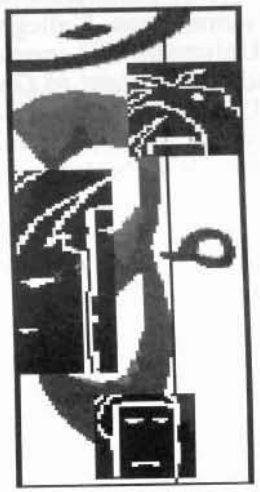
History Studies

Volume 3
2001

History Society Journal

University of Limerick

History Studies



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History Studies is a refereed publication of the University of Limerick History Society and is published annually. It is registered with the Irish International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) Centre at the National Library of Ireland.

Cover design by Jennifer McCaffrey and Nora McGillicuddy, Limerick School of Art and Design, Limerick Institute of Technology.
The cover incorporates the concept of past, present and future which is depicted firstly by the use of the Buddhist symbol *aum*. The idea is secondly represented by three illustrative heads looking in different directions. They symbolise the search for history by past, present and future historians.

Printed by Litho Press Ltd., Midleton, Co. Cork.

ISSN 1393-7782

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Preface

On 12 November 1940, Winston Churchill, British Prime Minister, in a tribute to Neville Chamberlain, his predecessor, inquired, '(w)hat is the worth of all this?'. He was referring to history and it is a question which historians should ask themselves every day. Indeed, even here in the University of Limerick, which has established itself at local, national, and international levels as a centre of excellence in history, this question should be borne in mind. UL history faculty are writing and publishing on a wide variety of topics, themes, and periods dealing with people, place, and space. Faculty have published seven books, edited three books, written many more articles for scholarly journals, and delivered invited lectures, contributed to media programmes, and spoken at conferences among other activities. The healthy state of historical scholarship within UL is matched by student performance at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, and indeed by the publication of this journal. History seems to matter a great deal.

In Ireland generally, history seems more vital and vigorous than it has ever been, and the need for it more important than ever before. In addition to providing a 'liberal education', it provides much more: history clarifies the complexity and uncertainty of human affairs and expands on the variety of human experience. It is suspicious of simplistic analysis, explanation, and solutions; it teaches proportion, perspective, reflection, breadth of view, tolerance of differing opinions, and, therefore, a greater sense of self-knowledge. We learn about other centuries, other cultures, and it is the best antidote to a society which assumes that there is only the *here* and *now*. There is not only the here and now; there is *there* and there is *then*. And the best guide to all is history. It helps to understand how our world got to be the way it is and others' worlds the way they are. The study of history has always been justified in these terms and they still provide the most convincing answer to Churchill's question.

Bernadette Whelan MA PhD
Patron
23 September 2001

Editorial

The publication of *History Studies* volume 3 marks the beginning of a new period. The involvement of founder-editors David E. Fleming and Edward Horgan has come to an end. Both have done a magnificent job in establishing *History Studies*. On behalf of the *History Society* of the University of Limerick we, the new editors, thank David and Edward for their work. They have made it easy for us to continue and expand *History Studies*.

The variety and quality of topics tackled by the authors, shows that the study of history is alive and well in Ireland at both undergraduate and postgraduate level. The articles presented here deal with a variety of issues such as education, medical history, and the First World War. This gives hope for future volumes of *History Studies* in which we plan to broaden the range of topics even further. We hope that readers will gain as much pleasure from reading the articles as we did editing them*.

Andreas Hüther
Sarah Power
September 2001

* Thanks to Charlotte Whiting and Tom Hulit for support and help.

Society and Sympathy: Edmund Burke's Scottish Enlightenment

Sean Patrick Donlan

Although there are signs that the situation is changing, Edmund Burke appears to be better appreciated outside of Ireland than within it. His role as British parliamentarian perhaps suggests, as does Yeats', that Burke belonged to the Anglo-Irish Ascendancy. His anti-revolutionary writings, in the age of Wolfe Tone, might similarly suggest a reactionary apologist. Students of Burke will know, however, how much more complicated his links to Ireland were. Burke's father was a convert to the Church of Ireland. His mother, her family, and Burke's sister remained catholic. He also spent his early years, not in Dublin, but in rural Munster where he began his education (possibly in Irish) and observed first hand the civil disabilities imposed on his beloved relations. Throughout his life, his writings revealed a man deeply sympathetic to the plight of the Irish masses. Burke did not seek an Irish state, but to unite the English and Irish more closely. He hoped to make the promise of the British constitution, the most 'enlightened' of his age, meaningful to the Irish nation.

Burke's literary and political abilities were early combined in *A Vindication of Natural Society* (1756), an anonymous parody of the 'primitivism' of Lord Bolingbroke. The piece was, in fact, so well-written that it was mistaken as a genuine, and much-approved, work. His *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origins of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757) was to ensure his success in the world of letters. Burke began to develop, in good eighteenth-century fashion, a rich network of family and friends. In 1757 he married Jane Mary Nugent, daughter of an Irish catholic doctor and a Presbyterian mother. He befriended many of the leading intellectuals and artists of the age, including Samuel Johnson, Joshua Reynolds, countryman Oliver Goldsmith, and David Garrick. Chief among his associates were also leading members of the so-called 'Scottish Enlightenment'. In the pages that follow, his associations, personal and philosophical, with the Scots will be explored.

Those figures associated with the Scottish Enlightenment conducted a highly sophisticated critique of the methodological individualism, rationalism, and egoism (as exemplified in Hobbes, Locke, Mandeville) common to the early eighteenth century. Most of the Scots attacked, by way of the 'sociability' and 'sympathy' of Shaftesbury and Addison, both religious 'enthusiasm' and

philosophical scepticism. It was a critique as historically sensitive as it was institutional and communitarian. Drawing on comparative reports of the 'new world', and philosophical histories of the 'old', as well as the work of Montesquieu, many of the Scots articulated complex stadial histories emphasising both a humanist continuity of human nature as well as the dynamism of cultural change. Particular emphasis was placed on the manner in which the commercial organisation of a society interacted with laws and manners. There were differences. Internal debates among the Scots, mirroring those in the rest of the English-speaking world, raged over the public spirit and participatory politics of the 'ancients' and the commerce and civil liberty of the 'moderns'. And, given the Scottish relationship to England, their work reflected a change in the history of ideas that was as much geographical as it was chronological.

Among Burke's early readings was the Scotch-Irish Frances Hutcheson. The 'father' of the Scottish Enlightenment, Hutcheson taught David Hume and Adam Smith, among others. He was both an original thinker (in the 'moral sense') and the conduit for 'benevolist' thought. In an early poem, Burke suggests that Hutcheson's *Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections* (1728) was a continuation of the work of the Greek Longinus.[1] Longinus' *On the Sublime* was, of course, the stated inspiration of Burke's own *Enquiry*, begun during his studies at Trinity College (where Hutcheson's son was a contemporary). Beyond the obvious similarity in title, Hutcheson's *Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* (1725) can also be seen as a significant influence. But, as a friend of Burke's aptly observed of the two, '(o)ne is a moral, the other a critical work.'[2] It is one of many Scottish rumours about Burke that, taking leave of his legal studies, he travelled to the University of Glasgow to contest, against variously Hume and Smith, the professorship in logic or moral philosophy left vacant by

[1] 'Like thee too great Longinus did before/The secret movements of the Soul explore./But that great Work which Time so long withheld/From mortal Sight is now by thee reveald' 'To Dr. H——n' (6-19 Feb. 1747/8) in T.O. McLoughlin and James T. Boulton (ed.), *The Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke* (10 vols., Oxford, 1997), vol. I, p. 30.

[2] 'Rev. W. Dennis to Richard Shackleton' (Mar. 1758) in A.P.I. Samuels (ed.), *The Early Life Correspondence and Writings of the Rt. Hon. Edmund Burke* (Cambridge, 1923), p. 212.

Hutcheson.

Burke's recorded Scottish Enlightenment did begin shortly after this period. He appears to have met Hume as early as 1759. Reviewing the Scot's *History of England*, the Irishman wrote:

> Our writers had commonly so ill succeeded in history ... that it was almost feared that the British genius, which had so happily displayed itself in every other kind of writing, and had gained the prize in most, yet could not enter the list in this. The historical work Mr. Hume ... published, discharged our country from this opprobrium.[3]

Burke himself had begun a work on English history and, while the cessation of the work was more likely the result of the intensive demands of his employer, the MP William Hamilton, the success of Hume's *History* may also have influenced his decision.[4] The second (and definitive) edition of Burke's *Enquiry* included an 'Essay on Taste', generally thought to have been inspired by Hume's 'On the Standard of Taste', one of many such essays of the age. But the two appear never to have been particularly close. It is not hard to imagine that even Hume's polite scepticism would have upset the more religious Burke. Whatever the philosophical disagreements between the two – and their remarkable political consensus too complex to explore here – Burke was later angered by Hume's portrayal of the Irish rebellion of 1641. Hume had written:

> There are indeed three events in our history, which may be regarded as touchstones of partymen. An

[3] *Annual Register* (1761), p. 301 *bis*. While the habit of publishing anonymous reviews makes the *Annual Register* an unreliable source, as the editors 'observed on none which [they] could not praise', it remains a valuable source. Because different parts of the *Register* were prepared separately for printing, after 1760 there were separate paginations for different sections. Following the use of L.P. Lock in his *Edmund Burke: Volume I 1730-1784* (Oxford, 1998) '*bis*' is added to the end of cites to the second pagination.

[4] The remaining fragment was posthumously titled *An Abridgement of English History*.

> English Whig, who assets the reality of the popish plot, an Irish Catholic, who denies the massacre in 1641, and a Scotch Jacobite, who maintains the innocence of queen Mary, must be considered as men beyond the reach of argument or reason, and must be left to their prejudices.[5]

Burke later wrote that the rebellion was sparked by oppressive, irregular justice and that '[b]y the issue of that war ... [and] the total reduction of the kingdom ... in 1691, the ruin of the native Irish ... was completely accomplished.'[6]

Hume was, however, responsible for giving Burke a copy of Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759). Writing to Smith, Hume referred to Burke as 'an Irish gentleman, who wrote lately a very pretty Treatise on the Sublime'.[7] He noted that he was 'very well acquainted' with him and 'was much taken with your Book. He got your Direction from me with a View of writing to you, & thanking you for your Present: For I made it pass in your name'.[8] It is another Scottish rumour that Smith was already aware of the *Enquiry* and, after reading it, stated that the author ought to have a chair in moral philosophy. For his part, Burke wrote a glowing review:

[5] David Hume, *The History of England from the Invasion of Julius Caesar to the Revolution of 1688* (Indianapolis, 1983-5), vol. IV, p. 395. Cf. the portrayal of Mary, Queen of Scots in William Robertson, *The History of Scotland* (London, 1996), p. 170.

[6] 'Letter to Sir Hercules Langrishe' (1792) in R.B. McDowell (ed.), *The Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke* (9 vols., Oxford, 1981-1996), vol. IX, p. 616. After experiencing anti-Catholic 'Whiteboy' riots of the 1760s in Ireland and the Gordon riots which followed the relaxation of restraints on English Catholics, Burke saw similar riots over discussion of a Scottish Act of Toleration. He wrote to James Boswell saying 'the American rebellion is more to my Taste than that which you are cooking in the North. ... and it would hurt me rather more to have the Excise [tax] in my own house, than the Mass in my Neighbours. 'Letter to James Boswell' (1 Mar 1779) in P.J. Marshall (ed.), *The Correspondence of Edmund Burke* (10 vols., Cambridge, 1981), vol. IV, p. 45-46. Robertson offered refuge and an armed guard to Catholics within the gates of Edinburgh College. Ibid., p. 46n2.

[7] (12 Apr. 1759) in J.Y.T. Greig (ed.), *The Letters of David Hume* (2 vols., Oxford, 1969), vol. I, p. 303.

[8] (28 July 1759) in Ibid., p. 312.

> The author seeks for the foundation of the just, the fit, the proper, the decent; in our most common and most allowed passions; and making approbation the tests if virtue and vice, and shewing that these are founded on sympathy, he raises from this simple truth, one of the most beautiful fabrics of moral theory, that has perhaps ever appeared.... it is rather painting than writing.[9]

In his promised letter, Burke continued, '(a) theory like yours founded on the Nature of man, which is always the same, will last, when those that are founded on his opinions, which are always changing, will and must be forgotten.'[10] Developed independently, their economic views were also similar. Smith was to have remarked that Burke was 'the only man, who, without communication, thought on these subjects exactly as he did'.[11] And Burke, returning the compliment, declared *The Wealth of Nations* (1776) 'in its ultimate results ... probably the most important book ever written'.[12] Their political attitudes were also broadly similar and the two remained friends for some time.[13]

Burke also appears to have been close to William Robertson, President of Edinburgh University and Chief Moderator of the Church of Scotland. If lesser known today than Hume or Smith, Robertson was one of the most noted

[9] *Annual Register* (1759), p. 485. The entire first chapter ('Of Sympathy') is extracted.

[10] (10 Sept 1759) in T.W. Copeland (ed.), *The Correspondence of Edmund Burke* (10 vols. Cambridge, 1978), vol. I, p. 129-30.

[11] Reported in Robert Bisset, *Life of Edmund Burke* (London, 2nd edition, 1800), vol. II, p. 429.

[12] Reported in Conor Cruise O'Brien, *The Great Melody: A Thematic Biography and Commented Anthology of Edmund Burke* (London, 1992), p. 144n1. See the more cautious review of *The Wealth of Nations* in the *Annual Register* (1776), p. 241 *bis*.

[13] Smith noted in his 1790 edition of the *Theory*, published just after the French Revolution began, that '[t]he man whose public spirit is prompted altogether by humanity and benevolence, will respect the established powers and privileges even of individuals, and still more those of the great orders and societies, into which the state is divided'. *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759; Indianapolis, 1984), p. 233.

historians of the age, eventually becoming Historiographer-Royal of Scotland. Burke thought Robertson's *History of Scotland* (1757) was 'admirable for the clearness with which he states all the points relative to politics and manners'.[14] A less favourable opinion of *The History of the Reign of the Emperor Charles V* (1769), still praises Robertson's clarification of the 'obscurity' concerning the 'state of Europe, previous to the sixteenth century'.[15] The preliminary volume tracks the 'progress of society in Europe in relation to interior government, laws, and manners' as well as military force, the balance of power, and commerce.[16] Of greater interest, in relation to Burke scholarship, was Robertson's explanation of the importance of chivalry. In the midst of changes in government and law,

> sentiments more liberal and generous had begun to animate the nobles. These were inspired by the spirit of Chivalry, which, thought considered, commonly, as a wild institution, the effect of caprice, and the source of extravagance, arose naturally form the state of society at that period, and had a very serious influence in refining the manners of the European nations.[17]

Burke continued to hold Robertson in high esteem and their correspondence sheds light on Burke's understanding of the stadial history of the Scots. Writing to thank Robertson for a gift of his *History of America* (1777), Burke commented:

> I have always thought with you, that we possess at

[14] See *Annual Register* (1759), p. 490.

[15] *Annual Register* (1769), p. 255 *bis*. Burke was critical largely because of the Scots' neglect of English law and marginalisation of England in continental affairs.

[16] Ibid.

[17] William Robertson, *The Progress of Society in Europe: A Historical Outline from the Subversion of the Roman Empire to the Beginning of the Sixteenth Century* ('Introduction' to *The History of Charles V*), (1769; Chicago, 1972), p. 57. Cf. Voltaire's 'Account of the Origin of Chivalry' in *Annual Register* (1760), pp. 176-178 *bis*.

> this time very great advantages towards the knowledge of human Nature. We need no longer go to History to trace it in all its stages and periods ... now the Great Map of Mankind is unrolled at once; and there is no state or Gradation of barbarism, and no mode of refinement which we have not at the same instant under our View. .... You have employed Philosophy to judge on Manners; and from manners you have drawn new resources for Philosophy.[18]

His review of the book continued, '(w)e view, at this day, what our ancestors once were. We see the first rudiments of society, and behold nations in every stage of their progress, from infancy to adolescence.'[19]

Drawing on Montesquieu and other comparative French sources, Burke had earlier contributed, with his friend William Burke (no relation), to *An Account of European Settlements in America* (1757). With the pace of the American war accelerating, Burke must have felt Robertson's work, even with the omission of the British colonies, perfectly timed. In return, Burke sent his own *Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol* (1777). His observations – 'Nor is it the worst effect of this unnatural contention, that our laws are corrupted. Whilst *manners* remain entire, they will correct the vices of law, and soften it at length to their own temper.' – must have seemed familiar enough to Robertson.[20]

[18] (9 June 1777) in Marshall, *Correspondence of Edmund Burke*, vol. III, p. 350-351.

[19] *Annual Register* (1777), p. 215 *bis*. While a late review, Burke's duties had gradually decreased after the mid-1760s, it is so close to Burke's letter as to permit attributing it to him.

[20] 'Letter to the Sheriff of Bristol' in W.M. Elofson and J.A. Woods (eds.), *The Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke* (Oxford, 1996), vol. II, p. 299. Burke pointed out that Robertson had 'the merchantile comfort of finding the Balance of trade infinitely in your favour; and I console myself with the smugg consideration of uninformed natural acuteness, that I have my Warehouse full of Goods at anothers Expence'. (7 June 1777) in Marshall, *Correspondence of Edmund Burke*, vol. III, p. 352.

The record of other Scottish links is less clear. Burke established a friendship with Henry Home, Lord Kames, of the Scottish Court of Session. Kames was a jurist, an historian, and a moralist. His *Elements of Criticism* (1762), was an 'organic' aesthetics that Burke thought effectively continued his own *Enquiry*. The Reverend Hugh Blair, Edinburgh Professor of Logic, made use of Burke's *Enquiry* in his courses on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres. He was 'indebted [to Burke] for several ingenious and original thoughts' and 'many of whose sentiments on [sublimity] I have adopted.'[21] Burke knew John Millar, Glasgow Professor of Civil Law and former pupil of Smith. While Millar would become progressively critical of Burke's response to the revolution in France, in the mid 1780s he could write, '[f]or my own part I must look upon it as one of the most fortunate circumstances of my life that brought me into your acquaintance'.[22] This relationship was due in part to Burke's appointment (twice) as Lord Rector of the University of Glasgow. Smith succeeded him. Burke was also a member of both the Royal Society of Edinburgh (with James Beattie, Hugh Blair, John Home, Thomas Reid and Robertson) and Glasgow's 'Literary Society' (with Adam Ferguson, Hume, Reid, and Smith).

These personal associations were joined by professional admiration. James Beattie, poet and Aberdeen Professor of moral philosophy, thought Burke 'one of the most agreeable men I have ever seen'.[23] Beattie's *Essay on Truth* (1770) has aged poorly, but was a favourite of the King and of Johnson, and Beattie himself notes that Burke '[p]raises all my works'.[24] Significantly, Burke wrote that Beattie 'establishes the standard of Truth in *Common Sense*' and his 'grand effort ... has been to expose the sceptical systems of Bishop Berkeley and Mr. Hume'.[25] Thomas Reid, the principal advocate of Scottish Common Sense philosophy, was a far sharper critic of Hume (and Locke) than

[21] Hugh Blair, *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* (1783; Carbondale, 1965), p. 55.

[22] (13 Nov. 1785) in William C. Lehmann, *John Millar of Glasgow 1735-1801: His Life and Thought and his Contributions to Sociological Analysis* (Cambridge, 1960), p. 356.

[23] R.S. Walker (ed.), *James Beattie's London Diary 1773* (Aberdeen, 1946), p. 33. Beattie's *Dissertations Moral and Critical* was reviewed in *Annual Register* (1783), p. 207 *bis*.

[24] See *Annual Register* (1771), p. 252 *bis*.

[25] *Annual Register* (1771), pp. 253, 255 *bis*.

was Beattie. He observed, with Burke, Smith, and Hume *contra* Hutcheson, that the 'one way to the knowledge of nature's works ... [was] observation and experiment'.[26] Reid thought enough of Burke to end the preface to his *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man* (1785), with a long passage from Burke's *Enquiry* reiterating this point.[27] Dugald Stewart, philosopher and biographer of Reid, was also acquainted with Burke and quoted (if somewhat inaccurately) from the *Enquiry*.[28] All of this is to suggest the mutual sympathies between Burke and the 'Common Sense' school.

Burke was also friendly with the Scot James Boswell, attorney and biographer of Johnson. Boswell is not normally linked with the Scottish Enlightenment – perhaps another subject worth exploring – but he was a student of Smith and an associate of nearly all of its important members. In his *Life of Johnson*, Boswell reported that he and Johnson

> stood talking for some time together of Bishop Berkeley's ingenious sophistry to prove the non-existence of matter, and that every thing in universe is merely ideal. I observed, that though we are satisfied his doctrine is not true, it is

[26] 'Essay on the Importance of an Inquiry into the Human Mind' in *Annual Register* (1764), p. 190 *bis*.

[27] It reads, in part:
'The variety of the passions is great, and worthy in every branch of that variety of an attentive investigation. The more accurately we search into the human mind, the stronger traces we every where find of his wisdom who made it. ... The elevation of the mind ought to be the principal end of all our studies, which if they do not in some measure effect, they are of little service to us.'
Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* (1757; Oxford, 1998), pt. I, section XIX, p. 48. See William Hamilton (ed.), *The Works of Thomas Reid* (Edinburgh, 1895), vol. I.

[28] The passage in the original reads:
'Whatever turns the soul inward on itself, tends to concenter its forces, and to fit it for greater and stronger flights of science. By looking into physical causes are minds are opened and enlarged; and in this pursuit whether we take or whether we lose our game, the chance is certainly of service.'
Burke, *Philosophical Enquiry*, p. 5. See Stewart, 'Account of the Life and Writings of Thomas Reid' in Hamilton, *Works of Thomas Reid*.

> impossible to refute it. I never shall forget the alacrity with which Johnson answered, striking his food with a mighty force against a large stone, till he rebounded from it, 'I refute it *thus*.'

Just after this story, well worth repeating on its own, Boswell remarks that, had Burke not been diverted by politics, he might have taken up the fight against scepticism. Johnson's action

> was a stout exemplification of the *first truths* of *Père Bouffier*, or the *original principles* of Reid and of Beattie; without admitting which, we can no more argue in metaphysicks, than we can argue in mathematics without axioms. To me it is not conceivable how Berkeley can be answered by pure reasoning; but I know that the nice and difficult task was to have been undertaken by one of the most luminous minds of the present age, had not politicks 'turned him from calm philosophy aside.' What an admirable display of subtilty, united with brilliance, might his contending with Berkeley have afforded us! How must we, when we reflect on the loss of such an intellectual feast, regret that he should be characterised as the man,
>
> 'Who born for the universe narrow'd his mind,
> And to party gave up what was meant for mankind?'[29]

Whatever the truth of this project, and there is some additional evidence for it, Burke's general sympathies with this branch of Scottish philosophy is clear.[30]

More frustrating for understanding Burke's 'Scottish' enlightenment is the absence of any detailed record of his relationship with Adam Ferguson,

[29] James Boswell, *Life of Johnson* (1791; Oxford, 1998), pp. 333-334.

[30] He was said, in preparation for a Glasgow professorship – see above – to have begun 'no less than a refutation of the systems of his own countryman the celebrated Berkeley, and of Hume.' James Prior, *A Life of the Right Honourable Edmund Burke* (London, 5th edition, 1854), p. 38.

Edinburgh Professor of pneumatics and moral philosophy. Burke knew Ferguson and, given Ferguson's place in the debate on luxury, their conversations or correspondence would certainly prove illuminating. If Burke is often placed on the side of luxury and commerce – he had in the *Vindication* satirised the picture of an idyllic 'state of nature' – Ferguson's more complex civic history provided a much less naive critique. Burke agreed, too, with Ferguson's social and 'benevolist' analysis, against authors who 'have set out by considering [man] as an animal, solitary by nature' or 'not satisfied with this blindness to what we read and see of his condition, in almost all ages and countries, have no less preposterously made him a mischievous one.[31] And while Burke's observation that 'art is man's nature', a sentiment frequently expressed by Hume and others, has been the subject of much scholarly ink, he would have found few who conveyed it as clearly as Ferguson did. 'We speak of art distinguished from nature', Ferguson wrote, 'but art itself is natural to man'.[32]

The intersection of the ancient-modern debate, both cultural and economic, with the dilemma posed by the 'revolution in France' also bears investigation. Given Burke's own sympathies with, or estrangement from, a Celtic past, it should hardly be surprising that he was involved in the debate over James MacPherson's *Ossian* (1762-1763). Burke was initially enthusiastic about these Scotch variants of Irish legends, there being 'far less doubt of the merit, than of the authenticity' of the work.[33] Even in translation, they preserved 'the majestic air, and native simplicity of a sublime original'.[34] But both he and Hume, that most anglicised Scot with whom Burke discussed the cycle, slowly and grudgingly came to accept *Ossian* as modern forgery.[35] This may, although it need not, bear on the larger cultural and economic issues. But it may be suggested that while Ferguson may have been sympathetic to the ancients, and Hume and Johnson to the moderns, Burke's place may be more ambiguous. He might have found himself in the more awkward position of

[31] Reviewing Ferguson's *Essay on the History of Civil Society* (1767) in *Annual Register* (1767), p. 308 *bis*.

[32] *Annual Register* (1767), p. 311 *bis*.

[33] *Annual Register* (1760), p. 253 *bis*.

[34] *Annual Register* (1761), p. 276 *bis*.

[35] See the 'Letter to Rev. Hugh Blair' (19 Sept. 1763) in Greig, *Letters of David Hume*, vol. I, p. 303.

Smith, recognising the virtues, but never forgetting the vices, of luxury and modernity. And, in the case of Burke, this equivocation may have Irish sources.

The Irish and Scottish situations were very different. Following the union with England and Wales in 1707, Scotland had experienced rapid economic development. Continuing links to a more marital and independent Highland Gaelic culture, made debates as much about English cultural dominance as about commerce. The union had also done little to alter Scotland's internal social structure. If they no longer controlled a political sphere, so important to the civic traditions, the Scots continued to control what we have come to call 'civil society'.[36] The *literati* remained free to develop a polite society of association and conversation. In Ireland, while Dublin was Britain's second city and retained an independent parliament, beyond the Pale the great masses of the people continued, less by choice than by legal and social exclusion, to live a way of life only nominally within the English cultural orbit. With its civil disabilities and confiscations, it remained a colony to, rather than a partner in, the Empire.

These differences were not lost on Burke and he directed his considerable rhetorical resources against these Irish exclusions. The nation was effectively divided 'into two distinct bodies, without common interest, sympathy, or connection. One ... was to possess *all* the franchises, *all* the property, *all* the education: the other was to be composed of drawers of water and cutters of turf for them.'[37] Writing to his son Richard, who was working with the Irish Catholic Committee, Burke stated that the '(n)ew *ascendancy* is the old *mastership*.'[38] And as Jacobinism spread throughout Europe, he became even more adamant that Irish catholics ought to be freed from legal disabilities. Catholicism was, 'as things stand, the most effective Barrier, if not the sole Barrier, against Jacobinism'.[39] Their 'religious principles, — Church polity, and habitual disciple, — might make them an invincible dyke against

[36] As used by the Scots and most of the eighteenth century, 'civil society' was the civilised association of men inclusive of the whole society (state, market, etc.).

[37] 'Letter to Sir Hercules Langrishe' (1792) in McDowell, *Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke*, p. 597.

[38] 'Letter to Richard Burke' (19 Feb. 1792) in McDowell, *Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke*, p. 644.

[39] 'Letter to William Smith' (29 Jan. 1795) in McDowell, *Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke*, p. 663.

that inundation.'[40] More than he is credited with, Burke understood the difference between speculative Jacobinism of 'men of parts' and that 'which arises from Penury and irritation, from scorned loyalty, and rejected Allegiance, [which] has much deeper roots. They take their nourishment from the bottom of human Nature and the unalterable constitution of things'.[41]

In good Whig fashion, Burke felt the sufferings of Ireland were due in no small part to the distortion, as in Hume, of Irish history. Burke sharply criticised 'those miserable performances which go about under the names of Histories of Ireland [and which] would persuade us, contrary to the known order of Nature, that indulgence and moderation in Governors is the natural incitement in subjects to rebel'.[42] It is among our regrets that Burke did not himself take up the

> interior history of Ireland, the genuine voice of its records and monuments, which.... [would] restore Nature to its just rights, and policy to its proper order. For they even now show to those who have been at the pains to examine them, and they may show one day to all the world, that these rebellions were not produced by toleration, but by persecution—that they arose not from just and mild government, but from unparalleled oppression.[43]

Burke instead sought change as part of a union, social at least if not political, between Ireland, the 'place of his nativity', and England, which 'had raised him to status and honours'.[44] As things stood, the great majority of the population of Ireland had not the liberty or leisure afforded those in Scotland.

[40] 'Second Letter to Sir Hercules Langrishe' (26 May 1795) in McDowell, *Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke*, p. 668.

[41] 'To the Rev. Thomas Hussey' (*Post* 9 Dec 1796) in Marshall, *Correspondence of Edmund Burke*, vol. IX, p. 162

[42] 'Tracts Relating to the Popery Laws' in McDowell, *Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke*, pp. 478-9.

[43] Ibid., 479.

[44] 'Letter to John Keogh' (17 Nov. [1796]) in Marshall, *Correspondence of Edmund Burke*, vol. IX, p. 113

Between them, Burke and the Scots exemplified the most pressing debates and developments of the eighteenth century. Like the Scots, Burke found himself in the debate between the past and the future. But whereas the argument for an anglicised commerce and Scottish culture was largely polite and peaceful, at the century's end, Burke faced, or so he saw it, the root and branch destruction of enlightened Europe, itself the precarious result of a long train of progress in manners, laws, and human commerce. This 'enlightenment' was qualified by Scottish erudition and Irish experience, but the revolution in France might spell, not merely the destruction of English society, but of modern civilisation itself. He sought not merely to protect the past, but also the future.

Civic Identity and Corporate Politics in Waterford City in the Eighteenth Century

Brian T. Kirby

As one of the oldest urban settlements in Ireland the city of Waterford can trace its origins as a corporate entity to the early medieval period. A product, primarily, of the ethnic division between Anglo-Normans and the existing Hiberno-Norse inhabitants of the settlement, which they had called *Vedra[r]fjord*, the town received recognition as early as 1215, when King John granted the citizens of Waterford freedom from royal customs and tolls.[1] Citizens, at this early date, were defined by their residence within the ancient walls of the town. This marked the beginning of a process whereby the citizens acquired the rudiments of self-government by obtaining the right to elect individuals to the offices of mayor and bailiff. It was partly as a result of this chartered status that Waterford emerged as Ireland's second city behind Dublin whose urban history, for much of the medieval and early modern period, it closely resembled.

Most of the medieval privileges and liberties were legitimatised when, in 1626, Charles I granted what came to known as the 'Great Charter of the liberties of Waterford'. Costing the citizens the extravagant sum of 20,000 marks (about £3,000) the Charter arrived in the city on 26 July 1626 and henceforth was regarded as the principal constitutional document governing the civic affairs of Waterford for over 200 years.[2] It was only the Daniel O'Connell-inspired era of sweeping municipal reform in the 1840s which finally removed the Great Charter from its central place in corporate self-definition. As so many of what later were interpreted as corporate rights were derived from royal charters and as municipal institutions governed according to ancient rights, the importance of the Great Charter in the construction of the civic psyche examined in this paper cannot be overemphasised.

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[1] Literally the old Norse for 'windy fjord', John Bradley and Andrew Halpin, 'The Topographical Development of Scandinavian and Anglo- Norman Waterford' in William Nolan and Thomas Power (eds.), *Waterford, History and Society* (Dublin, 1992), pp. 105-29 at p. 105; Eamonn McEneany, 'Origins', in idem. (ed.), *A History of Waterford and its Mayors* (Waterford, 1995), pp. 21-37, at p. 30.

[2] Julian Walton, *The Royal Charters of Waterford* (Waterford, 1992), p. 49.

Civic government was placed in the hands of a corporation made up of the 'mayor, sheriffs and the citizens of Waterford.' But on an ideological level the Charter conveyed a pertinent sense of historical continuity as it laid out the origins of the political structures which derived from corporatism:

> (a) body corporate is defined to be an assembly and joining together of many persons in one brotherhood, fellowship, whereof one is chief and the rest are the body and this head and body joined together make the corporation.[3]

This emphasis placed upon the organic or natural origins of corporatism was commonplace in urban political discourse in the eighteenth century and later combined with interpretations of Lockeian contract theory to give an unique ideological resonance to English corporate rhetoric.

This intellectual heritage fostered under the British system with its appeal to an ancient constitution was well established after the Glorious Revolution of 1688 and, inevitably, found its way into Ireland where it was publicised through the work of Irish radicals like William Molyneux.[4] Much of the language centred upon the extent and usage of rights and how these rights could be persevered in institutions such as urban corporations which, it was claimed served as guardians of the commonweal of society.[5] At the heart of any

[3] A number of translations of the Great Charter of Waterford (7 Charles. I) were made. An excellent transcript of the original charter can be consulted in the reading room of W[aterford] C[ity] A[rchives] whilst a number of printed editions were also produced, Timothy Cunnigham, (ed.), *Magna Charta Libertatum Civitatis Waterford* (Dublin, 1752), p. 11, par. 24. Later, a reprint of Cunningham's edition was produced with explanatory notes, *The Great Charter of the Liberties of the City of Waterford, to which is added the List of the Mayors, Bailiffs and Sheriffs, from the Year 1377 to the Year 1806 Inclusive* (Kilkenny, 1806).

[4] William Molyneux, *The Case of Ireland being Bound by Acts of Parliament in England, Stated* (Dublin, 1698; ed. J.G. Simms, Dublin, 1977); see also T.O. McLoughlin, *Contesting Ireland, Irish Voices against England in the Eighteenth Century* (Dublin, 1999), pp. 53-55.

[5] Jacqueline Hill, 'Corporatist Ideology and Practice in Ireland, 1660-1800' in S.J. Connolly (ed.), *Political Ideas in the Eighteenth Century* (Dublin, 2000), pp. 64-82, at p. 72.

corporation lay the *corpus* or body which, in its most rudimentary form, was an assembly of citizens.

The principal organ of the corporation, the common-council, became the locus of civic identity in the municipality. It consisted of forty members with a two-tier structure consisting of a lower order of nineteen common councilmen (also known as assistants) and an upper level comprising eighteen aldermen.[6] A requirement for election to the highest office of the corporation, the mayoralty, was that one had to be an alderman. The two sheriffs were, however, drawn from the ranks of the assistants. No distinction was made in the chamber in which the two orders sat jointly, the common council. Elections to both orders, particularly after the passing in 1672 of what were known as the new rules governing corporations in Ireland, were confined to the members who composed the council.

Enacted partly in response to the growing independence of Irish municipal bodies, the new rules represented a systematic attempt to bring the governance of corporate towns in Ireland more into line with their English counterparts.[7] Facilitating attempts to curtail wayward freemen assemblies the new rules marked a significant codification of the practices of municipal government in Ireland. The regulations re-imposed a modicum of royal control upon the towns as henceforth nominations to senior positions in their corporations had to receive the approval of the Privy Council in Dublin.[8] The mayor, sheriffs, recorder and town clerk in Waterford all had to pass this particular test before taking office.[9] The enactment of the new rules taken with the pre-eminent position of the Great Charter and the local traditions adopted over time by the corporation gave municipal government in Waterford a very distinctive character. The customs and by-laws of the corporation were, by definition, a unique response to the needs of civic life in the city.

[6] Kenneth Milne, 'The Corporation of Waterford in the Eighteenth Century' in Nolan and Power (eds.), *Waterford, History and Society*, pp. 331-50, at p. 335.

[7] 25 Charles c. 2, enacted by decree on 23 Sept. 1672. *Rules, Orders and Directions Made and Established by us the Lord Lieutenant, for the Better Regulating the Several Cities, Walled Towns and Corporations of Cork, Waterford ... and the Electing of Magistrates there.*

[8] Jacqueline Hill, 'Corporatist Ideology and Practice in Ireland, 1660-1800', p. 75.

[9] *Appendix to the First Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Inquire into Municipal Corporations in Ireland*, pt. 1, p. 587, H.C. 1835 (23), pp. xxvii, 143.

One feature was common to all the corporate towns in Ireland however, the exclusion from corporate offices of catholics and protestant non-conformists. The new rules effectively served to ensure the exclusion of those deemed a threat to civil society by imposing doctrinal oaths upon those seeking admission to corporate bodies.[10] If this exclusion could not be made legally binding by charter (and frequently it could not) then alternatively, by 'custom and usage', a corporation could enact by-laws which ensured that the corporate body would retain an Anglican as opposed to a broadly protestant composition.

In a society with an underlying framework of privilege, oaths were essential in fostering a hierarchy in civic life.[11] This was to be expected at a time when the vast majority of the population was excluded from political rights but corporatism drew an even more elemental distinction between those who were defined as citizens and those who were merely residents of the city. The grant of city freedom was the means through which the distinction between the free and the unfree was made in the urban polity. Corporatism, as an ideology, has as its primary characteristic the exercise of privilege confined to those who could prove their legal right to citizenship.[12] Those who could not prove this right were regarded as not legally entitled to membership of the corporation or to the privileges which were attached to it. In stark contrast to nineteenth century liberalism citizenship was articulated through the language of rights, and political and economic functions were seen as manifestations of these rights.[13]

In particular, it was freemen's rights, as those most closely associated with the attainment of citizenship which took the form of a zeal for corporate privilege. It was the freemen of the city who composed the city's electorate in parliamentary contests. The rights of the freemen were set out in the Great Charter which specified the means through which freedom and, ultimately, citizenship could be achieved. In order to receive the freedom of the corporation in Waterford, one had to be qualified by right, that is to say by three specific

[10] Jacqueline Hill, *From Patriots to Unionists, Dublin Civic Politics and Irish Protestant Patriotism, 1660-1840* (Oxford, 1997), p. 59.

[11] *The Great Charter of the Liberties of the City of Waterford* (Kilkenny, 1806), p. 22, see explanatory note for par. 43.

[12] C.D.A. Leighton, *Catholicism in a Protestant Kingdom, a Study of the Irish Ancien Regime* (Dublin, 1994), p. 76.

[13] Jacqueline Hill, 'Corporatist Ideology and Practice in Ireland, 1660-1800', p. 72.

means, birth, marriage or apprenticeship (for seven years under a free master). Alternatively, if, as increasingly became common in the course of the eighteenth century, one could not prove one's right to admission, one could receive it by special favour of the mayor. Underlying civic attitudes were shaped by a seminal distinction drawn between those who merely resided in the city and those who enjoyed privilege within it.[14]

The status of freeman brought with it participation in the political nation and was regarded as well worthy of defence. This defence rested squarely upon chartered rights which, as a result, enjoyed a lengthy currency in eighteenth century political discourses. In part this was purely derived from confessional interests, a desire, on the one level, to preserve what had been inherited from a victorious protestant past confirming supremacy by right of conquest. It was no coincidence that the most heralded sections of Locke's *Second Treatise* used by Irish radicals from Molyneux to Charles Lucas were those which stressed the rights secured by ancient conquest.[15]

Significantly, as Jacqueline Hill has emphasised, reference to ancient charters was also used to lend historical weight to attempts to politicise the wider protestant populous in eighteenth century Dublin. Charles Lucas, the Dublin apothecary and champion of corporate rights, regularly made use of the privileges conferred upon Dublin's freemen in order to legitimatise his own brand of radicalism.[16] Sean Murphy has, in a similar fashion, argued that more explicit defences of freemen's rights supplemented Lucas's appeal to antiquity.[17] In Waterford the Great Charter offered a defence of rights founded upon legality and, crucially, historical precedent. It provided, at the very least, a bulwark for the defence of the limited rights which the freemen possessed within the corporation.

[14] As late as 1833 the mayor of the city, William Hobbs, contended that residency or 'a persons residence in the city does not constitute a right to freedom' (N.L.I., MSS 3138, ff 5-6).

[15] For the links between Locke and Irish corporatist expression see Jacqueline Hill, 'Corporatist Ideology and Practice in Ireland, 1660-1800', p. 77; James Kelly, 'Perceptions of Locke in Eighteenth Century Ireland' *R.I.A. Proc.* 89 (1989), sect. C., pp. 24 – 27.

[16] Jacqueline Hill, 'The Politics of Dublin Corporation' in David Dickson, Daire Keogh and Kevin Whelan, (eds.), *The United Irishmen, Republicanism, Radicalism and Rebellion* (Dublin 1993), pp. 88-101, at p. 92.

[17] Leighton, *Catholicism in a Protestant Kingdom*, p. 81.

But whilst the residual catholic element in Irish towns was from the beginning of the eighteenth century denied access to civic privilege, a certain pragmatism was afforded to catholics with respect to trading rights.[18] Deriving from acts drawn up by the mayor and the corporation in the seventeenth century, a formula was created whereby what became known as *civis re* or citizens in substance could be admitted free of the city.[19] These freemen were allowed to exercise the privileges in trade attached to city freedom or to import or export merchandise from the city without the payment of any city duties or customs. This was open to tradesmen with means who resided in the town but who were not qualified for the status of *civis re et nomine* or citizens in substance *and* in name. It was the latter who, as freemen of the corporation, were entitled under charter to be included in the government of the city as citizens. Affluent catholic merchants (as it was specifically this class who benefited) petitioned the corporation for qualification to the limited rights of freemen in trade alone. Both sides accepted that the privileges conceded were partial, with no possibility that these catholic freemen were due the recognition or rights of citizenship. No willingness was ever expressed to admit these wealthy individuals to (and certainly not to exercise) any form of political function.

[18] David Dickson, 'Catholics and Trade in Eighteenth Century Ireland, an Old Debate Revisited' in T.P. Power and Kevin Whelan (eds.), *Endurance and Emergence, Catholics in Ireland in the Eighteenth Century* (Dublin, 1990), pp. 85-110, at p. 107.

[19] 'Large parchment book', entries from 1654-1700 of the different acts made by the mayor and the corporation, see the undated ordinances on f. 26 (W.C.A. L.A./1/1/A/02); See also Richard Cooke's evidence, (N.L.I., MSS 3138 f. 21); Seamus Pender 'Studies in Waterford History, the Guilds of Waterford, 1650-1700, I' *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society* 58 (Jan.-Jun. 1953) pp. 67-76, at p. 70.

Table, 1.1 *Freeman Admissions to the Corporation of the City of Waterford*[20]

Years	Total Admissions	Catholic Admissions
175	180	43
1760-1769	237	24
1770-1779	574	19
1780-1789	444	2
1790-1800	226	47*

It was widely held that just as economic functions were derived from distinctive rights and privileges attached to the relevant order or body of society, political functions were seen as concomitant features of citizenship. The survival of corporate traditions and of municipal institutions, like the common council, which governed according to its precepts, left an indelible mark upon the politics of representation in Waterford city. In Waterford the parliamentary franchise, as noted above, was held by the freemen of the corporation who, along with a smaller group of freeholders, made up the borough's electorate. Although the composition of the freeman-body varied, the constituencies of the corporate towns were generally relatively large. This was partly a reflection of conflicting interests within the governing councils. Waterford, for instance, had towards the close of the eighteenth century an electorate of about 1,000, one half of whom, it was reported were 'foreigners'.[21] Potential freemen after an act passed in 1748 were no longer required to be actually resident in any corporate

[20] *Alphabetical list of Freemen of the City of Waterford ... on the Books of the Corporation of said City* (W.C.A. T.N.C./1/4); Council Minutes, (W.C.A. L.A./1/1/A/10-13). *Prior to 1794 catholics were merely granted specific privileges in trade as freemen. However, the relief act of 1793 (33 Geo. III, c. 18) restored catholics to the parliamentary franchise and the corporation subsequently admitted 44 catholics (from 1794-1800) specifically under the provisions of this act.

[21] *Appendix to the History of the Proceedings of the Volunteer Delegates on the Subject of a Parliamentary Reform* (Dublin, 1784).

town to become free. This led to the creation of what were termed non-resident freemen or foreigners.[22]

The extent and composition of the freeman-body at the close of the eighteenth century was but one product of the intense struggle in the corporation between various familially based groups as they contended with each other in order to make the council and constituency more amenable to their interests. The families came broadly from a minor gentry background and their fortunes waxed and waned as interests in the council were, in turn, created or usurped.

Table, 1.2 Members of Parliament for the City of Waterford, 1715-1803

1715-38	Thomas Christmas John Mason	**1776-82**	Cornelius Bolton jnr. Robert Shapland Carew
1739-40	Thomas Christmas Robert Carew	**1783-97**	Henry Alcock Robert Shapland Carew
1741-4	Christmas Paul	**1799-**	William Congreve Alcock
1749-68	Samuel Barker Shapland Carew	**1800**	Robert Shapland Carew
1769-76	Shapland Carew Cornelius Bolton snr.	**1801-02**	William Congreve Alcock
		1803-32	Sir John Newport

While each family was able to maintain at various times a firm grip upon the parliamentary representation of the borough the struggle for hegemony in the corporation itself remained fairly lively. The first family to enjoy significant support in the common council in the 1720s were the Masons. Through a succession of profitable and well-connected marriages most notably between Aland Mason and the only daughter of the wealthy local magnate, the first Earl of Grandison, in 1747, the Masons enjoyed a steady rise in prestige. Their influence was cultivated through relations such as Dean Alexander Alcock[23] and

[22] 21 Geo. III c. 10 (1748), see A.W.P Malcomson, 'The Newtown Act of 1748, Revision and Reconstruction' in *I.H.S* 18 (1972), pp. 313-344.

[23] Alexander Alcock was chancellor of the cathedral chapter in Waterford and dean of Lismore from 1692 to 1740. He was married to Jane Mason, daughter of Sir John Mason, and was a brother to William Alcock, the holder of the family estate in Wilton, County Wexford. William Rennsion, *Succession Lists for the Bishops, Cathedral and Parochial Clergy of the United Dioceses of Waterford and Lismore* (Waterford, 1920), p. 41.

Thomas Christmas.[24] With political influence vested in such a small proportion of the population, personal ties and clientalism were peculiarly important. Access to a large reservoir of funds was also essential as the Masons quickly discovered. Support for prestige projects lent not only credibility but also a high sense of civic standing. Mary Mason let it be known how her father, John Mason, had advanced money, interest free, for a new quay in the city in 1718, and 'for that and all the roads about the town'.[25]

But the Masons were not to enjoy complete supremacy in the council for long, as from the late 1730s onwards disputes with an opposing faction led by a local merchant and alderman, Ambrose Congreve, intensified. Congreve was the lessee of an extensive estate from a local almshouse, the charity hospital of the Holy Ghost. In what may have been an attempt to enhance his support amongst council members, Congreve had, in 1728, let part of these holdings to the corporation including plots which would later become the fashionable bowling green just off the Mall.[26] A later addendum attached to the lease, dated 10 April 1734, proved that it was the intent of both parties that the corporation should hold the property forever.[27] Two years later, in 1736, Congreve had acquired enough support in the common council to be elected mayor. Located in a prime setting for urban development, the corporation would eventually divide up the estate into lots and underlet them in 1782 to favoured clients.[28] As David Dickson has remarked, this practice of letting out strategically located and profitable estates for inordinately long leases (99 years

[24] Thomas Christmas was M.P. for Waterford city from 1715 to 1747 and was a cousin of Aland Mason. The Christmas family were, in turn, related to another prominent family in Waterford's politics, the Paul's of Paullsville, County Carlow. Thomas Christmas's sister, Elizabeth, was married to Jeffry Paul whose son, Christmas Paul, represented the city in parliament from 1741 to 1748. See [copy] Aland Mason to Thomas Christmas, 16 July 1740, where the former promises his support for Christmas Paul in any forthcoming city contest. (P.RO.N.I., Villers Stuart Papers, T3131/B/4/6).

[25] Mary Mason to John Mason, 14 June 1718 (P.RO.N.I., Villers Stuart Papers, T3131/B/1/9).

[26] [Copy] extracts from council books and other corporation records, leases [relating to the administration of the Holy Ghost hospital] made by Robert Holmes, 28 Dec. 1826 (W.C.A. H.G./3/2, f. 21).

[27] Ibid., (W.C.A., H.G./3/2, f. 22).

[28] See Corporation Estate Office leases, dated 29 September 1782, (W.C.A. EST/1/1/406-09).

for the bowling green lots) was common in many corporate towns, and frequently stemmed from intra-corporation struggles for supremacy.[29]

Nominations to council positions were vigorously fought over by supporters of the Mason and Congreve clans in the late 1730s and injected an air of vitality into the council meetings. Intra-corporate strife and factionalism inevitably led to claims of mismanagement and venality. In 1738 nineteen members of the council signed a bill against the mayor Simon Vashon and the chamberlain (both Congreve supporters), allegedly to stop 'their hands from embezling [sic] the city revenue'.[30] For all the emphasis placed upon the supremacy of corporate privilege, there were occasions when proceedings in the council resembled a comic farce. Recalling a journey into town Alderman Henry Alcock described how he had an opportunity to meet Alderman Moore 'flying from a council that the mayor [Congreve] had appointed to be held that day at one of the clock'. It was customary for every council member to attend the mayor when called to do so, after all, this was a dignity conferred upon the chief magistrate by charter. However, far from fulfilling any semblance of duty to the mayor, both Alcock and Moore fled 'and took shelter at Lismore' leaving the council unable to meet 'for want of a sufficient number to concur' in what Alcock called 'the mischief intended by it'.[31]

Ensuring a majority in council was potentially an expensive business even for the affluent Mason family. Conviviality and the cultivation of social ties was considered vital in the securing of a following. Eighteenth century social mores and prejudices were commonly accommodated in attitudes to political representation. When Aland Mason heard that his solicitation of the Murray family, former servants of his, had failed to convince them to lend their support for his favored candidate (Christmas Paul) at an ensuing parliamentary contest in the city, he was livid:

> Consider[ing] the ingratitude and impertinence of that family to me ... I thank God I have a spirit above lying under an obligation to anyone below me and much more for anyone so beneath me as an menial servant ... I shall no longer desire or expect a vote, or his serving me, [from someone] that [was] so blind and bare fac[e]d as to brake [sic] his word with me.[32]

[29] David Dickson, 'Large Scale Developers and the Growth of Eighteenth Century Irish Cities' in P. Butel and L.M. Cullen (eds.), *Cities and Merchants, French and Irish Perspectives on Urban Development* (Dublin, 1985), pp. 109-20, at p. 117.

[30] Alexander Alcock to Aland Mason, 28 July 1739 (P.RO.N.I., Villers Stuart Papers, T3131/B/5/4).

[31] Henry Alcock to Aland Mason, 6 Oct. 1739 (P.RO.N.I., Villers Stuart Papers, T3131/B/5/9).

But it was the use of corporation procedures and by-laws to entrench or unseat a particular interest which lay at the heart of the *modus operandi* of municipal politics in Waterford. Exercises in factional politics were made according to distinctive legalistic formulas used in almost all the corporate towns in Ireland. Appeals to the Privy Council made under the new rules for disputed municipal appointments and, more frequently, petitions to the house of commons complaining of irregular returns at parliamentary contests, became increasingly common.[33] Little wonder that Mary Mason counselled her brother John to avoid the city while a parliamentary contest took place in December 1747 until 'talk of it may be over for you know it is not [an] nine day wonder'.[34]

The continuity of families active in the corporation in Waterford is testament to a desire to defend patrimonies built up over generations. Henry Alcock in 1740 reminded Aland Mason that what was at stake was not any plan for self-aggrandisement, but rather the preservation of an influence;

> that has become as it were hereditary in your family and the means you use to obtain it are no[ne] other than by saving your family from

[32] [copy] Aland Mason to John Alcock, 20 Sept. 1740 (P.RO.N.I., Villers Stuart Papers, T3131/B/4/9).

[33] There was a disputed return in the parliamentary election in the city in 1739 when Ambrose Congreve was unseated by Robert Carew; In 1761 an unsuccessful petition was made against the returns of Samuel Barker and Shapland Carew; In 1769 Henry Alcock was unseated after a petition from Shapland Carew; In 1802 after a particularly divisive contest and parliamentary enquiry William Congreve Alcock was unseated by his whig opponent, Sir John Newport.

[34] Mary Mason to John Mason, 2 Dec. 1747 (P.R.O.N.I. Villers Stuart Papers, T3131/B/1/42).

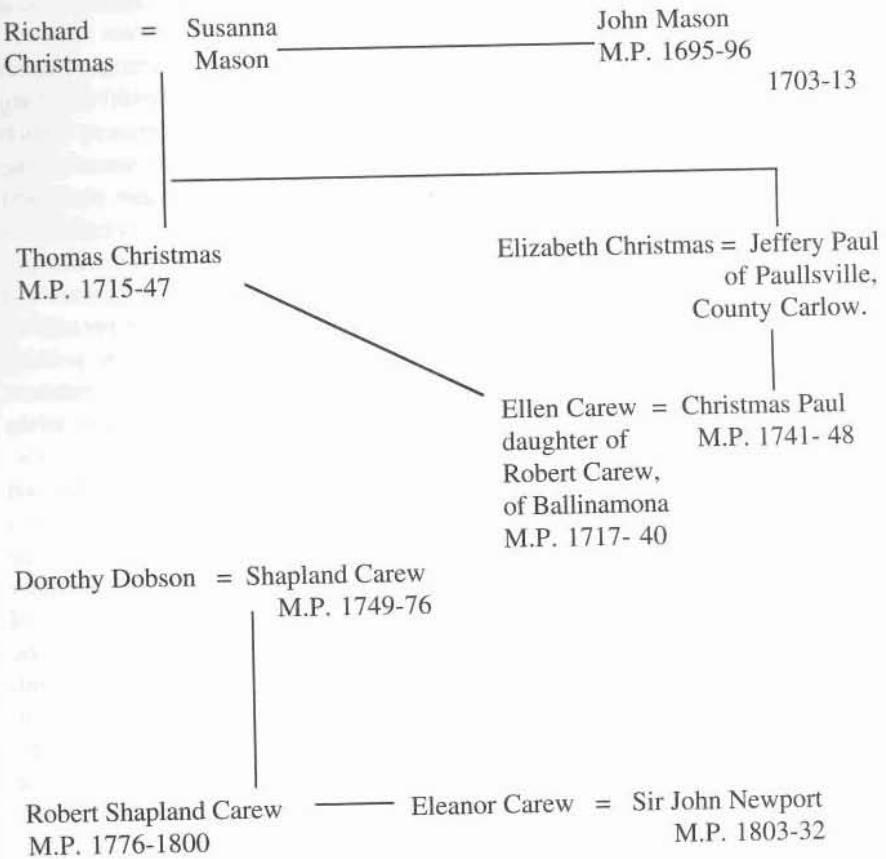
dishonour, and your native city from destruction.[35]

The ability to secure an independent means was closely tied to hopes of corporate and parliamentary representation. With origins in an eighteenth century rediscovery of classical virtue, it was argued that only those who were financially independent could succeed in representing the public's interest. As asserted above pedigree as much as wealth could determine a candidate's chances of success in both parliamentary and council elections. The founding of local dynasties in city politics can commonly be traced to fruitful legacies and endowments. When, in 1740, the premature death of the M.P. for the city, Robert Carew, occurred, his valuable estate and fortune was divided between his two brothers.[36] Shapland Carew acquired the Castleboro estate in County Wexford whilst Thomas Carew received the family's Ballinamona residence in County Waterford. The financial security afforded the Carews by these legacies gave them the freedom to harness their family's already prominent position in the parliamentary politics of Waterford city. Shapland Carew (1749 to 1776) and later, his son Robert Shapland Carew (1776 to 1800), would represent the city at College Green.

[35] Henry Alcock to Aland Mason, 12 Jan. 1740 (P.RO.N.I. Villers Stuart Papers, T3131/B/5/16).

[36] For the origins of the Carew's hold on the Ballinamona estate in County Waterford, see Julian Walton, 'The merchant community of Waterford in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries' in Butel and Cullen, *Cities and Merchants*, pp. 183-92, at p. 188.

Figure 1.3 *Eighteenth Century Familial Links between Parliamentary Representatives for Waterford city.*



Success at the polls was predicated upon the means through which influence could be exerted upon the freeman body. These means frequently revealed the temper of the candidate and exacerbated hostility within the council. Shapland Carew after his success in 1769, for example, was placed firmly in the 'popular interest,' seen as a defender of freeman's rights having secured *mandamuses* from the courts to confirm the claims of admission of many of his

followers.[37] This assertion of civic rights earned Shapland Carew high praise. As a sympathetic print later remarked, 'the citizens of Waterford will never forget' his struggles 'in the vindication of their rights or his victory over a domineering party' in the council. [38]

Of course what exactly constituted 'popular politics' in eighteenth century discourse needs to be carefully analysed. Waterford, with its long tradition of corporate institutions, was seen to fall into an category which included the larger cities of Dublin, and Cork which along with some of the other county boroughs were seen as strongholds of the independent protestant interest. This strand of protestant opinion exemplified by the Lucasite calls for a restoration of popular rights in the municipal politics of Dublin in the late 1740s placed particular emphasis upon the efficacy of corporate traditions and vigorously rejected oligarchical tendencies.[39] By the 1770s however notions of civic independence had acquired the semblance of orthodoxy in corporate politics as the ideology of patriotism reached the height of its popularity. Candidates paid homage to this ideal even if the 'patriot spirit' remained ill defined in terms of its actual political content.

This paper has shown that a historically based definition of rights and privileges derived primarily from royal charters characterised Waterford's parliamentary representation for much of the eighteenth century. Taking its cue from contemporary constitutional debates about the extent of Irish parliamentary rights the only foundation for civic freedom was seen as the legalistic forms of corporate privilege. Issues of rights and liberties were prominent in the rhetoric which underwrote the political representation of the city. As the eighteenth century progressed candidates increasingly evoked the motif of civic independence as a means of identifying themselves as worthy defenders of the corporate traditions of Waterford. The politics of factionalism was rejected as contrary to the commonweal and as incompatible with the language of civic patriotism fashionable in municipal, and later, national politics after the Lucas

[37] E.M. Johnston (ed.), 'Members of the Irish parliament, 1784-5' in *Proc. R.I.A.* 71 (1971), sect. C, p. 170. A *Mandamus*, from the Latin, 'to compel' was a legal writ obtained from the court of King's Bench, which forced a corporation to accede to a petitioner's request for freedom of a corporate body.

[38] *Waterford Mirror* 22 November 1806.

[39] S.J. Connolly, 'Precedent and Principle, the Patriots and their Critics', idem. (ed.), *Political Ideas in Eighteenth Century Ireland* (Dublin, 2000), pp. 130-58, at p. 148.

episode in Dublin. But whilst the rhetoric disavowed any ties to party attachments and oligarchy, the reality of representation both at the corporation and in parliamentary levels revealed a close bond between municipal politics and familial interests. The common council in the latter half of the eighteenth century became increasingly prone to disputes which, although not completely devoid of ideological content, were motivated chiefly by a desire for greater access to corporate property and patronage. Even as the various protagonists in parliamentary contests invoked the whiggish ideal of an independent civic polity their relations were manipulating ancient privileges and customs to ensure that the corporation would become, in effect, the private fiefdom of a few well-placed families.

Ironically by the use of corporate procedure oligarchical tendencies within the council were enhanced as one faction attempted to achieve supremacy over another by the use (more often, misuse) of freemen admissions and corporation appointments. But the hold which the corporatist ethos and the defence of civic independence maintained upon the language of representation was consistent and marked perhaps the defining principle in the minds of the urban protestant polity of Waterford in the eighteenth century.

Delirium and Disease: The History of Masturbation in the Nineteenth Century

Paul Montgomery

Introduction

> A married lady who is a leader in social purity movements and an enthusiast for sexual chastity, discovered through reading some pamphlets against solitary vice, that she herself had been practising masturbation for some years without knowing it. The profound anguish and hopeless despair of this woman in the face of what she believed to be the moral ruin of her whole life cannot be described.[1]

This facetious quote reveals much about societal attitudes towards masturbation and sexuality in nineteenth-century America and Europe. The history of sexuality has always been in a state of constant flux,[1] but from about 1800 to 1900 a negative representation and understanding of human sexuality emerged, which had not previously existed to the same degree. Various factors promoted such a change in attitudes. Many accuse Christianity among other constituents for this destructive image of sexuality.[2] This is of course true in part. However, in this essay we will discover that another force in society was just as culpable and influential as any other institution for the disapproving sexual stereotype it promoted. This was the medical profession.

The particular concern of this essay is the issue of masturbation. John F. Dedek rightly points out that 'no other form of sexual activity has been more frequently discussed, more roundly condemned and more universally practised than masturbation.'[3] It will become apparent in the course of this

[1] Weeks, *Sexuality* (New York, 1993), p. 21.

[2] Though from a much earlier period, many point to the treatment of masturbation in the Irish Penitentials. Among other activities such as homosexual practice, bestiality and incest, masturbation is referred to as 'unnatural fornication and self pollution'. See Hugh Connolly, *The Irish Penitentials* (Dublin, 1995), pp. 83-85.

[3] John F. Dedek, *Contemporary Sexual Morality* (New York, 1971), p. 44.

work that it was especially the medical profession which generated such pessimistic concepts with regard to 'the solitary vice' in particular.

Returning to the opening quote, it was not masturbation in itself that perturbed the woman, after all she was ignorant of her actions, rather it was societal labelling of such an act that initiated the feelings of guilt in the woman. This essay is concerned with the medical physicians who stimulated and maintained such labelling which in turn did a disservice to their own profession. For the medical profession, masturbation was regarded as a disease.[4] This is an eloquent example of the value-laden nature of science in general and of medicine in particular. The task here will be to unravel these values and give an accurate account of the treatment of masturbation by medical physicians in this period.

The Rise of the Masturbatory Hypothesis

In order to understand the prevalent comprehension and representation of human sexuality and sexual activity in the nineteenth century, it is necessary to comprehend the situation in the century that went before. Prior to the 1830s, sex was viewed in a much more relaxed manner than what was to follow in the ensuing decades.[5] Even among the highly conservative religious Puritans of New England sex was seen as 'good'. Church and court records fully testify to this fact. For example, numerous individuals were expelled from their churches and punished for refusing to have sexual relations with their spouses.[6] This period also witnessed a peak in the popularity of what were called the *Aristotle Books*. These works described the sex organs in detail and expressed a very positive attitude towards sexual intercourse. Coitus was described as healthy for 'it eases and lightens the body, clears the mind, comforts the head and senses, and expels melancholy'. For men it was necessary 'since sometimes through the omission of this act dimness of sight doth ensue, and giddiness.'[7] In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries masturbation was often accepted as a way of reducing excess semen, based on the principle of body harmony. By the early 1800s onanism was often a subject of obsessive concern, and the masturbator

[4] H. Tristram Engelhardt, Jr., 'The Disease of Masturbation: Values and the Concept of Disease' *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 48 (1974), p. 234.

[5] John Duffy, 'Sex, Society, Medicine: A Historical Comment' in *Earl E. Shelp (ed.), Sexuality and Medicine. Vol. II: Ethical Viewpoints in Transition* (1987), p. 69.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid.

was to become almost the archetypal image of the sexual deviant.[8] This shift in understanding, which permeated through the whole of society, was radically aided by the medical profession.

The *Masturbatory Hypothesis* refers to the idea that autoeroticism caused insanity.[9] The rationale behind this was that senile people masturbated openly and frequently, so eventually both mental depravity and masturbation became so closely associated with each other that they could well have been described as synonyms for one another. E. H. Hare recommends three probable reasons for the rise in this hypothesis. Firstly, the old idea that madness was caused by possession by evil spirits or involvement in witchcraft had fallen into disrepute (in England, the penal laws against witchcraft were repealed in 1736), and no satisfactory hypothesis had replaced it. The beliefs that the moon affected lunatics had also been discredited. Secondly, there was an increase in the understanding of human pathology and its relatedness to the mind. This resembles our modern day notion of psychosomatic illnesses. Thirdly, lunatic asylums increased greatly in number towards the end of the eighteenth century. It was in these institutions that the association between masturbation and insanity became more manifest.[10]

Between 1830 and 1834 the *Aristotle* publications mentioned above ceased to be published. The writings that replaced these texts were very pessimistic and generally expressed a suppressive fear of sexuality and genital stimulation. This changing popular American attitude was accentuated and fuelled by the medical profession. From the 1830s onwards physicians could neither explain nor cure the great epidemic diseases and had virtually no understanding of metabolic and degenerative disorders. Without an adequate basis to justify their position as a learned profession, they sought to emphasise their moral role in society. As a consequence, they happily seized on issues such as sexual morality and abortion, areas in which they claimed to have scientific knowledge, to bolster their standing in the community. By 1835 leading medical journals had picked up the themes of sexual excess and masturbation, and within a few more years the entire medical press was in full cry on the subject.[11]

[8] Weeks, *Sex, Politics and Society*, p. 49.

[9] E.H. Hare, 'Masturbatory Insanity: The History of an Idea' in *The Journal of Mental Science* 452 (1962), p. 11.

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

[11] Duffy, 'Sex, Society, Medicine', p. 73.

A Closer Look: The Real Men behind the 'Madness'

Thus far we have surveyed the broad view of events, but it is necessary to look closer at some of the incidents as they unfolded and at some of the prominent medical figures who endorsed and promulgated the idea that masturbation caused both disease and madness. It is surprising that as early as 1700 a book under the title *Onania* appeared anonymously in Holland.[12] This work was met with great success but the negative sexual themes it sermonised only laid the foundations for what was to come in the nineteenth century. Numerous physicians began writing about masturbation in the 1830s. In 1831, for example, there appeared the first of a series of anti-masturbatory tracts in J.N. Bolle's *Solitary Vice Considered.*[13]

However, the most influential impetus in bringing sexual activity to medical attention was the Lausanne physician S. A. Tissot (1718–1770). He taught that all sexual activity was dangerous because it caused blood to rush to the brain which in turn starved the nerves (making them more susceptible to damage) thereby increasing the likelihood of insanity.[14] Tissot also believed that for every ounce of seminal fluid lost its equivalent was forty ounces of blood, which had a debilitating effect on the body.[15] Moreover, since onanism was regarded as sinful from a biblical point of view, its moral character and the feelings of guilt it stimulated also affected the central nervous system (CNS).[16] Though all sexual activity was debilitating, masturbation had a much greater devastating effect. Tissot's ideas were more inspired by religious pamphleteering on the subject rather than any real scientific research.[17] Even though Tissot had established the widely held medical opinion that masturbation was associated

[12] Engelhardt, 'The Disease of Masturbation', p. 235.

[13] Ibid., p. 72.

[14] Vern L. Bullough and Voght, Martha, 'Homosexuality and its Confusion with the 'Secret Sin' in Pre-Freudian America' *Journal of History of Allied Science* 28 (1973), pp. 143-155, at p. 146.

[15] Engelhardt, 'The Disease of Masturbation', p 235.

[16] In chapter thirty-eight of the book of Genesis in the Old Testament, Onan spilt his seed (sperm) by premature withdrawal or *coitus interruptus*, thus provoking the anger of God. Though *coitus interruptus* is ethically different in character and moral evaluation from masturbation, the two terms became synonymous with one another over the course of time.

[17] Bullough and Voght, 'Homosexuality and its Confusion', p. 146fn9.

with serious physical and mental maladies, he was not alone in the propagation of these ideas. The American physician, Benjamin Rush, listed masturbation as one of the inciting causes of mental illness. He shared the general opinion of his medical colleagues that any sexual behaviour that did not result in procreation was harmful to the human constitution.[18]

Sylvester Graham in 1834 published what was to become one of the most influential works of its day. The title itself is revealing of its content.[19] It was called *Lecture to Young Men on Chastity*.[20] J. Milne Chapman, a physician from Edinburgh, published an article on masturbation in an American medical journal. After stating that all female masturbation was the cause of all disease in women, he concluded that masturbation was 'disgusting' and any study of it 'distasteful'.[21] Most of these medical journals provided a myriad of examples of bodily problems apparently caused by immoderate sexual demands. One physician, for example, after observing two cases of diarrhoea in 'vigorous men', both of whom had recently married, blamed their disorder on the excessive sexual requirements of their wives who were 'a little loose in their characters.'[22]

These ideas were also introduced into Europe as a result of a publication in London early in the nineteenth century. The book was entitled *Onania, or the Heinous Sin of Self-Pollution*.[23] The main concern of the anonymous author was that masturbation was bad for the whole person and was a common cause of epilepsy. Claude-Francois Lallemand, professor of medicine at Montpellier, taught in 1842 that all discharge of semen weakened the body and therefore seriously endangered men's health. His conclusion complemented the teaching of his contemporaries. Lallemand stated that 'masturbation is a

[18] Ibid., p. 147.

[19] The various titles of articles in medical journals in the nineteenth century reveal much about the emerging attitude towards sex and especially masturbation. The following is a sample take from several footnotes in Engelhardt's article. 'Masturbation as a cause of insanity; Self pollution in children; The influence of sexual irritation on the disease of the ear; Masturbation and ophthalmia; On circumcision as preventative of masturbation; Castration for the relief of epilepsy' and so on.

[20] Duffy, 'Sex, Society, Medicine' p. 73.

[21] Bullough and Voght, 'Homosexuality and its Confusion', p. 153.

[22] Ibid., p. 154.

[23] Hare, 'Masturbatory Insanity', p. 2.

menace to the future of civilisation.'[24] Staying with France, Dedek comments that French doctors during the nineteenth century were particularly worried about an occupational hazard of seamstresses. As they worked their sewing machines[25], the up and down movements of their legs sometimes caused orgasms, and in at least one establishment a matron was appointed to circulate among the girls to watch for 'runaway machines'.[26]

Delirium and Disease

The moral offence of masturbation, as we have seen, was transformed into a disease with somatic and psychological dimensions. So what did masturbation actually cause according to physicians? From all the sources I have researched, the following is a composite list of the diseases claimed to have been caused by the solitary vice. For the female first of all, there was a threat to her fertility and her capacity to bear children. There was also a possibility of cancer, insanity, TB, frigidity, leucorrhea, and nymphomania.[27] Moreover, the list continues for both sexes. Dyspepsia, constrictions of the urethra, epilepsy, blindness, vertigo, loss of hearing, headache, impotency, loss of memory, irregular action of the heart, general loss of health and strength, rickets and chronic catarrhal conjunctivitis. Very interestingly, nymphomania due to masturbation, it was claimed, was more common in blondes than brunettes![28] Freud, with his particular interest in the mind, said that masturbation was a cause of neurosis.[29] Benjamin Rush included among his list of effects tabes dorsalis, manglia and fatuity. Coleman comments that some manifestations included various kinds of pain, for example, heart murmurs named by some as 'masturbator's heart'. Hypertrophy and tenderness of the breasts were possible.[30] There was also a correlation between masturbation and homosexuality because the medical profession saw both as intrinsically linked with one another. Typical of the

[24] Ibid., p. 5.

[25] Engelhardt, 'The Disease of Masturbation', p. 236fn18. The title of the book that is quoted is: *Influence of Sewing Machines upon the Health and Morality of Females Using them.*

[26] Dedek, *Contemporary Sexual Morality*, p. 46.

[27] Weeks, *Sex, Politics and Society*, p. 51.

[28] Engelhardt, 'The Disease of Masturbation', p. 236.

[29] Ibid., p. 241.

[30] Gerard Coleman, *Human Sexuality: An All-Embracing Gift* (New York, 1997), p. 308.

treatment of this subject in medical journals is the description of an 'insane masturbator' unwilling to make any 'attempt at reform'. He was an 'effeminate young man who carried a fan and did needlework.'[31]

'And it Caused Him to Die!'

Perhaps the most baffling conclusion of physicians in the nineteenth century was that masturbation could lead to death and there were cases where this judgement was drawn. In England, for example, a post-mortem examination from Birmingham concluded that

> [masturbation] seems to have acted upon the cord in the same manner as repeated small haemorrhages affect the brain, slowly sapping its energies, until it succumbed soon after the last application of the exhausting influence.[32]

In America, Alfred Hitchcock, writing for the *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal* in 1842, said that he himself had observed several fatal cases of prolonged masturbation. One particular case was that of a twenty-three-year-old man who died 'after six years of habitual masturbation.'[33] There were no boundaries to the emergence of the hypothesis and henceforth in most medical writing insanity, illness, and masturbation were inextricably linked together.

Cause and Encouragement

If masturbation was the cause of these illnesses, then it begs the question, 'what causes masturbation?' G. Stanley Hall, the sponsor of Freud in America and an important force in psychology, listed the following contributory factors.

> Spring and a general warm climate encourage masturbation. So too does improper clothes, rich food, indigestion, mental overwork, nervousness, defective cleanliness, prolonged sitting or standing, monotonous walking, sitting cross-legged, spanking, late rising, petting and indulgence, corsets, straining of the memory, erotic reading and pictures, play solitude, perfumes, over eating, fondling, rocking chairs, pockets, feathered beds, horseback riding and bicycles.[34]

[31] Bullough and Voght, 'Homosexuality and its Confusion', p. 148.
[32] Engelhardt, 'The Disease of Masturbation', p. 240fn39.
[33] Bullough and Voght, 'Homosexuality and its Confusion', pp. 147-148.

The question of how 'masturbators' were labelled as such arises. If the medical profession concluded that masturbation was a disease, which they did, then the corollary to this was that there must be somatic signs and symptoms.

Signs and Symptoms

Masturbation in the eighteenth and especially the nineteenth century, was believed to produce a series of signs and symptoms.[35] With regard to the psychological characterisation of the 'masturbator', Henry Maudsley in the 1860s developed the notion that mastubatory insanity was demarcated by

> (i)ntense self-regard and conceit, extreme perversion of feeling and corresponding deranging of thought, and later by failure of intelligence, nocturnal hallucination, and suicidal and homicidal propensities, all of which doomed the boy to social disaster.[36]

Furthermore, Lallemand emphasises the cold and callous nature of the 'masturbator':

> He loves no one, he has no other interests, he shows no emotion before the grandeur of nature or the beauties of art; still less is he capable of any generous impulse or act of loyalty, he is dead to the call of his family, his country and humanity.[37]

[34] Ibid., p. 151.
[35] Engelhardt, 'The Disease of Masturbation', p. 234.
[36] Weeks, *Sex, Politics and Society*, p. 50.
[37] Hare, 'Masturbatory Insanity', p.8.

Changes in the external genitalia were attributed to masturbation also. Elongation of the clitoris, reddening and congestion of the labia majora, elongation of the labia minora, and a thinning and decrease in the size of the penis were all considered tell-tale signs.[38] Chronic masturbation was held to lead to superficial veins in the hands and the feet, moist and clammy hands, stooped shoulders, pale sallow face with heavy dark circles around the eyes, a 'draggy' gait, and acne. 'From health and vigour, [they loose their flesh] and became pale and weak.'[39] An 'undesirable odour of the skin in women' was another indication.[40]

Prevention and Cure

In the same way the doctors of the nineteenth century diagnosed diseases related to masturbation by their signs and symptoms, they also attempted to prevent and cure the 'evil'. The most interesting case I came across was that of a physician who successfully treated an 18-year-old Irish girl of hiccups when he learned that she was a masturbator.[41]

If the threat of disease was not enough to frighten people, then there were physical sanctions to prevent masturbation. The development of elaborate machines and electrical equipment, which responded to erections or physically prevented masturbation, have been well documented.[42] Then there was also recourse to circumcision or acupuncture of the testicles as a preventative. In females, infibulation or putting a ring in the prepuce was used to make masturbation painful. If this did not deter the wanton girl, some physicians like the British surgeon Baker Brown advocated and personally performed clitoridectomy. Brown recommended that 'the patient having been placed completely under the influence of chloroform, the clitoris should be freely excised by a scissors or a knife ...' He concludes 'I always prefer the scissors.'[43] For the persistent male, vasectomy or castration was the ultimate sacrifice for a cure. This preoccupation of the medical profession with endeavouring to find a cure for autoeroticism had ramifications for the whole of society. Children's

[38] Engelhardt, 'The Disease of Masturbation', p.236.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Coleman, *Human Sexuality*, p. 308.
[41] Duffy, 'Sex, Society, Medicine', p. 75.
[42] Weeks, *Sex, Politics and Society* p. 50-51.
[43] Engelhardt, 'The Disease of Masturbation', p.244. Cf. Engelhardt, 'The Disease of Masturbation', p. 242fn44.

hospitals and boarding schools in Ireland, for example, imposed stringent preventative measures. Some ensured that the children slept with their hands above the covers, for obvious reasons. A short duration of sleep was imposed upon the children in the hope that tiredness would force them to sleep immediately without 'distraction'. A healthy diet was also prescribed.

The Decline in the Hypothesis

Belief in the idea that masturbation could cause insanity and disease diminished rapidly from the 1890s onward. The Freudian concept of neurosis and its relatedness to masturbation replaced the masturbatory hypothesis for about forty years, but it too declined. What were the reasons for this? Historians differ in their answers to this question but there are some common arguments. The 1920s brought a revolution in American morals and culture. Europe was soon to follow. The First World War created a generation gap and at the same time America turned into a major industrial nation. The role of women came to the fore in public awareness and debate, and this was to have profound implications for medicine.[44] Also, masturbation went from being seen as a *cause* to a *symptom* until eventually it was disassociated with disease and insanity altogether. Another weakness in the masturbatory hypothesis was its continued inability to offer satisfactory physiological explanations and evidence. Did sexual intercourse debilitate the person as well? Or if sperm was the major debilitating factor, then how can we explain female masturbation? These were among the problems that a new understanding in human physiology brought about. Some doctors tried to use guilt, due to social labelling, as an explanation for insanity. However, this argument was flawed because many people with a mental disability masturbated without any sense of shame.[45] Faced with these facts and a modernised society, the medical profession had no other option than to let go of the fictitious medical theories it had created and embrace the real scientific knowledge that was becoming increasingly prevalent and obvious.

[44] Duffy, 'Sex, Society, Medicine', p. 82.
[45] Hare, 'Masturbatory Insanity', p. 15.

Conclusion

L. P. Hartly grasped something of the truth of historiography when he said 'the past is a foreign country; they do things differently there.'[46] Our primary endeavour here has been to visit the not too distant past of the nineteenth century and engage with the topic of how masturbation was perceived specifically by the medical profession. In this essay it has been illustrated that there was a relatively rapid rise and fall in the hypothesis that masturbation caused both insanity and illness. It is quite clear that the medical profession of the late eighteenth and nineteenth century was the main proponent of this idea which had an all-pervasive impact on society. This societal effect was both negative and destructive of a healthy understanding of human sexuality, physiology, and psychology. The physicians of this period assumed and usurped a parental role in society. As Professor Plumb has put it, 'they [masturbators] were to stay firmly in Eden, with their hands firmly off the apples and deaf to the serpents.'[47] I have also illustrated the apparently factual data of signs and symptoms and so on, that science provided; none of it 'factual' or 'scientific' of course. Some doctors ignored the true scientific and biological nature of their profession and abandoned it for a sort of sociological, moral, and cultural labelling theory. This was purely to bolster their position in society. Some of the preventative and corrective surgical procedures endorsed by the medical doctors were akin to butchery and all this has gone unanswered.

Finally, it is a philosophical precept that if one aspect of an equation is highlighted, other factors are immediately negated and become secondary. The reason the focus has been on the medical profession is because there exists in some histories, and especially in popular perception, the notion that the only institution responsible for a repressive sexual culture in the period under discussion was the Christian church. This, as the evidence suggests, is erroneous, and hence the necessity to redress the balance in the causal factors that encouraged the rise of notions like the Masturbatory hypothesis.

Bearing the above in mind and even though the attention and criticism of this work has been directed against the medical profession and its negative treatment of human sexuality, it is important that we do not forget the other factors which played their part in the pessimistic representation of the issues

[46] Cited by John H. Arnold, *History: A Very Short Introduction* (New York, 2000), p. 6.

[47] Duffy, 'Sex, Society, Medicine', p. 48.

covered here. Institutions, whether ecclesiastical or secular, were dynamic ingredients in this period. In the final analysis, the paradigm I suggest as more accurate, is one that maintains a creative tension between all the factors and institutions. Society in any age, is not one institution, but a conglomeration of many constituents. Keeping this in mind is not optional to historical work. Rather, it is intrinsic and necessary to the nature of the subject.

Myth, Memory and the *Frontkämpfer* of the Great War in German History*

Neil Jakob

> Myth does not deny things, on the contrary, its function is to talk about them; simply, it purifies them, it makes them innocent, it gives them a natural and eternal justification, it gives them a clarity which is not that of an explanation but that of a statement of fact ... it establishes a blissful clarity: things appear to mean something by themselves.
>
> *Roland Barthes*[1]

> Warfare is no doubt a time of dramatic, unique experiences, which leave dense memory traces, individual and social. This is particularly true in the twentieth century, with mass industrial warfare of conscript armies.
>
> *Jay Winter & Emmanuel Sivan*[2]

In 1914 the major European powers engaged in a 'path of collective slaughter'[3] which was to last for 1,500 days. Germany mobilised 13,200,000 men to fight. Of these, 2,037,000 - or 15.4% - were killed or died.[4] The sheer number of these losses suggests that by 1918 every family in Germany, as in the other major combatant nations, was in mourning - for a father, a son, a husband, a brother or a friend.[5] However, in November 1998, while Britain and France were commemorating the eightieth anniversary of the armistice which effectively ended the First World War, it was hardly mentioned in Germany, neither by the press nor by the government. Instead, Germany remembered the *Reichskristallnacht* (the pogrom against the Jewish community sixty years ago) as a precursor to the events that followed during the Second World War.

In Germany, the battles of Verdun and the Somme in 1916 have been eclipsed by the suffering and destruction of the Sixth Army at Stalingrad in 1942/43. The two million German casualties of the First World War have been surpassed by the over seven million casualties, almost half of them civilians, of the Second World War. The strategic bombing of German cities and industry as well as the complete military collapse of 1945, ending in unconditional surrender followed by occupation, left no room for interpretation of the destructiveness of war and the totality of defeat. However, most importantly, the horror and the shame of the holocaust largely removed the First World War from and replaced it in the public and political consciousness of post-Second World War Germany. That this did not occur in Britain and France to the same degree is possibly due to the greater destructiveness of the First as opposed to the Second World War in those countries.[6] In the fifty years since the founding of the Federal Republic of Germany, widespread public interest and controversy has only focused on the First World War when possible continuities between 1914/18 and 1939/45 have been the issue. Nonetheless, there is a constant and even renewed interest in the Great War in German historiography today, especially in the form of *Mentalitäts-* and *Alltagsgeschichte*, but unlike during the inter-war period, it has finally passed into history.

In what follows, some questions regarding the effects of the experience and trauma of the Great War in Germany are considered. The focus is primarily on the German soldiers' expectations and experiences, both in reality and mythology, as well as the importance of the representation and memory of the *Frontkämpfer* (frontline fighter) in inter-war Germany.

* An earlier version of this paper was presented at University College Dublin in February 1999. The research was part-funded by the Trinity Trust Fund, Trinity College, Dublin. I would like to thank Karen Bissett for her help in revising this paper.

[1] Quoted in Angus Calder, *The Myth of the Blitz* (London, 1991), p. 3.

[2] Jay Winter and Emmanuel Sivan, 'Setting the Framework' in idem. (eds.), *War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, 1999), p. 17.

[3] Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning* (Cambridge, 1995), p. 227.

[4] Jay Winter, *The Great War and the British People* (London, 1986), p. 75.

[5] See Winter, *Sites of Memory*, p. 2.

[6] See Laurence Moyer, *Victory Must Be Ours. Germany in the Great War, 1914-1918* (London, 1995), p. 12.

Conventional wisdom has it that when war broke out during the summer of 1914, it was greeted with enthusiasm by the majority of the populations in the belligerent countries.[7] Instilled with a sense of national pride and unity, of being the victim of foreign aggression, and of having to defend a just cause, millions of soldiers marched off to the front and possible death. One of the best known photographs documenting the 'spirit of 1914', i.e. the exuberance of the early months of the war, is one taken in Munich at the beginning of August. It is only one amongst many such scenes captured on film, its significance lies in the fact that amidst the cheering crowd a 25 year old Adolf Hitler can been identified. Hitler, living in Munich when war broke out, enlisted in a Bavarian regiment and spent most of the following four years as a corporal on the western front, being wounded several times and receiving the Iron Cross First Class. He later wrote of the early days of the war in *Mein Kampf*:

> The struggle of the year 1914 was not forced on the masses – no, by the living god – it was desired by the whole people. People wanted at length to put an end to the general uncertainty. Only thus can it be understood that more than two million German men and boys thronged to the colours for this hardest of all struggles, prepared to defend the flag with the last drop of their blood.[8]

Of his own emotions he stated:

> To me those hours seemed like a release from the painful feelings of my youth. Even today [Hitler was writing in 1924] I am not ashamed to say that, overpowered by stormy enthusiasm, I fell down on my knees and thanked Heaven from an overflowing heart

[7] On the 'spirit of 1914', see Jeffrey Verhey, '"Der Geist von 1914"' in Rolf Spilker and Bernd Ulrich (eds.), *Der Tod als Maschinist. Der industrialisierte Krieg 1914-1918* (Bramsche, 1998), pp. 46-53.

[8] Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (1925; translated by Ralph Manheim, London, 1992), p. 148.

> for granting me the good fortune of being permitted to live at this time.[9]

Mein Kampf has been described as 'the most notorious political tract of the twentieth century, a mixture of unreliable autobiography and half-baked political philosophy'.[10] However, within the context of this paper it is less important whether this information is accurate or not. The decisive issue here is that this is how the experience was perceived and represented.

The enthusiasm for war in 1914 seems to have been particularly great in Germany, an indication for this are the 1.5 million war poems said to have been written during the early months of the conflict.[11] However, the reactions are most likely to have been more diverse than the traditional image urban responses suggest. The enthusiasm of the rural population for example is likely to have been somewhat dampened by concerns about harvesting the crops which were still in the fields. Nonetheless, Germany was largely united in its support for a struggle, which was seen to be a continuation of the national uprising of 1813 and the war of unification of 1870.[12] Thomas Mann recognised the 'age old German struggle against the spirit of the west'[13] and concluded that '[t]oday there is only one honourable place, and that place is before the enemy.'[14] The war was embraced as a national cause, and, although Hitler's figure of two million volunteers is grossly exaggerated, the figure being closer to 308,000 for 1914/15, the volunteer phenomenon is nonetheless a significant one in a country that already possessed a large conscript army officered by professional soldiers. In a letter written to his parents on 3 August 1914, a German student states that he is 'unfortunately still' in Leipzig but is exalted at having 'finally' received his orders to report the next day. He had met

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid., back cover.

[11] See Michael Jeismann, *Das Vaterland der Feinde. Studien zum nationalen Feindbegriff und Selbstverständnis in Deutschland und Frankreich 1792-1918* (Stuttgart, 1992), pp. 299-300.

[12] See ibid., pp. 301-309.

[13] Thomas Mann, *Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen* (1918; Frankfurt/Main, 1995), p. 40.

[14] Thomas Mann, 'Gute Feldpost (1914)' in idem, *Gesammelte Werke. Vol. XIII: Nachträge* (Frankfurt/Main, 1974), p. 526.

a young lady earlier that day and had been 'embarrassed' to be seen in 'civilian clothes' as he 'no longer belonged in the peaceful Leipzig.' In the 'changing atmosphere' he has learned an important lesson[15]:

> When we think of our relatives and ourselves in these times, we become small and weak. When we think of our nation, the fatherland, God, everything around us, then we become courageous and strong.[16]

This young student, the embodiment of the 'spirit of 1914', believing in the greatness of the struggle ahead and his duty to play his part in it, was killed less than two months later during the Battle of the Marne.

In the letters written by (educated) German soldiers early on in the war, the discussions of the causes and aims of the conflict abound. Whereas British soldiers generally restricted themselves to matter of fact statements that they are fighting in order that justice may prevail, German writers identified cultural differences as the causes and the maintenance of *Kultur*, i.e. the unique German cultural tradition, as the main aim of the war. In the early months of the war, a German soldier wrote from the western front: 'Poetry, art, philosophy, culture are what the war is all about.'[17] At the same time another soldier was writing from the eastern front that '(w)e know full well that we are fighting for the German idea in the world, that we are defending Germanic feeling against Asiatic barbarism and Latin indifference.'[18] However, for many soldiers the central issue does not seem to have been the actual causes of the war, but the willingness to serve ones country. As one soldier wrote in September 1914: 'For the decisive issue is surely always one's readiness to

[15] 'Letter of Walter Limmer to his parents, dated 3 August 1914' in Philipp Witkop (ed.), *Kriegsbriefe gefallener Studenten* (1918; Munich, first new edition 1928), p. 7.

[16] Ibid.

[17] 'Letter of Rudolf Fischer, dated 18 November 1914' in Philipp Witkop (ed.), *Kriegsbriefe deutscher Studenten* (1916; Gotha, 2nd edition, 1916), p. 25.

[18] 'Letter of Walter Harich, dated 14 October 1914' in ibid., p. 71.

sacrifice and not the object of the sacrifice.'[19] This one sentence, written by a 23 year old German law student in a train on his way to the war in the west, probably comes closest to the fundamental meaning of the war experience as perceived during, and especially after, the war. The notion of sacrifice in the service of the fatherland, king or whichever form the imagined community or highest reference point might take, was one already popular before the war, in a world which was increasingly felt, especially by the younger generation, to be materialistic, soul-killing, and 'modern' in every other negative sense of the word.[20] Thus, sacrifice, meaning the selfless, meaningful and hopefully glorious death for the common good, was the natural and only sentiment capable of rationalising the carnage witnessed and attaching some form of meaning to it.

War was seen as an opportunity to start afresh, to get away from the stifling constraints and expectations of modern society.[21] A German soldier welcomed the possibilities the war offered: 'I see death and call out to life. I had accomplished little in my short life which was taken up by studies for the most part.'[22] Thomas Mann wrote:

> How could the artist, the soldier within the artist not have thanked God for the collapse of a peace-time world that he was fed up with, thoroughly fed up with! War! It was cleansing, liberation that we experienced, and an immense hope.[23]

[19] 'Letter of Franz Blumenfeld, dated 24 September 1914' in Philipp Witkop (ed.), *Kriegsbriefe gefallener Studenten* (Berlin and Leipzig, 1918), p. 2.

[20] On soldiers' expectations, see Eric J. Leed, *No Man's Land. Combat and Identity in World War One* (Cambridge, 1979), pp. 58-69.

[21] See Bernd Ulrich, 'Die Desillusionierung der Kriegsfreiwilligen von 1914' in Wolfram Wette (ed.), *Der Krieg des kleinen Mannes. Eine Militärgeschichte von unten* (Munich and Zurich, 1992), p. 115.

[22] 'Letter of Alfons Ankenbrand, dated 11 March 1915' in Witkop, *Kriegsbriefe* (1916), p. 44.

[23] Thomas Mann, 'Gedanken im Kriege (1915)' in idem, *Gesammelte Werke. Vol. XIII*, p. 533.

It was idealised as a valuable, character-building experience, and was seen almost as an integral part of human nature. War was regarded as having an almost mythical, regenerating effect on the soul and enabled the combatant to reflect upon himself and discover his true identity. In 1915 a German soldier wrote:

> One becomes strong. This life sweeps away violently all weakness and sentimentality. One is put in chains, robbed of self-determination, practised in suffering, practised in self-restraint and self-discipline. But first and foremost: one turns inward. The only way one can tolerate this existence, these horrors, this murder, is if one's spirit is planted in higher spheres. One is *forced* into self-determination, one *has* to come to terms with death. One reaches, to find a counterweight for the ghastly reality, for that which is most noble and highest.[24]

Many German soldiers soon realised how '[d]readful, unworthy of human beings, stupid, outmoded, and in every sense destructive'[25] war was, describing it as a 'manhunt'[26] and the 'gruesome murder of people'.[27] This feeling of hopelessness, of being unable to perceive an end to the fighting and being powerless to influence one's own fate is a recurrent theme in soldiers' letters written after the initial enthusiasm for the war had worn off. The soldiers resigned themselves to the fact that there was little they could do and began to focus on their immediate surroundings and became preoccupied with the basic necessities and trivialities of life. Their sense of duty which made them endure

[24] 'Letter of Gerhart Pastors, dated 16 April 1915' in Witkop, *Kriegsbriefe* (1916), p. 50. Italics in the original.
[25] 'Letter of Franz Blumenfeld, dated 24 September 1914' in Witkop, *Kriegsbriefe* (1918), p. 2.
[26] 'Letter of a German soldier from Switzerland, dated 1914' in Christian Grünberg (ed.), *Feldpostbriefe von schweizer Deutschen* (Zurich, 1916), p. 58.
[27] 'Letter of a German soldier from Switzerland, undated but 1915' in ibid., pp. 132-133.

the circumstances they found themselves in gradually became the meaning of the war. Hitler wrote:

> Thus it went on year after year; but the romance of battle had been replaced by horror. The enthusiasm gradually cooled and the exuberant joy was stifled by mortal fear. The time came when every man had to struggle between the instinct of self-preservation and the admonitions of duty.[28]

The soldiers of all nations that went to war in 1914 were, like the general staffs of the time, adherents to the 'spirit of the offensive'.[29] They imagined a form of mobile warfare, reminiscent of the Napoleonic and Franco-Prussian Wars, in which rapid advances over great areas and set battles would be decisive in bringing the war to a swift end by Christmas. The desire to go forward was expressed repeatedly by German soldiers. In November 1914, one of them serving on the eastern front wrote that '(f)or the first four weeks, never going into battle and doing nothing, I shook, shook with the urge to go forward; and that has not changed.'[30] His counterpart on the western front concurred that '(i)t is a thousand times more preferable to go forward in a daring attack, no matter what the cost, than to endure days of shelling, always waiting for the one which might come and mutilate or tear one to ribbons.'[31] Even a year later the offensive doctrine still persisted in many minds. One German soldier wrote: 'We have this physical urge to get at the Serbs face to face and put our fists in their faces. If the order to move our position forward comes tonight, we will feel as if we are going to heaven.'[32]

Soldiers found it difficult to readjust to a new kind of warfare in which the romantic notions of yesteryear became anachronisms. As one German soldier concluded: 'I imagined the war to be completely different. I can not even

[28] Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, p. 151.
[29] On the 'spirit of the offensive', see Michael Howard, 'Men against Fire. Expectations of War in 1914' in *International Security* 1/ 9 (1984), pp. 41-57.
[30] 'Letter of Walther Harich, dated 4 November 1914' in Witkop, *Kriegsbriefe* (1916), p. 4.
[31] 'Letter of Lothar Dietz, dated November 1914' in ibid., p. 22.
[32] 'Letter of Gerhart Pastors, dated 7 October 1915' in ibid., p. 114.

begin to describe the impressions I have gained.'[33] As the western front fossilised along a line running from Switzerland to the English Channel, a new element was added to the traditional confusion of the battlefield: the deadly concentration of fire power in barren killing zones which forced the opposing armies underground. In its new form, war had not been able to fulfil the expectations placed in it in 1914; it was not the 'renewing' experience that was hoped for:[34]

> Instead of personal initiative and individual responsibility, there was the dulling endurance of the trenches. Instead of gaining an intensified realization of the power of the spirit over matter, they found matter crushing the spirit. Instead of escaping the soul-killing mechanism of modern technological society, they learned that the tyranny of technology ruled even more omnipotently in war than in peace-time. The men who through daring chivalry had hoped to rescue their spiritual selves from the domination of material and technological forces discovered that in the modern war of material the triumph of the machine over the individual is carried to its most extreme conclusions.[35]

Militarily, the First World War marked the definite end of nineteenth century warfare. The central reality of it was the growing discrepancy between the mental and the technological battlefields, between the perception of the way a war ought to be fought, and the reality of modern industrialised warfare. Military virtues - courage, honour, leadership - and traditional strategies, deemed war to be an offensive enterprise. However, recent technological advances - the machine gun, rifled barrels, exploding shells - and the immense

[33] 'Letter of a German soldier from Switzerland, undated but 1914 or 1915' in Grünberg, *Feldpostbriefe*, p. 109.

[34] See Ulrich, 'Desillusionierung', pp. 116-117.

[35] Hanna Hafkesbrink, *Unknown Germany. An Inner Chronicle of the First World War based on Letters and Diaries* (New Haven, 1948), pp. 65-66.

destructiveness these entailed, determined it be a defensive one.[36] The adherence to the spirit of the offensive in an environment greatly favouring the defensive, resulted in the enormous casualties that became one of the lasting legacies of the 'war to end all wars'. The German soldiers of the First World War were confronted with a new kind of warfare, one which was 'different from all other warfare men had hitherto experienced'.[37] War as it transpired, could not fulfil the expectations and hopes placed upon it.

This became painfully clear from the outcome of the war. Despite early successes in the war, the occupation of most of Belgium and Northern France for four years, victory and substantial territorial gains in the east, as well as a series of five offensives beginning in March 1918 which brought German troops to within fifty miles of Paris, Germany lost the war in November 1918. However, Germany had managed to terminate the war before it reached her own borders, and German troops still occupied more than half of Belgium and parts of Northern France when the war ended. The German army was permitted to march home in an orderly fashion and the soldiers were welcomed back as undefeated heroes. The military high command, which had been *de facto* running the country during the last two years of the war, managed to turn over political control to a new revolutionary government whose first task was to seek an armistice. All this gave rise to the 'stab-in-the-back legend', the idea that the German military had not been defeated in battle but that it had been betrayed by politicians and civilians at home. This idea was to play an important role in the politics of the inter-war period, the parties that constituted the pillars of the first German republic were the ones who, in the eyes of many, had betrayed Germany and robbed her of a deserved victory. Instead, Germany had lost and was forced to accept a humiliating treaty dictated by the Allied powers at Versailles. Apart from the financial and territorial losses this involved, the acceptance of the responsibility for the outbreak of the war specified in the infamous 'war guilt clause', article 231, was seen to question the honour and integrity of the German nation as a whole:

[36] See John Keegan, *A History of Warfare* (1993; London, 1994), pp. 347-366 and Michael Howard, *War in European History* (1976; Oxford and New York, 1993), pp. 94-131.

[37] John Keegan, *The Face of Battle* (1976; London, 1991), p. 306.

> The Allied and Associated Governments affirm and Germany accepts the responsibility of Germany and her allies for causing all the loss and damage to which the Allied and Associated Governments and their nationals have been subjected as a consequence of the war imposed upon them by the aggression of Germany and her allies.[38]

Writing in *Mein Kampf* Hitler asked:

> Was it for this that the German soldier had stood fast in the sun's heat and in the snowstorms, hungry, thirsty, and freezing, weary from sleepless nights and endless marches? Was it for this that he had lain in the hell of the drumfire and in the fever of gas attacks without wavering, always thoughtful of his one duty to preserve the fatherland from the enemy peril? Verily these heroes deserved a headstone: "Thou Wanderer who comest to Germany, tell those at home that we lie here, true to the fatherland and obedient to duty."[39]

Modern historiography has shown the 'stab-in-the-back legend' to be what it is – a legend. The German army had by late July 1918 not only lost its ability, but also its will to sustain the war. The German historian Wilhelm Deist speaks of a 'covert military strike', in which as many as 300,000 German soldiers vanished within the German lines of communication to avoid going back to the front.[40] After four years of Armageddon, many had simply had enough of what one soldier in 1918 referred to as 'the madness of the

[38] H. W. V. Temperley (ed.), *A History of the Peace Conference of Paris. Vol. III: Chronology, Notes and Documents* (London, 1920), p. 214.

[39] Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, p. 186.

[40] See Wilhelm Deist, 'Verdeckter Militärstreik im Kriegsjahr 1918?' in Wette, *Krieg des kleinen Mannes*, pp. 146-167.

trenches'.[41] Widespread disobedience and even mutiny in October/November 1918 support this conclusion. Furthermore, Fritz Fischer has shown that the notion of German war guilt was largely justified, with the German government pursuing an aggressive policy before and during the July crisis of 1914.[42]

None of this however mattered during the inter-war period. The huge losses had to be somehow reconciled with the unfortunate outcome of the war. As victory and material gains had not been achieved, there must have been some other meaning to the Great War. In a continuation of wartime propaganda and emotions, the spiritual value of the experience and the heroism of the *Frontkämpfer* was advanced. Again Hitler:

> Thousands of years may pass, but never will it be possible to speak of heroism without mentioning the German army and the World War. Then from the veil of the past the iron front of the grey steel helmet will emerge, unwavering and unflinching, an immortal monument. As long as there are Germans alive, they will remember that these men were sons of their nation.[43]

The two events, which best incorporated the changing experiences of the German soldier as a reflection of the changing nature of the war and which came to symbolise the *Frontkämpfer*, occurred in the first half of the conflict: the battles of Langemarck (November 1914) and Verdun (February to December 1916). Langemarck and Verdun, in their differing roles as symbols of the spiritual greatness of German soldiers and Germany in general, were seen to be representative of everything that was good about the *Frontkämpfer* experience as opposed to the shame and indignity of defeat which followed. The positive attitudes the war brought forth were to be remembered and emphasised to gloss over its negative outcome.

[41] 'Letter of Otto Helmuth Michels, dated 19 June 1918' in Witkop, *Kriegsbriefe* (1928), p. 345.

[42] See Fritz Fischer, *Griff nach der Weltmacht. Die Kriegszielpolitik des kaiserlichen Deutschland 1914/18* (1961; Düsseldorf, 1994), esp. pp. 13-86.

[43] Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, p. 152.

The myth of Langemarck arose not from military success but from glorious defeat. After the 'miracle of the Marne' when the German advance on Paris was halted in September 1914 and the Schlieffen plan disintegrated, the German high command attempted to regain the initiative with the First Battle of Ypres in November.[44] It was to be the end of the war of movement on the western front until early 1918 and the birthplace of one of the most powerful myths of the Great War in German popular imagination. 10 November 1914 witnessed

> the sad spectacle of *Landwehr* veterans as well as fresh volunteers, many of them German Youth Movement and university students who previously had escaped military service, seeking to compensate for their lack of training and experience with enthusiasm and vigour.[45]

Attacking fortified British positions manned by well-trained and experienced soldiers near Langemarck (the name the Germans incorrectly chose for this engagement, apparently because it was more 'Germanic' than the actual name Bixchote), they suffered enormous casualties and had to retreat, some of them apparently singing *Deutschland, Deutschland über alles* to avoid being fired upon by their own side. To understand how this military disaster, involving untrained, ill-equipped and unsupported troops attacking fortified positions held by experienced members of a professional army, came to be seen as one of the defining and most glorious moments of the First World War in Germany, one has to look back on the image reported in 1914. The German Army Bulletin of 11 November 1914 stated that 'West of Langemarck, youthful regiments took by storm the first line of the enemy's trenches, singing *Deutschland, Deutschland über alles*.'[46] It is on the basis of this that a 'cult of Langemarck' developed during and especially after the war.[47] 'German nationalists thereafter celebrated [it] as the "march of honour to Langemarck"

[44] On the events of autumn 1914, see Holger Herwig, *The First World War. Germany and Austria-Hungary, 1914-1918* (London et al., 1997), pp. 96-120.

[45] Ibid., p. 106.

[46] *Militär-Wochenblatt*, 154/155 (1914), cols. 3331-3332.

[47] See Karl Unruh, *Langemarck. Legende und Wirklichkeit* (Koblenz, 1986).

... Youth, sacrifice, and idealism became the myth of Langemarck.'[48] The zeal and enthusiasm of the young volunteers joyously sacrificing their lives for their German fatherland while singing its anthem in their baptism of fire was the image of Langemarck. It was not military disaster or the futile loss of young lives but the 'youth and manly virtue consecrated to die for the love of the fatherland'[49] which the name of this little Belgian town invoked. The inspirational value of the sacrifice of 'those who died with this song on their lips and willingly gave their young bodies as the holy seeds of the future of the Reich'[50] was paramount and was celebrated by German students in particular in so-called *Langemarck Feiern* (Langemarck celebrations) throughout the 1920s and 1930s. Josef Magnus Wehner, veteran and author of the right-wing nationalist novel *Sieben vor Verdun* (1930), echoed the above sentiments when, in 1932, he gave his summary of the events at Langemarck:

> Before the Reich covered its face in shame and defeat those at Langemarck s a n g . The dying sang! They sang running, in serried ranks, a bullet in their heart, young students running to their own destruction in the face of the overwhelming forces and the roaring of thousands of enemy guns: '*Deutschland, Deutschland über alles, über alles in der Welt.*' ... And through the song, with which they died, they are resurrected and will be resurrected a thousand times until the end of the Reich ...[51]

The ten month battle of Verdun, ostensibly fought to 'bleed France white', represents, with a few exceptions such as the capture of Fort Douaumont, a

[48] Herwig, *First World War*, p. 106.

[49] George L. Mosse, 'National Anthems: The Nation Militant' in idem., *Confronting the Nation. Jewish and Western Nationalism* (Hanover (NH) and London, 1993), p. 22.

[50] Werner Beumelburg, *Ypern 1914* (Oldenburg and Berlin, 1925), p. 11.

[51] *Langemarck. Ein Vermächtnis. Worte von Josef Magnus Wehner, am 10. July 1932, zur Stunde der Übernahme des Gefallenen-Friedhofs in Langemarck durch die Deutsche Studentenschaft, gesprochen an allen deutschen Hochschulen, verbunden mit Briefen Gefallener* (Munich, n.d.), p. 6. Expanded spacing in the original.

radically altered image and experience of the *Frontkämpfer*.[52] The 'modern warrior of Verdun' was not the young, romantic and heroic figure of Langemarck, he was 'old, experienced, with no emotions and no ideal to identify with'.[53] This veteran lived within a microcosmic community established in the trenches and his motivation to continue fighting arose not out of romantic images of glory, but out of a firm sense of duty. It was this figure, and not the student of Langemarck, that the soldier of the next world war, trapped in Stalingrad or participating in the Holocaust, would be able to relate to.[54]

The constructive, rather than destructive interpretation of the German soldiers' frontline experience as epitomised by the notions of sacrifice, sense of duty, and creating of a *Volksgemeinschaft* (national community) out of the *Frontgemeinschaft* (community of the trenches), were incorporated into right-wing political movements like the *Stahlhelm*, and most notably the National Socialist German Workers Party.[55] They were disseminated through a wide range of official and unofficial histories of the war, as well as, through a variety of memoirs, diaries, letters, and novels, which dealt with the 'immortal heroic achievements of the German Army'.[56] Of the latter, Ernst Jünger's *Storm of Steel* (1920) with its aesthetic and glorified description of war on the western front is possibly the best known and most enduring. However, the experience of the war also resulted in a pacifist rejection of it, the most successful and famous example being Erich Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* (1929), which, ten years after its conclusion, caused a renewed and highly volatile discussion of the meaning of the war. The dedication of *All Quiet* states that it 'is intended neither as an accusation nor as a confession, but

[52] On the Battle of Verdun, see Alistair Horne, *The Price of Glory. Verdun 1916* (1962; London, 1993).

[53] Bernd Hüppauf, 'Langemarck, Verdun and the Myth of a New Man in Germany after the First World War' *War and Society*, 2/ 6 (1988), p. 96.

[54] See ibid., pp. 96-97.

[55] On the influence of the experience of the First World War on German political culture in the inter-war years, see George L. Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers. Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars* (New York and Oxford, 1990), esp. chs. 8 and 9.

[56] Wilhelm Ziegler, *Volk ohne Führung* (Hamburg, 1938/39), p. 370.

simply as an attempt to give an account of a generation that was destroyed by the war – even if they survived the shelling.'[57] Here Remarque utilised the image of the physically unscathed but psychologically scarred or destroyed veteran to emphasise his point. The insatiable monster of modern industrialised warfare not only devoured and mangled the dead and maimed, but also scarred every soul it touched. Though all the protagonists in *All Quiet* are dead by the end of the novel, Remarque returned to this theme of the disillusioned and broken veteran in its 'sequel' *Der Weg zurück* (1931). The generation returning from the war had lost its ideals, beliefs and innocence on the Somme and at Verdun - though the body remained intact, the soul was destroyed. Or, as another pacifist writer summarised: 'Never again! Because: "The only victor is death!"'[58]

The meaning of the frontline experience of the First World War was a controversial topic throughout the brief existence of the Weimar Republic. With opposing positive and negative interpretations, neither of which denied the horrors of the war, but simply drew different conclusions from the experience, it had a significance far beyond the literary or artistic field and played an important part in everyday politics.[59] However, when a former field-marshal appointed a former corporal to the position of Reichschancellor in January 1933, it was the positive interpretation of the experience of the First World War, which won over its rejection. With the burning of Remarque's novels in May 1933 for his 'betrayal of the soldiers of the World War'[60], the question of the meaning of the experience of the First World War had finally (or at least until the post-Second World War period) been settled in Germany.

In 1961, the British Historian A. J. P. Taylor wrote that 'Germany fought specifically in the Second World War to reverse the verdict of the first

[57] Erich Maria Remarque, *Im Westen nichts Neues* (1929; Cologne, 1987), p. 5.

[58] Edlef Köppen,'Kriegsbriefe gefallener Studenten' *Literarische Welt*, 13-14/5 (1929), p. 7.

[59] See Kurt Sontheimer, *Antidemokratisches Denken in der Weimarer Republik. Die politischen Ideen des deutschen Nationalismus zwischen 1918 und 1933* (1962; Munich, 1978), pp. 93-111.

[60] *Fränkischer Kurier*, 12 May 1933, quoted in Modris Eksteins, '"All Quiet on the Western Front" and the Fate of the War' *JCH* 15 (1980), p. 363.

and destroy the settlement which followed it.'[61] Though this may be an oversimplification of a complex matter, it is unquestionable that the First World War, and within it especially the experience and image of the *Frontkämpfer*, had a profound impact on the inter-war politics and history of Germany. The fact that it no longer features prominently in German social and political discourses should not distract from this. It was simply replaced by the even more horrific and destructive conflict that followed, a conflict, which would have been unimaginable and unlikely, had it not been for the Great War. The *Frontkämpfer* of the Great War has become part of history and the focus of popular attention, though to a much lesser degree and towards a different end, has now moved on to the next generation, in other words, the soldier of the Second World War and his complicity in the Holocaust.

[61] A. J. P. Taylor, *The Origins of the Second World War* (1961; London, 1991), p. 41.

Education and the Catholic Church in the Irish Free State

John E. Duggan

> If the advent of the Free State government caused any ripples of apprehension in ecclesiastical circles regarding educational change, they were soon dissipated by the congenial attitude of the education minister Eoin MacNeill. Among his first acts of office was an announcement, which must have caused profound satisfaction to the Church. In the Dáil session of 26 September 1922 he confirmed the rumour that Marlborough Street Teacher Training College was to be closed and its students transferred to the denominational colleges. Marlborough Street was a non-denominational institution established under the patronage of the National Board as part of its much-maligned plan for the promotion of 'mixed' education. But it had never been a great success as its graduates were invariably ostracised by the Catholic clerical managers of primary schools. While the closure of the college was probably justified on purely economic grounds, its timing was singularly auspicious. It proclaimed in no uncertain way that the policy of the new regime was to be one of strict denominationalism in education.[1]

When the Irish Free State government came into power in 1922 it had as its major ally the Catholic Church. As a result, the influence of the Catholic hierarchy permeated most if not all aspects of government. This influence was no more keenly felt than in the area of education. The government consulted the hierarchy in relation to the formulation of education policies as well as the

[1] *Catholic Bulletin*, Editorial, 13 January 1923.

implementation of them. Even the changes in the administrative structures within the Department of Education had the stamp of approval from the Catholic Church.

Under the British regime the Catholic Church vigorously opposed the proposed abolition of the National and Intermediate Boards and their replacement by a single education department. Yet it never objected to such a move in the event of self-government, so when it materialised there was no complaint from the Church. Its change of attitude was due to the realisation that the new department was to have a limited function, and that it would only concern itself with the co-ordination of the curriculum and not interfere in the running of the schools. As discussed elsewhere the department did, however, operate an inspection system, the principle object of which was to rank the efficiency of the teacher in the primary sector, and evaluate the suitability of the subjects on offer in secondary schools.

The Church's response to the administrative changes instituted by the government was very positive. The Church's main spokesman in the area of education, The Reverend Timothy Corcoran made his views and the views of the Church well known through the medium of the *Irish Monthly* a publication which was seen as the best guide to church reaction to educational changes and initiatives.

Even before the Church made its views known on administrative changes it acclaimed in July 1926 as an 'excellent choice' the appointment of Joseph O'Neill as secretary of the Department of Education, a man who shared Corcoran's zeal for the revival of the Irish language.[2] O'Neill wanted a minimum of ten hours of instruction in Irish per week in secondary school. He also maintained that the role of the State in education should be limited, a view which endeared him to the Church. O'Neill was unashamedly catholic in his views and championed the right of the Catholic Church to be involved in education, which led him to proclaim in a *Studies* article in 1949 'that an education system, which has not religious conviction at the heart of it, is still born.'[3]

Taking this statement into account, it is easy to see that with Joseph O'Neill at the helm, the Department of Education was never going to

[2] 'Notes on Current Educational Topics' *Irish Monthly* 601 (July 1923), p. 316.

[3] Joseph O'Neill, 'Department of Education, Church and State' *Studies* 38 (December 1949), p. 429.

undermine the influence which the Catholic Church wielded in the education system.

In 1923 the department announced plans for the reorganisation of secondary education. As discussed elsewhere, schools were required to have departmental approval for their curriculum programmes, and the two State examinations were introduced. The reorganisation also saw capitation grants awarded independent of examination results. The Catholic Church welcomed all these and indeed other measures wholeheartedly, and Corcoran was 'fulsome in his praise in the pages of the *Irish Monthly*.'[4] When the syllabus for the State examinations appeared in 1924 Corcoran was particularly pleased, 'especially with the emphasis placed on the Irish language.'[5]

The Catholic Church had little difficulty with the Department of Education's plans for the reorganisation of the primary school system. If there was an area where differences with the authorities had arisen in the past it was in relation to compulsory school attendance. Under the British, the Church refused to cooperate with the Compulsory Education Act of 1892 and as such it was rendered largely inoperative. D.H. Akenson pointed out that as far as the Catholic Church was concerned, 'compulsion ran contrary to parental rights.'[6] As a result, attendance at school remained very low in comparison to Britain, a fact pointed out by the National Program Conference on Primary Education in 1921.[7] Yet when the new State came into being all objections to compulsory attendance were withdrawn, and in June 1923 a meeting of the Catholic Clerical Managers Association agreed that 'the time had come for legislation in relation to compulsory school attendance.'[8] In 1924 the government announced that 'it intended to introduce measures to improve school attendance,' a move applauded by the Church's main spokesman the Rev. Corcoran.[9] In 1926 the School

[4] 'Notes on Current Educational Topics' *Irish Monthly* 603 (September1923), p. 426.

[5] 'Notes on Current Educational Topics' *Irish Monthly* 613 (July 1924), p. 338.

[6] D.H. Akenson, 'Education in Independent Ireland 1922-1960' in idem. (ed.), *A Mirror to Kathleen's Face. Education in Independent Ireland, 1922-1960* (London and Montreal, 1975), p. 11.

[7] *National Programme of Primary Instruction* (1922), p. 24, National Programme Conference (1922).

[8] *Irish Catholic Directory* 1924, p. 580.

[9] 'Notes on Current Educational Topics' *Irish Monthly*.

Attendance Act was passed and it won the approval of the people with the exception of some farming interests. As a result of the Act, attendance figures improved from 73.5% in 1924 to 82.7% in 1928.[10]

Under the British the questions of school attendance and the replacement of the National and Intermediate Boards by a single education department remained the two constant sources of friction between the Catholic Church and the State, mainly because of the atmosphere of mutual suspicion which characterised church-State relations at that time. However within a few years both areas of contention had been satisfactorily resolved, showing just how much the Church's views on education had been altered. From being antagonistic towards the government's education policies prior to the inception of the Free State, the Church almost overnight began to assert a tremendous influence and in many ways became the dominant partner in the whole area of education.

The church was helped in no small way to this position of influence by the attitude of the cabinet itself. The Education Minister, Eoin MacNeill, played a crucial role in the formation of the new Church-State understanding in relation to education. MacNeill was a devout Catholic who some years earlier had declared his support for the concept of education espoused by the Catholic Church in a paper entitled 'The Unity of Education' which he delivered to the Catholic Graduates and Undergraduates Association. In his address he questioned if any Christian could seriously entertain the notion of separation of religious and secular education. MacNeill was anxious that the attitude and opinions of the clergy should always be taken into account when education policies were being formulated, a point very well illustrated when just prior to his retirement he recounted his response to an approach by a group of clergymen who objected to the moral context of certain school text-books during the early days of his office as Education Minister

> Your objection to this is to me all sufficient – I do not place myself in the position of judge as to whether your objection is well based or not. When it is based on grounds that you state, I accept it.[11]

[10] PDDE, vol.34, Col 2116 (16 May 1930).
[11] PDDE, vol.13, Col 546-8 (18 November 1925).

Mac Neill also acceded to the wishes of the clergy in relation to the question of the amalgamation of small schools. When the management of these schools objected to the plans on moral grounds he immediately cancelled them.[12]

At the end of 1925 Cosgrave was forced by MacNeill's resignation over the Boundary Commission's findings, to consider a successor as Education Minister. The man he chose was John Marcus O'Sullivan, another eminent scholar and a devout Catholic. Indeed so strong was his faith that Professor Mary Macken maintained that

> (t)his intellectual giant had the faith of a child as well, and he nurtured it. The Psalms, the Missal, the New Testament were of his Daily food.[13]

O'Sullivan held the same views as MacNeill on the crucial question of the relative roles of the Church and State in education. He was perfectly at ease with the systems of State-aided primary and secondary schools which the fledgling Free State had inherited. According to him the systems answered 'some of the vital needs of the people'[14], in a way which a unified system under the State could not. O'Sullivan like his predecessor was prepared to accept uncritically the Catholic Church's claim 'that it had the duty and the right to educate'[15] and he was most certainly unwilling to encroach in any way on the prerogatives it so jealously guarded. The stance he maintained came not only out of his religious convictions but also for the practical reason of avoiding the Church-State conflicts, which other countries had to endure at that time that

> (a)nyone who has ever lived outside this country knows the extraordinary amount of damage that is done not merely to religion but to education by the extraordinary sterile debates, the bitter warfare I may almost call it that is caused by the school question in other countries. I am convinced that

[12] Ibid.
[13] Mary Macken, 'Obituary of John Marcus O'Sullivan' in *Studies* 37 (March 1948), p.6.
[14] PDDE, vol.16, Col 383 (4 June 1926).
[15] PDDE, vol.26, Col 383 (25 October 1928).

> anything in the nature of establishing a State system here, apart altogether from the higher point of view of religion and morality, and even from the purely secular point of view, would mean that we would lose a great deal ... we are lucky in this country that we have a system that satisfies the legitimate demands of the Church and the State in this matter, an exceedingly difficult thing to do ... Anything that would tend even to shake a system of that kind I would consider disastrous in the extreme.[16]

O'Sullivan's views constantly mirrored those of his predecessor, resulting in a continuing role of influence for the Catholic Church in education. Even when the debate arose for the second time on the issue of small adjacent boys' and girls' schools being amalgamated, O'Sullivan's response echoed the sentiments of MacNeill, when he stated that

> there is a very strong objection, on the part of those who are entrusted with the moral welfare of the great bulk of the population of this country, to having boys and girls taught in the same school. The objection is undoubtedly there. It is very strong.[17]

Even when the Minister was aware of instances where reform was necessary, he was unwilling to undermine the role and influence of the Church. For example in 1931 when the opposition attacked the curriculum offered at the church-controlled teacher-training colleges and demanded an inquiry into the issue, O'Sullivan, while he admitted that there were problems, was not prepared to force any changes. The State, would, as far as the government was concerned, not use its power to dictate to the church. An inquiry would only be carried out with the cooperation of the Church and needless to say no inquiry ever took place. With men like MacNeill and O'Sullivan at the helm, the Irish State was

[16] PDDE, vol.38, Col 1902 (27 May 1931).
[17] PDDE, vol.16, Col 383 (7 June 1926).

more than willing to carry out its role as a minor partner in the area of education. The Church was allowed to dictate the terms under which the children of the nation were to be educated and the government saw no reason to change the status quo.

Yet, pressure did come on the government from within the body politic to initiate change, most especially from the Labour Party, which constantly argued for substantial State *commitment* to education. In 1923 T.J. O'Connell, the Labour Party education spokesman, argued that a commission be set up to advise the Minister on the question of educational reform. Eoin MacNeill was less than enthusiastic about the proposal citing his 'horror of State-made education'[18] and rejected the notion of government responsibility for education.

The Labour Party in its 1924 policy document 'Labour's Policy on Education' proposed the setting up of an advisory Council of Education, which would propose legislative and administrative changes to the Minister, and it would control the qualifications of those entering the teaching profession. Many saw these proposals as having the potential to disrupt the distribution of educational authority between Church and State and as such they were greeted with a great deal of suspicion by interested parties, especially the Reverend Timothy Corcoran who wrote in the *Irish Monthly* that an advisory council would do more harm than good unless it was fully representative of existing school authorities and teaching forces 'all in fair proportion'.[19] He went on to declare that

> education is so serious and so direct a Catholic interest that Catholic authorities would never countenance any scheme in which they were not solid guarantees against its being subjected to hostile or even indifferent forces.[20]

As it happened Corcoran's fears were unfounded as O'Sullivan dismissed out-of-hand the proposal of an advisory council claiming that it could not serve any useful purpose.

[18] PDDE, vol.2, Col 548-555 (4 Jan 1923).
[19] 'Notes on Current Educational Topics' *Irish Monthly* 631 (January 1926), p. 675.
[20] Ibid.

Yet, despite the government's lack of enthusiasm and the very overt hostility of the Church towards it, the proposal did gain the support of both major teaching organisations. Indeed the I.N.T.O. at its conference of 1928 called on the government to introduce a measure, which would provide for

> (a) A Council of Education to assist and advise the Minister in all educational matters.
> (b) An Education Authority in each county and county borough whose main function shall be to make provision for adequate and suitable accommodation and the heating, cleaning and general upkeep and maintenance.[21]

The Catholic Church, through Corcoran reacted negatively and singled out the proposed system of local education authorities for special comment maintaining that it was 'a first move against the managerial system'.[22] Corcoran went on to point out that the major difficulty with any proposed council was its composition. He was particularly concerned that certain bodies 'neutral in their constitution'[23] might secure representation on the council and so 'challenge the principle of religious education, a principle which the Church is ever and must ever be, on the alert to defend.'[24]

Yet, he did allow for compromise albeit on the Church's terms. He had no real objection to a council solely made up of those representing the various teaching interests such as the Catholic Headmasters Association, the Association of Secondary Teachers of Ireland, the Christian Brothers Education Council and other such groups.[25] What the Catholic Church obviously envisaged was a council, if it was to be set up, dedicated to the preservation of the status quo, that being an education system with a distinctly Catholic bias.

The issue of the status of the lay secondary teachers came to a head again during the 1920s. After striking in 1920, the teachers were only partly satisfied with the increase in salary which they had achieved. At the same time

[21] 'Notes on Current Educational Topics' *Irish Monthly* 660 (June 1928), p. 284.
[22] Ibid, pp. 284-285.
[23] 'Notes on Current Educational Topics' *Irish Monthly* 673 (July 1929), p. 337-38.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Ibid.

the question of job security became a major concern for teachers, and believing that an independent Irish government might be more sympathetic than the previous British one, they drew up proposals regarding an appeals procedure in April 1922. The teachers suggested two boards of appeal, one for Catholic and one for non-Catholic schools, each to consist of three representatives of the headmasters, three of the teachers and an independent chairman. The demands were then submitted to Professor MacNeill in October 1922. In the Dáil debate of that December he promised to raise the issue along with teachers remuneration with the religious orders, while at the same time acknowledging that the position of teachers was unsatisfactory. However, he did add that he envisaged grave difficulties in trying to right the situation because most secondary schools were private institutions run by the religious orders, and as has been shown elsewhere, MacNeill was very reticent about introducing any new initiatives which would unduly upset the practises and principles of the Catholic Church. He did approach the bishops on the question of an appeals tribunal on behalf of the teachers but his efforts yielded little in the way of satisfaction. The bishops were determined to prevent interference with their schools and were as intransigent as ever.

All in all the Catholic Church was very suspicious of the government's plans to improve the working conditions of the lay teachers, believing that they might in some way interfere with the autonomy of schools run by religious orders. In the February 1924 edition of the *Irish Monthly*, Reverend Corcoran threatened to 'go to court if the State attempted to take over the education system.'[26] In the same edition an article by 'SJ' entitled 'Catholic Secondary Teacher's Security of Tenure' completely rejected the idea that a 'secular tribunal' should have any say in the appointment or dismissal of teachers.[27] He took this stance because Catholic secondary schools were thoroughly private institutions established 'at the cost of great sacrifices and often in spite of sufferings and dangers long before the State dreamt of assisting secondary education.'[28]

As a result lay teachers found themselves in a position where they were unable to claim similar remuneration and security of tenure as civil

[26] 'Notes on Current Educational Topics' *Irish Monthly* 608 (February 1924), p. 57.
[27] 'SJ', 'Catholic Secondary Teachers Security of Tenure' *Irish Monthly* 608 (February 1924).
[28] Ibid., pp. 69-70.

servants because quite simply they were not servants of the state. 'SJ' went on to point out that any change in the status would be resisted and

> (m)oreover, these Catholic schools can never regard themselves as State schools. They do not owe their origin to the State; only a small part of their expenses is defrayed even at present by the State. Their owners will not give up the liberty of managing them in accordance with their duty to God and with the confidence reposed in them by their pupil's parents.[29]

In February 1925 the government released details of a salary scale for secondary teachers, which would see 'male teachers paid £200 per annum and females paid £180 per annum.'[30] In addition all recognised teachers were to receive incremental salaries paid by the government. This was the first instance of secondary teachers being paid directly by the State. Some commentators like Denis Gwynn believed this was a 'revolutionary departure'[31] and was 'virtually a challenge to the previous monopoly of the religious teaching orders.'[32]

However, the Department of Education's report for 1924/25 was careful to emphasise that, despite teachers being paid by the state

> the State had assumed no responsibility for the appointment of headmasters or teachers, and the secondary system remains as hitherto one of purely private management.[33]

Indeed, Ernest Blythe in a Dáil speech pointed out that the state had no real responsibility for secondary teachers, as they were not its employees, while at the same time he believed the salaries, which teachers were getting, epitomised

[29] Ibid., pp. 69-70.
[30] An Roinn Oideachais, *Rules for the Payment of Increments of Salary to Secondary Teachers* (March 1925), p. 4.
[31] Denis Gwynn, *The Irish Free State, 1922-1927* (London, 1928), p. 385.
[32] Ibid.
[33] *Report of the Department of Education*, 1924-25, p. 8.

the generosity of the government. His and the government's attitude was such that the religious orders had the ultimate responsibility for those who taught in their schools and in a startling statement he went on to reiterate that approach when he said of the teachers

> we are not really bound to consider their case more than we are bound to consider the case of an employee of the Tramway Company, or of the Railway Company.[34]

The government had once again showed its reluctance to upset the religious orders and continued to leave teachers fate in the hands of the Catholic Church and its representatives.

While teachers were now paid by the Department of Education the question of tenure still remained a burning issue. The A.S.T.I. opened negotiations with the Catholic Headmasters Association in May 1925 in an effort to reach an agreed procedure to be followed in a dismissal case. However, difficulties soon arose when the C.H.A. rejected the demand by the A.S.T.I. to act on its members' behalf in appeal cases. The teachers asked the Minister for Education Eoin MacNeill to intervene, but true to government policy, it was characteristically rejected. His successor, Professor O'Sullivan, was equally reticent about taking on the Catholic Church and argued in the Dáil that it was 'not a matter which a minister could settle, even with the best will in the world.'[35]

As far as he was concerned the secondary school system was private in nature under the direction of the Catholic Church and its representatives, and the government had no right to interfere.
Indeed as it transpired O'Sullivan himself was in favour of the appeals procedure offered by the Catholic Headmasters Association. It was similar to that already in operation for primary teachers, and was known as the 'Maynooth Resolution of 1894.'[36] This resolution had been agreed by the I.N.T.O. and the Catholic Hierarchy and it required that before a primary teacher could be served, three

[34] PDDE, vol. 10, Col 634 (5 March 1925).
[35] PDDE, vol. 14, Col 913 (23 February 1926).
[36] T.J. O'Connell, *History of the Irish National Teachers Organisation, 1868-1968* (Dublin, 1969), p. 144.

months notice of dismissal by his or her clerical manager, the latter should first of all receive the assent of the bishop. When notice was served, the teacher had the right to offer a defence. The secondary headmasters were prepared to offer the very same system but under no circumstances would they countenance the participation of the A.S.T.I. in the appeal procedure.

In 1927 the National Synod of Maynooth extended the provisions of the Maynooth Resolution to the secondary sector.[37] The teachers reluctantly decided to cooperate with it, until such time they could test the sincerity of their employers. That time came in 1931 when a female teacher in a County Tipperary convent lost her job in order to make way for a member of the order managing the school. She appealed to the Archbishop of Cashel but he refused to overturn the convent's decision. Teachers became convinced that no appeal procedure would be fair without the involvement of their association. They were further influenced by the failure of the government to get involved in the issue. Even while aware of cases where blatant abuse was involved, the government was unwilling to act. It was in many respects weak-kneed and weak-willed when it came to taking on the church on behalf of the teachers who were working tirelessly to educate the nation's children, under what can only be described as very difficult conditions. The failure of successive education ministers to confront Catholic Church authorities in any meaningful way in relation to their treatment of teachers was just another example of the powerful influence the hierarchy exerted over those in government.

As discussed elsewhere, the major education initiative undertaken by the Cumann na nGaedhael government centred around the curriculum. Ireland had just emerged from a revolutionary period and the romantic-nationalist ideology of that period dictated that Irish cultural distinctiveness should be fostered by the revival of the Irish language, not just taught as a subject, but also used as a medium of instruction. In order to achieve these aims the government needed the active cooperation of the Catholic clergy and that cooperation was very much forthcoming.

As it transpired there was a great deal of goodwill shown on the part of the clergy towards the language revival. As it happened many bishops and priests were enamoured by the notion that Irish would once again become the spoken language of the people. Indeed some of the great champions of the language revival turned out to be men of the Church even before the Declaration

[37] Concili Plenari Maynutiani MCMXVII, *Aeta et Decreta, Statute* 387, No.3. p. 117.

of Independence, notably Bishop O'Dea of Galway, a man fluent in the Irish language.[38] Teaching congregations like the Brothers of St. Patrick and the Christian Brothers became synonymous with the ideal of Gaelic Ireland and its emphasis on the Irish language.

Ecclesiastical support for the language revival had been forthcoming since the beginning of the century. Even as early as 1900 the Catholic bishops urged that 'Irish be taught in all primary schools where there was no parental objection.'[39] In 1910 the Central Council of Catholic Clerical Managers went so far as to protest against the rule, which did not provide for the payment of Irish instruction in the junior grade.[40] By 1914 the managers were joining with the I.N.T.O. and Gaelic League 'in urging John Redmond to support the position of the language in the national schools.'[41]

When the Irish Free State came into being the supportive attitude of the Church continued with the chief spokesman Reverend Timothy Corcoran playing a pivotal role in the shaping of education policy. Corcoran was a champion of the Irish language and he very much influenced the National Programme Conference on Primary Instruction and the Dáil Commission on Secondary Education. The very fact that he was allowed to exert such influence epitomised the level of cooperation that existed between Church and State on the revival issue. So powerful was Corcoran that he was able to give his stamp of approval to the draconian measure of teaching infants entirely through Irish, regardless of their mother tongue. Even the curriculum recommendations of the Dáil Commission on Secondary Education had the fingerprints of Corcoran all over them, and one could discern that from the articles he wrote on curriculum reform in the *Irish Monthly* in 1923. In 1924 the Department of Education produced its syllabus for secondary schools and Reverend Corcoran gave it his unqualified approval when he wrote

> The framers of the new Intermediate programme are to be congratulated on the resolute way in which they have followed the principles laid down by the Dáil Commission of a few years ago, and have

[38] *Irish Catholic Directory*, 1912, p. 509.
[39] *Irish Catholic Directory*, 1902, p. 441.
[40] *Irish Catholic Directory*, 1911, p. 502.
[41] *Irish Catholic Directory*, 1915, p. 499.

> given a distinctly Irish orientation to their whole plan of studies.[42]

Corcoran, and by extension, the Church hierarchy were particularly pleased with the status afforded to the Irish language within the programme as well as the Irish emphasis in history and geography. He also staunchly defended the imposition of the Irish language on the education system in the face of criticism from protestant headmasters. The catholic headmasters on the other hand were very much in favour of the new programme both in the primary and secondary sectors. Not only were they enthusiastic about the revival of the language and its accommodation within the school system; they also embraced the policy of teaching through the medium of Irish in order to take advantage of the financial inducements offered by the Department of Education for doing so.

As we have seen, the main focus of the language revival policy lay at the primary level in the schools, where by the mid 1920's the Department of Education's Inspectors had the power to rate the efficiency of individual teachers in the teaching of the language. In 1926 the Second National Conference on Primary Instruction expressed disappointment at the progress being made in the area of instruction through Irish, but it did basically endorse the policies that were being followed. That endorsement was forthcoming on the advice of Reverend Corcoran who continued to advocate 'that the practise of teaching infants entirely through Irish be retained.'[43]

The Department of Education at that time had one major difficulty when it came to implementing the school programme. It simply did not have enough teachers fluent in the Irish language to teach the country's infant and junior classes. In 1926 the Department arrived at a unique solution to the problem when in February of that year it announced plans for the establishment of a series of 'preparatory colleges'.[44]

These colleges were basically second level boarding schools devoted to the teaching of all subjects through Irish. It was envisaged that those who completed their secondary education in these colleges would be guaranteed a place in the teacher training colleges. Corcoran had, prior to the setting up of these colleges, advocated the idea of recruiting primary teachers from the

[42] 'Notes on Current Educational Topics' *Irish Monthly* 613 (July 1924), p. 358.

[43] Akenson, *Mirror on Kathleen's Face*, pp. 119-134.

[44] Ibid., pp. 46-47.

Gaeltacht areas[45] and so it was decided that a considerable number of places at these 'preparatory colleges' should be reserved for students from the Irish-speaking areas of the country. The Reverend Professor, on behalf of the Church, welcomed the preparatory colleges but of course he did attach one important condition, which was

> that these colleges be under quite definitely religious administration that is, Catholic as far as Catholic pupils go. The day for forcing any inter-religious or secularist system on intending teachers is over for a long past, and the day when such a system would be submitted to by the fathers and mothers of the nation is yet far off and we hope will be always far off.[46]

The views of Corcoran and the Church were of course taken on board when the 'preparatory colleges' were established. The State bowed once again to the influence of the Church and there was no trace of secularism. Six colleges were set up, five for Catholics and one for Protestants. Religious apartheid was alive and well in the fledgling Free State. Not content with separating students on the basis of religion, the Church also insisted that 'the Catholic Colleges be segregated by sex and were to be under the direct management of the bishop of the diocese in which they were located.'[47] As expected Corcoran expressed his views on the arrangements and welcomed them with a certain sense of satisfaction.[48]

What the country was experiencing here was further cooperation between Church and State in the area of education. The language revival and the imposition of it on the education system was of paramount importance to the Cumann na nGaedheal government and in the Catholic Church it found a more than willing ally as it attempted to implement its language policy. But was it

[45] T. Corcoran, 'The Irish Language in the Irish Schools' *Studies* 14 (September 1925), p. 383.

[46] 'Notes on Current Educational Topics' *Irish Monthly* 634 (April 1926), pp. 169-170.

[47] *Report of the Department of Education*, 1927-28, p. 116.

[48] 'Notes on Current Educational Topics' *Irish Monthly* 646 (April 1927), p. 175.

cooperation? It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that here was just another instance of the awesome power which the Catholic Church wielded in the Free State and that the government was incapable of initiating and implementing a policy free from ecclesiastical influence and supervision. One could argue that the Church deliberately supported the language policy in order to reduce the likelihood of State involvement in the running of schools operated by the religious orders. However, as pointed out earlier, there was much in the way of evidence to suggest that the Church supported the language revival long before independence. One of course could take the view that the Irish language sat very comfortably with the clerical way of thinking. Throughout the 1920s the Catholic bishops constantly railed against what they perceived to be over indulgence in pleasure. They saw immodest dress, dances, films and literature, all imported, as being at the root of the problem. To the hierarchy, the Irish language represented all that was pure. So much so that in February 1925, Archbishop O'Donnell of Armagh announced that 'the Irish language was free of any vulgarities and its promotion as the first language among the people would act as a moral safeguard.'[49] Whether there was any truth in that assertion is of course arguable, but it was a genuinely held notion at that time. The hierarchy clearly believed that the Irish language was a perfect barrier, protecting the people and their minds from all the vulgarities that were rampant across the world at that time.

One other area of Irish education where a potential for conflict between Church and State lay was in the reform of the technical education system. It had been in existence since 1899, when the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland was established. Under the system, local government bodies formed 'technical instruction committees' which oversaw the management of 'technical schools' for instruction in trades and agriculture. Technical education was financed by State grants and local rates and was the only sector within Irish education that was in lay control.

When the Irish Free State came into being the Cumann na nGaedheal government, through the Department of Education instigated a Commission 'to inquire into and advise upon the system of technical Education in relation to the requirements of Trade and Industry.'[50]

The Commission comprised of representatives of employers, labour

[49] *Irish Catholic Directory* 1926, p. 559.

[50] *Report of the Department of Education*, 1925-26, p. 69.

and teachers and was able to call on the expertise of eminent foreign academics. The Church was not represented but the Reverend Corcoran, on the basis that there was a great need for technical training, welcomed the establishment of the Commission. The Vocational schools were of course unaffiliated to any religious body. But how did the Church view them? Catholic dogma was quite clear on the question of Catholic children attending non-catholic schools, and many of the Church's hierarchy often referred to Canon 1374 of the code of Canon Law which stated that

> Catholic children may not attend non-Catholic, neutral or mixed schools, that are those which are open also to non-Catholics. It pertains exclusively to the local bishop to decide, in accordance with instructions of the Holy See, under what circumstances and with what precautions against the danger of perversion; attendance at such schools may be tolerated.[51]

Indeed the papal encyclical 'Divini Illius Magistri' of 1929 was even more emphatic in relation to the issue

> We endorse and confirm the prescription of Canon law which forbids Catholic children on any pretext whatsoever to attend neutral or 'mixed schools', that is to say schools open indiscriminately to Catholics and non-Catholics alike; allowing attendance in the case of these only at the discretion of the Ordinary under certain circumstances, and with special safeguards.[52]

It should be noted that the decrees of the Synod of Maynooth in 1929 made it clear that Catholics, under pain of sin, could not attend non-Catholic primary or secondary schools or Trinity College.

However, the Reverend John C. Joy, SJ, writing in the *Irish Monthly*

[51] Quoted in Neil G. Closkey, *Catholic Viewpoint on Education*, p. 100.

[52] Pope Pius xi, *Divini Illius Magistri*, p. 38.

of November 1930, tempered that pronouncement when he stated that the new vocational system was to be a different case, because the specialised nature of the instruction offered excluded it from the general condemnation. The Maynooth decrees went on to point out that

> (w)here as the knowledge of crafts and agriculture is, in our opinion, useful and even necessary for our people, we judge it permissible that Catholic pupils in company with non-Catholics should attend where such knowledge only, but not general education, is provided.[53]

As it turned out the vocational sector was not as secular as the legislation establishing it seemed to suggest. The Church used its influence to broker a special agreement with the state to have denominational religious instruction offered in the schools, a fact welcomed by Reverend Corcoran and Reverend Dr. Wigmore of Fermoy.[54] The Church found other ways of exerting its influence on the system. Priests were regularly co-opted onto local education committees and indeed were voted in as chairman. A consultation of Thom's Directory of Ireland in 1929 would have informed the reader that 'of fifty-nine technical instruction committees in the country, twenty-seven had Catholic priests as chairmen.'[55]

According to J.H. Whyte there was a more fundamental reason why the Catholic Church readily agreed to the expansion of the technical sector in Irish education. During his research he was assured by an anonymous informer that the then Minister for Education, Professor O'Sullivan had given the bishops a guarantee that 'the vocational schools would not encroach upon the exclusive prerogatives of the clerically controlled secondary schools.'[56] In essence the Catholic Church had secured a guarantee that the education of the social and political elite of the country would remain firmly in its hands. This meant that

[53] 'Notes on Current Educational Topics' *Irish Monthly* 689 (November 1930), pp. 551-552.

[54] *Irish Catholic's Directory* 1932, p. 571 and T. Corcoran, *The Catholic Schools of Ireland*, p. 5.

[55] J.H. Whyte, *Church and State in Modern Ireland, 1923-70* (Dublin, 1980), p. 38.

[56] Ibid.

the bishops had no reason to fear the expansion of the technical sector. A government unwilling to confront the power of the clergy once again accommodated the Church's views and demands in relation to education.

Looking back over those ten or so years of Cumann na nGaedheal government there is no doubt that the dominant role of the Catholic Church in Irish education was well and truly preserved. Yet throughout those years there was that certain sense of apprehension on the part of the Church authorities that the government might create a secular education system. As a result spokesmen for the clergy often felt it was their duty to define the precise roles of both Church and State in education. They believed that the authority of the Church was supreme in all matters, and the state had a limited function when it came to educating the children of Ireland. One such spokesman the Reverend E. Cahill, SJ, wrote in 1925 that when there was a clash of interest between Church and State in education the men of the cloth would always triumph and

> as the church is the authentic and divinely appointed teacher and judge of moral obligation and duty, with power to decide such questions with infallible authority, it is clear that the rulers of the State in such a conflict must, in the ultimate resort, abide by the decision of the Church. In this sense and to this extent, the civil power may be said to be subject to the Church, even in matters that do not appertain directly or solely to the sphere of religion or morals. Examples of this kind would be education; the opportunity of public holidays; laws relating to marriage.[57]

What the Church was claiming in relation to education was quite simply the maximum independence for its schools. In 1927 the cleric who chaired the Second National Program Conference defended the State's educational role, 'as that of assisting privately owned schools.'[58] He went on to point out that

[57] Reverend E. Cahill, 'Notes on Christian Sociology, The Church and State' *Irish Monthly* 626 (August 1975), p. 417.

[58] Reverend Lambert McKenna, 'States Rights in Education' *Studies* 16 (Autumn 1927), p. 221.

financial aid from the State was acceptable, even necessary, but should be given without preconditions: '(t)he Conferring of money by the State brings with it no right to settle, independently of parents, the nature of the education given.'[59]

He was also quick to indicate that there was no reason whatsoever for the State to inspect the clerically managed schools. There was, he maintained, no reason to imagine that 'a child of ordinary middle class folk, attending a first class private school, is being imperfectly educated.'[60] Here we have another example of the Church, through one of its spokesmen, guarding its independence in relation to education.

More extreme examples of churchmen upholding that cherished independence can be found. One of the more intransigent champions of the private school tradition was N. Umis, a contributor to the Jesuit sponsored journal, the *Irish Monthly*. He went so far as to proclaim that the State examinations interfered excessively with the freedom of secondary schools. He argued that 'official education authorities' were not competent to judge the educational work of a school and that the teaching orders of the Church over centuries had perfected their own methods of teaching and learning and were surely the best judges of these things.[61] As far as Umis was concerned the State's role in education was a limited one. He was also at odds with Article 10 of the Free State Constitution which stated that '(a)ll citizens of the Free State have the right to elementary education.' Referring to the very same article 10 in a piece which he wrote for the *Irish Monthly* in 1929, he maintained that

> (t)he whole article smells a little of State omnipotence; it seems to be based on the idea that education is primarily a matter for the State, and if the State gives free education it has the right to give whatever sort of education it likes a pernicious idea, utterly at variance with right reason.[62]

[59] Ibid., p. 229.
[60] Ibid., p. 227.
[61] N. Umis, 'Freedom for Secondary Schools' *Irish Monthly* 671 (May 1929), p. 245-246.
[62] N. Umis, 'What's Wrong with the Secondary System' *Irish Monthly* 674 (August 1929), p. 408.

Umis of course was extreme in his views. Other Church spokesmen like Corcoran did not share his opinions. He, though a champion of the independent school tradition, had no real opposition to State examinations. However, despite any differences that may have existed between Churchmen, they agreed on one basic principle, that State interference in the operation of Catholic schools, especially at secondary level should be maintained at an absolute minimum.

Throughout the term of the Cumann na nGaedheal government there were occasions when church spokesmen felt obliged to question the role of the state in education but on the whole the Church was more than comfortable with the educational policies W.T. Cosgrave and his cabinet colleagues pursued. The satisfaction of the Church authorities was perfectly illustrated by Bishop Fogarty of Killaloe in a speech delivered in St. Flannan's College, Ennis, in December 1924, when he said that the change, which had recently taken place in Irish education, was a 'blessed and splendid one'.[63] He had, he said, noticed a drift away from the Catholic ideals – girls were actually smoking in public, for example – but he hoped that under the new system of education 'the Irish would be brought back and safely moored again in the harbour of Irish faith.'[64] Two years later, while speaking at the same venue, he went on to say

> I heartily believe myself that our present system of secondary education is second to none in Europe or anywhere else, and is an infinite credit to our enlightened government that formulated it. It has done away with the steeplechase methods of the old Intermediate which in my opinion, did a world of harm in its day to the national psychology, and has given us in its stead a system which, while guaranteeing stern efficiency in the schools, leaves a place for the development of character as well as intelligence, for culture as well as science, and for the spiritual ideals without which education often does more harm than good.[65]

[63] *Irish Catholic*, 27 December 1924.
[64] Ibid.
[65] *Irish Catholic Directory* 1928, p. 558.

The National Synod of Maynooth in the main endorsed Fogarty's views in a pastoral letter issued in 1927 when they pointed out that

> (t)he education for a Christian people is education permeated by religion. In Ireland however, we have had to make the most of systems that in theory fall far short of the ideal. Education on an undenominational basis involves certain restrictions on religious teaching. But for years past, in practise the character of our primary, as of our secondary schools, from a religious point of view, depends mainly upon ourselves, and there is no ground for complaint in the greater part of Ireland.[66]

It is clear from the many pronouncements that the Catholic Church authorities were pleased with the Free State government's education policies. The government never attempted to undermine or reduce the role of the Church in the education of the nation's children. If anything, by implementing the policies which it did, it re-enforced the influence of the clergy in Irish education. The Catholic Church was accepted by the government as being the dominant element in the church-state partnership which managed the Irish education system. Throughout the term of the Cumann na nGaedheal government, education remained a relatively uncontentious issue between it and the Catholic Church. Any fears that the bishops may have had in 1922 about the possible secularisation of the education system were quickly dispelled. Once the Catholic Church became convinced that its independence in relation to Irish education was not likely to be undermined by those sitting around the cabinet table, the country was set fair for an extended period of harmony in the church-state partnership which managed the Irish education system during the Cumann na nGaedheal years of office.

[66] Quoted by the Reverend M. Tynan in 'General Review of Education in Ireland' *Lumen Vitae* 4/2 (1941), p. 386.

Paddy on the Screen: Reactions to Cinematic Representations of Ireland

Patrick Farrelly

In his seminal book *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, Marshall McLuhan, discussing the myth of Narcissus, makes the point that the cautionary fable functions as an effective metaphor for the technological age of mass media. Pointing out that the word 'narcissus' comes from the Greek *narcosis* or 'numbness', McLuhan observed '(t)he point of this myth is the fact that men at once become fascinated by any extension of themselves in any material other than themselves.'[1] In terms of Ireland's experiences with the cinematic medium, this would seem to present a very useful working metaphor. In the early days of cinema in Ireland local showmen, like the Horgan brothers in Cork, often attracted packed houses to their shows by filming local scenes and events.[2] The attraction of seeing oneself on the silver screen held a compelling fascination for many Irish people. *Irish Limelight* reported in 1917 that when Norman Whitten captured on film actuality footage of the return of Sinn Féin prisoners from incarceration in Britain that

> some of the ex-prisoners and their friends could not resist the temptation to see themselves 'in the pictures', and a contingent marched up to the Rotunda early in the afternoon. They cheerfully acceded to the general manager's request that they should leave their flags in the porch, and, when inside, gave every indication of enjoying not only 'their own film' but the rest of the programme.[3]

By extension, films set in Ireland or portraying Irish stories, scenes or characters, have also attracted much attention in Ireland. The fact that the

[1] Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (Cambridge/Mass, 1997), p. 170.
[2] *Memories in Focus* RTE Television.
[3] *Irish Limelight* July 1917.

majority of these films over the years have been made by foreigners seems to have added an extra touch of intensity to their reception in Ireland. Margaret O'Callaghan, commenting on a statement issued by the bishops and archbishops of Ireland in October 1925, remarked:

> It is undeniable that in their preoccupation with the 'rank' of Irish people in heaven, and the 'name' of Irish people on earth they displayed an intense concern for the good opinion of others.[4]

The Irish people in general, and it is a trait that in many ways endures, seem to have a powerful interest in how they are perceived and portrayed by outsiders; an interest that appears to have been greatly heightened by the immediacy and visual nature of the cinematic medium.

In 1910 American director Sidney Olcott, who worked for the Kalem Company, made a film in Killarney, Co. Kerry, entitled *The Lad from Old Ireland*, widely believed to be the first American movie to be made on location in a foreign country. The film proved such a success that subsequently a full Kalem film crew accompanied Olcott back to Kerry and in the picturesque village of Beaufort, around twenty films were completed in a relatively short space of time with many locals taking small parts. Not everyone in Beaufort was so enthusiastic about the American filmmakers. In 1976 Robert Vignola, an actor and assistant director with Olcott's film unit, gave a radio interview to Prionsias Ó Conluain. Vignola relates how the local parish priest at Sunday mass castigated the intruders from the pulpit. The priest accused Olcott and his company of being 'tramp photographers ... there to degrade the Irish ... of taking pictures of poor thatched roof homes instead of photographing the new modern buildings they have in Ireland.' Warning the people not to let them film their homes the priest urged that the filmmakers should be 'driven out of town by them all getting together with sticks and stones and chasing [them] across the Beaufort Bridge.'[5] This parish priest, although later overruled and transferred by the bishop of the diocese, was perhaps the first to voice concern with the verisimilitude of a representation of Irish life on the cinema screen, a concern

[4] Margaret O'Callaghan, 'Religion and Identity' in *Crane Bag* 1983.

[5] *Memories in Focus*.

that would over the years be a recurring motif of commentaries on Irish-themed films.

Irish themes and setting were to prove extremely popular with Hollywood film producers, largely perhaps because of the vast numbers of Irish-Americans living in the United States. Indeed Hollywood made more films about the Irish than about any other ethnic minority. The nostalgia of much of the Irish-American community for 'the ould sod', perhaps more marked among first and second generation Irish, in part, perhaps, also explains the tendency of these films to portray Irish characters in a rather stylised fashion; in short, to provide the long-established stage-Irishman with a new celluloid medium.

In the early days of cinema, when movie content and tone were still very much derivative of music-hall fare, short films abounded with ethnic themes which often utilised national stereotypes as the surest route to easy laughs. The image of the drunken, brawling Paddy was one that provoked extreme anger among sections of the Irish community in the United States, especially given that in the early years of the twentieth century in America, the Irish were moving up the social ladder and out to the suburbs. The Ancient Order of Hibernians was at the vanguard of most protests against perceived slurs against Ireland's honour. A largely unsuccessful boycott of the Abbey Theatre's tour of America in 1912 was attempted, their representations of Ireland and the Irish being found to be lacking in the required reverence.

In 1927 MGM released a film, *The Callahans and the Murphys* which provoked howls of protest from the Irish-American community. The film, a familiar mix of drinking and donnybrooks, was cancelled in numerous cities and, when exhibited in New York, was the scene of violent and passionate protests. Another influential Irish-American organisation, the Knights of Columbus, spearheaded the protests in Boston, and MGM were obliged to cut the most offensive portions of the film before it could be shown. The campaign against the film, which was, as the studio defensively pointed out, actually made by an Irishman, Eddie Mannix, ensured, as Joseph Curran claims, 'that no more films as offensive as *The Callahans and the Murphys* would be produced by MGM or any other studio.'[6]

Notwithstanding this assertion, Irish opinion nevertheless, regularly took offence at the representations of Ireland and the Irish in many American

[6] Joseph M Curran, *Hibernian Green on the Silver Screen* (Connecticut, 1989), p. 35.

productions. Organs of national and ecclesiastical opinion responded with predictable prickliness to Irish caricatures in Hollywood movies. The *Irish Catholic* in 1937 raged:

> Ireland has been and is apparently still content to remain the dumping ground for the rubbish and anti-Christian poison that flows in a constant stream from the majority of American and British studios ... Just now, Irish themes and Irish backgrounds are very popular with alien producers, but, as in the days of the abominable postcard- and stage-Irishman, the themes employed are seldom if ever in keeping with the true spirit of Ireland.[7]

Such 'alien' productions also provoked the ire of the National Film Censor, James Montgomery. In 1927 Montgomery remarked of a film *Outside of Paradise*:

> I regret that the [1923 Film Censorship] Act does not give me the power to reject insults to Ireland. If so, I could deal with this vulgar libel ... if I were a member of an audience where the exhibitor had [the] temerity to show it, I know what I'd do.[8]

In 1928, railing against a short film, *Ireland Yesterday and Today*, Montgomery lamented 'I have no power under the [1923] Act to refuse a certificate to stage-Irish representations of our people and I issue one in this instance with great reluctance.'[9] Notwithstanding this acknowledgement of the limitations of the legislation, Montgomery nevertheless succeeded in banning another film, *Finnegan's Ball*, with the comment: 'I will not pass films which hold the Irish up to ridicule and contempt as coarse, vulgar, quarrelsome clowns. I consider it an impertinence to present this travesty for the certificate of an Irish

[7] *Irish Catholic* February 1937.

[8] James P. O'Connor, 'Censorship of Films 1894-1970' (University College Dublin, M.A.Thesis, 1996), p. 213.

[9] National Archive FCO2 98/27/3.

Censorship.'[10] *The Shamrock and the Rose* was similarly dismissed: 'I think we in Ireland should stop, at least in our own land, the exhibition of offensive stage-Irish productions.'[11]

The contradictions in Montgomery's pronouncements graphically highlight the completely arbitrary powers of the film censor. If one is to take the 1923 legislation at its word then official film censorship policy in Ireland classified stage-Irish productions as 'indecent, obscene or blasphemous,' or 'subversive of public morality.'[12] Montgomery admitted as much in his rejection of *Abie's Irish Rose* in 1929: 'This stage Irish/Jewish production is subversive of public morality as it is likely to offend and inflame religious and racial susceptibilities.'[13] *Abie's Irish Rose*, directed by Victor Fleming, was an exemplar of a popular genre in Hollywood in the 1920s and 1930s – gentle romantic comedies which functioned as parables of assimilation for multi-racial American society. Another example *Clancy's Kosher Wedding* also provoked the ire of Ireland's film censor: 'This is the type of thing we had on the stage when the baboon-faced Irishman was accepted without protest. The fighting Irish clown is being revived in Hollywood. I certainly won't pass films which hold us up to ridicule and contempt.'[14]

In his role as film censor James Montgomery effectively abrogated to himself the power to decide what was, and more often what was not, a legitimate portrayal of Ireland and Irish characters on the screen. The Wardour studio's silent production of Liam O Flaherty's *The Informer* was rejected emphatically by Montgomery:

> This sordid show of Chicago gun men, prostitutes and armed police in the standard slum of movieland is offered as a realistic picture of the underworld of Dublin. It would be funny if it was not mischievous. I refuse to issue a certificate for the exhibition of such a libellous distortion.[15]

[10] N.A. FCO 2 98/27/1.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Censorship of Films Act 1923.

[13] N.A. FCO2 98/27/5.

[14] N.A. FCO2 98/271.

[15] N.A. FCO2 98/27/5.

Five years later John Ford's Oscar-winning remake of *The Informer* fared little better with Montgomery:

> A sordid brutal travesty of the Black and Tan period. The prostitute and brothel tone which is given to the struggle is offensive and untrue. The production is very clever and artistic but it is unfit for exhibition in this country. The issue of a cert by this censorship might be taken as the State's approval of a gross libel.[16]

Clearly Montgomery believed that there existed a state-approved and petrified model of Ireland and Irish history, and that it was his duty as representative of the state to ensure that no alternate visions were allowed to permeate into the Irish consciousness through the cinema screen. Defending the hermeneutic gates against national slander often led Montgomery into bizarrely farcical situations. The big-budget biopic of Charles Stuart Parnell starring Clark Gable and Myrna Loy enraged the censor:

> This is a historical travesty in more than a facial [sic] sense. Unfortunately the Act does not provide for such outrages on the feelings of the Irish people, but it does provide for the rejection of films justifying divorce and bigamy*, and I avail myself of it with gratitude.[17]

That many Hollywood movies set in Ireland or dealing with Irish themes or characters were, in fact, seen as national blasphemy was clearly a point of view approved of wholeheartedly by many influential sections of Irish society. In 1930 an exhibition in the Savoy Cinema, Dublin, of a film *Smiling Irish Eyes*,

[16] N.A. FCO2 98/2712.

* Montgomery had reluctantly passed the MGM film, *The Great Ziegfield*, in 1936 because the divorce and remarriage of the eponymous hero was a historical fact. Such considerations obviously cut not ice when it came to *Parnell*.

[17] National Archive FCO2 98/27/15.

nominated subsequently by Mary Manning in the *Irish Statesman* for an 'international prize ... for worst film ever made' was the occasion for passionate protests. Rockett records how '(o)n the first night a group of National University students and others, including a future President of Ireland, Cearbhall Ó Dálaigh, actor Cyril Cusack and Liam O'Leary rushed into the cinema. They drowned out the sound of the film with cries of 'Take it off' and 'It's an insult'. The film was stopped and the Savoy's general manager, an Englishman, F. Knott, came on stage. He complained that the demonstrators had broken into the cinema but they retorted that he had broken into the country.'[18] It is perhaps an indication of the symbiotic interpenetration of national identity and Catholicism, a long-established truism of historiographical writing on the Irish Free State that these protests met with the complete approval of the Catholic press. The *Catholic Mind* opined that

> (t)he manager of the Savoy cinema in announcing the withdrawal of the film *Smiling Irish Eyes*, expressed the opinion that it would have been better if the young man who protested against it in the theatre on February 11 had made private representations concerning it. We, on the other hand, are of opinion that these young man dealt with the matter as they ought to have done.[19]

The depiction of Ireland and the Irish in a screen adaptation of Sean O'Casey's play, *Juno and the Paycock*, also provoked widespread protests around the country. In Limerick, men were instructed from the pulpit not to patronise the film and to ensure that their children did not see it. The rear entrance of the Athenaeum Hall where the film was being shown in the city was forced and a number of men seized part of the film. A large crowd subsequently watched the film being publicly burned in Catherine Street.[20]

A less hysterical consideration of stage-Irish representations on the cinema screen is provided by the *Irish Catholic's* film critic, Fr. T.J.M.

[18] Kevin Rockett, 'History, Politics and Irish Cinema', in Kevin Rockett, John Hill and Luke Gibbons (eds.), *Cinema and Ireland* (Kent, 1987), p. 55.

[19] *Catholic Mind* March 1930.

[20] *Irish Independent* 12 November 1930.

Sheehy. Reviewing the movie *Irish Hearts*, Sheehy acknowledged that the film 'was definitely polite to us' but went on to observe:

> It appears that Ireland, as presented on the film screen, will always be caricatured. Sometimes the caricature will be offensive; sometimes as in this case, it will be just mildly amusing; but it will always be caricature, because it is only as caricature that Ireland has any value to Hollywood or Elstree.[21]

Sheehy, an indefatigable champion of a native Irish film industry, regarded Irish-made films, even if they were just shorts, as urgently necessary to 'leaven the destructive dough' of Hollywood.[22] He regarded stage-Irish Hollywood films, no matter how inoffensive on the surface, as a very serious issue:

> A nation's prestige and voice in international affairs is small if it has no sympathetic or enlightened foreign general public to appeal to. Films will successfully eliminate Ireland as a reality in the minds of most general publics, as she becomes a joke rather than a nation.[23]

In 1944 a documentary film about Ireland was released as part of the *March of Time* series. *The Irish Question* and its representations of Ireland provoked a good deal of indignant controversy. At the Fianna Fáil Ard Fheis, Captain G. O'Gorman Quin denounced the film as '(a)n anti-Irish American caricature showing us as an ignorant, illiterate lot of poets and fools.'[24] The *Irish Press*, reviewing the film, caustically observed that '(i)t was all there almost to the pig-in-the-parlour and the chickens-in-the-bed. Time marches on? Anywhere except in the Green Isle of Erin.'[25] T.J.M. Sheehy, who had, when the film

[21] *Irish Catholic* 22 June 1944.
[22] *Irish Catholic*, 24 August 1944.
[23] *Irish Catholic*, 22 June 1944.
[24] *Irish Catholic*, 19 October 1944.
[25] *Irish Press* 4 September 1944.

was being made, lent some assistance to the film crew, saw both good and bad in the finished product. He praised the emphasis on Catholic life and on Ireland's recently won independence. The 'stress on the problem of partition and our attitude to it' was commended but the general depiction of the countryside and Irish agriculture exasperated Sheehy:

> I suppose the Americans want the misty bog-road, the side-car, the old-fashioned scythes, the vista of stone walls, the spinning wheel and the poverty-stricken poetic people and a country fifty years out of date. Some day they will learn that we have electricity and even reapers and binders and that time marches on in Ireland as well as in the States.[26]

Anger at the failure of moving pictures about Ireland to portray the manifestations of modernity and technological advance in the country is something we have seen as early as the 1910s from the Beaufort parish priest who denounced the filming of thatched cottages while new, modern slate-roofed houses were ignored. As the *Irish Press* observed some thirty years later: 'Because RKO Radio trumpets the orders, the typical Irish farmhouse is the mudwalled cabin and any broth of bhoy worth his salt talks with the nyaaah in his voice.' [27]

The first thirty years of Irish independence are widely depicted by conventional historiography as an era in which, ideologically speaking, the hierarchies of church and state were in active retreat from the imperatives of the modern, industrialised world. De Valera's over-quoted 'comedy maidens' homily was delivered on St. Patrick's Day 1943, just the year before the controversial *March of Time* film. Moreover de Valera's St. Patrick's Day addresses, of which the 1943 version provided the epitome of Irish Arcadian caricature, were ostensibly designed to utilise the medium of radio 'to speak to our kinsfolk in foreign lands, particularly those in the United States, and to tell them, year by year of the progress being made towards building up the Ireland of their dreams

[26] *Irish Catholic* 7 September 1944.
[27] *Irish Press* 4 September 1944.

and ours.'[28] In this context it is interesting to observe, in terms of the cinematic medium, the indignation which bucolic, pre-modern representations of Ireland provoked among Irish politicians, churchmen and commentators. The question may well be posed: Just who was caricaturing who?

Over the decades that followed, the sporadic appearance of cliché-ridden Hollywood or British films dealing with Ireland would invariably provide the opportunity to repeat calls for a greater commitment to native film production. Patrick Kavanagh predicted in 1948 that 'the first real Irish film will show up all this fake Irish stuff.'[29] While T.J.M. Sheehy expressed the hope that false pictures of Ireland

> may wake the ordinary people up and bring home to them the necessity for an Irish film industry. We might show the world that Ireland is really an independent nation with its own national heritage and culture with its own modern problems and its own Christian solutions.[30]

As Liam O'Leary rhetorically inquired in 1946 in response to the film *Captain Boycott:* 'How many unreal stage Irish films will it take to convince the sceptics that we must do our own work in this important field.'[31]

One Irishman who did get somewhat involved in movie making in the 1950s was Lord Killanin. He produced the film *The Rising of the Moon*, a movie which was as roundly criticised as any Hollywood production for its caricatured representation of Ireland and the Irish. Killanin, in his defence, offered an interesting observation:

> Ireland has not made films because there has been no need to do so ... Stage-Irishmen, although they may have a little weakness for lifting their arms, bursting into song and missing trains, are to my mind more likeable than their counterparts on the screens of other countries.'[32]

[28] Eamonn de Valera, St. Patrick's Day 1943 cited in Maurice Moynihan (ed.), *Speeches and Statements by Eamonn de Valera, 1917-1973* (Dublin, 1980), p. 466.
[29] *Irish Standard* 24 September 1948.
[30] *Irish Catholic* 14 September 1944.
[31] Kevin Rockett *Film and Ireland : A Chronicle* (London Festival of the Irish Arts, 1980).

Notwithstanding his rather personalised enumeration of the idiosyncrasies of the typical stage-Irishman, Killanin's opinion proves particularly revealing when one explores the box-office reception of such films in Ireland. Paradoxically for films that provoked such apoplexy among Irish commentators, they invariably proved enormous box-office hits in Ireland. Film magazine monthly, *The Screen*, was puzzled:

> Film critics are constantly lamenting how foreign-made pictures with Irish themes are chock-full with the grossest misconceptions of how we in Ireland live. But queer as it may seem, these pictures do very well in this country – *Hills of Donegal* is a recent example of this type of film. Looked at from any angle it was a poor production yet it was a roaring success, as was *Rose of Tralee* and *Saints and Sinners*.[33]

What was the innate attraction of these pig-in-the-parlour type films for Irish cinema audiences? What made the most feeble Hollywood 'Oirish' production a guaranteed financial success in Ireland? The simplest answer is perhaps mere laughter; that these films provided an opportunity to have a good giggle at misguided foreign perceptions of Ireland. T.J.M. Sheehy observed the audience reaction to the aforementioned *March of Time* film:

> When the Irish commentator took over and started his talk, reminiscent of Jimmy O'Dea's imitations of the Abbey, the audience laughed merrily. During the poverty-ridden rural scenes, some people were

[32] Ibid.
[33] *The Screen* March 1950.

> indignant but the majority just continued to laugh heartily.[34]

However, elsewhere Sheehy expressed the opinion that it was in fact a craving for national verisimilitude that attracted the average Irish cinema patron to films with an Irish theme or setting:

> Occasionally they line up for the stage-Irish type of film, but it is only because they are desperately hoping to see something resembling Ireland on the screen, and knowing Hollywood's abysmal ignorance, they are prepared to suffer a lot to see a little.[35]

As Irish film commentators were fond of repeating, the basic law governing Hollywood was box-office profit. Thus the popularity of stage-Irish films in Ireland poses an interesting question. As *The Screen* observed: 'What are the makers of these films to think? That the more 'stage-Irishisms' they import into their films the bigger the profits are going to be as far as this country is concerned.'[36]

Luke Gibbons notes that the typical image of Ireland as portrayed in these 'Hollywood poitín' films is one infused with a pastoral nostalgia for a pre-modern rural Arcadia. Ireland, it seems, is, in many ways, imagined on screen as the antidote to the mechanical dystopia of modern industrialised society. Despite the recent upsurge in Irish film production this assertion would seem no less valid in recent years than in earlier decades. The archetype of this idea is, of course, the 1952 film, *The Quiet Man*, directed by John Ford. Sean Thornton, played by John Wayne, flees the anonymity and pain of modern capitalist society and escapes to the idyllic Utopia that is an extremely romanticised west of Ireland. One wonders whether part of the attraction of films like *The Quiet Man* (a resounding success at the Irish box-office) was not, in some sense, just this vision of Ireland as a unique and magical land. No matter how much the blarney was recognised for what it was, was there not perhaps

[34] *Irish Catholic* 14 September 1944.
[35] Ibid., 21 December 1944.
[36] *The Screen* March 1950.

some small part of the Irish cinema-goer's psyche that took some pride in this type of representation of Ireland, perhaps finding in Sean Thornton's vision of an Irish paradise, a faint echo of de Valera's famous conclusion to his address to the nation after the end of World War II: 'We shall endeavour to render thanks to God by playing a Christian part in helping so far as a small nation can, to bind up some of the gaping wounds of suffering humanity.'[37] In any case, one can argue, as Gibbons does[38], that the representation of Ireland in *The Quiet Man* is no less 'real' than that in O'Flaherty's 1935 film *Man of Aran*, ecstatically received in Ireland as a 'faithful and beautiful motion picture'[39] and one that at last painted Ireland as she really was. An interesting addendum to this argument is perhaps provided by the contrasting reactions to the appearance of two films featuring the Irish language in Ireland in the mid 1940s. In 1944 a British film *San Demetrio* featured a small interchange between characters spoken in the Irish language. As Sheehy reported this brief passage was 'very welcome to Irish audiences and in Dublin was applauded in happy a fashion.'[40] In contrast, the previous year, a documentary film, *Tomorrow's Bread*, produced in an Irish language version, was roundly ignored by the Irish cinema-going public. The film was offered rent and carriage free to over 250 cinema proprietors but only four, two in the Meath Gaeltacht, one in Dublin and one in Galway, responded in the affirmative. As Liam O'Leary commented in his capacity as secretary of the Film Society:

> All this points to something radically wrong. The cinema proprietor can claim that his patrons do not want to see the film. Is he justified in this, or can teachers, Gaelic groups and the general public not

[37] *Irish Press* 17 May 1945.
[38] Luke Gibbons, 'Romanticism, Realism and Irish Cinema' in Rockett, Gibbons and Hill, *Cinema and Ireland*, p. 201.
[39] *Irish Press* 7 May 1934, cited in Gibbons, 'Romanticism, Realism and Irish Cinema' in Rockett, Gibbons and Hill, *Cinema and Ireland*, p. 195. 'I have never seen a film which produced so complete an illusion; the taste of brine on one's lips ... we had a real share in their [i.e. the Aran Islanders] pride.'
[40] *Irish Catholic* 27 July 1944.

take immediate action to support the showing of the film?'[41]

No action was taken. The typical Irish heart, it would appear, swelled with pride at the slightest intimation that an outsider's representation of Ireland made some recognition of the existence of the Irish language, but when it came to actually supporting a film made in Ireland in the Irish language a different set of criteria applied.

[41] *Irish Times* 15 December 1943.

The 1917 Russian Revolutions in British Political Thought and Literature 1918-1936: A Study in the History of Ideas*

Gabriel B. Paquette

> There has been so much confusion and 'inspired' rumor from Russia that we feel it is time for someone with authority to go there and tell exactly what he sees and believes.
>
> A. Bantors to
> J.M. Keynes (1925)[1]

The British Reception of the Russian Revolutions, 1890-1917

Coming during the Great War and just after the 1916 Easter Rising in Ireland, the Russian Revolutions profoundly affected British intellectuals, provoking debate about Western civilisation's decline, the viability of political democracy, and Bolshevism's function as a new 'religion'. A community of interacting intellectuals from across the ideological spectrum constituted a British intelligentsia throughout the inter-war period and the Russian Revolutions had a profound impact on it. Historian Philip Pomper explains the term intelligentsia is 'usually reserved for the alienated members of the highly educated stratum of society', but argues 'it is sufficient to think of the intelligentsia as those members ... of the educated classes who combine advanced or vanguard ideologies with activism.'[2] The British intelligentsia were 'public moralists' because they attempted 'to persuade their contemporaries to live up to their

*Special appreciation is due to Professors Philip Popmer and Cecilia Miller. Gratitude is extended to King's College Archive Centre (Cambridge), the Bodleian Library's Western Manuscripts Division (Oxford), The International Institute for Social History (Amsterdam), Olin Library (Middletown, CT), and the James Hardiman Library (Galway).

[1] Managing Editor of *The Daily Express* A. Bantors to J.M. Keynes (1925) in J.M. Keynes Papers [hereafter, J.M.K.] RV/1/61, King's College Modern Archive Centre, Cambridge.

[2] Philip Pomper, *The Structure of Mind in History: Five Major Figures in Psychohistory* (New York, 1985), p. 4.

professed ideals' and maintained a close relationship with a public audience.[3]

The most surprising phenomenon involves the public activism of the intellectuals because it began immediately before the Revolutions. Although constrained by its elitism, the British intelligentsia introduced its various concerns and commitments to the public sphere through intellectual production. In order to differentiate the ideas of the intelligentsia from the populace, I have grouped these contributions under the penumbra of the 'concept' of the Revolution whereas the popular reaction is labelled the 'myth'. These academic preoccupations, or 'concepts', included the decay of western civilisation, the shortcomings of parliamentary democracy, and Bolshevism's role as a missionary religion. I have focused mainly on intellectuals, including Keynes, Russell and Laski whose elitism was overshadowed by a commitment to improving the entire society.

The Russian Revolutions crystallised the aspirations and fears of various British political groups that had coalesced since the 1880s. In the sphere of political thought, I argue, the Russian Revolutions were not a radical disjuncture. For this reason, they were integrated into existing thought. Contemporary scholars agree that during the late Victorian and early Edwardian periods, societies, civic associations, and socialist groups, including the gradualist *Fabian Society* and the radical *Social Democratic Federation*.[4] Early twentieth-century progressive social science was imbued with philosophical Idealism, but was still informed by biologistic models espoused by Eugenics and Spencerian 'Social Darwinism'. Idealism enabled social commentators to view society as a malleable, inherently rational 'political structure' endorsing 'a particular set of economic and social relations.'[5] In many ways, the mounting opposition to natural-science models of society conditioned the eschewal of materialism, facilitating the focus on the 'spiritual' evolution of society towards the moral perfection of citizens. Borrowing from Plato's idea that justice, and not force, should underpin society, the hegemony of Idealism in British social and political thought provoked the endorsement of

[3] Stefan Collini, *Public Moralists: Political Thought and Intellectual Life in Britain 1850-1930* (Oxford, 1991), pp. 2-3.

[4] José Harris,'Political Thought and the Welfare State 1870-1940: An Intellectual Framework for British Social Policy' *Past & Present* 135 (1992), p. 121.

[5] Stefan Collini, 'Hobhouse, Bosanquet and the State: Philosophical Idealism and Political Argument in England 1880-1918' *Past and Present* 72 (1976), p. 110.

state intervention to remove obstacles imperiling ethical self-fulfillment of individuals in society.[6] This idea remained intact until the revolt against Idealism in the 1930s. This portrait of British political thought before the Russian Revolutions should not appear linear or homogenous: the notion of 'the common good', for example, was used in a variety of ways even among British Idealists, encompassing theories which both elevated and diminished the individual's connection to the social whole.[7]

Idealism's penetration of British political and social thought prior to the Revolutions must be contextualised in the overarching debate between 'Individualism' and 'Collectivism' between 1880 and 1914. Although these issues pre-occupied British thought since the Putney Debates of the English Civil War, the terms resurfaced concomitantly in the 1880s and ''Individualism' came into general usage to denote the entire range of anti-socialist political thought.'[8] To its detractors, Socialism was synonymous with the abolition of property, family, religion, class warfare, and nationalisation whereas Collectivism implied only 'the general tendency to increase the powers of the state.' Collectivism's definition is vague because pre-war progressivism was distinguished by its 'eclecticism'[9], ranging from the Fabian Socialism of G.B. Shaw to the under-consumptionism of J.A. Hobson's *Imperialism: A Study* (1902). In the final analysis, however, Collectivism encompassed contradictory trends, overlapping with Individualism in the debate over the inter-dependence of imperialism and social reform.[10] Conservative thought between 1880 and 1914 was similarly permeated by Collectivist ideas. While predicated on the

[6] Jose Harris, 'Platonism, Positivism, and Progressivism: Aspects of British Sociological Thought in the Early Twentieth Century' in Eugenio Biagini (ed.), *Citizenship and Community: Liberals, Radicals, and Collective Identities in the British Isles, 1865-1931* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 255. See also A.J.M. Milne, *The Social Philosophy of English Idealism* (London, 1962), esp. Chapters 5 and 6 passim.

[7] John Morrow, 'Ancestors, Legacies, and Traditions: British Idealism in the History of Political Thought' *History of Political Thought* 6 (1985), p. 508.

[8] Stefan Collini, *Liberalism and Sociology: L.T. Hobhouse and Political Argument in England 1880-1914* (Cambridge, 1979), p. 17.

[9] David Blaazer, *The Popular Front and the Progressive Tradition: Socialists, Liberals, and the Quest for Unity, 1884-1939* (Cambridge, 1992), p. 126.

[10] Bernard Semmel, *Imperialism and Social Reform: English Social-Imperial Thought, 1895-1914* (Cambridge/ MA, 1960), pp. 28, 234.

imperfection of the intellect, hostility to revolution, the organicism of society, and deep-seated skepticism, Conservative thought split between libertarian and state-interventionist wings in the early twentieth century.[11] In spite of this difference, however, both camps disparaged the bureaucratic centralisation associated with Socialism.[12]

Socialism was construed as overtly hostile to the British political tradition. The contempt for Socialism in British mainstream thought conditioned and presaged the reception of the Revolutions. As mentioned earlier in this section, Marxism's tenets were contrary to the prevailing ideas of British society. In particular, Marx's theory of value, assertion of class conflict, and theory of human nature were odious to the Ethical Liberalism of the epoch that extolled social progress through individual freedom, diligence, frugality, and parliamentarism.[13] Many commentators also detected the residue of Hegelian statism[14] that contradicted the prevailing commitment to individual freedom. Hegelian Idealist philosophy declined in England due to its association with Prussian militarism and the destruction of the confidence in the rationality of institutions wrought by the war.[15] Marxism threatened the further damage through its scientism, systematising, and inherent revolutionism.[16]

Without this understanding, it may appear strange that J.M. Keynes, among other post-war commentators, should refer to 'Bolshevism', 'Leninism', or 'Communism' as a religion. When interpreted in the context of the nineteenth-century response to Communism, it becomes cogent: British Collectivists and Ethical Socialists recognised the theoretical potency of Marxism, but accepted its antipathy to prevailing ideas. They modified its

[11] E.H.H. Green, *The Crisis of Conservatism: The Politics, Economics, and Ideology of the British Conservative Party, 1880-1914* (New York and London, 1995), pp. 313-316.

[12] J.R. Greenway, 'British Conservatism and Bureaucracy' *History of Political Thought* 13 (1992), p. 152.

[13] Kirk Willis,'The Introduction and Critical Reception of Marxist Thought in Britain, 1850-1900' *Historical Journal* 20 (1977), pp. 442, 452.

[14] G.W.F. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History* (trans. J. Sibree New York, 1956), especially pp. 46-48.

[15] Peter Robbins, *The British Hegelians 1875-1925* (New York and London, 1982), p. 105.

[16] Stuart MacIntyre, *A Proletarian Science: Marxism in Britain 1917-1933* (Cambridge, 1980), p. 49.

scientific dimension and, between 1883 and 1896, a 'religion of socialism [became] a substitute religion, filling the gap left by the decline of traditional religion.'[17] As the mentality of decline spread due to industrial shortfall and war-time destruction, Bolshevism was perceived to compensate for the spiritual energy the west had lost. If diluted Marxism adapted the features of traditional religion, the confusion of the inter-war period concerning Marxism's simultaneous irrationality and hyper-scientism is partially explained. Since nineteenth-century Liberalism was 'a creed nourished by a certain belief in orderly progress', the war had destroyed the 'immutable laws of social intercourse.'[18] As a result, a large theoretical vacuum was left when the 1917 Russian Revolutions occurred.

J.M. Keynes's 'Concept' of the Russian Revolutions

John Maynard Keynes's political views have seldomly received scholarly attention and this disregard has precluded analysis of the Russian Revolutions' impact on his ideas. Keynes's status as the pre-eminent inter-war economist and a prominent liberal enabled him to confront the Revolutions' repercussions for economic theory, Britain's international position, and the state's role in economic and social planning. It is beyond the scope of this article to determine the precise relation between Keynes's political and economic thought, specifically between his *A Short View of Russia* (1925) and *The General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money* (1936). Instead, I argue that Keynes's political thought, though far less developed than his economic theories,[19] was pre-occupied with the Revolutions and this linkage has inevitable consequences for his economic ideas.

Keynes predicated his political ideas upon economic assumptions: before the Russian Revolutions occurred, he argued that 'enlightened' individual self-interest and public interest would form a new altruistic harmony among individuals and society.[20] For this reason, his support of permanent state

[17] Stephen Yeo, 'A New Life: The Religion of Socialism in Britain 1883-1896' *History Workshop* 4 (1977), p. 6.

[18] Michael Freeden, *Liberalism Divided: A Study in British Political Thought 1914-1939* (Oxford, 1986), p. 9.

[19] Wayne Parsons, 'Keynes and the Politics of Ideas' *History of Political Thought* 4 (1983), p. 368.

[20] Freeded, *Liberalism Divided*, p. 158.

intervention in the economy, a balance between state and individual control, and the application of moral codes to politics were consistent with prevailing liberal ideas. They were not directly determined by the Revolutions or Bolshevism *per se*. Keynes's notion of the relation between theory and practice, however, hinges on his aversion to violent revolution. He proposed that intellectuals were responsible for 'preparing the way for the acceptance of non-orthodox views and policies' to ensure that intellectual revolutions are not superseded by political ones. Keynes's commitment to this pragmatic goal may partially explain his dual activity in politics and the world of ideas[21] because Keynes posited that 'capitalism above all else faced an ideological crisis.'[22] Keynes's espousal of the priority of ideas may explain the presence of the 'Victorian philosophy of social betterment'[23] in his economic writings. While recent scholars have pointed to the origins of Keynes's ideas to either the 1924 debate over unemployment, the 1925 debate over the gold standard, or the 1929 dispute over loan-financed public works[24], the role of the Revolutions has been ignored.

If Keynes reacted strongly to the Revolutions of 1917, his ideas were not integrated systematically into his thought until his brief visit to Soviet Russia in 1925. His friends, fellow Bloomsbury luminaries Leonard and Virginia Woolf, published his impressions in a pamphlet entitled *A Short View of Russia*.[25] Although widely distributed in Keynes's time, this document has been largely ignored by recent scholars. Keynes's analysis of Soviet Russia mixes profound sympathy and admiration for the Bolshevik experiment with acrid sarcasm and disgust for the underpinnings of the un-European regime. Most remarkably, his initial analysis anticipates historian Arnold Toynbee's argument for the religious basis of Bolshevism:

> Leninism is a combination of two things which

[21] These dual commitments are discussed more fully in E.S. Johnson and H.G. Johnson, 'The Social and Intellectual Origins of the *General Theory*' *History of Political Economy* 6 (1974), pp. 266-267.

[22] Parsons, 'Keynes', p. 384.

[23] Johnson and Johnson, 'The Social and Intellectual Origins of the *General Theory*', p. 275.

[24] Paul Addison, 'The Intellectual Origins of the Keynesian Revolution' *Twentieth Century British History* 2 (1991), p. 89.

[25] J.M. Keynes, *A Short View of Russia* (London, 1925).

> Europeans have kept for some centuries in different compartments of the soul-religion and business. We are shocked because the religion is new, and contemptuous because the business, being subordinated to religion instead of the other way around, is highly inefficient.[26]

In Keynes's view, Lenin's combination is original, yet provocatively threatening to the western world view. Keynes disparages the mixture's economic inefficiency, but recognises its political potency. In this way, Keynes affirms the power of fervent ideas to overcome material obstacles. For Keynes, Bolshevism's priority of ideas over economic factors is justified only through the internal logic of religion and he posits qualities shared by Leninism and religion, missionary ardour and intolerance chief among them. Keynes's characterisation of Bolshevism as a religion represents a 'concept' of the Revolutions because it employs intellectual categories to comprehend the events. Keynes consciously recognised the origins of the new religion's appeal. He locates it in what I have termed the popular 'myth' of the Revolutions, specifically in the 'strong emotional curiosity of the masses' and the exotic nature of Russia, 'the beautiful and foolish youngest son of the European family.'[27] He discredits Bolshevism as the outgrowth of an 'obsolete economic textbook', 'scientifically erroneous', and unacceptable to an 'educated, decent, intelligent son of Western Europe.'[28] For Keynes, capitalist economic efficiency must outweigh the emotional allure of Bolshevism's religious aspect, an idea intrinsic to his overarching suspicion of revolutions. I argue Keynes's rationality claim is linked to his liberal idea that derogates vanguard coups which pre-empt democratic decision-making. In this way, he refutes the legitimacy of revolution 'by a few' and assert the 'totality of individual wills'[29] in valid political change.

[26] Ibid., p. 11.

[27] Ibid., p. 13. N.B.: Keynes's complimentary description of the 'Russian Character' should not obscure his racism and cultural chauvinism. In J.M.K. GS/5/23, Keynes describes the 'reckless' Russians as 'being at the mercy of their Jews.' Keynes's anti-Semitism earned him *New Republic* editor Herbert Croly's gentle rebuke (J.M.K. RV/1/69).

[28] Keynes, *Short View of Russia*, p. 14.

[29] J.M. Keynes, 'Russia', J.M.K. GS/5/30.

In other essays on Russian themes, Keynes portrays a struggle between 'cruel', 'corrupt', 'inefficient' rulers and 'civilisation'[30], demonstrating his connection to the 'concept' of the Revolutions fashioned in the historical profession. Keynes argued that there is not 'any economic improvement for which Revolution is a necessary instrument', but admitted that 'irreligious capitalism'[31] must overcome the Revolution's emotional allure. Mirroring Max Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1904)[32], Keynes concedes his 'concept' is vulnerable due to the moral hollowness of the capitalist West. The Russian Revolutions have exposed the 'moral problem' of western Europe's all-consuming 'love of money.'[33] For this reason, the Bolshevik Revolution revealed the west's shortcomings, compelling the west to glean 'something which we can learn' from Revolutionary Russia.[34] Keynes's interpretation of Russian events was both determined by his liberal predilections and helped to transform them. If the link between Keynes's political and economic thought is direct, as other scholars have argued, Keynes's fascination with the Revolutions facilitates new readings of his economic work and further elucidates the connections between historical events and shifts in ideas.

Bertrand Russell's Account of the Bolshevik Menace to Civilisation

Although Bertrand Russell's (1872-1970) broad interests ensured that he participated in the formation of the debate over the Revolutions, he devoted most attention to debunking the exaggerated aspects of the public's interpretation. This section analyses Russell as public intellectual, not as a Cambridge philosopher. Recent scholarship has admirably addressed Russell's political and social thought, yet it remains useful to isolate Russell's reaction to the Russian Revolution because it locates him in the network of publicly-engaged intellectuals and reveals the impact of this capacity on his thought.

Marxist ideas appeared in Britain during the late-nineteenth century and Russell's intellectual career commenced with the publication of a treatise on

[30] Ibid., J.M.K. GS/5/23.
[31] Keynes, *Short View of Russia*, pp. 24-25.
[32] Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (trans. Talcott Parsons, London and New York, 1996), esp. pp. 182-183.
[33] Keynes, *Short View of Russia*, p. 26.
[34] Keynes, 'The Economic Transition of England', J.M.K. RV/1/39.

German Social Democracy in 1896.[35] Even at this early stage, Russell was sceptical of Marxism's methodology for four reasons: (1) He criticised Marxism's revolutionary rhetoric for divisiveness that impeded progress; (2) asserted that its purported scientific approach precluded pragmatism; (3) interpreted its democratic component as extreme; and (4) rebuked Marxism's 'failure' to distinguish artificial inequalities from natural ones. It appears, then that Russell's ideas of Marxism were established long before the Russian Revolution, justifying historian Philip Ironside's claim that the Revolutions had no enduring impact on his thought except for momentarily exciting him. Ironside's own arguments, however, conflict with his conclusion because Russell was an eager participant in the I.L.P. Leeds Convention and the Russian Revolutions marked 'one of the few moments of his life when he was caught up emotionally with popular enthusiasm.'[36] On this basis, the Revolutions provoked Russell to act publicly. He visited Russia in 1920 and was treated magnanimously, even securing an hour-long meeting with Lenin! Russell's disgust for the Bolshevik experiment did not stem for sympathy with the 'Russian People', but derived primarily from Bolshevik Russia's failure to realise the guild Socialist ideal to which Russell had clung and from the severe impediments Bolshevism placed on intellectual freedom.

Russell's preoccupation with Bolshevik Russia did not subside after his visit, but instead inspired his *Bolshevism: Practice and Theory* (1920). The book's tone and style indicate its intended popular audience. Russell's purpose, I argue, was to modify the exaggerated features of the popular 'myth' and to infuse them with intellectual categories which transcended hysterics. His book partially succeeds by introducing ideas of religion, civilisation, and democracy. Although he categorised Bolshevism as a religion 'as admirable as [that] instilled by Sermon on the Mount', an answer to Europe's 'disillusion and despair', he also castigated its fanaticism and threat to 'progress' and 'the free spirit of man.'[37] Russell's criticism differentiates between 'the Western World' and 'Bolshevism', and maintains that unless the West 'adopts less painful and more certain methods' of introducing Socialism that 'civilisation might go

[35] Philip Ironside, *The Social and Political Thought of Bertrand Russell: The Development of an Aristocratic Liberalism* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 25.
[36] Ibid., p. 135.
[37] Bertrand Russell, *Bolshevism: Practice and Theory* (New York, 1920), pp. 14-15.

under for a thousand years.'[38] It appears, then, that Bolshevik fanaticism and revolutionary ardour repel Russell more than the ideological system itself. If Russell left for Russia convinced of Guild Socialism's or Fabianism's virtues, his *Bolshevism: Practice and Theory* reconfirmed his allegiance to democratic institutions and awakened him to their fragility in Britain. Unlike other intellectuals, including Keynes, it was the 'practice' rather than 'theory' of Bolshevism which Russell repudiated because Bolshevik theory's application posed the greatest threat to 'civilisation':

> I believe that, if the Bolshevik theory as to the method of transition is adopted by Communists of Western nations, the result will be prolonged chaos, leading neither to Communism not to any other civilised system, but to a relapse into the barbarism of the dark ages.[39]

Russell deploys the political languages of democracy, civilisation, and religion, situating him in the 'concept' of the Revolutions. His use of terms such as 'chaos' and 'barbarism' are contradistinguished from the rationality which he implies underlies institutions, underscoring a Hegelian influence on his thought. Russell's text operates at two, overlapping levels. On the one hand, he engages in debates over political theory throughout the text, including his final exhortation for Britain to permit the 'self-government of industry.'[40] On the other hand, he resorts to speculative paranoia ('prolonged chaos') and jingoism concerning the possible impact and applicability of Bolshevism in Great Britain.

Although Russell's innovation lies in his combination of the popular and elite interpretations of the Revolution, it apparently did not transform his thought. If Russell's attitude toward Communism and Socialism before the Revolutions is compared to his opinions in the 1930s, however, he drifted toward a classical liberal position closely resembling J.S. Mill's essay 'On Liberty.' In his essay 'Why I am not a Communist' (1934), Russell emphasises Communism's restriction on intellectual liberty and its hindrance to

[38] Ibid., pp. 18, 32.
[39] Ibid., p. 169.
[40] Ibid., p. 186.

spontaneous thought that underlies 'all serious innovation.'[41] These features were absent in his earlier polemics against scientific Socialism and are embedded in Russell's re-emphasis of Millian liberalism[42] and reason. Russell argues that 'if a better civilisation is to emerge from the present chaos' then society must rely on 'men who genuinely believe in reason.'[43] These assertions locate Russell's 'concept' squarely in the Idealist and Liberal tradition and, perhaps, indicate his growing Conservatism that emerged from his fear of Bolshevism's consequences for Britain.

Harold Laski, the Bolshevik Experiment, and the Inapplicability of Revolution to Britain

Harold Laski has been alternately praised as Labour's leading inter-war intellectual and denounced as a sycophantic, unoriginal thinker. My article avoids the well-worn debate over Laski's merits and instead specifically focuses on his reception of the Revolution. While remaining staunchly left-wing, Laski's attitude toward the Revolution fluctuated and, like Russell, tried to elevate the popular debate to a more academic level. The reasons for Laski's sustained interest in the Revolution and the nascent Soviet Union may derive from personal sources, not merely intellectual preoccupations. Laski was a history tutor at Harvard University in the midst of the American 'Red Scare' and his Jewish origins and socialist sympathies were attacked in the outpouring of intolerance that engulfed America. In Laski's case, Yale University Press removed his book from circulation and *The Harvard Lampoon* devoted an entire issue to an anti-Semitic and anti-Bolshevist slander against Laski, prompting his departure for a political science position at L.S.E.[44] Between his 1918 return to England and 1920, Laski was a casual supporter of Bolshevism until he encountered Bertrand Russell, whose own negative appraisal dissuaded Laski from his optimistic assessment.[45] Laski's disenchantment did not hasten an abandonment of socialist principles, but modified them toward Fabianism. His

[41] Bertrand Russell, 'Why I am Not a Communist', in *The Meaning of Marx: A Symposium* (New York, 1934), pp. 84-85.
[42] John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty and Other Essays* (Oxford and New York, 1991), esp. pp. 29-33.
[43] Bertrand Russell, 'Is Society Based on Force?' *The New Leader*, 31 August 1923.
[44] Michael Newman, *Harold Laski: A Political Biography* (London, 1993), 62-63.
[45] Ibid., p. 74.

Grammar of Politics (1925) can be interpreted as an explanation of working class political action in the context of parliamentary state power after the Bolshevik regime failed to realise its lofty goals.

Laski's aspirations for the Soviet experiment were deflated by its atrocities, yet the Revolutions still occupied an under-appreciated part of his thought. In 1927, Laski published *Communism* and captured broad public attention, selling 40,000 copies in the first year.[46] Although less theoretical than his other works, it epitomises the moderate left-wing 'concept' of the Bolshevik Revolution and Soviet experiment, yet articulates its ideas in the popular idiom. I argue that Laski's incorporation of the Bolshevik enterprise into his political thought originated from historical consciousness. He claimed that the Paris Commune of 1871 was 'essentially a foreshadowing of the Bolshevik Revolution' that demonstrated the inadequacy of seising existing state power, the need for military support of the proletariat, and the mandatory repression of the capitalist class for a successful Communist Revolution.[47] Unsurprisingly, Laski's historicist perspective enabled him to identify the Jesuits as an antecedent for the Bolsheviks. This comparison merged the historical perspective with the category of religion that Russell and Keynes deployed. Laski's comparison, however, was less complimentary, emphasising the 'rigorous and unyielding sense of dogmas' among the Bolsheviks.[48] Like Keynes and Russell, Laski attempted to isolate the legitimate threats of Bolshevism from the hysterical trepidation.

Unlike other theorists, however, Laski focussed on the aggrandised threat Bolshevism posed to the British Empire. Although Laski's explanation is animated by pragmatism, it reveals his pre-occupation with the connection between theory and practice and his diminished estimation of the power of an intelligentsia to instigate political change:

> Nor can it be said that [Bolshevik] Eastern propaganda is likely to have the results they foresee ... The destruction of Western influence does not necessarily mean communism. There is no special reason to suppose that the handful of Eastern Intellectuals who frequent Moscow could, in a crisis, dominate India or China in the way, and with purpose, of Lenin and Trotsky.[49]

[46] Isaac Kramnick and Barry Sheerman, *Harold Laski: A Life on the Left* (New York, 1993), p. 259.
[47] Harold Laski, *Communism* (New York, 1927), pp. 36-37.
[48] Ibid., p. 51.

The calm tone of Laski's passage stems, I argue, from distaste for the prevailing reductive tendency of British popular thought concerning revolution. Simply because an intelligentsia-led movement succeeded in one country, Laski contends, does not necessitate its reiteration in another context, even under similar conditions. For this reason, Laski appeals for an analysis of the specific circumstances of each situation without resorting to models based on inflated fears or exaggerated rational causation.[50] Laski's displeasure with the reductionist logic of the popular representations is the golden thread connecting the disparate parts of *Communism*. In a concluding passage, Laski castigates those who maintain that communists are 'anxious, at any possible moment, to make an attack upon the established order.' Instead of presenting an alternative model of communism's internal logic, he argues for its emotional, irrational basis in the 'unconquerable hope [and] heedless and instinctual generosity.'[51] Whereas Laski does not reject the value of emotion, his view of the Revolution repudiates Communism's rationality and its applicability to Britain. In this way, he dismissed Communism's plausibility for Britain in the 1920s.

My interpretation of Laski's *Communism* is supported by his subsequent attack on the Third International's 'relentless logic' in *Democracy in Crisis* (1930) that he asserts is inapplicable to 'concrete English situations', its 'historic climate', and the British 'empiric' character.[52] Laski reconfirmed his views when he visited the Soviet Union in 1934, an experience that aggravated his contempt for the Stalinist dictatorship.[53] The Bolshevik Revolution forced Laski to confront the historical and cultural peculiarities of political systems and the meaning of revolutions. If Laski's private documents are perused, the continuity between his initial response to the Revolution and

[49] Ibid., p. 199.
[50] Bernard Zylstra, *From Pluralism to Collectivism: The Development of Harold Laski's Political Thought* (Assen, 1968), p. 135.
[51] Laski, *Communism*, p. 248.
[52] Harold Laski, *Democracy in Crisis* (Chapel Hill, 1930), p. 260.
[53] Newman, *Laski*, p. 74.

his more mature position becomes apparent. In a 1918 letter to Liberal internationalist Alfred Zimmern, he claimed that the failure to distinguish between 'Soviet theory and Bolshevik practice' was 'surely the outcome of an Anglo-French blindness similar to that which produced the terror in France in 1793.'[54] In this early letter, Laski's historical consciousness and agonising over the link between theory and practice are evident. Yet from his American viewpoint, he did not want Bolshevism to succumb entirely to its conservative attackers who aspired to be 'the masters of England.'[55] He maintained that the domination of a single set of ideas led to a less vigorous state and lessened its consensual basis. He abandoned this view when he later observed the 'infinite traged' wrought by revolution.[56] As Laski observed the development of Russian Communism, he became increasingly wary of Revolutions in general. In an unpublished manuscript entitled 'The Meaning of 1848', Laski comments 'all great revolutions explode with a sudden and dramatic violence which tends to conceal the slow disintegration of societies it is their function to complete.'[57] Laski's language demonstrates his concern with the decay of civilisation, historical consciousness, and religious decline.

The Intelligentsia Generates a 'Concept'[58]

Whereas individual thinkers filtered the Revolutions into their political thought, the Revolutions also compelled all intellectuals to confront Marxism as a legitimate ideological doctrine. The most visible impact was on left-wing political thought. The moderate Left's response to the Revolutions was ambivalent. The Revolutions challenged all political factions to re-evaluate the role of the state in society[59], but the moderate left, composed of Laski, Russell, and G.D.H. Cole, among others, maintained that the state was crucial to social well-being, stressing its capacity for social reform.[60] Lenin's *State and*

[54] Laski to Zimmern, 20 September 1918, Zimmern 15 f. 152, Department of Western Manuscripts, Bodleian Library.

[55] Zimmern, 153fn15.

[56] Laski, *Democracy in Crisis*, p. 266.

[57] Harold Laski, 'The Meaning of 1848', Laski TMs, International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam.

[58] Ramsay MacDonald to Maxim Gorky, 29 April 1917, Additional Manuscripts 48974f13, British Library Manuscripts Collection.

[59] MacIntyre, *A Proletarian Science*, p. 178.

[60] Winter, *Socialism and the Challenge of War*, p. 5 and MacIntyre, *A Proletarian*

Revolution (1917) disputed this assumption, asserting that in England and America the 'precondition of any real people's revolution is the *break-up*, the *shattering* of the 'ready-made state machinery.'[61] Lenin argued that after annihilating the 'old bureaucratic machine', a transitional regime is needed to 'reduce all officialdom to naught.'[62] Although moderate left intellectuals were more receptive to Leninism and the Soviet Union, they were not convinced completely of the Revolutions' virtues. In his 1921 preface to *Human Nature in Politics* (1908), Graham Wallas commented that the 'anti-parliamentarism and anti-intellectualism' of the Bolshevik Revolution had discredited the assumption 'men [were] automatically guided by enlightened self-interest', raising anxiety about freedom's consequences for 'the future of civilisation.'[63] Graham Wallas, like other intellectuals, was not immune to hysterical speculation. Writing to his friend and fellow Fabian G.B. Shaw, Wallas wrote:

> I watched Winston Churchill's armoured cars marching last May through London's streets and realised that the young members of his defense team were probably thinking of the ease with which they could bring a Fascist coup to London ... We ought to think more seriously about the military position than Giolitti or Kerensky did.[64]

Wallas's reference to Giolitti and Kerensky, who were deposed by Mussolini and Lenin, respectively, reflects the widespread fear of non-parliamentary revolution in Britain. The memory of the Russian Revolution permeated Wallas's thought, providing categories to analyse British political circumstances.

Science, p. 181.

[61] V.I. Lenin, *State and Revolution* (New York, 1932, 1943), p. 34. N.B.: The quotations in Lenin's writing stem from Marx's *The Civil War in France*.

[62] Ibid., p. 42.

[63] Graham Wallas, *Human Nature in Politics* (New York, 2nd edition, 1921), pp. 6-8. Wallas was not entirely averse to Bolshevism, but despised its 'suffering and waste.' For a discussion of his view, see Martin Weiner, *Between Two Worlds: The Political Thought of Graham Wallas* (Oxford, 1971), esp. pp. 178-179.

[64] G. Wallas to G.B. Shaw, 13 February 1927, Additional Manuscript 50553, British Library Manuscripts Collection.

Other left-wing intellectuals, including Guild Socialist and Labour Party activist G.D.H. Cole, did not share Wallas's consternation. Although he admired the Revolution and lauded the Soviet system's development, he rejected 'domestic attempts to imitate Russia's example'[65] because of the wide chasm separating Russia's economic history and political tradition from that of Great Britain. The most enduring aspect of Cole's analysis was the absence of 'parliamentary democracy in any real sense' in Russia as opposed to the 'strongly entrenched'[66] democratic tradition in Britain. Cole's attitude typified progressive intellectuals who both vigorously supported the Soviet Union's maturation, yet were sceptical of its application to Britain.

If Wallas and Cole were wary of revolution, most liberal intellectuals adamantly opposed it. Besides trampling the democratic process, radically changing state power, and committing mass atrocities, Liberals saw 'Russia as a sufficient reminder'[67] of democracy's fragility. Mainstream liberals, such as Alfred Zimmern, recognised education of the poor as a method to prevent the growth of Bolshevism in Britain and increase national consciousness. According to Zimmern, 'to the town-lad of today, England, the England of Shakespeare, is something of which he is only dimly aware.'[68] Like his intellectual contemporaries, Zimmern was convinced of British society's degeneration and its vulnerability to external enemies. The Revolutions both reinforced and transformed the intelligentsia's debate over civilisation's future, parliamentary democracy, and traditional religion. For these reasons, the revolutionary 'event' exerted a contentious and radical force in intellectuals' political thought.

From Nihilists to Secret Agents: The Revolutions in British Literature

The preponderance of Russian themes in British literature prior to 1917 presaged the reception of the Revolution. Although William Shakespeare cursorily referred to Russia in *The Winter's Tale* and *Love's Labour's Lost*, Peter the Great's visit to England in 1698 generated Russophilia in British literature that

[65] A.W. Wright, *G.D.H. Cole and Socialist Democracy* (Oxford, 1979), p. 97.

[66] G.D.H. Cole, *What Marx Really Meant* (New York, 1934), p. 157.

[67] Alfred Zimmern, *Lecture on Education and Democracy*, 7 December 1917, Zimmern 138fn7.

[68] Ibid., 138fn13.

sustained itself through Alexander I reign.[69] In the period before the Crimean War, Russian literature's 'poetical' quality was juxtaposed to Russia's 'barbaric' origins. After this Anglo-Russian conflict, Russophobia was ascendent in both the 'highbrow' poetry of Alfred Tennyson and the period's popular literature. Sidney Dobell's jingoistic poem 'England's Day' (1871) demonstrates that 'Russian, Yankee, and Prussian' were Britain's inveterate enemies and 'knaves.'[70] The animosity toward Russia and the advent of the Russian revolutionary nihilism became the dominant Russian themes in English imaginative literature, though Tolstoy's and Turgenev's work was widely distributed and appreciated. Besides British literature's exposure to Russian writers in the late nineteenth century, two additional trends conditioned the reception of the Russian Revolutions in Britain. First, Edwardian novelists frequently alluded with horror to the 'increasingly dispossessed working class', the decline of British character due to urban life patterns, the prospects of Britain's invasion by a foreign power, and the disintegration of the British pastoral. These anxieties reflected a prevailing concern that British society, including its 'racial stock', was 'degenerating.'[71] Second, the turn-of-the-century witnessed the British intellectual elite's disparagement of 'mass culture' that degraded its civilisation.[72] In the case of the Bloomsbury Group, the universal character of art differentiated it from 'transient, commercial culture' and it 'transcended petty social conflicts.'[73] Although I disagree with their conclusions, the cultural elite's observations of the rise in 'mass culture' was accurate because a market for 'low priced and sensational' fiction targeting the working-classes emerged to polarise fiction into 'lowbrow and highbrow

[69] Anthony G. Cross, *The Russian Theme in English Literature From the Sixteenth-Century to 1980: An Introductory Survey and a Bibliography* (Oxford, 1985), pp. 4, 19. In *The Winter's Tale*, see vol. III, ii; In *Love's Labour's Lost*, see vol. V, ii.

[70] Quoted in Patrick Waddington, *From The Russian Fugitive to The Ballad of Bulgarie: Episodes in English Literary Attitudes to Russia from Wordsworth to Swinburne* (Oxford and Providence, 1994), p. 95.

[71] William Greenslade, *Degeneration, Culture, and the Novel, 1880-1940* (Cambridge, 1994), p. 256.

[72] D.L. Le Mahieu, *A Culture for Democracy: Mass Communication and the Cultivated Mind Between the Wars* (Oxford, 1988), pp. 103, 108.

[73] Le Mahieu, *A Culture for Democracy*, pp. 122-123.

camps.'[74] The demarcation was not rigid, as certain novels were classified in each camp.

The conflation of these two trends triggered the popularity of the 'spy novel' and 'invasion fiction' in the late nineteenth century. Both were a 'political response to the erosion of Britain's status and prestige', and the protagonists of both genres were 'distinguished by [their] English-ness', serving as a 'symbol of stability' in a changing world.'[75] Although ambivalent portraits of Russian nihilists frequently appeared in British fiction, the 'spy novel' and 'invasion fiction' reflected an acute concern for Russia's threat to Britain's Empire, internal tranquillity, and sovereignty. Popular fiction was one of the principle transmitters of ideas about Russia before the Revolution. William Le Queux's *The Great War in England 1897* (1894) described the invasion of Britain by Russian 'masses' and 'hordes'.[76] This negative image was tempered by sympathy for Russian Revolutionaries who combated Russia's corrupt, arbitrarily governed, police state.[77] Throughout the fiction, however, there exists assumptions that Russia's and Britain's historical experiences are distinct. Russia abided by 'different standards of human behaviour', and 'the vastness of the [Russia's] enormous population and military' were permanent dangers to British interests.[78]

Although many of the intellectual elite's novelists did not confront Russian themes, Joseph Conrad's *The Secret Agent* (1907) and *Under Western Eyes* (1910) contributed to popular perceptions of Russia that conditioned the formation of the 'myth and concept.' In *The Secret Agent*, Conrad castigates revolutionaries as 'enemies of discipline', 'fanatics', and as driven by 'vanity, the mother of all noble and vile illusions.'[79] Conrad's *Under Western Eyes* is

[74] Joseph McAleer, *Popular Reading and Publishing in Britain, 1914-1950* (Oxford, 1992), pp. 16, 41.

[75] David Trotter, *The English Novel in History, 1895-1920* (London and New York, 1993), p. 169.

[76] I draw my analysis of Le Queux's novel from Keith Neilson, 'Tsars and Commissars: W. Somerset Maugham, *Ashenden*, and Images of Russia in British Adventure Fiction' *Canadian Journal of History* 27 (1992), pp. 475-500, 479.

[77] Neilson, 'Tsars and Commissars', pp. 482-483.

[78] Ibid., p. 483.

[79] Joseph Conrad, *The Secret Agent: A Simple Tale* (Garden City [NY], 1907, 1953), p. 55. For an excellent discussion of the British 'spy novel' see LeRoy L. Panek, *The*

saturated with references to Russia which anticipate the intellectual and popular reaction to the Russian Revolutions. Conrad anticipates the 'myth' in two ways: First, his protagonist is perplexed by the 'illogicality of [the Russian] attitude, the arbitrariness of their conclusions, [and] the frequency of the exceptional'[80], a description that renders the Russians non-European. Second, Conrad imitates convention when detailing the 'sumptuous immensity of the sky', 'endless forests', and 'plains of an immense country' of Russia[81], references that indicate Russia's portentous threat to British interests. Conrad departs from the 'myth', however, to confront the 'concept' of Russian civilisation. He contrasts British and Russian characters when he compares

> The civilised man, the enthusiast of advanced humanitarian ideals thirsting for the triumph of spiritual love and political liberty, and the stealthy, primeval savage, pitilessly cunning in the preservation of his freedom from day to day like a tracked wild beast.[82]

The passage's internal logic suggests the incompatibility of British civilisation and Russian savagery, an interpretation consistent with the segregation of 'Eastern' from 'Western' ideas throughout the novel. 'Ideals', 'love', and 'political liberty' are made the exclusive domain of Westerners. After forming an alliance with Russia, the British government sought to emphasise the similarities of Russians and Britons.

The revival of the 'spy novel' and 'invasion fiction' after the 1917 Russian Revolutions indicates the government's failure and the entrenchment of Russophobic ideas in the public sphere. In the 1920s, 'Red' was the dominant word of adventure fiction as *The Red Tomorrow* (1920), *The Red Lady* (1920), and *The Red Radio* (1927) became popular novels and showed 'just how un-

Special Branch: The British Spy Novel, 1890-1980 (Bowling Green [Ohio], 1981).

[80] Joseph Conrad, *Under Western Eyes: A Novel* (New York and London, 1910), p. 4. For pertinent secondary criticism, see Helen Funk Rieselbach, *Conrad's Rebels: The Psychology of Revolution in the Novels from Nostromo to Victory* (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1985), esp. Chapters 3 and 4.

[81] Conrad, *Under Western Eyes*, pp. 32, 64.

[82] Ibid., pp. 120-121.

British are both the Bolshevik ideas and those who support them.'[83] Many of these novels were linked to the ascendant jingoism and anti-Semitism in British society. Hugh Addison's *The Battle of London* (1923), for example, depicts a weak British government faced by two Russian Jewish commissars, yet Britain destroys their designs with a single torpedo.[84] W. Somerset Maugham's *Ashenden: Or the Secret Agent* (1927) refuted many of the traditional representations of Russians. Set between the March and November Revolutions in St. Petersburg, it depicts a British agent interacting with Russians and British nationals. Maugham's novel ridicules the British elite, whose embrace of Russian culture resembles the 'virulence of an epidemic of influenza.'[85] Although Maugham encouraged 'spy novels' to confront Russia more fully, he often lapsed into conventional description. In a romantic encounter with Anastasia Alexandrovna, Ashenden claims to view 'the boundless steppes of Russia [and] the Kremlin with its peeling bells' in her eyes.[86]

Between 1928 and 1930, however, there was a rapid decline of 'invasion fiction' and a shift in the 'spy novel.' Popular novels of the 1930s lost interest in Russian themes and became preoccupied with world conflict caused by technological advance.[87] British concern for Russia, class conflict, and communism did not cease altogether: Between 1928 and 1939, the British Board of Film Censors banned *Battleship Potemkin*, *Strike*, and *October*, three Russian films glorifying the Bolshevik achievement.[88] Although the three best-selling 'lowbrow' novels of the 1920s confronted class conflict[89], and many more broached socialist issues[90], the tenor of these novels became conciliatory as the Popular Front against Fascism gained strength. While it is beyond the scope of this article to discuss the 'Auden Generation' and the 'Left

[83] Neilson, 'Tsars and Commissars', p. 496.
[84] Described in Martin Ceadel, 'Popular Fiction and the Next War, 1918-1939' in Frank Gloversmith (ed.), *Class Culture and Social Change: A New View of the 1930s* (Brighton, 1980), p. 166.
[85] W. Somerset Maugham, *Ashenden: or the British Agent* (Garden City [N.Y.], 1927), p. 273.
[86] Ibid., p. 274.
[87] Ceadel, 'Popular Fiction and the Next War', p. 171.
[88] McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures*, p. 425.
[89] Ibid., 479.
[90] David Smith, *Socialist Propaganda in the Twentieth-Century British Novel* (Totowa [N.J.], 1978), esp. Chapter 4.

Book Club' that gained popularity after 1936, many left-wing writers of the 1930s looked toward the Soviet Union to answer Capitalism's impending failure. An examination of the literature of the period illustrates that the Russian Revolutions were merely one of the concerns of British writers of the period. In addition to the after-shocks of World War I, many of the preoccupations of British writers were psychological and spiritual, rather than ideological or political. E.M. Forster epitomised this reaction in his speech 'English Literature Since the War.' He professes that his generation is 'weary of ideals ... [and] suspects science because she has proved herself a destructive rather than beneficent power', triggering a 'disillusioned and rather cynical'[91] world-view. Although English literature's changes during the inter-war period are better explained through its internal developments than by external impingements, such as war or revolution, the Revolution was incorporated into these debates and subtly challenged them.

For political theorists and novelists, the 1917 Russian Revolutions did not indelibly transform their thought as the Revolutions were absorbed into pre-existing debates. Instead, the Revolutions forced the intelligentsia to reconsider its relation with mass society and, therefore, provoked them to emphasise ideas pertinent to a broader public.

[91] E.M. Forster, 'English Literature Since the War', Forster 8/21 fos., pp. 168-169, King's Modern Archive Centre, Cambridge.

Romania in 2000: A Look Back and a Look Forward

Peter Barnes

What do we western Europeans know about Romania and the Romanians? The current stereotype tends to be of gypsies begging, asylum seekers who are really economic rather than political refugees, and orphanages where children are neglected appallingly. Very few westerners think of Romanians as having something valuable to offer to Europe. A close look at the major events of the twentieth century, however, will quickly reveal that Romania has made major positive contributions to the defence of western democracy and the formation of modern Europe. This paper draws on lesser–known Romanian sources to offer western analysts a distinctly Romanian perspective.

Romanian Involvement in the First World War

In the early years of the twentieth century, Romania was still trying to reach maturity as a modern democracy, shaking off four hundred years of Ottoman and Russian Tsarist domination. The king was a German prince; the political elite was a social class of a few thousand wealthy *boieri* and landowners, divided between admiration for German order on the one hand and for French culture on the other. French influence in Romania in the last half of the nineteenth century was so strong that it was said that short of outright colonisation, France never had such a great impact on any nation as its impact on Romania from 1860 to the *fin de siècle*.

At the onset of the First World War, Romania's foreign policy imperative was the union of all Romanian lands under one crown. Most of the Romanian populations outside Romania's borders were in Austria–Hungary (Banat, Transylvania, Bucovina), while Bessarabia was under Russian rule. It was unlikely that an alliance with the Central Powers would bring about the return of Austrian-ruled Romanian lands: an alliance with the forces of the Entente, on the other hand, offered much greater hope for national union. Thus, for the Romanian government, the issue was not who to support, but merely to find the most opportune moment to enter the war. Romania declared war on 27 August 1916, having been promised unlimited war *materiel* via Russia, Russian support in Dobrudja, allied diversionary intervention in southern Bulgaria from Greece and equal status at any post–war conference. Not one of

these promises was met. German forces en route to stop the Brusilov offensive were diverted to Transylvania, and by 6 December 1916, seventy–five per cent of Romania had been occupied by the Germans. Two hundred and fifty thousand soldiers were lost and, adding insult to broken promises, British agents destroyed Romania's largest oil installations to keep them out of German hands.[1] Despite Romania's intervention being brief and apparently disastrous, it swung the balance permanently against the Central powers: Kaiser Wilhelm II had a nervous collapse; Chancellor Bethmann–Hollweg declared the war lost and resigned; von Falkenhayn, the German Chief of General Staff, called for peace negotiations and was promptly replaced with hardliners Hindenburg and Ludendorf. The German army was thus established as a greater power than the Kaiser and his chancellor, preventing further civilian influence in German government and ending any possibility of a negotiated peace settlement. Ludendorf observed that '(d)espite the victories obtained over the Romanian army, we were weakened in the general context of the war.'[2] The great western battles of 1916 could well have ended in German victories if Romania had not absorbed German reserves and undermined German confidence. On the other hand, one can only speculate how much shorter the war might have been if western guarantees had been fulfilled: Romania could have taken Bulgaria out of the war by Christmas 1916 and freed Transylvania, thus directly threatening Germany from the south–east. Churchill's fantasy of the 'soft underbelly' of Europe that influenced so much of his strategic thinking in both world wars, could have proved a reality if he had recognised Romania, and not Turkey or Italy, as the key to rapid penetration into the heart of Europe.

Romanian Unification and the Inter–Bellic Period

Romania's single war aim had been national union. The first fruit was the surprise gift of Moldova after the Bolshevik revolution. The Austrian Emperor's grant of autonomy on 16 October 1918 opened the door for realisation of the dream: assemblies of all the Romanian lands declared themselves inseparable parts of the Kingdom of Romania, and at the Great Assembly of Alba Iulia on 1 December 1918, Greater Romania was born. Romanians from Banat and Ardeal were harassed by Serb and Magyar forces and stopped from attending the Great Assembly, because these states had aspirations

[1] Kurt W. Treptow, *A History of Romania* (Iaæi, 1996), pp. 375–379.
[2] Ibid., p. 378.

for the territories in question.[3] However, French intervention on Romania's behalf ensured that the borders established at the Paris conference were honoured. The early French support was not sustained. When the Soviet Republic of Hungary claimed Ardeal (Transylvania) and launched an invasion in April 1919, the Paris Peace Conference decided not to intervene. The Hungarian attack was repulsed and Romania counterattacked, stopping at the Tisza on 1 May. When the Hungarians attacked again on 20 July 1919, the 'Big Four' told the Romanians they would have to establish their own border by force of arms.[4] The Romanian army did this, and more. On 10 July 1919 former Hungarian Prime Minister Gyula Andrassy had invited Romania to overthrow the Bela Kun regime with the affirmations: 'The only power that can liquidate bolshevism in central Europe is Romania', and '(o)nly with your help can we save our country and re–establish peace and order in the heart of Europe'[5]. Romanian forces fought their way to Budapest by 3 August, being welcomed by the Hungarian democratic and conservative parties. In contrast to the brutality of Hungarian forces in Ardeal and the Banat, Romanian forces organised soup kitchens and aid programs for the local population. This intervention ended the very real threat of communist domination of Central Europe,

but at the same time as Romania was protecting Hungary's future, she was wounding her pride. The well–meant but somewhat triumphalist observation of Alexandru Vaida–Voivod – '(t)he Hungarians are our enemies of yesterday, our vanquished foe of today, and we want them to be our friends of tomorrow'[6] – served to exacerbate the historical antipathy of Hungarians toward their former vassals.

Collective Security and Revisionism

As the series of border wars and post–war treaty negotiations finished in the early 1920s, there remained, inevitably, a set of nations who considered themselves net winners and another set who felt that, in the overall scheme of

[3] Gheorghe Buzatu, Valeriu F. Dobrinescu, and Hori Dumitrescu, *România æi Conferinæa de Pace de la Paris, 1919-1920* (Focæani, 1999), pp. 184-185.

[4] Ibid., p. 131.

[5] Florin Constantiniu, *O Istorie Sincerå a Poporului Român, Ediæia a Douå* (Bucureæœi, 1999), p. 285.

[6] Ibid., p. 286.

things, they were losers. Romania was clearly among the winners, while most of Romania's neighbours felt that they had lost territory unfairly, much of it to Romania. Russia was humiliated by its inability to recover Bessarabia; for Bulgaria, regaining the Quadrilateral was an essential national aim; the Serbs had fought bitterly at the Paris peace conference with Ion I.C. Bratianu's delegation over the Banat; Hungary resented the loss of Ardeal. The intensity of passion was shown by Myklos Horthy's comment:

> Hungary's Number One enemy is Romania because our greatest territorial claims are against her and because she is the most powerful of our neighbours. Therefore, our principal foreign policy goal is resolution of the Romanian problem by force of arms.[7]

Only with Yugoslavia was any real reconciliation possible: Bratianu's rival Take Ionescu probably saved Romania's future by his (unauthorised) concession to divide the Banat with Yugoslavia. His advice to King Ferdinand at the time was 'Romania is surrounded by three hostile nations (Russia, Hungary, Bulgaria); we can't afford to alienate the Kingdom of the Serbs and Croats as well'. Romania lacked the resources to hold all that she had won, so the concept of collective security was an essential strategy to preserve Greater Romania. In pursuing this goal, Romania had two outstanding foreign ministers in the inter–bellic period, men who were able to forge a network of defensive treaties. The first was Dumitru (Take) Ionescu (1858–1922). His dream was to establish a buffer zone – the *cordon sanitaire* – around Russia that would include the Baltic states, Poland, Romania, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Yugoslavia[8]. His successes, though less far–reaching, were still impressive. His major achievement was the Little Entente (signed 14 June 1921) which later that year forced the expulsion of the former Emperor Charles IV from Hungary.

The second great Romanian statesman of the period was Niculae Titulescu (1882–1941). While Ionescu had had the advantage of a European political environment that was generally disposed toward collective security, Titulescu had to operate in the context of rampant revisionism, led by newly

[7] Ibid., p. 286.

[8] Buzatu, *Conferinæa de Pace*, pp. 319, 321.

Nazified Germany, but followed with zeal by Russia, Italy and Hungary. He was twice elected president of League of Nations, the only diplomat to ever hold that post for two terms. He reorganised Little Entente in February 1933 to include a permanent council and an economic council. He followed this achievement with the Balkan Entente, signed on 9 February 1934 to provide a forum for peacefully resolving misunderstandings and reciprocal guarantees for the integrity of existing borders. Titulescu was also the driving force behind the London Convention on Aggression and Borders (signed 3 July 1933); in 1935 he sponsored the USSR in establishing treaties with Czechoslovakia and France (this gesture of international reconciliation actually worked against Romania: the western powers sustained Romania as a bulwark against Soviet expansion; with Russia again a part of the western strategic system, Romania's main use was as a pawn in negotiations with them). Thus by 1935 Romania had led the European nations in great strides toward long–term peace and cooperation. Aside from its efforts for long–term peace and stability in Europe, Romania can also claim credit for giving the final alert that made World War Two inevitable. The 'Tilea affair' occurred on 20 March 1939 when Viorel Tilea, Romanian ambassador to London, told Lord Halifax (untruthfully) that Germany had issued an ultimatum threatening Romania with a fate similar to that of Czechoslovakia. The ploy succeeded in waking up the English government. Sidney Astair remarked that the Tilea incident

> can be seen as the primary cause of the chain of events that led to the start of World War Two because without it Great Britain and France would not have given territorial guarantees to Poland, and the honouring of those guarantees obliged the two countries to declare war on Germany.[9]

Romanian Involvement in the Second World War

Phase One: With the Axis

For most of the one hundred years up until the start of the war, Romania had been striving to build close relationships with the western powers. However, by 1940 the total failure of western guarantees for Czechoslovakia and Poland in

[9] Constantiniu, *O Istorie Sincerâ a Poporului Român*, p. 339.

1938–1939, followed by the collapse of France, left Romania totally exposed and without allies. General Antonescu observed,

> I side with the Axis because our political and economic interests coincide, because for our security we cannot separate from Germany and Italy, and because Romania does not enter the Anglo–French economic sphere ... What have we to choose? What other force is there that can guarantee us against future dangers, and support our domestic military and economic rebuilding? ... The situation of small states is always difficult from this point of view.[10]

There was no choice: the Germans wanted only military cooperation and access to oil; Russia wanted all of Moldavia and a land bridge to Bulgaria through Dobrudja. Romania's own hopes were simple: recovery of territory lost by the Vienna Diktat and the Russian invasion of 1940. This was more achievable with the Germans: it allowed a military liberation of Moldavia (which Russia would never give by negotiation), and it created a political obligation from the Germans which could be exploited to annul the Diktat. After the rapid victories in the campaign of autumn 1941, Romania was confronted with a new decision: to continue fighting beyond the River Dneister or not? The Dneister is the traditional eastern boundary of Romania and the Russians had now been driven from Romanian soil. American and British representatives urged the Romanians not to invade their ally. Romania's decision sprang from a naive idealism, illustrated by Antonescu's declaration in December 1941: 'I am an ally of the Reich against Russia, I am neutral in the conflict between Great Britain and Germany, and I am for America against the Japanese'[11]. Not even Churchill's affirmation of total war - '(i)f Hitler invaded Hell, I would at least make a favourable reference to the devil in the House Of Commons' - was clear enough to the Romanians that an alliance with Hitler would override any sentimental attachments of the past. Romania's political leaders never gave up the hope that the west would accept Romania as a natural ally. Many now speculate on whether the Allies would have upheld the integrity of Romania's borders in

[10] Treptow, *A History of Romania*, p. 483.

[11] Constantiniu, *O Istorie Sincerâ a Poporului Român*, p. 371.

1945 if Romania had behaved otherwise in 1941. Looking at the ease with which the west abandoned Poland, Czechoslovakia and the Baltic states in the period between 1944 and 1948, it is inconceivable that they would have cared more for Romania. From the Romanian perspective, Bessarabia could not be safe without the total defeat of soviet armed forces (as was shown by the second Hungarian invasion in July 1919 after the Romanian army had stopped at the Tisza in May that year); more pressure could be brought to bear on Germany to return Ardeal if Romania showed itself to be a more loyal ally than Hungary.[12]

Phase Two: With the Allies

By mid–1942 German ability to win the war was in doubt, and in September 1942 the Romanian vice–president convinced Count Ciano that Italy and Romania should approach the Allies with a joint proposal for leaving the war, a plan vetoed by Mussolini in January 1943. The watershed in Romano–German relations was the debacle of Stalingrad: Romania had repeatedly warned the Germans of an impending offensive, but they failed to provide the necessary resources to resist the attack. Throughout 1943 the Romanian government continued to seek an accommodation with the western allies. Antonescu also authorised opposition leader Maniu to negotiate directly and offered to assist in a coup against himself if that would help.

Unwittingly, Romania played a significant part in aiding the Allied landings in Normandy: the British leaked to German intelligence information about their negotiations with Romanian Prince Stirbei in Cairo, causing German reserve forces to be moved from France into Hungary and Romania. Only in mid–1944 did the Romanians accept the harsh reality that the western Allies would not negotiate, and that peace must be made with the Russians. The Russian ultimatum required that Romania accept guilt for the war, pay reparations, allow free passage of Russian forces, and provide armed forces to support the allies. The only concession that Antonescu won from the Russians was a fourteen–day warning to the Germans that Romania was changing sides. In the period between 20 August and 22 August 1944, Antonescu made the military and political preparations necessary for the change, but on 23 August he was arrested under orders from King Mihai, who wanted the west to perceive the change of military alignment as the first act of a new government rather than an act of the old order. The Germans reacted to the change by attacking

[12] Ibid., p. 496.

Romanian forces throughout Romania. In the ensuing two weeks, Romanian forces showed their worth, taking prisoner fifty–three thousand German soldiers. The impact of Romania's defection was huge: the Carpathian barrier that had held off German forces for a whole year in 1917 was bypassed with a pen stroke; the Romanian army, a proven force, went from bitter enemy to valuable ally (German General Hans Speidel declared that '(t)he Romanians were the best soldiers in the Axis apart from Germany: give them good leaders and you will not find better troops'[13]). English historian John Erickson asserts that 23 August was one of the most decisive days of World War Two[14], while Hitler told Croatian leader Ante Pavelic that the defection was as great a disaster as the D–Day landings. Germany was forced to withdraw from Greece and the Balkans, and the war was shortened by at least six months.

How different would the post–war map of Europe be if Romania had stayed with Germany? Germany could have resisted allied penetration much longer – maybe the Ardennes offensive of December 1944 could have succeeded. Or, if the western allies had accepted Antonescu's offer to not resist an 'Anglo–Saxon' invasion in 1943? Perhaps fifty years of cold war could have been avoided. What is clear is that Romania changed the course of the war, and that (just as in 1916–1918) a more honest and open attitude by the western powers could have prevented decades of suffering in eastern and central Europe.

Influence in the Cold War

From the early 1950s Romanian communist leaders were looking for ways to distance themselves from Moscow, and while their efforts sometimes contributed to international tensions, often they brought easing of the global divisions that pushed the world toward war.

Romania's role in the Hungarian uprising of 1956 goes unnoticed by most western analysts amid the parallel crisis on the Suez Canal and the intensification of the thermo–nuclear armaments race. And to be sure, despite Khrushchev's request, Romania sent no troops. This decision was based on the very real fear of a Hungarian nationalist revolt in Ardeal. However, as Deletant observes: 'Romania was the USSR's most active ally in the Hungarian crisis – its support went beyond that of an ally to be that of a friend': strategic roads were widened to ease Russian troop movements; Romania offered asylum to

[13] Ibid., p. 382.
[14] Ibid., p. 412

Imre Nagy, then handed him over to the Russians; Romania undertook the rebuilding of the AVH (Hungarian secret police), recruiting ethnic Hungarians from Cluj.[15] Thus, Romania contributed in a major measure to a twelve–year delay in the development of 'communism with a human face'. And because the Hungarian crisis caused the Americans to panic and force the French and English to withdraw from Suez, Romania contributed to the downfall of England as a major world power. Although Dej put Khrushchev in Romania's debt by his active behind–the–scenes support for the Russian invasion, it awakened the Romanian leadership to their own vulnerability. Dej remarked to Silvio Brucan '(i)f we don't turn one hundred and eighty degrees in our relations with the Russians, we are lost.'[16]

Moves toward Independence under Gheorghiu–Dej

Within two years, Romania started looking for their payoff – but even this was made to look like help for Soviet strategic goals. As Americans forces boosted NATO strength, Dej proposed that Soviet land forces be removed from Romania. On 25 July 1958 the Soviet Union removed her 35,000 troops from Romanian soil as part of a negotiation strategy to force NATO to reduce its troop levels. Though this was a safe reduction for the USSR because Romania was not a front line state, it put the Soviets on the moral high ground at a time when American involvement around the world under the Dulles brothers' obsessive anti–communist philosophy was making America the world's bully. However, it was the last Romanian favour to her eastern neighbour. Henceforward, Romanian leaders found Romanian security to be better safeguarded by flirting with Russia's enemies: in June 1960 the eighth congress of the Romanian Communist Party (PCR) used Sino–Soviet disagreements to distance Romania from USSR; in 1961–1963, Romania championed the fight within Comecon against the Valev plan (to turn most of Moldavia, eastern Romania and Bulgaria into a giant agricultural zone to meet the USSR's internal needs); on 23 April 1964 the PCR declared Romanian autonomy from USSR in the 'Statement Of The Romanian Workers Party Concerning The Problems Of World Communism' and published Karl Marx's *Notes about the Romanians*, a denunciation of the Imperial Russian annexation of Bessarabia in 1812. Six months later Khrushchev was discredited and removed from the soviet

[15] Dennis Deletant, *Romania Under Communist Rule* (Iaæi, 1999), pp. 93–95

[16] Constantiniu, *O Istorie Sincerå a Poporului Român*, p. 458.

leadership; a change that led to the stagnation of the Brezhnev years. Romania's contribution to the weakening of Khrushchev's standing in Moscow should not be underestimated.

Ceausescu: Golden Years and Decline

The fall of Khrushchev was followed closely by the death of his old friend Gheorghiu–Dej and the accession of Ceausescu to the Romanian leadership. Deletant observes that: 'in pursuing autonomous foreign policy, Ceausescu was able ... to offer the west an opportunity to exploit an apparent breach in the communist bloc.'[17] Romania managed to be at the same time an ally of the USSR and a force for weakening the division of the world into two armed camps, reoccupying the role she had held as reconciler of Europe between the wars. 1967 was Ceausescu's vaunted 'year of freedom', in which he established diplomatic links with the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and, alone among the Soviet satellites, kept diplomatic links to Israel during the Six Day War. He allowed the Romanian Jewish Community to join the World Jewish Congress, and started cashing in on the new diplomatic links: for a 'head tax' of between four and ten thousand dollars per emigrant, Ceausescu allowed ethnic Germans and Jews to emigrate to the FRG and Israel.

Ceausescu earned international approval by his quick denunciation of the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia on 21 August 1968, largely because he knew it was part of a three phase plan by Moscow to re–establish order in Warsaw Pact states (invasions of Romania and Yugoslavia were to follow: neither Dubcek nor Ceausescu had been invited to the Warsaw Pact Heads Of State conference in July 1968). The USSR stopped the plan only after urgent meetings between Ceausescu and Brezhnev, and US intervention on Romania's behalf. This intervention was of huge significance: for the first time in the twentieth century, a western power contested the right of Moscow to decide the course of Romanian political life. Following this new watershed, 1969 saw visits by British Prime Minister Harold Wilson, by Charles de Gaulle, and by US president Nixon. In the period between 1971 and 1978, Romania was accepted into the western international organisations GATT, World Bank, IMF. It also received US Trade Department 'Most Favoured Nation'-status (MFN), in recognition of two major achievements: brokering the US–China reconciliation and facilitating the Egypt–Israel peace accord finalised at Camp David.

[17] Deletant, *Romania under Communist Rule*, p. 106.

1974 saw a change for the worse for 'the genius of the Carpathians': his old mentor Ion Gheorghe Maurer retired, and his wife Elena was appointed to Central Committee. This led to a rise in Ceausescu's megalomania and paranoia, and, as a consequent, the loss of international credibility as the Romanian economy entered a prolonged decline: by 1979 Romania was importing oil from the USSR; national debt tripled from three and a half billion dollars in 1977 to ten billion in 1981. There began a chain of events that exposed the moral bankruptcy of the Ceausescu regime, shocking and alienating western leaders. In 1978 Mihai Pacepa (Chief of Foreign Intelligence) defected: his 1987 book *Red Horizons* scandalised western leaders with its revelations of the extent of Romanian interference with expatriates. The 'Demographic Program' – a legal requirement for every family to have at least three children – was launched in March 1984 with the exhortation '(b)reed, comrade women, it is your patriotic duty.'[18] The 1985 thaw between Reagan and Gorbachev meant the USA no longer needed a strategic thorn in the side of the Russians and withdrew MFN status. Ceausescu's isolation increased until by the end of the 1980s, his only friends were Gaddafi, Saddam Hussein, Fidel Castro, and Kim Il Sung. Romanian isolation was highlighted in March 1989 when the United Nations human rights committee voted 21–7 for an inquiry into human rights abuses in Romania. Of her former allies; the USSR, Bulgaria and East Germany abstained, while Hungary voted in favour. Deletant remarks ironically on Ceausescu's success 'in uniting East and West – against him!'[19]

The Future

Romania has already accepted a role in the 'New Collective Security' of Europe: she has been an active participant in the NATO Pact for Peace program since 1993. Anticipating a future invitation into NATO, Romania concluded treaties with Hungary (1996) and Ukraine (1997), not without great internal controversy over territorial concessions. Future developments must be anticipated in terms of two issues that influence Romanian strategic thinking. Firstly, there is the dream of 'Greater Romania', to unite under one government the entire Romanian space, 'from the Dneister to the Tisza, from Maramureæ to the

[18] D. Aspinall, 'Romania: Queues and Personality Cults' in *Soviet Analyst* 16 May 1984, p. 4.
[19] Deletant, *Romania under Communist Rule*, p. 138.

Danube'[20]. This geographic area has been inhabited by the Romanians for over two thousand years, and not even waves of invasion and annexation of parts of the area have weakened the sense of identity and purpose of Romanians to be unified in one nation state. The second is a sense of continual exploitation and betrayal by the major states of Europe: in this century, the broken Allied promises of 1916, the failure of western guarantees for the Little Entente and Poland in 1938–1939, the rejection of peace overtures short of unconditional surrender in 1942–1944, culminating in Churchill's concessions at Moscow (9–17 October 1944) that Romania should be part of the USSR's sphere of influence, and the lip service support for the democratic parties but total acceptance of Russian policy in 1945–1947; the lack of western investment since 1990 and imposition of IMF/World Bank *laissez faire* monetarist capitalism. Possibly the pinnacle of perceived western betrayal was the implied promise of NATO membership that led President Constantinescu to sign a treaty with Ukraine on 2 June 1997 accepting the existing border between the two states. This concession was seen by many as a betrayal equal to the concessions that led to Carol II's forced abdication in 1940. The ongoing aspirations for Greater Romania – reincorporation of Moldova and northern Bucovina – present a potential for war with Ukraine; continual minority agitation for greater Hungarian autonomy in Transylvania feeds a historically justifiable fear of a 'Kosovo' type crisis – with the assumption that NATO would support Hungarian intervention rather than uphold Romanian sovereignty.

The future of Romania depends very much on recently re-elected president Ion Iliescu. He has come to power promising a pro-Europe and anti-corruption program, but as a lieutenant of Ceausescu and president from 1990 to 1996, his track record was of an orientation toward Russia, and institutionalised corruption. One can ask whether his past matters if he now has a clearly legitimate mandate to govern. Iliescu has the experience and the political connections to lead Romania well, but he is now over seventy, and some see a parallel between Romania's present balance of power and the situation in Germany in 1930–1933: the ultra-nationalist Greater Romania Party (PRM) is the second largest bloc in Parliament, and if Iliescu fails to lead well, or the region destabilises, 2004 could see something like 1933 in

[20] King Ferdinand, Declaration at Great National Assembly, Alba Iulia, 1 December 1918.

Germany, when the aging Hindenburg called on an ultra–nationalist party to lead the nation out of chaos. Above all else, Romania's future depends on her people. The huge majority of westerners working in Romania – missionaries, businessmen, and government representatives – all observe the same thing: Romanians are a clever, capable people; they have a wealthy land – abundant minerals, fertile soil, a strategic location; but they have certain negative expectations from two thousand years of invasion and exploitation that stop them from fulfilling their potential. If they can get over the past, they can own the future. They can restore Romania to a pre–eminent role in Europe and to a role of influence in the Middle East.

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History Studies
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