1848

1848
The Year the World Turned?

Edited by

Kay Boardman and Christine Kinealy

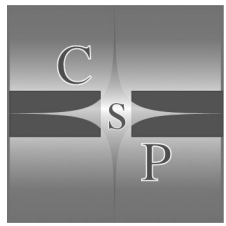

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Illustrations viii
Acknowledgements ix
Chronology xi

Foreword xvii
Terry Eagleton, University of Manchester

Introduction 1
Kay Boardman and *Christine Kinealy*, University of Central Lancashire

Part I: Questions of Political Authority and Justice

Chapter One 22
Spain and 1848: The Dog That Did Not Bark?
John Walton, University of Central Lancashire

Chapter Two 36
The Myth of the Demo-Soc Coalition: France in 1848
Charles P. Crouch, Georgia Southern University

Chapter Three 48
The 'Specials' and the Policing of Chartism in 1848
Roger Swift, University College, Chester

Chapter Four 60
Nicholas I and Russian Conservative Intellectuals: the Impact of the 1849 Repression on Danilevsky, Dostoevsky, and Katkov
Stephen M. Woodburn, Southwestern College, Kansas

Part II: Race, Ethnicity and Nationalism

Chapter Five 70
1848 and Jewish Emancipation in the Habsburg Empire
Ernst Wangermann, University of Salzburg

Chapter Six....83
Britain During the 1848 Revolutions and the Changing Features of 'Britishness'
Fabrice Bensimon, Université Paris 10, Nanterre

Chapter Seven....108
Literature, Finnish Nationalism and Fear of Revolution?
Irma Sulkunen, University of Tampere, Finland

Chapter Eight....120
The World Did Turn: The Ballarat 'Rebellion'
John Ireland, University of Melbourne

Part III: Gender and the Woman Question

Chapter Nine....130
Invisible Nationalists: Women and the 1848 Rising in Ireland
Christine Kinealy, University of Central Lancashire

Chapter Ten....146
Gender, Labour and Revolution in The *Ateliers des femmes:* Paris, 1848
Judith DeGroat, St. Lawrence University

Chapter Eleven....160
'An Escape, Not a Remedy': Emigration in Elizabeth Gaskell's *Mary Barton*
Emma Carroll, University of Birmingham

Chapter Twelve....173
1848: Queen Victoria and the *Cabinet d'Horreurs*
Yvonne M. Ward, La Trobe University, Melbourne

Part IV: Culture in Transition

Chapter Thirteen....190
An Image of 1848: Reportage, Caricature and Kenny Meadows's 'Dram-Drinker'
Brian Maidment, University of Salford

Chapter Fourteen 210
'Like a Wail from the Tomb, /But of World-Waking Power': James Clarence Mangan's 'A Vision: A.D. 1848', the Great Famine and the Young Ireland Rising
Melissa Fegan, University College, Chester

Chapter Fifteen 225
The Case of the Missing Chartist: How the Year of Revolutions was Presented to Readers of *The Illustrated London News*
Annemarie McAllister, University of Central Lancashire

Chapter Sixteen 243
A Glorious Revolution in British Art?
Matthew C. Potter, University of Plymouth

Contributors 257

Index 262

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Chapter Six

Fig. 1. 'Heroes of the Revolution' (1), from *The Man in the Moon* Vol. 3 (16 April 1848), 188.
Fig. 2. 'Heroes of the Revolution' (2), from *The Man in the Moon* Vol. 3 (16 April 1848), 193.
Fig. 3. 'Heroes of the Revolution' (3), from *The Man in the Moon* Vol. 3 (16 April 1848), 199.
Fig. 4. 'Paris Fashions', from *The Man in the Moon* Vol. 3 (17 May 1848), 277.
Fig. 5. 'The Great Barricade', from *The Illustrated London News* (1 July 1848), 415.
Fig. 6. 'Revolution in Britain', from *Le Charivari* (19 April 1848).

Chapter Thirteen

Fig. 1. Kenny Meadows, 'The Dram-Drinker' from the *Illustrated London News* XII, 298.
Fig. 2. Anon. Title page to vol. XII of the *Illustrated London News*.
Fig. 3. Kenny Meadows, 'A Happy New Year' from the *Illustrated London News* XI, 429.
Fig. 4. Hablot K. Browne ['Phiz'], 'Pantomime Night' from the *Illustrated London News* XII, 8.
Fig. 5. Kenny Meadows, Frontispiece to Vol. 2 of *Heads of the People* (Edward Tyas 1841).
Fig. 6. Kenny Meadows, 'The Jew Boy' from the *Illuminated Magazine* Vol. 1 (1843), 80.

Chapter Fifteen

Fig. 1. *Illustrated London News*, 22 April 1848, Front page.
Fig. 2. *Illustrated London News,* 15 April 1848, Front page.
Fig. 3. *Illustrated London News*, 15 April 1848, 242.
Fig. 4. *Illustrated London News,* 15 April 1848, 243.
Fig. 5. *Illustrated London News*, 17 June 1848, 391.
Fig. 6. *Illustrated London News*, 17 June 1848, 391.

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This book arose out of a conference held at the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) in Preston in the summer of 2005, entitled '1848: The Year the World Turned?' Its origins lay in informal conversations between two colleagues in the newly-created Department of Humanities (Kay Boardman and Christine Kinealy, lecturers in English Literature and History respectively), who discovered a mutual interest in the events of 1848, albeit from different perspectives. The enthusiastic response to the Call for Papers demonstrated that they were not the only people to be fascinated by the year of revolutions, with abstracts being received from as far away as Australia, and drawn from a wide range of disciplines. Due to space restraints, only a small portion of the papers that were delivered at the Conference appear in this book. However, this publication is dedicated to all the people who spoke at the Conference and who helped to make it such enjoyable occasion.

The editors would like to thank colleagues in the Department of Humanities, the conference office, student helpers and early supporters within UCLan. These include John Joughin, Dean of the Faculty of Cultural, Legal and Social Studies, who provided both financial and practical support, which ensured that the abstract idea of hosting an inter-disciplinary, international conference on the year of revolutions became a reality. Aidan Turner-Bishop, former librarian at UCLan and an expert on local history, led a walking tour of Preston that not only linked the city with the events of 1848, but made Preston pulsate with the depths of his knowledge and the vibrancy of his presentation. A special thank you should go to our keynote speakers who travelled from many parts of the world, reinforcing the idea that the impact and legacy of the 1848 revolutions were truly international. The enthusiasm and energy of graduate students at Drew University in the USA, to a course offered on this theme early in 2007, reinforced the editors' conviction that the fascination with the events of this year is widespread, and not just confined to Europe. James Enver, Paul Neill, Barry Quest and Francine Sagar read and commented on parts of the text, although mistakes and omissions are the responsibility of the authors and editors. Ciarán Luke (aged 15) provided the necessary technical support, and offered refreshments when the editors were flagging.

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CHRONOLOGY

1789	Fall of the Bastille in Paris
1798	United Irishmen uprising in Ireland brutally suppressed
1800	Act of Union between Great Britain and Ireland
1806	Wars for South American independence commence
1812	Spanish Constitution: Sicilian Constitution introduced
1814	Treaty of Paris
	Norwegian Democratic Constitution
	Restoration of monarchy in France
1815	Battle of Waterloo
	Congress of Vienna redraws the political map of Europe
1816-20	Constitutions in Nassau, Bavaria, Baden, Wurtemberg, Hesse-Darmstadt
1819	Peterloo 'massacre' in Manchester, followed by introduction of repressive Six Acts
1820	Military coup in Spain and restoration of 1812 Constitution
	Revolts in Naples, Sicily and Piedmont
	Greek revolt against Ottoman Empire led by Ali Pasha
1822	Portugal adopts constitution similar to Spanish one
1823	Daniel O'Connell founds Catholic Association in Ireland
1825	Resurrection of Diet in Hungary
	Uprising in Russia by Decembrists is brutally crushed
1826	Foundation of Matica Srpska
1829	Catholic Emancipation is granted in United Kingdom
	Portuguese Civil War
1830	Revolt at Brussels against rule by Kingdom of the Netherlands
	Polish insurrection against the Russians
	Revolts in Swiss cantons
	July Revolution in France results in deposition of Charles X
	Constitutions provided in Saxony, Brunswick and Hesse-Cassel
1831	Mazzini founds Young Italy
	Unrest in Modena, Parma and the Papal States, resulting in Austrian repression
	Workers' insurrection in Lyons
	Russia gives constitutions to Moldavia and Valachia
1832	Parliamentary Reform Act passed in UK
1833	Slavery abolished in British Empire

Attempted putsch against Diet in Frankfurt
1834 Zollverein (customs union) created between German states
Mazzini founds Young Europe at Basle
Start of Carlist War in Spain (until 1839)
1835 Foundation of *Croat Gazette*
1836 Foundation of Flemish Society
Frantisek Palacky publishes *The History of Bohemia.*
1837 Protests against the suspension of the Hanoverian constitution result in the Suspension of 7 professors, including the Grimm brothers.
1838 Belgian state recognised by Netherlands
1839 Louis Blanc published *Organisation of Labour*
First Chartist petition in Britain
1840 World Anti-Slavery convention held in London, women were not allowed to participate
Daniel O'Connell founds Loyal National Repeal Association in Ireland
Opium Wars in China
1842 Second Chartist petition
The *Nation* is founded in Dublin
1843 Daniel O'Connell suffers setback at Clontarf
1844 Balbo publishes *Speranze d'Italia*
Frederich Engels publishes in German *The Condition of the English Working Class*
1845 Croat made the official language of the Zabreb Diet
Foundation of the *Prague Gazette* and the *Slovak Gazette*
Appearance of mysterious potato blight in Europe, although it had most serious consequences in Ireland
1846 Feb-rising in Cracow, Poland, brutally suppressed by Austria and Russia
Abolition of Corn Laws in UK
Pius IX becomes Pope and declares a political amnesty
Subsistence crisis in many parts of Europe
1847 Economic downswing in Europe
Irish Confederation founded in Ireland
Daniel O'Connell dies in Genoa
Austria occupies Ferrara in Papal States
Banquets for parliamentary reform in France
Liberal demonstration in Baden
Federation of Communists founded in Cologne
Civil war in Switzerland

1848

January	Irish Confederation splits: cigar riots in Milan: insurrection in Palermo: new constitution incorporating the Duchies into Denmark
February	Constitution granted at Naples: Lombardy under siege: proposal in Baden Chamber for German parliament: Constitution granted at Florence
21 February	Publication of *Communist Manifesto*
24 February	Revolution in Paris that leads to the abdication of Louis-Philippe and the proclamation of a republic
27 February	Popular assembly declared in Baden
1 March	Revolution in Neuchatel, Switzerland Riots in various German states
2 March	Decree in Paris for reduction of the working day
3 March	Demands made by Hungarian Diet
5 March	Unrest in German states; disturbances in Glasgow
7 March	Lamartine's Manifesto to Europe
11 March	Assembly in Prague
12 March	Revolt in Vienna Lowering of property qualification in Belgium
13 March	Metternich flees from Vienna
14 March	Constitution announced in Rome Rioting in Berlin
17 March	Hungarian Diet declares Hungary to be a separate state
18 March	Frederick William of Prussia promises reform
22 March	John Mitchel, William Smith O'Brien and Thomas Meagher arrested in Ireland for nationalist activities
23 March	Constituent Assembly elected in France Piedmont declares war against the Habsburgs
10 April	Chartist demonstration in London
11 April	Sanction of Hungarian constitutional laws
12 April	Start of republican insurrection at Baden
16 April	Unsuccessful demonstration for postponement of elections
23 April	Far left lose ground in elections for Constituent Assembly
29 April	Pope Pius IX condemns the struggle for Italian unification
7 May	Riot in Madrid
9 May	Commission of Executive Power appointed in France

13 May	Autonomy of Serbian Voivodina
	Finnish national anthem first sang in public
15 May	Riot in Naples and beginning of backlash
	Viennese riot
	Rally by Rumanians in Transylvania at Blaj
18 May	Opening of Frankfurt Parliament
22 May	Opening of Prussian National Assembly
25-26 May	Trial of John Mitchel by 'packed' jury; he is found guilty and sentenced to 14 years transportation
30 May	Proclamation banning meetings and demonstrations in London
2 June	Opening of Congress of Prague
4-11 June	Arrest of Chartist leaders in Britain, including Ernest Jones
10 June	Vienna ratifies the kingdom of Hungary and Jelacic dismissed
12 June	Prague riot end Czech movement
14 June	First Democratic Congress meets in Frankfurt
15 June	Workers' riot in Berlin
23-26 June	Workers' insurrection in Paris; Bishop Affré killed
24 June	In France, General Cavaignac appointed Chief Executive with task of crushing uprising
28 June	Dissolution of Prague Congress
29 June	Archbishop John elected *Reichsverweser* in Frankfurt
3 July	Venice pledges allegiance to Charles Albert, King of Sardinia
8 July	Arrest of editors of radical newspapers in Ireland
12 July	Abolition of Germanic Diet
15 July-18 Aug.	Congress of Artisans at Frankfurt
20 July-20 Sept.	Congress of Guild Members at Frankfurt
22 July	Opening of Constituent Assembly in Vienna
23 July	Radetzky defeats Piedmont at Custozza: Milan re-occupied
24 July	Frankfurt Parliament declares Poznania to be part of *Reich*
25 July	Defeat of King Charles Albert at Custozza by Austrian troops
	Habeas Corpus suspended in Ireland
27-29 July	Insurrection in Ireland easily defeated
9 August	Austro-Sardinian armistice
12 August	Manin assumes power in Venice
16 August	*Junkerparliament* established in Berlin
23 August	Workers' insurrection in Vienna
	Congress of Workers' Associations founded in Berlin

26 August	Malmo armistice between Prussia and Denmark undermines Frankfurt Parliament and annexes Schleswig-Holstein to latter
1 September	Ferdinand II mounts an expedition against Sardinia
11 September	Jelacic, who has been reinstated, attacks Hungary
12 September	Swiss constitution introduced
16 September	Frankfurt Parliament reluctantly accepts Malmo armistice
18 September	Republican riot in Frankfurt
21 September	The Baden Republic protests against Malmo treaty resulting in arrest of its leader, Gustav Struve
28 September	Assassination of General Lamberg in Pest
2 October	Magyar victory in Hungary
6 October	Assassination of Latour, the Minister of War, by a mob
26 October	Commencement of second Democrats' Congress in Berlin
31 October	Demonstration in Berlin in favour of Vienna revolution
9 November	Execution of Robert Blum, a radical member of the Frankfurt Parliament, in Vienna
15 November	Rising in Rome
22 November	Austrian *Reichstag* reopened
25 November	Pope Pius IX flees to Gaeta
2 December	Abdication of Ferdinand I
5 December	Dissolution of the Prussian National Assembly
10 December	Louis Napoleon elected President of the French Republic

1849

5 January	General Windischgratz occupies Pest on behalf of Austria
23 January	Prussia offers to play a leading role in German states
26 January	Defeat of Magyars at Kapolna
2 February	Successful Magyar counter-offensive commences
8 February	Proclamation of Tuscan Republic
9 February	Proclamation of Roman Republic by Mazzini
15 February	'Great German' group formed in Frankfurt
17 February	'Little German' group formed in Frankfurt
7 March	Dissolution of Reichstag at Kremsier
9 March	Austria proposes a Central European Federation

14 March	Austria abolishes seigniorial dues
20 March	King Charles Albert attacks Austria and is defeated and abdicates
23 March	Former authorities are restored in Parma, Modena and Florence
28 March	Frederick William IV is elected 'Emperor of the Germans'
3 April	Frederick William IV refuses crown of united Germany
5 April	Austria recalls its deputies from Frankfurt Parliament
14 April	Proclamation of Hungarian independence
25 April	King of Wurtemberg accepts constitution of the *Reich* King of Hanover dismisses his Chamber
28 April	Frederick William refuses the Imperial Crown of Germany
1 May	Peoples' Assembly at Palatinate Insurrection at Neustadt
3 May	Republican rising at Dresden
9 May	Riot at Elberfeld
10 May	Resignation of von Gagern at Frankfurt
11 May	End of Sicilian revolution
12 May	Commencement of rising in Baden
13 May	Conservatives successful in elections in France
14 May	Frederick William recalls delegates from Frankfurt parliament
18 May	Alliance between Palatine and Baden insurgents
30 May	The parliament leaves Frankfurt
4 June	Hungarian government, led by Kossuth, returns to Pest
13 June	Anti-parliamentary riot in Paris
18 June	The Wurtemberg government drives out the parliament in Stuttgart
1 July	Rome capitulates to conservative forces, helped by France
3 July	French troops occupy Rome
6 July	Austro-Sardinian peace treaty
13 August	Hungarian forces capitulate to Russia
22 August	Venice recaptured by conservative forces
23 August	Venice surrenders

FOREWORD

TERRY EAGLETON

Certain historical dates radiate a kind of magical aura, distilling a whole complex epoch in a single pregnant signifier. Such dates – 1688, 1789, 1848, 1917, 1968 – act like a kind of symbolic coding, speaking like all symbols of a great deal more than themselves, communicating a whole capacious world of meaning in the most surreally abbreviated of forms. They have something of the mysterious power of Walter Benjamin's so-called dialectical images, which bring time to a sudden *nunc stans* or dramatic point of arrest, making the dead live again to tell their tragic tale to those – ourselves – who are their only possible redeemers. For only by our own political actions in the present can we complete the emancipation for which the dead struggled in vain, and in doing so, lend their narrative retrospectively a new, more affirmative meaning, shifting them from the register of tragedy to that of hope.

William Wordsworth speaks of certain precious 'spots of time' in his own spiritual evolution, a phrase which combines the spatial and the temporal in the best postmodern fashion. These for Wordsworth are moments of rupture and revelation, associated often enough with death, trauma and transformation. It is just that Wordsworth's poetry, in traditional English style, works excessively hard to persuade the reader that such moments of crisis and disruption are in truth nothing of the kind – that the imagination can naturalise and domesticate them, assimilating them in retrospect to an organic continuity. The poet is always at his least convincing when he attempts to perpetrate this solemn con-trick, constrained as he is to deny the most vitally constitutive events of his own inner biography. To peer into these particular abysses would be to call into question the coherence and integrity of the writing subject himself, who would risk being exposed as far less monumentally unified and far more anxious than he would wish to present himself. So it is that the mighty flow of the Wordsworthian iambic pentameter, with its majestic *enjambements*, intricately cohesive syntax and apparently seamless flow of reflection, seeks to convince us that he is always, perpetually and immutably, as he was - that boy who thrilled mindlessly to the animal pleasures of Nature, and the Lakeside poet who is now recording those delights from a sagacious distance, share an unfractured identity, even as the poetry itself betrays the gulf which looms up between them.

Something rather similar, one might claim, happens in the course of bourgeois revolutions. For the middle classes above all require stable, relatively tranquil conditions in which to pursue their prosaic ends of amassing as much capital as possible; and the fact that most middle-class civilisations, like any other type of social order, were brought into being by violence, invasion, usurpation, revolution, genocide or occupation then poses a particular embarrassment to this stolid, God-fearing, peace-loving bunch of honest burghers - men and women of the kind who have now almost vanished from the earth but who are to be found, for example, in the pages of the early Thomas Mann. Once the revolution has been achieved, then, and the violence which fuelled it has been sublimated into the rather more socially acceptable function of preserving law and order, middle-class societies regularly engage in the process of re-writing their past in ways that might ratify the curious transition they have undergone, often in a mere handful of decades, from brigands to bankers, *sans culottes* to stockbrokers. As erstwhile revolutionaries get their feet under ministerial desks, a degree of historical explanation would seem in order; and this mode of historical explanation is commonly known as revisionism, a practice which has been bizarrely portrayed by one woefully misguided practitioner of Irish studies as a wilful and gleeful debunking of tradition on the part of those who wish to cause others pain. The implication here, of course, is that non-revisionists are paranoid enough to imagine that all revisionists are professional sadists. On the contrary, such recasting of the historical narrative has nothing to do with malice, and everything to do with the fact that the middle class, whether of a nationalist stripe or not, is at once an inherently revolutionary formation (the most revolutionary in history, indeed, as Marx, one of their greatest champions, admiringly points out) and a thoroughly anti-revolutionary one. If it is to flourish, it must necessarily disown the process by which it came to power, consigning it summarily to historical oblivion, or at least rewriting the historical narrative in retrospect, *à la* Wordsworth, to disavow its more traumatising and unpalatable elements.

You may, for example, suggest that the revolution was not really a revolution at all, like a number of commentators on the English Civil War of 1688, or some rather infamous French historians of 1789; or that it was indeed a revolution, but one that was not really necessary, the view of some Unionist or right-wing chroniclers of 1916; or that it can perhaps be retrospectively justified by what it has set in place, but only at the cost of recognising that its values are now a positive obstacle to social progress rather than the very dynamic of it. At a certain historical point, in brief, the middle classes reach what in the current cliché is called a tipping point, where they must acknowledge that the original pre-conditions of their flourishing, once they have indeed begun to thrive, have now become not only redundant but actively counterproductive.

This poses a particular problem for the whole host of post-colonial nations, Ireland having been the first among them in the twentieth century, who arrive belatedly upon a global scene carved up among nation-states which, like Britain, had their revolutions so long ago, or had them in such a mediated, oblique and compromised form, that they have long since forgotten that they are the children of a revolution at all, and are all the more successful on account of such collective amnesia. Many of the most effective revolutions seek to erase themselves from memory; for if you could overturn the social order in the past, then you must inevitably serve as a model to the political revolutionaries of the present, which is the very last thing you want to be. This lamentable situation, however, is greatly compounded when your revolution is still recent enough to be within living memory, like those of most post-colonial regimes today, or only just out of memory, as in the case of Ireland. Living down this shameful heritage of hot-headedness, in order to prove yourself a stolid, reputable member of a civilised community of transnational corporations, is then all the harder.

So it is that, among the historians and commentators of such relatively new-fangled nation-states, one can generally find those apparently in the grip of a peculiar self-loathing – those hard-boiled writers who seize gleefully upon any opportunity to denigrate their own state or people or history of affliction, and who in their pathological overreaction to such realities are thus (did they but know it) simply the flipside of the old bellicose chauvinist brigade. Those who in the trite old clichés of so-called modernisation wish to draw a line in the sand of history and move ever forwards and upwards are secretly in thrall to the nationalist nostalgia for which history is to be reified rather than revised. They are, in truth, no more than their inverted mirror-image.

Strung out between nostalgia and amnesia, a postmodern era has lost sight almost entirely of the third possibility, which socialists have always sought to keep open: reaching back to the precious resources of historical tradition in order to transform the present. For there are, of course, radical, life-yielding traditions as well as reactionary, death-dealing ones, just as there are oppressive forms of modernity along with emancipatory ones. This is one reason why Marxists, who are revolutionaries yet who (as Leon Trotsky remarked) have always lived in tradition, find the petty-bourgeois-nationalist versus middle-class-revisionist debate of only limited interest. In one sense (though by no means in all), the contention reflects little more than a conflict between an earlier and a later phase of middle-class ideology.

One version of that conflict has taken the form of a debate between nationalists and internationalists. There are, so the theory goes, those morbidly inward-looking souls who gaze eternally at their own national navels; and there are those bright-eyed, progressive creatures who raise their eyes from their own

bellies and peer hopefully outward to the community of nations in all its prodigal diversity, where their own unhealthily introverted *Volk* might alone assume their rightful place. Among other things, this glib antithesis rather conveniently overlooks the fact that nationalism has not been for the most part simply a national affair. As Perry Anderson has observed, there is no more international phenomenon. But it is not just that nationalism has been a global political current, from Algeria to Afghanistan. It is also that nationalists have generally sought to strike up comradely relations across national frontiers, and nineteenth-century Irish nationalism, with its manifold affinities to Egypt, India, Afghanistan, South Africa and a range of other, similarly struggling nations, proved no exception.

This, indeed, is what is so curious about the date 1848. For it signals, of course, a number of national or nationalist insurgencies; yet it also indicates in its European sweep that these occurred on an international scale. To this extent, it helps to dismantle any too-easy opposition between the national and the global, as several of the essays in this rich, wide-ranging volume would indicate. There is, to be sure, something rather embarrassing for historians about the fact that so many distinct uprisings broke out in different places at the same time. Does this not smack a little too suspiciously of iron laws of history, of secret compacts between apparently discrete phenomena, even (dare one breathe the words?) of a kind of Providence or *Zeitgeist*?

We do not, after all, want to wallow in some kind of vulgar Marxism here – though one must confess that Irish literary history makes it very hard to avoid. It is deeply distressing to us unfathomably sophisticated leftists, who would not dream for a moment of asserting some crudely direct relation between material history and cultural artefacts, that Ireland's national poet, Thomas Moore, emerged at just the same time as the United Irish movement; that the first significant Catholic novelists of the early nineteenth century took up their pens as the hour of Catholic Emancipation struck; that Oscar Wilde declined and expired at the very moment of the demise of his social class; that Joyce published his *Portrait* in the same year as the Easter Rising, and *Ulysses* in the first year of the Free State; and that the Northern poets burst upon the scene just as the Troubles were getting under way. One would naturally prefer that none of this was so – that Irish history would manifest rather less mechanistic relations between base and superstructure, of the kind that provide comfort to vulgar Marxists everywhere. History, one must confess, occasionally gets things grotesquely wrong.

Liberal and conservative commentators generally have two reactions to revolutions. If they are successful, they denounce them as barbaric; if they fail, they jeer at them as farcical. Ireland in 1848 has not been innocent of the latter

treatment. It is a mark of the power and erudition of this collection that it will make such facile responses so much more difficult.

INTRODUCTION

KAY BOARDMAN AND CHRISTINE KINEALY

Terry Eagleton's erudite and far-ranging Foreword reminds us of the intense relationship between culture and politics in the mid-nineteenth century. Eschewing the traditional view, however, he demonstrates the contribution of what is often regarded as a peripheral region in the historiography of 1848, Ireland. By doing so, he provides a reminder of how extensive the debate and desire for change was in this exceptional year. Did the world turn, however, is a question that continues to engage, challenge and divide scholars. As Eagleton suggests, there are few dates that enjoy universal recognition or significance. Mostly they are associated with individual countries (1066 in England; 1690 in Ireland; France in 1789; Russia in 1917). An exception though is 1848, which is widely remembered as the 'Year of Revolutions', with any further explanation or specific geographic location being unnecessary. Yet, an on-going debate within the large historiography of this time is, can any of the upheavals that reverberated throughout Europe during this year correctly be described as a revolution? What really changed? Regardless of the conclusions reached, the appellation remains. Rightly so, because the political events that took place in Europe in that year had far-reaching consequences, both spatially and temporally. However, by focussing almost exclusively on the political impact of the revolutions (or non-revolutions?) that took place in 1848, other occurrences of significance (or even of revolutionary importance) have sometimes been over-looked or marginalised. Moreover, while Europe remained at the centre of the turbulence, the reverberations of 1848 extended far beyond the core regions associated with revolution, with its impact being felt not only in Ireland, as Eagleton reminds us, but also in Finland, Spain, Russia and Britain (countries usually omitted from general histories), and even much further afield.

When does the Year of Revolutions truly begin and end? Although the revolutionary calendar commenced in Sicily at the beginning of 1848, this rising had little impact outside its own immediate borders. It was the revolution in France in February, that ousted King Louis Philippe and resulted in the proclamation of a republic, which unleashed revolutionary feelings in Europe. Conservatives in Europe looked on nervously, remembering the far-reaching consequences of the revolution in 1789. The repercussions were swift. Within a few weeks, the centres of two of the most repressive states in Europe, the

Habsburg Empire and Prussia, had been challenged. On 12 March, there was an uprising in Vienna and, the next day, Prince Klemens von Metternich resigned and fled to London; a favourite destination for deposed despots. His departure was immensely symbolic: he was one of the architects of the Settlement of 1814-15 and therefore indelibly associated with repression and maintaining the status quo. Multiple insurrections and revolts took place elsewhere. The Ancien Régime in Europe appeared to be on the verge of collapse. Yet, within a year, the old order had regrouped and reasserted itself. Had anything changed?

Politics and Cultural Nationalism

The early years of the nineteenth century were dominated by wars with France, which only ended with Napoleon's second and final exile in 1815. While the Settlement of 1814-15 is credited with keeping peace in Europe until 1848, the intervening years were ones of political change and confrontations, with challenges to the Settlement occurring as far apart as Poland and Greece. The revolutions of 1830, especially those in Belgium and France, provided a foretaste of the liberal and nationalist demands that were to manifest themselves throughout Europe in 1848. Even the United Kingdom, which was regarded as having one of the most liberal parliamentary systems in Europe, experienced political turmoil, as did Russia, which was at the other end of the Continent and of the political spectrum. They both coped by using overt and covert repression. And, as some of the chapters in this book illustrate, the demise of the Chartist movement in 1848 was, for the British government, a massive propaganda victory.

Apart from political developments, 1848 was the result of the coming together of a number of influential ideologies and beliefs, in particular, those of nationalism and Romanticism. The Romantic Movement had roots in Germany in the late eighteenth century, but it quickly spread throughout Europe and even beyond. The French Revolution, based on the idea of the rights of the individual, gave a political expression to Romanticism and inspired the first generation of English Romantics, notably the poets William Blake, Samuel Taylor Coleridge and William Wordsworth, with the second generation, Lord Byron, Percy Bysshe Shelley and John Keats following suit. On the Continent, however, Romanticism frequently combined with political radicalism and 'became the instigator of nationalism in Germany, Italy and Spain' (Ackroyd 1-2). Consequently, in the early decades of the nineteenth century, 'Against a landscape of bloody and violent revolution, social upheaval and economic and political change, the seeds of Romanticism sprouted and flourished' (Ackroyd 1-2). Increasingly, culture and politics became intertwined as the demand for national independence sought to demonstrate there was a historical basis for

nationhood, however spurious and invented the claims sometimes were (Anderson 3-4). In this regard, writers and poets played an important part in providing an outlet for, and giving coherence to, national consciousness. One of the results of the spread of the Romantic Movement, was the creation of an intense relationship between literature, culture, history and politics, which was at its zenith by the 1840s; this diffusion was helped by the increase in literacy and the expansion in newspapers and other printed media. In the United Kingdom, the Condition of England question, for Thomas Carlyle and other social commentators, became part of a complex debate about the contradictions between the accumulation of great capital set against the most abject poverty the country had ever seen. A whole gamut of writers across Europe (and beyond) were stirred to engage with the anxieties created by the burgeoning relationships between cultural, social and political life. Consequently, love of country, the rights of the individuals, interest in the past, and hatred of the dehumanization caused by new modes of production fused together, and in the process re-energised both politics and popular culture.

Cultural nationalism was particularly evident in Europe in the years prior to 1848. It was expressed through language, history, music, art and literature, although in a variety of ways, often reflecting the recent politics of the country in which it was located. In Finland, for example, which had gained limited political independence at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the use of the vernacular language was crucial in helping to create a sense of national identity in the years preceding 1848. In contrast, in Poland and Ireland, two countries that had recently lost their political independence (Ireland as a result of the 1800 Act of Union, while Poland had been divided up between Austria, Prussia and Russia as part of the post-Napoleonic Settlement) language was of less importance in the struggle for national identity and political independence. In Poland, cultural nationalism found a champion in the young composer Frédéric Chopin, notably in his composition, *Polonaises*. A political revolt in the Austrian part of Poland in 1846, led by the Polish Democratic Society, was so brutally put down that Polish involvement in 1848 was bound to be minimal. Nonetheless, the Cracow revolt of 1846 was regarded as inspirational to European radicals, including Frederick Engels and Karl Marx (Engels). In Ireland, literature played its part in the fusion of culture and politics, notably through the columns of the *Nation* newspaper, which sought to educate the Irish people in their history and culture. A small, unsuccessful uprising took place there, in County Tipperary in July 1848, which was easily squashed by the local constabulary. However, its swift defeat belied the support for and influence of Irish nationalism. Overall, both countries failed to achieve any change in their political situation, but they challenged the complacency of

their respective rulers and brought the governments of the United Kingdom and Russia into the revolutionary orbit in 1846-1848.

Artists associated with 1848 included historians, poets, writers and composers, including Victor Hugo, Alphonse de Lamartine and George Sand in France, Cesare Balbo in Italy, the Grimm Brothers in Hanover, Ferdinand Freiligrath in Germany, Frantisek Palacky in Prague, Frédéric Chopin in Poland, Hans Christian Anderson in Denmark, John Mitchel and 'Speranza' in Ireland, Fyodor Dostoyevsky in Russia, Arthur Hugh Clough, Elizabeth Gaskell and Charles Dickens in England. In their works, they allied their literary and creative talents with disillusionment at the consequences of industrialisation and the existing political systems. Their writings were fuelled also by a belief that political change was necessary and inevitable. Thus, in *Mary Barton,* Elizabeth Gaskell wrote of the conflict between 'masters and men' in the industrial north of England. The book first appeared in 1848, but it had been written a year earlier and, in the Preface, Gaskell explained:

> I know nothing of Political Economy or the theories of trade … To myself the idea of the state of feeling among too many of the factory people in Manchester, and which I endeavoured to represent in this tale (completed above a year ago) has received some confirmation from the events which have recently occurred among a similar class on the Continent (Preface 38).

In 1848 also, Karl Marx's *Manifesto of the Communist Party* was published in which he, more unequivocally than Gaskell, came to a similar conclusion, arguing that a class conflict between masters and men, or as he referred to them, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, was inevitable. Like *Mary Barton,* the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* was written in 1847. It was published on 21 February 1848, three days before Louis Philippe abdicated, the event that triggered the wave of revolutionary fervour. The tract first appeared in German, although the aim was for it to be translated into English, French, Italian, Flemish and Danish. It was ground-breaking in its demand that 'workers of the world unite' and therefore it seemed to be at odds with the nationalism of many other writers of that period. In 1848 and in his subsequent writings, Marx failed to adequately factor nationalism into his political formulations (Anderson 3). In the succeeding decades, however, socialism would join nationalism as a major force in world politics.

Varieties of Revolution

The abdication of Louis Philippe of France on 24 February signified the real beginning of the Year of Revolutions. The following day, a provisional government was announced and the Second Republic proclaimed on 26

February. On 27 February, a National Workshops Scheme was introduced, which recognised the principles of the right to work and thus was one of the most radical measures to emerge during the revolutionary cycle. Just as importantly, the French king's departure provided the signal for a wave of protests, uprisings and revolts to commence in Europe, initially in Vienna, Berlin, Piedmont and Pest, but spreading far beyond these localities. From Ireland to Russia, no part of Europe was untouched by the revolutionary tidal wave. For the most part, however, these risings and those that followed tended to be local, sporadic and unco-ordinated. The speed with which the protests occurred took many governments and rulers by surprise and their initial reaction was to grant concessions rather than resist the demands of the protestors. Consequently, the early stages of the 1848 revolutions resulted in relatively little bloodshed or loss of life, or even damage to property.

For the most part, the 1848 revolutions developed along national lines with little international co-operation, despite the early outpouring of approval for the February Revolution in France. On 7 March, the most prominent minister in the new government, Lamartine, raised hopes that, as had been the case in 1789, France would give support to other nations seeking political change with the announcement of his *Manifesto to Europe.* In it, he stated that France would not respect the borders created in 1815 and would protect people whose aspirations were denied by their governments. This pronouncement alarmed conservatives throughout Europe, but Lord Palmerston in Britain, who had close contacts with the new French government, was more sanguine that France would not intervene in the affairs of any other nation. However, in the spring of 1848, numerous radical delegations made their way to Paris to meet the French government. The conservatives need not have worried as the new French government had already been warned by the British ambassador not to interfere in the affairs of other nations, most especially those of Ireland (Comité). Just as importantly, the *Manifesto* was a piece of 'contrived ambiguity' with Lamartine never intending to take any action that could risk France being engaged in a war (Cassells 58). Consequently, although many revolutionaries looked to France for inspiration and guidance, unlike in the first French Revolution, the French Provisional Government deliberately played no part in the politics of other countries. The British government even threatened to declare war if France gave support to Irish nationalist demands (Lord Clarendon to Lord Grey, Clarendon Papers, Bodleian Library, 8 April 1848).

Nationalism and liberalism were the two dominant ideological currents in 1848, with few demands being made for universal male suffrage. Yet democratic and even socialist aspirations had taken root in Europe prior to 1848 and did emerge sporadically, although their influence was felt later in the century. The aims of the 1848 revolutions differed, although the most common

demands related to political change, that is, for more representative, liberal, government, for unification, and for national self-determination. In both Italy and Germany, all three demands were made, although the approaches of the insurgents were very different, while for Ireland, independence was the key aim. For Germany and Italy, political autonomy required national unification, something that was not achieved in 1848. For the German states in particular, the early stages of the revolution appeared promising, with William IV of Prussia agreeing to reforms as early as 18 March. This was followed by the creation of a German parliament at Frankfurt, with representatives from each of the states, including the economically and politically powerful Prussia. However, the refusal of Frederick William IV of Prussia to accept the imperial crown offered by the parliament in April 1849, marked a turning point in the German revolution, ultimately leading to the demise of that body only a year after it had been created.

For Ireland, political independence required that the 1800 Act of Union be overturned; a concession that the British government believed would threaten the sanctity of their empire. Hence, one of the largest and most organised national movements in Europe was ignobly and easily defeated, with the loss of only two lives, in an uprising that had lasted approximately forty-eight hours. The determination of the British state not to make any concessions to either the British Chartists or the Irish nationalists was in marked contrast to the reaction of other European governments, whose initial response was to back down and grant concessions. The Finnish experience was different again. The authorities – both in Finland and Russia - were anxious to contain the spread of radical ideas, especially amongst students. They therefore encouraged the writing of a national anthem by the moderate nationalist, Johan Ludvig Runeberg, which was inspired by Finnish heroic ballads. It was first performed in public on 13 May 1848, and was followed by the unfurling of a national flag. Consequently, the birth of a distinctive nation identity is dated from this occasion. A similarly 'quiet' revolution took place in Switzerland in 1848, where a Constitution was introduced on 12 September, which drew political inspiration from both the American and the French Revolutions. Significantly and unusually, however, in addition to providing for national unity, the Constitution also granted universal male suffrage.

The Habsburg Empire, whose influence extended into many different countries, provides a microcosm of the complexity and ever-changing nature of the revolutionary threat. The early departure of Prince Metternich was a symbolic victory for radicals throughout Europe, and it was quickly followed by nationalist successes in Austrian-controlled Germany, Italy and Hungary. The Austrian government, which was fighting insurgency on a number of fronts, therefore took longer to mount a counter-insurgency offensive, which meant that

the revolutionary challenge extended into 1849. However, the defeat of King Charles Albert of Sardinia at Custozza in late March 1849 was a significant blow to Italian nationalist aspirations. However, one of the most sustained conflicts of 1848 took place in Hungary where nationalists, led by the charismatic Lajos Kossuth, combined liberal demands with the desire for political independence. The fate of Hungary, which was also part of the sprawling, repressive Habsburg Empire, became indelibly associated with the rise and fall of the fortunes of the 1848 revolutionaries. Prior to the uprising, Hungary possessed its own parliament, although it was tightly controlled by the Austrian government and, despite the autocratic nature of Austrian rule, the period preceding the 1848 uprising was associated with reform. Again, the political aspirations of the revolutionaries were given coherence and a voice by a poet, Sándor Petofi (1823-49), who composed the *National Song,* which was recited on the streets of Pest. His activities were not just confined to abstract words, however. Petofi helped to draft a twelve-point programme, agitated to get political prisoners released, and worked to form a Revolutionary Council (Kabdebo 47-49).

Increasingly, the Habsburg authorities attempted to put down the uprisings by exposing the divisions between the ethnic minorities within the Empire. This was most evident in Hungary where they encouraged the Croatian general, Joseph Jellacic, together with the Croatian army, to put down the revolutionary government. He was unsuccessful initially, but additional support from Austrian troops enabled him to capture and occupy the Hungarian capital in December 1848. The Hungarian government did not accept defeat but, led by Lajos Kossuth, relocated to the east of the country. Austria had underestimated Hungarian nationalism, and the people rallied and recaptured their capital in May 1849. Kossuth's movement was weakened, however, by not having the support of all Hungarians, more particularly that of the non-Magyars. Consequently, concurrent with Hungarians demanding their political autonomy, Ana Ipatescu, a Romanian radical was leading a movement for independence from Hungary and Russia.

The Hungarian victory was short-lived, and put down by the ruthless intervention of Russian troops, with vicious reprisals to follow. A period of direct rule ensued and it was not until 1867 that Hungary regained its own parliament and limited independence. Significantly Russia, so often deemed not to have played a part in 1848, was pivotal in ending what had become a flagship of the revolutionary aspirations of that year. Consequently, the Habsburg Empire survived the challenges of 1848 without any loss of territory. A lasting reform, however, was that serfdom was abolished throughout the vast empire. The Hungarian rising had attracted international sympathy, especially from the governments of the United States and Britain (despite opposing similar demands

in Ireland). Both countries gave Kossuth a hero's welcome when he visited during his exile from Hungary, demonstrating that support for the 1848 revolutions sometimes came from unexpected sources and was not simply a conflict between governments and peoples. These vignettes of revolutionary activities demonstrate the variety of experiences in 1848. However, they only tell a small part of the story of that year. The essays that appear in this book further demonstrate the complexity of the Year of Revolutions, and illustrate that by using non-traditional approaches and methodologies, there is still much to be discovered about this renowned year.

Order Restored

The flight of Prince Metternich, the conservative architect of the 1815 Settlement, only sixteen days after Louis Philippe's abdication, seemed to augur the beginning of a new political order. Furthermore, a characteristic of the 1848 revolutions was that the existing regimes offered little initial resistance. However, the new order and the new parliaments that emerged during the 'springtime of the peoples' were short-lived. Signs of a conservative backlash had first been evident in France during the election of a National Assembly by universal (male) suffrage, only a few weeks following the declaration of a republic. The closing of the National Workshops only a few months after they had opened, not only provided a trigger for the violent June days, but signalled that the class unity evident in the early days of the revolution was over. Conservative backlashes were also evident elsewhere in Europe as the old regimes re-grouped and so, twelve months after the revolution in France, the traditional elites were returning to power and the liberal gains made only a few months earlier were being withdrawn. Significantly also, in July 1849, French troops helped to put down the Roman Republic, which had been proclaimed by Giuseppe Mazzini in February of that year. Following this, they remained in Rome to protect Pope Pius IX, who had been forced to leave the city in November 1848.

As early as spring 1848, conservative forces throughout Europe were starting to re-assert themselves. Consequently, while the insurrections were spreading throughout Europe, counter-revolutionary forces were re-grouping. Like the revolts, the pace and manner of the retaliation varied from place to place. In some countries, the backlash was swift and successful. Britain banned the Chartist demonstrations due to take place on 10 April and, in the following months, further meetings were prohibited and leaders arrested. For them, the main threat came from Ireland and so draconian legislation was introduced, including the Treason Felony Act in April, while Habeas Corpus was suspended in July. Also, less obvious but no less effective, a network of spies, false reports