

UCC Student History Journal



UCC Student History Journal
Est. 2024

Frederick ‘The Tolerant’

Examining the relationship between
Frederick II & Moses Mendelssohn

“The Forgotten Famine”

The Famine of 1741, and ‘an Bliain an áir’

April 2024

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Volume I | Issue I

Letter from the Vice-Editor in Chief



Encouraging discussion of the past is imperative to the study and appreciation of history. It is presently a promising period in which the UCC History Society seeks to empower the students' academic capabilities and efforts. Now we are presented with a forum, inscribed with demonstrations of the students' ability to actively and impactfully engage in historical discourse.

Without the passion of a very few people this forum would have remained as a fanciful recommendation. For that purpose, I must it explicit my appreciation for the consistent and significant contributions of Emma Ni Muirthile, Dónal O' Connell, Becky Bourke, and Jason Burns. I must also extend my appreciation to the UCC History Society's committee, its regular attendees, and the contributors to this forum. It has been a true joy. Thank you.

**Daniel A. O' Connell
Vice-Editor-in-Chief.**

Letter from the Vice-Editor in Chief



From a throwaway comment in the first meeting of this year's History Society, to the glossy set of essays you see before you - the UCC Student History Journal has been nothing short of a grand Odyssey. Truly, this publication has been an incredible labour of love - from all parties involved.

That being said, I would like to firstly thank each and every individual who put forward a submission. Thank you for sharing your intellect, your passions, and your vast amounts of knowledge. Without you, this publication would be entirely blank!

Secondly, I'd like to thank my fellow committee members, for sharing their time and their ideas over this past semester. To Daniel, for fostering this abstract notion into a tangible being. To Jason, for being the voice of calm amongst squabbling History Society members. To Donal, for consistently lending an ear at any time of day (or night!). Finally, a big thank you to Becky, who doesn't need me to tell her how superb she truly is!

Lastly, I'd like to thank you, dear reader. Without anyone to pick up our work, there would be little point in this publications existence.

So, without further ado, please enjoy the inaugural edition of the UCC Student History Journal!

Le Meas,
Emma Ni Muirthíle,
Vice-Editor-in-Chief.



UCC History Society



About UCC History Society

As far as I'm aware there has been no written record of the history of the society, so here is my attempt to ensure that future members know a little about where their society came from. We know little about the creation of the original 'UCC Historical Society', one thing that is known is that the first email ever sent by the committee was on Wednesday, 1st of September 2010 listing off the five members of the then committee. From there the society continued to operate till the end of the 2019/20 academic year when it ceased to run events for unknown reasons...

It's around this time that the society's saviour comes into the story. On Sunday, 30th of August 2020, Richard Keyes-McDonnell emailed the society hoping to become involved only to get no response. Richard learned that the society had been left to rot away as another failed society. However, Richard's passion for history meant that he was determined to ensure that UCC students with a similar passion for history had a society that represented them. Richard began contacting the history department and the society's executive and started getting traction for being able to restart the society for the 2022/23 academic year. Like a phoenix from the ashes, the society was starting back again.

It was during the summer between the two years that I heard of the resurgent history society looking for help. I contacted Richard and met with him and another history student in Vicarstown to discuss starting the society again. Richard for all his work would be chair and I'd be Finance Officer. Going into 2022/23 the society looked strong.

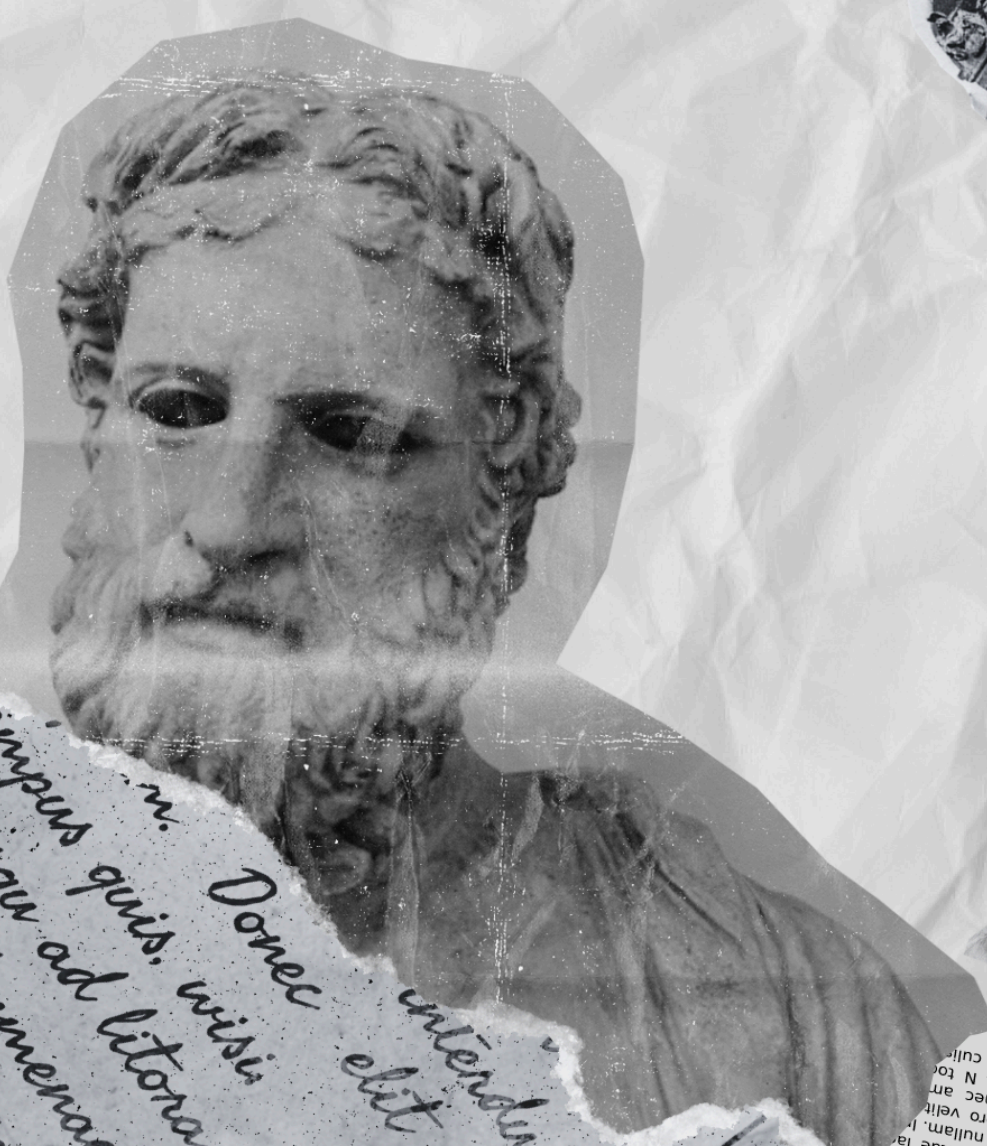
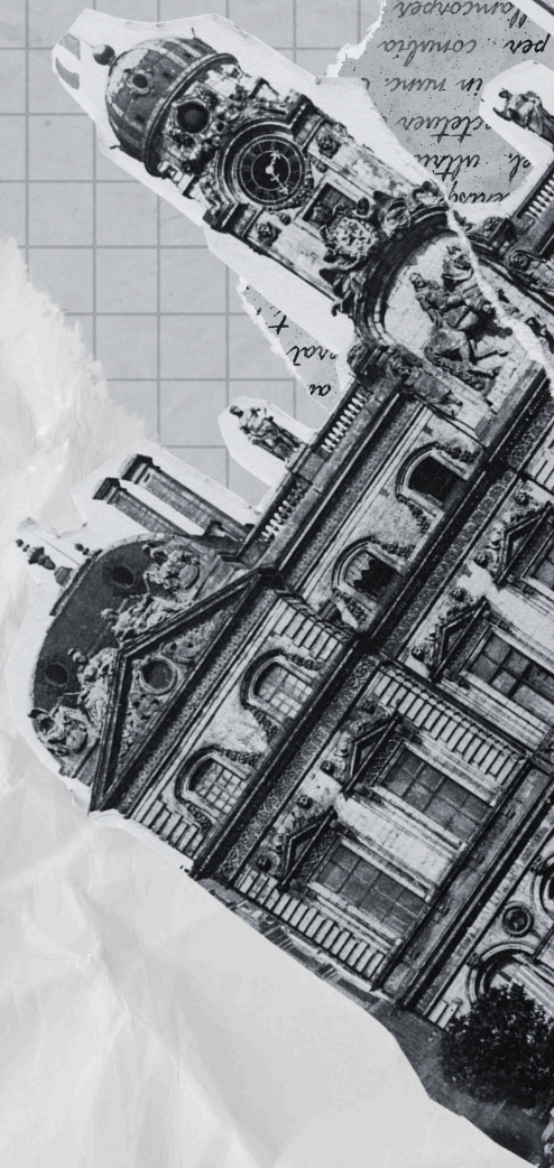
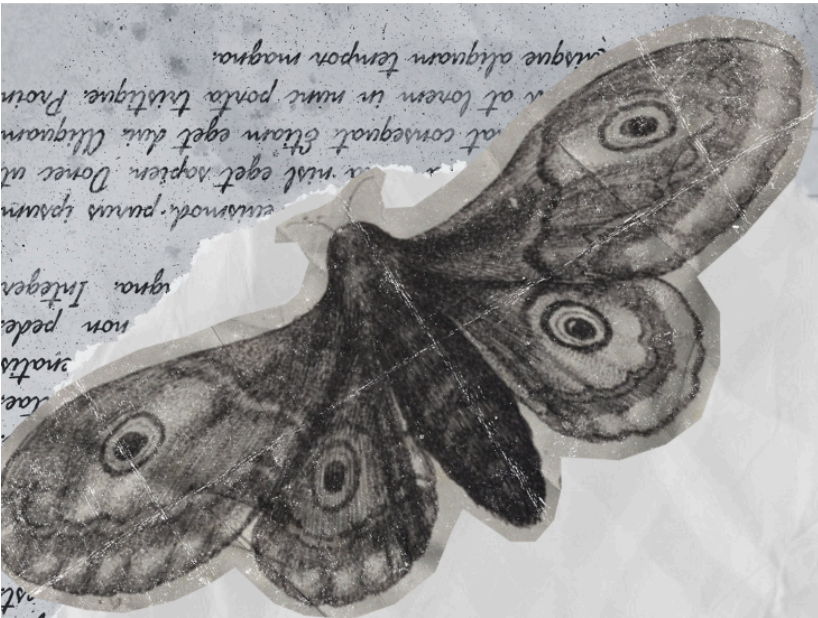
Unfortunately, semester one was hampered by administrative works, finance and budget meetings and answering the hundred of emails that had built up in an inbox that hadn't been opened in months. But despite these hurdles we got through it, and got additional members meaning semester two would be our true start of the new and improved UCC Historical Society.

Our first event was held at 3pm in Boole 2 on Friday, 20th January 2023 and was a talk by Dr Olesia Zhytkova entitled "Ukraine and Ireland: similar pages of history". The talk had fantastic attendance with the Boole being almost full as we invited members of the Ukrainian community in Cork to attend as well as students to spread the word of history on campus and beyond. A few of us went to Abbey Tavern after to celebrate our success and in so doing started a tradition of the committee being social, fun and fostering lifelong friendships. Other events from this time were a talk about the Cork LGBT archive and the now famous 'Histor-tea'. With several events under our belt we held our first AGM since the revival on Tuesday, the 18th of April 2023 where I was elected Chairman with four other committee members for the coming year. While the society had been successful in hosting events, I had a vision that the society would be far more social in orientation, making it a space for lovers of history to come together, make new friends and discuss their shared passion for history. With this vision in mind I organized the 'Historical Networking Event' on Tuesday, 19th of September 2023 in Vicarstown. It was here that many of our current committee members were found and many friendships were started. The society regulars only grew from here with many joining the committee at our EGM which was held on Monday, 24th of October 2023. It was also at this EGM that we officially changed our name from the 'UCC Historical Society' to the 'UCC History Society'.

We organized events for every week throughout the college year with the society going from strength to strength. The society looks strong going into the future and I wish the next chair the best of luck in their turn on adding pages to the history of the UCC History Society. I'd also like to thank Richard, the previous committee and everyone who was on my committee this year.

I certainly could not have done it without ye and wish you all the best whatever you do next in your lives!

James Power, UCC History Society Chairman, 2023 - 2024



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‘Frederick the Tolerant’: Examining the Discrepancy between Historical Perception and Frederick II’s Personal Interactions with Moses Mendelssohn.

Emma Ní Muirthile
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The following paper was presented at St. Catharine’s College, Cambridge as part of the Cambridge Undergraduate Conference in German Studies on March 2nd, 2024.

I.

This paper will explore the assertion made by Frederick the Great in 1740, as he wrote, “All religions must be tolerated, and the sole concern of officials is to ensure that one denomination does not interfere with another.”¹ This marginal note, and the underlying ideology it represents, ironically played a defining role in shaping the predominant historiography surrounding Frederick II in Germany, particularly as the post-World War II era, *Die Stunde Null*, unfolded. The narrative concerning Frederick’s Prussia underwent a transformation from a celebration of its military prowess to an exaltation of Prussian tolerance. Prussophile historians have redirected the historical depiction of Frederick’s realm, emphasizing its purported religious tolerance, especially towards its Jewish population. Despite being ingrained as a known fact, this semi-mythical portrayal of Frederick II as a champion of Jewish emancipation, inspired by Enlightenment-era notions of religious tolerance, belies the reality of Frederick’s antiquated views on the Jewish people and his government’s policies of exploitation and expulsion. To truly understand Frederick’s commitment to Enlightenment ideals, particularly regarding tolerance towards Jews, a closer examination of his interactions with Moses Mendelssohn becomes imperative. Mendelssohn, one of 18th-century Prussia’s intellectual luminaries and among other things, a Jew, provides insights into Frederick’s more nuanced approach to tolerance, revealing a monarch whose enlightened philosophy was shaped more by self-interest and state advantage than a steadfast moral ideology. In such, this paper challenges the methods by which an accurate account of prejudice may be distorted into a historical narrative of tolerance and explores the ideological motives driving this transformation.

II.

To understand the mythmaking behind the image of a morally incorruptible Prussian State, led by a wholly tolerant Monarch and a sober civil service is to understand *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*. The idealisation of Frederick by the Nazis, and Hitler himself was the death knell for national celebrations of Prussian Militarism. *Der Alte Fritz* became synonymous with Adolf Hitler as seen in the 1942 film “*Der große König*”, an overt piece of propaganda which used Frederick II’s life as an analogy for Hitler. Hitler’s expansion of Third Reich territory into Western Poland was directly inspired by Frederick’s own campaigns in the region, to reclaim what was viewed by many as ‘rightful’ German territory. As such, when the rubble of the former Third Reich settled, post-war Germany was left reconsidering not only the past three decades of Her history but the past three centuries. Nazi monopoly on German culture, literature, and history during the epoch of National Socialism

¹ Frederick II, personal communication, 1740. Quoted in T.C.W Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture: Old Regime Europe, 1660-1789* (New York, N.Y.: Oxford University, 2002). 213

had poisoned perceptions of any ideas even vaguely associated with the NSDAP, Frederick included. It is interesting to note, that Prussia is considered the precursor for the militarism of Nation Socialism, rather than, or even including its antisemitism.

Frederick the Great's military successes were no longer allowed to be celebrated – as they might be if he was associated with another nation. That is not to say that the militant and often violent policies of expansionism by European Powers should not be scrutinised – but the blackout veil of immediate shame without genuine national introspection is also harmful. The Frederick-shaped hole left in German cultural memory by the guilt of post-war reckoning was quickly filled, however, by a newly created (albeit tamer) mythology surrounding Frederick, the idea of 'Frederick the Tolerant.' The historiography surrounding the Kingdom of Prussia, and its greatest Monarch saw its post-war renaissance in the 1980s.² Selective highlighting of elements of Frederick's reign – mainly his philosophy, replaced militarism as the dominant positive feature of the Kingdom. Yet, the notion of the tolerant king in the mainstream narrative, and the 'new' subversion of Prussian history is harmful because it obscures the historical fact – creating a new popular fiction to subscribe to.

III.

The policies espoused by Frederick II towards Jewish Prussians (itself an oxymoronic term, considering that Jews living in the Kingdom of Prussia were denied the rights of citizenship until 1812)³ were entirely antithetical to any ideas of enlightenment era thinking on religious tolerance, and human autonomy as a whole. The "Revidertes Generalprivilegium und Reglement vor die Judenschaft" (1750) penned by Frederick outlines the restrictions placed on Jewish denizens of Prussian lands. The legislation details among other things, the nature of the elusive *Schutzjude* status. The *Schutzjude* status is not in actuality, a means of protection, but rather oppression. The main concern of the document is the economic contributions of Prussian Jews, poorly disguised as an expansion of Jewish Civil rights. This document, which appears to expand Jewish civil liberties has entered the historical record in a way which creates a false reality around Frederick's tolerance. The legislation makes provisions for Jewish communities, i.e. what exactly a community can consist of.⁴ Frederick was not interested in creating viable Jewish communities for the sake of tolerance, but rather because he needed these communities to exist because of the positive contributions made by them to the Prussian economy. The perennial bogeyman of the "Beggar Jew"⁵ as referenced multiple times by Frederick himself, was to the king, a significant threat to economic activity. The antisemitic motif of the Jewish 'travelling pedlar' would outlive Frederick II well into the 1940s, but the fiction around Frederick would detach the monarch from this concept. As such, the Prussian state made it clear that the only 'acceptable' Jew in Prussia was a wealthy one. To whom exactly a "Beggar Jew" referred is unclear, as demonstrated by Frederick's attempt to expel all Jewish families from the Netze district who possessed less than 1,000 Thalers worth of property. Having less than 1,000 Thalers worth of property was nowhere near destitution, as having 200-300 Thalers worth of property usually meant a family-owned significant land and livestock. The *Revidertes Generalprivilegium* was paralysing for Jewish communities, especially because they encouraged intense intracommunity spying. Part of these revised 'privileges' was the obligation placed upon elders in Jewish Communities to

² Thomas Dahms, "Diligent Bureaucrats and the Expulsion of Jews from West Prussia, 1772–1786," *German History* 39, no. 3 (August 20, 2021): 335–57, <https://doi.org/10.1093/gerhis/ghab027>. 335.

³ Frederick William III, "Edict Concerning the Civil Status of the Jews in the Prussian State" (1812), https://ghdi.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/15_TheJews_Doc.8English.pdf.

⁴ Frederick II, "Revidertes Generalprivilegium Und Reglement Vor Die Judenschaft" (1750). III §.

⁵ Frederick II, personal communication, 1772. Quoted in Thomas Dahms, "Diligent Bureaucrats and the Expulsion of Jews from West Prussia, 1772–1786," *German History* 39, no. 3 (August 20, 2021) 342.

report on the economic condition of individual Jews. Section IX states: “Sollen die Juden-Ältesten und Vorsteher jeder Provintz und Orts auf den Zustand derer sämtlichen Juden ein beständig wachsames Auge haben”.⁶

When Moses Mendelssohn entered through the Rosenthal Gate of Berlin in 1743, the gatekeeper’s task was “to stop and register all incoming Jews, keep an eye on them during their stay and expel the foreign ones”,⁷ and to make sure any Jews entering had “visible means”.⁸ Frederick’s obsession with the economic capabilities of Jews in his territory would be the main motivation behind any granting of civic tolerance, rather than any commitments towards religious equality. Between 1772 and 1786, between nine and ten thousand Jews were forcibly expelled from West Prussia on Frederick’s orders, this being the first systematic expulsion of Jews from the region since the 16th century.⁹ Frederick II’s antisemitism has been overshadowed in the historical narrative by the intense discrimination of the National Socialist regime, thus the historical narrative has been misshaped by the ideological narrative. These expulsions were limited by Frederick’s civil servants, who reminded the Monarch - who appeared sometimes blinded by his prejudices - of the economic benefits that could be reaped from the toleration of certain Jewish communities. After the 1st partition of Poland in 1777, the Jewish population of Prussia increased rapidly owing to the large Jewish communities in the former territories of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

These communities were accustomed to the more tolerant conditions of their existence under Polish-Lithuanian leadership – i.e. the less restrictive legislation around trade. These tolerant conditions allowed Jewish communities to establish themselves within certain industries, making them indispensable in economic terms. Many West Prussian Jews were saved from the expulsions in the Netze district by the intervention of Franz Balthauser von Breckenhoff, a fiscal adviser in Frederick’s civil service. This was not because of any greater humanitarian purpose, but because the mass expulsion of some of the ‘poorer’ merchant families in Netze would spell certain economic disaster.¹⁰ The economic wars that Prussia found itself in would mean that Frederick the Great would have to rescind some of the restrictions placed on Jewish communities in 1750, especially in regions in modern-day Poland. For example, in 1754 the Jews in Breslau were all granted a general privilege because the mistreatment of the community would put trade with Poland at risk.¹¹ This general privilege was not extended to every Polish Jew in West Prussia – only those who could provide fiscal ammunition to aid Frederick’s economic wars with Saxony and Austria. The reality of Jewish privileges for the sake of the Prussian economy has been morphed into the fiction of Jewish privileges for the sake of tolerance.

The eventual emancipation of Jews in Prussia would not occur during Frederick’s lifetime, but rather during the reign of his grand-nephew, Frederick William III in 1812. Frederick did not deliberately pave the path to emancipation. Still, his selective granting of protection and civil rights to wealthy Jews allowed individual community members to raise the community as a whole to an elevated position. For example, Moses Mendelssohn was only allowed to stay in Berlin for much of his life because of *Schutzjude* and factory owner Issac Bernhard extending his privilege to Mendelssohn as his employee.¹² It is perhaps the events of 1806

⁶ *Ibid.* IX §

⁷ Amos Elon, *The Pity of It All: A Portrait of German Jews 1743-1933* (London: Penguin, 2004). 4.

⁸ *Ibid.* 29.

⁹ Dahms, *Diligent Bureaucrats*, 337.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* 344.

¹¹ Selma Stern-Taeubler, “The Jews in the Economic Policy of Frederick the Great,” *Jewish Social Studies* 11, no. 2 (1949): 129–52, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4464809>.

¹² Elon, *The Pity of It All*. 31.

(the end of the Napoleonic Wars), and the general spirit of the German Enlightenment, combined with Jewish determination towards upward mobility despite Frederick's restrictions that led to the eventual emancipation in 1812. Modern historiography around Frederick has, in some sense, destroyed the truth about Jewish emancipation, to promote a falsehood about one of Germany's historical heroes. True adherents to Enlightenment thinking, such as Gotthold Ephraim Lessing did more to ennoble Jewish Prussians in the minds of their compatriots through his literary works, i.e. *Nathan der Weise* (1779), and *Die Juden* (1749), than Frederick did through his legislation.¹³ Lessing, from the pulpit of the theatre stage showed extraordinary commitment to exalting Mendelssohn to a position of literary emancipation, allowing Mendelssohn to occupy the social position of Jew that was respected in wider European society, inspiring social change.

IV.

Frederick the Great did not appreciate Moses Mendelssohn in the same way that Lessing, or indeed most of his contemporaries did. Frederick privately expressed a dislike of Jews, perhaps inspired by his once close friend Voltaire, who described the "wretched little Jewish people... who was never anything but a race of ignorant and fanatic brigands".¹⁴ The Prussian King's Francophile tendencies in general would be the main point of conflict between the two men. The mainstream recounting of Moses Mendelssohn's path to *Schutzjude* status is straightforward; Mendelssohn asked for said privilege, and Frederick kindly obliged. The factual reality of the decade-long struggle towards protected status is naturally more complicated and reveals a moral truth about Frederick as the 'Enlightened Philosopher Monarch.'

Frederick II and Moses Mendelssohn never met, a strange reality considering the intellectual and cultural prowess of Mendelssohn. Moses Mendelssohn embodied the spirit of The Enlightenment, as described by Emmanuel Kant as – "Sapere aude!"¹⁵ Mendelssohn was a self-made man, who taught himself to read, write and speak in standard German – despite the restrictions placed on him by his community.¹⁶ From his first publication, Mendelssohn became respected by the Jewish and Gentile communities alike for his philosophical and theological writings, earning him the moniker "The German Socrates". Even self-professed enemies of the Enlightenment such as Johann Georg Hamann, wrote that he and Mendelssohn disagreed on virtually everything during a spirited debate, but he still respected "The Jew Mendelssohn" in the spirit of tolerance.¹⁷ This was not a sentiment echoed by Frederick the Great – contrary to efforts made by post-war historiography to paint him as such.

Mendelssohn and Frederick's relationship can best be examined through three incidents – Mendelssohn and the Prussian Academy, *der Neun und Neunzigster Brief*¹⁸, and Mendelssohn's *Schutzjude* application. Mendelssohn was supposed to be elected a member of the Prussian Academy of Sciences in 1767, having previously won first prize in an essay competition hosted by the academy in 1764. Frederick II, advised by Voltaire, had the final

¹³ Heinrich Graetz, *History of the Jews*, vol. 5 (1895; repr., Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 2014), <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/45085/45085-h/45085-h.htm>, 297.

¹⁴ M. Voltaire, *The Philosophical Dictionary, for the Pocket* (1764; repr. New York: Carlton House, 2006), <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/18569/18569-h/18569-h.htm>, 244.

¹⁵ Immanuel Kant, 'Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung?', *Berlinische Monatsschrift*, XII, 1784, pp. 481-494.

¹⁶ Sebastian Hensel, *The Mendelssohn Family (1729-1847) : From Letters and Journals*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

¹⁷ Elon, *The Pity of It All*, 33.

¹⁸ Moses Mendelssohn, "Neun Und Neunzigster Brief," *Briefe, Die Neueste Literatur Betreffend*, April 24, 1760, Universität Bielefeld, https://ds.ub.uni-bielefeld.de/viewer/image/1921386_003/2/#topDocAnchor.

say on each nomination to the academy and thus chose to deny the academy's choice, twice.¹⁹ Frederick, having just elected Catherine the Great as a member, was repulsed at the idea that a Jewish man would be the next elected member after Her Imperial Majesty.²⁰ Some historians (See MacDonogh, 2013) have tried to shift the 'blame' for this incident onto Catherine herself – a poor attempt to disguise Frederick the Great's antisemitism. Mendelssohn himself was unbothered by this rejection, believing it was more honourable to be lauded by an institution and vetoed by a king than the other way around.

To understand the brief yet impactful quarrel over Mendelssohn's *Schutzjude* status, *der Neun und Neunzigster Brief* in Nicolai's *Briefe, Die Neueste Literatur Betreffend* must be examined. In this *Literaturbrief*, published in 1760, Mendelssohn reviews Frederick the Great's *Poesies diverses*. Mendelssohn, despite being generally complimentary towards Frederick's poetry hits right at Frederick's heart in his attack of the poet's use of the French language over German, writing, "*Welcher Verluft für unsere Muttersprache, daß sich dieser Fürst die französische Sprache geläufiger gemacht! Sie würde einen Schatz besitzen, um den ihre Nachbarn Urfache hätten sie zu beneiden*".²¹ Mendelssohn, under the risk of expulsion by his own community, expressed a love for the German language and culture that superseded his own head of state's affinity for the language. Mendelssohn would be called up to the courts of the Prussian State Council over *der Brief* over (false) charges of defaming Christianity. Although these would eventually be dropped, the absence of a *Schutzjude* status for Mendelssohn was revealed to the public.

One of Mendelssohn's great admirers, Marquis D'Argens urged Mendelssohn to apply, worried that Prussian society was at risk of losing an intellectual powerhouse at any minute. Mendelssohn revealed his reluctance to beg for what he should naturally be owed as a human being but agreed to apply for the sake of his own family.²² Mendelssohn's first application was 'lost' by Frederick the Great – a basic rejection of civic liberty that left Mendelssohn crest-fallen. Mendelssohn was happy to resign himself to being at perpetual risk for expulsion, but again, being urged by the Marquis, resubmitted his application on July 12th, 1763. The application was a replica of the previous one, with an added preface in French. This time, after being personally placed by the Marquis on Frederick's desk, Mendelssohn would receive *Schutzjude* status in October of 1763.²³ This status only extended to Mendelssohn himself, not his wife or his children.

V.

In conclusion, Frederick the Great's legacy on tolerance, and the historiography surrounding it illustrates the impact of ideology and emotion on historical fact. He proved in actuality, on multiple occasions, to be more than willing not only to ignore Mendelssohn – arguably one of the most able thinkers in his entire domain - but put the life of Mendelssohn and his entire family at risk, because of his own prejudices. It is clear - through his actions and legislations, that Frederick was not a devoted friend of Jewish tolerance in the spirit of enlightenment, but rather a committed Realpolitiker, who 'tolerated' some Jewish communities for the possible economic benefits he could reap from them. Even then, Frederick had every intention of replacing Jewish businessmen and merchants with Christian ones as soon as it became economically viable. It is incredibly difficult to grasp, why

¹⁹ Elon, *The Pity of It All*, 35.

²⁰ Giles MacDonogh, *Frederick the Great* (St. Martin's Press, 2013). 326.

²¹ Moses Mendelssohn, "Neun Und Neunzigster Brief," *Briefe, Die Neueste Literatur Betreffend*, April 24, 1760. Quoted in Meyer Kayserling, *Moses Mendelssohn* (Leipzig: Hermann Mendelssohn, 1888).

²² Meyer Kayserling, *Moses Mendelssohn* (Leipzig: Hermann Mendelssohn, 1888). 116.

²³ *Ibid.* 117.

someone who claimed to be such a friend of the arts, as Frederick did, would leave a great mind such as Mendelssohn's unattended and neglected. The historical perception surrounding Frederick as a tolerant monarch is damaging to the legacy of Mendelssohn, and the struggle for Jewish emancipation. It is, therefore, unwise to simply replace a painful historiography surrounding Prussia's militarism, with a false one about its tolerance, lest it is forgotten who the true champions of tolerance are. Any reader of Mendelssohn Mendelssohn's "Reply to Lavater," (A response to a Swiss clergyman trying to convert Mendelssohn to Christianity) would recognise what tolerance, and its defence truly look like. There is no better illustration of the real-world consequences of false historiography, than the fact that a previously removed statue of Frederick the Great was re-erected in 1980 in East Germany, before Moses Mendelssohn's gravesite was repaired in 2008.

Carefully analysing the prolonged and systematic suppression of Moses Mendelssohn's personal freedoms by Frederick II reveals a manifestation of the ruler's intolerance towards the Prussian Jewish community. This scrutiny highlights distortions in the historiography of Frederick II's reign, ultimately leading to a misrepresented legacy of being a "tolerant" monarch.

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Beyond the Skies: The Financial Trials and Philanthropic Triumphs of Amelia Earhart

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Introduction

In the annals of aviation history, few figures capture the imagination and intrigue quite like Amelia Earhart, a pioneer whose daring spirit soared through the clouds, leaving behind a legacy both inspiring and enigmatic. The world-renowned feminist icon is often celebrated for her groundbreaking achievements in aviation and her mysterious disappearance during an attempt to circumnavigate the globe.²⁴ However, behind her daring exploits and trailblazing spirit lay a lesser-known story of financial struggles and remarkable philanthropic endeavours.

As arguably the world's most known aviatrix, one would assume Earhart was brought up in a world of wealth and glamour. Despite this, much of her childhood was actually shrouded by financial instability due to her father's inability to maintain steady employment, leading to her having a worldview deeply influenced by poverty, thus instilling her with a sense of independence and resilience.²⁵

Early Years of Adventure, Ingenuity, and Social Conscience

The future aviator spent much of her childhood behaving in a way that people of her time deemed to be 'boyish', with her and her sister Pidge being known for tree climbing and outdoor 'rough-and-tumble'.²⁶ As a child, Earhart famously constructed a homemade rollercoaster on the roof of her family's toolshed with the help of her uncle after a visit to the World's Fair in St. Louis, showcasing her adventurous spirit and early ingenuity.²⁷ She would be quoted to have said this felt "just like flying", words that would spark a lifetime of achievements.²⁸

Earhart's desire for adventure would be hindered by her mother's social status and the expectations of girls at the time, alongside her father's incapability to provide financial stability for the Earhart family. Her mother, Amy Otis, was the favourite child of former United States (US) District Court Judge, Alfred Otis, who disapproved of her marriage to Edwin Earhart, a man raised in "grinding poverty" who worked to pay for his education at the University of Kansas Law School by shining shoes.²⁹ Amelia would be inspired by her father and his failure to live out his dreams of becoming a member of the US Supreme Court during his lifetime to pursue her dreams of entering the skies no matter her restrictions.³⁰

²⁴ D. L. Rich, *Amelia Earhart: A Biography*, (Washington DC: Smithsonian, 1989).

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *Ibid.*, at p.4.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, at p. 8.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, at p. 8.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, at p. 5.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, at p.8.

Earhart's desire to help people was evident from her youth as she left the junior college she was attending, The Ognotz School in Philadelphia, a single semester before earning her degree in order to work as a nurse's aide during the First World War.³¹ During her time with the Volunteer Aid Detachment at Spadina Military Hospital, Earhart would herself become a patient as she developed severe pneumonia.³² Despite her own struggles in life, Earhart was determined to make a place for herself in history and utilize this to help others.

From Passion to Perseverance in Aviation

As Earhart grew older, her passion for aviation continued to intensify, fuelled by her experiences as a volunteer during World War I and having observed the emerging role of aeroplanes in warfare. Although contemporary society would consider aviation a hobby of the elite, it was the economic downturns of the 1930s that allowed women to enter into this field.³³ Flying, particularly in the early 20th century, was still a particularly expensive pursuit, and Earhart often found herself in debt to finance her aviation endeavours. Due to her gender, in a male-dominated field such as aviation, she faced numerous obstacles in securing funding and sponsorship for her flights.³⁴

As the 16th woman to ever earn herself a pilot's license, Earhart caught the attention of New York publisher George Putnam, who would later become her husband, as he sought his next aviation project.³⁵ At the time of Putnam's discovery of her, Earhart was a social worker, as was traditional for women of the early 1900s.³⁶ Aware of Putnam's interest in her, she knew she would need to get money in order to be able to afford the flight lessons and keep her family afloat financially.

As the cost of flying lessons could amount to \$1,000 in 1920, Earhart had to work a variety of jobs such as photographer, bin lorry driver, sausage factory work, and more.³⁷ Due to extreme dedication and financial frugality, she was able to afford her first plane, a chromium-yellow Kinner she called the *Canary*.³⁸

Celebrity and Prestige

Earhart, alongside fellow pilot Wilmer Stultz, flew across the Atlantic, making herself the first female passenger to take such a journey, shooting her into the spotlight. Putnam would puppeteer Earhart's public persona and perception, taking intense control over her image and demanding nothing short of greatness for his newest project.³⁹

³¹ Dr J. Miller-Cribbs & J. N. Mains, "Amelia Earhart (1897-1937): Social Worker, Women's Advocate, World Famous American Aviation Pioneer" (2013) VCU Libraries Social Welfare History Project.

³² M. S. Lovell, *The Sound of Wings* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989).

³³ D. L. Rich, *Amelia Earhart: A Biography*, (Washington DC: Smithsonian, 1989).

³⁴ C. Cabinet, "Selling Amelia Earhart" (2022) 45(2) *The Missouri Review* 83, at p. 84.

³⁵ *Ibid*, at p.84.

³⁶ *Ibid*, at p. 83.

³⁷ *Ibid*, at p. 83.

³⁸ *Ibid*, at p.85.

³⁹ K. C. Winters, *Amelia Earhart: The Turbulent Life of an American Icon*, (New York: Macmillan Publishers, 2010), at p.2.

Earhart herself was also aware that in order to fly she must promote herself, taking on gruelling tour schedules and book deals, alongside large talks which would fund her flights that would go on to break records.⁴⁰ At the height of her career, Earhart was known to reply to young aviators who wrote to her, all whilst supporting her irritable mother and alcoholic father.⁴¹

Putnam coordinated record-breaking flights for Earhart, boosting her status as an aviator and earning her several world record entries. She was the first woman to fly an autogiro, alone across the Atlantic, and then nonstop across the US.⁴² Putnam transformed her into an all-American brand due to the lack of direct revenue and high costs associated with her flights.

Earhart would use her public image not only to fund her activities in the sky but also to encourage women to take up aviation, doing so in a multitude of ways including writing articles for *Cosmopolitan*.⁴³ In her position as Purdue University's technical advisor for aeronautics, Earhart conducted speeches about the future of aviation and encouraged female students to fly. In 1932, she became the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean, using the flight to promote the advancement of aviation and to raise funds for the development of aeronautical research.

Ninety-Nines & Women in Aviation

Around the time her record-setting flights began, Earhart would join the Ninety-Nines, an is an international organisation that offers networking, mentoring, and flight scholarship opportunities to recreational and professional female pilots. As one of the organization's earliest members, Earhart worked tirelessly to promote aviation among women and provide support and mentorship to aspiring female pilots. Subsequently, she would be elected as their first president in 1931, through which she would help shape their mission and foster a supportive community for female aviators.⁴⁴

One of the primary philanthropic endeavours Earhart spearheaded with The Ninety-Nines was their scholarship program, as she understood better than anyone the financial barriers many women faced in pursuing careers in aviation.⁴⁵ She worked tirelessly to establish scholarships that would provide financial assistance to aspiring female pilots and these scholarships not only helped women achieve their dreams of flight but also contributed to the advancement of women in the aviation industry as a whole.

Earhart's dedication to aiding the Ninety-Nines extended beyond financial support as she recognized the importance of mentorship and guidance in empowering the next generation of female aviators. As a prominent figure in the aviation community, Earhart served as a mentor to countless women, offering advice, encouragement, and support as they navigated their careers in aviation. Her mentorship was invaluable in helping women overcome obstacles and

⁴⁰ M. W. Albion, *The Quotable Amelia Earhart*, (New Mexico: University of New Mexico Press, 2015) at p. 57.

⁴¹ K. C. Winters, *Amelia Earhart: The Turbulent Life of an American Icon*, (New York: Macmillan Publishers, 2010), at p.2.

⁴² C. Cabinet, "Selling Amelia Earhart" (2022) 45(2) *The Missouri Review* 83, at p.87.

⁴³ *Ibid*, at p. 91.

⁴⁴ M. S. Fischler, "Where Earhart, not Lindbergh, is the Hero" (2002) *The New York Times* 14.

⁴⁵ *Ibid*.

achieve success in a field where they were often marginalized. As Earhart defied social expectations for her gender, she was in a unique position to establish herself as a respectable role model and inspire rhetorical, and hence societal, revolution.

Conclusion

Amelia Earhart, a trailblazer in aviation history, not only etched her name in the skies but also left an indelible mark on the ground through her philanthropic efforts. Whilst Earhart's legacy is shrouded by the conspiracies surrounding her presumed death in 1937 upon attempting to become the first pilot to circumnavigate the globe at the equator, this truly diminishes her legacy as a hardworking woman and dedicated philanthropist of her time.⁴⁶

As society continues to celebrate Earhart's legacy, it is essential to remember not only her groundbreaking achievements in aviation but also her remarkable contributions to society and her unwavering dedication to helping others. Her story echoes the sentiment that true greatness lies not only in one's accomplishments but also in a person's ability to make a positive difference in the lives of others, even in the face of adversity

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⁴⁶ D. L. Rich, *Amelia Earhart: A Biography*, (Washington DC: Smithsonian, 1989).

The Consolidation of Irish National Identity in the Free State: A Barrier to the Employment of Irish Women

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“The Republic guarantees religious and civil liberty, equal rights and equal opportunities to all its citizens...”⁴⁷

Extracted from the 1916 Proclamation, the above quotation illustrates an idealised image of a free and equal Ireland for all. However, the opposite of this ideal would occur in the early years of the Irish Free State, where the nationalist determination to solidly define Irish national identity as entirely different, and separate from that of Britain following the War of Independence – a desire to firmly establish the Irish nation as a sovereign, independent state in all areas of life - would see the enactment of various legislative measures that would heavily constrict the employment of Irish women. Efforts to consolidate Irish national identity were hugely influential on the view of women’s role in society, with the perception of the female homemaker being a founding cornerstone in the traditional Gaelic character the State was desperate to institute, and made efforts to reinforce, through various legislative measures.

Early Legislation

The female economic role in the Irish Free State was moulded by the aspiration to strongly define Irish national identity, paired with a typical post-revolution Governmental behaviour of attempting to demonstrate and assert power over post-conflict societal chaos through the introduction of measures against women.⁴⁸ As early as 1924 the fledgling state was implementing structures around women’s participation in jury service, introducing measures that “*gave them exemption upon demand...simply because they were women.*”⁴⁹ The Cosgrave government seized the norm of most women applying for the exemption to go a step further under the 1927 Juries Act, placing Irish women in the “Persons Exempted but Entitled to Serve upon Application,” category. Minister for Justice, Kevin O’Higgins, claimed this would improve efficiency and be cost-saving for the State, while women could focus on “*performing the normal function of womanhood in the state economy.*”⁵⁰

This gendered legislative behaviour in relation to women’s economic role and employment was mirrored in the Civil Service Regulation (Amendment) Act 1926, which granted the government the power to exclude women from certain entry examinations for the civil service, effectively closing off higher ranks of the service to men only. This was only the beginning, with the government formally introducing a complete ban on married women working in the Civil Service, as well as in national school teaching, in 1932, with rationale for the bar cited by the Department of Education including that “*women could not*

⁴⁷ Government of Ireland, “*Proclamation of Independence: Poblacht na hÉireann, the Provisional Government of the Irish Republic to the People of Ireland.*”

⁴⁸ Maryann Gialanella Valiulis, “*Defining Their Role in the New State: Irishwomen’s Protest against the Juries Act of 1927.*” 54.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.* 43-45.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

satisfactorily tend to both the duties of work and home." ⁵¹ The passing of the Civil Service Amendment Act in 1926 restricted female civil servants to low-paid roles within the system, while ensuring all positions within the service were consistently advertised by gender, with any posts open to female applicants requiring that they be unmarried or widowed to qualify. Even before this, in December 1925, the gendered pay scales of the service were added to, with the introduction of differentiated pay according to marriage status, the norm and subsequent law surrounding the marriage bar meaning that the "married" rate of pay was received by male civil servants only, and ensured that female careers within the service were incredibly short. ^{52 53}

The Influence of Irish Nationalism and Identity

The perception of women's role in an independent Ireland conveyed through the enacting of this legislation, was a stark contrast from the years of the independence struggle. Gone were the days when tales of fierce warriors such as Gráinne Mhaol, and ancient Gaelic mythological characters such as Queen Meadhb, were harnessed to describe real-life leaders of the nationalist movement such as Constance Markievicz and Maud Gonne, with the emergence of an immensely conservative nature to Irish nationalism that had "*clearly defined gendered divisions of labour*," burying this inspiring imagery of prominent Irish female figures and firmly replacing them with the idealised domestic functions of wife and mother. ⁵⁴ Despite women playing a role equally as active as their male counterparts during the independence struggle, Irish nationalism had long been a gendered ideology, and the establishment of the Irish Free State allowed the pining for the traditional Gaelic utopia in which the movement was rooted in, to have a chance at becoming reality, which heavily influenced the approaches to the consolidation of Irish national identity and society post-independence. ⁵⁵

McClintock's claim that "*all nationalisms are gendered*," is undoubtedly applicable to Irish nationalism, and in correlation with how women are "*typically construed as the symbolic bearers of the nation...women...appear in a 'metaphoric or symbolic role*," the emphasised societal ideal of Irish women as wives and mothers, was not a new conception, but one which was firmly embedded in the foundations of the nationalist movement. ⁵⁶ From patriotic "Aislings" of the eighteenth century that frequented poetic portrayals of Ireland "*as a poor woman begging for the courageous protection of Irish men*," to the dominant appearance of "Mother Ireland," iconography in the Proclamation of 1916, "*Ireland, through us, summons her children ... Having organised and trained her manhood...supported by her exiled children...*" these associations, had been subliminally subversive for centuries, unconsciously attributing women as the territory over which control can be exercised, and

⁵¹ Mary McAuliffe, "*The Irish Woman Worker and the Conditions of Employment Act, 1936 Responses from the Irish Free State Women Senators*." 41-43.

⁵² Deirdre Foley, "*Their Proper Place': Women, Work and the Marriage Bar in Independent Ireland, c. 1924-1973*." 65-68.

⁵³ Mary McAuliffe, "*The Irish Woman Worker and the Conditions of Employment Act, 1936 Responses from the Irish Free State Women Senators*." 41-43.

⁵⁴ Ivana Bacik, "*From Virgins and Mothers to Popstars and Presidents: Changing Roles of Women in Ireland*." 100-101.

⁵⁵ Aidan Beatty, "*Counter-Revolutionary Masculinities: Gender, Social Control and Revising the Chronologies of Irish Nationalist Politics*." 232 – 236.

⁵⁶ Anne McClintock, "*Family Feuds : Gender, Nationalism and the Family*." 61-63.

this is evident from the way in which women's societal role was used to fortify Irish national identity in the early years of the State.^{57 58 59 60}

Frequently observed was the "scandalous" behaviour of English women – "...drinking, smoking, in paid employment and practising birth control."⁶¹ The perceived moral superiority of the Catholic, Gaelic Irish – "*pure and virtuous while they described the English as pagan and immoral,*" – was a critical justification for the firm implementation of traditional gender roles, seen as pillars of stability in the post-conflict period.⁶² Furthermore, the ideas surrounding a woman's duty to the nation through her role within the home, which would be concreted in the contentious article 41.2 of the constitution, can be discerned as stemming from a subconscious equation of the meanings of 'home' and 'nation.' The Irish Free State emphasised the equation of a woman's domestic value to her value within and contribution to, the nation as a whole, with the theory that "*women who failed to perform their duties in the domestic environment were seen to be failing in their responsibilities to the nation,*" used as an underlying justification and structural support to the enactment of legislation designed to keep women in the domestic sphere.⁶³

The Conditions of Employment Act 1936

Described by Cairiona Beaumont as "*the most serious attack on the right of women citizens to work outside the home,*" the Conditions of Employment Act 1936 was introduced to Dáil Éireann in 1935 to protect male citizen's right to work by then-Minister for Industry and Commerce, Seán Lemass.⁶⁴ With section 16 titled "Restrictions on the Employment of Female Workers," the contentious bill granted the Minister the ability to create regulations "*prohibiting the employment of female workers,*" in relation to industrial work, while also declaring it to be unlawful for any employer to have a number of female industrial workers greater than the number of "*'other' workers.*"⁶⁵ Including further details prohibiting women from commencing work before 8 a.m., restrictions on night-time work, and allowing the Minister to introduce a gendered minimum working age, the bill was a blatant attempt to ensure that men – the *real* employees – received preference in industrial employment. While prominent figures and organisations such as the Irish Women Worker's Union (IWWU) spoke out strongly against it, the established centrality of Catholic moral values and the conservative nationalism leading the Irish Free State, meant that traditional gender stereotypes enforced with legislation such as the act in question, were ones which well acclimatised to, resulting in a general acceptance of the view that "*it was a wrong thing that young girls should be sent into the factories and young men kept out.*"⁶⁶

⁵⁷ Josep M. Armengol, "Gendering the Irish Land: Séamus Heaney's 'The Act of Union' (1975)." 7-8.

⁵⁸ Ivana Bacik, "From Virgins and Mothers to Popstars and Presidents: Changing Roles of Women in Ireland." 101-102.

⁵⁹ Government of Ireland, "Proclamation of Independence: Poblacht na hÉireann, the Provisional Government of the Irish Republic to the People of Ireland."

⁶⁰ Ivana Bacik, "From Virgins and Mothers to Popstars and Presidents: Changing Roles of Women in Ireland." 101-102.

⁶¹ Maryann Gialanella Valiulis, "The Politics of Gender in the Irish Free State, 1922-1937." 575.

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ Louise Ryan, "Leaving Home: Irish Press Debates on Female Employment, Domesticity and Emigration to Britain in the 1930s." 398-399.

⁶⁴ Mary McAuliffe, "The Irish Woman Worker and the Conditions of Employment Act, 1936 Responses from the Irish Free State Women Senators." 36.

⁶⁵ Mary McAuliffe, "The Irish Woman Worker and the Conditions of Employment Act, 1936 Responses from the Irish Free State Women Senators." 37.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.* 37-39

The male breadwinner model was a frequent justification used in support of the bill in the Dáil and in the Seanad, with Labour Party leader William Norton harnessing the theory, stating that the role of men as money makers would be threatened if “*the ‘invasion’ of the female worker into the workplace continued unabated.*”^{67 68 69}

The act passed into law in 1936, unsurprisingly, given the way in which the importance of the woman in the home was viewed as a pillar of Irish society, evident in statements made by Fianna Fáil’s Aodh De Blacam in November 1936, who deemed the disruption of the domestic sphere caused by Irish female entry into employment as the death knell of the epicentre of “*traditional order and national character,*” – the home.

Therefore, while without question, the gendered employment legislation of the Irish Free State inhibited the employment opportunities of Irish women, it is undoubtedly worth considering how the gendered conservative ideals ingrained in Irish nationalism, paired with the strive to define and assert Irish national identity post-independence, were key influences and ultimately, great societal barriers, to Irish women’s equal access of the workforce in twentieth-century Ireland.

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⁶⁷ *Ibid.* 40

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ *Ibid.* 41

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A Brief History of Ageism in Irish Education

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Introduction

“Ageism” refers to the discrimination faced by a person as a result of their age. Ageism has ramifications in political, social, academic and professional settings and therefore, to make suitable policy affecting age, an interdisciplinary approach is required by researchers to parse through relevant literature and best inform policy. Therefore, this paper will provide a brief history of ageism specifically against this cohort of non-traditional learners and its implications on all three levels of education from primary to tertiary level. Focusing on a single facet of ageism—such as education—is crucial to not undervalue the importance of any aspect of it. The paper will be separated into four parts, firstly providing a brief definition of “ageism” before delving into the “life stages”. This will segue into education with respect to both the proactive steps taken to decrease academic inequality and the current approaches taken to educating non-traditional learners. Finally, the paper will discuss some of the notable advancements made in the Irish context to tackle age discrimination in education.

What is Ageism?

As described by Bill Bytheway, ageism is not the actions of a majority group against a homogeneous minority.^{70,71} This is because the process of ageing is not unique to any single gender, class, race or ethnicity. This concession thus causes difficulty in creating a definitive definition of the prejudice in question. However, for the sake of simplicity, this paper will borrow the definition from a book by Macionis and Plummer. Ageism is a shorthand term referring to the discrimination and prejudice faced by the elderly based on “blatant” and “subtle” factors.⁷² While many other elements of ageism exist, such a definition is largely sufficient for a non-specialist audience. However, for this paper, the cohort should be expanded from “elderly” to non-traditional learners who are returning to some stage of education.

The Life Stages

Stereotyping with respect to ageing was perpetuated as a result of (life) stage models.^{73,74} These consider goals which should be achieved by approximate chronological ages and have been influential in shaping public opinion around activities pursued by individuals of all ages.⁷⁵ While such systems have been integral to societies, the late 20th century would see a waning popularity for these structured “life scripts”. Despite a move in academic spheres away from traditional life stages, its moulding of societal perceptions has persisted. This has led to systemic ageism being deeply ingrained in society as a result. Hence, to consider the

⁷⁰ John J. Macionis and Kenneth Plummer, *Sociology: A Global Introduction*, 5th ed (Harlow, England ; New York: Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2012), 442.

⁷¹ Bill Bytheway, *Ageism*, Rethinking Ageing Series (Buckingham ; Bristol, PA, USA: Open University Press, 1995), 1.

⁷² Macionis and Plummer, *Sociology*, 449.

⁷³ Bytheway, *Ageism*, 19–24.

⁷⁴ Macionis and Plummer, *Sociology*, 442.

⁷⁵ Jeffrey Jensen Arnett, ‘Life Stage Concepts across History and Cultures: Proposal for a New Field on Indigenous Life Stages’, *Human Development* 59, no. 5 (2016): 290–316.

history of ageism and how it has been combatted necessitates that the field's relation to anthropology is acknowledged.

Education

Ageism in education is not a new issue; instead, it is a result of progressive failures to provide adequate education to all in Ireland. Kathleen Lynch indirectly discussed this in 1998 when speaking on the lack of incentivisation for those of lower socioeconomic classes to continue with education upon reaching the compulsory age for education. Moreover, she highlighted the continued improvements in education policies over the prior 30 years.⁷⁶ While these advancements made were of benefit to society as a whole, these were largely proactive in helping children in the aftermath of their implementation, failing to retroactively educate those who suffered from the past flaws of the education system. Many of the steps taken—examined over the next paragraphs—to provide back-to-education for those with gaps in their learning fail to accommodate learners interested in gaining the “classroom experience”.⁷⁷ The lack of a more traditional schooling experience for those in later life remains pertinent for those wishing to learn about fields such as geography rather than having a sole emphasis on fields such as maths, reading and writing.

Advancements

U3As

Attempts are being made to help those in later life receive education outside of reading, writing and maths skills. Best exemplified through Universities of the Third Age (U3As), these institutions encourage those in later life to engage in primarily informal classes to develop skills.^{78,79} With the first opening in Ireland in 1995, the implementation of these institutions may be linked to a change in the stereotypes around ageing and learning, thus disparaging some of the subtle stigmas caused through the aforementioned life stage models. Furthermore, these institutions address the “classroom experience” of learning fields such as geography or poetry. However, it is important to consider breakdowns of the statistics. While this is not possible in the Irish context due to the lack of reports available, a majority of attendants generally appear to be white, middle-class women in non-Irish reports.^{80,81} This majority gender is similar in the other institutions established by the Irish government and other NGOs as will be discussed below.

ETBI and NALA

Touched upon in the paragraph on education, resources do exist to provide individuals with opportunities to learn reading, writing, maths and also computer skills. In Ireland, these are done through ETBI, a government-affiliated charity which took on the responsibilities of

⁷⁶ Seán Healy and Brigid Reynolds, eds., ‘Chapter 16: The Status of Children and Young Persons: Educational and Related Issues’, in *Social Policy in Ireland: Principles, Practice and Problems* (Dublin, Ireland: Oak Tree Press, 1998), 342.

⁷⁷ Bytheway, *Ageism*, 103.

⁷⁸ António Fragoso and Josélia Fonseca, ‘Combating Ageism through Adult Education and Learning’, *Social Sciences* 11, no. 3 (March 2022): 12, <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci11030110>.

⁷⁹ ‘U3A List of Locations’, Age Action, accessed 14 February 2024, <https://www.ageaction.ie/how-we-can-help/lifelong-learning-u3a/u3a-list-locations>.

⁸⁰ Halina Zielińska-Więczkowska, Marta Muszałik, and Kornelia Kędziora-Kornatowska, ‘The Analysis of Aging and Elderly Age Quality in Empirical Research: Data Based on University of the Third Age (U3A) Students’, *Archives of Gerontology and Geriatrics* 55, no. 1 (1 July 2012): 195–99, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.archger.2011.07.011>.

⁸¹ Gierszewski and Kluzowicz, ‘The Role of the University of the Third Age in Meeting the Needs of Older Adult Learners in Poland’.

VECs and FÁS training centres in 2013, and via NALA, the National Adult Learning Agency, a charity formed in 1977.^{82,83} Again, both of these institutions, while successful, primarily failed to attract men in as high of quantities as women to learn with them. This is visible when considering gender breakdowns of ETB's overall statistics—of note, given the amount of work ETB is involved in, it is not possible to determine the gender ratio specifically for reading, writing and maths programmes—and of NALA's reports between 2000 to 2011 (compiled of three separate reports).^{84,85} Before moving on, it is crucial to recognise that the goal of ETBI is not to aid those of a specific age cohort of adults. Taking this into perspective adds value to a goal of proactively addressing age discrimination, encouraging lifelong learning rather than taking an approach favouring those specifically without any formal education. Thus, ETBI diminished stigmas around attaining an education for those not conforming to the traditional life stages. This has been of significant value to pro-actively counter ageism rooted in education over the decades since its (and its predecessors') release.

Springboard+

Along with informal education, there have been pushes for official learning with more recent schemes such as Springboard+. Formed in 2011, its objective was to provide back-to-education opportunities to lower and middle-income citizens. While acknowledging the societal positives that the system holds, this should not detract from scrutinising its flaws. In official reports of their attendees, there is a significant difference in gender breakdowns with more women than men aged 24+ being involved in some courses offered. This is highlighted in tables 1 and 2 of the appendix, displaying a widening gap between male and female involvement of both graduates and current students.^{86,87} While many of these courses are intended to benefit those of an already learned background, the system is still of value to hamper the negative stigmas around lifelong learning. Therefore, Springboard+ has proven itself to be an excellent method of diminishing the historically associated stigmas between age and learning capabilities in Ireland.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the essay sought to provide a brief history of ageism in education in the Irish context. This was broken into four main sections, the first provided a definition of ageism. Afterwards, the life stages were examined. With an underlying influence on modern society, scrutiny of the stages was critical before delving into education and the means by which to combat this subtle ageism. Next, the essay shifted from theory towards the Irish context. Discussion of education was intended to highlight two key aspects. Respectively, these were: that steps taken were predominantly proactive, failing to help those who had already been

⁸² 'Adult Literacy', Citizens Information (Citizensinformation.ie), Ireland, accessed 15 February 2024, <https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/education/further-education-and-training/adult-literacy/>.

⁸³ 'NALA 1980-2010: A Living History', NALA: National Adult Literacy Agency, 2011, <https://www.nala.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/NALA-1980-2010-a-living-history.pdf>.

⁸⁴ Sandra Roe, 'A Study of the Role, Contribution and Impact of Education and Training Board (ETB) Further Education and Training (FET) Services on Active Inclusion in Ireland', ETBI, November 2021, <https://www.etbi.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/ETBI-Active-Inclusion-A4.pdf?x15050>.

⁸⁵ 'NALA Factsheet: Participation in the VEC Adult Literacy Service 2011', NALA: National Adult Literacy Agency, accessed 15 February 2024, <https://www.nala.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/NALA-Factsheet-participation-in-the-VEC-adult-literacy-service-2011.pdf>.

⁸⁶ 'Access Our Data – Graduates', Higher Education Authority, accessed 14 February 2024, <https://hea.ie/statistics/data-for-download-and-visualisations/access-our-data/access-our-data-graduates/>.

⁸⁷ 'Access Our Data – Students', Higher Education Authority, accessed 14 February 2024, <https://hea.ie/statistics/data-for-download-and-visualisations/access-our-data/access-our-data-students/>.

through the education system, and that qualitatively, research indicates a desire for both the schooling experience as well as the education experience. Lastly, the advancements made by Ireland were considered. Broken into three segments, the advancements discussed centred around the informal Universities of the Third Age, the numeric and literacy education provided by the ETBI and NALA along the development of Springboard+. Examining these institutions brought two core points forward. Firstly, that current efforts made by both the government and charities fail to attract a similar quantity of male students as female, and that efforts being made by Springboard+ and ETBI are intended not only to retroactively aid the elderly but also to encourage lifelong learning across the life course in its entirety, proactively addressing ageism in education. Tackling ageism in the Irish context is difficult. This is largely a result of the multifaceted and systemic issues which predate the existence of the Republic of Ireland as its own independent country. This indicates that within the domain of education in Ireland, there is an apparent—albeit slow—waning of the effects of ageism on education and on the perceptions of lifelong learning.

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A Forgotten Famine

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Look and see, Famine rides his black horse over Ireland, rendering the staple crops of grain and potatoes inedible. What follows is a rampant rise in food costs, hunger and disease abound, alms are given, and relief schemes are put in place, though for many it is far too late. Ultimately, 20% of the island's population is lost. Such is the toll of this blight, Richard Purcell, a Corkman working as an agent for the Earl of Egmont, writes of; "*the most dreadful calamity ever to befall this poor kingdom*"⁸⁸. To almost every Irish citizen today this report will seem grimly familiar, echoes of the 'Great Hunger' which ravaged this country in the 1840s, leaving an indelible mark on her landscape and people, however, this is not that story this opening account refers to a calamity one century older than Ireland's most notorious famine episode, a period dubbed; "*Bliain an Áir*", or; "*The Year of The Slaughter*"⁸⁹.

This famine of 1740-1741, though similar in many respects, differs in its original cause, as initially, it was an extreme bout of cold weather persisting on from the Winter of 1739 that created food shortages, rather than an infection in the crop⁹⁰. It cannot be said conclusively what generated the meteorological conditions for this chill, known colloquially as both the "*Black Frost*"⁹¹ and the "*Great Frost*"⁹², though it is speculated that the eruption of the Japanese Mount Tarumae in August 1739, as well volcanic eruptions on the Kamchatka peninsula in Russia, could well have been of some influence⁹³. Barometric data from the time is scant, and may not be perfectly accurate, however surviving readings record indoor temperatures of -12°C , and a sole outdoor temperature reading of -18°C ⁹⁴, extreme conditions which led the author Jonathan Swift to write with anxiety that; "*our kingdom is turned to be a Muscovy [Moscow], or worse*"⁹⁵. Other reports tell of fairs and market stalls erected on the frozen river Liffey, and even a whole oxen roasted on its surface; such was the density of the solid ice⁹⁶. Elsewhere, a

⁸⁸ "Dancing on Ice: recalling the Great Frost of 1740" [2018] Irish Independent, available <https://www.independent.ie/irish-news/dancing-on-ice-recalling-the-great-frost-of-1740/36663457.html> (date accessed: 6 February 2024).

⁸⁹ James Kelly, "Coping with Crisis: The response to the Famine of 1740-41" (2012) 27 Eighteenth Century Ireland / Iris an dá chultúr 99 at 99 [hereinafter Kelly].

⁹⁰ Sryan Bruen, "Winter 1739/40: The Great Frost" [2018] Climatology of the British Isles, available <https://bruen45.wixsite.com/britishislesclimate/post/Winter-1739-40-the-great-frost> (date accessed: 5 February 2024) [hereinafter Bruen].

⁹¹ Samuel McSkimin, *The History and Antiquities of the County Town of Carrickfergus* (Belfast: Davidson and M'Cormack, 1909) at 79 [hereinafter McSkimin].

⁹² D. Dickson, *Arctic Ireland* (Belfast: White Row Press, 1997) at 11 [hereinafter Dickson].

⁹³ Bruen, *supra* note 3.

⁹⁴ Dickson, *supra* note 5 at 12.

⁹⁵ Jonathan Swift, *The Works of Jonathan Swift; Containing Interesting and Valuable Papers not Hitherto Published, Volume II* (London: Henry Washbourne, 1841) at 820.

⁹⁶ Allison Bray, "Despite current cold spell, Ireland is no stranger to extreme cold and snow, records reveal" [2022] Irish Independent, available <https://www.independent.ie/irish-news/despite-current-cold-spell-ireland-is-no-stranger-to-extreme-cold-and-snow-records-reveal/42211547.html> (date accessed: 8 February 2024).

hurling match was played upon the River Shannon at Portumna, County Galway⁹⁷. Coupled with the cold was a month of harsh winds and near constant rain in September of 1739, destroying much of the year's harvest, as well as greatly disrupting Winter and Spring planting¹¹.

The devastation of crops by frost, and the loss of much of the country's reserve food store, would have grave mortal consequences in the months to come, however, in the early months of 1740, the cold alone was as much a killer as hunger or disease⁹⁸. Vast numbers perished from hypothermia, and there are numerous reports of bodies found frozen in the streets of Kildare Town, Naas and Dublin⁹⁹. Civil unrest was rife in major towns and cities as, with the price of coal rising too high for most, the populace resorted to stripping whatever meagre sources of fuel were available in a desperate bid to generate warmth¹⁰⁰. This extended to the uprooting of trees and hedges from public highways, and in January 1740 the Dublin Daily Post reported fourteen men arrested in the Phoenix Park for: "*the cutting down of trees for firing*". In response, The Lord Mayor of Dublin, Daniel Falkiner, instructed "*hucksters of coal*" to cease all increases in their pricing, and in February 1740, jailed the captain and purser of a coal ship for attempting to bypass these provisions. Such decisiveness seemingly had the desired effect, and the price of fuel steadied as the year went on¹⁵.

Soon, however, the effects of food shortages would compound the crisis. By April 1740, Richard Purcell gives a harrowing account of the poor of North Cork, subsisting only on weeds, sour milk, foul potatoes and nettles¹⁶, whilst in Cork City, the mass burial of "*several hundred indigent persons*" is recorded at the rear of the Green in Shandon Churchyard¹⁰¹. Many recountings of *Bliain an Áir* emphasise the miserable plight of the Munster peasantry in particular, with numerous bleak accounts detailing, amongst other episodes, the regular consumption of horse and dog in County Clare¹⁰², the recourse to the ancient art of cattle raiding by desperate families on the Kerry-Limerick border¹⁰³, and the complete depopulation of townlands across Kerry¹⁰⁴. All this devastation led the agent of the Earl of Cork to pronounce, as early as February 1740, that "*half the labouring people of the country are dead*"¹⁰⁵.

⁹⁷ "The Great Frost of 1740 Recalled" [2020] The Connaught Telegraph, available <https://www.con-telegraph.ie/2020/04/26/the-great-frost-of-1740-recalled/> (date accessed: 8 February 2024). ¹¹

L.M Cullen, "The Irish food crises of the early 1740s: The economic conjuncture" (2010) 37 Irish Economic and Social History 1 at 9 [hereinafter Cullen].

⁹⁸ L.A Clarkson, "Food Shortage, Climatic Variability, and Epidemic Disease in Pre-Industrial Europe: The Mortality Peak in the Early 1740s by John D. Post" (1987) 35 The Agricultural History Review 110 at 111 [hereinafter Clarkson].

⁹⁹ Kelly, *supra* note 2 at 103.

¹⁰⁰ Allison Bray, "Our cold snap was nothing compared to the Great Irish Frost of 1740" [2010] Irish Independent, available <https://www.independent.ie/irish-news/our-cold-snap-was-nothing-compared-to-the-great-irish-frost-of-1740/26609822.html> (date accessed: 8 February 2024). ¹⁵Kelly, *supra* note 2 at 103-104.

¹⁰¹ F. Tuckey, *The County and City of Cork Remembrancer* (Cork: Osborne Savage and Son, 1837) at 130, (noted only that the burials took place during the Summer months).

¹⁰² *Faulkner's Dublin Journal* (28 March 1741).

¹⁰³ J.A Gaughan, *The Knights of Glin* (Dublin: Kingdom Books, 1978) at 63-64.

¹⁰⁴ E. McLysaght, *The Kenmare Manuscripts* (Dublin: The Stationary Office, 1942) at 59-60 [hereinafter McLysaght], see also Engler, *supra* note 16 at 1037.

¹⁰⁵ Kelly, *supra* note 2 at 115.

Illness is an inevitable result of such a deprived climate, and between the months of March and May 1740, Faulkner's Dublin Journal reports epidemical sickness and death nationwide, ravaging those made vulnerable by malnutrition. Fever, smallpox, and dysentery were the primary killers, the last of which taking a particularly wretched toll on the capital, though it was noted that general mortality from infections was far greater in the country, where access to proper medical treatment was severely limited¹⁰⁶. Disease persisted and took a firm hold in the summer months, just as the last frosts had finally thawed, and in time, so-called 'flux' (dysentery and typhus fever) would prove more lethal than either cold or starvation¹⁰⁷. The nature of such contagions was to disrupt aid efforts and stoke fear and suspicion of one's own neighbours. Tragically, the writer William Pearde reports that in rural Munster, 'hitherto resilient' social bonds were beginning to break down, as "[t]he badness of the times discourages our neighbours from the hospitality that was formerly among them"²⁴.

In recent years, the narrative of the Great Famine has been reframed in Ireland's popular imagination, with more blame being laid at the feet of unfeeling or outright malicious authorities, the improper actions of the British bureaucracy now seen as commensurate a factor to the oomycete infection which originally took root in the potato crop²⁵. Here again, the story of Ireland's forgotten famine varies once more, as there seems to be little evidence of hostile attitudes among authorities regarding the setting up of programmes to provide relief¹⁰⁸, though even in the absence of malice, it is not to say there was no shortcomings or moral quandaries associated with the provision of aid, as has already been detailed, a great many rural poor, especially in the early months of the crises, were decimated long before aid could arrive.

Numerous relief funds were organised in the early months of 1740, with collections allocated to the purchase of food and coal for the impoverished. These efforts were predominantly operated by Church of Ireland parishes, the preeminent purveyors of alms in the age of the protestant ascendancy²⁷. In general, individuals and institutions of contemporary power and influence gave generously, Trinity College Dublin¹⁰⁹, The Freemasons of Ireland, as well as several Protestant bishops, archbishops, clergymen, and local officials¹¹⁰, to name just a few. For their part, the Catholic Church eased the requirements on the faithful to fast during lent, authorising parishioners to eat meat on four days of the week: "*on account of the great scarcity of fish and roots*". Key also was the soup kitchens and workhouses, with the Dublin Workhouse, in particular, administering the greatest initiative of relief ever extended in Ireland to that point, supporting as much as 8% of the city's population at one time¹¹¹. As a result of these programmes, it seems the plight of the urban poor was somewhat alleviated as

¹⁰⁶ see Engler, *supra* note 16 at 1037, where it is noted the setting up of emergency medical tents in Cork City for the needy to be seen by a physician with no charge, such an amenity as this would not be made available to those living in rural areas for the duration of the 1740-41 famine.

¹⁰⁷ S. Engler, F. Mauelshagen, J. Werner, J. Luterbacher, "The Irish famine of 1740–1741: famine vulnerability and "climate migration"" [2013] *Climate of the Past* 1161 at 1173 [hereinafter Mauelshagen].

²⁴Kelly, *supra* note 2 at 113.

¹⁰⁸ see Dickson, *supra* note 5 at 74, "*nobody faulted the government per se for what happened*".²⁷J. Kelly, "Scarcity and Poor Relief in Eighteenth-Century Ireland: The Subsistence Crisis of 1782-4" (1992) 28 *Irish Historical Studies* 38 at 40, see also C. McCabe, "Civil Parishes' Response to Begging" [2018] *Begging, Charity, and Religion in Pre-Famine Ireland* 127 at 132 for more information on the way in which aid was collected by, and distributed through, the Church of Ireland.

¹⁰⁹ Dickson, *supra* note 5 at 82.

¹¹⁰ Kelly, *supra* note 2 at 105-106.

¹¹¹ Kelly, *supra* note 2 at 116.

²⁵M.G McGowan, "*The Famine Plot Revisited: A Reassessment of the Great Irish Famine as Genocide*" (2017) 11 *Genocide Studies International*

the year went on, however, only 12.5% of the population lived in towns and cities¹¹², and most in rural areas could not avail of these localised efforts, instead having to rely on their landlord's generosity, a virtue in no way guaranteed.

However, reports surviving to us indicate that a majority of landlords afforded at least a modicum of relief to poverty-stricken tenants during this time, be it a remission on rents or the actual distribution of material aid³². Particularly benevolent was Katherine Conolly of Castletown, County Kildare, the philanthropic widow of former Speaker of the Irish House of Commons William Conolly, she distributed a great deal of money to impoverished tenants, and commissioned the building of the 140 foot tall 'Conolly Folly', a great and spectacular stone obelisk at the rear of Castletown House, of no functional purpose other than to provide additional employment to those in need on their estates¹¹³. Later, she would fund the construction of the 'Wonderful Barn' in Leixlip, a fantastical corkscrew-shaped granary, once again to generate industry, and to act as a food store in the event of any future famines befalling the Conolly's tenants¹¹⁴. A less virtuous exception was the Earl of Cork, who, regarding his estates in County Waterford, and despite the repeated behest of agents in Munster that the poor were starving, failed to authorise any charitable expenditure¹¹⁵. Even given the climate of general altruism elsewhere, however, distress and excess mortality persisted relatively unfettered¹¹⁶, with prices of forage and foodstuffs continuing to rise as unfavourable weather conditions persisted, a freakishly dry Spring disrupting the planting and grazing which ought to have hailed an upturn in fortunes³⁷.

This sustained hardship and price hiking fostered animosity amongst those in need, and civil unrest soon returned, with reports of mob action abounding in the Summer months. Major towns such as Drogheda, Dublin and Belfast saw the mass looting of shops and markets, with rioters made up of both hungry townspeople and vagrants newly arrived from rural areas³⁸. Docked merchant ships were a common target, particularly in the south of the country in Kinsale, Youghal, Dungarvan, and one notable episode in Carrick-on-Suir, wherein a crowd a thousand strong rose to drive away a military party and carry off 60 barrels of oats from a ship bound for Waterford, though five of their numbers were killed in the fracas. In some cases, such ships were in fact laden with provisions of grain and bound for charitable distribution elsewhere³⁹, and the fact many were ransacked in such a way echoes the quote of William Pearde on the breakdown of social order. Notable, however, is the leniency the courts often showed to those apprehended for such offences, commuting many capital verdicts, and acquitting the pettier of offenders, on account of the "*great scarcity*" at play⁴⁰. Seemingly the judiciary recognised the little alternatives available to those desperate enough to 'help themselves' and decided wisely against the fostering of any further enmity.

As with most famines, it is difficult to determine a definitive end date for *Bliain an Áir*, and even as the crisis was supposedly dwindling, many communities lingered precariously close to the edge of famine conditions were noted nationwide in December 1740 as well as rampant fever enduring into Spring 1741. emergency, and spates of abnormal death recurred often in short bouts¹¹⁷. Widespread deprivation and hunger held until mid-1741, with an

¹¹² Engler, *supra* note 16 at 1020.

¹¹³ see J. Howley, "Obelisks and Eye-Catchers" (2002) 28 Irish Arts Review 116 at 118, where the obelisk is called a 'famine relief project'.

¹¹⁴ G. Wick, "Castletown, Ireland" (2011) 26 Historic Gardens Review 42 at 42-43.

¹¹⁵ Kelly, *supra* note 2 at 107.

¹¹⁶ see B.F. Elrington, *The Judges in Ireland, 1221-1921* (London: John Murray, 1926) at 130-131'.

¹¹⁷ see McLysaght *supra* note 20 at 59, where the emptying of lands by death and abandonment is still recorded as late as April 1741.

easing of this hardship and the lowering of prices signalled by the beleaguered arrival of vessels carrying grain from British America, reaching the west coast by Summer¹¹⁸. Disease also remained rife late into 1741, with physicians in Galway, who likened famine-related sickness to a plague, still steadfastly refusing house calls; “*for any fee whatever*” as late as August of that year¹¹⁹. Phillip Skelton, a curate in County Monaghan, describes the scene in the wake of the slaughter; “*Whole parishes are almost desolate, and the dead have been eaten in the fields by dogs for want of people to bury them. Whole thousands in a barony have perished, some of hunger and others of disorders occasioned by an unnatural, putrid and unwholesome diet*”¹²⁰.

On assessing *Bliain an Áir*, most estimates place the proportion of Ireland’s 2.4 million population killed as a result of famine conditions at 13-20%, amounting to approximately 400,000 souls⁴⁵, a truly staggering mortality rate, and deadlier even than that of an Gorta Mór a century later⁴⁶. This tragedy laid bare the failings of the old Irish Poor Law system, which relied on the traditional provision of alms by private members of a community and the local parish, with the notion of governmental intervention in such affairs deemed inappropriate⁴⁷, and even such meagre measures as were taken by administrators, such as the Lord Lieutenant’s ban on the exportation of all grain except to England, and the charitable initiatives undergone by several city corporations, were considered exceptional at the time⁴⁸.

In truth, the great suffering and devastation wreaked across Ireland in the years 1740-41, in light of the relatively little hardships endured elsewhere in England or Scotland, exhibits the extent to which this nation was left underdeveloped and lagging behind the other nations of the United Kingdom, in regards the fundamentals of a functioning economy and civil society. It is remarkable that when Parliament assembled for the 1742 sessions, no legislative changes were occurred by the calamity, it was only amid the Great Hunger in 1846 that Daniel O’Connell, MP for County Cork, to procure famine relief, would lay the details of the century-old tragedy before the British House of Commons, outlining the insufficiency of the Irish Poor Law and pleading for appropriate measures to be taken⁴⁹, he may have hoped the Year of the Slaughter might serve as cautionary tale to the powers that be, spurring them into action so that another tragedy might yet be avoided, as it were, no heed was taken.

¹¹⁸ Cullen, *supra* note 11 at 9-10.

³²see McLysaght *supra* note 20 at 60, a the Earl of Kenmare warns of *periculum in mora*, (death in delay), in regards the provision of aid or relief to struggling tenants, see also Dickson, *supra* note 5 at 17 where he speaks of the awareness amongst the landed gentry and the wider Protestant Ascendancy as to the risks borne from neglecting one’s tenants, the disease caused by such deprivation being irrespective of class or wealth.

¹¹⁹ Kelly, *supra* note 2 at 120.

¹²⁰ Brendan McWilliams, “The Great Frost and forgotten famine” [2001] The Irish Times, available <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/the-great-frost-and-forgotten-famine-1.282539> (date accessed: 8 February 2024).

⁴⁵Dickson, *supra* note 5 at 62-63.

⁴⁶see C. Ó Gráda, P.P. Boyle, “Fertility Trends, Excess Mortality, and the Great Irish Famine” (1986) 23 *Demography* 543 at 555-556, the authors confirm a figure of 1,000,000 excess deaths as a result of the Great Famine, calculating, therefore, a mortality rate of approximately 11.7% of the Irish population. ⁴⁷ Mauelshagen, *supra* note 22 at 1167.

⁴⁸Dickson, *supra* note 5 at 17-18.

⁴⁹ Hansard Archive, Volume 83: debated on Tuesday 17 February 1846, Famine and Disease in Ireland.

Tom Crean: Ireland's Antarctic Hero

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"Courage is an instinct seldom denied by the truly brave"- Leif Tomy

In the stories of human history, tales of heroism often unfold against the backdrop of warfare, where courage and sacrifice intertwine to shape the course of nations. Yet, amidst the tales of valour and conquest, there existed a man whose unstoppable spirit helped with the pursuits of exploration and science. Tom Crean's acts of heroism in the name of the discovery of a place still known for its mystery and treachery, Antarctica. A place so alien and desolate of all life that it is often said to be the closest a human can get to another planet without leaving Earth. Most would agree that the things he endured and accomplished were already enough to be considered a national hero, yet he was only officially recognized by Ireland in 2021, over 100 years after his feats of true valour.

Tom Crean was born in 1877 in the small village of Annascaul in County Kerry. At the young age of 16, he enlisted in the British Royal Navy, possibly after an argument with his father. It wasn't until 1911 that he got his first shot to show the world his unwavering bravery when he joined Robert Falcon Scott's expedition to be the first person to reach the South Pole. Crean had been with Scott on all of his naval postings so far and had made a good impression on Scott, making Crean one of the first to be chosen for this new expedition. Although Crean himself never wrote a diary, therefore we can't know his exact thoughts, we can learn how highly everybody around him thought of him and his actions have been forever memorialized.

The journey to the South Pole was a trek of 1,558 km one way with over 3,000 m incline and would take months of walking while pulling 181 kg sledges through the snow, avoiding hidden crevasses, trying not to lose fingers and toes to frostbite, sheltering from blizzards that could hit at a moment's notice, and so many more factors that could and would result in disaster. Crean and sixteen other men were to accompany Scott as far as they could. They left for the South Pole on the 1st of November 1911, and by the 4th of January 1912, they reached 277 km from the Pole with only seven men who had been healthy and lucky enough to continue on. Scott and his selected crew of 4 other men were soon off on their own to become the first people at the South Pole, Crean watching them disappear into the white mist, not knowing he and the other two men would be the last ones to see any of them alive.

After the Polar team was out of sight, Crean along with William Lashly and Teddy Evans had the arduous task of trekking back the 1,288 km they came. As Tim Foley points out in his book, *Crean The Extraordinary Life of an Irish Hero*, that is like walking from Dublin to Killarney four times through blizzards and deathly cold temperatures. The going was slow, as Scott had decided to bring four men instead of three as he had planned, and left the others to haul the sledges back often hauled with a team of four. From the 4th to the 11th of January, they had already seen complications with worsening conditions, suffering from

shortness of breath, and Crean becoming inflicted with snow blindness (sunburns to the eyes) for four days.

On the 18th of January, Evans also began to suffer from a terrible bout of snow blindness. In Lashly's diary, he writes that "Evans had his goggles off all day to pick out the course over the crevasses and he suffered agony of snow blindness for the next fortnight. He was unable to write his diary up again until 29th January. He was too blind to do any useful pulling and could only walk along beside the sledge." By the 30th of January, he had recovered from the snow blindness but he began to complain about stiffness of his legs and a loosening of his bowels. This greatly slowed their progress, and by the 4th of February, only 290 km now from their destination, Evans began to show signs of scurvy. It advanced rapidly and a man who was already struggling to walk now became nearly immobile.

By the 9th of February, they had successfully reached One Ton Depot, the last large depot before returning to base 210 km away. Evans at this point though was declining faster by the day. He was still able to walk but progress forward was too slow to be safe, especially as temperatures began to drop even further. On the 13th of February, they finally had to call it and stop the march. Evans' was in crippling pain, his legs had turned green, and he encouraged Crean and Lashly to leave him to save themselves. They decided to put him on the sledge, now carrying the weight often pulled by double the amount of people plus the weight of a person and having already continuously walked a total of 3,048 km (roughly the distance of walking from Cork to Istanbul) in 3 months while pulling 181 kg sledges.

Evans continued to worsen and by the morning of the 18th of February, he fainted and the two were not able to wake up. Crean immediately cradled him in his arms, thinking he was dead. Evans later recounts "His hot tears fell on my face and, as I came to, I gave a weak kind of laugh." This was the final straw, knowing they all couldn't continue forward, they decided one person would have to stay with Evans while the other went for help. Crean volunteered to trek alone in search of help. With only three biscuits and two sticks of chocolate, Crean started the 56 km (from Cork to Dungarvan) left to reach base. His path was littered with crevasses hidden under snow, and without backup, a sledge, or even skis, one false step could result in disaster.

Tom Crean walked 56km in a nonstop 18-hour walk, already exhausted from a three-and-a-half months journey, and with very little food through the most treacherous conditions the Earth has to offer, in an attempt to save Evans' life. It is hard to imagine the physical and mental strength it takes for someone to accomplish this, all still with his spirits high. However, just as he had gotten back to the hut, the storm that threatened his journey went into full swing, preventing any other men to go out and perform the rescue that Crean had just risked his life for. Even after everything, when the blizzard subsided the next day, Crean immediately offered to go back out with the rescue party but wasn't allowed. The rescue team was able to quickly make their way to where Lashly and Evans had set up their tent and successfully brought the two back safely.

Unfortunately, Crean's next journey out to the ice on this expedition would not end with such good news. On the 12th of November 1912, just 18 km south of One Ton Depot he and his search party would come across a tent which lay the huddled together bodies of Scott, Wilson, and Bowers. "I loved every hair on his head," Scott had written about Crean in his diary, and after four expeditions together, the feeling surely had been mutual. Crean's other

close friend for years who had been on the Polar party, Edgar Evans, had not survived the journey back and his body was never found.

This is not the end of Crean's story. After all this, he was still drawn back to Antarctica, this time under the command of Sir Ernest Shackleton (who was born in County Kildare). On the 29th of December 1913, Shackleton announced his plan to be the first to cross the entirety of Antarctica, a 2736 km journey. By the 1st of August 1914, the ship *Endurance* set out from London with its crew, bringing Crean right back to that icy wasteland.

To summarize the first parts of this failed expedition, by January the ship had already gotten trapped in ice and would become crushed beyond repair by October. The team of 27 men would then load up as much as they could on their lifeboats and start the arduous journey to Elephant Island, an over 840 km trek. This became nearly impossible, as the ice around them was hard and uneven, making it slow work to drag the lifeboats, and as they soon found, the ice was moving in a southerly direction. "If ever the phrase 'two steps forward, one step back' applied in the literal sense, it was now," writes Tim Foley in his book. After deciding to set up camp and wait for the ice to thaw which it did on the 8th of April. They rowed through small paths made from cracks in the ice until they finally reached land on the 15th of April.

Shackleton described the men's reaction to touching land for the first time in eighteen months as they 'gloated over pebbles like misers over gold.' However, they were still extremely far from any place of rescue, and Shackleton knew no one would consider searching Elephant Island. He made the decision that he and a few other men would have to take one of the small lifeboats and travel another 1300 km across the famously treacherous Southern Ocean to South Georgia Island where there was a whaling town with contact to the outside world.

They altered their largest lifeboat, the *James Caird*, to have a sail and slight protection from the elements. The team selected for this journey was Ernest Shackleton, Frank Worsley, Timothy McCarthy (a Cork man), John Vincent, Harry McNish, and of course, Tom Crean. Right off the gate, the boat nearly got smashed as they left Elephant Island for her lack of ballast, but Crean saved her with his oar. Thus, on the 24th of April 1916, began Crean's second miraculous journey in the pursuit of saving lives.

It is again hard to imagine what these men would have gone through. The makeshift roof of the boat only covered three-quarters of the space below, causing buckets of frigid seawater to constantly splash under the deck. Crean took up cooking duties, as he had done many times before, and would attempt to use their only source of heat, a single-burner Primus stove, to cook their rations. This would often prove unsuccessful, with the waves constantly splashing over, drenching through every square inch of their belongings. Their clothes and sleeping bags would provide no solace from the elements either, being constantly saturated with seawater. The only comfort they had was amongst each other's company, keeping spirits high and engaging in banter.

The Southern Ocean 'maintained its evil winter reputation,' writes Shackleton. Beyond trying to stay warm and stay fed, they also had to worry about actually getting to

South Georgia Island. It's a true feat of navigation from Frank Worsley, as he was somehow able to keep consistent track of their position, using a sextant on a small boat being constantly bashed around by waves. These waves would be so cold, that the other men's main jobs would become hacking away the ice that formed on the sides of the boat and rudder. This ice was extremely dangerous, as it threatened to weigh down the boat and allow waves to easily spill further into it.

By day fifteen into the journey, things were beginning to look very rough. All the men were suffering from extreme thirst as they had used up their water reserves at that point. The constant winds and snowstorms with no reprieve mentally and physically wore them down. Worsley writes, "Our hands had become awful objects to look upon. Crean's and mine, in addition to being almost black with grime, blubber, and soot, were ornamented with recent frostbite and burns from the Primus. Each successive frostbite on a finger was marked by a ring where the skin had peeled up to so that we could count our frostbites by the rings after the method a woodman uses when telling the age of a tree."

Just as things were getting dire, on the 9th of May the men spotted South Georgia Island. This gave them hope, but hurricane conditions prevented them from being able to navigate around to the east side of the island where the town and safety lay. The next day they were able to land on the west side of the island and touch land once again. They allowed themselves to rest for nine days, rebuilding their strength as much as they could after the 16-day, 1300 km journey through perilous seas. The expedition was far from over though, as blocking the west coast from the east coast of the island is a huge range of mountains reaching as high as 2,900 m.

Tied together with rope, dressed in ragged and weather-beaten clothes, and only carrying three days' worth of rations, Crean, Shackleton, and Worsley set off in search of the whaling station of Grytviken on the 19th of May. Being possibly the first people to ever hike those mountains, they had no idea where to go and which peaks would lead them in the right direction. The next thirty-six hours were the final test of perseverance. Shackleton would allow the two to sleep, but knowing the risk would wake them up after only five minutes, telling them it had been half an hour, and pressing on. Every step at this point must have felt like it would be their last, but they had no other choice but to keep going. On multiple occasions, they would walk one way only to have to backtrack as it led nowhere. In one of these occurrences, they found themselves at the top of a steep slope. Having turned back so many times, and feeling as though this way was possibly their only shot, they knew the only way was down.

Left with little to no other options, they tied their ropes to form a sled and, with the lives of 25 other men at stake, shot down the icy slope. By some miracle, Tom Crean and his companions emerged with only minor bruising. Their risk paid off, as at 6:30 am on the 20th of May, they heard the faint whistle of the whaling station's work day starting. Finally, after over nineteen months, they heard the sound of the outside world again.

They successfully made their way down to the station and were able to explain to the station manager who they were. Then began the next endeavour of rescuing the rest of the men. The men left on the east side of the island were saved, but the men on Elephant Island proved to be much more difficult to get to, as either they didn't have the right kind of ship to be able to get through the ice and weather, or the weather was just too treacherous for even a

large ship to pass through. It wasn't until the 30th of August 1916, 4 months after the group on the *James Caird* had left the 22 men behind on the desolate rock, that they would be able to get close enough to rescue them. Crean, Shackleton, and Worsley watched as one by one, the men began to appear on the shore. With bated breath, they counted each figure that appeared, and by yet another miracle, all 22 men were accounted for.

The mental and physical strength of the man from the little village of Annascaul and his companions had saved even more lives. There are many people in this world right now who can thank Tom Crean for their lives. He was a caring, witty, and overall strong man who was loved by all who spent time with him. He moved back to County Kerry after the *Endurance* expedition, married in 1917, opened a pub named 'The South Pole Inn', became a family man, and hid his medals, never to speak to anyone much about his time in Antarctica. He passed unexpectedly in 1938 in Cork and has since had many people advocating for his wider recognition. In 2003 a statue was erected in Annascaul across from his pub, but it wasn't until 2021 that he was recognized by the wider Irish government, by having a new research vessel named RV *Tom Crean*.

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Why History?

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The purpose of this journal is to allow for students to explore through their own writings the construction of history and to engage with the past. When the value of the study of history is rarely examined it is easy to take for granted the purpose of this, but I believe that it is rewarding and revealing to genuinely, critically ask: Why history? Why do we choose to study history instead of, for example, philosophy, the sciences, or other humanities? Cases for the study of history are far from uncontroversial in the contemporary age as the privatisation of academia results in the demand for easily commodified fields of study, something which history does not provide, and this further has impacted secondary education with the contemporary debate over history as a mandatory part of the curriculum. When looking for arguments for history it can be appealing to argue for its contemporary functions in some way, but I believe that the most natural way to explain the reasons for studying history is to look at the history of the field itself. The past has been a subject of systematic study since the 5th Century B.C. with Herodotus coining the term (that is, the individually authored writing of history, as record keeping, kings lists, and myths go back even further), and each era and author has had their own justification. Thus, it is only fitting that to understand “why history?”, we must construct a history of history.

In the West, history is seen to begin with Herodotus' *Histories* in the mid-5th century BC, and by some accounts made more rigorous by Thucydides by the end of that century. This raises another why, that of why they began to write like this in the first place. Daniel Woolf makes the claim that history originally meant “inquiries” to Herodotus; thus, he and Thucydides were using this mode of authored selection of sources to critically understand the past to firstly understand the present political situation of Greece and secondly to understand the general trend of History, understood by the classical Greeks through *Tyche* – something akin to fate.¹²¹ The Greeks viewed history as cyclical, something which would be echoed by most Romans, but those influenced by Jewish theology had a more teleological view of history. Polybius and Josephus were two non-Roman historians within the Roman Republic and Empire who contributed to the popularisation of history as a form of writing in Rome, where it would stand alongside ethnography as a particularly popular subject with Rome's educated elite, orators, and senators. Polybius, though still influenced by *Tyche*, saw it as a guiding force towards a “telos” of the eternal city of Rome. Josephus was similarly teleological and thus placed great emphasis on the depth of history, specifically the antiquity of Judaism.¹²² It was thus an existential and religious interest in the past which drove the

¹²¹ Daniel Woolf, *A Concise History of History: Global Historiography from Antiquity to Present*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019): 20-2.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 20;27.

development of history as an early field, with teleological and cyclical worldviews imbuing the past with meaning towards the future.

Josephus provided a convenient bridge between the popularised historical form of the Romans with the history of the Christian church in late antiquity on account of its Jewish tradition. The difference being the intensity of Early Christian historiographical teleology. Chronography became vital to Christians as it provided a timeline for the inevitable and imminent return of Christ and the realisation of the Book of Revelations, while histories could also provide a didactic purpose for Christian kingship during the fracturing of the Roman state. Simultaneous to this is the development of rigorous state biographers in the dynasties of classical China during and after the Han period, where history became an important aspect of the functioning of the state bureaucracy. With the subsequent emergence of Islam, Arabic historians sought to provide explanations for the differences between regions through their histories and differences of histories based on geography, with figures such as Ibn Khaldun becoming seen as the grandfather of sociology.¹²³ That is to say, the Middle Ages were a period of intense historiographical development and a diverse tradition of history spanning the continents, from Bede to the *Nihon Shoki*. Despite this, the most fruitful discussion of the purpose and utility of the study of history (again, that is to say in the European tradition) begins in earnest in the Renaissance and continues through the Enlightenment into modernity.

History for the sake of learning moral lessons was the primary concern of the Middle Ages even if there were exceptions, but a critical comparative study of the past to understand the nature of change in nations, languages, and states emerged as a purpose during the early modern period under the influence of scholars such as Lorenzo Valla (c. 1407-1457). His primary concern was the comparative study of language and script to interrogate the integrity of historical documents, a field which would develop into philology and influence the language turn of the German Enlightenment.¹²⁴ The reasons to study history seemed to become endless: famous figures like Machiavelli would use history to imbue their city with character in the era of the city-state and the emergence of the Republic. William Camden would survey Britain and Ireland and combine antiquity, history, and topography to make a kind of proto-archaeology as a mode of understanding the distant or unrecorded past. It was a period of intense diversification of study, though a trend did emerge in the early modern state history, whereby historians would primarily find themselves in the employ of courts and in the practice of justifying the actions or existence of a state.

A unique figure of the Early Modern historians is Italian jurist Giambattista Vico (1668-1744) for the ways in which he would anticipate the professionalisation of history and the emergence of historicism in the succeeding century. Vico saw the study of the past as an act which broadened understanding in the most rewarding sense – that past peoples were fundamentally, and psychologically different to the historian studying them, and that to be able to understand the laws of history and transplant one's psyche to the past – effectively to understand the emotional reality of the past. His *New Science* is in part a religious and

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 60.

¹²⁴ Woolf, 90-2.

philosophical work – a repudiation of Descartes’ scepticism – but first and foremost a methodological and critical approach to the field of history and a justification of the study of history much more detailed than this one. It additionally wraps history in the teleological history of human psychology, a framework which would later be adopted and developed by the likes of Herder and Hegel.¹²⁵ But as to why this study is important, for Vico it is a practice of self-development.

With the subsequent onset of the Enlightenment, history became more of a philosophical tool than it already was in the Renaissance, particularly in the hands of men like Voltaire and Immanuel Kant (1724-1804). The universalist absolutism of the early Enlightenment could be framed critically as a return to simply didactic histories, but the use of historical thought for enlightenment went beyond that. Kant’s teleology was one of progressive enlightenment, and the study of history was to construct unity, and cosmopolitanism, and aim towards a future of unending peace.¹²⁶ His view of the development of history is a smaller aspect of his total universal philosophy, but he is of particular note for the oppositional development of one of his students, J.G. Herder (1744-1803). Herder is perhaps one of the most foundational figures in the reinvigorated interest in national history in the 19th century and is considered the father of the school of historicism. Herder viewed history as essential to the constitution of the nation and, in a sense, a source of immortality for the individual (similarly to but distinct from his contemporary Mendelssohn).¹²⁷ He had an organicist and almost totally cyclical view of history and, influenced by Vico, found its study to be life-affirming. Herder’s work would be co-opted by 20th-century reactionaries to justify anti-democratic German supremacism, such as the organicist Spengler or the infamous *Volkists*, but Herder himself was committed to the equality of all nations and languages, republicanism, and cosmopolitanism.¹²⁸ Thus, Herder’s romanticism should not be considered a counter-enlightenment as it often is, though later romanticists, such as Fichte and Carlyle, would add reactionary elements (the former endorsing German supremacy and the latter developing “Great Man” theory of history).

In the 19th century history would come under the significant influence of other disciplines, such as Durkheim or Comte’s sociology, but the emergence of industrialisation demanded a more critical economic history. This was attempted by Smith earlier, and then by Malthus and Ricardo, but most famously by a student of one of Kant’s students (Hegel), Karl Marx (1818-1883). Marx famously took the idealist approach of Hegel and turned it on its head, putting materialism first. This new historiography would be named historical materialism, and its purpose was to construct a history of class warfare and spread class consciousness. Marxist historiography would develop out of this and endure as one of the most influential schools of historical thought. His economic thought was married to his historiography, and both were inspiration for many revolutions in the subsequent century.

¹²⁵ Anthony Grafton, “Introduction,” in *New Science*, trans. David Marsh (London: Penguin Random House, 2000): xi-xvi.

¹²⁶ Amélie Oksenberg, Rorty and James Schmidt *Kant’s Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009): 1-2.

¹²⁷ Anne Pollock, “How to Dry Our Tears?: Abbt, Mendelssohn, and Herder on the Immortality of the Soul.” *Aufklärung* 29 (2017): 84.

¹²⁸ Michael Forster, “Johann Gottfried von Herder,” *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2023): 10.

As the 20th century would be too dense with unique and specific reasons for and of history, I will conclude with a brief explanation of one of the 19th century's most destructive philosophers' attack on history, and what is to be learned from it. In 1874 Friedrich Nietzsche wrote the essay *On the Use and Abuse of History for Life* as a polemical attack on the philosophical concern with the past. Effectively, Nietzsche refutes the explanations for "Why History?" and provides a narrow function of the field of study for practice in actual life. Nietzsche claims "The person who cannot set himself down on the crest of the moment, forgetting everything from the past, who is not capable of standing on a single point, like a goddess of victory, without dizziness or fear, will never know what happiness is. Even worse, he will never do anything to make other people happy."¹²⁹ Such statements are unsurprising from the philosopher who championed becoming, but his "use" for history proves more interesting than the abuse, as he finds that "living requires the services of history," while "an excess of history harms the living person."¹³⁰ This view of moderating history is not new but the mode Nietzsche suggests is, with his proposals being inspiring and life-affirming. Woolf proposes that Nietzsche destroyed, or at least attempted to destroy, the past as a source of truth.¹³¹ In effect, this sets the stage for the crisis of historicism which beset the twentieth-century and saw an explosion of new perspectives, such as the emergence of many post-modern fields of historical thought.

It should not be surprising that throughout the past a single certain appraisal of the value of studying history can be found, especially not by historians. While there have been many attempts to universalise the school and derive absolute truths about existence from the past – to fully develop history as a science – by thinkers such as Immanuel Kant, Karl Marx, or Leopold von Ranke, thinkers such as Giambattista Vico, Johann Herder, and Friedrich Nietzsche remind us of the centrality of the subject. Thus, history, the inquiry for answers began by Herodotus, seems to only yield greater questions. Despite this, historical thinking has remained a central aspect of the human condition, and thought about the past remains relevant to every generation, each with new answers to the titular question.

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¹²⁹ Nietzsche, *On the Use and Abuse of History*, (1874): 3.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 7.

¹³¹ Woolf, 193-4.

Meet The Committee!



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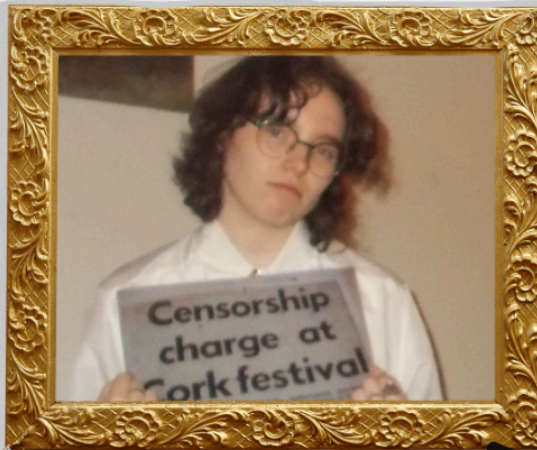


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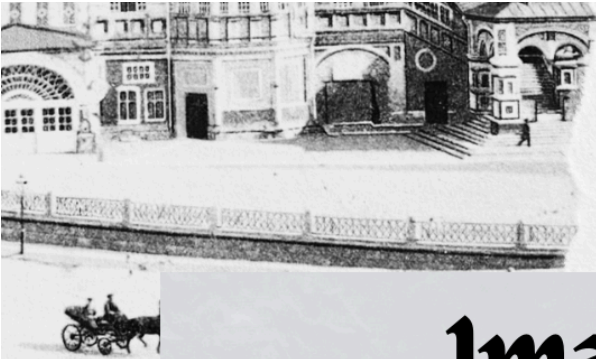


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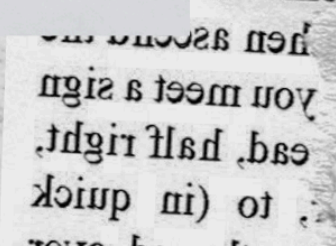
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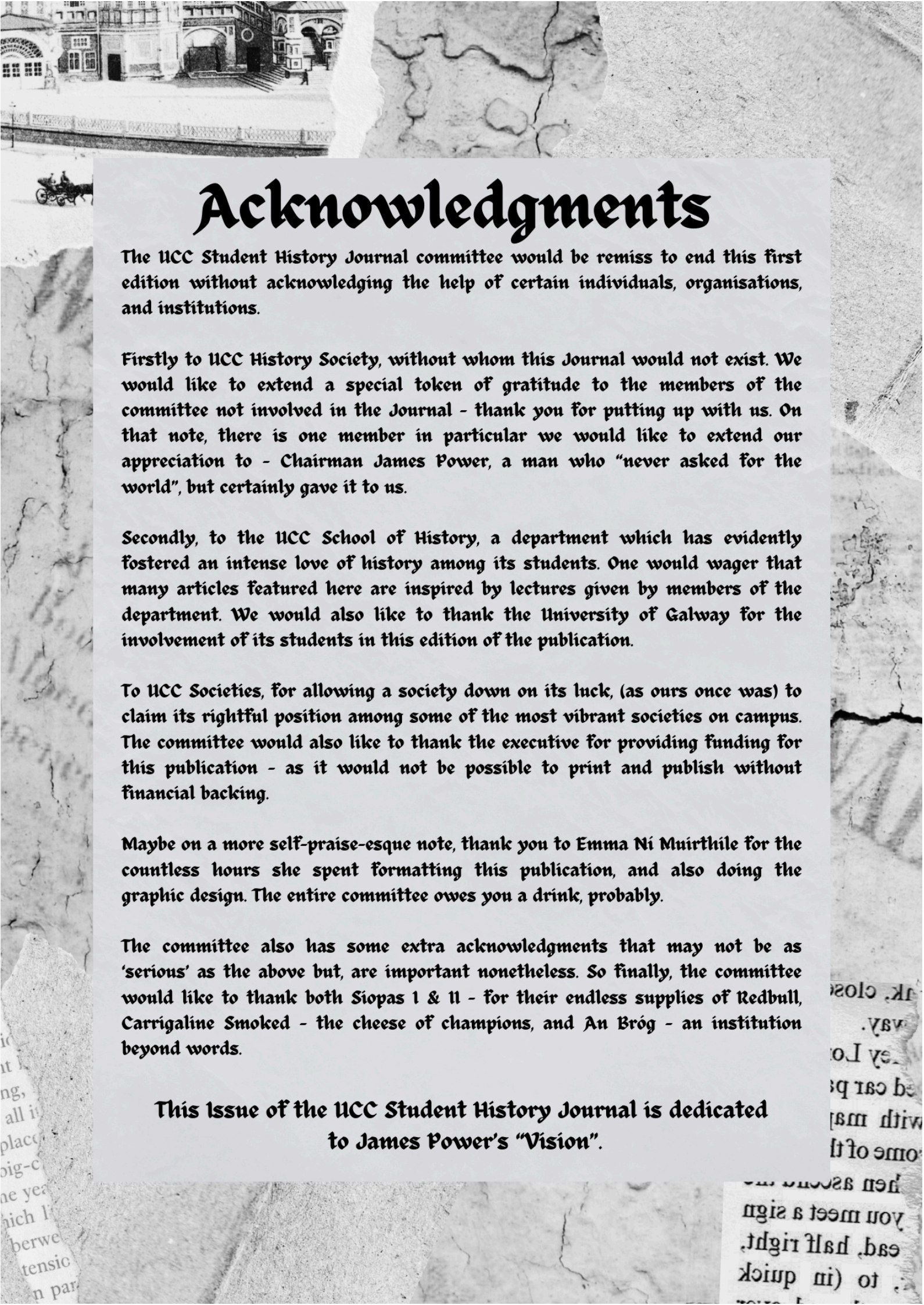
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Notes on Insignia:

- > Both the emblem for the UCC History Society and Her publication, as featured in this very issue were created by Rebecca Bourke.

Graphics:

- > All decorative graphics made using elements from Canva Pro.
- 



Acknowledgments

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Firstly to UCC History Society, without whom this Journal would not exist. We would like to extend a special token of gratitude to the members of the committee not involved in the Journal - thank you for putting up with us. On that note, there is one member in particular we would like to extend our appreciation to - Chairman James Power, a man who "never asked for the world", but certainly gave it to us.

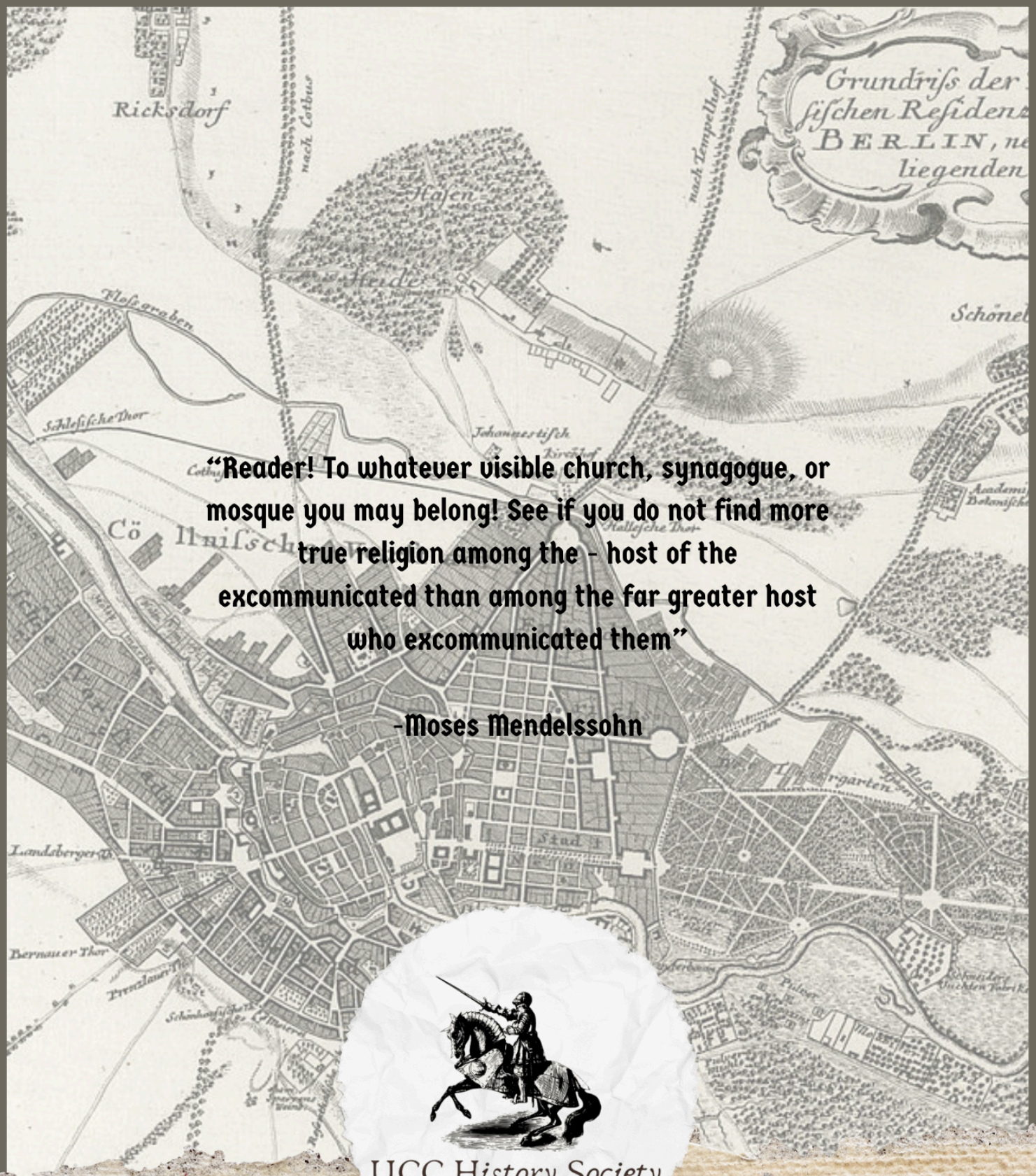
Secondly, to the UCC School of History, a department which has evidently fostered an intense love of history among its students. One would wager that many articles featured here are inspired by lectures given by members of the department. We would also like to thank the University of Galway for the involvement of its students in this edition of the publication.

To UCC Societies, for allowing a society down on its luck, (as ours once was) to claim its rightful position among some of the most vibrant societies on campus. The committee would also like to thank the executive for providing funding for this publication - as it would not be possible to print and publish without financial backing.

Maybe on a more self-praise-esque note, thank you to Emma Ní Muirthile for the countless hours she spent formatting this publication, and also doing the graphic design. The entire committee owes you a drink, probably.

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**This Issue of the UCC Student History Journal is dedicated
to James Power's "Vision".**



“Reader! To whatever visible church, synagogue, or mosque you may belong! See if you do not find more true religion among the - host of the excommunicated than among the far greater host who excommunicated them”

-Moses Mendelssohn

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