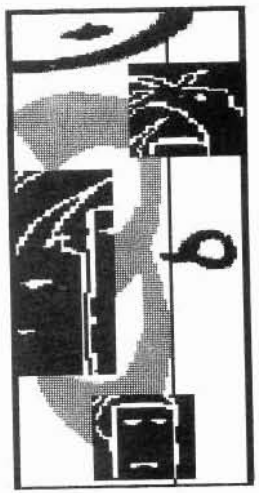
History Studies

1999

History Society Journal

University of Limerick

History Studies



University of Limerick
History Society
Journal

Volume 1 1999

The University of Limerick History Society would like to acknowledge the generous support of our sponsors:

Dr. Roger G.H. Downer, President, University of Limerick
University of Limerick Foundation
Professor Colin Townsend, Dean, College of Humanities, University of Limerick
Professor Nicholas Rees, Head, Department of Government and Society, University of Limerick
University of Limerick Students' Union
O'Mahony's Bookshop

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

All correspondence should be addressed to: The Editors, *History Studies*, University of Limerick History Society, University of Limerick Students' Union, University of Limerick, Limerick, Ireland.

Contents

Preface

In 1997 the History Society in the University of Limerick was established by faculty and students. This development revealed the healthy state of interest in history which was soon confirmed by the high attendance at lectures, seminars, film showings and field trips. It is not often that one gets the opportunity to praise the extra-curricular activities of undergraduate and postgraduate students but on this occasion, however, tribute must be paid to the Society's committee for their endeavours to promote history within the University of Limerick and in the local community. The publication of *History Studies* marks another important landmark in the development of history at the University of Limerick.

This journal contains the fruits of the labour of the Society's committee and members in the academic year 1997-8. Not only did the History Society committee organise the respective lectures and seminars at which the enclosed papers were delivered, but it supervised the production of this journal. The collection includes papers from both students and faculty alike and covers a wide range of topics, themes and periods. It is hoped that readers will enjoy the wealth of the knowledge and information contained within this collection.

Dr. Bernadette Whelan
Patron
History Society
University of Limerick

Editorial

The study of history is a well established discipline. For over sixty years teachers and students of history have been served by *Irish Historical Studies* which has set the standard for most professional writing of history in Ireland. In recent years historians have opted to answer new needs by publishing new publications such as the *Irish Economic and Social History Journal* and *History Ireland*.

Irish universities too, have a well earned reputation in fostering historical analysis and scholarship. The University of Limerick History Society, established in 1997, devoted itself to promoting the study of history within the University. With the active support of Dr. Bernadette Whelan and the history faculty the Society grew to become one of the most active groups on campus. At its foundation, members of the History Society adopted the idea of producing a journal dedicated to publishing both undergraduate and post-graduate work. In conjunction with this, members of the Society thought it appropriate to publish the papers presented at their meetings.

This first volume of *History Studies* contains papers presented to the History Society, including those delivered as part of the Holocaust Forum which took place in November-December 1997.

With the support of the history faculty and the financial support of generous benefactors within the University, the History Society is proud to publish this journal and hope that it brings enjoyment to the reader.

David A. Fleming
Edward Horgan

August 1999

The silence of the birds: Zoltan's Holocaust[1]

Edward Horgan

The human mind often likes to forget the unpleasant and recall the better things of life. The Holocaust is the greatest blot on the history of mankind. Yet, already many are in denial or in ignorance of it and many would prefer history and humanity to begin to forget or continue the process of forgetting.

Deborah Lipstadt, in her book *Denying the Holocaust,* addresses what she regarded as the 'growing assault on truth and memory'.[2] Many of those leading the attempts to deny the nature, scope and even the historical facts of the Holocaust come, predictably from right wing neo-fascist sources. But Lipstadt also lists politicians, such as Franjo Tudjman in Croatia and David Duke in the United States of America, influential writers such as David Irving in the United Kingdom, Robert Faurisson in France and Patrick Bucanan, the US syndicated columnist, as examples of others who support the denial of the Holocaust to varying degrees.

> Many years ago the prominent German historian, Theodor Mommsen, warned that it would be a mistake to believe that reason alone was enough to keep people from believing such falsehoods. If this were the case, he said, then racism, anti-Semitism, and other forms of prejudice would find no home.'[3]

There is also a popular misconception that the Holocaust was a once-off aberration of mass insanity that is never likely to be repeated. The killing fields of Cambodia, the 'ethnic cleansing' of Bosnia and Kosovo and the almost inexplicable and ongoing horrors of Rwanda and Burundi, should all serve to remind us that human suffering on a vast scale can be inflicted by

[1] In November 1997 the University of Limerick History Society hosted a forum on the Holocaust. The speaker on the final night of the forum was Zoltan Zinn-Collis a survivor of Bergen Belsen concentration camp who now resides in Athy, Co. Kildare. This account is based partly on Zinn-Collis' presentation to the forum and on an interview conducted with him in September 1998. The author also met with one of Zoltan's rescuers, Dr. Han Collis, who was part of the medical team which entered Bergen Belsen camp shortly after its liberation in 1945.

[2] Deborah Lipstadt, *Denying the Holocaust* (Jerusalem, 1993).

[3] Ibid., p. 25.

humans on humans at any time. These other instances of genocide show that such crimes against humanity are not just a German phenomenon. While the Third Reich carried out the Holocaust, the scale and the manner in which the slaughter occurred could not have happened without the involvement or complicity, deliberate or otherwise, of other European governments and individuals. Ireland, isolated by its neutrality and its geography, bears some guilt due to neglect. Ireland's wartime representative in Berlin, Ambassador Victor Bewley, was anti-Jewish, and the Departments of External Affairs and Justice effectively prevented certain Irish efforts to assist with the rescue of Jews from Germany and central Europe before, during and even after the war. Robert Briscoe, a veteran of the Irish War of Independence and a Jewish minister in Eamon de Valera's Fianna Fáil government during the war years failed to get a visa for entry into Ireland for his aunt who was in immediate danger in Germany just before the war. His son, Joe Briscoe, recalled:

> I went through the records and discovered that my father had applied to Gerry Boland, the Minister for Justice at that time, for permits. Gerry Boland had turned him down, saying that he didn't want problems with anti-Semitism and the unemployment level was already too high as it was.[4]

Robert Briscoe's aunt was later gassed at Auschwitz concentration camp. Up to one hundred and fifty-five of his other relatives were also killed in the Holocaust.

Denmark was one of the few countries that behaved in an honourable manner towards Jewish people, and demonstrated what might have been and what should have been the case in the rest of Europe.

> When in the spring of 1940 Denmark was occupied, the people resolutely refused to enforce any discriminatory regulations ... three years later when the Germans took over the administration of the country, ... almost the whole of the inconsiderable community [of Jews] were ferried in all manner of flimsy craft over to Sweden.[5]

Robert Collis, an Irishman then serving in the British Army as a doctor, raised the broader issue of genocide briefly when he recorded a conversation he had in Bergen Belsen in 1945 with a British officer. Referring to the delicate issue of mass killings by the Russians, Collis asked: 'But what about their concentration camps, their shootings, their Belsens? Are we going

[4] Mary Rose Doorly, *Hidden memories: the personal recollections of survivors and witnesses to the Holocaust living in Ireland* (Dublin, 1994), p. 13.
[5] Cecil Roth, *A history of the Jews* (New York, 1970).

to shut our eyes to all that as we did to Hitler's and comfort ourselves with another "peace in our time" bit of wishful thinking?'[6]

The question can be raised whether, it is wrong to blame all Germans, particularly subsequent generations, for the Holocaust? Arguably, that would be just another manifestation of racism. In order for catastrophes such as the Holocaust to happen, forces of evil driven by evil, personified by an active minority, are necessary. However, it also requires ignorance, silence and apathy by the majority. Historians have a duty to explore and reveal the truth so that present and future generations may learn from past mistakes.

Zoltan Zinn, at the age of four, was a prisoner at Bergen Belsen. He should not have survived. The Nazis took special interest in ensuring that the next generation of Jews would be wiped out. It was considered essential therefore to ensure that the elimination of children was given priority.

> Upon reaching the extermination camps, most children were sent to their death ... For instance, in one French roundup, of Jews in July 1942 in which 9,000 people were sent to Auschwitz, 4,000 of whom were children, only 30 people returned home after the war, none of them children.[7]

Zoltan Zinn-Collis was born in August 1940 in the foothills of the Tatra mountains in former Czechoslovakia. His father, Adolf Zinn, was a Slovakian Jew, his mother a Hungarian whose family descended from the Zip Germans of Slovakia.[8] The Zinn children were baptised into the Protestant Reformed Church of their mother. Zoltan's very earlier years, like his present life in Kildare, was uneventful and ordinary. His early memories include going to see the film Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs at a nearby town with his sister Edith. Their German heritage could have saved them. Their father was eventually forced into hiding because he was a Jew, but remained in regular contact with his family, living rough in the neighbouring countryside. The local Nazi *Einstazgruppen*[9] eventually became aware of his mother's marriage to a Jew. She was approached by a German officer who came to her house and offered her and her family protection if she renounced her husband. Her Aryan background could have saved the family, but only at the expense of

[6] Robert Collis and Han Hogerzeil, *Straight on* (London, 1947), p. 89.
[7] Doorly, *Hidden memories*, pp. 35-6.
[8] Ibid., p. 23.
[9] The word *Einstazruppen* or 'special action groups' refers to Nazi murder squads set up by Heinrich Himmler's SS to exterminate Jews and communists, among others, in Eastern Europe and Russia.

its Jewish father. Like many others of mixed marriage, she refused to do so. It is likely that at this point she was not aware of the full implications of her defence of her husband. Many Jews and others in Germany and the occupied territories still believed that they were being deported to work camps only, and not to extermination camps. This adds more gravity to the failure of those who were aware of the true nature of the camps, but who failed to protest and publicise their existence. Many more Jews could have been saved if they and the general public had been more fully aware of what was going on. Some time later, Zinn-Collis' father was arrested after having been betrayed to the Germans. The whole Zinn family was then arrested and their deportation nightmare began in January 1945. Having survived most of the war they were betrayed in its final months.

Zinn-Collis' recollection of the period is that the first part of the journey was by cattle truck, and that conditions were appalling. He thinks part of the journey was by bus and he recalls that the bus went off the road at some point, possibly because of snow and mud. Bureaucratically and coldly the family was arrested, separated from its father, entrained like cattle and sent to an unknown destination. This was to be the procedure for the annihilation of the entire Jewish population in Europe. Of course, it would have been more convenient if the authorities could murder their captives as they were rounded up. This was done in some cases, especially during the initial capture of towns in the Baltic states, the Ukraine and Russia. Daniel Goldhagen outlines in detail how large numbers of Jews were murdered by shooting.

> A sample of the German slaughters included 23,600 Jews in Kamenets-Podolske on August 27-28, 1941; 19,000 in Minsk, divided between two different massacres in November 1941; 21,000 in Rovno on November 7-8, 1941; a total of over 25,000 Jews near Riga on November 30 and December 8-9, 1941; 10,000 to 20,000 in Kharkov in January 1942; and, in the largest single shooting massacre, more than 33,000 over two days at Babi Yar on the outskirts of Kiev at the end of September 1941.[10]

Zinn-Collis' story was just one person's experience. He was one of the exceptionally lucky ones, though it seems incongruous to apply the term 'lucky' to any aspect of his experiences at the hands of the Nazis. When Russia was invaded in June 1941 huge numbers of Jews fell into German hands. The tasks of elimination and disposal became too great to achieve through 'on-the-spot' shootings, carried out by the *Einstazgruppen*. Death camps were erected to specialise in the elimination of 'undesirables' by

[10] Daniel Jonah Goldhagen, *Hitler's willing executioners* (London, 1997), p. 154.

gassing. One of the first death camps was Auschwitz-Birkenau which opened its gates in March 1942.[11] According to Robert Collis, Spring 1942 saw the beginning of the deportation of Jews from Slovakia by the Germans with the aid of the Slovak government. By November 1942 eighty thousand out of a total of one-hundred thousand had been deported. Then followed a pause of two years. In November 1944 the Germans occupied the country and commenced to round up the remainder of the Slovak Jews.[12] It was this second roundup which finally sealed the fate of the Zinn family. Zinn-Collis does not know how or when his father died. They were separated from him during their journey to Belsen and he never saw him again. Robert Collis in his book noted:

> We heard that Zoltan's Hungarian mother had died in Belsen from typhus, that his father had been taken from Ravensbruck Lager to Sachsenhausen from where he was never heard of again. One little brother had died in Belsen and a sister in Ravensbruck.[13]

Zinn-Collis does not know what his mother's name was. At the age of four, a mother is only known as Mamma. The loss of family still effects him, particularly on family occasions. When interviewed at his home in Athy, he spoke of his daughter's recent wedding. He was upset by the fact that it was an unbalanced wedding. He was the only representative of the Zinn family at the wedding.

His memories of Belsen are irregular. Like most four-year-old boys, his priorities were on the daily events in his life. The lack of routine at this period in Belsen, combined with the dreadful conditions and the ever-present reality of death all around him, left an indelible impression on him. To this day he creates a personal 'security zone' around himself and he defends it.[14] Zinn-Collis never hugs strangers and has difficulty making close friendships. He says that he tends to be over-protective of his own children. But in other ways he acted as a normal four-year-old even in a concentration camp where it may have helped him survive. At Belsen he got on with the business of being a precocious four-year-old, which required regular doses of mischief. He recalls getting into trouble for being regularly caught in out-of-bounds areas

[11] Ibid., p. 157.

[12] Collis and Hogerzeil, *Straight on*, p. 77.

[13] Ibid., p. 65.

[14] For his visit to the University of Limerick on 9 December 1997, Zoltan had arranged to arrive at 6 p.m. Yet, he arrived in Limerick at 3 p.m. in order to ensure that he was familiar with his surroundings and that he was on time for his meeting.

such as the kitchen, and even playing with the Alsatian guard dogs. Another significant factor in the survival of many of the young children at Belsen was the presence of two Jewish women, Hermina and Luba, who had been transferred from Auschwitz and who assumed the role of nurses and guardians for the children. Zinn-Collis recalls how he and other small children were washed by Hermina and Luba on the rare occasions when water was available and then being sent to run around 'to dry off' while the vermin were being washed from their clothes.

Liberation in April 1945 came too late for many at Belsen. The camp, designed as a transit camp, was, in mid 1945, overflowing with dead, dying or starving prisoners.

> When the Russians neared the eastern concentration camps, the inmates were marched off to more western camps. Belsen, which was designed to hold not more than ten thousand at utmost capacity, was filled and filled again ... the numbers grew and grew till over sixty thousand people were pressed into the camp. Disease broke out. Typhus, dysentery and tuberculosis were the chief, all aggravated by starvation. Now the people began to die, first in tens, then in hundreds, day by day.[15]

The camp had reached a state of almost total anarchy. Food and even water had effectively run out or been deliberately cut off. Doorly noted that on the day of Liberation 'one of the last things which Zoltan's mother heard was the sound of cheers going up all around her.'[16] She died soon after.

A few weeks after Liberation, Robert Collis arrived in Belsen with a team of medical workers and volunteers. One of these volunteers was Han Hogerzeil, a Dutch law student, who later became a doctor herself and married Robert Collis. Because Robert Collis was a paediatrician he and his team concentrated their activities on the children, most of whom were ill with multiple diseases. Robert Collis described how he was 'captivated' by Zoltan from the beginning: '... Zsoltan Zyn, who lay moaning to himself in a corner. He was but five years old. His side made him cry nearly all the time, and his big, brown, lovely eyes were full of pain.'[17] Han Collis recalls Zoltan's first words to them in German, which she translated for Robert Collis: 'My father is dead, now the doctor is my father.'

Robert Collis brought five of the children, for whom no living relatives could be traced, to Ireland and arranged adoption or fostering for them. They included Zoltan and his sister Edith. He experienced many bureaucratic difficulties. Irish adoption laws specified that adopting parents must be of the same religion as the children therefore Zoltan and Edith could not be formally adopted. However, they were effectively fostered by Robert Collis, which accounts for the Collis part of Zoltan's name. Zoltan and Edith were sent to the Quaker school at Newtown, Waterford. He speaks very well of this part of his upbringing. 'To them' he says, 'I was just another snotty nosed kid, always getting up to mischief. They were non-judgmental and they made no fuss about me and treated me as a normal child and that was just what I needed during that period.'

When asked if he thought happenings like the Holocaust could be repeated in central Europe or elsewhere, Zinn-Collis replied that the world has already witnessed other holocausts in Cambodia, Bosnia and Rwanda. It was these new acts of genocide that encouraged him to speak out and inform people of what he had witnessed. He commented on the failure by the Roman Catholic authorities in the Vatican to condemn the Holocaust during the Second World War and the continuing failure by the Vatican to speak out about events in Bosnia and Kosovo. He hopes that by publicising the Holocaust he may achieve some good.

Lessons can be learned from the Holocaust. Firstly, the official, systematic policy of the German Third Reich succeeded. The immediate result of the Holocaust was the murder of up to six million people by the Nazis. But an even greater loss, to the Jewish people and to humanity as a whole, was the loss of countless generations of unborn Jews and others murdered at Auschwitz, Belsen and the other death camps. This is the hidden loss of the Holocaust. Zinn-Collis and others like him, by their survival, and through their families, at least robbed the Nazis of some of their hoped for achievement.

The Jewish people lost not just those millions directly murdered but also all the subsequent generations that would have descended from them.

---

[15] Ibid., p. 49.
[16] Doorly, *Hidden memories*, p. 30.
[17] Collis and Hogerzeil, *Straight on*, p. 61.

The death of the others
Reflections on the Nazi use of genocide and eugenics to create a Master Race

William O'Brien

The twentieth century has witnessed not just a high toll of individual human life, but also of entire peoples, the extermination of which is termed genocide. It is a relatively new term coined by the Jewish American lawyer, Rafael Lemkin, from the Greek word *genos* meaning people or tribe and the Latin verb *caedre*, to kill. Lemkin defined it thus:

> Generally speaking genocide does not necessarily mean the immediate destruction of a nation, except where this is accomplished by mass killing of all its members as a nation. It is intended rather to signify a co-ordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of the essential foundations of life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the peoples themselves. The objectives of such a plan would be the disintegration of the political and social institutions ... Genocide is directed against the national group as an entity and the actions involved are directed against individuals, not in their individual capacity but as members of a national group.[1]

Lemkin's definition of genocide was influenced by the experience of the Holocaust, the persecution of Jews and that of other minorities from 1933 to 1945 in Germany and elsewhere. However, the mass killing of peoples is not a new phenomenon, it is a tragic common fact of history. In ancient times the military defeat of a people frequently meant the slaughter of men and the enslavement of women and children. More recently, Western civilisation had proved no more enlightened. The Indians of both North and South America have been the clear victims of genocide from the first arrival of Europeans on those continents. In Tasmania the native Aboriginal population was literally hunted out of existence by the white settler population. Indeed, nineteenth century imperialism might have brought glory and riches to some major European powers but the cost to indigenous populations was appallingly high in terms of lives lost, humiliation, theft of property and cultural dispossession.

[1] Cited in 'Beyond the 1948 Convention – emerging principles in genocide in customary international law', *Maryland Journal of International Law and Trade*, 17, 2 (Autumn, 1993), pp. 193-226.

However the Holocaust stands out as unique. Much has been written and much remains to be understood as the debate currently surrounding Daniel Goldhagen's *Hitler's willing executioners* reveals.[2] Interpretations of this tragedy have varied. It must be borne in mind that the Nazis targeted more than the Jews. They also murdered, on a large scale, the disabled, gypsies, insane, and those it chose to categorise as 'asocial', black or homosexual. None of these groups can be considered in isolation as the fate of all was ultimately interlinked. For far too long the fate of these other groups has been largely forgotten. Yet, to deny the memory of their loss is to lose sight of the Nazi obsession with eugenics. The Nazis, in particular Adolf Hitler and Heinrich Himmler, the head of the *Schutzstaffen* (SS), aspired to create a socio-biological Utopia in which all weaknesses were removed from the German race. Such a dream necessitated the exclusion of those non-Germans and Germans who were deemed a threat to the purity of the race or *Volk*. In this it has to be admitted they were greatly aided by those of the German scientific and medical establishment who produced ideas of race similar to the Nazis.[3]

To gain some understanding of Nazi theories on eugenics it is important to examine the nineteenth century background to this pseudo science. During that period racial prejudice which had existed for centuries was validated by a scientific guise, a development not confined to Germany[4]. In large part, the evolutionary theories of Charles Darwin contributed to the process, but in a way of which he would have disapproved. Later writers, influenced by Darwin's work, characterised the processes of evolution in the phrase, 'the survival of the fittest' and applied those ideas to human relationships. In particular they were interested in struggles between ethnic and national groups. In this way of thinking only certain races were seen as worthy of survival. Given the great rivalries between the major European powers in the nineteenth century such views were highly persuasive. Many thinkers and politicians became increasingly concerned about the quality of their particular nation. They viewed with alarm certain groups who were regarded as a threat to the long-term survival of the nation. Ethnic minorities within the state clearly caused them much anxiety but within their own groups

[2] Daniel Jonah Goldhagen, *Hitler's willing executioners: ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (London, 1996).

[3] Henry Friedlander, *The origins of Nazi genocide: from euthanasia to the Final Solution* (Carolina, 1995), pp. 123 -6.

[4] James Joll, *Europe since 1870* (London, 1990), pp. 101 -12.

were to be found others whose feebleness, it was feared, would ultimately destroy the race. The threat lay in their blood, that is in their genes. Many scientists, reflecting the nineteenth century's obsession with categorising all things, labelled these individuals in groups whose behaviour or infirmities might be explained in this way.

Crime, for example, was not a result of poverty, but bad genes. The disabled were an especial cause for alarm. As competition between nations increased it was argued by many in Germany that racial degeneration would inevitably result if such individuals were allowed to have children. History was put to use to suggest that certain groups had not only an inherent superiority but a great national destiny. Such groups, it was argued, triumphed because they had sought to preserve the integrity of their race. Those of Aryan or Germanic origin were seen as especially favoured. Ironically, in light of later events, it was a Frenchman, Jean Arthur Gobbineau, who with his *Essay on the Aryan race* first popularised the obsession with Aryan racial origins. Such views were highly influential in Germany but, it must be emphasised, not just there nonetheless. The attraction was to a certain extent understandable. Three successive wars, two of which were against Austria and France, had led to German unification in 1871. Rapid economic success soon followed, making Germany the dominant European economy on the eve of World War One. It is perhaps not too surprising then that many in Germany began to see their nation as chosen by providence to lead mankind.

Yet, imperial Germany was a society riven with divisions. A modern economy was straining within an institutional strait-jacket based on a social structure dominated by the aristocracy and crown. A large working class led by the German Socialist Party (SPD) challenged both the old landed élite and its industrial allies. For some, modernisation represented a threat to old values, a fear shared by conservatives in Germany and generally across Europe. Many retreated into a bellicose nationalism. From the accession of William II to the throne in 1888, these problems greatly increased. In order to distract public attention away from growing domestic problems the political establishment began to pursue a more aggressively nationalist policy in foreign affairs.

It was during this period of turmoil, of dramatic social and political change that Hitler, Himmler and other leading members of the Nazi movement received their intellectual formation. German nationalism was a multi-faceted phenomenon, rabid anti-Semitism, it must be said, only appeared on its lunatic fringe but it influenced many nonetheless, particularly

those such as the *petite bourgeoisie* who were unable to find a secure place for themselves in the new industrial and social order. Such beliefs incorporated much pseudo scientific ideas on race and urged Germans to ensure the purity of the *Volk*. Widely disseminated in the popular press at the time, they served to confirm the prejudices of individuals who found themselves in competition with those whom they regarded as inferior and yet often more successful than they were. They offered a rationale of sorts of their plight and in calling for the exclusion of those who did not meet their criteria of purity offered an easy solution.

Exclusion was not extermination, or at least, not yet. Daniel Goldhagen has been much criticised for attributing to Germans what he calls an eliminationist anti-Semitism at this time.[5] Yet, the development of Hitler's thought on this issue is problematical. There is no denying his hatred of Jews, as *Mein Kampf* makes abundantly clear. His anti-Semitic beliefs date from his years in Vienna between 1907 and 1913. Having failed to get into the Viennese Academy of Fine Arts, he eked out an existence doing odd jobs and living in doss houses. Ironically, as Alan Bullock indicates, he was indebted to the kindness of many Jews, in particular a stall-holder who provided him with much needed clothes.[6] In *Mein Kampf* he professed to have been astonished by anti-Semitism, seeing in the Jew a man no different from any other. However, in the orthodox Jews he saw something sinister. Like many racists before him he saw in the object of his hatred not a human being, but a stereotype, a collection of negative characteristics which he saw as a threat to himself. Jews were not the only objects of his ire however, as he made clear in *Mein Kampf*:

> My inner revulsion toward the Hapsburg state steadily grew ... I was repelled by the conglomeration of races which the capital showed me, repelled by this whole mixture of Czechs, Poles, Hungarians, Ruthenians, Serbs and Croats and everywhere the eternal mushroom of humanity - Jews and more Jews. To me the giant city seemed the embodiment of racial desecration ... The longer I lived in this city the more my hatred grew for the foreign mixture of races which had begun to corrode this old site of German culture ... For all these reasons a longing rose stronger in me to go at last whither my childhood secret desires and secret love had drawn me.[7]

[5] Goldhagen, *Hitler's willing executioners*, pp. 23-4, 80-1, 88-9.
[6] Alan Bullock, *Hitler: a study in tyranny* (London, 1962), pp. 34-5.
[7] Adolf Hitler, *Mein kampf*, translated by James Murphy (London, 1969), pp. 114-5.

The Jews topped the list of Hitler's demonology of inferior races. These races as a whole were a threat to the racial and cultural integrity of the German *Volk* and were to be excluded as far as possible.

A question frequently examined by historians, is that of when exactly did Hitler decide to eliminate the Jews. In the early 1920s he outlined plans to an acquaintance of his intention on coming to power to erect gallows in Munich's *Marienplatz* and to have all the city's Jews hung, a procedure which he would then repeat elsewhere.[8] Yet, such explicit declarations of his final intentions were rare before the outbreak of war in September 1939. To gain a more accurate idea of Hitler's thinking before the Second World War we must look at his views on eugenics.

During the 1920s Hitler set out his views on race not only in *Mein Kampf* but also in another shorter book that remained unpublished in his lifetime. This 'Second Book', as it has been called, sets out more clearly than *Mein Kampf* his theories on race. Domestic policies he defined as 'the art of preserving for the people the basis of its power in the form of its racial value and numbers.' Foreign politics he described as 'the art of securing for a people the living space it needs at a given time in terms of size and resources.' For this he envisaged an area of some five-hundred thousand square kilometres – a necessity which implied war.[9] In the early 1930s he stated:

> We are obliged as part of our mission of preserving the German population. We shall have to develop a technique of depopulation. If you ask me what I mean by depopulation, I mean the removal of entire racial units. And that is what I intend to carry out – that is roughly my task. Nature is cruel so we too must be cruel. If I can send out the flower of the German nation into the hell of war without the smallest pity for the spilling of precious German blood, then surely I have the right to remove millions of an inferior race that breeds like vermin! And by remove I don't necessarily mean destroy: I shall take systematic measures to remove or dam their natural fertility. For example, I shall keep their men and women separated for years. Do you remember the falling birth rate of the last war? Why should we not do quite consciously as through a number of years what was at that time merely the inevitable consequence of the long war? There are many ways, systematically and comparatively painless, or at any rate bloodless of causing undesirable races to die out.[10]

[8] R.G.L. Waite, *The psychopathic God*, (New York, 1993), p. 363.
[9] Bvon Schewick, 'Katolische Kirche and Nationalsozialischte rassenpolitik,' in K. Gotto and K. Regpen (eds.), *Katolische Kirche und Nationalsozialisms* (Mainz, 1980) cited in Martyn Housden, *Resistance, resistance and Conformity in the Third Reich* (London, 1997), p. 12.

It must be always borne in mind then that Hitler targeted the Jews and others for genocide not simply out of racism but also as part of a grand design to improve the Aryan racial stock. Bear in mind too that Lemkins's definition of genocide does not mean the immediate murder of the ethnic or racial group. It begins first with their exclusion from society and can be developed over time from there.

Once the Nazi party came to power in 1933 it began to exclude those groups and individuals deemed unworthy of inclusion in the Volk. Jews as Semites were seen as a separate racial group. Through the centuries they had stubbornly preserved their culture and as such might aspire to become a state within a state. Traditionally too they had been seen by many Germans as a group given to deceit and to the exploitation of the less privileged in society. Prejudice and myth greatly coloured how they were viewed as a race whether by scientists, Nazis or ordinary Germans. Through intermarriage with Germans it was maintained they deliberately set out to dilute those characteristics of blond hair and blue eyes that set Germans apart from others. The disabled threatened the physical integrity of the Aryan race by passing on their infirmities to later generations. 'Asocials' were made up of criminals, prostitutes, beggars, alcoholics and others whose behaviour was seen as a threat. Gypsies in their refusal to accept a settled way of life and traditional authority were a particular threat to authoritarian social structures that would guarantee the economic, political and cultural success of the race. Germans of mixed race, often as a result of liaisons between black French soldiers and German women, though very small in number, were all too obvious a reminder of miscegenation. Homosexuals were despised because they appeared to repudiate the obligation to breed and threatened the Nazi ideal of a *Mannerstadt*, a patriarchal state in which women were to play only a subordinate role.

The Nazis moved quickly against some of these groups with laws for compulsory sterilisation. In 1933 a law for the prevention of 'hereditary sterilised diseased offspring' was introduced to 'prevent lives unworthy of existence'. From 1933 to 1939 three-hundred and twenty thousand women, a half per cent of the population, were sterilised.[11] Most were disabled or schizophrenic and others of mixed race. In November of that year, a law

[10] H. Raushing, *Hitler speaks* (London, 1939), p. 140.
[11] Martyn, *Resistance and conformity*, p. 158.

against dangerous 'habitual' criminals was passed. It provided for the sterilisation of males by castration. By 1940, two thousand had been castrated.

The option of fleeing Germany was not available to Germany's disabled who were largely confined to institutions. It had long been argued by some medical authorities that the cost of keeping unproductive individuals was unjustified. Funding of state-run institutions was drastically cut and inevitably many inmates died as standards of care deteriorated. Worse was to follow however. In 1938 Hitler informed the chief physician of the Reich of his intention to dispose of the disabled on the outbreak of hostilities. He was as good as his word. From September 1939 thousands were killed. Many were taken to special hospitals and killed by special injection or some other means. Nor did this remain secret. In the localities of many of these institutions there was public knowledge of these crimes. In one southern German town many of these victims were greeted by groups of children who cruelly taunted them with actions that hinted of their eventual fate. During the war those who remained in institutions were denied the extra rations that hospitals usually received. Some psychiatrists had recourse to concentration camps to rid themselves of difficult patients.[12]

From the very beginning the Nazis persecuted gypsies by applying the existing laws with ever increasing vigour and eventually forcing them into specially created camps. Their desire for a wandering life was characterised as abnormal, the result of genetic inheritance. Many were sterilised very early on along with the other groups and were later included by the Nazis in the 'final solution'. Largely despised by settled people throughout most of Europe; few at that time came to their defence.

'Asocials' were quite simply those who might fall through the net in any society. For all their concern with social engineering the Nazis showed little real insight into the problems of social deprivation and crime – Hitler's own experiences in the doss houses of Vienna notwithstanding. Crime was attributed by the Nazis to a genetic predisposition in this group and could only be eradicated by the exclusion of this group from the wider population. This was done by sterilisation and later through murder in the camps. The death toll for Hitler's lack of social imagination was high.

[12] The most detailed account of the Nazi campaign of euthanasia is Henry Friedlander's, *The origins of Nazi genocide: from euthanasia to the Final Solution* (Carolina, 1995).

The plight of homosexuals during the Third Reich was largely ignored until the 1980s.[13] Criminalised by Paragraph 175 of the German penal code this group was soon targeted by raids on bars, clubs and the headquarters of homosexual rights organisations. The law was amended after 1935 to criminalise all sexual activity between men and the Nazis used the homosexual smear to remove opponents within the army, civil service and the churches. Following a time in prison under the law – some eight months or so – homosexuals were increasingly sent to the camps while those charged with gross indecency were sent directly to the camps. Overall, during the Third Reich, some forty to sixty thousand men were sent to the camps. Lesbians were largely ignored because as a group they were less visible – one of the few benign consequences of a deeply patriarchal society. The work of Rudiger Lautmann, Professor of Sociology at the University of Bremen gave the first clear picture of their fate.[14] Of those sent to the camps under the age of twenty, seventy per cent died. Homosexuals were given the 'pink triangle' as a mark of their supposed weakness. As a group they occupied the lowest rung of the prison ladder and were victims of abuse not only from guards but other prisoners as well. They were frequently given the most dangerous work. In Saschausen, a camp outside Berlin, they were put to work in the clay pits, filling trolleys which they then drew to the surface. The camp commandant, Rudolf Hoess thought that hard work would make men of homosexuals. In fact it killed most of them. Accidents were all too frequent as half-starved and exhausted prisoners collapsed. The death toll among homosexuals remains contentious. Some commentators have claimed it was as high as one million, others have put it as low as fifty thousand. More realistically Lautmann estimates it at somewhere between five thousand and fifteen thousand with ten thousand as the most likely figure.[15]

It was however, the Jews who were the principal targets of Hitler's hate and the main victims of his desire to create a master race. There are two schools of thought on Hitler's attitude to the Jews. One school most recently represented by Daniel Goldhagen is of the view that Hitler wanted to exterminate the Jews as soon as possible. However, as has been noted above,

[13] Apart from a few biographical works, for example, Heinz Heger's *Men of the pink triangle* and occasional references in other works, little is known of how homosexuals fared.

[14] Rudiger Lautmann, (ed.) *Seminar: Gesellschaft und homosemualitat* (Frankfurt on Main, 1977).

[15] Ibid., p. 133.

explicit declarations of eliminationist intent were rare before the late 1930s. It is argued here, as others have argued, that while he wanted to get rid of Jews completely, he bided his time and worked initially to exclude them by removing them from as many areas of German life as possible.

Both domestic and foreign considerations stayed Hitler's hand. For much of the 1930s Germany was in quite a weak economic position. The Jewish community was fully integrated into German life and though it undoubtedly faced much prejudice it was much more favoured than were Jewish communities elsewhere. Indeed, both the financial and organisational help provided by Germany's Jews was vital to the success of the Zionist and other Jewish movements. As a group, their contribution to German cultural, scientific and business life was second to none, in fact, a group vital for the growth of Germany. The public support the Nazis enjoyed before 1933 also tends to be overestimated. As late as the general election of 1928 they received only two per cent of the popular vote. Their rise to power was attributable to factors other than anti-Semitism. The other minorities discussed above could be easily removed for the most part as most were already marginalised or criminalised. However, because Jews were integrated into German society the community presented Hitler and the Nazis with a major problem.

Hitler resorted to terror to gradually exclude Jews and quash any sources of opposition to his long-term racial policies. After all, the Nazis exploited the best weapon available to any totalitarian regime – the individuals need to ensure their own survival. Few are likely to be heroic, a fact which makes the deeds of those prepared to defend justice all the more remarkable. Over time the Nazis terrified the German population either into indifference, or more rarely, into active participation in their genocidal projects. At first Hitler moved slowly but with ghastly results – the destruction of the civil liberties of the Jewish population. The fact that Hitler was prepared to take his time and manipulate public opinion at home and abroad was sinister and speaks of a failure of will, not just within Germany but also elsewhere. If people are now obsessed with the question of how much the German civilian population knew of genocide during the war, there still remains the question of the extent of awareness outside Germany of Hitler's policy of exclusion and terror. The camps had yet to be filled by Lemkin's criteria, but violence was already being waged on Jewish institutions, culture, religion and indeed quality of life. It may be suggested that Europe's major powers allowed Hitler to fully implement his policies even before 1939.

The policy of exclusion was gradual. The Nurmberg Laws of 1935 deprived Jews of citizenship, reducing them to the status of subjects. In itself this was a major suspension of civil rights and a very public gesture. Jews were also forbidden to marry Aryans or have extra-marital relations with them. Some thirteen other supplementary decrees greatly extended the scope of the Nuremberg Laws. All were introduced before 1938. In 1933 Jews were excluded from the civil service, journalism, radio, farming, teaching, theatre and film. In 1934 they were banned from working in the stock exchange. Though it was only in 1938 that they were banned from practising law and medicine, in practise they had long been inhibited from practising such professions. Indeed, by 1936 over half of Germany's Jews had no regular income. Daily life became intolerable as shops refused to sell food or offer services to Jews. This was widely known throughout Europe.

A turning point was *Kristalnacht*, 9-10 November 1938 when Hitler, as William Shirer noted, finally lost control of his blood lust.[16] On that night thousands of Jewish businesses, homes, synagogues and other property was attacked. Many were killed or seriously injured and some thirty thousand were interned. The attacks seemed spontaneous but were in fact orchestrated by Reinhard Heydrich, Himmler's second-in-command in the Gestapo. He worked through local officials to co-ordinate the mayhem. Indeed, it almost proved counter-productive for there was much sympathy towards the Jews and some Nazis feared a backlash. It never happened however. *Kristalnacht* was perhaps the last time that Germans might have dared to publicly come to the defence of their Jewish neighbour. There was no major protest, however, from the public at large. The Nazis had begun to terrify the population into silence, dangling the privileged status of being Aryan at them, a status which, if they were seen to sympathise with the oppressed, might be taken from them. The Nazis were able to treat the Jews even more unjustly after that night. Insurance compensation for damage was confiscated and a collective fine of one billion marks was levied on the Jews for supposedly causing the disturbances.

The policy of appeasement pursued by the major European powers made Hitler bolder. As they shrunk back from challenging him, his rhetoric became more extreme and his vision of the future for non-Aryans ever darker. The 'final solution' began to be formulated in 1939 following the invasion of

[16] Willaim Shirer, *The rise and fall of the Third Reich* (London and New York, 1964), p. 531.

Poland. In a secret meeting, with top-ranking Nazi officials, Heydrich outlined his plans to confine European Jews to ghettos in large cities prior to 'resettlement' in the east – a term which had become a euphemism for extermination. No document outlining the basic precepts of the 'final solution' seems to have existed. It is likely that the plan was passed on verbally, down the chain of command, by Himmler, Heydrich and Goering during the summer of 1941.[17] Minutes do exist however of a meeting in Berlin in January 1942 in which the strategies to be employed in dealing with the Jewish question were discussed. Heydrich provided figures of the size of the Jewish populations in all European countries, Ireland included. He estimated a total of eleven million Jews on the continent: all were to be exterminated. Hitler and Himmler were keen to rid themselves of the German Jews and were no longer constrained by domestic or foreign considerations. Germany was now under the iron control of the Nazis and anyway it was at war. Those who could be used would be employed in the German war effort and would just be simply worked to death. Extermination camps would be used to exterminate the rest. In areas in the 'east' overrun by German forces, the local Jewish population would be simply eliminated on the spot.

The question of public knowledge in Germany is a vexed one. Goldhagen's view that most Germans harboured an eliminationist anti-Semitism is much too simplistic. It has provoked much criticism for distorting much of the evidence, both secondary and primary. Nonetheless a great many ordinary Germans did actively aid the Nazis in their genocide. Many civilians, particularly transport officials, were involved in bringing Jews and others to the camps. Postal workers brought news to families that were to be 'resettled'. Nurses and doctors examined those who were transported. An estimated four thousand policemen accompanied the Wehrmacht to Russia in 1942 and with others were responsible for the death of two of the six million Jews killed during the war. It is certain that rumours of much that went on was circulated widely, particularly the Nazi campaign of euthanasia. In the Ruhr almost a quarter of the population of the industrial centres was Slavic in origin.[18] The humiliation and plight of this group was public knowledge. If ordinary Germans were guilty of anything, it was indifference. In their desire to survive, they chose to ignore others more vulnerable than themselves. It is the destruction of human decency that allows totalitarian regimes to thrive.

[17] Ibid., pp. 1146-51.

[18] Martyn, *Resistance and conformity*, p. 157.

What are the lessons of the Nazi genocide? The aforementioned Rafael Lemkin acted as advisor to the American prosecutors during the Nurmberg trials. It was under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations that the *Convention on the prevention and punishment of the crime of genocide* was drawn up. Articles two and three are for our immediate purpose the most important to consider. Article two defines the following as acts of genocide: the killing of members of a group, causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of a group, deliberately inflicting on a group conditions of life calculated to bring about the physical destruction in whole or in part of a group, and imposing measures to prevent births within a group. Article three identified punishable crimes: genocide, conspiracy to commit genocide, attempt to commit genocide, and complicity in genocide. By the early 1970s some seventy countries had signed the Convention. However, it has failed to protect the rights of many minorities in many countries.

The war crimes committed during the conflict in Bosnia in 1994, were truly appalling in their brutality and here the echoes of the Nazi era are truly chilling. All the factions involved in the conflict, according to the United Nation's commission of inquiry into Balkan genocide in 1995, established camps, seven-hundred and fifteen in total. While all were responsible for war crimes, it was among the Bosnian Serbs that a clear and carefully co-ordinated policy of genocide was to be observed. The aim was to eliminate other religious and ethnic groups from an area, a process that became known as 'ethnic cleansing', a euphemism as chilling as 'final solution'. The experience of the camp inmates of Bosnia closely paralleled that of the Jews and others during the Nazi era. Packed into buses and forced to surrender their valuables, they were transported to camps as soon as their towns and villages were overrun. Men of military age were separated and sent to one group of camps. The death toll in these camps was high. Many were shot out of hand. Standards of medical care were poor and the diet meagre. The newspaper photographs and television pictures of emaciated men portrayed a horror not seen since World War Two. Rape and sexual abuse of women was systematic. The Commission of Experts on Bosnia noted that once international media reports of the rapes increased, sexual abuse in the camps declined, implying that those in authority had it in their power all along to curb such attacks. They concluded:

> The practises of ethnic cleansing, sexual assault and rape have been carried out by some of the parties so systematically that they appear to be the product of policy. The consistent failure to prevent the commission of such crimes and the consistent failure to prosecute and punish the

perpetrators of these crimes clearly evidences the existence of a policy of omission. The consequence of this conclusion is that command responsibility can be established.

Will those responsible for this tragedy – Kardicz, Mladicz and others – be ever brought to justice? The immediate post-war experience does not inspire confidence. Of the estimated one-hundred and fifty thousand war criminals responsible for genocide during the Nazi era only thirty thousand have been brought to justice. Most of these were in the Eastern European countries. Many of those charged in the West got off with relatively light sentences. This was largely due to the influence of the United States, Britain and France who were anxious to use the new West Germany as an obstacle to communist expansion into Western Europe. This necessitated a strong German economy and this was largely achieved by releasing from prison those industrialists, civil servants and others who had worked or collaborated with the Nazi regime.

One might well ask, what final line of defence is there for the weak if justice itself falls victim? The answer lies within ourselves. We must never forget the past and above all, we must try to rise above individual selfishness and speak out. The gestures we might make may be small, but whether it is by letter of protest on the plight of a political prisoner or by our refusal to buy goods we suspect are made in a prison camp, we still can make a start. Above all, it is by moving from stereotypes to real human beings that we learn to value and treasure the sanctity of each human life.

The Holocaust

Andreas Roth[1]

Saul Friedlaender once defined the inherent difficulty facing every historian of the Holocaust as a 'paralysis' which 'derives from the simultaneity and interaction of entirely heterogeneous phenomena: messianic fanaticism and bureaucratic structures, pathological impulses and administrative decrees, archaic attitudes and an advanced industrial society.'[2] The fact that the Holocaust was orchestrated by the political élite of a country ranking among the most developed as far as economic success, political awareness and cultural heritage is concerned, contributes to its singularity.[3]

Concentration camps were not invented by the Nazis but by the British in the course of the Boer War, while government-instigated mass murder had already been practised by the Young Turks who almost annihilated the Armenian people. The Nazis, however, perfected the qualitative and quantitative dimensions of genocide. Never before had mass murder been justified by an openly propagated and allegedly scientifically based political ideology and never before had callously perfected techniques enabled the perpetrators to murder more than five million people.

Up until recently no single piece of documented evidence was known to exist pointing to a particular meeting of Nazi officials at which the decision to murder the European Jews was taken. On 6 December 1997,

[1] The author would like to acknowledge the help of Georg Spielmann in composing this article.

[2] Saul Friedlaender, *Nazi Germany and the Jews: the years of persecution 1933-1939* (New York, 1997).

[3] For general accounts of the Holocaust and its historiography see, Christopher Browning: *'Die debatte über die täter des Holocaust'* in: Ulrich Herbert (ed.), Nationalsozialistische vernichtungspolitik 1939-1945. Neue forschungen und kontroversen (Frankfurt, 1998), Johannes Heil and Rainer Erb (eds.), *Geschichtswissenschaft und öffentlichkeit der streit um Daniel J. Goldhagen* (Frankfurt, 1998), Raul Hilberg, *The destruction of the European Jews* (New York, 1985), Alfred Low, *The Third Reich and the Holocaust in German historiography* (New York,1994), Alexander Mitscherlich, *Die unfähigkeit zu trauern: Grundlagen kollektiven verhaltens* (München,1977), Kurt Pätzold, *Tagesordnung: Judenmord. Die Wannsee Konferenz am 20.*

however, Michael Jeismann, writing for the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* reported that in 1996 a German historian working in a Moscow archive hitherto closed to the public, uncovered one of Heinrich Himmler's, diaries. On 18 December 1941, the Reichsführer SS made the following, fragmentary entry: 'Jewish question. To be exterminated as partisans'. It refers to a meeting with Hitler which had taken place on the same day. With the help of additional circumstantial evidence, another German scholar, Christian Gerlach, extrapolated that the sinister decision was taken on 12 December 1941 at a meeting of top Nazi party officials.

This gathering preceded by about a month the conference at Wannsee outside Berlin, at which the main Reich authorities discussed the future of European Jewry. Under the chairmanship of the head of the Reich Main Security Office, Reinhard Heydrich, the conference agreed on the 'total solution' of the Jewish question. The *Schutzstaffen* (SS) was accepted as the dominating and driving force of the murder machine. Heydrich stipulated: 'All Jews will be deported to the East for labour. Most will disappear through natural diminution. The survivors will be treated accordingly.' The places earmarked for such treatment were the death camps.

Concentration camps were established in Germany immediately after Hitler's assumption of power in January 1933. They were run by either the SS or the *Sturmabteilungen* (SA) and primarily accommodated political enemies of the Nazis and so-called 'anti-social' persons rather than Jews. In 1939 there were about twenty-five thousand prisoners in the various camps, a mere fraction of the number of internees in Stalin's *gulag* at the time. The actual death or extermination camps were only set up in the course of the invasion of the Soviet Union by the German army (Wehrmacht) in 1941. The preferred locations of such camps, the sole purpose of which was mass murder, were secluded areas of occupied Poland where there was a traffic infrastructure in place which enabled the co-ordinators of the Holocaust to move large numbers of Jews by train from all over Europe to their final destination. Apart from this, eastern Europe was an ideal place due to the presence there of a considerably higher number of native Jews than in the German occupied countries of western and southern Europe. More than half of all Jews killed by the Nazis died in the purpose-built death camps at Treblinka, Belzec, Sobibor, Kulmhof, Lublin and Auschwitz. In the latter camp alone one million suffered death.

The killings, however, had started immediately after the invasion of

Poland in September 1939, when special 'task forces' – *Einsatzgruppen* – were formed by the SS leadership. The *Einsatzgruppen* operated behind the front lines, independent of the Wehrmacht. They rounded up Jews, often with the help of the local population, and summarily shot them in fields and forests. Once the Soviet Union was invaded, captured communist Red Army commissars were subjected to the same kind of 'special treatment' – *Sonderbehandlung*. As most members had not voluntarily joined the *Einsatzgruppen*, many of them faced immense psychological problems.

While the *Einsatzgruppen* began to enhance their killing methods with the help of vans into which carbon-monoxide was released – the first centre of three such vans was organised at Kulmhof – the Wehrmacht did not remain idle. An exhibition put together by the Hamburg Institute for Social Studies in 1997 proved beyond reasonable doubt that especially in Serbia the ordinary German armed forces involved themselves in the murderous activities of SS-led units.

Parallel to the establishment of the extermination camps in Poland the Jews were ghettoised as a precursor to what was officially labelled 're-settlement' by the German authorities. Many Jews in fact believed that they were headed for a Jewish statelet in the Ukraine. The biggest ghetto was that of Warsaw which was eventually, like all other ghettos in eastern Europe, forcefully cleared and its inhabitants either shot on the spot or transported to one of the death camps.

Upon their arrival at the camps, the Jews were subjected to a selection process. At Auschwitz, camp doctors, one of which was the notorious Joseph Mengele, decided on whether death would be inflicted at once or whether the respective Jew could still be utilised as labour. Sooner or later, however, an inmate was taken to the so-called 'swimming pool' or 'shower room', *Badeanstalt*, at Birkenau, beside the main Auschwitz camp. In the swimming pool or de-lousing unit they were killed with the help of the industrially-produced poison gas '*Zyklon-B*'. The corpses were cremated and all personal belongings were collected and, as far as possible, utilised to foster the German war effort. When the Red Army liberated Auschwitz in January 1945, the soldiers found over three-hundred and sixty thousand men's suits in addition to over eight-hundred and twenty-six thousand women's coats and dresses. A mere seven thousand internees survived the terrors of Auschwitz.

All operations at Auschwitz and the other extermination camps were imbued with a legitimising sense of 'order'. Officially, theft or rape by

prison guards was not allowed. The façade of normality was maintained, both for victims and perpetrators. The latter were thus enabled to distance themselves emotionally from the unspeakable acts of crime. They later tried to justify their behaviour by saying that they had merely followed orders. Very few guards or administrators harboured any personal vindictiveness against Jews.

Hannah Arendt coined the term 'banality of evil' to describe the emotional and motivational background of Nazis like Adolf Eichmann.[4] He was head of the department within the Reich Main Security Office dealing with the 'final solution'. From his desk he masterminded the futile attempt to barter ten thousand Allied lorries in exchange for the lives of one million Jews in 1944 to obtain desperately needed military hardware for the Wehrmacht. Personally, he probably never laid hands on a Jew but he meticulously organised the death of hundreds of thousands.

Others were physically involved. In 1960, when Eichmann was kidnapped in South America by Israeli agents, Johann Kremer was standing trial in Germany. He had been a medical doctor at Auschwitz and was familiar with the organisation of the killings. On 2 September 1942, he recorded in his diary: 'Present at Sonderaktion (gassing of 918 French Jews) for first time at 3 a.m. The Dantean Inferno seems almost like a comedy in comparison'. The extent of his personal dehumanisation process is made evident by his diary entry for 11 October 1942: 'Roast hare for lunch – a huge leg – with potatoes and cabbage. Present at Sonderaktion during the night (1600 Jews from Holland).'

Extremely little resistance was put up by the Jews, a fact for which some have held the Jewish collective psyche responsible. There is no empirical evidence to sustain this argument but it would explain the fact that the ghettoised Jewish population of eastern Europe rose against their oppressors in only seventeen instances. The major uprising occurred in Warsaw in early 1943.

There is, in fact, ample evidence for Jewish collaboration with the Nazis, ranging from membership of the Jewish Police in the urban ghettos to the attempted tracking down of fellow Jews who had gone into hiding. Hannah Arendt referred to this phenomenon as the 'darkest chapter of the whole dark story'.[5] The passivity of most Jews was partly based on a

[4] Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: a report on the banality of evil* (London, 1994).
[5] Ibid.

widespread unawareness of or refusal to believe in the extermination camp activities.

Although many Jews were left in ignorance of the genocidal proceedings, the Allies were kept informed. Escapees from the camps as well as a small number of German diplomats appalled at the actions of some of their fellow countrymen supplied London and Washington officials with first-hand knowledge. Furthermore, the personnel at Bletchley Park managed to break the German Enigma code in the summer of 1941, obtaining detailed information about shootings of Jews in the Ukraine. On 8 December 1942, United States President Franklin D. Roosevelt was given a twenty-page memorandum on Nazi perpetrated genocide by a Jewish delegation to the White House. He promised to give the memo 'full consideration'. The Vatican stated that the papacy was unable to publicly denounce any 'particular atrocities'.

Jewish agencies did their utmost to convince the Allied leaders that some action had to be taken to prevent further killings. In June 1944 the case of Auschwitz was highlighted yet again and the Allies were asked to bomb the gas chambers and railway lines. But no sufficient attempt was made to thwart the Nazis' project. The only part of Auschwitz that was targeted by air raids was Monowitz, also known as Auschwitz III, where chemical works were situated. The crematoria, which were clearly visible on photographs taken during reconnaissance flights, survived the hostilities and were levelled by the Germans themselves in the course of the Wehrmacht's retreat in 1945.

So far, no satisfactory explanation has been found to explain the inactivity and indifference exhibited by western leaders. To some extent this was due to the fact that reports about the atrocities stemming from Jewish sources were dismissed as 'customary Jewish exaggeration'. But there is no doubt a more sinister explanation. British officials would not have been happy about a large scale exodus of Jews from eastern Europe, bound for Palestine. Gilbert's attribution of Allied passiveness to a 'lack of comprehension and imagination' fails to provide a convincing explanation.[6]

Irish political leaders were not oblivious of what was going on in the death camps, either. While the imposition of censorship prevented the dissemination of knowledge, it has been proved by Donal Ó Drisceoil that Frank Aiken, then Minister for the Co-ordination of Defensive Measures,

[6] Martin Gilbert, *Auschwitz and the Allies* (New York, 1995).

knew about the Holocaust. Information about these events, however, did not pass the Irish censor: 'Buchenwald, Belsen, Lublin, Dachau, Auschwitz-Birkenau – none could be allowed to disturb the equanimity of the neutral Irish mind.'[7] Dermot Keogh has shown that only a handful of Jewish refugees were reluctantly allowed into the country – the Irish minister plenipotentiary to Germany, Charles Bewley, in fact malevolently delayed the granting of visas. Jews were only welcome if they could provide funds for themselves and, preferably, gainful employment for Irishmen.[8] On 13 December 1938, Francis Stuart wrote to the editor of *The Irish Times*, in reply to a request to admit Jewish refugees into Ireland: 'With slums such as we have in our large towns, with nearly one hundred thousand unemployed ... such an appeal for funds must seem ironical'.[9]

Though most surviving Jews left Germany after the war, their numbers have, however, begun to increase there. It is mainly Russian Jews who are contributing to the rebirth of Jewish communities in Germany, principally in Berlin. But relations between Germany and the Jewish community world-wide remain strained, proof of which are the recent claims for compensation by former Jewish forced labourers directed at large German companies such as Volkswagen or Degussa. Such payments had been made before by the German government, although the rendering of financial assistance has not helped to relieve the German psyche.

The sociologist Alexander Mitscherlich referred to the German 'inability to mourn', a post-war phenomenon prevalent until the late 1970s, when the screening of the Amercian television series *Holocaust*, focusing on the fictitious story of a Jewish family in Nazi Germany, contributed to the termination of the self-imposed, protective amnesia of the war generation. Children then began to question their parents about what they had done or known about during the Nazi years.

Probing into the past on a private level had been preceded by official investigations. As early as 1946 the main war criminals were put on trial in Nuremberg. In later years, some of the more immediate perpetrators of the Holocaust, such as extermination camp medical staff, were tried and sentenced. At Ludwigsburg in south-west Germany a special prosecuting agency, which is still active, was set up to collect data to found indictments

[7] Donal Ó Drisceoil, *Censorship in Ireland during the Second World War: neutrality, politics and society* (Cork, 1996).
[8] Dermot Keogh, *Jews in twentieth-century Ireland* (Cork, 1998).
[9] *The Irish Times*, 13 December 1938.

of war criminals. Most Germans, however, remained personally unaffected and rejected the notion of 'collective guilt', which was coined by the pastor Martin Niemöller, himself a former concentration camp inmate.

While the screening of *Holocaust* caused widespread discomfort on a sentimental and psychological level, an intellectual response by the politically and historically interested public was triggered by the so-called *Historikerstreit* – dispute among historians – in 1986. Ernst Nolte, a respected historian of fascism in Europe, maintained that there was a causal nexus between the extermination of European Jews as orchestrated by Hitler and Stalin's terror regime in Russia. Nolte based his controversial thesis on a speech made by Hitler to Wehrmacht officers in 1943. Hitler apparently warned his subordinates that they, if taken prisoner by the Red Army, would collapse under a certain torture method employed initially by the Bolsheviks during the Russian Civil War in the early 1920s and which prominently featured a half-starved rat in a cage. Nolte construed from Hitler's paranoid fear of Bolshevism, which he regarded as an essentially Jewish creation aiming to undermine Christian civilisation.

The Berlin-based historian went on to interpret the Holocaust as a pre-emptive strike by Hitler. His thesis was vociferously refuted by prominent German historians and the dispute permeated the editorial and feature pages of all German national newspapers and periodicals for several months. Among his opponents were leading representatives of the functionalists' school such as Hans Mommsen or Martin Broszat, who interpret the Holocaust as a process sheltered by and gradually gaining momentum under the umbrella of German military dominance over large parts of Europe, rather than as the result of a given plan. Their counterparts, the intentionalists, among them Klaus Hildebrand and the late Andreas Hillgruber, tended to be somewhat milder in their critique of Nolte.

The bone of contention was not buried properly and in 1997 the French historian Stéphane Courtois, indirectly reawakened interest in the subject matter by likening Communism to Nazism, arguing that *summa summarum* Communism was the greater menace.[10] Ernst Nolte, who has since retired from his chair at the Technical University of Berlin, continues to write the occasional controversial letter to his favourite newspaper, the

[10] Stéphane Courtois (et al.), *Le livre noir du communisme: crimes, terreur, répression* (Paris, 1997).

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung.

While the *Historikerstreit* did not send out major tremors abroad, it was all the more surprising that an eminent Irish journalist presented himself as a disciple of Nolte. On 22 February 1997 Kevin Myers wrote in *The Irish Times* that 'it is impossible to imagine Nazism without communism as a template from which it was formed, and against the contours of which it took shape and method.'[11] The evidence as marshalled in this article, however, points in a different direction. The Holocaust was a quantitatively and qualitatively unparalleled and unprecedented undertaking.

What explanations may be found for this mass murder, unique in the history of mankind and unimaginable in its dimensions and excesses? Why was the Holocaust initiated by Germans, but not by other peoples with more distinct anti-Semitic traditions, for example the Russians and the French? Which motives were pursued by the German perpetrators, how did they justify actions which exceeded all moral and ethical limits? What role was played by the ordinary German as compared to that assumed by those perpetrators well known to the public? Orders, motivated by a strikingly pathological hatred of the Jews, have historically served as explanation for the actions of the latter: the culprits were relegated to the category of fanatical Nazis or SS-henchmen.

In 1996 Daniel Goldhagen attempted to answer some of these questions in his book: *Hitler's willing executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust*. According to Goldhagen, a typically German version of anti-Semitism, which displayed an 'eliminatory' feature and thus distinguished itself from anti-Semitism of other peoples, was responsible for the mass murder of the Jews. While the aim of anti-Semites in other European countries was 'social elimination' (the de-emancipation of the Jews), a form of anti-Semitism had established itself in Germany at the end of the nineteenth century based upon genocidal tendencies. Goldhagen stated that the ordinary German accepted his role as executor willingly and enthusiastically.[12]

In support of his theory he examines the reserve police battalion 101 from Hamburg, which was involved in the mass-execution of Jews and the subject of a study by Christopher R. Browning.[13] The difference between

[11] *The Irish Times*, 22 February 1997.

[12] Daniel J.Goldhagen, *Hitler's willing executioners. ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (New York, 1996).

the two studies is made obvious by the respective titles: Browning's ordinary men are Goldhagen's ordinary Germans. 'The most appropriate, indeed the only appropriate general proper name for the Germans who perpetrated the Holocaust is Germans.' In a speech, preceding the battalion's first executionary action, the commanding officer, Major Wilhelm Trapp, left the issue of participation up to the policemen themselves: some refused to participate – more than ten but less than twenty per cent – but the overwhelming majority agreed to take part in the massacre.

According to Goldhagen, the explanation is that the perpetrators, 'ordinary Germans', were animated by anti-Semitism, by a particular type of anti-Semitism that led them to conclude that the Jews ought to die. Simply put, the perpetrators, having consulted their own convictions and morality and having judged the mass annihilation of Jews to be right, did not want to say no. This behaviour is explained by the German 'eliminatory anti-Semitism' mentioned above: it possessed a 'potential for genocide' waiting to be activated. [14]

Goldhagen's work aroused immense interest, not least because of his monocausal explanation for a phenomenon that exceeds human comprehension. Subsequently, he was severely criticised by numerous historians on the basis of his methodology. It was claimed that his book was lacking in revelationary content. Furthermore, his work was lambasted for not being scientific, a criticism based on his selective usage of sources. Eberhard Jäckel labelled the book 'simply bad'.

Two basic arguments contradict Goldhagen's thesis of 'eliminatory anti-Semitism' as the sole explanation for the Holocaust. Firstly, not all Nazi victims were Jews. The organised murder of Sinti and Roma gypsy people, disabled people, and political opponents cannot be explained in terms of anti-Semitism. Secondly, the perpetrators were not only Germans. Up to thirty per cent of the camp guards were Romanian, Croatian, Ukrainian, Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian. Goldhagen's harsh judgement of the perpetrators is based upon his belief that their decisions were governed by their own free will; his so-called 'human' element is challenged by Browning, who argues for greater consideration of psycho-social elements. *Hitler's willing executioners* is exposed as a moral pamphlet rather than a

[13] Christopher Browning, *Ordinary men. Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (San Francisco, 1993).

[14] Daniel J.Goldhagen, *'A reply to my critics. Motives, causes and alibis'* in *The New Republic*, 23 October 1996, pp. 37-45.

scientific treatise.

In conclusion, Browning's call for a multi-causal interpretation seems more convincing: he analyses the perpetrators' motivation from an ideological and cultural as well as from an organisational perspective. General human dispositions such as peer pressure, conformity, obsequiousness and the legitimisation of the events by the government must be considered. In addition, Browning emphasises the mutual reinforcement of war and racism.

> A combination of situational aspects, an ideological overlapping which resulted in the Jews being targeted under the auspices of anti-Semitism and the war as well as the victims' dehumanisation was sufficient to turn 'ordinary men' into perpetrators of genocide.[15]

[15] Browning, *Ordinary men*.

'With burning anguish' The Vatican, the Jews and the Third Reich 1933-45

David A. Fleming

From the time of Constantine to that of Napoleon, Roman popes have influenced European politics. But as the Catholic Church's predominance over temporal affairs declined in the nineteenth century, the pope became a less important political figure on the European stage. From 1870 until 1929 Catholic popes had been in self-imposed exile within the walls of Vatican City in Rome. It was left to the Italian dictator Benito Mussolini to free the pope from his bondage in 1929 and to set up the Vatican City State, ruled by him as its sovereign head. For the following two decades the spiritual authority of the Roman Church was pushed to an extreme which has not been seen since the time of the Reformation. Burning questions about the moral conduct of the Vatican have been put, as accusations of silence, collusion and collaboration with totalitarian regimes, proliferated. This paper attempts to look at the German state's relations with the Vatican as well as the controversy surrounding the Catholic Church's attitude to the Jewish question during the Second World War.

By 1890 the Catholic Church had recognised that it could no longer effectively influence a Europe which had embraced liberal thinking and had increasingly become anti-clerical. The pope now saw the chief Catholic parties of Europe as the only means of representing his views and offered them the Church's whole support. They were *Action Française* in France, the *Popular Party* in Italy and the *Centre Party* in Germany. This was to change, however, with the arrival of a new pope – Pius XI (Achille Ratti) in 1922. He saw a need to return to 'spiritual values and Christian living' which he believed could not be delivered by the main Catholic parties. Consequently he transferred his support from the Catholic parties to the newly founded Catholic Action, an organisation which comprised all of the lay institutions of the Church, that in his view, would be more suited to bring back to society the 'Christian living' that it had lost. Now that support for the political parties had been withdrawn, they soon declined as a political force in their own respective states.

Consequently, the Catholic Church lost one of the few means of protecting its interests politically in Europe. Thus, the policy of making

formal concordats between the Vatican and particular states was adopted. Although concordats between Church and state were made in the past, much more importance was now given to such agreements. A concordat can be defined 'as a formal treaty or agreement entered into by the Holy See and individual States for defining the respective roles of the two parties in fields where conflict tends to arise.'[1] The Vatican does not negotiate these treaties to obtain rights necessarily for itself but rather for the Catholic citizens of the particular state. During the reign of Pius XI from 1922 to 1939, eighteen such concordats were concluded, a record for any papal reign.

As the Church changed its diplomatic and political strategy from 1922 onwards, it also recognised the rise of a new political ideology in Europe. The rise of fascism was feared by the Church as it threatened to replace religion with its own philosophy of the supremacy of the race. Both vied for the minds and souls of the individual and demanded undivided loyalty to the one supreme power, whether that be God or dictator. However, Pius XI held the view that 'the Church could obtain greater religious influence in public life from a stable government under an energetic, all-powerful ruler than it could through democratic party political strife' which of course reflected the Church's own structure of authority.[2] It is within this context that the Catholic Church embraced Fascist Italy. However, Nazi Germany was treated differently.

The Church feared the rise of fascism but worried more about the growing spread of communism. Consequently it viewed Nazi Germany as the lesser of two evils. The Church recognised in Nazism a force in Europe which could prevent communism from invading Europe. But this policy had to reflect the Vatican's distrust of national socialism as well as considering the fate of Germany's thirty million Roman Catholics. The Vatican had cause for alarm. Article 24 of the Nazi Party manifesto stated:

> The Party bases itself on positive Christianity without binding itself dogmatically to any single confession. We demand the freedom of all religious beliefs in the state, so far as they do not endanger the existence of the state and do not offend the manners and morals of the German race.[3]

Some top-ranking Nazi leaders advocated the establishment of a German National Church which would eliminate any outside influences in Germany. This naturally frightened the Vatican.

[1] Anthony Rhodes, *The Vatican in the age of the dictators 1922-1945* (London, 1973), p. 39.
[2] Ibid., p. 32.
[3] Ibid., p. 165.

It is not surprising, therefore, that when approached by the German government to conclude a concordat, the Vatican was more than enthusiastic. After only eight days of negotiations between Franz von Papen representing Germany and Cardinal Secretary of State Pacelli, a concordat was signed on 23 July 1933. The terms were astonishingly favourable to the Vatican. The Church was granted the right to run its own schools which had been a bone of contention in Germany for years. One of the most significant terms of the concordat was article 31 which stated that 'the inhibited freedom of action for all Catholic religious, cultural and educational organisations, associations and federations' were to be assured by the German government.[4] This article guaranteed the existence of the Catholic Church in the Third Reich. For Germany, and more importantly Hitler, the concordat stipulated that Catholic priests could no longer take part in politics. This put the final nail in the coffin of the Centre Party, which along with the Catholic Bavarian People's Party were the last parties to succumb to the nazification of the State. With one stroke of the pen, Hitler's regime gained the prestigious honour of being recognised as the legitimate government of Germany by one of the oldest institutions in Europe.

Cardinal Pacelli, who was later to become Pope Pius XII, said privately to the British representative at the Vatican that 'the recent changes in Germany had made it essential ... for the Church to regularise its relations juridically with the Reich.'[5] This was the strategy behind the signing of such a treaty with Germany. Henceforth, Germany was legally bound to safeguard the rights of the Catholic Church within its borders. Little did the Vatican know that Hitler and his regime would become notorious for their violation of formal international treaties. A French Jesuit, Yves de la Briere, commented at the time that 'he [the pope] hoped that in the probable event of an extreme conflict between Church and State in Germany the legal value of a concordat would give the claims and protests of the Church hierarchy a surer legal basis'.[6]

Within five days of the conclusion of the concordat the Church was tested when Germany issued a sterilisation law, in contravention to Christian moral teaching. The following years saw the gradual elimination of all churches in Germany. Religious personnel were arrested, often on charges of

[4] Louis L. Snyder (ed.), *Hitler's Third Reich: a documentary history* (Chicago, 1991), p. 142.
[5] Rhodes, *The Vatican in the age of the dictators*, p. 177.
[6] Ibid., p. 175.

immorality or of smuggling foreign currencies. The Catholic presses were closed and Catholic publications were banned. One of the more frightening reports which came to the Vatican concerned education. The Church saw education as its rightful sphere of influence since it was essential for the propagation of Catholic teaching. Widespread intimidation was used by Nazi officials and police to prevent children from attending Catholic schools. This was in total violation of the concordat which stated that 'the maintenance of Catholic schools is guaranteed ... Orders and religious associations are authorised to found and direct such private schools in accordance with the general laws and conditions fixed by the state.'[7] To counter such intimidation, the parents of Catholic school children established associations which the Nazis did everything possible to break up. Things came to a head when Pacelli sent a formal letter of protest to the German representative to the Vatican, von Bergen:

> ... a planned attack is in progress against the Catholic schools. Party members go from house to house intimidating parents into signing in favour of state schools. Moreover, teachers who do not speak openly in favour of state schools are relieved of their posts.

The letter also recorded at least one hundred such instances where education had been attacked in contradiction to the concordat. School attendance figures suggest that the intimidation worked. In Munich in 1935, three per cent of parents sent their children to Catholic schools in comparison to 1933 when sixty-five per cent were doing so.[8]

The Nazis also found a way to eliminate the Catholic Youth organisations. These were forbidden to stage any form of organised sporting activity. Sport could only be played by members of the Hitler youth. The Catholic bishops complained fiercely, but to no avail. Another law banned the wearing of uniforms, the display of insignias, flags and marching. These measures eventually killed off the Catholic youth organisations. The Vatican now feared the worst in Germany. One final attempt at reconciliation came in 1936 when the Vatican offered to support the German efforts in 'defence of the Church' during the Spanish Civil War, if the persecutions in the Third Reich would stop. This was rejected almost immediately.

By 1936 the Vatican had few options left, having formally protested through its nunciature in Berlin and through von Bergen in Rome, but to no avail. The German bishops met at Fulda, in Bradenburg, for their annual conference in 1936 and decided to ask the pope for an encyclical regarding the

[7] Ibid., p. 185.
[8] Ibid., pp. 186-8.

state of Catholicism in the Third Reich. In January 1937, the pope agreed with the bishops and asked Cardinal Pacelli to formulate an encyclical. It would surprise the world with its content. It became known as 'one of the greatest condemnations of a national regime ever pronounced by the Vatican'[9]

'Mit Brennender Sorge' – With Burning Anguish – detailed the many grievances and persecutions of the Church in Germany.

> Ours was ruled by the loyalty to the terms of the agreement; but ... [the reader] will have to recognise with surprise and deep disgust that the unwritten law of the other party has been arbitrary misinterpretation of agreements, evasion of agreements, and finally more or less open violation of agreements.[10]

The subject of education was raised in the next indignant sentence:

> the open war against the confessional schools, which are guaranteed by the Concordat, and the nullification of the freedom of the ballot for those entitled to a Catholic education, show the tragic seriousness of the situation in a field which is of vital interest to the Church and an oppression of the conscience of the faithful such as never before been witnessed.[11]

In a clear reference to the intimidation of Catholics, the encyclical noted 'In our districts ... voices are raised in ever louder chorus urging men to leave the Church.'[12] This was the only Vatican document of importance that criticised the Nazi regime and was read from every Roman Catholic pulpit in Germany on Palm Sunday, 21 March 1937.

Hitler was outraged at what he saw as flagrant and arrogant opposition to his policies and ordered all copies to be seized and future publication banned. The printing presses where the encyclical was printed were destroyed and the printers arrested. An official complaint was made by von Bergen at the Vatican, on orders from the German foreign ministry in Wilhelmstrasse. From that date the persecution of the Catholic Church in Germany intensified. The Nazi government ordered that the 'morality' trials be stepped up. One such trial in Koblenz was of two hundred and sixty-seven Franciscans, of whom there were only five hundred in Germany, accused of offences against mentally-ill youngsters in their care.[13]

[9] Ibid., p. 204.
[10] Charles E. Delzell (ed.), *The papacy and totalitarianism between the two world wars* (New York, 1974), p. 151.
[11] Ibid., p. 152.
[12] Snyder , *Hitler's Third Reich*, p. 255.
[13] Richard Grunberger, *A social history of the Third Reich* (Middlesex, 1979), p. 558.

Instead of stemming the Nazi tyranny toward the Church, Pius XI's encyclical augmented it. However *Mit Brenneder Sorge* was of pronounced importance, since it set a precedent for subsequent Vatican statements against injustice and persecution. Even though the encyclical did not name the regime or its leader, it did specifically address the suppression of the Church and the doctrines of Nazism. World opinion was surprised at this pronouncement of 'deep anxiety' and was quick to utilise it for propaganda against Germany. Wilhelmstrasse received many reports on the effect of the encyclical: Swiss Catholics expressed their support for the Vatican, Hungary reported that not one single Hungarian paper had sided with Germany, Chile was becoming increasingly unfriendly.[14]

Under Pius XI, the Vatican denounced Hitler whenever his regime threatened the Church. Some commentators have concluded that the pope adopted such a line so as to 'drive a wedge' between the continuing closeness of Mussolini's government and Berlin. This relationship was copper-fastened after the signing of the Rome-Berlin Axis in 1936 and Pius XI feared that Italy would be forced to adopt Nazi policies which would strike at the Church in Italy itself. Such overtones were recognised by both Britain and France who encouraged the Vatican in its stance toward Germany. Pius XI died in February 1939 before, it is said, he could deliver a scathing condemnation of fascism.

Pacelli was the candidate most likely to succeed Pius XI. He was seen by most commentators as the candidate who would continue Vatican policy on the lines of Pius XI and consequently Britain and France supported his candidacy while Germany and Italy opposed it.[15] Pacelli was duly elected as Pope Pius XII in March 1939. Three days after his coronation he called a conclave of bishops to discuss 'the German question'. He told his cardinals that he would personally write a 'letter of peace' to Hitler. This letter immediately revealed a softer approach and commenced as follows:

> To the illustrious Adolf Hitler, Fuhrer and Chancellor of the German Reich! Here at the beginning of Our pontificate We wish to assure you that We remain devoted to the spiritual welfare of the German people entrusted to your leadership ... We recall with great pleasure the many years We spent in Germany as Apostolic Nuncio, when We did all in Our power to establish harmonious relations between Church and State. Now that Our responsibilities of Our pastoral function have increased Our opportunities, how much more ardently We pray to reach that goal.[16]

It was the first indication that the new pope was ready to adopt a more conciliatory attitude to the German state in order to protect its interests there.

The Vatican, like the rest of the world, was convinced that a war with Germany was coming closer. Vatican policy under Pius XII changed to facilitate a neutral stance in the coming conflict 'from which the pope could act as a mediator to ensure European peace.'[17] However, it was due to this continued neutrality during the war, that Pius XII has been criticised subsequently. Allegations of remaining silent while Nazi Germany committed atrocious acts of barbarity were widely made in the post war years.

From the beginning of his pontificate, Pius XII made valiant efforts to keep the peace in Europe. In April 1939 he asked all powers, except Soviet Russia, to attend a conference to discuss the problems at hand. This was rejected by both sides. Britain feared another 'Munich' while Germany was confident in her arms.

Hitler invaded Poland on 1 September 1939. Immediately Britain and France asked the pope to condemn this act of aggression. The pope refused, stating that in accordance with the policy of neutrality which the Vatican had always taken during wartime, he could not publicly or directly comment on any form of international conflict. What the pope did say about the commencement of war in Europe was issued through his first encyclical entitled *Summi Pontificatus* on 27 October 1939:

> The blood of countless human beings, including many civilians, cries out in agony, a race as beloved by Us as the Polish, whose steadfast Faith in the service of Christian civilisation is written in ineffaceable letters in the Book of History, giving them the right to invoke the brotherly sympathy of the entire world.[18]

It did not mention Germany by name nor did it condemn the invasion. This was not satisfactory to Britain and France. Germany banned this encyclical.

The Vatican Radio, ran by the Jesuits, became a vociferous commentator on German aggression. A broadcast detailing 'the state of terror and brutalisation' which Poland was suffering was made in January 1940. The German representative, von Bergen, was instructed to make an immediate complaint for this breach of neutrality. The reply from the Secretary of State stated that Vatican Radio was run by the Jesuits and was not under the control

[14] Rhodes, *The Vatican in the age of the dictators*, p. 206.
[15] Peter C. Kent, 'A tale of two popes: Pius XI, Pius XII and the Rome-Berlin Axis', in *Journal of Contemporary History*, 23, 4 (1988), pp. 589-606.

[16] Rhodes, *The Vatican in the age of the dictators*, p. 228.
[17] Kent, 'A tale of two popes', p. 603.
[18] Rhodes, *The Vatican in the age of the dictators*, p. 237.

of the secretariat. Although many more lines can be written on the subsequent German invasion of European countries and Russia and the pope's stance regarding those it is clear that the papacy tied itself to a policy of neutrality, the merits of which can be questioned.

Another aspect of the Vatican's German policy, which evoked criticism, was in relation to the genocide of the Jews. Reports of the ghettoisation of Europe's Jews began to be communicated to the Vatican by priests and bishops from 1940 onwards. Rumours of actual extermination came during the summer of 1942. The Allied governments, represented by Myron Talyor, the US representative to the Holy See asked the Vatican in September 1942, as a neutral source, to confirm reports that the Allies had received about the extermination of the Jews. Moreover, he asked, if 'the Holy Father have any suggestions as to any practical manner in which the forces of civilised public opinion could be utilised in order to prevent a continuation of these barbarities?' The reply came in October 1942 and stated that the Vatican could neither confirm nor deny such reports and therefore would not comment.[19] The Americans informed the Vatican that their silence was 'endangering its moral prestige and its undermining faith both in the Church and in the Holy Father himself.'[20]

The Vatican never once publicly denounced Nazi Germany by name during the Second World War. What was the reason for this? One view is that if the pope was to condemn Nazi Germany he would also have to condemn Stalinist Russia. Furthermore, if he did condemn the Nazi regime the persecution would have been intensified, as had happened after *Mit Brennender Sorge*. It was this argument that the pope constantly used when defending his refusal to condemn German atrocities. In 1942 the Dutch bishops issued a pastoral letter condemning the transportation of the Dutch Jews to Poland. The Nazi leadership threatened the bishops that if the letter was widely disseminated all Jewish converts to Catholicism would be transported. The bishops went ahead anyway. Consequently, baptised Jewish converts were arrested and transported to their death in the 'East'. The pope noted: 'If the letter of the Dutch bishops has cost forty thousand lives [ninety-two thousand in reality], a protest from me might cost two-hundred thousand. I cannot and should not bear this responsibility.'[21]

[19] Ibid., p. 67.
[20] Ibid.
[21] Jonathan Louis , *The pope and the Nazis*, documentary by the British Broadcasting Corporation (1996).

A second explanation for the pope's silence was that the Vatican had lost vital credibility at the commencement of the war when it had failed to maintain peace. For it to regain its position as a peace broker, it could not comment on any particular incidents or atrocities, knowing that the other side would use the words of the pope as propaganda. It therefore had to abide by strict neutrality. Thus, when the Axis powers asked the pope to declare that the invasion of Russia was a 'Holy Crusade' against Bolshevism, the pope refused.

A third justification for a policy of silence relate to the possible consequences of a papal condemnation. Even if the pope denounced Hitler as a murderer of Jews, it might have been very difficult for such a condemnation to be relayed through occupied Europe. If Pius XII had excommunicated Hitler and his henchmen would it have stopped the slaughter? Would German Catholics have viewed Hitler in a different light?[22]

If the Vatican did not publicly condemn the persecution of the Jews, it did utter condemnations in private messages to heads of Axis states. One message to the Slovak government read:

> The Holy See has always entertained the firm hope that the Slovak government ... would never proceed with the forcible removal of persons belonging to the Jewish race. It is with great pain that the Holy See has learned of the continued transfers of such a nature ... The Holy See would fail in its Divine Mandate if it did not deplore these measures.[23]

A letter of similar content was sent to the Hungarian government. However, it must be stated that no such letter was sent to Hitler.

By October 1943, the Germans were in Rome. The question of the Roman Jews now arose. During one single night the Jews of Rome were arrested. When news of this came to the Vatican, the pope ordered the secretary of state, Cardinal Maglione, to summon the German ambassador. Maglione informed von Bergen that 'It pains the Holy Father more than words can say, that here in Rome right under his very eyes so many people are made to suffer simply because they are of a particular race.' The ambassador advised the secretary of state not to jeopardise the Vatican's impartiality by making a stand now.[24] The Church didn't go any further with it. However Pius XII ordered all enclosed monasteries in Europe to open their doors to any person fleeing persecution. Consequently five thousand Roman Jews were saved from

[22] Delzell , *The papacy and totalitarianism*, pp. 96-102.
[23] Rhodes, *The Vatican in the age of the dictators*, p. 347.
[24] Louis, *The pope and the Nazis*.

certain death. Overall the Roman Catholic Church may have saved the lives of four hundred thousand Jews.[25]

Delzell concludes that the pope was daily preoccupied with the counteracting roles of his temporal and spiritual duties. Every letter, speech and action of the pope had to be clearly balanced against its likely results. Each had to be weighed in the impossibility of predicting which action would best serve the interests of the Church.[26]

Several questions must remain unanswered. Should the pope, as spiritual head of the Roman Catholic Church, have denounced and condemned the Nazi regime for attempting to eradicate the Jewish population of Europe? Would it have done any good? Would the Catholic Church itself be eliminated as a result of such a condemnation? One would have to contend that some form of public pronouncement on the plight of the Jews, might have sent a message to the world that Christ's vicar on Earth and his Church had not forgotten them. This view however comes with hindsight. On 17 March 1998, the Catholic Church under Pope John Paul II issued a document titled *We remember, a Reflection on the Shoah*. It expressed the grief of the Church for its failures during that period. It did not however explicitly apologise for the stance which Pius XII took, but rather praised him for his diplomacy.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Delzell, *The papacy and totalitarianism*, pp. 95-6.

Mothers of the Fatherland
Women and National Socialism in Germany

Janet Power

From his earliest days in politics Adolf Hitler attracted support from German women. Although relatively few women voted for the National Socialist Party up to 1930, the deepening economic depression brought more women to Hitler's side. The aim of this paper is to examine the impact of National Socialism on German women and their involvement in Hitler's movement. Nazi supporters shared the same mentality that united them against the hostile world and the only security that they felt was a strong sexual identity: men would be men and women would be feminine.

The vision that Nazi propaganda propagated was that of a strong man and a gentle woman co-operating under the stern guide of an orderly state. But even the image of an orderly state was an illusion. The Nazi party was decentralised and authoritarian, needing leaders throughout the nation. Local organisation was one of its main attractions. Followers had plenty of opportunity to gain power at local level without worrying about interference from above and women were no exception. It was because of this lack of interference that women were allowed to build their own ideology and set up community services for Nazi men and their families. Their presence misled observers by offsetting the brutal masculine type exalted by Hitler with that of powerful manhood and loving womanhood. True women believers could see for themselves that their ideal state could exist in the future. But before Hitler dealt with the future he first had to expel the past and find a replacement for the 'new woman' of early twentieth century feminism. This he did with the creation of the new mother who would put family and country above all else and would become a missionary for Nazi ideals.

From 1890 onwards most German women supported the German Socialist Party (SPD).[1] However all the women elected to the national assembly no matter what party they represented, concentrated on women and family issues. After the First World War, German women had in fact greater freedom than in any other country because of their vote and their academic and professional skills. The Social Democratic Women's movement began to fade as

[1] Ute Frevert, *Women in German history: from bourgeois emancipation to sexual liberalism* (Oxford, 1989), p. 169.

an independent group and concentrated on social work. Frevert noted that it was women's conservatism that had won them the vote in the first place.[2] After 1919, women voted in favour of the Centre Party, the German Democratic Party and the German Peoples Party. In this traditional society, women voted for more conservative parties than men because they were faced with fears not experienced before. The more religious a party, the more women followed it as many women hoped that the party would mould the community into a model of a Christian family.

After World War One many Germans were unhappy with the political system of democratisation and with the economic hardship of the period. Women in particular, were afraid of many of the new changes that were occurring. They wanted emancipation from the emancipation that they had just gained. The freedom that had delighted some around 1920 had unsettled the majority of women. Many women argued that access to politics had not given women any political influence, so the only way to increase that power was to co-operate with men and to reap their protection as a reward. They also realised that trying to compete with men for political power was pointless but that compromise with them might bring advantage. Women were willing to settle for fewer rewards and less influence. They crusaded to take women out of political life and into a more 'natural' sphere of social activity. For the many women who rejected emancipation, the National Socialist movement was attractive.

Hitler knew that the German people wanted to regain the pride they had lost with the fall of the Empire in 1918. Not alone that, but the economic depression of 1929-33 had dampened the nation's idealism. So much discontent between worker and capitalist, socialist and nationalist and rich and poor prompted nostalgia for an idealised past. Hitler reasoned that the only social categories providing a sense of security were those of race and gender. Thus the Aryan race and the rightful place of men and women in society had to be secured. Conservatives believed that the Jew and the 'new woman' were becoming too powerful and wanted them both out of the Aryan man's world. The 'new woman' was seen as an agent of degeneracy and national decline that would bring in her wake the destructive forces of Bolshevism and democracy.[3] It was said that German women were being lured into rational thinking by Jews and Marxists and that those who agreed with female emancipation were trying to destroy the existence of the Christian-Germanic family life. But even this

[2] Ibid., p. 172.
[3] *History Today*, 43 (November, 1993), p. 35.

'new woman' was more of an image than a reality. It would have been almost impossible to have such power in a society that regarded women as a necessary evil, and which did everything in its power to keep women as subservient as possible.[4] The Union of Female Retail and Office Staff stated in a report that the living standards of almost half of its members was well below the poverty line.

Sylvia Pankhurst writing in 1936, was in no doubt that fascism represented the use of force in theory but in social policy and doctrine the fascist promised to create was 'more masculine men and more feminine women'. This fitted into a racist context that pitted 'Roman' and 'Aryan' élites against 'inferior' races. [5] Hitler made his racial and sexual prejudices about race and gender the basis of the state's social policy and ideology. Women felt the impact of fascism most directly when it touched them in their faith, their family life or their occupational goals. Fascism invaded each of these areas and touched the lives of ordinary women and by doing this influenced them in their daily routines. This is exactly what Hitler had intended. By the use of propaganda, he urged women to be feminine and proud to be so. He had them feel that they were a source of power at the roots of family life. He realised that women could be used to achieve his aims. Although he would never allow them political power, he supported their efforts and did not interfere with their separate organisational structures. They however went along with the wishes of a party that wanted to deprive women of power and political influence. For them democracy and choice had resulted in chaos and competition. They wanted to get away from that world and devote themselves to family and economic security. They believed that they had the opportunity to create the largest women's organisation in history with the blessing of the male chauvinist Nazi Party and without interference from any authority. They were also convinced that they could gain unlimited power from within their own separate sphere – an entirely feminine world where they would improve their 'own space'. In other words their 'own living room'. But they would have to use flattery and coyness to ward off suspicion of women's autonomy. Their strength was what men feared, but yet, needed most.

This, of course, was not what Hitler had in mind. Hitler's ideal woman would be of good background, have a large number of children and be loyal to the state. In fact what he wanted was a devoted follower who would do, say and

[4] Frevert, *Women in German history*, p. 182.
[5] R. Bridenthal (ed.), *Becoming visible: women in European history* (Boston,1977), p. 500.

believe whatever the state wished. The psychological pattern of this type of woman was:

> The yearning for subjection and self-surrender that lacks neither the features of personal unselfishness nor the shrill tones of hysterical faith; the blatant prejudices and the ability to fit all obviously contradictory facts into her philosophy without any intellectual embarrassment, to canonise stupidities and to surrender blissfully to the densest obscurity.[6]

So it is not difficult to see why the Nazi leadership preferred to recruit passive women who would implement policies handed down from the male leadership. Women had very little control in the Third Reich, but some like Gertrud Scholtz-Klink who was appointed leader of the Nazi Women's League in 1934, managed to gain substantial control over the women in her charge. Her main job was to integrate all non-socialist and non-communist women's associations into the Nazi network. While some embraced Nazism, some Catholics and Protestants did express reservations for a time, but most welcomed an authoritarian state in 1933. Most women believed that party and church goals were the same.[7] Hitler demanded the sort of total surrender that a wife should give to a husband or a priest to his church. Through his 'faith', women discovered a political religion and pledged loyalty for life. Even the Nazi symbol, the swastika, embodied two traditions important to them, the red cross and the Christian cross.

Christian ideologies were far from Hitler's mind when he proposed and implemented his policies for the good of the German race. One needs to keep in mind that his main aim was to restore the natural order of things, by keeping men masculine and women feminine aided by a cleansing to purify the Aryan race of its bad blood. One of the strategies used by the Nazi party in order to keep women in their traditional role was the use of propaganda to make them happy and content with their domestic roles as mothers and housewives, and more importantly, to keep them away from gainful employment.

Hitler had promised from the beginning of his rule to keep women out of public influence. Motherhood was exalted. Home economics institutes were established around the country. These institutes were supported by radio programmes, home classes and popular media reports, all directed at cementing the role of the modern homemaker. Degrees and awards were also an incentive offered to the perfect housewife and capable mother. This had a two-fold effect

[6] Joachim C. Fest, *The face of the Third Reich* (Harmondsworth, 1983), p.408.
[7] Claudia Koonz, *Mothers in the fatherland: women, the family and Nazi politics* (London, 1987), p. 66.

on the nation. With wartime labour shortages the Nazis considered reversing their policies, so that women could be available to replace men in the work place. There was resistance from women, many of whom had understood that their rightful place was in the home. Instead foreign forced labour was used.

Loan schemes offered women ways to stay in the home and raise children.[8] A 1933 law for the 'encouragement of marriage' gave loans to couples to marry with exemption of repayment for a large number of children with twenty-five per cent being deducted from the loan for each child borne. This was after all the main aim of the fascist regime; to make sure that there was a population to defend the state for all time. But in order to qualify for this scheme women and men had to undergo medical tests to ensure each was of Aryan blood. In other words, racial awareness replaced love in marriage. It was imperative that children born to German people were perfect. Aryans had to be free from hereditary defects which led to a lucrative black market in the document industry. The law for the 'Prevention of Hereditarily Sick Offspring' was publicly acclaimed as the beginning of state measures for the elimination of the biologically inferior. It forced racially unfit men and women along with alcoholics, mentally or physically handicapped people to be sterilised.[9] It is estimated that over three-hundred and seventy-five thousand people were forcibly sterilised and of these five per cent were killed.

The establishment of the 'Motherhood Cross' was another part of the incentive scheme. This was based on the notion that

> The German mother of many children should hold the same place of honour in the national community as the front-line soldier, for her risk of life and body for people and Fatherland was the same as that of the front line soldier in the thunder of battle.[10]

According to Hitler, equal rights for women meant that they received the respect that they deserved in the sphere that nature had assigned to them. However it was more than that. The Nazi system rested on a female hierarchy as well as a male chain of command. As in wartime, women believed their sacrifices played a vital role in a greater cause, mainly by bringing Nazi doctrine to every family in the Reich. Whilst Nazi men preached race hate and nationalism women created a gloss of idealism. This image kept the morale of German men high while they continued the tyranny under an illusion that they remained decent. Women in Nazi Germany put policies into practice, not alone by their

[8] Fest, *The face if the Third Reich*, p. 406.
[9] Bridenthal, *Becoming visible*, p. 521.
[10] Fest, *The face of the Third Reich*, p. 407.

encouragement but also by implementing them themselves. For example, they supported new sterilisation policies, they boycotted Jewish businesses, by the use of Nazi propaganda they converted the unconvinced, sent their children to the Hitler Youth to be indoctrinated and closed their doors to those who begged for mercy. Woman along with men, delivered up their victims.

In return, Hitler purported to honour women as long as they remained in motherly roles. Even going back to the fall of imperial Germany in 1918, families and schools prepared girls for roles as mothers and wives. They were discouraged from wearing cosmetics and fashionable dress, as it was considered 'Jewish cosmopolitanism'. Smoking was strictly forbidden for pregnant women and physical fitness was encouraged at all times for the good of the nation. Apart from their prohibitions, they could benefit in matters of, arguably, more importance. For example, Guilda Diehl founded her own land movement in order to bolster morale at the home-front. She also defended women's interests in separate women's legislation. Her supporters wanted more than *kinder, kuche and kirche* and believed that only women could bring health to the nation through female solidarity that would unite Aryans of all classes. Although she opposed a woman's right to work outside the home she proposed state subsidies to allow mothers with no support to stay at home. In general her main aim was to work for Nazi victory from an independent position.

Gertrud Scholz-Klink was another woman in the Nazi movement who liked the feeling of power. As leader of the women's movements she had control over their actions and thoughts. It was she who indoctrinated a generation of young women and girls 'to be brave, be German and be pure'. Her women's division concerned itself with women's responsibilities and formed almost a state within a state. She directed government departments of economics, education, colonial issues, consumer affairs, health and welfare without any male interference. Just as the Nazi party had organised on the periphery of the Weimar Republic, women's organisations organised on the periphery of the Nazi party. And to prove Elias Canetti's view on crowds and power, this crowd of women preserved itself in the crowd of men and both kept each other alive in an atmosphere of hate and prejudice. In a recent interview with Claudia Koonz, Gertrud Scholtz-Klink argued that by keeping women from political power, they were saved from doing wrong and evil.[11] However, she neglected to mention that middle class Nazi wives took belongings from Jewish people and that there were women like Gerda Bormann who told her husband not to rest until every

[11] Bridenthal, *Becoming visible*, p. 525.

Jew was eliminated. She also closed her eyes to the fact that she herself was prominent at the core of the evil that permeated the Nazi era. She was spectacular but ruthless and ruled over the lives of thirty million women. She had the responsibility of the home spirit and told them how many children to have, when to have them, what to wear, what to cook and how to cook it.

Women in the nineteenth century were supposed to be moral crusaders, but by contrast the Nazi woman forfeited her moral influence because she gave herself up to the state and enjoyed the rewards that she received. While endorsing homely domesticated roles, they smuggled weapons, served as couriers past police check-points and marched behind swastikas. In the guise of heightening women's status, Scholtz and her followers invaded personal choices not alone in childbearing and education, but also in ethical values and social life. Nazi women who once felt an atom of power within their own space found to their cost that by the late 1930s the state was beginning to destroy it. In less than a decade these legal changes threatened to undermine long-standing family values.

The Divorce Reform Act of 1938, led to an increase in legal separations and there was a possibility of dissolving a marriage where women after five years of marriage had not given birth. The *Lebensborn* – a state registered brothel organisation – was set up for the procreation of illegitimate children and plans were in hand to allow men to marry twice for the purpose of procreation. Even if the family had four children already, the wife was obliged under the law to allow him to remarry. All these new innovations in a country that set traditional Christian family values so high went to the opposite extreme in less than a decade.

By surrendering their political rights in return for honour and prestige bestowed on them as 'mothers of the fatherland', German women ultimately acquired an equal role in helping to make the Third Reich possible. They made Germany a pleasant place in which to live for their community but unbearable and impossible for racially unworthy people. These Nazi women helped make a murderous state possible. They, along with their men, followed Hitler from conviction, opportunism and choice and although they did not issue orders, they did implement them and played a vital role in making dictatorship, war and genocide possible. By offering material aid and emotional reassurance to Nazi men they made fascism effective.

Corinthian or Philistine?
A history of modern sport

Jack Anderson

> It is difficult to think of a modern society in which sport, in its widest sense, does not occupy an important role and indeed where it has not taken on the trapping of a major, nation-wide industry.[1]

James Walvin suggests that sport is unquestionably humanity's greatest pastime. Sport, he contends, reveals everything from national idiosyncrasies to individual temperament. It has developed from an activity rooted in folklore and tradition to one based on millions of pounds of sponsorship money. It has spawned exhaustive academic study, mostly to place it in its sociological perspective.[2] It has even started wars.[3] Essentially, this paper attempts to place sport, particularly male sports, in its social and historical context and hopes to address these related issues.

Firstly, an attempt will be made to briefly outline the revolutionary effect that the Victorian culture of respectability and utilitarianism had on the evolution of modern sport. In short, the Victorians transformed folk-based, custom-related, sporadically-held and often gratuitously violent events into codified and 'socially acceptable' pastimes. Secondly, reference will be made to the manner in which Victorian sport coped with the social and commercial demands of the twentieth century, particularly in relation to the impact of industrialisation on sport. Due to a myriad of reasons, sport, like many aspects of society, emerged from the industrial age in a form almost unrecognisable from that of before. Yet, the impact which industrialisation had, both on sport and society was not simply structural in nature: the social values and norms

[1] J. Walvin, *The people's game – A social history of British football* (London, 1975), p. 1.

[2] E. Dunning, *Soccer: the social origins of the sport and its development as a spectacle and profession* (London, 1979), E. Dunning, *Barbarians: gentlemen and players: a sociological study of the development of Rugby Football* (Oxford, 1979), R. Holt, *Sport and the British: a modern history*, (Oxford, 1989) and A. Mason, *Association football and English society, 1863-1915* (Sussex, 1980).

[3] The Honduras-El Salvador war of 1969 was inspired by a soccer match the two countries were playing for the right to take part in the 1970 World Cup in Mexico, see R. Kapuscinski, *'The Soccer War': The best of Granta reportage* (London, 1993).

associated with sport were affected also. Finally, this paper will argue that in many ways sport, as defined by the Victorians, was a victim of its own success. While the Victorians tamed the wildness of traditional sports, their popularity inevitably led to commercialisation and professionalisation. To this end, winning, regardless of the means, became paramount. The epitome of such pressure on modern athletes is the manner in which they are willing to risk their health and reputation through the abuse of performance enhancing drugs. Moreover, it is suggested that this 'win at all costs' mentality is at the root of the recent increase in on-field violence. Thus, it will be argued that these contemporary trends have led to a corruption of the more honest and respectful values of sport and may in the long term threaten sport's historical role as the true 'opium of the masses'.

Holt in his seminal study on sport and the British argues that 'modern sport according to received wisdom was invented in the mid Victorian years – the 1850s to 1880s':

> violent, disorderly and disorganised sports gave way to more carefully regulated ones adapted to the constraints of time and space imposed by the industrial city, embodying the Victorian spirit of self-control and energetic competition as well as taking advantage of the development of the railways and the mass press.[4]

A brief perusal of the history of sport supports this view. This golden age of sport gave birth to a diverse range of organisations, including the Football Association (1863), the Rugby Union (1871), the Amateur Athletic Association (1881) and in a slightly more reactionary manner, the Gaelic Athletic Association (1884). Sports like cricket flourished from village greens to county-based leagues, boxing was regularised through the Queensberry rules. Even racing, the so-called 'Sport of Kings' became more accessible to the Victorian bourgeoise with the inauguration of the Aintree Grand National in 1847.

During this period, 'traditional' sports such as cock-fighting, badger-baiting, coursing and the ancient field sports of the landed gentry lost the pre-eminence which they had formerly enjoyed. To the Victorians, the term 'sport' was no longer synonymous with the killing of animals any more than street games such as football could be described as 'an ill-defined contest between indeterminate crowds of youths' often played riotously, in restricted

[4] R. Holt, *Sport and the British*, p. 3.

city streets producing uproar and damage and attracting anyone with an inclination to violence.[5]

Quite apart from the social unrest these events caused, they were often accompanied by injuries, maimings and even fatalities. In fact, as Walvin notes, except that 'personal injury even death characterised early references to football ... the games would, and presumably did, go unrecorded.'[6] As early as the fifteenth century, the English monarchy itself was forced to address this ever-spiralling social phenomenon. In 1491 James IV ordered that 'It is statute and ordained that in na' place of the Realme there be used Futeball, Golfe or uther skil unproffitable sportis' contrary 'to the common good of the Realme and defence thereof.'[7] With wars either present or imminent, monarchs in the medieval and early modern period were anxious that the favoured pastimes of the people were strategically directed towards more military concerns. Archery, jousts and duels were to be encouraged and unruly games, particularly street football, were seen as a threat to the very fabric and security of society and were expressly condemned. The history of pre-industrial sport might be written in terms of the attempts to suppress it, firstly, in the name of militarism and latterly, in the post-reformation age, in the name of Sabbatarianism. In the puritan era games held on Sunday were regarded as frivolous and a waste of time, a view underpinned by a scriptural admonition in Exodus 20: 8-10. Thus the Lord's Observance Act in the Irish Parliament of 1695 prohibited 'hurling, commoning [ground hurling] and football on the Lord's Day with the penalty of twelve pence for each offence.' Indeed, some commentators trace this religious antipathy to sport back to the very beginning of Christianity itself, a point well made by Scanlan and Cleveland:

> The Olympics and the gladiatorial contests ended at a time when Christianity was establishing itself in Rome. The acceptance of the religion by the Emperor Constantine marked its establishment as the official state religion and fostered its development as the dominant cultural force in the western world. It is worth noting that the spokesmen for this emerging religion, great [medieval] scholars such as Saint Augustine and Saint Jerome, chose the customary rites at the Coliseum [which had usually featured unfed lions and unarmed Christians] as powerful symbols of pagan decadence and in the process tarred all sports with the same brush.[8]

Yet society and its laws were not always so hostile towards sport. Many ancient societies, particularly Greece, welcomed the competitiveness, athleticism and egalitarianism of sport. Sport was seen as promoting a necessary outlet for the expression of violent and aggressive tendencies in an arena that unlike the battle-field, was contained, respectful, much less dangerous and much less wasteful in terms of life, cost and territory. Consequently, in ancient Greece the law exempted fatal accidents that occurred during a sporting event from a charge of murder, on the grounds that death was regarded as an inevitable risk of sport.[9] Boxing and chariot racing had high fatality rates. Scanlan and Cleveland explain this legal exemption by reference to the social mores of the spectators. Blood was what they came for and blood was what they got.[10]

It must be admitted that sport did not travel comfortably through the Middle Ages and beyond, nor did medieval society particularly care about specific legal provisions for sport. Indeed, given its religious puritanism and the fact that medieval society had more on its mind than leisure activity, the official and legal tolerance of sport can be safely said to have actually decreased during this period.[11] Medieval Europe spent several centuries in a state of almost perpetual war, marked by invasions from the Teutonic north, seven centuries of sporadic battles with the forces of Islam from the East and a series of vicious border disputes evolving out of the collapse of the Holy Roman Empire. Invariably, economic disruption and depravation accompanied these wars and the bubonic plague regularly swept across a weakened continent. Medieval life was severe, dangerous and brief with an atmosphere not conducive to the pastime of sport or indeed any pastime with the notable exception of an occasional witch-hunt. While a slight, if contained, respite did come with the Renaissance and the Age of Enlightenment the contained cultural revival therein was more concerned with the arts and sciences than any physical activity. Moreover, as the period of the Industrial Revolution approached in Europe, the privileged élites withdrew whatever tacit support they had for these activities in favour of more cultural

[5] Walvin, *The people's game*, p. 12.
[6] Ibid., p. 11.
[7] Ibid.

[8] See J. Scanlan, and G. Cleveland, 'The past as a prelude: the early origins of modern American sports law', *Ohio National University Law* Review, (3) pp. 433, 440 (1981).
[9] Ibid. p. 437.
[10] Ibid.
[11] S. Lee, *Aspects of European history, 1494-1789* (London, 1992).

and profitable pursuits. Arguably, the period 1750-1850 marks the lowest point, almost to extinction, of many sports and leisure activities especially in Britain and Ireland. Industrialisation gave rise to a new monied puritanical, mentality that initially 'denied the rights of industrial people to any leisure at all, insisting instead only on their economic utility.'[12]

Yet, these puritanical attitudes gradually disappeared and as the first Industrial Revolution gathered pace in the nineteenth century, the utilitarian viewpoint of society changed significantly. By 1850, increased wages, better working conditions, improvements in communications and education and the effects of urbanisation led to a rebirth of sport in its more recognisable modern form. In Britain, the Victorians acknowledged that a succession of prohibitions would never stop the development of sports among the lower classes, particularly a lower class that had a steady weekly wage and the leisure time in which to spend it. If anything, the Victorians took a pragmatic view that the only way to control these sports was to attempt to organise and regulate them. The process of 'changing the game', which admittedly was a comparatively slow and gradual one, started around 1820 and lasted until the beginning of the present century.

In Victorian Britain, the police force gradually became more aware of the need to counter the potential for social unrest and the propensity for harm, injury and even fatality inherent in many of these so-called 'sporting' events. Such events were seen as merely an excuse for gratuitous street violence and mayhem, as subject to mob rule. Holt, for example, noted the remarkable rise in prosecutions for the illegal holding of cock-fights in Liverpool during the 1870s.[13] Moreover, it is around this period that the first prosecution of spectators for aiding and abetting a bare knuckle prize fight was successfully mounted.[14]As Walvin stated, 'The contrast with pre-industrial leisure was stark. The new forms of leisure were as disciplined, regulated and even as time-tabled as the industrial society which spawned them.'[15]

This was especially true of those areas where there was a high concentration of large-scale, regulated, factory-based manufacturing. For example, in Lancashire, in north-eastern England, the new rhythms of working hours brought about major changes in the way in which leisure time was spent. The passage of the Factory Act in 1850 and its statutory

[12] Walvin, *The people's game*, pp. 26-7.
[13] Holt, *Sport and the British*, p. 57.
[14] Coney (1882) 8, QBD, p. 534.
[15] Walvin, *The people's Game*, p. 56.

introduction of *'la semaine anglaise'* which in effect ordered the stoppage of work at 2 p.m. on Saturdays produced the conditions which facilitated the popularity in many urban areas of the 3 p.m. start to football games.

Industrialisation and urbanisation also affected and transformed the most unlikely of sports even those thought to be exclusively rural in nature, such as greyhound racing. The matching of greyhounds for speed and killing ability is an ancient sport and appealed as much to industrial workers as it did to country folk.[16] With the introduction of circuit racing from the United States in the 1920s, urban greyhound meetings, offering a cheap, night out with the opportunity to gamble legally, became hugely popular. As Holt observed, during the period 1925 to 1935 Britain could be said to have truly 'gone to the dogs' and by 1932 the annual attendance at licensed tracks in London had risen to six-and-a-half million.[17] This exemplified a trend general to many sports at the time, namely that sport was changing rapidly from 'open-field participation' to 'enclosed spectatorism'. For large sections of the working population in the United Kingdom it soon became the case that their only active participation in sport was in the form of a betting stake in the weekly football pools or at a track, usually run by a local magnate.

This mid-nineteenth century development meant that burgeoning club teams and the public schools who between them fostered the initial development of modern sport did not have to confine themselves to local contests. In effect sport became 'nationalised'. Moreover, it meant that supporters could also travel cheaply and quickly to places they would otherwise never have seen, engendering a sense of camaraderie and identification with their local team.

With the development of the new national school system in the United Kingdom during the 1870s, literacy rates among the working class soared. From the 1880s, regional newspapers in particular, helped by the developments in communications such as the telegraph, began to give serious coverage to sport especially the 'gamble friendly' sports such as racing and football. Results, fixtures, venues, team-sheets even starting prices became much more accessible. Holt remarks that by the 1880s specialist newspapers

[16] It still does and around ten thousand spectators, accompanied by equal amounts of protesters, annually attend the Waterloo Cup, coursing's biggest prize, held every February at Altcar on the outskirts of Liverpool.
[17] Holt, *Sport and the British*, p. 86. For further reading see N. Baker, Going to the Dogs: hostility to greyhound racing in Britain: Puritanism, socialism and pragmatism in *Journal of Sport History* (2) (Summer 1996), p. 97.

such as *Sportsman*, *Sporting Life* and *The Sporting Chronicle* were each selling over three-hundred thousand copies a day.[18] The resulting publicity for the sports in question was immense and further enhanced their popular following and occasions such as the Derby became national events in their own right. Over a quarter of a million Londoners were being drawn to the Epsom Downs by the turn of the century.[19] Walvin, concluded:

> Modern football reflected then a deep-rooted social revolution within industrial society, involving the freeing of the lower strata to enjoy the first meagre benefits of a technically advanced and relatively sophisticated society. Leisure time, more money and the improvements in education, transport and communications cumulatively produced the need, desire and possibility for leisure and recreation.[20]

However, while Walvin refers to football only, his words may apply to all sports during the utilitarian period. In short, the new industrialised class, armed with a utilitarian view of society, was responsible for the birth of modern sport. The newly emerging middle class mentalities inspired people across the social spectrum. Public schoolmasters such as Thomas Arnold recognised both the physical and mental benefits of organised sport in their attempts to reform their unruly and aristocratically arrogant pupils.[21] Trade Unions and factories were equally taken by this wave of '*embourgoisement*' into organising recreation for their leisure time. In fact many of today's professional football teams have such humble origins. For example, in a northern suburb of Manchester, workmen of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company formed the Newton Heath team in 1880. In 1902 it took the name Manchester United. Workmen employed at Singer's cycle factory in Coventry formed Singers Football Club in 1883 and by 1898, the team had become Coventry City. In London workers at the munitions factory in Woolwich began to play football in 1886, as Royal Arsenal Football Club, then later as Woolwich Arsenal. The present name, Arsenal, was adopted in 1914.[22]

[18] Holt, *Sport and the British,* p. 181.

[19] See the discussion of the role of the sporting press in A. Mason, *Association football and English society: 1863-1915* (Sussex, 1980), p. 175.

[20] Walvin, *The people's game,* p. 66.

[21] It was in the public schools that the rules for many of today's more popular sports were initially drafted, see E. Dunning, *Barbarians, gentlemen and players* where he outlines the role of sport, especially rugby, in the public schools of the time starting with the famous 'pick and run' of William Webb Ellis in Rugby school in 1823.

[22] Walvin, *The people's game,* p. 60.

Given the above it can be argued that sport, once organised and codified, became not only socially acceptable to the Victorians but an integral part of what it meant to be British. Victorians recognised the numerous values that a sports-loving nation, or even empire, could hold. Two in particular are noteworthy. Firstly, it was seen to contribute to a diminution of a tendency towards social unrest. Taking part in sport meant that workers had less time for drinking, and sport was even charged with promoting social cohesion by bringing the classes together both in participation and in spectating. The monarchy was quick to acknowledge the social lubricant that was sport and as early as 1914 George V began the tradition of royal attendance at the FA Cup Final. Evidently, it was not lost on the British establishment that many of the men and women they would have to rely on in the then inevitable upcoming war against Germany would be typically drawn from such crowds. Secondly, sport was held, not alone to be good for the physique, but it also helped to build character, in the true traditions of the gritty Englishman, imbuing in him a sense of fair play and honour. Victorian commentators suggested that these factors contributed to the social stability of Britain during this volatile *fin de siècle* period.

British leaders, especially within public school circles, realised that books alone could not teach the young such virtues as self-restraint, honour and the 'give and take' of life.[23] Lord Wellington was moved to remark that the battle of Waterloo had been won on the playing fields of Eton. Even chauvinistic Swiss men like Baron de Coubertin, founder of the modern Olympic Games, agreed that the encouragement of physical vigour and group co-operation in games had played an important part in the acquisition of the British Empire![24]

Everyone from king to pauper was expected to be a 'sport', an attitude which some commentators suggest was an important factor in the social stability of the United Kingdom as compared to the other great powers of this period, such as France. Scanlan and Cleveland conclude that team sports played a role in 'debrutalising the masses, filling their leisure time and offering opportunities for distinction with less regard to class (or race) than might reign otherwise.'[25] British commentators such as Mason similarly remark that 'sport could provide the cement which would fill the dangerous gaps between classes and wedge them tight in a relationship based in part on

[23] Holt, *Sport and the British,* p. 93.

[24] Ibid. p. 274.

[25] J. Scanlan, and G. Cleveland, 'The past as a prelude, pp. 433, 441-2, fn48.

common excitements and shared pleasures.'[26] Indeed, Holt goes as far to point out that a nervous King George V anticipating his first Labour government was advised that 'the general feeling of the country was that, true to British ideals, the Government, whoever they should be, should have a fair chance.'[27] That is a sporting chance, regardless of class or social standing.

In conclusion, this industrial age also gave birth to a new monied 'working' class whose values were not so Corinthian. As the crowds expanded, the potential and real income from sport and football in particular, could no longer be ignored, especially by the industrial magnates of northern England.[28] In general élite players in the more popular team sports such as football and rugby soon recognised and realised for themselves the monetary value of their sporting skills. For many, especially the less privileged in society, sport became an accessible and potentially rewarding profession as athleticism, unlike the qualifications needed for the traditional professions, recognised no social barriers or educational attainment to success.

Nevertheless, it was argued bitterly that professionalism and professionals would be seen to convert into a job, an activity which should have been a mere pastime. Sport would become a way of life rather than an enjoyable and diversionary part of life. In turn it was felt that this would lead to an over-emphasis on winning at any cost given that the livelihood of the professional would depend on it. Furthermore, it would destroy amateurism because no amateur could compete with the best professionals who trained and practised together. The emphasis in sport would alter from one of participation to one of aggressive 'spectatorism', feeding the ever vicious circle of competition and blurring the line between the respect for 'fair play' and a resort to cynical gamesmanship. To paraphrase the unforgettable comments of BBC commentator Kenneth Wolstenholme, ageing Victorian athletes thought that the professionalism of the twentieth century signalled that the golden age of sport was 'all over'.

[26] Mason, *Association football*, p. 222.
[27] Holt, *Sport and the British*, p. 268.
[28] Ibid. p. 222. See also Walvin, *The people's game*, p. 222.

A troubled relationship
The influence of the West in Russian history

William Sexton

This paper will examine the thousand-year relationship between Russia and the West. In order to assess this question, it is pertinent to define what is meant by Russia. Russia comes from the word *Rus* or people, first used by the Norsemen, which ultimately originated from Roslagen, north of Stockholm, where the traditional Viking founders of the Russian states originated. This connection with Sweden highlights the ambiguity of Russia: influenced by the West yet always remaining detached from Western culture.[1]

What is the West? According to some it encompasses Europe and the Americas, the western hemisphere and Europe, non-communist nations, that is western Europe and the United States of America. This concept of 'West' is associated with Western Christianity, the rule of law, democratic secular constitutions and a concept of human rights, in contrast with twentieth century Russian or Soviet history, 'whose people were viewed as a nation of slaves.'[2] This paper will explore the complex and often controversial interaction between Russia, 'whose Western researchers by and large feel only astonishment and contempt'[3] and the West in terms of literature, religion, architecture, geography, personalities, concepts of laws and constitutions and, above all history.

In contrast to the relatively restricted dimensions of France or Germany, Russia is characterised by a wide variety of environments stretching from high steppes, thick forests, high mountains and rugged *plateaux*. The European plain is west of the Urals and includes Russia's industries, richest soils, and its principal cities. The Urals separate the European plain from Russia's Asiatic Siberia. Its Aral-Caspian lowlands are arid and often include former Soviet territories such as Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan. Its west Siberian plain is marshy, rising no more than one hundred and fifty metres above sea level while the central Siberian plateau is forested and Arctic-like

[1] Lionel Kochan, *The making of modern Russia* (Harmondsworth, 1997), p. 5.
[2] Edvard Radzhinsky, *Stalin* (London, 1996), p. 34.
[3] Alexander I. Solzhenitsyn, *The mortal danger: how misconceptions about Russia imperil the West* (New York, 1980), p. 10.

and rich in mineral resources. Finally Russia's east Siberian uplands are dotted with mountains which face the Pacific Ocean.

As a nation Russia is a contrast of time-zones. It is a vast plain acting as a natural bridge across Eurasia. Its northerly location, relative isolation and its mountains and deserts have hindered easy contact with Europe and has left Russians with 'the consciousness of the insecurity of land frontiers.'[4] In contrast to the United States' location on both the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, Russia's longest coastline is on the frozen Arctic, while its short Pacific and Baltic coastlines are often ice-bound. Russia is in many respects not just a country but a world of its own. Its geography also indicates great diversity of climates ranging from Arctic, sub-tropical, humid, dry-fertile and continental while its many major rivers such as the Volga, Pechora, Neva and Don are amongst the world's major waterways. In both size, stature and mentality Russia remains immense although the boundary changes of 1991-92 have reduced it somewhat.

Some would suggest that Russian history was and is a tug of war between Asian and European forces with neither side gaining complete mastery. As Ian Beckett has suggested, Russia's world-view has perceived a constant menace from foreign powers threatening invasion.[5] Between 1240 and 1480 Russia came under Mongol rule. Up to the eighteenth century, Russia fought many wars with Sweden, Poland and Lithuania. In 1812, Napoleon's invasion of Russia – the First Great Patriotic War – was repelled, 1854 to 1856 saw the Crimean War against Britain and France while the twentieth century saw conflicts with both Germany and Japan. Much of what relates to Russia is also relevant to both her Belorussian and Ukranian neighbours who share a common culture and varying histories. They perceive 'the bad old Russia of old'[6] as a myth.

Who resided in Russia and its neighbours? Research indicates that Ukraine or southern Russia was dominated between 1000BC to 200AD by Cimmerians, Scythians, Sarmatians – the last two being Iranian. Between 200 and 370AD Germanic Goths from Scandinavia ruled and were followed in 370 by Mongolian Huns. These too were replaced by the Avars and Khazars who later converted to Judaism. Much of northern Russia was

[4] Ian Beckett, *Communist military machine* (Hong Kong, 1987), p. 187.
[5] Ibid., p. 12.
[6] Solzhenitsyn, *The mortal danger*, p. 16.

dominated by nomads, while other sparsely populated areas were occupied mainly by Balts and Finns.[7]

Between 400 and 800 Slavs began to spread out from their original habitats in Poland and the Black Sea areas to central and eastern Europe, the Ukraine, Belarus and Russia edging out Germans and Balts. They were active traders and townspeople. During the ninth century, whether by force or by consent, Vikings from Sweden and Germany set up proto-Russian states such as Novgorod and Kiev. Both Slavs and non-Slavs – Khazars and Vikings – inter-married. The greater dispersion of Slavs throughout Europe and Asia resulted in the creation of different languages such as Ukranian, Polish and Russian. Up to the late tenth century, Russians worshipped nature gods. Around 988, Kiev's grand prince Vladimir I adopted Christianity. Although his mother favoured Roman Catholicism, he accepted Christianity emanating from the Byzantine capital of Constantinople. This choice proved to be a key element in shaping the future orientation of Russia and its neighbours since it brought them into the Eastern Orthodox world. Unlike Europe, where nations like France and Germany became greatly influenced by Rome's heritage and language, Russia orientated itself towards Greek influence and the heritage of caesaro-papism which had an emperor as head of both church and state.[8]

Kievan Russia was, after 1050, in decline with civil wars, famines, new rivals and revolts by cities like Novgorod. In this vulnerable state, it could not fend off Mongol attacks between 1237 and 1240 which was to culminate in the tragic conclusion to the Kievan period.[9] The Mongols destroyed Kiev and other cities, subjugated almost all Russia and regularly invaded eastern Europe. They incorporated Russia within the Golden Horde which was ruled from Sarai on the Volga. Although Russians sometimes exaggerated Mongol oppression, it is true to say that the period between 1240 and 1480 was characterised by heavy taxes, wholesale waste, genocide and stultification of fledgling democratic institutions. Above all, while Europe was transformed by the Renaissance, voyages of discovery and constitutional ideas, Russia was cut off under the yoke of Mongol rule.[10]

Kiev was replaced as the focus of Russian life by northern Russia. Cities like Novgorod, Pskov and Moscow competed for Mongol favour. Many

[7] Leon Uris, *Topaz* (New York, 1968), p. 108.
[8] Tim Judah, *The Serbs: history, myth and the destruction of Yugoslavia* (London and New Haven, 1997), p. 44.
[9] Orest Subtelny, *Ukraine: a history* (Tronoto, 1988), p. 41.
[10] Kochan, *Modern Russia*, p. 16.

princes like Alexander Nevsky became national heroes by fighting off attacks from the Teutonic Knights and Sweden. Finally Moscow became the pre-eminent state. Its princes, such as Yuri and Ivan I, were favoured by Mongol leaders who made them grand dukes and allowed them to collect taxes. Helped by its location, Moscow soon became increasingly independent and between 1380 and 1480 it eliminated Mongol rule. After the Ottoman capture of Constantinople in 1453, Moscow's Ivan III married the Byzantine heiress Zoe. This led to many developments including his self-proclamation as tsar, or Russian Caesar, which was based on the claim that Moscow was the heir of the east Roman empire. He encouraged the idea of Moscow as a third Rome which had succeeded both Rome and Constantinople, where true Christianity would survive.[11] This myth-making would survive to form part of modern Russian ideology.

This identification with the east Roman empire and Orthodoxy provided a powerful ideology that in practise saw the tsar as ruling almost by divine right, thereby starting 'Russia's long tradition of bureaucratic state power over society.'[12] During this period Russia expanded to the Caucasus, Volga and Siberia.

Many features of modern Russia developed during the sixteenth century. Tsars increased power by centralisation and weakened the hereditary nobles – *boyars* – in favour of nobles who owed their position to service. While this reflected many processes in Europe, Russia's past development and distinctive culture and geography gave it a more despotic twist than elsewhere. This process was intensified in Russia under Ivan IV who ruled from 1547 to 1584.

Ivan IV, 'who was unaffected by the great movement of the Renaissance',[13] was a tyrant. He formed a huge secret police force, the *oprichnika*, had tens of thousands murdered, burnt many cities such as Novgorod, gave land arbitrarily to his servants and even killed his heir. Ivan's rewards to his servants helped create a new nobility and spread the idea of serfdom whereby peasants remained on landed estates and farmed it. While serfdom was diminishing in Europe due to the cultural revolution, the expansion of trade, the availability of money and the exploration of the

[11] Leon Uris, *Armageddon* (London, 1964), p. 158.
[12] Stephen F. Cohen, *Voices of Glasnost: interviews with Gorbachev's reformers* (London and New York, 1989), p. 32.
[13] Peter Calvocoressi, *Resilient Europe: 1870-2000* (London and New York, 1991), p. 73.

Americas, Russian serfdom became entrenched and economically inefficient.[14] Ivan IV pursued wars against the Mongols, Sweden and Poland with varying degrees of success.

The years 1584 to 1613 became known as the 'Time of Troubles' with weak and incompetent tsars like Ivan's son Theodore I and Boris Gudonov. Between 1605 and 1613 many pretenders, such as the first and second Dmitris, claimed the Russian throne. Civil war between nobles, peasants and Cossacks and the Polish and Swedish invasions of Russia all served to weaken the country.[15] At one time the *boyars* offered the throne to Poland's Prince Wladyslaw, but fear of Polish dominance ended this possibility. After much fighting things went in favour of the Romanov family whose scion Michael was offered the throne by the special assembly - *Zemskii Sobor*. His descendants ruled Russia until 1917. The invasions from the west of the Poles and Swedes confirmed for many Russians their anti-Western attitudes. Under the reigns of Michael and his son Alexis between 1613 and 1676, Russia annexed most of the Ukraine and Siberia and increased its power at the expense of Poland and Sweden.

Up until the late seventeenth century, Russia remained aloof from the West and its modernist trends.[16] However from the time of Peter the Great, who ruled between 1682 and 1725, Russia began to embrace Western ideas. It is pertinent to examine certain aspects of Russian culture and society up to the seventeenth century. Russian art flowered with the adoption of Christianity and during the late thirteenth century under Mongol rule developed into three schools, those of Kiev, Novgorod and Pskov. Russian art and architecture took its inspiration from the Eastern Church, with its anti-sculptural nature and its distinctive onion-domed churches. The period of Mongol dominance saw cities like Pskov and Vladimir building churches such as St. Dmitri. As Moscow came to the fore, brick and stone buildings began to replace wood and many *Kremlin* churches were designed by Italian architects.

The Russian church was noted for its monasticism. Communities modelled on that at Greece's Mount Athos were founded. Icons and religious art spread quickly from the churches to people's homes.[17] The fall of Kiev as a

[14] John Merriman, *A history of modern Europe: from the French Revolution to the present* (London, 1996), p. 806.
[15] Roy Medvedev, *The October Revolution* (London, 1979), p. 178.
[16] John L.H. Keep, *Last of the empires: a history of the Soviet Union 1945-1991* (Oxford,1996), p. 28.
[17] Subtelny, *Ukraine*, p. 50.

centre of power led to religious authority shifting to Moscow in 1328. At this time Moscow's rulers became linked with the Church 'which remained rather aloof from mundane secular concerns.'[18] The sixteenth century was marked by divisions within the Church with many, like St. Nil Sorsky, who believed in poverty and religious toleration.[19] While others like St. Joseph of Volotsk supported unity of church and state, ownership of property and religious conformity. The latter group succeeded in 1589 when Moscow's Metropolitan Job was made patriarch thereby rendering the Russian church independent. The seventeenth century saw Western theological ideas countered by Patriarch Pytor Mogila's system of theological training. But under Patriarch Nikon during the 1650s, schisms occurred. He introduced liturgical reforms that caused conservative groups known as 'Old Believers' to break away. They were persecuted and fled to Siberia where they still exist and are noted for their reputation of economic efficiency.

Peter the Great is a controversial figure. To some he is the tsar who embraced European culture, introduced major reforms to Russia in shipbuilding, dress, education, mathematics, technology and in the army. He ensured that his nobles would serve in the state apparatus and that they would be able to compete with the best of Europe. He managed to defeat Poland and Sweden decisively during the Great Northern War between 1700 and 1721 and brought Russia to the West's attention with 'another round of Russian-Turkish fighting.'[20] Yet he was an eccentric in the mode of an Ivan or a Stalin. He built his new western city, St. Petersburg, on the Baltic Sea over the bodies of tens or perhaps hundreds of thousands of people. His reforms and conquests burdened greatly the serfs who were increasingly bound to their landlords, as the latter were bound to Peter. Some Russian authors, such as Andrei Bely in his novel *Petersburg*, view St. Petersburg as a metaphor for attempted Westernisation of Russia.

After Peter came thirty seven years of tsarina rule. During this period the Russian nobles were able to free themselves from obligatory service. This period saw intensified Westernisation. Italian, French, Swedish and English words entered the Russian language. Russian ballet commenced under the supervision of French teachers such as Jean Baptiste Landet. Imitation of things European became commonplace. Russian nobles, 'who had a

[18] Kochan, *Modern Russia*, p. 7.
[19] Alexander I. Solzhenitsyn, *From under the rubble* (London, 1975), p. 40.
[20] Judah, *The Serbs*, p. 54.

consciousness as being fellow Europeans'[21] imported French chefs and German bakers, eating only European dishes and speaking only French while 'looking to the West for a model of progress.'[22] Russian art and architecture was dominated by imports with artists, particularly from Italy, creating a Western European Baroque style with palaces such as the Winter Palace designed by Bartolommeo Rastrelli. This Westernisation took place only among nobles and intensified divisions between nobles and peasantry. Western art was incomprehensible to many peasants removed from Western sown concepts and this incomprehension may have, as some historians have argued, sowed the seeds of revolt in Russian minds.

Catherine the Great is a major symbol of this division between peasant and Westernised noble. A German princess, she usurped her husband's throne in a *coup d'etat* in 1762. Being well-educated, she paid attention to Western ideas and corresponded with Diderot and Voltaire. However her record was one of contradictions. Her profession of Enlightenment principles contrasted sharply with her actions. Dependent on the nobility, due to her dubious legitimacy, she entrenched serfdom, crushed peasant revolts and enserfed the Ukranian peasantry. While she introduced many innovations and reforms, particularly in medicine and education, she started wars of aggression against Poland and Ottoman Turkey. Her cynical three-fold partition of Poland when the latter was trying to implement new constitutional ideas mock her pretensions to progress. She treated her heir Paul badly and her Enlightenment pretensions gave way to increasing repression.

After Catherine's death in 1796, Paul ruled until he was assassinated in 1801 with his son's complicity. The patricide succeeded as Alexander I with a reign that reflected that of his grandmother. Young and idealistic, he talked of fundamental changes including the drawing up of a constitution, freeing of serfs, and even the setting up of a republic. However like many before and after him he found that Russia's development and culture rendered her ill-suited for such fundamental change.[23] Reliant on aristocratic support and facing the threat of Napoleon, he abandoned any plans for change. Some historians view him as a sincere reformer while others view him as irresolute, devious and caught between Western ideas and the realities of Russian life. Napoleon's invasion of Russia in 1812 was repulsed by all Russians led by

[21] Uris, *Topaz*, p. 164.
[22] Merriman, *Modern Europe*, p. 808.
[23] Ibid., p. 608.

Alexander. In 1814 Russia and her allies defeated France and entered Europe victoriously.[24]

However, despite the victories, there was some uneasiness in the Russian army. Many Russian officers who had explored Europe on their military campaigns came into contact with Western ideas of constitutionalism and democracy. These 'captivated' the revolutionary movements in the country.[25] They were furthered radicalised by Alexander's increasing conservatism, leading the officers to view revolution as their only means to reform. The formation of secret societies was met with increasing repression. When Alexander died in 1825 these officers tried to overthrow his anti-liberal brother Nicholas I in the failed Decembrist Revolt. Nicholas was a suspicious man. He restricted universities, increased censorship and expanded the secret police. Yet his repression proved a failure. Known as the 'Policeman of Europe' he failed to deal with the growing land problems resulting from population growth and agricultural backwardness. His oppression merely stimulated Russian literature and led to the radicalisation of new political and social ideas 'towards left-wing ideologies.' [26]

The Crimean war, 1854-6, showed how bankrupt Nicholas's policies were. They proved to be inadequate against British and French forces. The new tsar, Alexander II, realised that serfdom would have to end or the regime would fall. Aided by favourable economic conditions, his 1861 proclamation freed serfs. He also introduced juries, relaxed army discipline, introduced a system of local government, although, he never intended to destroy aristocratic political power.[27] However, the partial failure to solve peasant overpopulation and the rise of radical anti-tsarist radicals, induced Alexander to pursue an expansionist and 'Pan-Slavic' foreign policy. This culminated when Russia went to war with the Turks. In his last years he reverted to a reforming policy and at the time of his assassination approved a draft constitution setting up a parliament, the *Duma*. His assassination induced his anti-liberal heir Alexander III to ditch this constitution and to reverse many of his reforms.

Alexander III relied largely on censorship, the secret police and force to maintain order and this policy was continued by his successor

[24] Nikolai Tolstoy, *The minister and the massacres* (London, 1986), p .363.
[25] David Thomson, *Political ideas* (Harmondsworth, 1966), p. 14.
[26] Ibid., p. 77.
[27] Gail Sheehy, *Gorbachev: the making of the man who shook the world* (London, 1991), p. 294.

Nicholas II, who came to the throne in 1894. His minister Stolypin tried to create a base of land-owning peasants in order to maintain the monarchy.[28] In spite of their efforts Russia was changing greatly. Peasants migrated to cities. Industry expanded massively after 1870, in new areas such as manufacture, mining and oil drilling. Its expansion into Central Asia, the Caucasus and Siberia continued during this period. Both tsars implemented a program of 'Russification', that is, the pressurising of non-Russians to learn Russian and to become Orthodox. It can be argued that the rapid changes in Russian society helped seal the eventual doom of the Romanovs as the old autocracy was ill-equipped to deal with the new conditions of increased industrialisation. Gail Sheedy noted that 'the Russian people had no experience of liberal monarchy or economic competition.'[29]

Interaction with Europe took place on the intellectual level as well as the political and military. Russian literature went through a renaissance or 'golden age' between 1815 and 1910. This era produced many writers and intellectuals such as Alexander Pushkin, Nikolai Gogol, Ivan Turgenev, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Leo Tolstoy, Alexander Ostrovsky, Anton Chekhov, Maxim Gorky and Andrei Bely. They were noted for their treatment of social issues and Russian identity. A major question among intellectuals at this time focused on which direction Russia should go. Was it to become a part of the West or remain separate? Ivan Turgenev spoke for the former, those 'with a passionate love for European constitutionalism'[30] while Fyodor Dostoyevsky spoke for the later, the Slavophiles, who it seemed to many 'did not want Russia to go forward.'[31] While some Slavophiles supported change this debate dominated Russian intellectual life. Other cultural pleasures, such as ballet and art flourished. Ballet produced people like Lev Ivanov, Michel Fokine, Olga Preobrajenska, Anna Pavlova, Tamara Karsavina, Sergei Diaghilev and Vaslav Nijinsky. Art produced figures like Thomas de Thomon, Iiya Repin, Andrei Voronikhin, Vasili Stasov, Alexander Ivanov, Vasili Perov and Mikhail Vrubel.

The tensions within Russian society exploded in the 1905 Revolution which was touched off by humiliating defeats at the hands of the Japanese. The revolution ended in the granting of a *Duma* and a constitution known as the 'October Manifesto'. Although these concessions were restricted, Russia

[28] Ibid., p. 294.
[29] Ibid., p. 295.
[30] Radzhinsky, *Stalin*, p. ix.
[31] Merriman, *Modern Europe*, p. 808.

seemed to be heading along the road to a constitutional monarchy or even a republic. However, the weakness of Nicholas II in both foreign and domestic policy, combined with the disaster of the First World War destroyed Romanov autocracy. The road seemed set for the destruction of the proto-democratic institutions by the Bolshevik *coup d'etat*, with some historians stating it as 'a naked seizure of power'[32] and a 'quickly spawned ... militaristic, nationalistic despotism.'[33]

The course of Russian history and society from 1917 to 1991, provides an arena for great controversy. Seen at first, by some, as a road towards a 'workers paradise', it became evident that this was a substitution of one tyranny for another, a tyranny that was far more oppressive than that of the tsars. The Bolsheviks under Vladimir Lenin, deposed a democratic provisional government in October 1917, left the First World War at the treaty of Brest-Livotsk in 1918, fought a civil war with their opponents from 1918 to 1921 and then set in motion the 'Sovietisation' of Russian life. This included the persecution of the Orthodox Church, the adoption of one-party rule and mass repression. After Lenin's death in 1924 he was succeeded by Joseph Stalin, who is estimated to have killed between thirty and fifty million Russians and non-Russians between 1924 and 1953.[34]

During his dictatorship, Russia and its dependent territories, which became known as the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), were traumatised by forced collectivisation into state-run farms, industrialisation, the 'Great Terror' or purges, mass deportations and famines.[35] In August 1939 Stalin signed a non-aggression pact with Germany which partitioned eastern Europe into Nazi and Soviet spheres of influence. Poland was once again to come under Russian occupation. This pact was terminated by Hitler's attack on the USSR on 22 June 1941 which began the 'Great Patriotic War' and brought the USSR into the Allied camp. When Germany was finally defeated in May 1945, Soviet Russia seemed to have not only proven itself as a major power but as a new superpower on the world stage. However, the initial collusion with the West in the Allied camp dissolved into conflict culminating in the Cold War that lasted until 1991 which pitted the US-led western bloc against the Soviet-led eastern bloc. The focus of Soviet policy during this

[32] Uris, *Armageddon*, p. 159.
[33] Thomson, *Ideas*, p. 152.
[34] Solzhenitsyn, *Rubble*, p. vii.
[35] Uris, *Topaz*, p. 106.

period was the creation of a communist world.[36] Stalin was succeeded in 1953 by Nikita Khrushchev who relaxed Stalin's iron grip on Russia but was himself forced out of office in 1964.

Khrushchev's removal was the signal for a partial re-Stalinisation of Soviet life under Leonid Brezhnev. Although relations between the United States and the USSR improved during the 1970s with the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (Salt) leading to a reduction in nuclear weapons, relations worsened in the 1980s.[37] Meanwhile, the re-imposition of stricter social controls brought the Soviet government into conflict with its subjects in the western parts of the USSR and with dissidents such as Andrei Sakharov and Alexander Solzhenitsyn whose books condemned the Stalinist past.

On the foreign front the USA was angered by what it saw as Soviet interference in Latin America and Africa. In the mid-1980s it became clear to many communists that the USSR was in need of radical change. Following Brezhnev's death in 1982 and the rule of some short-lived successors, Mikhail Gorbachev gained power in 1985. He commenced policies of *glasnost* and *perestroika* which advanced both external and internal liberalisation. He allowed eastern Europe to break away from Soviet domination between 1989 and 1991 and he ended the Cold War. However, his policies released tensions which ripped at the core of the Soviet system and following an attempted coup in August 1991 he lost power to his rival Boris Yeltsin who accepted the USSR's break-up and became president of a rump Russian state.

Despite the turmoil of the twentieth century, Russia still produced many great figures in its cultural life. Many intellectuals proved to be fierce critics of communist oppression. Russian architecture, although stifled by communists, produced some innovations such as the 'wedding cake'. Musical geniuses such as Dmitri Shostakovich, Aram Khachaturian and Sergei Prokofiev made vital contributions to music while the Bolshoi ballet produced geniuses such as Rudolf Nuruyev. However, in general, communist rule stifled the cultural expressions of Russians and left an oppressive legacy than continues to suppress Russian culture.

On the eve of the twenty first century, how might the future of Russia be conceptualised? There is no doubt that Russia will continue to go through many problems as it adjusts to Western thinking and a rapidly changing economic and social state. As many Russians are disappointed with the failure

[36] Tolstoy, *Minister*, p. 385.
[37] Thomson, *Ideas*, p. 196.

of their fledgling democracy to bring them economic benefits, the danger of a communist and ultra-nationalist resurgence is acute. However, in many respects Russia proved over the past thousand years to have a remarkable ability to recover from adversity. Having to deal with their communist and tsarist past will prove difficult for many Russians. The likelihood of Russia managing to overcome its demons is strong and it is possible that in time it will deal with its past and become aligned with the West. The future still remains uncertain and whether Russia and the West can establish satisfactory relations remains to be seen. Though Russia is deeply conscious of its European heritage and has striven to be regarded as an inventive nation,[38] there is much difference between the two. That heritage of difference still remains a gulf to be bridged.

[38] Beckett, *Military machine*, p. 77.

Who fears to speak?
Changing patterns of remembering 1798

Maura Cronin

Who fears to speak of; ninety-eight,
Who blushes at the name...?

These lines by John Kells Ingram have become almost as familiar among the historically conscious in the bi-centenary year of 1998 as they were in the centenary year of 1898 and, with their focus on commemoration they serve as a useful foundation upon which to build an analysis of poetic and literary expressions of popular memories and pseudo-memories of the rebellion.

In what ways did these memories evolve over the course of the nineteenth century? An examination of nationalist poetry, song and newspaper articles suggests that as popular literacy spread, as the Irish language declined and as the chronological distance between the event and the commemoration grew, that a process of romanticisation and sanitisation occurred in the way the rebellion was 'remembered'. The main sources used in this analysis are popular street ballads, songs in the Irish language, songs and poems penned by enthusiastic nationalists from Young Ireland to the republican element of the 1890s, and newspaper articles and illustrations appearing in both separatist and mildly nationalist newspapers from the 1840s onwards.

Songs dating from the 1790s are of two types, each reflecting the political atmosphere of the 1790s in a different way. The first type consists of those poems and songs composed for propaganda purposes by the United Irishmen and their supporters, particularly in the earlier 1790s. The writers of these compositions were very conscious of events in France and looked forward to a direct replay of those events in the Irish context, hence their preference for anti-monarchical and egalitarian sentiments and their use of revolutionary imagery like the tree of liberty:

Plant, plant the Tree, fair Freedom's Tree,
'Midst dangers, wounds and slaughter,
Erin's green fields its soil shall be,
Her tyrant's blood its water.[1]

These were the optimistic works which saw the chance of revolution *a la française* as a real possibility. Such optimism did not long survive the

[1] G. D. Zimmermann, *Songs of Irish rebellion* (Dublin, 1967), pp. 127-29.

rebellion itself. It is true that the songs continued to be reproduced for some years between the covers of *Paddy's Resource*, and were reported to the authorities as being sung in public houses where the disaffected continued to gather[2]. They seem to have been largely supplanted by songs of defeat and revenge like 'Father Murphy of County Wexford' and 'The Croppy Boy'.[3]

'Fr. Murphy of County Wexford' is worth quoting at some length as typical of these post-rebellion songs:

Come all you warriors and renowned nobles
And listen to my warlike theme,
And I will tell you how Father Murphy
Has lately roused from a sleepy dream.
For Julius Caesar nor Alexander
Nor brave King Brian e'er equalled him,
For armies formidable he did conquer
Though with two pikemen he did begin
...
O had the Frenchmen they reinforced us
And landed transport at Baginbun,
Then Father Murphy would be our leader
And fifty thousand with him would come.
Success attend you brave County Wexford
Who took off your yoke and to battle did run,
Let them not think we gave up our arms
For every man has a pike and gun.

Decidedly localist in its focus, it raises the rebel leader to the status of almost superhuman hero, stresses the courage of the rebel bands against insurmountable odds, laments the inevitable defeat which comes from lack of foreign aid, and expresses a heartfelt wish for future revenge on the enemy. It probably dates from the Rebellion itself or from soon afterwards, giving as it does, through snapshot-type accounts of incidents, the impression of having

[2] *Paddy's resource: being a select collection of original and modern patriotic songs, complied for the use of the people of Ireland* was first published in Belfast in 1795 and went into a number of editions over the following two decades. A song from *Paddy's resource* was reported as being sung in a tavern in Newry in 1804. Tom Dunne, 'Popular ballads, revolutionary rhetoric and politicisation' in Hugh Gough and David Dickson (eds.), *Ireland and the French Revolution* (Dublin, 1990), pp. 139-155; State of the Country Papers, National Archives, Dublin (cited hereafter as SOC), 1804, 1028/7.

[3] Zimmermann, *Songs of Irish rebellion.*

been written by a first-hand observer or by someone placed at one or two removes from the actual events narrated:

When Enniscorthy was subjected to him
It was on to Gorey he marched his men,
On the Three-Rock Mountain we took our quarters,
Waiting for daylight the town to win ...

Or, from 'The Croppy Boy':

It was to the guard-house I then was led,
And in his parlour I was tried,
My sentence passed and my courage low,
To New Geneva I was forced to go.

A number of songs in the Irish language give the same impression of closeness to events. Chief among these are the poems by Miceál Óg Ó Longáin who, working and living in the immediate hinterland of Cork city, combined the several roles of farm labourer, teacher, Gaelic scribe and poet, and organiser for the United Irishmen. Ó Longáin's works reiterate some of the themes in 'Father Murphy of County Wexford'. They lament bitterly the fact that the province of Munster failed to participate in the rebellion:

... nuair d'adhnmhar an gleo
Le scata greatna greannmhar bhi fadhartha go leor ...[4]

and at the same time look forward to the day to come when French aid will be forthcoming and – a vital motif for the future – when traitors who expedited the failure of the rebellion will be dealt with in an appropriate fashion:

... go mbeadh duthaigh Déiseach is iarthar Éireann
Ag teacht le chéile ón dtir aneas.
Go mbeadh ár gcampaí déanta le fórsaí tréana,
Bheadh cúnamh Dé linn is an saol ar fad,
Is ní dhiolfadh méirleach darbh ainm Néill sin
Is bhuafaí an réim linn ar Shliabh na mBan.[5]

I have decided to treat these immediate post-rebellion songs, both Irish and English, as a genre distinct from the second type of song, the broadside ballad.

[4] '*Maidin Luain-Cincise*' (Whit Monday morning).

[5] 'Sliabh na mBan' (Slievenamon):
That the Déise country (Waterford) and the west of Ireland
Would come together,
That our camps would be manned with strong forces,
And God's help given to us,
And no traitor called Neill would sell us,
And we would be victorious on Slievenamon.

This latter type became a major channel of popular politicisation in the two decades immediately preceding the famine. The division is, as we will see, somewhat artificial, since a number of the themes of the two genres overlap. However, because the broadside ballads appear to have been more widely sung or, at least, were considered thus by the authorities, their capacity both to illustrate memories and pseudo-memories of 'ninety-eight and to foment popular excitement seems particularly significant. As the Sovereign of Kinsale complained to Dublin Castle in 1833, ballad singer and listening crowd could unite in defiance of the lawfully constituted authorities:

> [One singer] told me in the street, surrounded as he was by vast numbers of townspeople and countrymen, that I would not dare to interfere with him; to which declaration the mob gave unequivocal symptoms of assent and approbation.[6]

What were the broadsides? Described by a contemporary as 'thousands of yards of nonsense daubed on tea-paper',[7] they were usually anonymous compositions, mostly (though not always) in the English language, sung and sold on street-corners and around fairs and markets to a very receptive audience, and serving as both a pre-famine equivalent of 'Top of the Pops' and bush telegraph. Since many ballad singers were highly mobile – covering as much as a four hundred mile circuit over a year and a half, their audience was both numerous and representative of popular political feeling – something which is highly significant when we realise that although songs of place, comic songs and love songs formed the greater part of the average ballad singer's repertoire, the most popular numbers by the immediate pre-famine years were the seditious ones, some of which referred to 'ninety-eight.[8]

Interestingly enough, most of the broadside ballad references to 1798 are quite oblique – just a word or a phrase rather than any long description. In a seditious ballad called 'The Young Soldier Boy' sung in Listowel in 1848 a brief exhortation to 'prepare your Croppy pikes' was sufficient to whip up considerable excitement. Similarly, the Bandon ballad singer who gave a rendition of 'Erin the Green' in 1843 had only to declare: 'Dear Christians,

[6] Chief Secretary's Office Registered Papers, Outrage Reports, National Archives (cited hereafter as CSORP.OR) 1833, 1/1.

[7] Charles Gavan Duffy, *Four years of Irish history* (London, 1885), p. 66.

[8] For details of the itineraries of ballad singers and the preference of the public for seditious songs, see Maura Murphy, 'The Ballad Singer and the role of the seditious ballad in nineteenth century Ireland: Dublin Castle's view' in *Ulster Folklife*, 25, 1979, pp. 79-102.

remember the year 'ninety-eight' to get the crowd going. Versions of this ballad, sung throughout Munster in 1843, frequently omitted the date – 'Dear Christians, remember the year' since everyone throughout the political spectrum knew exactly how significant the date was. In other words, there was no need for detail since all knew the emotive nature of any recall of the year of rebellion.[9]

What all street ballads of the 1830s and 1840s shared in relation to their treatment of 1798 was an intense sectarian bitterness. There was no doubt that both composers and audience saw the rebellion as a war between Catholics and 'heretics' – another link in a chain of persecution stretching from Luther to Henry VIII to Cromwell and on to the 'tithe-eaters' of the Established Church in the immediate pre-famine period. The role of the ballad was to 'remember' (or create memories) and in remembering to look forward to revenge. This link between distant past, the more recent events of 1798, and the sectarian tensions of the present came across very clearly in the previously mentioned 'Erin the Green':

> Since Luther lit the candle, we've suffered penury,
> But now it is extinguished in spite of heresy.
> We'll have an Irish parliament, fresh laws we'll dictate,
> Or we'll have satisfaction for the year of 'Ninety-Eight.[10]

This was not – any more than were the Irish poems of Miceál Óg Ó Longáin – a lament involving a helpless wringing of hands in recalling an irretrievable and tragic past. This was a gleeful savouring of what could be done in the near future to wreak a horrible revenge on whose who, in the words of one ballad, 'took great delight in hanging us in the year of 'ninety-eight'.[11]

Were the vengeful bards of the broadside tradition reflecting current memories of events which were, after all, less than a half-century in the past? This seems highly likely since the events of the rebellion and its aftermath had burned themselves so deeply into popular memory that as late as the 1930s collectors for the Irish Folklore Commission were given graphic accounts in Wicklow of 'Hempenstall, the walking gallows'. But it is also likely that the sectarian bitterness of the pre-famine broadsides had as much to do with current inter-denominational tensions as with any retrospective judgements on the year of rebellion. After all, the 1830s had been replete with denominationally-related controversies concerning the tithe system, the revival of the Orange Order in the

[9] CSORP.OR 1848, 12/316; 1843, 6/14675.

[10] CSORP.OR 1843, 6/14675.

[11] CSORP.OR 1843, 27/11344.

face of government repression, the Protestant evangelicalism of the 'new reformation' and the Pastorini 'prophecies' promise of the downfall of Protestantism. Thus, when ballad singers referred either directly or obliquely to 1798, they did so in the context of other and more immediate grievances and hatreds. When, for instance, 'The Downfall of Tithes' was sung throughout Munster and beyond in 1832, this weaving of 'memory' of 1798 was closely linked with current popular exultation over the gruesome killing of a tithe collector and police at Carrickshock near Knocktopher in County Kilkenny. This is a particularly interesting ballad since it uses the motif of Slievenamon – the same background against which Miceál Óg Ó Longáin wrote his lament for the failure of the rebellion – to forecast not only the 'downfall of tithes' but also a more ominous warning of the overturning of existing authority structures 'when all our woes are terminated' and Catholics come into their own again:

> The wisp is kindled throughout this injured nation,
> Recall your heroes who from home are gone,
> As they pay no more unjust taxation,
> Tythes are abolished on Slievenamon
> ...
> We heard the text of the divine sages,
> That when the date of the year is gone,
> That one true Catholic without a weapon
> Would banish legions from Slievenamon.[12]

The hey-day of the most sectarian of the 1798-related ballads had passed by the early 1850s, largely because the most sectarian elements in Irish society – those at the bottom of the social heap – had been more or less effectively removed by the famine of the previous half-decade. The sectarian element did not, of course, disappear. The revival of sectarian tensions with the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill controversy of 1851-2 brought its own brief rash of anti-Protestant ballads which clearly saw a line of continuity between the 'persecution' of 1798 and the spate of 'no-popery' which exploded in British cities as a reaction to the new legislation. But another element had intervened to replace the essentially sectarian approach of the broadsides with something more acceptable to exponents of the emergent romantic nationalism of the period. This new element was the Young Ireland movement, with its leading light, Thomas Davis, and its enthusiastically propagandist newspaper, the *Nation*.

Young Ireland's 'remembering' of 1798 demonstrated contradictory elements. At one level, most of those subscribing to the movement's non-

[12] CSORP.OR 1832, 1/1572, A/1581.

denominational romantic nationalism were horrified by the sanguinary and sectarian aspects of the year of rebellion. At another level, Davis and Young Ireland were impressed by the secular nationalism of the United Irish leaders, and particularly by Tone's objective (which they interpreted in a less complicated manner than its original author) to 'substitute the common name of Irishmen in place of the denominations of Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter'. Moreover, since the essential ethos of Young Ireland was the adulation of individual valour and idealism in the face of insurmountable odds, the men and women of 1798 provided the ideal heroic figures who could be emulated by current and future generations. This dithering between condemnation of the 1798 rebels' violence on the one hand and praise of their courage on the other comes across particularly clearly in Davis' essay on 'Memorials of Wexford':

> [Wexford] rose in '98 with little organisation against intolerable wrong; and though it was finally beaten by superior forces, it taught its aristocracy and the government a lesson not easily forgiven, to be sure, but far harder to be forgotten – a lesson that popular anger could strike hard as well as sigh deeply; and that it was better to conciliate than provoke those who even for an hour had felt their strength. The red rain made Wexford's harvest grow. Theirs was no treacherous assassination – theirs no stupid riot – theirs no pale muting. They rose in mass and swept the country by sheer force. Nor in their sinking fortunes is there anything to blush for. Scullabogue was not burned by the fighting men.[13]

No such equivocation was evident in John Kells Ingram's immortal poem, 'The Memory of the Dead', principally because he totally ignored the less savoury events of the year of rebellion and concentrated instead on the inspiration to be gained by the apprentice nationalists of the mid-1840s from the heroic example of what were now seen as their natural political parents of half-a-century previously:

> They rose in dark and evil days
> To right their native land,
> And kindled here a living blaze
> That nothing can withstand.
> Alas, that might should vanquish right,
> They fell and passed away,
> But true men, like you, men,
> Are plenty here today.

This, quite obviously, was far loftier stuff than that bawled around the streets in the broadside ballads or sung with more eloquence in the Irish songs. This was

[13] Arthur Griffith (ed.), *Thomas Davis: the thinker and teacher* (Dublin, 1916), p. 116.

'ninety-eight without the blood and, importantly, without the explicitly sectarian calls for revenge. But frightened observers, whether in parliament or among the loyalist population at local level, did not really see any difference between the broadsides and what a modern historian has described as the 'genteel warblings' of Young Ireland. Both genres were ultimately provocative; both urged either emulation of, or revenge for, the events of 1798; both appear to have reached a wide audience – either sold for a penny as the broadsides were or, in the case of Young Ireland's poems, available through the pages of the *Nation*.[14]

For Young Ireland, of course, 1798 was only one among a whole series of pasts which were held up to the public as both landmarks and guiding lights in the development of a national consciousness. Davis himself had a poem for almost every prominent event in Irish history or, at least, in the nationalist view of that history: 'The Geraldines', 'Lament on the death of Eoghan Roe O'Neill', 'The Penal Days', 'Song for the Volunteers'. What Davis omitted, others of the Young Ireland school filled in – John O'Hagan's 'The Union', J. D. Frazer's 'Gathering of the Nation 1641' and Bartholmew Dowling's 'Battle Eve of the Brigade'.[15] But as the more militant spirits in Young Ireland became disillusioned by the terrible disaster of the potato famine and excited by the apparent success of the 'bloodless' French revolution of February 1848, the 'genteel warblings' were now paralleled by a more directly militant genre of verse which appeared in John Mitchel's *United Ireland* and Joseph Brennan's *Irish Felon*. Here the ethos was best summed up by the poem which closed with the line – 'A pike! a pike! a pike!'. The close connection between the motif of the pike and the 1798 rebellion was lost on no-one, and what became very clear was that the militants had selected one past upon which to base their ideals, and had jettisoned the rest. They still, of course, saw the past and present as inextricably linked, just as the broadsides, the Irish songs and the poetry of Young Ireland had done. But they also closely integrated their Irish past and present with current events on the continent, and particularly in France. In other words, inspiration for the Mitchellite nationalists was based as much on contemporary continental politics as on the emulation and avenging of an Irish past. This is certainly the message which came across in the aptly titled poem, 'Past and Present' which appeared in the *Irish Felon* in early July 1848:

> Every time hath fitting action –
> Thought and meaning of its own:

[14] It does seem that some of the Young Ireland poems – wedded to appropriate airs – may have also reached the public by being integrated into the broadside literature.
[15] T. F. O'Sullivan, *The Young Irelanders* (Tralee, 1944), pp. 541, 583, 595.

> Not to raise a native faction –
> Not to prop a foreign throne –
> Not for orange, green, or blue, Men –
> Have we come to grips with Fate:
> Prate no more of Eight-Two, Men –
> Think – oh think of Forty-Eight![16]

There was no mention of 'ninety-eight here, certainly, but a very clear rejection of the constitutional past epitomised by Grattan's Parliament and a hankering for the militancy of Mitchel:

> Then resolve to do or die, Men–
> *Onward* is the word of Fate –
> Prate no more of Eighty-Two, Men –
> Do or die in Forty-Eight!

How effectively were these ideas on 'Ninety-Eight and militant nationalism spread? We do not really know. While the broadside ballad long survived the disastrous famine of the late 1840s, the audience which had turned seditious numbers into money-spinners for wandering minstrels had been effectively cleaned up by the catastrophe. This meant that although the broadside continued into the 1880s to cause considerable worry to the authorities by its capacity to disseminate seditious ideas, it would never again have the capacity to rouse a crowd to violence as it had in the pre-famine decades. But in its place came a new transmission mode – the cheap songbook. The most influential was without doubt the *Spirit of the Nation*, reprinted at least twice every decade from 1843 onwards[17]. Others which hit the market from the 1860s were *The Wearing of the Green Songbook, Shamus O'Brien Songbook,* and – most significantly named – *The Spirit of 'Ninety-Eight Songbook*. In these modestly priced songbooks (costing between one penny and sixpence), the spirit of commercial enterprise went hand in hand with emergent militant nationalism. Some were published in Dublin, others came from the presses of the Glasgow printing house of Cameron and Ferguson. With a glorious lack of political partisanship, this firm tapped the growing current of popular British nationalism, Irish militant republicanism and Orange consciousness, turning out a whole series of songbooks from *The O'Donnell Abu Songbook* at one extreme to Orange songsters at the other.[18]

[16] *Irish Felon*, 1 July 1848.
[17] O'Sullivan, *the Young Irelanders*, p. 58.
[18] Fenian Papers, National Archives, 1870, 6791R.

In the Irish nationalist songbooks the repertoire ranged from apolitical 'come-all-yes', through some of the compositions of Young Ireland, to Fenian songs like John Keegan Casey's 'Rising of the Moon' and the poignant 'Felons of Our Land'. These latter songs, and others like them, returned to 1798 both as a tragedy to be lamented and as the fountain-head of Irish nationalist inspiration:

> Oh, what glorious pride and sorrow fills the name of 'Ninety-Eight'.
> ('The Rising of the Moon')
> Fill up once more, we'll drink a toast
> To comrades far away.
> No nation on the earth can boast
> Of braver hearts than they.
> Although they sleep in dungeons deep
> And flee outlawed and banned,
> We love them yet, we'll ne'er forget
> The felons of our land.

This, like the Young Ireland model, was a very different type of 'remembering' to that expressed in the broadside ballads of two decades previously. It was the reverend recall of the 'martyr'. And martyrs, while they may be emulated by brave spirits, can be revered even by the more timid through a veneration of relics associated with their lives and works. Such a relic-centred cult of 'ninety-eight emerged in the mid-1860s when Irish republicans in America sought to raise money for the cause through the Chicago Fair. An examination of the objects donated to the fair shows just how 1798 and all it now retrospectively stood for had become tinged with an almost religious veneration:

> We want *reliques* of Ireland's past history, battle flags, weapons, uniforms, harps, books, letters, souvenirs from the graves of dead patriots, autographs, pictures, mineral specimens, bog-oak ornaments, turf, broom, tabinet, lace, gloves, needle-work, embroidery...
> [We have received]...A Pike, of the Irish War of Independence of 1798, found near the old bridge of Wexford in 1863, with John Nugent's respectful compliments ...
> Mr John Hickey, Kingstown, - Pistol used in 1798 ...
> A powder horn, used by Murtagh Byrne, of Imaal, Wicklow, in '98 ...
> A piece of stone from Vinegar Hill ...
> From Michael Leeson, a musket taken by his uncle, Cornelius Leeson, from the Yeomen at Vinegar Hill ...[19]

[19] *Irish People*, 20 February 1864.

What was also emerging was the cult of the patriot grave. Davis had, of course, already established this in the early 1840s with his poem on 'Tone's Grave' while the *United Irishman* had roused the ghosts of 1798 in similar fashion:

> These were our predecessors. Before foreign rule had finally clenched its grip upon the land, they stood up to die and died. And now half a century is dead and gone and from their Holy Graves we take their principles again.[20]

From the early 1870s onwards, the increasing frequency of Fenian funerals nurtured the growing conviction that the best patriot was a dead one. By the time the centenary of 1798 had come around the grave cult had become an essential feature of popular nationalism. The militant republican *Shan Van Vucht* produced in Belfast by Alice Milligan and other republicans, harnessed popular support for the centenary not only by publishing articles and poems on the rebellion but also by exhorting its readership to participate in 'Decoration Day' when graves of the patriot dead would be visited and decorated.[21] The request fell on receptive ears for in a large number of areas the patriot grave became the focus for the centenary celebrations, particularly in those areas which could not boast a battle site or the birth or death-place of a patriot. Nor was it essential that the grave be one of a 1798 hero or heroine. The burial place of any patriot from the militant tradition could provide the focus. In Kilmallock, County Limerick, for instance, the 'ninety-eight centenary was marked by the raising of a green flag over the grave of an unknown Fenian, something which upset one loyal lady to such an extent that she cut down the flag and found herself in court on a charge of defacing a public monument. Other local loyalists were perplexed as to how an 1867 grave could provide the site for celebrations of 1798 – which only goes to show how faulty was their understanding of the processes working towards the weaving of a seamless garment of Irish history.[22]

For nationalists, of course, there was no such puzzlement. The centenary allowed them to telescope time and to establish a direct line of continuity between the events of 1798 and the political developments of their own day. A contemporary print entitled 'The Illustrious Sons of Ireland' was the visual manifestation of this trend. Portraying a whole range of patriotic figures from Sarsfield to Tone to Emmet to O'Connell and on to Parnell, grouped together with scant respect for either chronology or political differentiation, this print wove past with present to prove that all Irish history moved inexorably towards 'freedom' – an Irish nationalist version of the Whig

[20] *United Irishman*, 26 February 1848.
[21] *Shan Van Vucht*, 21 October 1896.
[22] *Cork Examiner*, 4 June 1898.

interpretation of history, half a century before the phrase had been coined. Booksellers with an eye on the market presented the same 'seamless' version of Irish history in advertisement form, publicising their stock of 'books on Ireland' in a way which covered the entire gamut from constitutionalism to militancy to cultural revival to devotional Catholicism:

> *Irish Song Book, Patriot Parliament of 1689, New Spirit of the Nation, Bog of Stars, ... Early Gaelic Literature, Life of Sarsfield, Owen Roe O'Neill,* Murphy's *Cromwell in Ireland,* Prendergast's *Cromwellian Settlement,* O'Hanlon's *Lives of the Irish Saints ...* O'Reilly's *Irish-English Dictionary, Saltair na Rann, Cath Finntragha,* Smith's *Memoirs of '98,* Fitzpatrick's *Sham Squies and Informers of '98.*[23]

Since the broadsides of the pre-famine period had lauded the super-human leader like Father Murphy and the pike-toting rebel anxious for blood, the type of hero being celebrated had, of course, changed out of all recognition. Young Ireland, as already discussed, had already begun this trend, but the process was completed by two related developments of the centenary period – the re-writing of songs on 1798 and the erection of 'ninety-eight monuments. The re-writing of poems and songs was an attempt to purge the original versions of sectarianism and to inject into them a lofty national spirit which had not appeared in the originals. Eithne Carbery of the *Shan Van Vucht* was one of the re-drafters, producing a new (and now standard) version of the northern song, Rody McCorley. P. J. McCall was an equally assiduous re-drafter. He took, for instance, an old song called 'The Belfast Mountains' and rewrote it under the same title as a lament for Henry Joy McCracken, closing it appropriately with the lines:

> Here solemn waves beneath us chant requiems for the dead,
> While rebel winds shriek "Freedom" for living hearts o'erhead.[24]

More significant was his redrafting of 'Fr Murphy of County Wexford' which has already been mentioned in this paper. Whereas the original version was obliquely sectarian and decidedly local in emphasis, McCall's version, retitled 'Boolavogue', exuded high-minded nationalism:

> Arm, arm!' he cried, 'For I've come to lead you,
> For Ireland's freedom we'll fight or die!'
> 'The cause that called you will call tomorrow
> In another fight for the green again.'

[23] *Shan Van Vucht,* 5 June 1896.
[24] *Shan Van Vucht,* 3 July 1896.

Now, as had been progressively the case from Young Ireland onwards, the identity of 'the foe' was clear. It was England. This was not, of course, new. Tone had already in the 1790s described that country as 'the never-failing source of all our political evils'. What had changed in the intervening century was the popular view. Up to the mid-1840s those who had exacted bloody vengeance on the rebels were seen – particularly in the broadside ballad tradition – as the Protestants. Now, following the trend set by Young Ireland, the sectarian dimension had been purged and the blame laid squarely on the 'foreign enemy'. This version of events was fostered by nationalist historians like Rev. P. F. Kavanagh whose version of the 1798 rebellion was presented thus in a centenary lecture at Cork:

> Just one hundred years ago England was meditating a great crime, which, as usually happens, necessitated many other crimes. This crime was to deprive Ireland of her native Parliament ... [The English Ministers] were aware of the efforts made by the chiefs of the United Irishmen to shake off the yoke of England, and to assert their rights by force of arms. [They] resolved to frustrate the aims of these patriots by driving the people into premature insurrection.[25]

The monuments erected in towns all over the country – particularly outside north-east Ulster which, ironically, had been the heartland of the United Irishmen – confirmed the squeaky-clean non-sectarian version of 1798, many speakers stressing, as at Newry, that 1798 was not a war between papists and protestants. However, elsewhere the cross-denominational aspects of the rebellion were given less prominence and events were presented not just as a celebration of martyrs, but of Catholic martyrs. At Gorey, 'faith and fatherland' were the themes stressed in speeches, while at Harristown near Monasterevan the commemoration centred, as the newspaper heading put it, on 'the memory of a martyred priest'.[26] The design of the monuments was equally equivocal. Celtic crosses, Maids of Erin, and stalwart, straight-backed pikemen predominated – and sometimes a combination of all three. The National Monument in Cork, whose foundation stone was laid in 1898 and completed over half a decade later, presented such a combination. It depicted a pensive Maid of Erin leaning on the broken remains of a Celtic cross, surrounded by four male heroes of the republican tradition, with the names of many more on panels around the base. Blithely ignoring the internecine quarrels dividing the monument committee – an aspect of many similar committees at the time – the

[25] *Cork Examiner,* 30 May 1898.
[26] *Freeman's Journal,* 8 August 1898.

dedication on the monument, closing with an appropriate quotation from Thomas Davis, reiterated the perceived stream of continuity and lofty mindedness of militant nationalism:

Erected
through the efforts
of the
CORK YOUNG IRELAND SOCIETY
to perpetuate the memory of
the gallant men of
1798, 1803, 48 and 67
who fought and died
IN THE WARS OF IRELAND
to recover her
SOVEREIGN INDEPENDENCE
and to inspire the youth of
our country to follow in their
patriotic footsteps and
imitate their heroic example.
And righteous men will make our land
A NATION ONCE AGAIN.

Yugoslavia
The first two thousand years

Gerard Downes

Any attempt to pull together in a few thousand words all that is the mire of Yugoslavian history must necessarily be selective. A large tome would be more appropriate of a two thousand-year-old history. As the Slavophile writer Fred Singleton commented in the preface to his *A short history of the Yugoslav peoples*:

> Any author who is either bold enough or foolhardy enough to attempt to write a short history of Yugoslavia must be aware from the outset that he or she is taking on an almost impossible task.[1]

What perplexed many commentators during the war that ravaged Yugoslavia between 1991 and 1995 was the diversity of cultures in the former federal republic. When Rebecca West travelled through the small port town of Susak in the northern Adriatic in 1937, she was struck by how vociferous seemed the young men of the local population. West attempted a justification for the decibel-shattering exuberance of one particular Yugoslavian youth that she encountered:

> He was simply the product of Dalmatian history: the conquest of Illyria by Rome, of Rome by the barbarians; then three hundred years of conflict between Hungary and Venice; then four hundred years of oppression by Venice, with the war against Turkey running concurrently for most of that time; a few years of hope under France, frustrated by the decay under Napoleon; a hundred years of muddling misgovernment by Austria. In such shambles, a man had to shout and rage to survive.[2]

A few years after West, the Nobel laureate, Ivo Andric, captured more succinctly a taste of the eclectic make-up of his homeland in his seminal work *A Letter from 1920*. Andric was describing a city in Bosnia-Herzegovina that had unjustifiably become notorious as the place where the First World War 'started'. In the early 1990s its name would resonate again all around the globe:

> Whoever lies awake in Sarajevo hears the voices of the Sarajevo night. The clock on the Catholic cathedral strikes the hour with weighty confidence: 2 am. More than a minute passes – seventy five seconds to be exact – and only then does the Orthodox church chime its own 2am. A moment later the tower

[1] Fred Singleton, *A short history of the Yugoslav peoples* (Cambridge, 1985), p. 74.
[2] Barbara West, *Black lamb and grey falcon: a journey through Yugoslavia* (London, 1995).

> clock on the Bey's mosque strikes the hour in a hoarse, faraway voice; and it strikes 11, the ghostly Turkish hour. The Jews have no clock, so God knows what time it is for them ... Thus division keeps vigil, and separates these sleeping people, who wake, rejoice and mourn, feast and fast by four different calendars.[3]

In so portraying the religious differences, Andric illustrated also much of the cultural complexity within the Yugoslav state of which Bosnia was one of six federal republics. The city of which he wrote so presciently, Sarajevo, had become synonymous by the middle of the 1990s with an internecine conflict whose propagation of genocide elicited connotations of another, ostensibly more sinister age. When war did manifest itself, commentators sought (often erroneously) to label it as 'a settling of old scores' or else as 'historically inevitable', conveniently ignoring the role played by some politicians in fomenting armed conflict, indeed, conveniently ignoring history itself.

Any portrayal of Yugoslavia cannot but be sensitive to the panoply of cultures, dialects, languages, religions, ethnic groupings, calendars and even alphabets which pervaded its landscape before and after its declaration of independence from the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1918. The notion of creating a Yugoslavian state (Yugoslavia means 'land of the South Slavs') was first mooted in the early nineteenth century. The fact that such a nation had no historical or cultural basis did not hinder its most fervent proponents. One of these, Ljudevit Gaj, a young student of law from Zagreb decided on the name *Illyrian* for the movement that would press for an independent southern Slavic state. Croat writers had earlier used this appellation as had the ill-fated Napoleonic regime of the southern Slav populated Habsburg provinces. Gaj's gospel was disseminated by a small circle of intellectuals encouraged by the examples of their contemporaries around the continent who had seen the cause of nationalism boosted by the French Revolution. For political unity to be attainable a linguistic and cultural monolith giving the impression of a common Slavic heritage also had to be invented. To this end the Stokavski dialect 'used by the great writers of Dubrovnik'[4] was chosen as the 'Illyrian language' to stand beside Polish, Russian and Czech as a vernacular of the Slavic people. The intention was to create the myth of a common south Slavic race with a distinct history and language. In Vienna in 1850 an agreement among southern Slav intellectuals established the Stokavian Ijekavian dialect as the literary standard for Croats and Serbs alike. In 1866 a Roman Catholic bishop, Josip Strossmayer, founded the Yugoslav Academy of Arts and Sciences in Zagreb to

[3] Ivo Andric, *A letter from 1920*.
[4] Singleton, *Short history*.

engender the apperance of cultural unity. In an ironic twist, one hundred and twenty years later, the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences issued its infamous Memorandum in the daily *Vecernje Novosti*, the contents of which served as a catalyst in the disintegration of the Yugoslav state that the Illyrian Movement had so cherished. The 'Illyrians' were only one of many 'national' groups in the nineteenth century who created a myth of national unity in order to achieve some form of autonomy. To engender an ideal of a monolithic state meant ignoring or inventing events from Slavic history.

The Slavs, a people with no apparent connection to ancient civilisation, first appeared in the Balkans (*Balkan* in Turkish means 'mountainous') late in the fourth century after Christ raiding Romanised settlements south of the Danube from their temporary resting place in what now constitutes part of the state of Hungary.[5] Though only one tribe among many that embarked on attacking the Roman world, the Slav is one of the very few whose cultural identity did not become subsumed into the populations it dominated. While the Goths, Avars, Huns, Franks and Lombards gradually saw their separate cultures dissipate, the Slavs were resilient in maintaining a separate identity.[6] Gradually, the Slavs moved in to colonise their former resting-places. They settled in what are now the present-day territories of Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Montenegro with representative groups in Macedonia and Dalmatia, which now forms part of the Croatian coastline. By the end of the eighth century most of the area of what constituted Yugoslavia south of the Sava-Danube line was colonised by Slav tribes, whose influence also extended into Albania and central Greece. Byzantine writers refer to this area as 'Sclavonia', the land of the Slavs.[7]

The republic which was created in 1991 as Croatia has its historical antecedents in the medieval kingdom of two monarchs, Tomislav and Kresimir. It traumatically relinquished its autonomy in 1097 after defeat by the Hungarian king at the Battle of Gvozd. Five years later the Croatian crown became a Hungarian patrimony, a standing it retained until the sixteenth century when the Austrian Habsburgs took control of Magyar territory.[8] Croatia was not to regain any semblance of sovereignty until 1941, a status due primarily to the

[5] Norman Davis, *Europe a history* (Oxford, 1996).
[6] Stephen Clissold (ed.), *A history of Yugoslavia from early times to 1966* (Cambridge,1966).
[7] Singleton, *Short history*, p. 15.
[8] Aleksander Pavkovic, *The fragmentation of Yugoslavia* (London, 1997) p. 7.

Nazi invasion in April that year. Fifty years later, under substantial German duress, the European Community recognised Croatian independence.

The first Serbian state was centred in southern Serbia and the mountainous terrain of Montenegro. A Serbian dynasty was established during the reign of Stevan Nemanja in the twelfth century. At the beginning of the thirteenth century, Stevan assumed the title of king. Moreover, conveniently, his brother Sava became head of an independent Serbian Orthodox Church. Perhaps the most revered of rulers in Serbian history, Stevan Dusan (1331-55) brought his kingdom to the pinnacle of its powers. After conquering the Bulgarians, he was able to have himself crowned Emperor of the Serbs and Romans (Byzantium) in 1346. He died while launching a campaign against Constantinople, the attaining of which remained the foremost ambition of both the Serbian and the Bulgarian monarchs. After his death the Serbian Empire disintegrated.[9]

The singular event which more than six hundred years later is regarded by Serbs as the most blessed in their long history took place in Kosovo Polje (The Field of Blackbirds) on 28 June 1389. Here the Serbs under Prince Lazar Hrebljanovic were defeated by the Ottoman Turks and thus ceded their autonomy: it would remain thus for more than four hundred years. Prince Lazar was canonised a saint by the Orthodox Church and the day itself became known thereafter as St.Vitius' Day, the feast day of the 'Kosovo Martyrs'. It may seem peculiar to celebrate a shattering defeat as the greatest day in a nation's history but the spectre of Kosovo was invoked continuously throughout the nineteenth century as 'an exhortation to fight for the liberation of the Serbs from foreign rule'.[10] Kosovo, as Misha Glenny argues, is 'one of the great Serbian myths, regarded by Serbs as the cradle of their civilisation'.[11] Today the population of Kosovo is approximately ninety per cent Albanian, a fact that rankles with Serbians. Conveniently obliterated from Serbian history is the fact that Serbs and Albanians fought together at Kosovo Polje, as they did again when Austrian armies invaded in 1690 and 1737. Kosovo was to be annexed by Serbia and Montenegro in 1912 when Albania proclaimed independence, provoking 'unprecedented levels of national euphoria'[12] in Serbia. After 1945 Kosovo became an autonomous province within Serbia. It has become a cliché to state

[9] Hugh Poulton, *Who are the Macedonians?* (London, 1995).
[10] Pavkovic, *Fragmentation*, p. 9.
[11] Misha Glenny, *The fall of Yugoslavia: the Third Balkan War* (London, 1992), p. 15.
[12] Christopher Bennett, *Yugoslavia's bloody collapse, causes, course and consequences* (London, 1995), p. 24.

that the Yugoslav conflict began in and will end in Kosovo. However, a latter-day Serbian leader used the grievances of his fellow nationals to pursue his own agenda. In April 1987 the local, predominantly ethnic Albanian police used batons and truncheons to quell the manifest discontent of Serbs in Kosovo. The Serbian leader in Belgrade, Stambolic, asked a relatively unknown party cadre to visit Kosovo and calm the local minority populace. Once there, Slobodan Milosevic told the vast crowd that the local police should be resisted. 'No one should dare beat you', he declared to a tumultuous throng. 'This sentence', according to Kosovo Serb leader, Miroslav Soljevic, 'enthroned him a Tsar'.[13] Within less than two years, the province was stripped of its autonomous status and despite armed resistance, subsumed into an enlarged Serbia. Milosevic was by now a Serbian icon, a status he cemented for himself on the six hundredth anniversary of Prince Lazar's defeat at Kosovo Polje. In a chillingly prophetic address before an adoring audience of fellow Serbs on 28 June 1989, Milosevic asserted that 'we are in battles and quarrels. They are not armed battles though such things should not be excluded yet'.[14]

Serbia was under Ottoman rule for more than four hundred years. It became a bastion of Christian Orthodoxy in 1054, breaking with the Roman Christianity that maintained its grip in Croatia and Slovenia. Turkish domination induced conservatism through anti-Western sentiments and Orthodoxy itself. Anti-occidental attitudes in the Ottoman world had been prevalent from the Crusades onwards. All the great movements that reverberated around the Western world – the Renaissance, Reformation, the Scientific Revolution, the Enlightenment, Romanticism, the French Revolution – did not permeate into the collective Balkan consciousness. The possible exception may have been Serbia. Perhaps inspired by events in Paris, the Serbs attempted an ill-fated revolt in 1804 under the leadership of George Petrovic, revered in Serbian lore as Karadjordje. Initially concerned with railing against corrupt local authorities, the revolution turned into a movement for national independence.[15] A second uprising in 1815 led by Milos Obrenovic helped the Serbs gain concessions from the Turks. More importantly, it gave greater impetus to the quest for independence, a measure of which Serbia attained in 1829 when it was granted autonomous status within the Ottoman Empire.[16] The

[13] Tim Judah, *The Serbs history, myth and the destruction of Yugoslavia* (London, 1997), p. 162.
[14] Ibid., p. 164.
[15] Barbara Jelavich, *History of the Balkans in the twentieth century* (New York, 1983).
[16] George W. Hoffman and Fred Warner Neal, *Yugoslavia and the new communism* (New York, 1962).

'Bulgarian atrocities' of 1875, in which Ottoman and Muslim ruthlessly suppressed a Christian uprising, led to the Gladstone government in Britain abandoning its backing of Turkish policy in the Balkans. After Russia had defeated the Ottomans in the Crimea in 1877 a re-drawing of the Balkan political landscape was inevitable. A year later, at the Congress of Berlin, Serbia along with Romania and Montenegro was accorded its long-awaited independence. The Balkan states, granted independence were impoverished from the beginning, a situation exacerbated by the channelling of revenue into armaments in order to defend their territory rather than into economic development.[17]

Serbian independence however, precipitated a reversal for Yugoslav *narodno jedinstvo* (national unity) as the Austro-Hungarian Empire began its occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Thirty years later, Austria provoked a continent-wide crisis by actually annexing the province. Serbia had hoped to incorporate Bosnia into a Greater Serbia once the Ottoman Empire collapsed. Austria's actions now appeared to have retarded that possibility. Not only was the annexation a calamity for the prospects of South Slav unity, it also deprived Serbia of access to the Adriatic Sea through Bosnia.[18] Although Serbia mobilised and threatened war, Russia refused to provide military assistance and conflict was averted.

War did come to the Balkans in 1912 however when the Balkan League, consisting of Montenegro, Serbia, Bulgaria and Greece attacked Turkey on the pretext of the latter's ill treatment of Albanian and Macedonian rebels. The Turkish army was soon in retreat and Serbian forces reached the Adriatic, thereby attaining access to the sea. However, Austria again proved to be Serbia's *bête noir* by mobilising its troops in Bosnia and threatening war on Serbia if it did not abandon its outlet to the sea. A climb-down ensued and a treaty signed in London in May 1913 merely aggrieved Bulgaria, which then attacked Serbia and Greece, thereby igniting the so-called Balkan War of Partition.[19] The defeated Bulgarians were forced to accept the Treaty of Bucharest whereby it had to renounce all claims it had to Macedonia which was also coveted by both of the victors. The report of the International Commission set up to investigate the conflict contained descriptions of the war that were to be replicated almost eighty years later:

[17] Jelavich, *Balkans history*.
[18] Singleton, *Yugoslav peoples*.
[19] Davies, *Europe*.

> Houses and whole villages reduced to ashes, unarmed and innocent populations massacred en masse, incredible acts of barbarity, pillage and violence of every kind – such were the means which were employed by the Serbo-Montenegrin soldiery, with a view to the complete ethnic transformation of these regions.[20]

Sending the Archduke Ferdinand and his wife to Sarajevo on St.Vitius' Day, 28 June 1914, has been compared by some commentators as dispatching the British royal family to Dublin on St. Patrick's Day in the aftermath of an event like Bloody Sunday. It is not inconceivable that the ill-fated couple were dispatched by the Austrian High Command in the hope that they would meet an untimely end. Malcom suspects, 'With overwhelming stupidity his visit to Sarajevo was fixed for 28 June, the anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo and therefore the most sacred day in the mystical calendar of Serb nationalism.'[21] This would then provide Austria with an excuse to declare war on Serbia, it had long sought, especially since 1908. History records that a nineteen year old consumptive student of the Black Hand movement, Gavrilo Princip, fired the fatal shot that 'rang out around the world'. The Black Hand was wary of the moderate proposals to rectify the problems of minorities within the empire. Under Archduke Ferdinand's so-called Trialist solution, an independent southern Slav state would become an even more forlorn dream.

The war wrought devastation on Serbia. Its railway system, industry and livestock were practically obliterated. In Croatia and Slovenia industrial output actually expanded during the war. Out of Serbia's population of four-and-a-half million people, twenty-eight per cent died in the war, which included the staggering figure of sixty-two per cent of its male population, aged fifteen to fifty-five. In proportionate terms Serbian losses were three times greater than Britain's and two-and-a-half times those of France.[22] In contrast, former Austro-Hungarian parts of the empire lost less than ten per cent of their respective populations.[23] Serbia emerged from the war a broken nation ever more determined to be the fulcrum of a new South Slav state. Its wish was granted twenty days after the Armistice was declared. Negotiations had taken place on the island of Corfu from where a declaration was issued. It stated that the future kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes would be a constitutional,

[20] From *Report of the International Commission to inquire into the causes and conduct of the Balkan Wars* (Carnegie Endowment For International Peace, 1914).
[21] Noel Malcolm, Bosnia: a short history, (Cambridge, 1996).
[22] R.J. Crampton, *Eastern Europe in the twentieth century and after* (London, 1994), p. 131.
[23] Pavkovic, *Fragmentation*.

democratic, parliamentary monarchy headed by the Serbian Karadordevic dynasty in which two alphabets (Cyrillic and Latin), three names (Serb, Croat and Slovene) and three major religions (Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy and Muslim) would be equal. On 1 December 1918 the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, under the regent Prince Aleksander, took its place among the states of the world.

The new country was basically a bastion of Serbian interests with Croatia and Slovenia playing subservient roles in the state. An attempt was made to impose a parliamentary democracy of the type that gained popularity in nineteenth century Europe. Such laudable aims were thwarted when the leader of the Croat Peasant Party, the charismatic Stjepan Radic was shot by a Montenegrin radical on 20 June 1928. Seven weeks later Radic died and with that the hope of a federal state, respectful of the rights of all its nationalities, also evaporated. It gave Prince Aleksander the excuse he needed to enact a *coup d'état* which he did on the Orthodox Christmas Day, 6 January 1929. He suspended the constitution and granted himself control of all political and legislative functions within the state.

His kingdom was now re-named Yugoslavia (the land of South Slavs). Aleksander's inglorious reign was cut short by a Macedonian assassin, possibly aided by Hungary and Italy, on 9 October 1934 while he was on a state visit to France. His heir, Peter, was too young to succeed to the throne so his cousin Paul was crowned king on condition that Peter would succeed him when he came of age in 1941. However, by that year Paul's pro-German stance precipitated a revolt against his rule, the result of which saw Peter installed as sovereign on 27 March. The new government signed a friendship treaty with the Soviet Union on 6 April and in doing so provoked the ire of Nazi Germany, which, on the very same day invaded Yugoslavia. The invasion was met with stern resistance in both Serbia and Slovenia. Croatians, however, were not on the whole displeased to collaborate with the Nazis. Marching on Zagreb, instead of fighting fiercely to take the Croatian capital, the Germans were able to take fifteen thousand prisoners, including twenty-two generals.[24] In all, over three hundred thousand officers and men of the Yugoslav army capitulated and surrendered to the Germans in April 1941. Since 1918 Croatia, had resented what many perceived as the casting off of Hungary as a master only to replace it with Serbia.[25]

[24] Crampton, *Eastern Europe*, p. 143.
[25] Clissold, *Early times*.

Hitler was determined to destroy Yugoslavia and to share out its fragmented parts with his collaborators. An independent state of Croatia (*Nezavisna Drzava Hrvatska*, or NDH) was to be created. Initially, an Italian protectorate, the NDH was in reality run as a German fiefdom. Having been granted asylum in Mussolini's Italy, the leader of Croatia's notorious *Ustase*, Ante Pavelic, entered Zagreb on 15 April 1941. One of Pavelic's objectives was to 'purify' Croatia of 'alien elements', particularly Serbs.[26] Why Pavelic is not as reviled as his fascist contemporaries in other states is an historical anomaly. *Ustase* myth maintained that Croats were by origin Goths and therefore genetically superior to the Slavic Serbs who were derogatorily classified as 'Orientals' who should be destroyed. Of the Serbs they said that 'one third would be converted to Roman Catholicism, one third expelled and one third exterminated'. The *Ustase* were almost as good as their word. The most notorious of their many concentration camps was at Jasenovac, the 'Serbian Auschwitz,' which operated from 1942-45. Some estimates put the final death toll at seven hundred thousand though such estimates are now impossible to verify. Not as technologically advanced as Nazi Germany, Croatian *Ustase* eschewed *Zyklon-B* and sealed chambers in favour of clubbing to death the inmates. boiling them in cauldrons and sawing off their heads.[27]

Not all Yugoslavians were as collaborative as Pavelic, however. Resistance to the Nazis came from the Serbian Colonel Mihailovic. Refusing to surrender to the Germans, Mihailovic led an armed uprising in May 1941 against the occupying Nazis. Mihailovic's troops were called Chetniks and considered themselves as the representatives of the exiled government that based itself in London. In June 1941 following the German invasion of the Soviet Union Yugoslavia's Communist Party issued a call for an uprising against the occupiers. The Communist forces called 'Partisans' were led by Josip Broz Tito, a man whose name became synonymous initially with a policy of non-alignment during the Cold War and later with keeping the Yugoslav federation intact. Tito and Mihailovic met in September 1941 but could not concur on their strategic aims. By late November, the Chetniks had given up resistance to Nazi rule. The Chetniks and Partisans were soon embroiled in a fratricidal civil war. The Partisans wished to create a new Yugoslav federation after the war; the Chetniks, the vast majority of whom were Serbs, hoped to maintain the monarchy under Prince Peter. After the war the Chetniks were massacred *en masse* by partisans. Mihailovic was tried and executed. The

[26] Singleton, *Yugoslav peoples*.
[27] Davies, *Europe*, p. 707

Chetniks had themselves carried out acts of depravity against Muslims during the war. Archbishop Stepinac who had welcomed the creation of the NDH was tried and sentenced to sixteen years imprisonment for collaboration with the *Ustase*. The Vatican excommunicated all those connected in any way with the trial. At least two hundred clergy were killed for suspected leniency towards Pavelic's regime.[28] In all, Yugoslavia lost a staggering twenty-two per cent of its pre-war population – over one-and-a-half million people.[29]

The 1946 constitution was based on the 1936 constitution in Stalin's Soviet Union. It guaranteed equality for all before the law. Significantly, Tito, half Croat half Slovene, became head of state after elections in November 1945. A federation of six 'equal republics' – Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, Slovenia and Montenegro with an autonomous province Vojvodina and an autonomous region, Kosovo-Metohija, was established. Kosovo had become part of Alabania in 1941 after the German invasion. However, to the disappointment of the ethnic Albanian majority, it reverted to Yugoslav rule after an agreement between Tito and the Albanian leader Hoxha. The new federation was soon in dispute with Moscow for what the latter regarded as 'ideological deviation' and 'sliding back into capitalism'.[30] The split between the two communist states came on 28 June 1948 when Yugoslavia was expelled from the *Cominform* (Communist Information Bureau) which was an international association of communist parties. The Yugoslav secret police, *OZMA*, founded by Aleksander Rankovic in 1943 and based, like the constitution, on its Soviet counterpart, rounded up hundreds of thousands of suspected pro-Stalinists and dispatched them for 're-education' to various labour camps. Expulsion from the *Cominform* meant that the Yugoslav economy suffered a haemorrhage of lost Soviet credit, technical expertise and a lucrative export market in the USSR.

Tito's government embarked on a policy of long-overdue land reform, a collectivisation drive, rapid urbanisation and a series of ambitious five year plans, which sought to replicate the success (if not the methods) of Stalin's schemes in the USSR. After some initial success, the economic blockade imposed by the Soviet Union and its allies destroyed the best intentions of the first five year plan. A second attempt at long-term economic planning begun in 1957 met with much greater success attaining its targets within a four-year

[28] Hoffman and Neal, *New Communism*, p. 95.
[29] Denis Rusinow, *The Yugoslav experiment, 1948-74* (London, 1977), p. 18.
[30] Pavkovic, *Fragmentation*, p. 53.

period.[31] Yugoslavia could not have survived without Western, mostly American, aid. An initial grant from the Truman administration of $20 million was the precursor to vast loans and grants that by 1960 had totalled over $2 billion.[32] A policy of non-alignment in foreign affairs was pursued vigorously by the regime and earned it much credibility abroad. Relations with Moscow improved once Khruschev assumed leadership of the Soviet Communist Party after the death of Stalin in 1953. The 1958 Yugoslav Communist Party Congress adopted the policy of *Jugoslovenstvo,* the concept of a single Yugoslav nation. This alienated in particular the republic of Slovenia that hitherto had been one of the more vociferous supporters of a federated Yugoslavian state. *Jugoslovenstvo* envisaged the merging of all the different cultures within the federation into a singular homogenous Yugoslavian culture.

Jugoslovenstvo was abandoned by the mid-1960s in favour of a more realistic approach to the federation's ethnic diversity. In some cases, particularly that of Macedonia, a new republic was formed even though it had little or no historical foundation. In the latter case a Harvard Slavicist, Horace Landt was drafted in to create a grammar for the Macedonian language![33] It was Bosnia however that created the greatest headache for the Yugoslav state. Tito had promised before the war's end that the federated republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina would be 'neither Serbian nor Croatian nor Muslim but rather Serbian and Croatian and Muslim'. In 1964 Tito created another 'nation' – the Bosnian Muslims. Within little more than quarter of a century Bosnia-Herzegovina would become an independent state during a war in which a person's cultural provenance often determined his or her fate.

The new constitution of Yugoslavia promulgated in 1974 was an attempt to decentralise power within the state in an imaginative step to maintain the federation. By the time of Tito's death in May 1980, however, it was clear that there existed no unifying presence within Yugoslavia to help secure its future as a sovereign geo-political entity. In the 1974 constitution Tito had made provision for the notion of a 'collective' or 'rotating' presidency, whereby a member from each of the six republics and two autonomous provinces would hold the state's highest office for a year at a time. By the mid-1980s, however, the Yugoslav government was dominated by Serbs. In 1987 the death knell of the federated state was sounded when the Belgrade government launched a brutal crackdown on ethnic Albanians in Kosovo. Two years later Kosovo was

[31] Singleton, *Yugoslav peoples*, pp. 216-35.
[32] Christopher Cviic, *Remaking the Balkans* (London, 1991), p. 56.
[33] Dusko Doder, in *Foreign Policy* 91, p. 11.

stripped of its 'autonomous' status and by the time Slobodan Milosevic gave his fateful speech at the Field of Blackbirds on the feast day of the Kosovo martyrs, 28 June 1989, the delusion of 'Yugoslav unity' had evaporated. Slovenia, which had begun the push for independence in January 1990, ceded from the federation in May 1991. When Croatia followed in June 1991 the Serbian response plunged the Balkans once more into the abyss.

Fig. 1. Yugoslavia 1991.

The road to Kosovo
The Balkan wars 1991-8

Edward Horgan

> Nothing is simple in the Balkans. History pervades everything and the complexities confound even the most careful study.[1]

Any understanding of the current events in the Balkan region must take into consideration the complex matrix of circumstances that influenced these events. This matrix must include history, mythology, religion, the balance of power, colonialism, ethnographic migrations, culture, ethnicity and race. A good understanding of the geography of the region is also essential, especially its location at one of the migratory cross roads of the world, combined with the geographic relief of the Balkans itself. This paper will deal with the period from April 1991 to December 1998. In this short period five separate but interconnected wars have been waged. These included wars of independence waged between Slovenia and Yugoslavia, Croatia and Yugoslavia and the Krajina Serbs and Croatia.

The Bosnian war almost defies normal description. It includes attempted genocide against the Muslim community, three way civil war with Serbs, Croats and Muslims fighting each other in Central Bosnia, Muslims against Muslims in Bihac, the war of secession by Serbs and Croats from Bosnia, the war of secession by Muslims from Yugoslavia and the war of 'aggression', 'conquest' or 'liberation' by Serbia. In Kosovo, the ongoing crisis could be described as a War of Independence or merely a war to attain just representation by the Albanians within Kosovo. Serbia would view the conflict as a counter terrorist war by the internationally recognised government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

The validity of what one calls these wars depends on one's national or international viewpoint and this fact in itself emphasises the complexity of the situations that have developed and the difficulty in achieving resolutions. Even the name Kosovo is no longer agreed. The Serbs refer to it as Kosovo-Metohija while the Albanians call it Kosova.

A knowledge of the demography of former Yugoslavia is essential in any study of the region's recent wars. The population blend of former

[1] David Owen, *Balkan odyssey* (London, 1995), p. 1.

Yugoslavia is like a smaller reflection of the eastern European ethnic mix. Russia, Poland, Ukraine, Bellarus, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Bulgaria and ex-Yugoslavia are predominantly of Slav origin with a mix of other minorities while the Baltic States, Hungary, Romania and Albania have non Slav majorities. Likewise, former Yugoslavia, Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia, Montenegro and Macedonia, have populations of which the majority are of Slav origin with a mix of other minorities. The exceptions are Kosovo with its large Albanian majority and Vojvodina which has a large Hungarian ethnic minority. With the exception of Slovenia and Kosovo, most of the inhabitants of former Yugoslavia speak very similar versions of the Serbo-Croat language. Religion is one of the major differentiating factors though not necessarily the root cause of its wars.

Croatia in 1991 had almost five million people, the majority of whom were Croat Roman Catholic, but it had a large Serb Orthodox minority of over six-hundred thousand and other significant minorities including Muslims and Hungarian Roman Catholics. The majority of these Serbs have since been expelled into Serbia or to the Serb controlled areas of Bosnia and attempts have been made to resettle up to thirty thousand of them in Kosovo.

Serbia had over forty per cent of the total population of former Yugoslavia with ten million people. In the autonomous province of Vojvodina with its a large Hungarian minority, Serbs are less than fifty per cent of the population. Kosovo is made up of ninety per cent Albanian and eight per cent Serb with 'others' making up two per cent. Serbia as a whole has significant other minorities including Croats and Muslims. The Sanzak province in Serbia, located between Kosovo, Montenegro and Bosnia, has a large Muslim population. One of the reasons for the fierce fighting which occurred in the Muslim 'safe areas' of Srebrenica, Zepa and Gorazda in east Bosnia was to prevent the emergence of a crescent of Muslim held territory. This, in theory, could link Bosnia through the Sanzak and Kosovo to Albania, thereby encircling Montenegro and cutting off Serbia completely from the Adriatic Sea. This is also a factor in the mutual interdependence between Montenegro and Serbia. The Montenegrins hold the high ground between Serbia and the sea with Serbia acting as the guarantor for the Orthodox Montenegrins who fear being isolated and being surrounded by Muslims. While it is unlikely that the Muslims in any of these areas have had recent ambitions of this nature, a study of the geography and demography in the regions reveals how the fears of the Serbs could be raised concerning future developments.

> The main strategic concern associated with the wars in former Yugoslavia is the fuse line which runs from Sarajevo, to the Sanzak Muslims to the

> Albanians in Kosovo (both within Serbia) to the Albanians in Macedonia, to Albania itself, and then to Greece and Turkey.[2]

However the possibility of Greece and Turkey becoming involved in a Balkans clash, in addition to their existing Cyprus and Aegean Sea islands' conflicts, has been a complicating factor in the European Union (EU) and the North Athlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) involvement in mediating the Balkan crisis.

Montenegro, which has now combined with Serbia to form the Federation of Yugoslavia, has a population of six-hundred thousand people, mainly Serb Orthodox but with minorities of Slav and Albanian Muslims, Croats and others. Macedonia has a population of over two million people, mainly Orthodox, but with two-hundred and fifty thousand Albanian Muslims and at least twelve other categories including Serbs, Greeks and Turks. Due to Greek objections voiced at EU and UN levels Macedonia is now officially called 'The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia'. Albania itself cannot be excluded from the 'Yugoslavia' matrix, because of its ties with Kosovo. It has a population of almost three-and-a-half million people who are mainly Muslim but with a significant Albanian Catholic minority, especially in the north of the country and a Greek minority of over fifty thousand in the south.[3]

The fall of communism all over eastern Europe in 1989, cast the sparks of conflict onto this flamable ethnic mixture. The blaze which resulted could have been extinguished in the early stages of conflagration by judicious but courageous fire fighting. Events came to a head when in May 1991 Slobodan Milosevic refused to accept the Croat, Stipe Mesic, as an automatic rotating president of Yugoslavia. This was the spark that forced the hands of Croatia and Slovenia and on 25 June 1991 the Croatian and Slovenian parliaments simultaneously declared independence.

The Slovenian War of Independence lasted less than two weeks. Slovenian customs officials took control of the international border crossing points backed up by Slovenian reserve forces. Slobodan Milosevic sent in the mainly Serbian Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) to regain control of Yugoslavia's international borders. The old communist Yugoslav defence system helped the break-up of the Federation. Two military structures existed, the Serb dominated JNA at federal level and at local level the Territorial Defence Forces (TO). This system helped to reduce the risk of Soviet military

[2] Ibid., p. 11.

[3] Population figures taken from various sources including, *Philip's atlas of the world* (London, 1997) and Noel Malcolm, *Kosovo: a short history* (London, 1998).

interference as had happened in Hungary and Czechoslovakia. In 1991 in Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia, the TO split into its own ethnic or national groups and provided the basis for the armies of the new independent republics.

JNA moved troops and tanks into Slovenia and attempted to overthrow the government. The plan was to retake the border posts from the TO and secure the seaports and Ljubjana airport. Slovenian reservists blockaded JNA garrisons and forced the withdrawal of the JNA after only ten days. 'Slovenia mounted a well-planned resistance, and was soon dropped from Milosevic's and the army's strategic plans'.[4] A war in Slovenia could have bogged down the JNA in a war of attrition that would be difficult to support logistically through a hostile Croatia. Slovenia also had easy access to supplies of arms and other essentials from countries, including Austria and Germany. The prime minister of Slovenia, Milan Kucan, one of the most successful politicians and leaders from former Yugoslavia, manipulated his much more powerful neighbours, Croatia and Serbia, playing one off against the other. He read the political and military situations accurately and took decisive action at the right times. The Croatian leader, Franjo Tudjman was much less decisive, especially in the first year of the wars, but he soon learned and later led Croatia as the major winner in the whole series of wars. Milosevic was, on the one hand, a cunning and scheming operator but at other times he displayed incompetence and poor leadership. He was driven by sectional Serb interests or by self-interest and had little faith in the concept of a 'Greater Yugoslavia'.

European Union diplomacy and conflicting vested interests among EU states such as Britain, France, Germany and Greece played an essential role in the failure to prevent or stop the wars. Hans Kung, the German theologian, highlights the role of unethical Balkan leaders and European Union leaders in the rapid move from potential crisis to disastrous inter-ethnic warfare:

> It is scandalous that Croatia, openly protected above all by German diplomacy, was accepted into the Council of Europe in 1995 although President Tudjman, rejected by the majority of his people ... did not either co-operate in the arrest of war criminals or allow the elected opposition leader to take up his post as the mayor of Zagreb, or the Serbian refugees to return. And it is equally scandalous that Milosevic, the war criminal and chief author of the Yugoslavian war, discreetly

[4] Malcolm, *Bosnia*.

> protected by English and French diplomacy, could have held on to power for so long.[5]

Croatian journalist, Vesna Knezevic, writing in *The Irish Times*, described Tudjman and Milosevic as the two remaining European dictators. 'The Tudjmans now have estates all over the country, along with trade companies, banks, and sports and leisure complexes' and of Milosevic, 'If his opponents were ever tempted to finish him off, he could always play, as he often did, the nationalist Kosovo trump card. Too often the Serbs took the bait.'[6]

The success of Slovenia led to an inevitable chain reaction in the disintegration process. There was no leader in Yugoslavia capable of leading the Federation, partly because of the self-interest and corruption that had characterised much of Tito's later period in power. After the loss of Slovenia, Milosevic and his supporters in Serbia stopped pretending to represent a genuine federalist Yugoslavia and began to more openly espouse a Greater Serbia. It was all the more surprising then that the Western European powers, under the convenient cover of the EU, continued for several years to insist on a resolution that avoided a break-up of Yugoslavia. Why did the European powers fail to act? David Owen's explanation sounds hollow:

> Could NATO have stopped the Serb-Croat war when it broke out in 1991? The answer must be yes, but at a risk of military lives that no democratic leaders were prepared to ask of their people.[7]

Yet they were prepared to risk and lose soldier's lives in the hopeless United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) mission between 1992 and 1995. Over one hundred and fifty United Nations' personell were lost in Bosnia and Croatia during this period.

Hans Kung asserted: 'A timely and well-considered threat of economic sanctions and military force (no ground troops but massive NATO air attacks), could have stopped the aggression at that time [1991]'.[8] The NATO air attacks of 1995 that eventually stopped the war were neither massive nor prolonged.

The military situation at the beginning of the wars in 1991 was that the massive JNA was already in place in garrisons in all the republics, but each republic also had armed, mostly loyal, militias. This mix almost guaranteed civil war unless very quick and strong pre-emptive military action

[5] Hans Kung, *A global ethic for global politics and economics* (Munich, 1997), p. 124.
[6] *The Irish Times*, 23 November 1998.
[7] Owen, *Balkan odyssey*.
[8] Kung, *A global ethic*, p. 122.

could be taken by Yugoslavia to enforce the Federation. Such decisive action failed to materialise. Milosevic dithered and Yugoslavia died when Slovenia successfully seceded in July 1991. The alternative was for the UN, or NATO acting on its behalf, to deploy a strong 'peace enforcing' force to facilitate a relatively peaceful series of separations of the republics from Federal Yugoslavia. This option also failed to materialise. EU leaders and diplomats argued strongly against military intervention by NATO at this point. In between these options was an abyss of chaos, into which Bosnia and Herzegovina almost inevitably fell.

In Croatia, since the middle of 1990, Serb extremist militias had been actively provoking clashes in the Krajina area of Croatia, and then calling on the JNA to impose 'peace'. Their leaders included Zelijko Raznjatovic, known as Arkan, who set up the Arkan Tigers, Vojislav Seselj and his Cetnic Army, and JNA army commander Colonel Ratko Mladic, later to become notorious in Bosnia where he emerged as a general and is now an indicted war criminal. Croat nationalists also stoked resentment among Serbs by large-scale discrimination in employment and other areas.

> The self-proclaimed "Serbian Autonomous Region of Krajina" held its own second referendum on May 12: ninety-nine per cent of the participants voted to leave Croatia and join Serbia. One week later, ninety-four per cent of the voters in Croatia opted for independence; most Serbs boycotted the Croatian vote.[9]

These incompatible decisions led to all out war in Croatia between the Croats and Croatian Serbs who were supported by Serbia. The Serb dominated JNA, using its massive predominance in tanks and artillery, quickly annexed almost thirty per cent of Croatia including all the Krajina and most of east and west Slavonia and laid siege to the key strategic towns of Dubrovnik on the Adriatic and Vukovar on the Danube. They needed the area around Dubrovnik to expand Serb access to the Adriatic and to help make a Serb canton in Herzegovina viable. Internationally this proved a major mistake, because the world media and especially that of central Europe focused on the destruction of the historic and popular holiday centre of Dubrovnik and eventually forced the Serbs to halt their attacks on it. The contrast, between the Western treatment of Dubrovnik and Vukovar, highlights both the power of the media in drawing international attention to an issue and its detremental effect.

[9] Robert J. Donia and John V.A. Fine, *Bosnia and Herzegovina: A tradition betrayed* (London, 1994).

The international outcry over Dubrovnik was justified because of the loss of life and because of it historical significance but the reality is that the physical damage to Dubrovnik was, on a Yugoslavian scale of destruction, relatively small. The city has been very successfully restored since. Vukovar, by contrast, was relatively unknown and of significance only to the Serbs and Croats who had previously lived in this town in peace and harmony. Vukovar received relatively little attention from the world media while it and its citizens were destroyed.

When the JNA retreated from Slovenia it concentrated its efforts on Croatia and, combined with the Serb Militias, it engaged in full-scale war attacking towns in Slavonia. On 19 August 1991, the JNA laid siege to Vukovar and attacked Dubrovnik in September of that year. Vukovar was eventually captured on 17 November 1991 with heavy casualties. The surrender was followed by the killing of unarmed prisoners and civilians including hospital patients by Serbian troops and irregulars. Martin Bell, the BBC corespondent, highlighted the plight of Vukovar:

> Even to this day there is no destruction more complete than that which the Serbs visited on the Croatian town of Vukovar, which they turned into a Stalingrad on the Danube. A Serbian Colonel told me at the time, not just as a matter of record but of pride, that they hit it with two million shells.[10]

At this stage almost one third of Croatia was under Serb control. Croatia had initially avoided arming its militias in order not to provoke Serbia and as a result had to rely on lightly-armed Croatian police units as its first line of defence. Bosnia was later to repeat this same mistake. This lack of preparedness forced Croatia to concede territory and to agree to an unfavourable cease-fire on 2 January 1992.

The UN, the EU and the USA took no decisive action until the fighting had effectively finished. They deployed UNPROFOR in Croatia on 13 March 1992. Four separate protected areas called United Nations Protected Areas (UNPAs), were created in east Slavonia (Vukovar), west Slavonia (Pakrac), north Krajina (Glina) and south Krajina (Knin). Large parts of these areas, especially in south Krajina and east Slavonia, were now ethnically cleansed of Croats, so the UN demilitarised zones were protecting the Serbs within Croatia. This freed up large numbers of JNA troops and equipment, who crossed into Bosnia with UN approval and assistance, thereby reinforcing the Bosnian Serbs with large quantities of heavy weapons and manpower. The

[10] Colonel Mark Cooke, *Promise of hope* (London, 1994), p. xi.

Serb militias in the UNPAs of Croatia continued to remain in Croatia in breach of the UN agreement. It was a UN logic that was taken to an even more unjust and illogical stage when, on the basis of the Serb reinforcement of the Bosnian Serbs, the UN imposed an arms embargo on all combatants in the region. Since the Serbs were already over-armed and the Croats got adequate supplies from Europe, the unprotected Bosnian Muslims were penalised by the arms embargo. Croatia benefited from an uneasy peace for three years from 1992 to 1995 and used this period to rearm its forces with considerable foreign assistance, in spite of the UN embargo.

The EU recognised the independence of Slovenia and Croatia in December 1991 after Germany forced the issue by announcing that it was about to do so unilaterally. This hasty recognition was to have devastating consequences for Bosnia as it further polarised its three main communities. Hans Kung argues that 'the second fatal mistake was, conversely, in the face of massive Serbian aggression immediately to give diplomatic recognition to Croatia and Slovenia as sovereign states.'[11] He blames the Vatican authorities and Germany for this move and goes on to accuse Britain and France of equal, if not more serious duplicity.

> In order to restore the balance of power in the Balkans in the face of the unfortunate massive German and Vatican support for Croatia and Slovenia, England and France ... played the card of their ally since Bismarck's time, Serbia. Officially 'neutral', they sent UN troops as 'observers' to Bosnia and precisely in so doing constantly prevented any serious military intervention against Serbian aggression.[12]

March 1992 saw the negotiated and peaceful withdrawal of the JNA from Macedonia. Milosevic was again cutting his losses and creating a buffer zone to avoid the complications of Greek and Bulgarian interests in Macedonia. This was important also because Greece and Bulgaria were essential sources of supplies to the beleaguered Serbia. A separate UN peace-keeping force, which included US troops, was deployed in Macedonia in 1993 as a trip-wire force in case of Serb attempts to prevent independence for Macedonia.

The EU recognition of Croatia and Slovenia now forced a reluctant and totally unprepared Bosnia to also move towards independence. The results of the Bosnian referendum were announced on 2 March 1992 and showed overwhelming support for an independent multi-ethnic Bosnia-Herzegovina.

[11] Ibid., p. 122.
[12] Kung, *A global ethic*, p. 123.

Despite a Serb boycott of the referendum many Serbs had voted in favour. Bosnia was recognised as an independent state by the EU on 6 April 1992. Violence was already widespread in Bosnia in the months leading up to recognition. However, the war started in earnest with the arrival of Arkan's Serb paramilitary group in the town of Bijeljina, in north-eastern Bosnia. Ethnic cleansing, as recently practised in Vukovar, had arrived in Bosnia. Up to one hundred Muslims were killed with the deliberate intention of terrorising the region and forcing Muslims to evacuate this strategically important corridor joining the two main Bosnian Serb areas and providing access to Serbia. On 16 May the UN decided not to send a peace-keeping force to Bosnia and withdrew most of the UN force already in Sarajevo.[13]

Bosnian government forces were hopelessly outnumbered. There were almost one-hundred thousand Serbian regular JNA soldiers serving in Bosnia by March 1992. This was in addition to the Bosnian Serb irregular or reserve soldiers and the special paramilitary groups from Serbia provided by Arkan and Seselj. The Bosnian government had as few as four thousand armed troops at this time. From a military point of view, Bosnia and Herzegovina, were irresponsibly unprepared for a war which had been inevitable for over a year. Without the help of the Bosnian Croats and the Croatian government, each of which provided about fifteen thousand fighting troops and the tanks and artillery provided by the Croatian army, Bosnia and Herzegovina would have been completely overrun in a few weeks. By the middle of the Summer in 1992, over two thirds of Bosnia and Herzegovia was under Serb control. UNPROFOR was eventually re-deployed back into Bosnia and by the end of 1992 there were eight thousand UNPROFOR troops in Bosnia. However, their mission was limited to facilitating humanitarian aid, and even this they failed to do effectively. By August 1992, journalists were reporting the existence of prison camps and severe maltreatment of prisoners in Serb controlled areas of Bosnia. In June the Bosnian authorities cited a list of ninety-four known Serb concentration camps. They estimated that over nine thousand had died within them.[14] Air strikes were threatened by the Western powers but never materialised. Many of these camps, where men, women and children were tortured, raped and murdered, continued in existence until 1995. Comparisons with the Holocaust are justified, even if the scale of the atrocities was considerably less.

[13] Ibid., p. 242.
[14] Malcolm, *Bosnia,* p. 245.

The Siege of Sarajevo began in April 1992 and continued until September 1995. It demonstrated, on the one hand, the lack of resolve of the much stronger Serb forces and, on the other, the resilience and determination of the people of Sarajevo. UN monitors were allowed 'monitor' the gun positions during firing but were not allowed take any action to prevent them doing so.

In July 1992 NATO and the Western European Union (WEU) imposed a naval embargo in the Adriatic. This was effective only against the encircled Muslim community of Bosnia who had no significant allies at this point. Croatia had already established its supply routes from central Europe, while Serbia had enough military supplies to last for decades and was supported by Russia and Greece, both of whom were breaking the economic embargoes. Despite the presence of EU officials and EU military monitors (ECMM) the EU could find no evidence of Greece breaking the EU and UN embargos.

In October 1992, the Muslim situation worsened with the Bosnian Croat take-over of Mostar. The new Croat leader, Boban, began establishing a separate state of Herceg Bosna, in the western parts of Herzegovina and in central and western Bosnia. The Bosnian government forces were now fighting against the Croats and Serbs simultaneously. Though on a smaller scale atrocities committed in central Bosnia by the Croats were comparable to those committed by the Serbs.

In January 1993, William Jefferson Clinton took over from George Bush as US president. In spite of election promises there was no real shift in US policy on Bosnia for over two years. Douglas Hurd, a former British foreign secretary, claims that 'the UN intervention in Bosnia saved hundreds of lives.'[15] It can be argued that the opposite is true, that the UN intervention in Bosnia cost thousands of lives and that the three year delay in obtaining effective NATO intervention cost tens of thousands of lives.

Atrocities continued to be inflicted on the Bosnian population, mainly, but not exclusively, by Serb forces. On 5 February 1994, a mortar attack on Sarajevo killed sixty-four civilians. NATO at last took some action and declared an exclusion zone for heavy weapons around Sarajevo which the Serbs partially complied with. Around this time in spite of their overwhelming strength in manpower and armaments the war began to go against the Serbs. The first hopeful sign for the Bosnian government was the suspension of the

[15] Douglas Hurd, *The search for peace* (London, 1997), p. 135.

Croat-Muslim war in central Bosnia. This led to increasing co-operation between the Muslim and Croat forces in Bosnia. Meanwhile the Serbs continued to pursue their military objectives by attacking the so-called UN safe areas including Gorazda, Zepa and Bihac, in spite of non-enforced threats of NATO air strikes. Combined Croat and Bosnian government forces scored some success in central Bosnia with the capture of Kupres on 4 November 1994. In April 1995, Bosnian forces made gains by capturing Travnik and Mount Vlasic.

On 1 May 1995, after a three year pause, the war in Croatia resumed. During that pause, the Croatian army had been substantially improved with new equipment and training. The Croatian army attacked the UN protected area of western Slavonia and captured it within six days. Most of the Serb population living there fled into the Serb areas of northern Bosnia. Serbia and the JNA failed to intervene, leaving the Croatian Serbs to their own devices. On 25 May 1995, following further shelling of Sarajevo, NATO was authorised to carry out air strikes against the Serbs. Serb ammunition dumps were destroyed. The Serbs retaliated by killing seventy-one civilians in the centre of Tuzla with a rocket and by taking more than three-hundred and sixty UN soldiers hostage. This action succeeded in the short term and NATO air strikes were halted. All UN hostages were released by early June. The Serbs now moved and quickly captured the UN safe areas of Srebrenica and Zepe and attacked Gorazda and Bihac.

The fall of Srebrenica on 11 July 1995 was the blackest moment in the history of the UN's involvement in Bosnia, if not in the complete history of the UN. Aerial photographs later released by the United States indicated that mass graves had been dug near Srebrenica and possibly contained as many as four thousand people.[16]

In late July, the tide turned against the Serbs. A combined Croat and Bosnian assault captured Livno and moved toward Bihac cutting off Serb forces in the Krajina Knin area of Croatia. The Croatian army attacked the Krajian area on 4 August 1995. The town of Knin was captured on 5 August and within seventy-two hours the Croatian forces were in almost complete control of the entire territory.[17] Croatia subsequently negotiated the peaceful return of its remaining territory from Serb control, finally gaining possession of east Slavonia and Vukovar in December 1997. From an almost disastrous

[16] Malcolm, *Bosnia*, p. 264.
[17] Ibid., p. 265.

beginning in 1991, Croatia had emerged as the major winner of the war. Not only had it regained all its territory but it had succeeded in expelling most of its Serbian minority.

Following a further Serb mortar attack on Sarajevo on 28 August which killed thirty-seven people, NATO commenced two weeks of intensive bombing of Serb positions. In the meantime, the Croat and Bosnian government forces in central Bosnia were making substantial gains and captured Donji Vakuf and Jajce. Intensive negotiations which led to cease-fires and the Dayton Peace agreement followed. The agreement stabilised the Bosnian situation, at least on a temporary basis. However, it contained many unstable factors. It ostensibly attempted to unite Bosnia but in reality it enforced the division of Bosnia into two small and unsustainable statelets. The Bosnian Serbs, the Bosnian Croats and the Bosnian Muslims all considered themselves the losers in these wars. 'By persisting in their misunderstanding of Bosnia's past, the western statesmen, both European and American, were helping to ensure that Bosnia would have a much more troubled and uncertain future.'[18]

In the meantime Kosovo had again become the focus of attention. Milosevic, having lost Slovenia and Macedonia, having failed miserably in his bid to annex one third of Croatia, having, at best, been held to a draw in Bosnia and Herzegovina, now played the Kosovo card, for the second time. However, he seemed to have failed to comprehend the broader strategic factors. His short-term tactics have often succeeded while his long-term strategy, if he has such, has failed so far. The Kosovo war situation is still more in the realm of current affairs than history. I will therefore avoid examining this equally complex struggle and leave it for future historians to consider. Likewise it is much too soon to attempt a comprehensive summing up of the Yugoslav wars.

[18] Ibid., p. 271.

University *of* Limerick

FOUNDATION

The University of Limerick Foundation was established in 1989 to provide, in partnership with the University, international leadership and support for the advancement of the University of Limerick.

Directed by a Board of international leaders from the fields of business, industry and the arts, the Foundation has raised in excess of IR£30 million to assist the development of the University. It does this through:

- endowed professorships
- scholarships and fellowships and
- capital developments including the Foundation building, a IR£15 million research, training and cultural complex.

The Foundation secured funding for the new IR£14 million Lewis and Loretta Glusksman Library and Information Services Building which was completed in 1998.

University *of* Limerick

Postgraduate Opportunities in the College of Humanities

Applications are invited from suitably qualified candidates for the Degree of MA or LLM and PhD by research and thesis in all major disciplines of the College and its Centres:

- Department of Government and Society
- Department of Languages and Cultural Studies
- Department of Law
- Centre for Applied Language Studies
- Centre for Criminal Justice
- Centre for European Studies
- Centre for Irish-German Studies
- Centre for Peace and Development Studies
- Irish World Music Centre
- Social Health Research Centre

Further information and postgraduate application forms are available from:

Assistant Dean, Research,
College of Humanities,
University of Limerick, Limerick, Ireland.
Telephone: 061-202435
E-mail: geraldine.sheridan@ul.ie

University *of* Limerick
Department of Government and Society

Bachelor of Arts in
History, Politics and Social Studies

The BA in History, Politics and Social Studies is a four year taught undergraduate degree which is designed to provide students with an innovative and typically broad Arts education.

Its objectives are:

– to foster an awareness and encourage a critical evaluation of the historical, political and social features of modern societies,

– to develop skills in the collection, analysis and evaluation of historical, political and social data,

– to provide specific competence in the various subject areas

Programme of study:

The subjects comprising the degree are: History, Politics, Sociology, Economics, Human Geography, Public Administration and Women's Studies.

Contributors

Jack Anderson is a graduate of the University of Limerick with a BA in Law and European Studies. He has completed an MA into legal liability in sport.

Maura Cronin has a BA and MA by NUI. She has a Ph.D. from University of Leicester, Birmingham. She lectures in history at Mary Immaculate College, Limerick.

Gerard Downes is a student on the BA in History, Politics and Social Studies programme at the University of Limerick. He was a former treasurer of the University of Limerick History Society.

David A. Fleming is a student on the BA in History, Politics and Social Studies programme at the University of Limerick. He was a former auditor, secretary and treasurer of the UL History Society.

Edward Horgan is a graduate of the Irish Military College and is a student on the BA in History, Politics and Social Studies programme at the University of Limerick and on the MA in Peace Studies at the Irish School of Ecumenics.

William O'Brien has a BA in English and History and a Higher Diploma in Education from NUI. He is currently researching a Ph.D. thesis on the Nationalist press in Dublin during the nineteenth century at the University of Limerick.

Janet Power has a BA in History, Media and Communications and is taking an MA in Women's Studies at the University of Limerick. She is also a history tutor at the University of Limerick and is co-ordinator of the UCC Women's Studies Diploma programme, in County Tipperary.

Andreas Roth has an MA from the University of Siegen, Germany, and is currently completing a Ph.D. thesis in the Department of History at the National University of Ireland, Galway.

William Sexton is a student on the BA in History, Politics and Social Studies programme at the University of Limerick. He is a member of the University of Limerick History Society.

History Studies
University of Limerick History Society Journal

Subscription Form

To place an order for copies of the 2000 edition please fill in the attached form and forward it to the following address:

The Editors, *History Studies*, University of Limerick History Society, Students' Union, University of Limerick, Limerick, Ireland.

Name:_____

Address:_____

_____

_____

Please send me ____ copies of *History Studies*, 2000 (ISSN 1393-7782).

Subscription prices are £4 for members of the Society and £5 for individuals and institutions. Please add £1.50 for postage and packing, per copy.

I enclose a cheque/postal order/international money order for Ir£__ payable to the UL History Society.