke', *Encyclopedia of Historians and Historical Writing, volume I*, ed. K. Boyd (London, Fitzroy-Dearborn, 1999)