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RWS: History, Memory and National Identity

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You Say 'Po-TAY-to' I Say 'Po-TAH-to.'

Troubled Perspectives on Anglo-Irish Relations, 1966-1998.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Troubled Perspectives of History.....	3
1.1 Introduction.....	3
1.2 Thesis Topic and Research Question.....	5
1.3 Concepts: Historical Narratives and the Nation.....	6
1.4 Background of the Troubles of Northern Ireland.....	10
1.5 Sources.....	16
1.5.1 Overview of English History Textbooks.....	16
1.5.2 Overview of Irish History Textbooks.....	17
1.6 Analytical Scheme.....	17
1.7 Irish Conquest and Potato Famine as case studies.....	19
1.8 Thesis overview.....	19
Chapter 2: Anglo-Irish Relations in Historical Perspective.....	21
2.1 Introduction.....	21
2.2 Overview of Anglo-Irish Relations.....	21
2.3 Concepts of Danger.....	25
2.3.1 The Dangers of Selectivity and Forgetting.....	25
2.3.2 The Dangers of Remembering.....	29
2.4 The Use of History in Anglo-Irish Relations.....	31
2.5 Conclusion.....	34
Chapter 3: The Conquest of Ireland in History Textbooks.....	36
3.1 Introduction.....	36
3.2 Justification, Land Control and Historical Time.....	37
3.3 Perspectives on Cromwell.....	41
3.4 Perspectives of Primary Sources.....	44
3.5 Narrative Forgetting.....	50
3.6 Segregation and Identity.....	51
3.7 Conclusion.....	54
Chapter 4: Construction of the Potato Famine in English and Irish History Textbooks....	56
4.1 Introduction.....	56
4.2 Periodization: Potato Dependency and Plantations.....	57

4.3 Post Famine: Legacy.....	61
4.4 Historical Time, Remembrance and Forgetting.....	63
4.5 Causes of the Famine: Land Policy or Environment?	66
4.6 Conclusion.....	70
Chapter 5: Conclusion.....	72
5.1 Introduction.....	72
5.2 Findings.....	72
5.3 Multiperspectivity.....	75
Primary Sources.....	77
Bibliography.....	79

CHAPTER 1 Troubled Perspectives of History

1.1 Introduction

A popular Irish folk song, the ‘Fields of Athenry,’ engages the Great Famine. Originally written in the 1970s, it has been popularized by bands such as the Dubliners, the Pogues, Wolfetones¹ and most recently the Boston based band, The Dropkick Murphys.

Michael they have taken you away
For you stole Trevelyan’s corn
So the young might see the morn
Now a prison ship lies waiting in the bay
...
“Nothing matters Mary, when you’re free”
Against the famine and the crown
I rebelled, they cut me down

Is this just another beautiful Irish ballad or is this a politicized rebel song? The song was written in the 1970s, when the Troubles were in full swing and there was a strong Irish national identity among the republicans and nationalists. Why was this song written over a hundred years after the Famine happened, why was the past brought into the troubled present?

These lyrics tell a story of a (fictional) man who committed a crime, he stole corn to feed his starving family during the famine. What is interesting in the first part of these lyrics is the framing of the corn as “Trevelyan’s corn.” Sir Charles Trevelyan was the English public official responsible for the administration of relief during the Potato Famine.² Trevelyan’s role is controversial, in that he believed in a more laissez faire attitude, denying free food to the starving Irish. He has often been criticized and demonized by the Irish, as contributing to preventable deaths during the Famine. In these lyrics, anger and resentment are not being expressed toward the individual English landowner, or England or English policy in general, but expressed at Trevelyan, the face of English policy towards Ireland during the Great Famine. The second selection from the lyrics expresses the freedom that the Irish desired against the British. The famine was a catastrophe that resulted in deaths and emigration. By connecting famine and being

¹ The band Wolfetone is named in observance of Irish hero, Wolfe Tone. Wolfe Tone is regarded as the father of Irish republicanism. He was one of the leaders of the 1798 Rebellion.

² Ciarán Ó Murchadha. *The Great Famine: Ireland’s Agony 1845-1852*. London: Continuum International Publishing. Print. 2011. p. 50.

under England's rule (the "crown") in the same line, these lyrics imply to the listener that these events are interconnected. In so doing, this song connects the past famine to the present problems plaguing Northern Ireland. The message is that the Irish in Northern Ireland must be freed from the British and British prosecution.

Ireland, like many other nations that have been invaded or colonized, has a long history of trauma, begging the question how it deals with this traumatic past. Ireland is an interesting case because remembrance of the past is such a large part of its culture. Irish culture includes a lot of folklore including an impressive amount of songs about their past history, 'Fields of Athenry' being just one of many. Folklore is an important part of how the past is perceived in the present, and is heavy with ideological implications and laden with emotions.³ These ideological implications are an important part of heritage, but additionally, folklore can, and often does, lend itself as symbols for identity politics.⁴ Folklore in Ireland, is "continuous with an imagined, Irish, Gaelic, Catholic and communal past."⁵ Irish folklore keeps the past present, crossing many oceans with the Irish diaspora, allowing descendants of immigrants to retain their Irish identity. Irish folklore in Ireland developed partly as a "nationalist reaction to a metropolitan culture with universal pretensions."⁶ Historical culture is the way that people relate to the past on various different levels and how these relationships are represented and structured in "schools, universities, museums, heritage institutions, media, schoolbooks, ideologies, traditions, and attitudes."⁷ It is the conditions that are necessary for people to deal with the past, the "social infrastructure,"⁸ "production and reproduction of historical knowledge and understanding."⁹ The culture that a person associates themselves as belonging to exerts a strong force on the way they look at the past through the process of "socialization and customs."¹⁰ Socializing the community members into groups of persecuted and victim can lead to obscuring of events to fit into this narrative. It essentially can lead to untruths being passed off as history.

³ Diarmuid Ó Giolláin. *Locating Irish Folklore: Tradition, Maternity and Identity*. Cork: Cork University Press, 2000. Print. Pp. 2

⁴ *Id.* 1

⁵ *Id.* p. 2

⁶ *Id.* 4

⁷ Maria Grever "Fear of Plurality: Historical Culture and Historiographical Canonization in Western Europe." *Gendering historiography: Beyond National Canons*. Eds. Angelika Epple and Angelika Schaser. Frankfurt, New York: Campus, 2009. Print. p. 54.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Jan Assman and John Czaplicka. "Collective Memory and Cultural Identity" *New German Critique* 65. (1995): p. 125. Print.

Although this example of Irish folklore allows for insight into the Irish historical perspective, folklore is not at the center of this thesis. Another tool to being able to analyze historical perspectives is the history textbooks that are used by nations, which is what I analyze in this thesis.

1.2 Thesis Topic and Research Question

This thesis compares the Irish and English narratives in history textbooks of the history of Anglo-Irish relations. As I will discuss in chapter 2, Ireland and England have differing ways that they look at history, and my thesis aims to discover how the perspectives in their history schoolbooks also differ. These differences will highlight the way that historical narratives are constructed in history textbooks. Additionally, I involve the history of the Troubles of Northern Ireland to highlight the importance of perspectives of Anglo-Irish shared history and how it escalated¹¹ to conflict.

My thesis addresses the conflict that arises when nations use their past as a political arena to play out contemporary problems. That is to say, the conflict in the present¹² causes history to be perceived in a certain manner. One of the major contestations between the two sides in Northern Ireland is interpretations of history. The main research question of my thesis: is how are the narratives of Anglo-Irish relations constructed in Irish and English history textbooks during the Troubles of Northern Ireland? I will compare the two perspectives to see where they differ and overlap. I will be looking at these two perspectives to illuminate how narratives are constructed. I have devised sub-questions that will allow me to break down these narratives into comparable pieces: What is the periodization of the narratives? How does this periodization effect causation and blame in the narrative? Are the legacies of these events discussed? What are the spatial connections of the events? How are public figures portrayed? Are the events placed in their own historical time, to encourage historical understanding? Are there differences in the narratives that can be attributed to selectivity?¹³ And, finally, how are segregation and identity issues dealt with in these texts? The following section will discuss the concepts that are necessary to answer my research question and sub-questions.

¹¹ And to an extent, still continues to escalate to conflict.

¹² The perspectives in the Troubles.

¹³ Selectivity meaning dangerous remembering or forgetting, not merely insignificant differences.

1.3 Concepts

The main concept that I will introduce below is historical narratives. There are other sub-concepts that are an important part of the discussion surrounding historical narratives: nation, national identity, historical culture, historical distance, and historical understanding. These concepts are necessary to the understanding of the construction of historical narratives and perspectives in history textbooks. In Chapter 2, I will discuss additional concepts, the dangers of narrative remembering and forgetting, as they are pertinent to the way that the Irish and the English construct their national narratives.

1.3.1 The Nation and Historical Narratives

My thesis is an analysis of the construction of historical narratives in history textbooks. The first concept that needs to be addressed is historical narrative. Additionally, I am looking specifically at national historical narratives, so I explore what a nation is and the relationship between national identity and nationalism and the construction and framing of historical narratives. Historical narratives, according to Paul Ricoeur, are the connection of events through emplotment.¹⁴ Plot creates the temporal unity that allows the past to be re-examined,¹⁵ but it is not as simple as listing all the events that occur in “the interval between birth and death.”¹⁶ Historical narratives are a series of explanatory statements, linking “causal sequences and connections of past events.”¹⁷ The narrative is explanatory, because it does not merely describe what happened, but answer the questions of how and why.¹⁸ In *Life in Quest of Narrative*, Ricoeur discusses the relationship between narrative and life, and whether there is distance between the life lived and the life retold.¹⁹ Part of the necessity of narratives in history is because as humans we experience life in a narrative form, with a beginning, middle and end.²⁰

¹⁴ Paul Ricoeur. *Time and Narrative*. 1. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990. p. ix.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Paul Ricoeur. *Life in Quest of Narrative*. David Wood edition. London & New York: Routledge. 1991. Print. p. 20.

¹⁷ Geoffrey Roberts. *The History and Narrative Reader*. Oxford: Taylor & Francis Group Ltd. 2001. p. 3.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Paul Ricoeur. *Life in Quest of Narrative*. Although he maintains that a life cannot be retold, it is the story that is told.

²⁰ Geoffrey Roberts. *The History and Narrative Reader*. p. 6

Central to historical narratives is human action or agency.²¹ According to Frederick Olafson, historical narrative is a “reconstruction of a sequence of human actions within one action and its consequences become the premise for a succeeding action and so on.”²² The implication here is that in a historical narrative, the events are interconnected through consequences and agency; there are connections and continuity in the narrative. The narration of human conduct is the foremost element of history.²³ What interests me in regards to human action being the central focus of history, is the concept of environmental history. Famines can be framed as a consequence of human action, or due to natural disaster. If the Potato Famine is framed as a natural disaster, regardless of human action, than is it still part of history? Abstract agents can additionally be used as a protagonist, examples such as “the spirit of liberty, imperialism...or the Enlightenment...nationalist can do anything, respond to circumstances, or initiate different situations” can be cited.²⁴ The argument here could be that the environment could either be an abstract element, or a situation that humans have to respond to. Carr argues in *Time, Narrative and History*, that the cognitive object of the narrative is human agents acting within time.²⁵

The historical narratives that I am analyzing are national narratives. Benedict Anderson defines nation as “an imagined political community.”²⁶ Imagined in this sense means that the connection that citizens feel to their nation and to their fellow citizens is in their minds, it is a feeling and not something concrete.²⁷ The sense of feeling of belonging to a nation can be defined as nationalism or national identity. According to Anderson, nationalism would be easier to define if it were treated not as an ideology but as a sense of belonging and identification, similar to how one ‘belongs’ or ‘identifies’ with their family, or ‘belongs’ or ‘identifies’ with their religion.²⁸ According to Mario Carretero, national identity is something that is developed in order to create the idea that the nation is something stable and natural.²⁹ It is “a group of beliefs, assumptions, rituals, representations and practices” that contributes to a collective will and the

²¹ *Id.* p. 5.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Id.* pp. 5-6.

²⁵ David Carr. *Time, Narrative and History*. Indiana University Press, 1991. Print. p. 61.

²⁶ Benedict Anderson. *Imagined Communities*. Rev. London: Verso, 2006. Print. p. 5.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ Mario Carretero et al. “Students Historical Narratives and Concepts about the Nation.” *History Education and the Construction of National Identity*. London: University of London. (2012). Print. p. 156.

development of the idea of the nation as a natural reality.³⁰ National identity has many dimensions which include “a specific language, sentiments and symbolism.”³¹ It places a strong emphasis on origin as a political community.³² According to Anthony Smith, a professor of Nationalism and Ethnicity at London School of Economics, in his book *National Identity*, the myth of national identity revolves around either “territory or ancestry (or both) as the basis of political community.”³³ This definition is vitally important to understanding the Troubles of Northern Ireland, especially with the Troubles’ roots in Anglo-Irish relations. Northern Ireland is a nation with two segregated groups of people, both with competing claims to the land that they occupy. The Irish claim it to be their ancestral land, because the Protestants came over with the English invasion and are therefore ‘outsiders.’ Identity has different dimensions because it can be national or cultural and individual or collective.³⁴ The dominant national narrative often only involves the political landmarks, following the lives of political leaders, with the nation state as the main actor.³⁵ This pushes to the side the social, economic or cultural transformations and other structural elements other than politics that are important.³⁶ Politicizing history runs the risk of creating a past that serves the need of the present.³⁷

The historical part of the historical narratives relates to historical distance, historical thinking and historical understanding. Historical distance is, according to Mark Salber Phillips, more than just temporal distance from the past. It involves “engagement” and “detachment,” it is how the past is “perceived and described.”³⁸ The length of the distance one feels toward the past is one way that a perspective of history is created. In essence it is the level of importance attributed to the event. A related factor is if a certain aspect of history is included in the national narrative (or curriculum), or if it is “forgotten history.”³⁹ To understand historical thinking and historical understanding is to see history as more than a representation of the past, a data table of

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ Anthony D. Smith. *National Identity*. Las Vegas: University of Nevada Press. 1984.

³² *Id.* p. viii.

³³ *Id.* p. viii.

³⁴ *Id.* p. 3

³⁵ Maria Grever. "Plurality, Narrative and the Historical Canon." *Beyond the Canon: History for the Twenty-first Century*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2007. Print. p. 51.

³⁶ *Id.* p. 47.

³⁷ Emilie Pine. *The Politics of Irish Memory: Performing Remembrance in Contemporary Irish Culture*. London: Palgrave Macmillan. 2011. Print. p. 26.

³⁸ Mark Salber Phillips. “Distance and Historical Representation.” *Historical Workshop Journal*. 57.1 (2004): p. 125.

³⁹ To be discussed in Chapter 2.

important events, actions and people.⁴⁰ It is history as a way of thinking.⁴¹ It should make the narrative more understandable, but not oversimplify it, such as a chronological order can do.⁴² Historical understanding is the ideal of the historian; having an explanation of conduct of the past rather than relying on interpretation.⁴³ Bodo von Borries refers to “*conditio sine qua non* of historical insight,”⁴⁴ which means reducing history to the “preconditions” of the time.⁴⁵ Peter Munz describes historical understanding as to “think away everything that has happened since, and call up a mist over the face of time.”⁴⁶ Addressing the events as those present would have witnessed them, without knowledge of what the result of that event or what would develop in the future.⁴⁷

In order for the historian to gain an understanding of the conduct and the motivations of the actors present during the original experience of history, according to Munz, one must research the experiences that the actor had prior to this and gain an understanding of the traditions and the general laws of this time.⁴⁸ Historical understanding in the classroom revolves around these same principles, but the student in the classroom is not responsible for researching these experiences, traditions and motives. For the student and for the purposes of the definition of multiperspectivity, it is the mindset that they are able to understand these various motivations. The past is a useful tool for a student to “help...define the meaning of the present and place ourselves in historical time.”⁴⁹

Michael Oakeshott compares practical uses of the past with historical uses of the past. Practical past is when the past is looked at through a present lens, such as politically manipulated history. This is important for the Irish, for the way that they remember history runs the risk of being manipulated for political purposes, as will be discussed more in Chapter 2. Historical past

⁴⁰ Bodo von Borries. “Competence in Historical Thinking, Mastering of a Historical Framework, of Knowledge of the Historical Canon.” *National History Standards: The Problem of the Canon and the Future of Teaching*. London: University of London. (2009). p. 283.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ Peter Munz. “Historical Understanding.” *The Philosophical Quarterly*. 3(12):1953. p. 193.

⁴⁴ Bodo von Borries. “Competence in Historical Thinking, Mastering of a Historical Framework, of Knowledge of the Historical Canon.” p. 287.

⁴⁵ *Id.* p. 287.

⁴⁶ Peter Munz. “Historical Understanding.” *The Philosophical Quarterly*. 3(12):1953. p. 195.

⁴⁷ Bodo von Borries. “Competence in Historical Thinking, Mastering of a Historical Framework, of Knowledge of the Historical Canon.” p. 287.

⁴⁸ Peter Munz. “Historical Understanding.” *The Philosophical Quarterly*. 3(12):1953. P. 196.

⁴⁹ Peter Seixas. “Historical Understanding among Adolescents in a Multicultural Setting.” Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. *Curriculum Inquiry* 23:3 (1993). p. 301.

is more concerned with being authentic, understanding the events as they happened and without concern for the needs of the present.⁵⁰ Practical past relates more to collective memory (heritage), as historical past relates more to history in the academic sense.⁵¹ As stated, it is important that students are able to relate the past to the present, but it is important not to transfer present values onto the past, as collective memory and everyday history can sometimes be guilty of. Is it possible not to project present values on the past? According to Mike Denos in *Teaching about Historical Understanding*, when we make selections about what to study in history it reflects the historians present values and situation.⁵² History that is learned in other settings can have an effect on how students learn and understand history, for example history learned in their community or in entertainment and folklore, such as myths and stories. Peter Seixas calls not just for a history curriculum based around “what history students should know, but also with an awareness of how they think and learn about the past and their own place in time.”⁵³ Seixas defines historical thinking as having three main elements: identification of historical significance⁵⁴, historical epistemology,⁵⁵ and agency.⁵⁶ Historical epistemology is how the students learned about past events.⁵⁷ Agency is a combination of factors, to paraphrase it is being able to understand the motivations of those involved in the situation.⁵⁸ How did the actors make decisions, what choices did they face, and what were the consequences?⁵⁹ Agency is understood in relation to the “social and cultural circumstances in which they [the actors in history] found themselves.”⁶⁰ If we look to the past without a preconception about the present, then we will be more clearly able to see the motivations of the many actors in history, and often create parallel stories. It will allow us to see what outside factors that might have been otherwise ignored that in fact had an important influence on the motivation of one of the actors involved (i.e. environment, war involving only one of the actors etc.).

⁵⁰ Keith C. Barton. “The Denial of Desire: How to Make History Education Meaningless.” *National History Standard: The Problem of the Canon and the Future of Teaching History*. Charlotte, North Carolina: 2009. Print. p. 277.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² Mike Denos, and Roland Case. *Teaching about Historical Thinking*. Vancouver: The Critical Thinking Consortium, 2006. Print. p. 2.

⁵³ Peter Seixas. *Historical Understanding among Adolescents in a Multicultural Setting*. p. 302.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ *Id.* p. 303.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ *Id.* p. 302.

⁵⁸ *Id.* p. 303.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ *Id.* p. 302.

1.4 Background of the Troubles of Northern Ireland (1968-1998)

An escalating factor in the Troubles of Northern Ireland is differing interpretations of history. In this section, I will give an overview of history of the Troubles to give the reader the background information necessary to understand why these interpretations led to violence. The tension in Northern Ireland escalated into violence between 1968 and 1969.⁶¹ The conflict was eventually resolved with the Good Friday Agreement in 1998; 30 years after the Troubles began. In these 30 years, over 3600 people were killed in Northern Ireland.⁶² Prior to the development of outright violence in 1968, there was much tension in the community stemming from the origin of the state. The Troubles of Northern Ireland was one of sectarian conflict, between the Catholics and the Protestants. An understanding of how these dual communities developed in Northern Ireland is vital to comprehending the conflict, and appreciating the resolution.

The creation of the state of Northern Ireland in 1922 led to a polarization of two groups, the Catholics and the Protestants. This society was separated and segregated along identity lines. The separate identities that developed between the Protestants and Catholics are a familiar one in many nations. During the Reformation of England in 1536, Ireland was under English control. England becoming a Protestant nation had repercussions for Ireland, as well as the English settlers living in Ireland.⁶³ At this time, Ireland was primarily Catholic, and the English settlers converted to Protestantism to show loyalty to the king of England. Ireland as a Catholic country came to be a threat to the King of England, because of his traditional Catholic enemies, Spain and France,⁶⁴ and after this point England's policy was one of military conquest and suppression of the Catholic religion.⁶⁵ This is where the religious divide between Catholics and Protestants in Ireland takes on a national and political identity as well. The Protestants perceive themselves to be descendants from the settlers who came from England or Scotland, and their political ambitions are to remain within the United Kingdom. The Catholics see themselves as

⁶¹ David McKittrick and David McVea. *Making Sense of the Troubles: A History of the Northern Ireland Conflict*. London: Penguin Books. 2000. Print. p. 42.

⁶² From both Protestant and Catholic sides. Ian Dawson and Ben Walsh. *The Struggle for Peace in Northern Ireland*. London: John Murray Publishers Ltd. 2004. Print. p. 14.

⁶³ David Holloway. "Understanding the Northern Ireland Conflict: A Summary and Overview of the Conflict and its Origins." *The Community Dialogue Critical Issues Series*. 3: June 2005. p. 6.

⁶⁴ David McKittrick and David McVea. *Making Sense of the Troubles: A History of the Northern Ireland Conflict*. p. 42.

⁶⁵ David Holloway. "Understanding the Northern Ireland Conflict: A Summary and Overview of the Conflict and its Origins." p. 6.

Irish, and consider themselves as such and have often desired either home rule or full independence.⁶⁶

At the dawn of the 20th century, Irish nationalists wanted home rule from Britain. Protestants feared this, as over the years the Protestant settler community had enjoyed political control and the economic benefits that stemmed from their political position, and if Ireland gained control of her own politics, the Protestants would become a minority and lose their controlling power.⁶⁷ Right before World War I, Britain proposed Home Rule for Ireland, but the outbreak of World War I pushed this legislation aside.⁶⁸ 1916 was the year of the Easter Rising in Ireland, where the Irish nationalists rose in rebellion. This rebellion was quickly put down, and London executed many of the uprisings leaders.⁶⁹ After World War I and the Easter Rising, the Irish nationalists were no longer asking for Home Rule, but desired full independence.⁷⁰ There was a problem with this, as the Protestants, (mostly living in the North, in the province of Ulster), wanted Ireland to remain part of the United Kingdom,⁷¹ for the same reason as stated above, they feared becoming a minority, facing possible retribution from the Catholic Republicans.⁷²

The partitioning of Ireland into the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland was the result of an attempt to appease both the Catholic nationalists and Protestant loyalists in Ireland. The partition did not ease tensions between the two groups. The Catholics in the north became displaced people without ever leaving their homes. They boycotted their new nation,⁷³ retaining their Irish identity and did not consider Northern Ireland to be a legitimate state.⁷⁴ The border created between the Free State⁷⁵ and Northern Ireland was not arbitrarily drawn, there were

⁶⁶ Home rule would reinstate the Irish Parliament in Dublin, allowing for some power transition but Ireland would still be under English rule as opposed to independence where Ireland would be a sovereign nation.

⁶⁷ David McKittrick and David McVea. *Making Sense of the Troubles: A History of the Northern Ireland Conflict*. p. 3.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ *Id.* p. 4.

⁷⁰ *Id.* p. 4.

⁷¹ Ian Dawson and Ben Walsh. *The Struggle for Peace in Northern Ireland*. p. 9.

⁷² David Holloway. "Understanding the Northern Ireland Conflict: A Summary and Overview of The Conflict and Its Origins." p. 7.

Republicans was the political ideology that desired independence from Great Britain, resulting in the Republic of Ireland.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ David McKittrick and David McVea. *Making Sense of the Troubles: A History of the Northern Ireland Conflict*. pp. 1-2.

⁷⁵ The Republic of Ireland was known as the Free State of Ireland at this time. In 1949, Ireland officially became independent of Great Britain and this is when they officially became the Republic of Ireland.

political motives tied to the placement of the border. The “guiding concept in deciding its borders are that it should have a decisive Protestant majority.”⁷⁶ The Protestants in the North were still uneasy about this new state, despite their majority. They constantly felt that London was not as committed to keeping them in the United Kingdom as they were.⁷⁷ Some sectarian violence erupted in the time immediately following the partition, from 1920 to 1922.⁷⁸ Eventually, violence settled down and despite community tensions, there was some stability in the new state.⁷⁹

Due to the political nervousness of the Protestants during the creation of Northern Ireland, steps were taken to strengthen the Unionists⁸⁰ position in the government. This system of Protestant majority in political power lasted for five decades and preserved the attitudes of the 1920s for as much time.⁸¹ This is when the policies that would come to cause the Catholics to protest in the 1960s emerged. Housing policies were adopted to maintain social control, and only those who were loyal to Northern Ireland were allowed to be employed in the public sector.⁸² The Unionists did not want to relinquish any power to the Catholics and one way that they maintained power was through boundary manipulation. ‘Gerrymandering’⁸³ was the name that the Catholics gave to the Unionists policy of boundary manipulation.⁸⁴ When there was an area, such as Londonderry, where there was a Catholic majority, the boundaries would be redrawn to ensure a Protestant majority, leading to a Protestant public official.⁸⁵ The housing policies that discriminated against Catholics furthered political discrimination. The voting policy was not one vote per person,⁸⁶ but two votes per household.⁸⁷ This discriminated against those

⁷⁶ David McKittrick and David McVea. *Making Sense of the Troubles: A History of the Northern Ireland Conflict*. pp p. 5.

⁷⁷ *Id.* p. 4.

⁷⁸ David Holloway. “Understanding the Northern Ireland Conflict: A Summary and Overview of the Conflict and its Origins.” p. 8.

⁷⁹ David McKittrick and David McVea. *Making Sense of the Troubles: A History of the Northern Ireland Conflict*. p. 6.

⁸⁰ Political part of the Protestant loyalists.

⁸¹ David McKittrick and David McVea. *Making Sense of the Troubles: A History of the Northern Ireland Conflict*. p. 6.

⁸² David Holloway “Understanding the Northern Ireland Conflict: A Summary and Overview of the Conflict and its Origins.” p. 8.

⁸³ David McKittrick and David McVea. *Making Sense of the Troubles: A History of the Northern Ireland Conflict*. p. 8

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ Pending any age requirements.

⁸⁷ David McKittrick and David McVea. *Making Sense of the Troubles: A History of the Northern Ireland Conflict*. p. 9

who could not afford to move out of their parents' house, as well as those who were subtenants, which affected the Catholic population disproportionately.⁸⁸ Despite all of this, the violence decreased, due to a feeling of apathy among the Catholic population.

As stated above, the Catholics are not just Catholic, but additionally Irish nationalists, similarly the Protestants are Unionists and generally consider themselves to be British citizens. Many attempts at resolution were not successful, the aims of each group were at odds with one another: to give one group what they wanted, it would take away what the other group wanted (independence and joining the Republic of Ireland or remaining part of the United Kingdom). Additionally, the Catholics felt like second class citizens due to segregation. Some of the grievances of the Catholics had were discrimination in housing and employment, particularly civil service jobs and as public officials, discrimination in voting practices as well as unfair treatment by the police.⁸⁹

It would not be until the 1960s that the system in Northern Ireland would begin to waver and succumb to violence. The new Prime Minister of Northern Ireland, Captain Terrance O'Neill, took office in 1963.⁹⁰ He embodied a sense of changing tides in Northern Ireland, with his emphasis on reconciliation in the community.⁹¹ Unfortunately, the reform Captain O'Neill put through "was an inadequate attempt to brush away decades of division without tackling the underlying problems."⁹² Simultaneously, Northern Ireland saw an economic decline, as traditional industries in Northern Ireland were in decline, leading to a rise in unemployment and social discontent.⁹³ Marches were common in Ireland, stemming from the formation of the Orange Order⁹⁴ in 1795.⁹⁵ Historically, these marches could evolve into riots⁹⁶, particularly in Belfast, and the Troubles were no exception. 1966 was the fiftieth anniversary of the 1916

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ Ian Dawson and Ben Walsh. *The Struggle for Peace in Northern Ireland*. p. 16.

⁹⁰ David McKittrick and David McVea. *Making Sense of the Troubles: A History of the Northern Ireland Conflict*. p. 23.

⁹¹ *Id.* p. 26

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ The Orange order is a heritage organization for the Protestants in Ireland. It was common ground between the different denominations of Protestants in Ireland.

⁹⁵ David McKittrick and David McVea. *Making Sense of the Troubles: A History of the Northern Ireland Conflict*. p. 26.

⁹⁶ The marches often went through neighborhoods of the opposing religion, causing disturbances which led to riots.

Easter Rising. This year also saw three murders⁹⁷ credited to the Ulster Volunteer Force, a loyalist organization.⁹⁸ Catholic protests began in June 1968, and on 5 October 1968, the tension grew to violence.⁹⁹ On 5 October a Catholic march in Londonderry was held, and this march was met with police resistance.¹⁰⁰ November 1968 saw some reforms from the Northern Irish government.¹⁰¹ The reforms aimed to decrease discrimination in housing and the voting system.¹⁰² Some Republicans were not satisfied with these reforms and continued to protest, and the Unionists felt that their prime minister was betraying them by giving in to reforms for the Catholics. In January 1969, violence between groups escalated significantly.¹⁰³ A march of students from Belfast to Londonderry was attacked by loyalists.¹⁰⁴ The demonstrators were assaulted with stones and sticks, at this time the world was watching these events unfolding.¹⁰⁵ Televisions around the world were filled with images of beaten and bleeding demonstrators, leading to much Catholic sympathy.¹⁰⁶ The apathy of the Catholics for the past decades was replaced with a renewed nationalism in the new generation. This violence is generally perceived to be the beginning of the Troubles because it was violence between the two groups outright, not the result of police action,¹⁰⁷ and as it changed the atmosphere of Northern Ireland from stable tension to one much more susceptible to explode into violence.¹⁰⁸

The Troubles of Northern Ireland can be looked at as “a more violent expression of existing animosities and unresolved issues of nationality, religion, power and territorial

⁹⁷ The first being a Protestant widow inadvertently killed by a bomb meant for a Catholic-owned bar, the second a Catholic man singing Irish rebel songs, and the third a Catholic teen who walked into the wrong bar.

⁹⁸ David McKittrick and David McVea. *Making Sense of the Troubles: A History of the Northern Ireland Conflict*. p. 40.

⁹⁹ Ian Dawson and Ben Walsh. *The Struggle for Peace in Northern Ireland*. London: John Murray Publishers Ltd. Print. pp. 18-19.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.* p. 19.

David McKittrick and David McVea. *Making Sense of the Troubles: A History of the Northern Ireland Conflict*. p. 44.

¹⁰¹ Ian Dawson and Ben Walsh. *The Struggle for Peace in Northern Ireland*. London: John Murray Publishers Ltd. Print. p. 19.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

David McKittrick and David McVea. *Making Sense of the Troubles: A History of the Northern Ireland Conflict*. p. 48.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ Ian Dawson and Ben Walsh. *The Struggle for Peace in Northern Ireland*. p. 19.

¹⁰⁸ David McKittrick and David McVea. *Making Sense of the Troubles: A History of the Northern Ireland Conflict*. p. 53.

division.”¹⁰⁹ The past holds double importance for the Troubles, first of all the problems that this society faced were not new, but deeply rooted in shared history. Secondly, the past was used as a tool to justify violent actions in the present. The Catholics perceived themselves to be victims of English imperial policy, and the historical misdeeds of the English were related to the continued segregation in Northern Ireland. The other side, the Protestant perspective, is not so far removed from the collective identity of their ancestors. They saw themselves as facing wild and violent enemies and living in a hostile land as outsiders, without much backing from their allies, culminating in a defensive attitude towards the Irish Catholics.¹¹⁰ These identities are important for the research of this thesis, as they show insight into some of the perspectives that I may find in the history schoolbooks of the Republic of Ireland and England.

1.5 Sources

The sources that I chose to use for my research are history textbooks of the Republic of Ireland and England. History textbooks are the most stable variable in the history classroom; they are used in classrooms throughout the nation and provide the strongest insight into the historical narratives that students learn. The narratives I am looking into are past narratives, the historical narratives as they are portrayed in textbooks during the Troubles of Northern Ireland, 1968-1998.¹¹¹ In the following section I will outline the textbooks that I used from each nation to reconstruct the narratives. A bibliographical list of these textbooks is provided in the Appendix marked Primary Sources.

1.5.1 English History Textbooks

In my research for finding the perspective in English history textbooks regarding the conquest of Ireland, I ran into some difficulties finding texts that discuss this. I widened my search to mention the initial conquest, the split between Protestants and Catholics after Henry VIII’s Reformation, Irish policy, Irish revolts and the English response, and then Ireland achieving Home Rule in 1919. For this final event, of the three English textbooks covering the period between 1919 until 1991, only one mentions Ireland in reference to the attempt of Irish nationalists trying to achieve independence during the Treaty of Versailles negotiations, and

¹⁰⁹ *Id.* p. 1.

¹¹⁰ *Id.* p. 7.

¹¹¹ I include some texts from the early 2000s because what I found in the narratives was interesting and relevant for the perspectives constructed in this time period.

being disappointed.¹¹² These texts are Modern World History by Tony McAleavy (1996),¹¹³ Modern World History¹¹⁴ by Ben Walsh (1996), and The Developing World: Man Moves Forward by Roger Watson (1975).¹¹⁵ These textbooks are covering World History during the 20th century, covering almost identical topics starting with the resolution of World War I, World War II, the Cold War and concluding with the collapse of the Soviet Empire.

The periods covered in the British history textbooks appear to be consistent. The periods usually covered are 1066 until 1500¹¹⁶, 1500 until 1750¹¹⁷, and 1750 until 1900¹¹⁸, or 1066 until 1900¹¹⁹. Then of course were the texts that covered 1919 until 1990 mentioned above which concentrated on the conflicts of the 20th century. Other texts that were date specific for events or people where The Reign of Elizabeth. England 1558-1603, 'King' Cromwell covering the period that Cromwell was in power in the late 17th century, The Irish Famine: The Birth of Irish America 1845-1852,¹²⁰ An Economic and Social History of Britain covers 1066-1939. Most of the English history textbooks that I analyzed were printed in the late 1990s, some in the early 2000s, and one from 1966 and one from 1975.

1.5.2 Irish History Textbooks

The Irish history textbooks that I analyzed for my thesis were Late Medieval Ireland, 1370-1541,¹²¹ Uncovering History,¹²² Independent Ireland,¹²³ Colonial Ireland, 1169-1369,¹²⁴ A Primary History of Ireland, 1691-1949,¹²⁵ Let's Look at History 2: Exploring Change.¹²⁶ The

¹¹² Tony McAleavy. *Modern World History*. Cambridge University Press. 1996. Print. p. 18.

¹¹³ Tony McAleavy. *Modern World History*.

¹¹⁴ Ben Walsh. *Modern World History*. London: John Murray Publishers Ltd. 1996.

¹¹⁵ Roger Watson. *The Developing World History Four: Man Moves Forward*. London: Longman Group Limited. 1975.

Jamie Byron et al. *Changing Minds: Britain 1500-1750*. Essex: Addison Wesley Longman Limited. 1997.

¹¹⁶ Jamie Byron et al. *Medieval Minds: Britain 1066-1500*. Essex: Addison Wesley Longman Limited. 1997.

John D. Clare. *Conflict, People & Power. Medieval Britain 1066-1500*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2000.

¹¹⁷ Ros Adams et al. *Revolutionary Times, 1500-1750*. Oxford: Heinemann Library, 2003. Print.

Jamie Byron et al. *Changing Minds: Britain 1500-1750*.

¹¹⁸ Jamie Byron. *Minds and Machines: Britain 1750 - 1900*. Essex: Addison Wesley Longman Limited. 1999.

¹¹⁹ Walter Robson. *British History 1066-1900*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995. Print.

¹²⁰ With some introduction of prior Irish history for historical context.

¹²¹ Art Cosgrove. *Late Medieval Ireland, 1370-1541*. Dublin: Helicon Limited, 1981. Print.

¹²² Sean Delap and Paul McCormack. *Understanding History*. Dublin: Folens Publishers, 2011. Print.

¹²³ Ronan Fanning. *Independent Ireland*. Dublin: Helicon Limited, 1983. Print.

¹²⁴ Robin Frame. *Colonial Ireland, 1169-1369*. Dublin: Helicon Limited, 1981. Print.

¹²⁵ Mairead Ni Ghada. *A Primary History of Ireland: 1691-1949*. Dublin: Brown and Nolan Limited, 1964. Print.

¹²⁶ Peter Sobolewski and John McDonald. *Let's Look at History 2: Exploring Change*. Dublin: Gill and Macmillan Ltd, 1990. Print.

issue of finding Anglo-Irish history was not prevalent in the Irish textbooks, as relations between the two nations are found throughout the texts. *Exploring Change*, as I will discuss later in my findings, seems to revolve entirely on England, and how English policy affected Ireland. These Irish texts are also parts of history series, and I chose to analyze texts from different series. This means the periodizations label what section of history that is covered within the series that covers a much longer period of Irish history (ancient history to modern history).

1.6 Analysis Scheme

My research analyzes how history is remembered and taught in Irish and English history textbooks. More importantly, I am looking at the differences and similarities in these history textbooks. The careful wording of the text, what is included and emphasized, or what is missing will give insight into the memory culture of each nation. It is important to state that my analysis is not aimed at qualifying what is a ‘good’ or ‘bad’ history textbook, or what is ‘good’ or ‘bad’ history. Robert Stradling in his publication on the perspectives of history in textbooks addresses the importance of not trying to answer the question of “what is a good history textbook?”¹²⁷ The nationalization of history textbooks means, he argues, that there are different standards and that it would be difficult to define what elements must be present in a textbook to make it ‘good.’¹²⁸ My analytical scheme is designed to weed out underlying messages in textbook history, what is written between the lines. If the Irish history concentrates heavily on being victimized, then history will continue to be a state of contention for Irish students, particularly if the English version of events downplays past English responsibility. Falk Pingel authored a methodological guidebook, the *UNESCO Guidebook on Textbook Research and Textbook Revision*, which gives an overview of the methodological and practical issues that need to be considered in textbook analysis. When it comes to textbook analysis according to Pingel, there are two different levels of the text that have to be considered. The first consists of the pedagogical implications, and the second is the text itself.¹²⁹ The pedagogical implications are how the textbooks are used in the classroom. How the teacher presents it and how the students use it.¹³⁰ The only pedagogical analysis that I have in my scheme are any questions or assignments that are in the text. The vast

¹²⁷ Robert Stradling. *Teaching 20th-century European history*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing. 2001. p. 257.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹ *Id.* p. 3.

¹³⁰ Further pedagogical analysis warrants classroom research, which falls outside the scope of this project.

majority of my scheme is then the second level, the text itself. Each research project requires a tailored research scheme to bring out the answers to the questions being asked. I used *Methods in School Textbook Research*¹³¹ by Jason Nicholls, Pingel's *UNESCO Guidebook on Textbook Research and Textbook Revision*¹³² and Stradling's *Teaching 20th Century European History*¹³³ to develop a scheme tailored for my research question.

The two sections of my scheme are extrinsic and intrinsic factors. The extrinsic factors are the bibliographical data: the publishing house, the target group, and publishing date. These data are important because they co-shape the content of the history textbook. Are there criteria that the publishers need to follow when producing this book? What was the political context of the time that the history textbook was being written? Additionally, it is important to note whether the history textbook centers on national history, world history or concentrated history (history of a specific event or phenomenon).

The intrinsic factors are based around the narratives in the text. I analyze the periodizations of the narratives, and the spatial connections of events. If events are discussed in historical isolation or connections are made. I also look at how people are framed in these narratives. I look at how prominent historical figures are perceived by different narratives, as well as how the 'average' citizen was characterized. I look at the absences and silences in these books, as well as what is emphasized. The questions are designed to answer my sub-questions, and ultimately my research question regarding the construction of narratives. When available, I included an analysis of any questions or assignments that accompany the text, as well as if there are any visual aids, but questions and visual aids are not guaranteed in the history textbooks. A part of the questions are derived from the previously discussed concepts, *national identity*, *historical culture*, *historical distance*, *historical understanding* and *historical narratives*.

1.7 Irish Conquest and Potato Famine as case studies

Anglo-Irish relations began in the 12th century, it would be inefficient of me to try and cover the many events that occurred throughout the centuries. Beginning my research, I wanted to concentrate on the Potato Famine but soon came to the conclusion that prior history was

¹³¹ Jason Nicholls. *Methods in School Textbook Research*. Oxford: University of Oxford. Print.

¹³² Falk Pingel. *UNESCO Guidebook on Textbook Research and Textbook Revision*. Hannover: Verlag Hahnsche Buchhandlung. 1999. Print.

¹³³ Robert Stradling. *Teaching 20th-century European history*.

necessary to show how the Irish and English historical narratives developed, as the Irish perspective of the Potato Famine overlaps their perspective of English colonization of Ireland. Additionally, the conquest of Ireland is important for a study of Anglo-Irish relations because it is when identity politics began to develop. The conquest began in 1169, and from this point on settlers from England and Scotland came to Ireland with the goal of obtaining land. The separation between these two groups, the English settlers and the native Irish, changes in degrees of separation throughout the course of English occupation of Ireland, and the explanation for the development of the relations between the two groups, I hypothesize, will relate to how the two groups in Northern Ireland coexist.

The Potato Famine is the most remembered and mourned event in Irish history. There are different factors that can be attributed to causing the famine. These varying perspectives of the famine are not wrong, but how they each frame the narrative and connect events exemplifies how framing a narrative changes the perspective drastically. As I stated above, the Irish perspective overlaps with prior history, what is interesting to see how the English perspective will deal with colonization and how that affected the Irish during the Potato Famine.

1.8 Thesis overview

In the next chapter, I will provide an overview of Anglo-Irish history, as well as a discussion of memory cultures in Ireland and England, to give the reader background knowledge to understand my analysis of history textbooks. I will then describe the concepts that I hypothesize to find in the historical narratives, which are *narrative forgetting* and *emphasis*. I conclude Chapter 2 with further information on the use of history in Anglo-Irish relations. Chapter 3 is the analysis of the conquest and colonization of Ireland in history textbooks and Chapter 4 is the analysis of the Potato Famine in history textbooks. In these empirical chapters, I will answer my sub-questions and my findings from my research. In Chapter 5, I will outline the findings of my analysis and then conclude my thesis with a discussion of multiperspectivity.

Chapter 2: Anglo-Irish Relations in Historical Perspective

2.1 Introduction

In Chapter 1, I provided an overview of my thesis. Chapter 2 lays the foundation for a discussion about Ireland and England more specifically. I will begin this chapter with the background information for understanding the history involved in my thesis, an overview of Anglo-Irish relations. From there I will discuss remembrance cultures as they pertain to England and Ireland. I devote a section of this chapter to the use of history in Anglo-Irish relations to highlight how important history is, particularly to the Irish, during conflicts.

2.2 Overview of Anglo-Irish Relations

Before the arrival of the Anglo-Normans, Ireland was organized into different kingdoms, with a high king ruling over the island.¹³⁴ The Anglo-Normans had conquered England in 1066. The initial conquest of Ireland by the Anglo-Normans began in 1169.¹³⁵ But, these were not the first invaders to arrive in Ireland. Prior to the arrival of the Anglo-Normans, Ireland was ruled by the Celts. The Celts themselves were a group of people who arrived in Ireland around 500 or 600 B.C.¹³⁶ The Vikings arrive in year 900 and stayed for approximately a century.¹³⁷ The Vikings established trading settlements in Ireland that grew into the cities that the Anglo-Normans occupied upon their arrival, most notable Dublin.¹³⁸ The initial conquest of Ireland by the Anglo-Normans began in 1169.¹³⁹ One of the rulers of a kingdom in Ireland had been defeated in battle by the high king and he retreated to England. In England, he sought help from the Normans to regain power in Ireland.¹⁴⁰ This banished king, Dermot, returned to Ireland with an army of Normans and Englishmen who helped him regain power.¹⁴¹ In 1171, Dermot died and was succeeded by one of the Englishmen who helped him return to power, Strongbow. This caught the King of England's attention, Henry II, and he arrived in Ireland in 1171 with an army.

¹³⁴ Door Finbar Madden. *Understand Irish History: Teach Yourself*. London: Hodder Education. 2005. Print. p. 2.

¹³⁵ David Holloway. *Understanding the Northern Ireland Conflict: A Summary and Overview of The Conflict and Its Origins*. p. 4.

¹³⁶ Door Finbar Madden. *Understand Irish History: Teach Yourself*. p. 2.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸ *Id.* p. 3.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁰ *Id.* p. 10.

¹⁴¹ *Id.* p. 11.

This is considered the beginning of English control of Ireland. The Anglo-Normans primarily exerted control in the area that surrounds Dublin, called the Pale.¹⁴²

Over time, events occurred that caused England to consolidate its control over Ireland. Some of these events were international (e.g. wars), or domestic affairs in England or Ireland (e.g. Reformation in England). This is why, when discussing Anglo-Irish relations, it is important to understand the context of what was happening simultaneously, the ‘meanwhiles’ of history discussed in Chapter 1. One of these important ‘meanwhiles’ is the 15th century Reformation in England. Between the original invasion and the 15th century, Ireland was relatively undisturbed outside of the Pale. In this time period before the Reformation, the newcomers who arrived, the Normans and the English, were gradually assimilated into Irish culture, this is described in numerous texts as “becoming more Irish than the Irish.”¹⁴³ In the 15th century this peaceful coexistence changed, the Reformation had begun in England. At this time, England looked to Ireland with much more worry than before, and began to seek hegemony over Ireland.¹⁴⁴

Beginning in the 16th century a pattern emerged that would continue for centuries in Ireland, the Irish would rebel against British rule, and the British would confiscate Irish land and give it to a loyal Englishmen as a plantation, or vice versa.¹⁴⁵ In 1603, there was an unsuccessful rebellion in Ulster against English rule, resulting in an exodus of the leaders of the rebellion and their land being given to loyalists.¹⁴⁶ The success of the plantations in Ulster is an explanation for why there was a high density of Protestants in this area which turned out to be problematic during the independence negotiations. Another important rebellion is the 1641 rebellion, and the ensuing massacre by Oliver Cromwell.¹⁴⁷ Cromwell brought troops into Ireland, and sieged the city of Drogheda.

The English consolidated control over the Irish through the Penal laws of the late 17th century, which were restrictions placed on the Catholic population of Ireland. The Penal laws were introduced in the late 17th century with the intention of instituting even more control in

¹⁴² David Holloway. “Understanding the Northern Ireland Conflict: A Summary and Overview of The Conflict and Its Origins.” p. 6.

¹⁴³ Walter Robson. *British History 1066-1900*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995. Print. p. 50.

¹⁴⁴ Door Finbar Madden. *Understand Irish History: Teach Yourself*. p. 10.

¹⁴⁵ Door Finbar Madden. *Understand Irish History: Teach Yourself*. p. 11.

¹⁴⁶ David Holloway. . “Understanding the Northern Ireland Conflict: A Summary and Overview of The Conflict and Its Origins.” p. 3.

¹⁴⁷ Door Finbar Madden. *Understand Irish History: Teach Yourself*. p. 11.

Ireland.¹⁴⁸ Catholics were legally not allowed to own property worth more than five pounds, they were excluded from the political and education systems, the legal profession, they were not allowed to leave the country to be educated (the penalty for this was for their family land to be confiscated), among other restrictions.¹⁴⁹ These laws were diminished as part of Catholic emancipation, but in their wake they created a country where a majority of the land was owned by English and Protestant land owners and Irish Catholic peasants who had to rent land in order to work and live. Additionally, plantation policy was continued as a way of controlling the Irish economically. This was a policy of giving land, or incentives to English farmers to move to Ireland. The giving of land that was perceived to be rightfully Irish¹⁵⁰ and unlawfully confiscated led to resentment and anger on the part of the Irish. The plantations and penal laws also deepened the economic and societal divisions between the native Irish population and the newcomers.

In the late 17th century there was a growing surge of Irish nationalism under the United Irishmen and Wolfetone. In 1798, the French Revolution inspired the Catholics to also revolt against the English and gain independence. This failed revolution caused the 1801 Act of the Union. Prior to this, the Irish did have their own parliament, but after this the British imposed direct rule over Ireland. After the Union Act, some of the Anti-Catholic measures began to be lifted, followed by the 1829 Catholic Emancipation Act. There was continued pressure from Ireland to repeal the Act of the Union, but when famine struck in the mid-19th century, this quickly lost priority.

In the mid-19th century, despite the lifting of some of the penal laws, most of the Irish were still poor peasants who were living off of the bog land, the least arable land in Ireland. The only crop that flourished there was the potato. As a result of this, Irish people survived solely on potatoes. The potato was sufficient for the Irish, as long as the crop was good, because it contains many necessary nutrients. This became problematic in 1845 when the potato crop failed due to a fungus. The crop continued to fail for the next few years. At the time of the Potato Famine, Sir Robert Peel was the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, and at the beginning of the Famine, he was responsible for helping Ireland. In 1845, Peel even purchased

¹⁴⁸ David Holloway. "Understanding the Northern Ireland Conflict: A Summary and Overview of The Conflict and Its Origins." p. 3.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁰ Or a specific person's family land.

100,000 pounds of corn from the United States and had it shipped to Ireland.¹⁵¹ This was generous of the Prime Minister, but the issue became more complicated when the unexpected happened: the crop failed yet again. It was against then current economic philosophy to continuously give away food. Peel was voted out of office during the time of the Potato Famine, and was replaced by Lord John Russell. Although, Assistant-Secretary Charles Trevelyan was in control of the treasury and as a result was influential for relief efforts for Ireland.¹⁵² Trevelyan reverted to policies more in line with the political and economic philosophies of this time, over the humanitarian aid that Ireland needed. The economic philosophy was laissez-faire, and for the Irish this meant that the healthy crops that were being grown in Ireland continued to be exported for sale in England. When the blight returned the year after Peel's resignation, Trevelyan's response was that all of Peel's relief efforts (workhouses, giving away food), should immediately be closed down in an effort to ensure the poor of Ireland would not grow accustomed to government aid.¹⁵³ The government in the end relented on some of these restrictions; they would offer meal supplies to the Irish, but only the Irish in the west. This was problematic for the Irish in the east and southeast.¹⁵⁴ The Irish in the Northeast (Ulster) were affected by the food crisis, but the plantations in this area cushioned some of the blight for the Irish.¹⁵⁵

The result of the famine was the death of one million people and another million more emigrated. The emigration of Ireland continued for at least another century after the Potato Famine, with Irish communities forming in the United States of America, Great Britain and other English speaking areas of the Commonwealth. The culture of Ireland was also affected by the famine. The areas of Ireland that suffered the most were where Irish-Gaelic culture was strongest, and where Irish was the language spoken. As a result of the disproportionate effect on the Irish people, the Irish language slowly died out.

The conquest of Ireland, the Reformation, the plantations and the Potato Famine are all a vital part of Anglo-Irish relations. The question is how Anglo-Irish relations are remembered in Ireland and England? The next section is an overview of memory cultures that are relevant to

¹⁵¹ Ciarán Ó Murchadha. *The Great Famine: Ireland's Agony 1845-1852*. London: Continuum International Publishing. Print. 2011. p. 50.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

¹⁵³ Ciarán Ó Murchadha. *The Great Famine: Ireland's Agony 1845-1852*. p. 51.

¹⁵⁴ Joseph O'Neill. *Irish Potato Famine*. Edina: ABDO Publishing Company. 2009. Print. p. 52.

¹⁵⁵ Resulting in some additional resentment from the Irish to the Protestants living in these counties.

Ireland and England, which will provide essential background information for the reader prior to a discussion of the narratives in the history textbooks.

2.3 Concepts of Danger

In Chapter 1, I discussed some concepts that are part of historical narratives and history teaching in the classroom. The concepts that I discuss in Chapter 2 are more pertinent to the English and Irish cases specifically; forgetting and remembering, which can be combined under the title of narrative selection. I will outline how forgetting and remembering are in and of themselves important parts of historical narratives, and outline the dangers of narrative forgetting as it pertains to England, and the dangers of remembering as it is relevant to Irish memory.

2.3.1 The Dangers Selectivity and Forgetting

Selection is a necessary element in history education.¹⁵⁶ This selection is not wrong per se, but selection can sometimes have a strong effect on the consumers' perspective of historical events.¹⁵⁷ Selectivity in history education means that some information is remembered and some information is forgotten.¹⁵⁸ It would be impossible to, and inefficient for every event to be studied, some selection must occur in order to create an understandable and comprehensible history.¹⁵⁹ History has to be shaped for consumption.¹⁶⁰ The decisions of what to include in history, particularly school history, is written with much thought on what to include, and what to leave out.¹⁶¹

As social beings, we “remember and forget according to these memory frames and practices of the groups of which we are members.”¹⁶² Hazel Rose Markus et al. refer to these

¹⁵⁶ Robert Stradling. *Teaching 20th Century European History*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing, 2001. Print. p. 21.

¹⁵⁷ Bodo von Borries. “Competence in Historical Thinking, Mastering of a Historical Framework, of Knowledge of the Historical Canon.” p. 290.

¹⁵⁸ Jens Brockmeier. “Remembering and Forgetting: Narrative as Cultural Memory.” *Culture & Psychology*. 8:1(2002). p. 22.

¹⁵⁹ Bodo von Borries. “Competence in Historical Thinking, Mastering of a Historical Framework, of Knowledge of the Historical Canon.” p. 289.

¹⁶⁰ Emilie Pine. *The Politics of Irish Memory: Performing Remembrance in Contemporary Irish Culture*. p. 16. Experience with the past is meant to emphasize that taught history is generally to people who did not directly live through these events and as a result are learning explanations and interpretations of historical events.

¹⁶¹ Jeffrey K. Olick and Joyce Robbins. “Social Memory Studies: From ‘Collective Memory’ to the Historical Sociology of Mnemonic Practices.” *Annual Review of Sociology*. 24 (1998). Print. p. 110.

¹⁶² Jens Brockmeier. “Remembering and Forgetting: Narrative as Cultural Memory.” p. 23.

practices as “contexts of cultural participation.”¹⁶³ These social frames do vary by person though; we are members of more than just our national groups. We are members of smaller communities, kin groups and ethnic groups. All of these overlapping groups create the social framework by which we remember. Memory can be distinguished between autobiographical memory, historical memory, history and collective memory.¹⁶⁴ The concepts that are relevant to this thesis are historical memory and collective memory.¹⁶⁵ Historical memory is the memory that is derived from historical records.¹⁶⁶ Collective memory is the part of the past that is still active because it is used to cultivate identity.¹⁶⁷

Are remembering and forgetting opposite concepts? Philosopher Simonides transformed art memoria, the art of memory, into art oblivionis, the art of forgetting.¹⁶⁸ By doing this, he showed that memory and remembrance are essentially about forgetting.¹⁶⁹ Perhaps it is better, he suggests, not thinking of remembering and forgetting as opposites or the same, but part of a whole process that is culturally mediated.¹⁷⁰ This cultural mediation incorporates the discussion in Chapter 1 about collective memory. Jens Brockmeier asks “how does culture shape the practices and the notion of memory?”¹⁷¹ He argues that memory is organized by the individual according to ‘frames’ of memory that are socially constructed.¹⁷² Collective memory is a shared memory that affects the perception of the community and how they look at the past.¹⁷³ A mnemonic community that shares its past will identify with one another and bond together. The nation is an example of community that shares a common past. Together, the members of this community share a collective memory. Included in this shared memory are filters that affect the perception of the past.¹⁷⁴ As I stated in the introduction to Chapter 1, Historical culture is the way that people relate to the past on various different levels and how these relationships are represented and structured in “schools, universities, museums, heritage institutions, media,

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁴ Jeffrey K. Olick and Joyce Robbins. “Social Memory Studies: From ‘Collective Memory’ to the Historical Sociology of Mnemonic Practices. p. 111.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁸ Jens Brockmeier. “Remembering and Forgetting: Narrative as Cultural Memory.” p. 23.

¹⁶⁹ *Id.* p. 22.

¹⁷⁰ *Id.* p. 25.

¹⁷¹ *Id.* p. 24.

¹⁷² *Id.* p. 23.

¹⁷³ Zerubavel, Eviatar. *Time Maps*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003. p. 4.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

schoolbooks, ideologies, traditions, and attitudes.”¹⁷⁵ It is the conditions that are necessary for people to deal with the past, the “social infrastructure,”¹⁷⁶ “production and reproduction of historical knowledge and understanding.”¹⁷⁷ The culture that a person associates themselves as belonging to exert a strong force on the way they look at the past through the process of “socialization and customs.”¹⁷⁸

After having established that forgetting is essential to memory, it should be stressed that there is a large difference between leaving out some events and omitting important events. Mary Douglas, a social anthropologist who was known for her publications on symbolism, human culture and comparative religion, writes about selective memory as a normal process.¹⁷⁹ In her publication, “Forgotten Knowledge” she analyzes the Bible, and states that even if the words of the Bible stay the same, the interpretation and meanings attributed to these words may change over time and place.¹⁸⁰ This is an interesting way of framing history textbooks. I am reading books that were constructed between ten and thirty years ago, and the interpretations behind these constructions may have changed while the words remain the same. One of the parts of the textbooks I researched was the silences or the absences, what is forgotten in the historical narrative. If the selection of history omits important events; it falls under the concept of narrative forgetting.¹⁸¹ Forgetting can be defined as “selective remembering, misremembering and disremembering.”¹⁸² Uri Ram, a sociologist who has written on memory and perspectives, states that narrative forgetting takes place in the development and circulation of the national narrative.¹⁸³

One way of analyzing conflicting perspectives of history is the way that an event is labeled. One side often refers to a war as a war of independence, while the other labels it as aggression by the other side. The Jewish-Israelis and the Palestinians refer to the incident of

¹⁷⁵ Maria Grever “Fear of Plurality: Historical Culture and Historiographical Canonization in Western Europe.” 2009. p. 54.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁸ Jan Assman and John Czaplicka. “Collective Memory and Cultural Identity” *New German Critique*. 1995. p. 125.

¹⁷⁹ Mary Douglas. “Forgotten Knowledge.” *Shifting Contexts: Transformations in Anthropological Knowledge*. London & New York: Routledge. (2007). p. 15.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁸¹ Uri Ram. “Ways of Forgetting: Israel and the Obliterated Memory of the Palestinian Nakba.” *Journal of Historical Sociology*. 22.3 (2009): 366-395. Print. p. 366.

¹⁸² Mary Douglas. “Forgotten Knowledge.” *Shifting Contexts: Transformations in Anthropological Knowledge*. p. 16.

¹⁸³ Uri Ram. “Ways of Forgetting: Israel and the Obliterated Memory of the Palestinian Nakba.” p. 366.

1948 as the War of Independence and the Al Nakba - The Disaster, respectively.¹⁸⁴ These two names show a clear divide in the interpretations of the same event, one classifying it as independence, inferring they are gaining something, and the other as a disaster, associating it with destruction. The American Civil War has undergone many name changes throughout time and space: War Between the States, War of the Rebellion, War for Southern Independence, War of Northern Aggression and Freedom war. The states of the former confederate used War Between the States to encourage its own interpretation of the war, the title Civil War implies that the war took place in one nation as a whole, rather than two separate warring entities. It is a question of whether the South was an independent nation, or rebels within the United States. These name changes have depended on the historical, political and cultural sensitivities of different groups. The Potato Famine of Ireland can be called as such, or referred to as the Great Hunger. These two names for the period of 1845-1852 emphasize different aspects. The Potato Famine highlights the failed potato crop, whereas the Great Hunger stresses the hardships (hunger) that the Irish people faced during this time.

Ram stresses the importance of how a historical event is packaged.¹⁸⁵ His use of the term package reminds the reader that history is something to be consumed, almost connecting history to a marketable commodity. It could possibly be a portrayal of the truth, but excludes vital information. Although this does not constitute an error, it does subtract from the amount of truthfulness, and this is problematic if truth is to be the goal of history. The phrasing of the story can change how the story is perceived, and also alters the level of truth in the narrative.¹⁸⁶ The language and wording of the narrative is thus important to analyze. How events are portrayed effects the perception of the readers. This is of utmost importance when considering what the official narrative of the nation is. What is the story that is taught in schools? Ram emphasizes the importance of the encounters with the perspective of the story that has been forgotten.¹⁸⁷

Ram analyzes a piece of text from the Israeli Jubilee¹⁸⁸ that exemplifies narrative forgetting.¹⁸⁹ The Israelis forced the Palestinians to leave the territory in a structured manner.

¹⁸⁴ Uri Ram. "Ways of Forgetting: Israel and the Obliterated Memory of the Palestinian Nakba." p. 366.

¹⁸⁵ *Id.* p. 372.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁷ *Id.* p. 374.

¹⁸⁸ The end of a cycle that is important to the Jewish faith, and in particular to the control of land in Israel.

¹⁸⁹ *Id.* p. 373.

In the Jubilee they use the word “encouragement.”¹⁹⁰ This word decreases the amount of responsibility that is portrayed in the Israeli narrative. If they used a word such as “forced,” as I did, then the perception of the Israeli action changes in the mind of the reader. The narratives can decrease or increase either victimization or responsibility. This official statement of “encouragement” in the national narrative is true, but it is not wholly truthful.¹⁹¹ The selectivity of the events and the misleading word usage alters the portrayal of the story.¹⁹² Such an analysis is a helpful for scheme that I use to analyze history textbooks. When looking into the history textbooks of each nation, I look into how the wording affects the reader’s perspective of victimization and responsibility of either the Irish people or the English government and landowners.

2.3.2 The Dangers of Remembering

“What stories can do, I guess, is make things present.”¹⁹³ The pain and trauma of the past can be carried into the present through narratives.¹⁹⁴ According to Ranke, the Irish interpretation of history is that “every generation is equidistant from eternity.”¹⁹⁵ The historical distance between past events and remembrance in the present is particularly short for the Irish.¹⁹⁶ Events that happened centuries ago are discussed in politics and in their communities as if they happened yesteryear.¹⁹⁷ For the Irish, there is no ‘statue of limitations’ whereas at some point there is a lessening of the pain in remembrance, or elements of forgiveness appear.¹⁹⁸ Historical narratives described another way are not meant to make the past more distant from the present, but reconcile the past with the present. Miroslav Volf, a theologian, has asked the question of “how to remember rightly, so that memory, having impelled forgiveness and reconciliation, might go beyond itself, having finished its dirty work might rest in an ‘after’ memory.”¹⁹⁹ These philosophers and historians all raise the issue that Amos Oz verbalizes in his questions, “Apart

¹⁹⁰ *Id.* p. 374.

¹⁹¹ *Id.* p. 375.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*

¹⁹³ Jonathan Tran. “Emplotting Forgiveness: Narrative, Forgetting and Memory.” *Literature and Theology*. 23:2. (2009). Print. p. 220.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁵ Oliver MacDonagh. *States of Mind. A Study of Anglo-Irish Conflict 1780-1980*. London: George Allen & Unwin (Publishers) Ltd., 1983. Print. p. 6.

¹⁹⁶ Eviatar Zerubavel. *Time Maps*. p. 38.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁸ Oliver MacDonagh. *States of Mind. A Study of Anglo-Irish Conflict 1780-1980*. pp. 6-7.

¹⁹⁹ Jonathan Tran. “Emplotting Forgiveness: Narrative, Forgetting and Memory.” p. 221.

from the right to remember is there also a right to forget?”²⁰⁰ We have discussed the dangers of narrative forgetting in the previous section, and this section relates to the dangers of remembering as it occurs in the Irish narrative.

Part of remembrance is how the past is treated: are the events discussed with a forgiving and a reconciliation mentality, or is the present re-victimized by the past? Horrors of the past are often held in the present with a statement similar to ‘Never Forget.’ Is there a way to remember horrors with forgiveness? Fault is almost always taken as a given, as in the Irish narrative where the British caused the problems that arose in Ireland, but forgiveness cannot be assumed.²⁰¹ Ricoeur was uncertain of how forgiveness can even exist at all; he discusses it as “the tone of an eschatology of the representation of the past.”²⁰² He argues that forgiveness is not a logical part of human action.²⁰³ In regards to memory and forgiveness, sometimes what is more important is not the actual event itself but how that event is carried into the present and the collective memory of a nation.²⁰⁴ In the Irish textbooks, the tone of how the story is portrayed shows how these elements are present or combatted.

Remembering the past may seem like a straightforward objective. It is not always this simple though, the way the past is used in the present varies from nation to nation. The past is kept alive in a variety of interconnected ways. One of these methods is cultural memory. It is important to remember the past, but cultural representations put their own shade on the narrative.²⁰⁵ Another way the past is remembered is through nostalgia. As globalization and migration have increased, people feel less secure about their nation, so nostalgia is a method that glorifies their past and confirms their national identity.²⁰⁶ Ireland’s collective memory tend to the negative aspects of their past. According to Emilie Pine’s *The Politics of Irish Memory*, this phenomenon can be called anti-nostalgia. It is a method that celebrates Irish achievement in the face of much difficulty.²⁰⁷ The narrative shows the reader the difficulties that Ireland faced as a way of emphasizing how far that they have come. Anti-nostalgia also underlines the boundary

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁰¹ *Id.* p. 223.

²⁰² *Ibid.*

²⁰³ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁴ *Id.* p. 222.

²⁰⁵ Emilie Pine. *The Politics of Irish Memory: Performing Remembrance in Contemporary Irish Culture.* p. 14.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁷ *Id.* p. 22.

between the past and the present, the traumatic and the secure, keeping the past foreign.²⁰⁸ The way that the Irish remember also speaks to the need for a parallel history for victims. The saying that ‘history is written by the victors’ is combated here. This creates a future oriented memory that aims for justice for the victims.²⁰⁹ This framing changes the perspective of how Irish remember; it turns from a negative method to a positive one.

In this comparison of the dangers of remembering and forgetting, and how they are part of the Irish and English memory cultures, it can be concluded that the Irish and the English are going to be looking at history in different ways, with different emphasis. The concepts of remembering and forgetting are essential to this thesis as they become apparent in the history textbooks of each nation. The next section is a discussion about the use of history in Anglo-Irish relations, most importantly while the Irish and the English are in conflict, and what contentions history causes between these two nations.

2.4 Use of History in Anglo-Irish Conflict

“The English do not remember history, but the Irish forget nothing.”²¹⁰ History has been a contentious issue throughout Anglo-Irish relations that has developed into conflict and hurt negotiations. In 1921, when the English and the Irish were discussing Ireland’s independence, one of the Englishmen who was working on the negotiations with Irish president de Valera reported that he “listened to a long lecture on the wrong done to Ireland...[by] Cromwell, and when[ever] I tried to bring him [de Valera] to the present day, back he went to Cromwell again.”²¹¹

Although this is a dated example, it highlights the importance of history in how relations played out between Ireland and English.²¹² The past continued to live on in Irish memory, whereas the English tended to forget²¹³ what had happened in the past. For the Irish, the past was still contemporary, while the British in the late 18th century and early 19th century started to

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁹ *Id.* p. 26.

²¹⁰ Oliver MacDonagh. *States of Mind. A Study of Anglo-Irish Conflict 1780-1980*p. 1.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*

²¹² And by extension, Northern Ireland.

²¹³ The connotation of this British forgetting is not necessarily a negative aspect, just that their narrative emphasized different events.

adopt a history that had the theme of progress, congratulatory history.²¹⁴ This theme in English remembrance corresponded with a decrease in a sense of accountability for past actions.²¹⁵

A mentality that has been a source of conflict in Anglo-Irish relations, particularly after the Partition in 1922 is the idea of Ireland as an island as a whole. The Catholic republicans see the island as a God given whole, it is meant to be one nation.²¹⁶ The religious issue, to the Catholics, is a false separation of identity created by the British to deliberately turn Irishmen against one another.²¹⁷ The problem of national and religious identity in Ireland is a complicated one. In literature the discussion always revolves around Catholic republicans and Protestant unionists. Religion is often emphasized as the dividing factor between these groups, but national identity is also a factor. The Catholic republicans are proud Irishmen who want their island to be one nation, whereas the Protestant unionists consider themselves to be British and wish to remain in the United Kingdom because of this. Each of these two sides uses Irish history as a justification for their identities.

A part of Irish history that plays well into each side is the rebellions and following response. The rebellions involved killing Protestants, and when word of Catholics murdering Protestants reached English ears, the response was usually swift and deadly. This results in history that can be framed in different perspectives, with either side being portrayed as the victim. A look into how the Catholics use these uprisings in their history will provide some insight. Modern Irish historiography began in 1790 with Revd. Edward Ledwich's book, *Antiquities of Ireland*.²¹⁸ It is at this point that the trend of using the Irish past as a platform for contemporary Irish political conflict.²¹⁹ An example of how history becomes politicized in Ireland is the use of the 1641 massacres after the 1798 uprising.²²⁰ After the 1798 uprising, and the beginning of the use of Irish historiography, the 1641 massacre became a popular subject of historical exploration.²²¹ For the next ten years, the 1641 massacre was the center of Irish historical debate.²²² The debate surrounded the Protestant narrative and the Catholic narrative.

²¹⁴ *Id.* p. 9.

²¹⁵ *Id.* p. 11.

²¹⁶ *Id.* p. 23.

²¹⁷ *Id.* p. 23.

²¹⁸ *Id.* p. 1.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²²⁰ *Id.* p. 2-3.

²²¹ *Id.* p. 1.

²²² *Id.* p. 4.

The rebellion of 1641 involved deaths on both sides. It began as an attempted coup d'état by the Catholics, but when it failed it turned into an ethnic conflict between the Irish and the English, (Catholic v. Protestant). The Catholic uprising spurred action by the English, namely Cromwell. Cromwell's actions in 1649, as shown in the above quote by President de Valera, remain a politicized historical event for centuries.

The idea that the Irish emphasize the trauma in their history is not a new one. Theodore William Moody and Robert Dudley Edwards in the mid-1930's embarked on an ambitious plan to reform how the Irish remember history, through changing the aims, methods and the style of Irish history writing.²²³ They were not even the first to engage this challenge; previously historians D.B Quinn, R.B McDowell and Aubrey Gwynn had sought similar reform in Irish standards.²²⁴ Moody's and Edward's plan involved establishing two different historical societies and the Irish Historical Studies which was modeled to be similar to the Western academic journals such as the English Historical Review, the American Historical Review, and the Historische Zeitschrift.²²⁵ One of the tasks that Moody and Edwards undertook was to incorporate a section into this journal specifically for articles to "refute received wisdom or unquestioned assumptions concerning well known events, persons or processes by means of the findings of new research."²²⁶ This pedagogic program aimed at connecting university and academic history with school history.²²⁷ Their hope was to call attention to the shortcomings of the texts that the readers and notably teachers had come to treat as wholly truthful.²²⁸ In the 1960s, Moody laid down the ground work for A New History of Ireland.²²⁹ Moody aimed for New History to be the catalyst that "would...systematically reconstruct[ed], by chronological and thematic synthesis to be produced by a generation of experienced scholars trained in the methods of the professional academic historian."²³⁰ According to Moody there are two myths²³¹ that are the biggest obstacle in creating an objective Irish history.²³² Macdonagh discusses the

²²³ Ciaran Brady. "Interpreting Irish History: The Debate on Historical Revisionism, 1938-1994." Irish Academic Press: Dublin. 1994. Print. p. 3.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*

²²⁵ *Id.* p. 4.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*

²²⁷ *Ibid.*

²²⁸ *Id.* p. 5.

²²⁹ *Id.* p.

²³⁰ *Id.* p. 6.

²³¹ Catholic myth and the Protestant myth.

²³² Ciaran Brady. "Interpreting Irish History: The Debate on Historical Revisionism, 1938-1994." p. 7.

historiography of the Protestant narrative and the Catholic narrative and how each conveyed reversed events.²³³ The Catholic republican narrative stresses all events as part of a long chain of struggle against English oppression.²³⁴ The Catholic republican myth evolved into “a national feeling for the timeless.”²³⁵ Macdonagh primarily focuses on myths as they evolved in premodern Irish historiography, but they are still relevant to this discussion because they formed the backbone of what grew to be the “enduring characteristics in Irish political attitudes.”²³⁶ Moody distinguishes between history and myth as “good history which is a matter of facing the facts and myth which is a way of refusing to face them.”²³⁷ The myths that Moody named as remaining a point of contention in Irish history is “separatist sectarian myth,” which he associated with Ulster loyalism, and the unitary, nationalist myth, which was the hallmark of southern republicanism.²³⁸ His claim about these myths was that eventually after some time these myths would crumble under the weight of academic history, and the program that he began, Irish Historical Studies, would have succeeded in its goals.²³⁹ It would be arrogant for me to say that my thesis is a continuation of Moody’s goals, but the myths that Moody addressed in his research are a part of what I am looking for in the Irish history textbooks. One of the history textbooks that I acquired for research was part of a series of textbooks designed specifically to combat these same myths that Moody was writing about. In the following chapters, I will discuss the results that I discovered in the history textbooks of Ireland and England.

2.5 Conclusion

In Chapter 1, I introduced my research question and sub-questions, as well as the scheme I used to analyze the history textbooks, and additionally described the sources that I used for my thesis. I gave a brief overview of the Troubles of Northern Ireland, as well as the initial conquest and the potato famine as case studies. I discussed the concepts that were necessary for my topic more generally. In Chapter 2, I provided an overview of the history of Anglo-Irish relations, and discussed how history is used in England and Ireland, and finally the importance of the use of

²³³ MacDonagh, Oliver. *States of Mind. A Study of Anglo-Irish Conflict 1780-1980*. London: George Allen & Unwin (Publishers) Ltd., 1983. Print. p. 4.

²³⁴ *Id.* p. 5.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*

²³⁶ *Id.* p. 6.

²³⁷ Ciaran Brady. “Interpreting Irish History: The Debate on Historical Revisionism, 1938-1994.” p. 7.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*

²³⁹ *Ibid.*

history in Anglo-Irish relations. In the next two chapters, I will give examples of these concepts in the history textbooks.

Chapter 3: The conquest of Ireland in history textbooks.

3.1 Introduction

Anglo-Irish relations can be framed as a relationship between an empire and its colony. Framed in this way, the arrival of the newcomers in 1169 is the start of the colonization process, followed by the religious divide that developed in the 16th century, and finally the decolonization process that began in the early 20th century resulting in the partition of Ireland and Northern Ireland in 1921. This chapter analyzes the construction of the conquest and colonization of Ireland in Irish and English history textbooks, and these three time periods play a role in how the conquest is framed in the narratives.

Ireland under English influence or rule underwent a division. During the time of the original arrival of settlers in Ireland, 1169-1170, England was part of the Norman Empire.²⁴⁰ The settlers that arrived were Norman; they brought with them their French culture. The arrival of the Norman invaders in the 12th century created a division in society, but it was not as long lasting as the divide caused by religious identity and English identity in later centuries.²⁴¹ Within two generations, the Norman identity was “no longer a source of national or ethnic tension.”²⁴² In 1204, England came to be separated from the Norman Empire. This led to a division in the Anglo-Norman identity, the settlers arriving in Ireland after carried with them their English identity and culture. This change in England effects the identities of the groups in Ireland, and how this is dealt with in the texts will be addressed in this chapter.

As discussed, history plays an important role in the Troubles of Northern Ireland. During the conquest and colonization, many settlers arrived in Ireland from England, and Scotland, and after the Reformation these settlers were Protestant. The Protestants see themselves as the ‘descendants’²⁴³ of the English settlers, and this is where their British national identity can be derived. Northern Ireland was divided by this national identity,²⁴⁴ with each side trying to justify itself as rightful owners to the land. This societal division was not just an abstract one,

²⁴⁰ John Gillingham. “The Beginnings of English Imperialism.” *Journal of Historical Sociology*. 5:4. (1992): Print. p. 393.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*

²⁴² *Ibid.*

²⁴³ Is religion an inherited quality? The questions surrounding the national identity of the opposing religious groups of Northern Ireland is a complicated one, one that is not pertinent to my own research. Here when I refer to the Protestants as descendants, to clarify it is because they consider it to be their ancestry.

²⁴⁴ David McKittrick. *Making Sense of the Troubles: The Story of the Conflict in Northern Ireland*. p. 3.

one of the major problems of the Troubles was the physical segregation of the Catholics and the Protestants. Territorial disputes are at the center of the Troubles. Each side cites history as evidence that they are the rightful owners of land.

The history I am comparing begins with the original conquest of Ireland, with the arrival of settlers who begin to claim land. The questions I will be answering of the historical narratives are: Is segregation discussed and dealt with in these texts? How is identity dealt with in these texts? What people are emphasized, and are their motivations discussed? How is the arrival of the English and their interference in Ireland justified or discredited? Are there primary sources shared by history textbooks, and how are they used? These questions will be answered within the context of the initial conquest in 1169, English policy throughout Anglo-Irish relations and decolonization.

3.2 Justification, Land Control and Historical Time

Herfried Münkler is a German political scientist who wrote a book on theory and the history of empires, appropriately titled *Empires*. In this text, he writes that empires, especially large scale political orders, have to justify their existence as they are not natural.²⁴⁵ Two ways that empires can justify themselves, according to Münkler, are the imperial mission, such as a civilizing mission, or by introducing peace to the area.²⁴⁶ Justification is relevant for control of territory as well. If the English textbooks successfully justify the colonization of Ireland, then their land confiscations and plantation policy are also justified, making the Unionist group in Northern Ireland the rightful owners of territory. In this section I will analyze how these texts deal with the arrival of the English in Ireland.

As I stated above, how the English justify their control of Ireland by extension solidifies control of Irish territory throughout the narrative of Anglo-Irish relations. Part of this justification is a discussion on how the English came to arrive. Münkler argues that part of colonial history should address how the natives shaped their own process of being colonized. One of the theories of *Empires* is how relations among indigenous societies affected the

²⁴⁵ Herfried Münkler. *Empires: The Logic of World Domination from Ancient Rome to the United States*. Malden, MA: Polity. Print. p. 80.

²⁴⁶ *Id.* p. 81.

colonization process.²⁴⁷ Rivalries in these societies helped empires gain a foothold in their society.²⁴⁸ Also, there could have been cleavages in the society that could be taken advantage of, such as a large polity that lacks a strong bond or common loyalty which could be a hindrance in devising a common strategy, or there could even be a part of society that welcomes outside help in achieving their goals.²⁴⁹ Münkler's outline of the divisions in the host society that could result in colonization draws strong parallels to how the conquest is framed in British History.²⁵⁰ The kings were fighting and inevitably one of them asked for outside assistance, which resulted in the English gaining a foothold in Ireland that they were reluctant to give up.

The discussion in British History regarding the initial conquest of Ireland begins with a description of Ireland during the Middle Ages and dances around both of Münkler's justifications of empire. The political system of Ireland at the time is described as divided among the different areas of the island.²⁵¹ The kings of Ireland "spent a lot of time fighting each other."²⁵² The text also states that most of the high kings were weak.²⁵³ The implication here is that a stronger power could come in and unite the kings under one strong power, bringing peace to the island. Another English text, The Irish Famine begins its discussion of the Potato Famine with an overview of Irish history. The text states that the political division of Ireland ended up causing its own colonization.²⁵⁴ It further states that the King of England, Henry II, "took advantage of this Irish feuding to claim overlordship of the island."²⁵⁵ In British History, the Irish are framed as making the first move by going to the British for assistance, causing their own vulnerability to the British.

The second justification for empires is the imperial mission. The imperial mission is a statement of progress, of a duty to civilize the 'barbarians' now part of the empire.²⁵⁶ Examples of this can be seen in the Spanish empire's mission in converting the New World's 'savages' into Christians, or Tsarist Russia and its defense of the Orthodox Church, or the United States'

²⁴⁷ David Abernathy. *The Dynamics of Global Dominance: European Overseas Empires 1415-1980*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000. Print. p. 105.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁰ Walter Robson. *British History: 1066-1900*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995. Print.

²⁵¹ *Ibid.* p. 48.

²⁵² Walter Robson. *British History: 1066-1900*. p. 47.

²⁵³ *Ibid.* p. 48.

²⁵⁴ Tony Allan. *The Irish Famine. The Birth of Irish America*. Oxford: Heinemann Library, 2001. Print. p. 6.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁶ Herfried Münkler. *Empires*. p. 88.

mission to spread democracy across the globe.²⁵⁷ White man's burden is a concept that refers to the 'white' man of Europe and his duty to spread their culture and civilization around the world, justifying the global empire. Ireland does not fall so easily within this category, as it was not outside of Europe and its inhabitants were not different 'racially' from the occupiers.

The description in British History notes where the Irish stood at this time in terms of financial institutions, religion (Christianity), and culturally. The message is a confusing medley of civilization, and lack thereof, in Ireland: they were a people of religion, they had a culture, but they were financially backward.²⁵⁸ The text states that during the Middle Ages, the Irish did not yet use a monetary system, that they used a trade system.²⁵⁹ Instead of using coins, they used cows as at this time they were primarily cow farmers.²⁶⁰ British History also frames the Irish as being less civilized in terms of a legal system. The text states that "[Lord] John brought law and order to at least part of the land."²⁶¹ This statement has spatial and temporal connotations. The temporal aspect is in the beginning of the sentence, "John brought law and order..."²⁶² The reader can infer that prior to John's arrival; there was no law and order in Ireland. The text does not qualify what type of legal system that Ireland had before the English arrived. The spatial value is that the English "brought law and order to at least part of the land."²⁶³ The reader is left to infer from this that parts of Ireland, outside of Lord John's control, remained lawless and without order. This combined with the qualification about the backwardness of the Irish financial system paints a picture of Ireland as behind the times, and in need of the English help to become civilized. This narrative creates the idea that the British were merely responding to the Irish request for help. To take it a step further, it could be inferred that the Irish relinquished their sovereignty to the English by inviting them on their soil and into their domestic affairs. What is interesting is how the Irish narratives would deal with the idea that their own ancestor started the process of the conquest of their island.

Colonial Ireland addresses how the Irish can perceive Dermot for his invitation to the English into Ireland. The chapter on invasion discusses that after Dermot was ousted, he lost all of the political, economic, and military support, and after this he was "left with little option but

²⁵⁷ *Id.* p. 90.

²⁵⁸ "Irish monks ran schools, and they were very fine artists." Walter Robson. *British History*. p. 47.

²⁵⁹ Walter Robson. *British History:1066-1900*. p. 45.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁶¹ Walter Robson. *British History:1066-1900*. pp. 47.

²⁶² Emphasis added.

²⁶³ Emphasis added.

to seek backing elsewhere.”²⁶⁴ This text addresses how this was “controversial...because of the consequences”²⁶⁵ of his actions. One of the major contentions surrounding this story is how Dermot invited the Anglo-Normans and the English into Ireland, and thus whether the Irish are to blame for their own colonization. Colonial Ireland tackles this head on by addressing the role of historians: “[h]istorians, having freed themselves of the anachronistic view that he was a traitor to Ireland, have been unsure of what to make of him.”²⁶⁶ The Irish conquest was preceded by Dermot’s request of help, how does this fit into the Irish narrative of victimization by the English? Colonial Ireland tries to answer this question by discussing what would have been normal during Dermot’s time:

That a man of Dermot’s stamp should seek out his powerful neighbouring ruler, and then attempt to recruit forces in South Wales, was entirely natural. The Danish and Norman nobles of England had in the past found refuge and help in Ireland; Dublin and Wexford had long-standing contacts with western England and the Scandinavian settlements...²⁶⁷

This text situates Dermot in *historical time*, analyzing his actions against the norms of this period. This text categorizes Dermot’s actions as “natural”²⁶⁸ and in line with past actions of nobles in England. It begs the question of why did Dermot’s actions cause colonization, whereas the nobles of England who sought refuge in Ireland did not cause Irish involvement in English affairs. John Gillingham, a historical sociologist, wrote an article about the development of English Imperialism. His theory is that the imperial culture of England began in the 12th century, which coincided with Dermot’s request for help.²⁶⁹ This perspective of Dermot placing Dermot in his historical time is different than the English narrative which emphasizes the reasons why Ireland needed England to become a nation. Colonial Ireland takes on a cultural explanation for why at this time that Ireland became occupied. The explanation is twofold but interconnected. The first concerns Wales and the balance of power. The narrative mentions that “Norman lords had penetrated deep into Wales.”²⁷⁰ The narrative of Colonial Ireland also

²⁶⁴ Robin Frame. *Colonial Ireland, 1169-1369. Helicon History of Ireland*. Helicon Limited, Dublin. 1981. Print. p. 3.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁶ *Id.* pp. 3-4.

²⁶⁷ *Id.* p. 4.

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁹ John Gillingham. “The Beginning of English Imperialism.” p. 392.

²⁷⁰ Robin Frame. *Colonial Ireland, 1169-1369*. Print. p. 6.

coincides with the periodization of the English texts, with the Norman conquest of England in 1066. Wales was once an area where one could grow rich and these opportunities were declining. The Welsh were even expanding on English ground, depleting opportunities for land investments in Wales and the south of England.²⁷¹ The aristocrats, looking for land to invest in, looked to Ireland as the new frontier.²⁷² Additionally, “literature of the time, with its emphasis on quests, feats of arms, and courtly love, reflects the search for reputation, patronage and heiresses.”²⁷³ This creates a narrative that tries to explain why the Anglo-Normans would have wanted to come to Ireland, maybe even despite their king’s wishes. The combination of Ireland as the new frontier, and the growth of the romantic element of honor provide insight regarding the motivations of the Anglo-Normans for invading Ireland, prior to Dermot inviting the English and Anglo-Normans to assist him in re-conquering his title.

The discussion of the English arriving in Ireland in these narratives provides some interesting findings. The first was a confirmation of my hypothesis that the English narratives would try to justify the arrival of the English by emphasizing the benefits that colonization brought to Ireland, and that the Irish opened themselves up to colonization by not being unified. The second is that the Irish text I analyzed tries to place Dermot in historical time to negate the idea that the Irish caused their own colonization. The narratives in Irish history textbooks do not discuss the ‘law and order’ that the English brought to Ireland, they emphasize the destruction of Irish culture through the colonization process. Additionally, the Irish narrative discusses events outside of Ireland and even England, and why this perhaps was a reason that at this time the English invaded, which can be seen as an attempt to discredit the justification laid out by the English narrative.

3.3 Perspectives on Cromwell

Oliver Cromwell was a Member of Parliament in England in the mid to late 17th century. For some time, he was the most influential ruler in England, and also a devout Puritan.²⁷⁴ He was a controversial character in English history; he can be framed as either a hero or a villain. The reasons that a discussion of Cromwell is necessary are first, he is an important villain in Irish

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*

²⁷² *Id.* p. 7.

²⁷³ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁴ A very extreme form of Protestantism.

collective memory and secondly, the perspectives in these text offer examples of how the religious divide is identified.

One of the events that Cromwell is known for is crushing a rebellion in Ireland in 1649. The rebellion actually happened in 1641, but the English Civil War broke out and England's attention was away from Ireland. After the Civil War ended, Cromwell went to Ireland to gain control of the rebellion. This is known to the Irish as the Massacre of 1649, and also can be framed as the beginning of the 'Cromwellian conquest of Ireland.' Cromwell's siege of the Irish town of Drogheda resulted in many deaths:²⁷⁵ 3,552 is the estimate of total loss of life, with approximately 2,800 being soldiers and the rest civilians.²⁷⁶ Cromwell's siege in Ireland is an interesting historical event to discuss because it can be easily used in anti-English propaganda, or it can be placed in historical time with a discussion of what the rules of engagement were at this time.

The English textbook, 'King' Cromwell has a narrative that revolves around the perspectives of Cromwell mostly in England, but includes a section of perspectives in Ireland. In Exploring Change, an Irish text, there is also a large segment of the narrative dedicated to the Cromwell in Ireland. Another English text, Changing Minds: Britain 1500-1750 dedicates a part of its narrative to Ireland and the revolt of 1641. This text situates the revolt in connection with politics in England, notably it is connected as one of the reasons for the start of the English civil war.²⁷⁷ King Charles wanted to take an army to crush the rebellion in Ireland, but the Parliament would not allow this.²⁷⁸ The English narratives both discuss Cromwell's religious motives for going to Ireland. Changing Minds states that he "believed that God wanted him to punish the Catholics" in response to the horror stories about the murder of Protestants by Catholics.²⁷⁹ 'King' Cromwell opens its discussion about Cromwell with background of his religious upbringing.²⁸⁰ The Irish narrative does not discuss Cromwell as a Puritan, or make a statement about religious differences, but it does similarly mention Cromwell's belief that God justified his actions against Drogheda. The English narrative dedicates a section to the probable Puritan

²⁷⁵ The accounts vary on their emphasis on total deaths, or emphasizing that civilians were killed during the siege as well. I aim here to give a picture of why Cromwell is perceived as a villain in Ireland while remaining neutral.

²⁷⁶ John Barrett. *Sieges of the English Civil Wars*. London: Pen and Sword Books. (2009). Print. p. 165.

²⁷⁷ Jame Byron et al. *Changing Minds: Britain 1500-1750*. Essex: Addison Wesley Longman Limited. 1997. p. 75.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid*.

²⁷⁹ *Id*. p. 80.

²⁸⁰ Andry Harmsworth and Ian Dawson. *'King' Cromwell*. London: John Murray Publishers Limited. 2002. Print. p. 8.

education that Cromwell received which gave insight into why he thought Catholics were barbaric.²⁸¹ Moving into the description of the 1649 massacre, the text analyzes why the Irish revolted in 1641, giving background information on land confiscations in Ireland.²⁸² This background information also discusses the Reformation and the religious divide of Ireland.²⁸³ This is important because throughout the English narrative, the designation of religion denomination has a more prominent role, much more so than the Irish narrative.

The Irish history textbook Exploring Change does not emphasize this religious divide that the English narratives do. The only person who is demarcated as a religion is Sir Arthur Aston, the English Catholic who was defending the city at which Cromwell first arrived.²⁸⁴ This is very important here because the only person they state is a Catholic is also English. The identities of the groups in both these narratives are native Irish and Catholic or Protestant and English (or perceived descendants of English). The statement about Sir Arthur Aston then, is probably to state how abnormal this character's identity is in this narrative. The text explains that Cromwell arrived at this city, Drogheda, because he "wanted to protect the settlers in Ulster."²⁸⁵ The Irish narrative then lacks the qualification between the Protestants and Catholics in Ireland, and instead relying on the difference between outsider (settler) and native.

The Irish narrative continues to follow Cromwell's fate in post-Drogheda Ireland, whereas the English narrative stops after the initial massacre. The narrative in the Irish text revolves around Irish history, whereas the English text is following Cromwell through other controversies in history. After Drogheda, other towns in Ireland heard what had happened and quickly surrendered fearing a similar fate. Exploring Change states that in the ten year period, 1641 to 1651, one third of the Irish population died, including both native Irish and colonists.²⁸⁶ The text describes the dire state that Ireland was in, with many people lost their homes and farms, and England's response of selling these undesirables into slavery instead of taking care of them.²⁸⁷ The next step in this narrative is a description of how the English dealt with Irish land.

²⁸¹ *Id.* p. 10.

²⁸² *Id.* p. 35.

²⁸³ *Id.* p. 35.

²⁸⁴ Peter Sobolewski and John McDonald. *Let's Look at History 2: Exploring Change*. Dublin: Gill and Macmillan Ltd, 1990. Print. p. 155.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁶ *Id.* p. 158.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

This section is labeled “Cromwell’s ‘Final Solution’ to the Irish Problem.”²⁸⁸ There is an obvious anachronistic parallel here to Hitler’s final solution to the Jewish problem. The text addresses how that the English Parliament passed its ‘final solution’ legislation, but does not dictate whether this is what the legislation was called, or if it is what it has come to be called. The result of this legislation nonetheless was that three quarters of Irish land came to be confiscated.²⁸⁹

Neither the English nor the Irish history textbooks place this event in historical time, or overemphasized, as I anticipated. Regardless, the perspectives on Cromwell allow for an interesting discussion on how religion is framed in these narratives. The English narrative separates the rebels and Cromwell in their different religious categories, and discusses how perhaps Cromwell might come to be anti-Catholic through his Puritan education. The Irish narrative categorizes this event as a colony rebelling against its empire, and the repercussions, making it an event about land control. Additionally, the Irish narrative connects the harsh treatment of the Irish at this time to the Potato Famine that would come in 150 years.

3.4 Perspectives on Primary Sources in the History Textbooks

The primary sources I will be discussing in this section are used in Irish and English history textbooks for two reasons: the first is a comparative analysis of perspectives of the conquest of Ireland; the second is my own comparison of how a first person’s account of the conquest of Ireland in the 12th century is used in these texts. The first section discusses perspectives in British History and the exercise that follows. The second section is a discussion on the use of Gerald of Wale’s account of the conquest of Ireland as it was ongoing in the history textbooks. British History includes two sources to enable a discussion surrounding English rule, and its benefits or harm to Ireland. The sources are labeled 24e and 24f.²⁹⁰ There is no description of the authors or identification of their nationality. Source 24e is from a book written in 1955. It is an exemplification of justification of colonization that Ireland benefitted from English rule through its civilizing mission and introduction of peace and order:

The conquest was a good thing for Ireland. It gave her law and order. It

²⁸⁸ *Id.* p. 159.

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁰ Walter Robson. *British History: 1066-1900*. p. 127.

ended the wars between the Irish tribes, the raids, and the killing. England's victory let the Irish grow into a nation.

This excerpt states the benefits of colonization for Ireland, what England brought to Ireland, law and order, and peace, and implies that without England's help, Ireland would not have grown into a nation. Source 24f is from a book printed in 1927. This statement frames English colonization in a different manner:

At the end of the revolt,²⁹¹ Ireland was in a dreadful state. The English had won, but the Irish were reduced to hunger and misery. Wolves roamed the countryside. Children crawled on all fours, eating grass. Some men and women were so hungry that they became cannibals.

This excerpt concentrates more on the immediate harmful effects that England caused in Ireland. The difference is that the 24e looks at the benefits in the short term and the long term, and the second is the state Ireland was in after the force that England had to exert in order to bring Ireland under control. The in-text comparison between these two excerpts takes place in an exercise. The exercise calls for the reader to compare the long-term and short-term results of the conquest. The exercise wants the students to qualify each of these contrasting statements about the affect English rule had on Ireland, one of the questions though asks "[i]s it possible that both authors were right?" If you are to agree that both authors are right, that the Irish suffered in the short term, but then benefitted in the long term, then the justification of the English empire has a stronger case against the source that describes the short term horrors Ireland faced.

The second source that I will discuss is from an account written in 1188 by Gerald of Wales. Gerald of Wales accompanied Henry II's son, John to his travels in Ireland in 1185, and wrote the *Conquest* in 1188 to discuss what he witnessed. Colonial Ireland defines this work as:

patronising assumptions about the barbarity of the Irish, [with] their blunt presentation of indelicate aspects of Irish society, their delight in exotic tales, and their glorification of some of the participants in the invasion – provoked furious reactions from patriotic writers of later ages."²⁹²

²⁹¹ This text does not specify which revolt that they are referring, and could be any number of revolts in Ireland that were crushed by the English.

²⁹² Robin Frame. *Colonial Ireland*. p. 2. Emphasis added

This description is important for two reasons: the writing of Gerald of Wales probably influenced the English perspective of Ireland, justifying their colonization and additionally it affected the Irish perspective by influencing the writings of patriotic Irish writers in later times. Colonial Ireland tackles this idea of Gerald as biased by stating that he “must be placed in his own time,”²⁹³ but also that he was “accurate and intelligent, though deeply partisan.”²⁹⁴ The text warns though that it should be “approached with caution,”²⁹⁵ Gerald of Wales was “concerned to celebrate the achievements of his kinsmen,” it includes “fictional speeches,”²⁹⁶ and “he does not hesitate to fabricate the texts of letters that he had not seen.”²⁹⁷ But that “[d]espite these reservations, the Conquest provides a remarkable view of the way in which a gifted contemporary regarded the enterprise in which his relatives participated.”²⁹⁸ Colonial Ireland is giving a warning about the accuracy of Gerald of Wales as a historian, but also acknowledging that his version of events presents an interesting perspective in of itself to be studied, as an Englishman who was directly involved in the conquest.

²⁹³ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

British History also includes an excerpt from Gerald's book, but in an entirely different context as shown here:

Source 9a

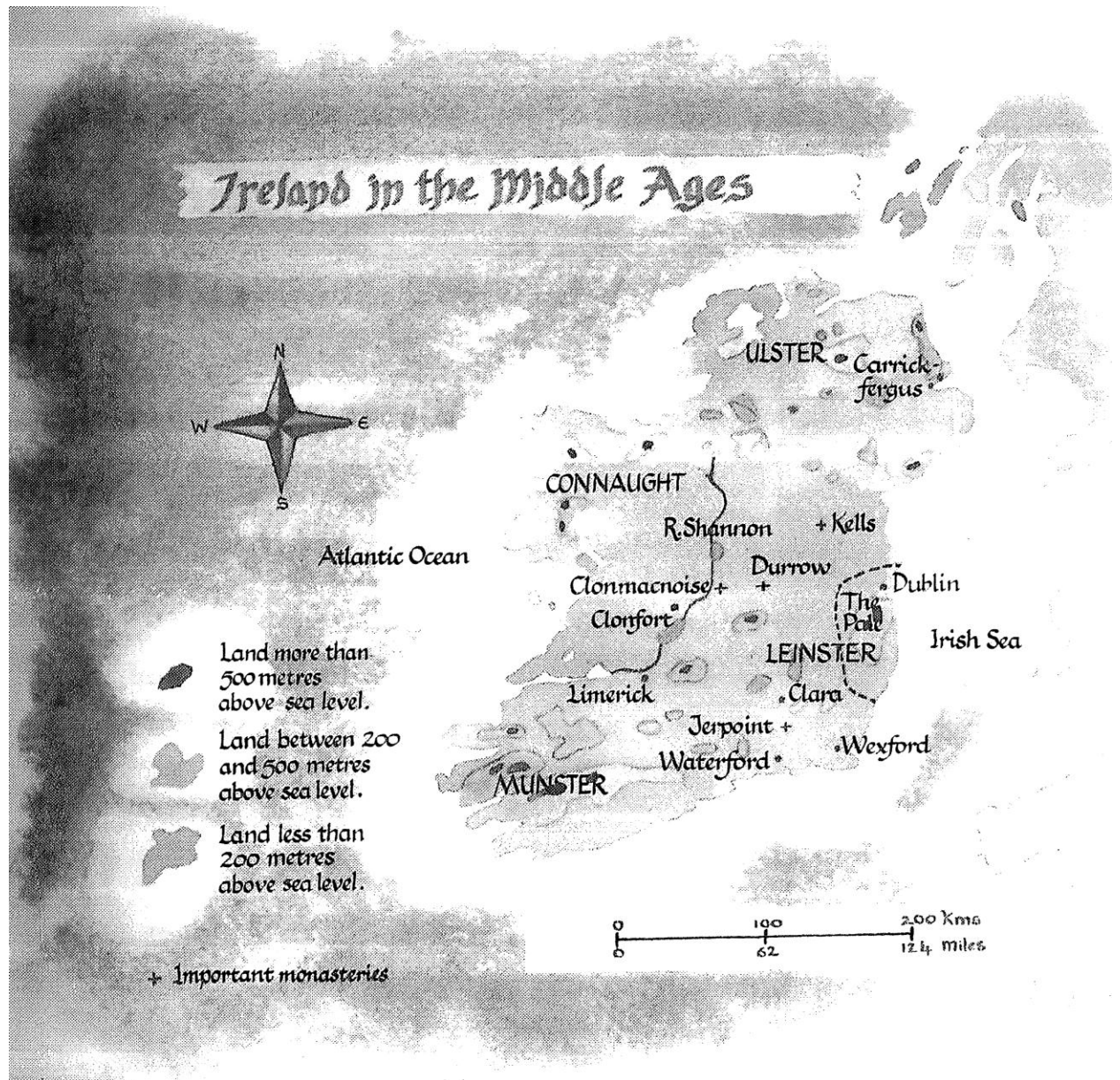
From north to south, Ireland stretches a distance of eight days at 40 miles a day. From east to west, it stretches for four days. The country is low-lying round the coast. Inland it rises up to hills and mountains. The Shannon is the biggest river. Its source is in a lake that lies between Connaught and Munster. From there, part of it flows south to Limerick and the sea. The other part flows north between Ulster and Connaught. It reaches the sea in the north.

From a book written by a Welsh priest called Gerald in about 1190.

Colonial Ireland gives much importance and emphasis to Gerald of Wales' work as a primary source, a source of history and a source of perspective, whereas British History includes it as a geographical description of Ireland, but its in-text analysis leads to some interesting developments. British History specifies that a Welsh priest named Gerald wrote a book about Ireland in 1190.²⁹⁹ There is no other mention of Gerald and his primary source of the Conquest in this text, perhaps which could place him in his context and noting what his role was in the conquest. The text excerpt included in British History is a description of the landscape of Ireland at the time of the acquisition.

²⁹⁹ Walter Robson. *British History:1066-1900*. p. 49.

Here is the map of Ireland in the Middle Ages:



And the accompanying exercise:

Exercise 9.2

Read Section B and Source 9a, and look at the map of Ireland on page 47. Was Gerald (the author of Source 9a) right about Ireland? Fill in the blank spaces.

- a Gerald said that Ireland stretches _____ miles from north to south. He said that it stretches _____ miles from east to west.
- b The map shows that Ireland is _____ miles long from north to south, and _____ miles wide from east to west.
- c Gerald was _____ when he said that there are hills and mountains in Ireland. But he was _____ when he said they were not near the coast.
- d In some ways, Gerald was right about the River Shannon:
 - i It is Ireland's _____ river.
 - ii It does flow south to _____ and the sea.
- e In some ways, Gerald was wrong about the Shannon:
 - i Its source is not in a _____ between Connaught and Munster.
 - ii Part of it does not flow _____.

There are a few inaccuracies apparent in Gerald's writing when you compare them to the map of Ireland. The first inaccuracy is regarding the size of Ireland. Gerald writes that Ireland is about 320 miles north to south, and 160 miles east to west.³⁰⁰ From Ireland's most northern point, to its most southern point is at most 248 miles. His description from east to west is not entirely inaccurate at 160 miles. He states that "[i]nland it rises up to hills and mountains."³⁰¹ If you draw your attention back to the map in the Appendix, there are very few spots that come 500

³⁰⁰ *Id.*

³⁰¹ *Id.*

meter above sea level in Ireland. It is difficult to understand why this is included in this English text. Textbooks from both nations take space in their narrative of the conquest of Ireland to address Gerald's narrative and its inaccuracies, but in entirely different ways. The Irish text lays out a strong analysis of how Gerald's perspective affected his historical overview of this time in Ireland, but also notes the importance of Gerald's work despite its shortcomings. The English text includes an inaccurate description of Ireland geographically, but makes no effort to describe how this fits into the rest of Gerald's Conquest, or much analysis about what these inaccuracies mean in the context.

3.5 Narrative Forgetting

In Chapter 2, I discussed the dangers of narrative forgetting. Narrative forgetting can be defined as silences and omissions. The silences were apparent in the English history textbooks. I had to research more English history textbooks in order to gain more access to the narrative of the Irish conquest, as there were many more gaps in the history of Anglo-Irish relations. The events that unfolded that resulted in the colonization of Ireland were more likely to be omitted in the English history textbooks. I widened my search to the initial conquest, the split between Protestants and Catholics after Henry VIII's Reformation, England's policies on Ireland, Irish revolts and the English response, and then Ireland achieving Home Rule in 1919 in order to find descriptions of Anglo-Irish relations. Of the three English textbooks covering the period from 1919 until the collapse of the Soviet Union, only one mentions Ireland.³⁰² Another that covers the period from 1870 until 1955 is completely silent on Ireland. As I stated in Chapter 1, the sole reference in these English books is of the attempt of Irish nationalists trying to achieve independence during the Treaty of Versailles negotiations, and being disappointed.³⁰³ This silence is despite that during this time Ireland received Home Rule and was partitioned, went through a civil war and the beginning of the Troubles in Northern Ireland, all of which included and affected England.

A large part of Irish history is also the Irish diaspora, the large reach that the Irish immigrant community has reached around the globe. *An Economic & Social History of Britain: 1066-1939* discusses Ireland in reference to the Irish immigrants who came to England, and also

³⁰² Tony McAleavy. *Modern World History*. Cambridge University Press. 1996. Print.

Ben Walsh. *Modern World History*. London: John Murray Publishers Ltd. 1996. Print.

Roger Warson. *The Developing World History Four: Man Moves Forward*. London: Longman Group Ltd. 1975.

³⁰³ Tony McAleavy. *Modern World History*. p. 18.

the effect that the Potato Famine had on the Corn Laws of England. The text is silent on the effect that England and English policies had on Ireland. It also neglects to discuss the reasons that the Irish left Ireland, concentrating only on the Irish in their new nation. Similarly, Changing Minds: Britain 1500-1750 mentions Ireland in reference to the Irish immigrants and how the Poor Law of 1601 resulted in them not receiving assistance or being sent back to Ireland.³⁰⁴ This frames Irish immigration in a negative light: showing the strain that the poor Irish had on England. Additionally, it shows that these texts may discuss England and English history isolated from world history.

3.6 Segregation and Identity

Segregation in Anglo-Irish relations, including the Troubles, revolves around self-identification and identifying of others. The Partition of Ireland in 1921 was a compromise, but not an easy or nonviolent one. From the first months of the partition onwards, violence was a problem. From 1920 to 1922, 428 people were killed in Northern Ireland, the large majority being Catholic.³⁰⁵ After 1922, the violence deescalated until the end of the 1960s, but it left a legacy of communal conflict and mistrust in Northern Ireland. One result of this initial conflict in the 1920s was legal and political segregation between the two groups. Decisions were made that the problems could be contained if the groups and their identities would not coexist, and separation became the norm.³⁰⁶ The segregation became instilled in Northern Ireland and two separate cultures developed in isolation. There were few mixed marriages. Children were educated separately, learning different historical interpretations, solidifying their separate identities.³⁰⁷

In the history of ‘outsiders’ living in Ireland, there seem to be different ways of dealing with how they coexisted with the Irish in Ireland. The segregation issue is one of identity, and exclusion-inclusion. Are the outsiders portrayed as being different: nationally religiously, or economically superior? The idea that the English settlers, prior to the Reformation, “became Irish” is repeated in numerous English textbooks, whereas the Irish narrative emphasizes the separation of the Irish and the English community. In British History, the Irish revolt against

³⁰⁴ Jamie Byron et al. *Changing Minds: Britain 1500-1750*. 1997.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁷ David Holloway. “Understanding the Northern Ireland Conflict: A Summary and Overview of the Conflict and its Origins.” p. 2.

English rule in 1250 is discussed.³⁰⁸ It lists a few reasons for Irish success during this time; the relevant reason for this thesis is one concerning the identity of the “English (and French) lords and knights.”³⁰⁹ First, it is interesting to note it addresses the lords and knights as English, but also as French, even though this French identity is labeled in parenthesis. The lords and knights, the text elaborates, “married Irish girls. Their sons, and their sons, also took Irish wives. In time, they became completely Irish.”³¹⁰ This narrative emphasizes the dissolution of the English identity of settlers.

The theme of identity and intermarriage matters in the introduction to Colonial Ireland as well. There is a comparison in the introduction of the Anglo-Norman identity as it is absorbed or rejected by the Scottish, English and the Irish. In Scotland and England, the identities were “blend[ed]”³¹¹ or “accommodated happily enough in the...historical consciousness.”³¹² This is put in stark contrast to the evolution of the Gaelic identity. In the Irish Gaelic identity “[t]he Anglo-Norman invaders and settlers continue to be cast in the role of alien intruders...despite the fact that their blood must run in the veins of almost every family in modern Leinster and Munster at least.”³¹³ The author of this text frames the “origins of the emotional rejection of the Anglo-Norman tradition, and of the identification of it with the English domination...[in]... the medieval period itself.”³¹⁴ Colonial Ireland maintains that the whole of the island was never fully conquered. In the unconquered areas they had freedom to maintain and practice their Irish Gaelic identity, which in part meant “articulate[ing] hostility to the incomers...preservation and intensification of the sense of common Gaelic identity.”³¹⁵ The introduction portrays not just Scotland as a colonized land, but England as well. It shows that the Anglo-Normans invaded and conquered England at this time, or prior to Irish colonization. It also shows how the identities of these three groups developed in different directions, with Scotland and England absorbing these newcomers as part of their “historical consciousness,”³¹⁶ while Ireland (despite intermarriages) rejected the Anglo-Normans on an emotional or ideological level. The author further explains

³⁰⁸ Walter Robson. *British History: 1066-1900*. p. 125.

³⁰⁹ These lords and knights are who I often refer to as settlers. Walter Robson. *British History: 1066-1900*. p. 50.

³¹⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹¹ Robin Frame. *Colonial Ireland, 1169-1369*. p. viii.

³¹² *Id.* p. ix.

³¹³ *Ibid.*

³¹⁴ *Ibid.*

³¹⁵ *Ibid.*

³¹⁶ *Ibid.*

this cultural rejection by emphasizing that Ireland at this time was not fully colonized, the “international élite”³¹⁷ and their settlements were separated from the Gaelic areas, allowing dual cultures to grow. English common law and administration was imported to the élite settlements, whereas in “the Gaelic areas...Irish custom continued to be observed.”³¹⁸ British History states that the English in Ireland “spoke the Irish language...kept Irish poets in their homes...were keen on stories of Irish heroes, giants and magic. They had no time for English laws and taxes.”³¹⁹ These two ideas about identity and segregation in Ireland during the earlier years of the conquest are directly in contrast with one another.

The divide between nationalities was not as divisive one as the later religious divide between the groups of Ireland. British History covers a few reasons why the Irish “did not like”³²⁰ or even “hate”³²¹ the English. The first reason is as follows: “the English were foreigners. They did not understand Irish law or history, or the Irish language.”³²² Secondly, after Henry VIII made himself the head of the Church of Ireland and instituted the reformation in England, there was a religious divide between the Protestant English and the Irish Catholics. The third reason was that under Queen Mary Tudor, the plantation policy was created.³²³ The first reason listed is in contrast with the description of the English losing their heritage and embracing the Irish identity, but is in line with Colonial Ireland’s segregation narrative. The second two reasons in British History emphasize the religious and the economic divide between the Irish and the English in Ireland. In regards to an explicit discussion of segregation, British History notes that the “Irish peasants tilled the fields, and the English lords lived in the castles.”³²⁴ The author does not qualify the reasons that the Irish were put into the peasant role, while the English were the landlords. British History comments on the differences between the Catholics and the Protestants in Ireland at a later time, around 1750. It states that the Protestants, despite being a minority in Ireland (25% of the population), held all the power, land and important jobs. The text says that the “Irish Catholics got the right to vote in 1793. But they still complained that they were treated unfairly.” The text discusses three major differences between the Protestants

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*

³¹⁹ *Id.* p. 50.

³²⁰ Walter Robson. *British History: 1066-1900.* p. 124.

³²¹ *Id.* p. 126.

³²² *Id.* p. 124.

³²³ *Id.* p. 126.

³²⁴ *Ibid.*

and the Catholics: power, land ownership and job opportunities. The difference in power was partially negated by giving the Irish the right to vote, and the wording implies that the Irish should have been grateful for receiving this right.

Colonial Ireland at the end of its introduction again returns to the idea of Ireland as an “episode in European history,”³²⁵ by stating that “the broad picture we see by the 1360s is the familiar one of an English political authority operating from Westminster and Dublin, a self-conscious Gaelic society, and, in between, an Anglo-Irish population afflicted by problems of identity and confidence.”³²⁶ What is interesting in this perspective is the idea that there was an “Anglo-Irish” population that was concerned with who they were, were they Irish, Anglo-Norman, or English? It continues this explanation, “the adaptation of the descendants of the settlers to their Irish environment.”³²⁷ This implies it was the settlers that assimilated to the Irish culture, rather than the implication that in Scotland and England where the traditions were “blend[ed],”³²⁸ implying that a new culture formed with parts from either side. The segregation and identity theme in these narratives will continue to play an important role in the Potato Famine analysis.

3.7 Conclusion

The English texts provide a justification for the conquest of Ireland that is in line with Münkler’s: Ireland was less industrialized, and their financial system was undeveloped, and benefitted from English colonization. Ireland remained undeveloped for centuries, arguably due to English interference, despite the English claim of benefits of colonization.³²⁹ Perhaps the discussion of the English encountering a people who were already undeveloped allows for the idea that the English are not to blame for the Irish not participating in the Industrial Revolution (which was a factor that led to the Potato Famine).³³⁰ English history textbooks also connect the colonization to the divided society of Ireland and Irish action. The tone in Colonial Ireland is a bit different, but we should consider that this Irish history textbook appears to be written at a more historiographical level. It considers more academic historical terms such as historical

³²⁵ *Ibid.*

³²⁶ Robin Frame. *Colonial Ireland, 1169-1369*. p. x.

³²⁷ *Id.* p. x.

³²⁸ *Id.* p. viii.

³²⁹ Eamonn Slater and Terrance McDonough. “Marx on 19th Century Colonial Ireland: Analyzing Colonialism beyond Dependency Theory.” *National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis*. 36. (2008): Print. p. 24.

³³⁰ *Ibid.*

consciousness and collective identity. It also is an entire book dedicated to the colonization of Ireland, as opposed to merely a section of British history as in the English history textbooks. With that being said, there are some comparisons that can be drawn.

There are three comparisons that I would like to conclude about the Irish and English construction of the conquest of Ireland in history textbooks. The first is that the English history textbooks make an attempt to justify their arrival in Ireland, whereas the Irish history textbooks try to negate these justifications. This can be seen in the discussion of the benefits or harm that England brought to Ireland, or the description of how backward Ireland was prior to England's arrival, and additionally in the qualification of Dermot's actions. The second is that in the English history textbooks the texts are more likely to discuss the divide between the Irish and the English as a religious divide, whereas the Irish will describe the groups more as native or settlers (national identity). To extend this comparison, the English texts state that before the religious divide, the English in Ireland inevitably became Irish. This description serves to emphasize the difference between the groups that develops after the religious divide, the implication being that religion is indeed the sole separating factor. The final comparison is on the silences in the English texts of Anglo-Irish relations, particularly of the decolonization process in the 20th century. The justification of the English involvement in Ireland, segregation and identity issues and silences additionally continue to play a prominent role in the narrative of the Potato Famine.

Chapter 4: Construction of the Potato Famine in English and Irish history schoolbooks.

4.1 Introduction

The Potato Famine is the one of the largest events in Irish collective memory. There is a spectrum of perspectives that lie between two extremes: natural disaster and genocide. Most perspectives lie somewhere in-between these two extremes, but there is still a gap. The perspectives that are discussed in this thesis are not the perspectives of extremists groups, but statements about the Potato Famine and its place in Irish and English narratives found in history school books. The Potato Famine was a disaster that the Republicans used as a propaganda tool against the British and the Protestants. Their British³³¹ national identity was seen as an extension of imperial power. Due to the use of the Potato Famine in such a manner on the political arena, the trauma of the past was kept alive. My analysis of these history schoolbooks focuses on the question of whether the narrative of the Potato Famine is reconciliatory in tone or trauma inducing.

In 1997, British Prime Minister Tony Blair issued an apology for the Irish Potato Famine. He noted that the famine “left deep scars...[and]...[t]hose who governed in London at that time failed their people through standing by while a crop failure turned into a massive human tragedy.”³³² The Irish Prime Minister at this time responded, “the statement confronts the past honestly, [and] it does so in a way that heals for the future.”³³³ The story of the Potato Famine is difficult for the English to reconcile with as the narrative can be construed very negatively against the actions of their nation. Prime Minister Blair’s speech came during the 150th remembrance of the Potato Famine, but if we recall the timeframe of the Troubles, it is towards the end of the Troubles nearing the Good Friday Agreement. What is interesting in Prime Minister Blair’s words is that he notes responsibility for British (in)action while the Potato Famine was ongoing, he was careful not to allow his apology to stray into dangerous territory,

³³¹ British meaning part of the British Empire or the United Kingdom as opposed to an English identity.

³³² Kathy Marks. “Blair issues apology for Irish Potato Famine.” *The Independent*. 2 June 1997. Web. Accessed 24 July 2013.

Sarah Lyall. “Past as Prolouge: Blair Faults Britain in Irish Potato Blight.” *New York Times*. 3 June 1997. Web. Accessed 24 July 2013.

³³³ Kathy Marks. “Blair issues apology for Irish Potato Famine.” *The Independent*. 2 June 1997. Web. Accessed 24 July 2013.

that is into the centuries of colonization that can be connected to exacerbating the Famine. The words of both the English and the Irish Prime Minister were important in the political context of the Troubles because it showed some reconciliation between the Irish and the English, in a way that took some of the trauma out of the history for the Irish.

When looking into the construction of the Potato Famine in both the Irish and English textbooks, these are the sub-questions I posed: Does the narrative connect the Potato Famine to either earlier history, or later events? What are the spatial connections to the Potato Famine? What details of the narratives are portrayed differently in these texts? How are the causes of the Famine discussed in the text? Answering these questions, I will gain a picture of the narratives and their emphasis on remembrance or forgetting.

4.2 Periodization: Potato Dependency and Plantations

How an event is framed in *historical time* can have an effect on how an event is perceived. The inclusion of history outside of the usual temporal or spatial zone of an event can change how the event is interpreted. The construction of the Potato Famine allows us to gain insight into this process. The Potato Famine occurred between 1845 and 1852. For my analysis, I looked for whether events prior or after were connected to the Potato Famine. First, I will address the ‘prehistory’ of the Potato Famine as it is discussed, or ‘forgotten,’ in these history textbooks. Then, I will discuss the legacy that followed the Potato Famine in these history textbooks.

A Primary History of Ireland begins its discussion about the Great Famine by establishing the history of the potato in Ireland. The text states that the potato was introduced in the seventeenth century.³³⁴ In the time between the introduction of the potato and the Great Famine, the potato had become “the sole diet of millions,”³³⁵ the text explained, and “farmers and their families ate potatoes, and nothing but potatoes, at every meal.”³³⁶ Establishing that the potato had become the staple food of the Irish peasants at this time is an important fact that prepares the reader for why it was such a disaster when the potato failed. At the same time as the Potato Famine, the corn crop of England also had a terrible year, but England did not face the same fate that Ireland

³³⁴ Máiréad Ní Gháda. *A Primary History of Ireland, Book 2, from 1691-1949*. Dublin: Brown and Nolan Limited, 1964. Print. p. 79.

³³⁵ *Ibid.*

³³⁶ *Ibid.*

did when a sole crop failed.³³⁷ The explanation in A Primary History of Ireland establishes both the positive reason³³⁸ for why the Irish became dependent on the potato, and alludes to the English actions that led to this. The potato was a “nourishing food,”³³⁹ with “a pleasant taste,” and “the climate...is very suited to the crop.”³⁴⁰ Following these positive explanations the text moves into more negative territory, for “[t]here were other reasons for the rapid spread of the potato.”³⁴¹ The continuing explanation includes the plantation policy of England, and explicates that the plantation policy removed the Irish from arable land to bog land where only the potato would be able to grow.³⁴²

One of the explanations of potato dependence, and by extension, the Great Famine was the plantation policy of England.³⁴³ One of the ways I analyzed the narratives of the Potato Famine was to see how they connected plantations and land policy in Ireland and the Potato Famine. The periodization of British History aims at setting up some of the background information for the beginning of the Famine. The section of this chapter on the Great Famine describes Ireland as “a farming country.”³⁴⁴ There are two parts of the English text The Irish Famine that I will discuss in reference to prior periodization of the Potato Famine. The first is the statement in the text noting the lack of industry in Ireland, “...demand for land in a country with few other jobs.”³⁴⁵ I will discuss this further in the section on the agricultural and Industrial Revolution, but the importance is that this text does not give reasons why there were no other jobs in Ireland.³⁴⁶ The second statements I will address are in a section discussing the risks of dependence of the potato: “People were aware at the time of the dangers of being over-dependence [sic] on a single crop.”³⁴⁷ It is not clear what people that the author is referring to, if it is the Irish then the statement negates the fact that the Irish were not dependent by choice. If he is referring to the English, then it is a statement of blame that the English neglected to stop the

³³⁷ Ciarán Ó Murchadha. *The Great Famine: Ireland's Agony 1845-1852*. p. 47.

³³⁸ The potato was nourishing, grew underground so it was safer during conflict, suitable to Irish climate and has a pleasant taste.

³³⁹ Máiréad Ní Gháda. *A Primary History of Ireland, Book 2, from 1691-1949*. p. 79.

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁴¹ *Ibid.*

³⁴² *Ibid.*

³⁴³ *Ibid.* The explanations for the Famine will be explained in further detail. The plantation policy will only be discussed here as it is connected to periodization.

³⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁴⁵ Tony Allan. *The Irish Famine: The Birth of Irish America*. Oxford: Heinemann Library, 2001. Print. p. 11.

³⁴⁶ One of the main arguments of the Potato Famine is that England prevented industrialization in Ireland because they needed Ireland's agricultural resources to support their own industrial revolution.

³⁴⁷ Tony Allan. *The Irish Famine: The Birth of Irish America*. p. 13

Irish from being vulnerable before the Famine, but not an explicit one. Plantation is defined in the Irish history textbook Let's Look at History 2: Exploring Change as “lands taken from Irish lords and then given to English and Scottish settlers.”³⁴⁸ The plantation policy is connected to the Penal laws against Catholics. These are discussed in the beginning of this textbook, but no dates are given (mid to late 17th century). The important part of this section is that prior to the Famine, the text situates the landowners as “British in origin and Protestant.”³⁴⁹ The societal division is explained on national and religious lines, similar to the English texts, but this difference also extends to the economic divisions in society, where the English text goes silent. Landowners were “determined to make their position in Ireland secure by making laws to keep the majority of the people poor, ignorant and degraded.”³⁵⁰ This description of landowners sets the tone for the narrative. The role of the historian in historical understanding is, according to Muntz, “is a man who studies people’s conduct and who tries to make his readers understand why people acted in a certain way.”³⁵¹ We are experiencing a text which is describing a motivation for the degradation of Catholics. The landowners associated their success with the demise of the Irish Catholic peasants, and this narrative describes laws that were created for the sole purpose of keeping them poor. British History also discusses the use of plantations in Ireland. It is in this section that the narrative states that “[m]ost of the Irish were Catholics, and hated the Protestant English.”³⁵² This English text does explain plantations with context. It describes that many of the Catholic Irish lost their lands, and how the settlers and the Irish thought negatively of one another.³⁵³

One of the specific plantations that are discussed in the Irish history textbook Exploring Change that led up to the Potato Famine are Cromwell’s Plantations. Cromwell was a strong English political leader in the late 17th century and early 18th century. The text states that Cromwell and the English government were motivated by a hope to push all the Irish to Cannaught and Clare, which would allow for Ireland to become mainly an English and Protestant nation.³⁵⁴ Exploring Change directly links the use of plantations to the Famine. The logic of this

³⁴⁸ Peter Sobolewski and John McDonald. *Let's Look at History 2: Exploring Change*. Dublin: Gill and Macmillan Ltd, 1990. Print. p. 166. Referring to plantations in the 17th century.

³⁴⁹ Máiréad Ní Gháda. *A Primary History of Ireland, Book 2, from 1691-1949*. p. 9.

³⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁵¹ Peter Munz. “Historical Understanding.” p. 193.

³⁵² Walter Robson. *British History: 1066-1900*. p. 158.

³⁵³ *Ibid.*

³⁵⁴ Peter Sobolewski and John McDonald. *Let's Look at History 2: Exploring Change*. p. 160.

section connects farming as the only way to make a living in Ireland, and that the growing population meant competition for land.³⁵⁵ This is in contrast to the English narratives, which state that there was no industry, but in this Irish narrative we see direct blame for the lack of industry on the English. The competition for land described in Exploring Change is connected to the landowners who realize that they can exploit this for higher rent, and subdivisions of land, and the next connection to this is the Irish dependence on potatoes and the Famine as a result of only being able to grow the potato for consumption. This section is not included in the chapter that discusses the Potato Famine, but in the chapter that discusses plantation policy and how it affected the Irish. Famine, in this instance, is not merely the Great Famine that occurred in the 1840s, but also other famines that happened while the Irish were dependent on the potato (but were not as destructive to the population). What we see in this text is a direct link between English policy and a public figure (Cromwell), and his motivation for decimating the Irish population which is then connected to the Potato Famine. A pattern that becomes apparent in the Irish history textbooks is framing a specific public figure into a villain, a scapegoat for English policy in general. The periodization connecting these plantations to the Potato Famine also creates the idea that the English had prior genocidal intentions, and then weaves all the policies and events that led up to the Potato Famine essentially having genocidal results on the Irish people. Cromwell's plan to move the Irish to the west of Ireland is called in this narrative, "Cromwell's Final Solution."³⁵⁶ This draws to mind obvious parallels with the Holocaust. The reader of this text could connect the 'genocidal motivations' of prior English policy into the Potato Famine, the periodization of this narrative then changes the perspective of the Potato Famine drastically. The perception of the lack of English help during the Potato Famine changes from a mistake to an intentional form of inaction. The periodization of the Potato Famine in such a way exemplifies the discussion in chapters one and two about the dangers of remembrance, and keeping pain and trauma alive in history. In the following section, I will discuss how the legacy of the Potato Famine is addressed in the history school books.

³⁵⁵ *Id.* p. 166.

³⁵⁶ Peter Sobolewski and John McDonald. *Let's Look at History 2: Exploring Change.* p. 160.

4.3 Post-Famine: Legacy

A second discussion around the temporal framing of the Potato Famine is the effect that it had on events that followed it, the legacy. The direct and most tangible legacy of the Great Famine is loss of people, emigration and death that led to a population decrease that took nearly 100 years to recover from. How do these textbooks deal with the more abstract political and cultural legacies that developed from the famine? Is the Potato Famine discussed in historical isolation, or connected to events that followed in Ireland? What I look at is how these texts then deal with the legacy of the famine, does the narrative discuss the political and population (emigration) legacies?

In British History, the section following the Potato Famine discusses English politicians, Parnell and Gladstone, and their attempts to help Ireland politically.³⁵⁷ Charles Stewart Parnell was an Irish member of the British House of Commons between 1875 and 1891.³⁵⁸ Gladstone was the Prime Minister of England in the late 19th century.³⁵⁹ The narrative qualifies him as a “the great Liberal Prime Minister...[who]...tried to solve Ireland’s problems.”³⁶⁰ There is a brief overview of the time between the Potato Famine and 1900, where Gladstone tries to help Ireland by passing legislation that protects the Irish peasants from the landowners.³⁶¹ The text states that “Parnell and his party were not satisfied.”³⁶² This text connects the potato famine to the development of Irish and English political leaders pushing for Ireland to have Home Rule. The end of this section connects the discrepancy of the Irish and English opinions on Ireland having Home Rule. The text raises the additional question of Ulster, the settlement of Ireland that is populated with Protestants who identify as British.³⁶³ This leads into a much larger issue of the Troubles of the 20th century, but what is important to note here is that the text connects the Potato Famine to later developments. The Primary History of Ireland describes the time that came after the Potato Famine as not much better, except that the Irish had the potato back. It describes the political climate in a similar manner to British History, the rise of the Irish desire for Home Rule and Gladstone’s repeated attempts at passing the Home Rule Bill.³⁶⁴ The Irish

³⁵⁷ Walter Robson. *British History: 1066-1900*. p. 259.

³⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁵⁹ Ciarán Ó Murchadha. *The Great Famine: Ireland’s Agony 1845-1852*. p. 5.

³⁶⁰ Walter Robson. *British History: 1066-1900*. p. 259.

³⁶¹ *Ibid.*

³⁶² *Ibid.*

³⁶³ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁴ Máiréad Ní Gháda. *A Primary History of Ireland, Book 2, from 1691-1949*. p. 90.

Famine makes the most direct link between the Potato Famine and its legacy, “[a] direct line of agitation links the famine years to the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1921 and the Republic of Ireland in 1949.”³⁶⁵

Of the population that Ireland lost due to the Potato Famine, half was the result of emigration. The Irish diaspora and Irish immigration is a large topic in Irish history as the vast numbers of Irish people that have settled across the world. The English texts are either silent on the Potato Famine, or discuss Irish immigration to England specifically, referring to the economic and social problems that came with population growth. Irish immigrants in England are discussed in a negative manner, addressing the problems associated with population growth. One of the English texts, British History, is not silent on the Potato Famine, but is silent on emigration and how the loss of people affected Ireland post-Famine.

As I stated above, the English texts were more silent on emigration, and the Irish texts discuss the Irish diaspora in a discussion of the difficulty of the journey to reach their destination, but the narrative stops at the port. The Irish Famine is the exception to this; this text moves the spatial component of the narrative from Ireland to the United States of America to follow the journey of the Irish. The narrative of this text is not only about the Potato Famine, but the Irish diaspora as well. Irish Famine discusses the difficulties that the Irish faced when arriving in the United States, the discrimination, and the poverty. One particularly intriguing statement addresses the xenophobic response of Americans: “[they] had shown great generosity in contributing to relief funds for famine victims in Ireland; but when the poor and the starving turned up on their own doorstep, they inevitably saw them as a threat.”³⁶⁶ This qualification is reminiscent of the other English narratives because the text gives the reader the idea that immigrants only brought with them problems, falling more in line with the mentalities of the people who were unwelcoming to the newcomers during the Famine. The Primary History of Ireland states that the Irish arrived in America, “where, in time, they became... prosperous... many Americans are proud of their Irish descent...give generous help to every national movement.” This discussion is interesting for two reasons. In contrast to English texts, it does not discuss the hardships that the Irish faced when arriving in a new land, or discusses the problems that came along with an influx of emigrants. Secondly, it connects the Irish diaspora

³⁶⁵ Tony Allan. *The Irish Famine. The Birth of Irish America*. p. 29.

³⁶⁶ *Id.* p. 24.

with supporting future national movements to come, which will prove to be quite important during the Troubles.

4.4 Historical Time, Narrative Forgetting and Remembering

As I discussed in Chapter 2, forgetting and remembering are not opposites, but should be considered part of one whole process. Narrative forgetting and narrative remembering on the other hand is dangerous territory that I explored in these texts. Narrative forgetting omits information that would change the perspective of the narrative, and narrative remembering in this context is where the trauma of the Potato Famine is overemphasized. To do so, I analyze where the text either places blame or praise and whether it offers an explanation or motivation for action or behavior. The explanation of behavior in the Potato Famine is usually done by placing the event in its historical time, by describing the context of the space and time of the event.

First I will note the narrative forgetting as seen in the English textbooks. The following excerpt from British History regarding the famine depicts narrative forgetting:

The English were not to blame for the potato blight. But the Irish blamed them for not helping more during the famine. And English landlords who evicted poor peasants were hated. In the 1870s, evictions were the main cause of trouble between England and Ireland.³⁶⁷

To reiterate the definition of narrative forgetting according to Mary Douglas refers to “selective remembering, misremembering and disremembering.”³⁶⁸ Narrative forgetting is more than just the omission of facts. It is a form of decreasing responsibility for past (national) actions. The quote from British History addresses that the Irish blame the English for the famine while simultaneously emphasizing that the English are not at fault. The narrative touches upon the evictions by English landlords but does not go into further detail about the extent that the evictions affected the Irish.

Narrative forgetting presents itself additionally in the omission of the abundance of food that was actually available in Ireland. During the Potato Famine there was food being produced, but it was being exported from Ireland because the Irish could not afford it and this is why it is important whether the narrative discusses how the potato came to be a staple crop in the diet of

³⁶⁷ Walter Robson. *British History: 1066-1900* p. 45.

³⁶⁸ Mary Douglas. “Forgotten Knowledge.” p. 15.

the Irish. According to Stephen Devereux's publication, *The New Famines: Why Famines Persist in an Era of Globalization*, alternate definitions are necessary for famine. He argues famines (such as the Potato Famine) have occurred without a shortage of food.³⁶⁹ Irish Famine is the only English text that discusses the export of food during the Potato Famine. This section qualifies the continued export of food as an "odd fact." The facts of this section are correct, the Irish were unable to afford the food that was being exported to England during this time, but the framing of why the Irish were unable to afford this food is decidedly different from the Irish narrative in A Primary History of Ireland:

The corn crop in those years was good, but it had to be sold to pay the rents on which many of the landlords still insisted. The corn was sent to England and sold there. The Government was urged to forbid the export of food, but this was not done. While thousands died of hunger, ships laden with good Irish grain sailed away from these ports.³⁷⁰

These two perspectives from the English and the Irish side tell alternative stories of the Potato Famine. On the English side, we see a denial that the English were to blame, and an acknowledgment that this blame was a source of contention between the Irish and the English,³⁷¹ or the export of food was framed as not a problem caused by the English, but the Irish were to blame for not being able to support themselves besides the potato. The Irish texts blame the landlords for still insisting on rents or evicting the poor, and additionally blame the government for not stopping this process to help the Irish.

Despite all of the negative attention England has received for its treatment of the Irish, it did not completely ignore the problem of the Potato Famine. There were attempts to help through the creation of workhouses and government-funded work projects to assist the Irish in paid work that would enable them to be able to buy food.³⁷² These programs, despite altruistic intentions, were not enough. The English texts describe the help that the English offered, stating that "the problem was too big - there were not enough jobs or places in the workhouses. The

³⁶⁹ Stephen Devereux. *The New Famines: Why Famines persist in an Era of Globalization*. New York: Routledge. (2007). Print. p. 10.

³⁷⁰ Máiréad Ní Gháda. *A Primary History of Ireland, Book 2, from 1691-1949*. p. 81.

³⁷¹ In the 1870s, but perhaps the periodization of this contention runs much deeper and for a longer time.

³⁷² Ciarán Ó Murchadha. *The Great Famine: Ireland's Agony 1845-1852*. p. 50.

government said that there was not enough money to pay for all the schemes.”³⁷³ This phrasing transfers the blame onto the problem, the famine itself - stating that the English government tried to help, and the help failed because the problem was too big. British History addresses the actions of the English government and how they tried to help the Irish during this period. The narrative describes how the English set up work programs for the men to earn money to buy food, the cancellation of the Corn Laws, the import of “cheap foreign corn and maize.”³⁷⁴ Irish Famine provides an overview of Sir Robert Peel’s efforts: the public works programs that he set up as well as the corn that Peel purchased for Ireland, and repealing the Corn Laws.³⁷⁵ This text does provide an overview of the reasons why the English government did not provide more assistance during the famine, dedicating a section placing it in its historical time that there was no precedent set for famine relief and that the political philosophy of the time was that “market forces should be left to work.”³⁷⁶

In contrast to the English texts which transfers blame onto the Famine being insolvable, an Irish text places the lack of English efforts in historical time. An example of historical understanding is provided in a disclaimer included in A Primary History of Ireland labeled “Government Policy.”³⁷⁷ This text instructs the reader to be wary of being too “presentist.”³⁷⁸ The direction from the author is that the reader should not be judgmental of the actions of the British during the Famine, and then goes on to explain the economic trends of the 1840s. What is interesting to note in this same section though is that the text reiterates that “the British Government...allowed a million people to die of hunger in a land where corn grew well and cattle fattened on the rich grass.”³⁷⁹ The imagery of this excerpt is strong for gaining a perspective of the famine, and also connects back to the prior discussion of the abundance of food available in Ireland at this time. An English history textbook, The Irish Famine: The Birth of Irish America uses a quote from Trevelyan labeled “Saving Money, Not Lives.”³⁸⁰ In this quote, Trevelyan states that despite the fact that many Irish will die, he does not want to create a

³⁷³ Walter Robson. *British History: 1066-1900*. p. 256.

³⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁵ Tony Allan. *The Irish Famine. The Birth of Irish America*. p. 17.

³⁷⁶ *Id.* p. 18.

³⁷⁷ Máiréad Ní Gháda. *A Primary History of Ireland*. p. 82.

³⁷⁸ Without actually using this word.

³⁷⁹ Máiréad Ní Gháda. *A Primary History of Ireland*. p. 82.

³⁸⁰ Tony Allan. *The Irish Famine. The Birth of Irish America*. p. 19.

society that becomes dependent on welfare.³⁸¹ This perspective aligns with the disclaimer included in A Primary History of Ireland, “Government Policy.”

As shown in Chapter 3 with the framing of Dermot’s role in inviting the Irish into England, the discussion on the Potato Famine in Irish texts also has to configure the role of the Irish and their bad actions. Let’s Look at History 2: Exploring Change is careful in its wording of the famine, particularly in distinguishing between the English and the Irish. Political figures (the Prime Ministers), and in reference to “the government,” are not specified as English agency’s or people, regardless if their actions had a positive or negative effect on the Irish people. In the final section of the Potato Famine in this Irish history textbook, there is a segment called “New Landowners.” This section describes how landlords³⁸² had been bankrupted by the famine and had to sell their estates, and that this land was bought by Irishmen.³⁸³ This is the first time that there is a qualification between Irish and English landowners in this chapter of the history textbook. The description of these Irish landowners is not very positive. This Irish text explains that Irish landowners were also greedy and guilty of evictions.³⁸⁴ This text is followed by a depiction a young boy who is shocked to find out that the “Irish landlords were as bad as the English.”³⁸⁵ This section is important for a reader, particularly a young Irish reader who has absorbed the community narrative of the Potato Famine that may portray the English and the Protestants as the villain, and the Irish as the victim.

4.5 Causes of the Famine: Land Policy or Environment?

One of the most noticeable and influential discrepancies between the Irish texts and the English texts is whether the emphasis on the causes of the Famine are on economic and political factors, or on environmental causes. In this chapter, I have discussed some aspects of the causes of the Famine: plantations and land policy, potato dependence and the Industrial Revolution. In this section I will provide a more concrete outline of the causes of the Potato Famine as they are discussed in the history textbooks.

The English texts discuss the causes of the famine as more of a natural disaster, not something that could have been prevented. This supports the perspective that it is inconceivable

³⁸¹ *Ibid.*

³⁸² Unspecified if they were English or Irish.

³⁸³ Peter Sobolewski and John McDonald. *Let’s Look at History 2: Exploring Change*. p. 266.

³⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁵ *Id.* p. 267.

for a famine to be caused by people or government. The Irish Famine opens its description of the Potato Famine by describing its calamity and then following with "...and it was all caused by a plant disease."³⁸⁶ This direct statement about the cause of the famine being solely attributable to nature negates the blame that the Irish narrative places on the English for preventing industrialization and causing their vulnerability to famine.

As I stated earlier in this chapter on the lack of jobs in Ireland, The Irish Famine discusses the lack of industry further:

...industrialization was something Ireland knew little about. It did not have the coal and iron the fuelled the manufacturing revolution then underway in mainland Britain. And the social system in Ireland did little to encourage the people to improve things."³⁸⁷

This is intriguing in comparison with the Irish perspective for three reasons. The first is that it addressed the lack of industry in Ireland and the second because it blames the social system in Ireland for not encouraging the people to do more. The third and largest reason is because despite the discussion of the penal laws and segregation of the Catholics resulting in their poverty, this text does little to explain how the lack of industry in Ireland was connected to England's industrialization. The Irish narrative states that the wealth of Ireland was being exported to England to fund its industrialization, and this text is silent on that regard, and even extends the blame to the Irish social system for not fixing the problem. An Economic and Social History states "the Irish population was growing more rapidly [in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries] than the English, and industry was almost non-existent in Ireland."³⁸⁸ This text does not connect the lack of industry in Ireland with any reasons. This excerpt is removed from a section that discusses the issues with population growth; it does not discuss the Potato Famine directly throughout its entire text.

In the Irish textbooks, the lack of industry in Ireland is addressed, and drastically changes the perspective of the narrative of the Potato Famine. The Industrial Revolution in England and

³⁸⁶ Tony Allan. *The Irish Famine. The Birth of Irish America*. p. 5.

³⁸⁷ *Id.* p. 10.

³⁸⁸ Michael W. Flinn. *An Economic & Social History of Britain 1066-1939*. London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd. (1965). p. 125.

the Agricultural Revolution in Ireland³⁸⁹ are connected to the Potato Famine in the text Let's Look at History 2: Exploring Change. This text relies on small pictures throughout the text that reminds a reader of caricatures. This text cites the Industrial Revolution as being the point in time that English landowners discovered that they could make more money farming (more than just by charging rent to the tenants).³⁹⁰ In the English history textbook The Age of Expansion 1750-1914, the description of the Potato Famine begins with a comparison between Ireland and England at this time. The text states that the population of both Ireland and England were growing fairly rapidly at this time, but the major difference between these two nations was that England was developing to compensate for this increased population, where Ireland was not.³⁹¹ This is an interesting, and simplified explanation for the Potato Famine. This statement can stand on its own as the truth, but it is forgetting major points. Ireland was unable to participate in the agricultural revolution and the Industrial Revolution due to England's hegemony over Ireland, specifically the land in Ireland.³⁹² Leaving out this information changes the framing of the Potato Famine significantly.

What are additionally discussed in the Irish history textbooks are the agricultural changes that the Industrial Revolution exported to Ireland. Exploring Changes describes these: landlords in Ireland "evict[ing] their tenants, knock[ing] down villages, enclos[ing] the open fields and the common lands...The farms of the tenants became compact holdings divided into small fields."³⁹³ The text continues to describe this as an economic plan in order to be able to raise cattle in Ireland.³⁹⁴ The second connection of this section to the potato famine is in regards to what type of food was grown in Ireland. The text describes that "farming...thrived...grew big quantities of wheat, barley and oats which were sold to England"³⁹⁵ Following this statement is an image of two men cutting down what appears to be wheat. At first read, it is a confusing picture because it appears that they are having a conversation with one another, but they are making comments to the reader. One man is trying to be positive, stating that there was no one else who would do that

³⁸⁹ Beginning in about 1760. Peter Sobolewski and John McDonald. *Let's Look at History 2: Exploring Change*. p. 255.

³⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁹¹ John D. Clare. *The Age of Expansion*. Surrey: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd. 1996. p. 50.

³⁹² Eamonn Slater and Terrance McDonough. "Marx on 19th Century Colonial Ireland: Analyzing Colonialism beyond Dependency Theory." p. 24.

³⁹³ Peter Sobolewski and John McDonald. *Let's Look at History 2: Exploring Change*. p. 256.

³⁹⁴ Peter Sobolewski and John McDonald. *Let's Look at History 2: Exploring Change*. p. 256.

³⁹⁵ *Id.* p. 257.

work so “it was just as well.” This is interesting because it also alludes to the fact that the only jobs that were available to the Irish were in agriculture. The response of the other man is “and the food we relied on was the potato”³⁹⁶ which sets the tone for the Potato Famine that is to happen in a few decades.

A Primary History of Ireland places a discussion of the problems of the Famine in conjunction with larger problems of Anglo-Irish relations in a longer context. This text sums up what the author has written in previous sections about the problems of land and the Corn Laws³⁹⁷ in Ireland: “...tenants on the land had no rights and no security.”³⁹⁸ “There was no encouragement for a man to improve his land or his house, and every reason why he should make no effort to better his way of living”³⁹⁹ A Primary History of Ireland focuses on various inaction and action of the English government that exacerbated the problem. Exploring Change is an intriguing Irish text because it almost entirely revolves around Anglo-Irish relations. Every chapter appears to start with a new English royal being crowned, or another English political leader turning his or her sights onto Ireland. It follows Anglo-Irish relations from the different forms of conquest and plantation colonization that England imposed upon Ireland. Throughout their description of plantation colonization, various facts are included that could allude to the causes of the Potato Famine, as stated above in the temporal and spatial connections of the Potato Famine.

The discussion of causation creates or breaks the link between colonization and the Potato Famine. Causation and criticism of the English government varies between these narratives. In the English narratives, we see that they address that they did not do enough as the famine was on going. The policies that the Irish narratives are more concerned about are the policies prior to the Famine. The Irish texts here emphasize that the English colonized them, and this colonization was a direct cause of the Potato Famine. The Irish narratives also emphasize the lack of industry and the Irish over reliance on agriculture for employment and over dependency on the potato as a result. The English texts are silent on the Potato Famine, or neglect to discuss prior history that led up to the Irish being in a vulnerable place. The only English text that does include prior history as explanations of the Potato Famine is The Irish

³⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁹⁷ Máiréad Ní Gháda. *A Primary History of Ireland*. p. 88.

³⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

Famine, but as I outlined, this text also negates English action as being a cause of the Potato Famine.

4.6 Conclusion

In Chapter 3, the findings revolved around justification, identity and silences. In Chapter 4, the findings are the temporal aspects of the Potato Famine and, causation and blame. The question of the periodization of the Potato Famine shows some intriguing findings, particularly in regards to English policy on Ireland. The English perspective mostly addresses their policy as the Potato Famine was ongoing, land policy is discussed on a lighter level in connection to the Famine in comparison with the Irish perspective. Additionally, the English text neglects to name the landowners and the peasants by their respective nationalities and religions, even though the result of the text demarcates them as such. The Irish perspective aims at linking the Potato Famine to earlier English policy, most notably control of land. In the Irish perspective, the English controlled the land and the Irish were forced to rely solely on the potato, resulting in their vulnerability when the potato crop failed. There is much overlap in the Irish perspective between the English colonization of Ireland and the causes of the Potato Famine. This is a markedly different perspective than the English perspective, which acknowledges that the policy of England while the famine was ongoing may have not been the best policy, but does not connect it to the larger context as a result of colonization. This finding brings the apology from Tony Blair back into my mind. He apologizes for the English not providing more assistance during the Potato Famine. This follows the English perspective in these texts. What is important here is to remember that I am not commenting on what is “good” history, nor am I making a comment on whether or not the Prime Minister made a “good” apology, I am merely making the connection here that the Prime Minister and his speech writers were careful to consider the English perspective of the Potato Famine when writing the apology.

The sub-questions that I researched into these perspectives are related. The Irish perspective links the Potato Famine to the wider issue of colonization and land policy of that time, which addresses the additional issues of what caused the famine, and if the causation of the famine has been established then there is a person or group to blame. We have answered how the periodization of each perspective has been constructed, and can see how the causation and the blame follow these fault lines. The Irish perspective blames the English and English policy

for extreme hardship that they suffered in their past. What this starts to paint is a picture of Irish collective memory that can offer an explanation for the mentality that is behind the extremism in the conflict of the Troubles.

The spatial connections that I hypothesized would be prevalent in discussion of the Potato Famine were present in the schoolbooks: emigration and English policy. How these two spatial connections were framed in the schoolbooks though provides some insight into the narrative. Emigration in English textbooks was framed with a more negative connotation, either with the difficulties that the Irish faced in their new home, or the problems associated with an influx of immigrants. Emigration in Irish texts was discussed in context of loss of population in Ireland. English policy has been discussed extensively, but to summarize: the Irish text concentrates on English policy leading up to and including the Potato Famine, whereas the English texts tend to discuss the English policies during the Potato Famine. The connection of prior policies, plantations and potato dependence, links causation and blame to England's imperialism. In the final chapter, I will discuss the findings from Chapter 3 and 4 in conjunction with one another.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

This thesis is a comparative analysis of the construction of English and Irish perspectives on their shared history. As I stated, my goal is not to give a critique on what is good or correct history. Rather, I address where the perspectives differ. My research question is how the narratives of the history of Anglo-Irish relations are constructed in English and Irish history schoolbooks during the period that the Troubles of Northern Ireland were ongoing. The elements of the narratives that I analyze are the periodization, the spatial connections, the portrayal of people and public figures, narrative forgetting, narrative emphasis, segregation and identity issues, and the context in which the event was placed. I will overview the findings of my analysis in terms of these elements in this final chapter, and then I will discuss multiperspectivity as a remedy for the differences in these constructions.

5.2 Findings

When constructing a narrative, a decision is made in where to place events in history. This is in reference to where, and how much prehistory to include to give the narrative meaning.

Additionally is placing history in space, is it discussed in historical isolation, or connected to events seemingly outside the narrative? In both the conquest and colonization of Ireland and the Potato Famine, the periodization and spatial connections of the narratives has an effect on the construction. The conquest of Ireland in the 12th century opened Ireland up to be colonized by England for centuries. The findings in regard to the periodization and spatial connections of the conquest show that it is difficult to place the Irish characters who invited England into Ireland into the Irish narrative of victimization. The Irish texts try to place this in historical time, to show that this was normal and there were other factors that led to the colonization then their invitation. The English narratives use prehistory of Ireland to justify the benefits England brought to Ireland through colonization. These justifications are England bringing law and order and peace to Ireland.

The periodization of the Potato Famine can change the way the causation of the Famine is shaped. To include in the prehistory of the Famine, as the Irish texts do, means linking the colonization and English policy of Ireland to the Famine. The Irish texts do this by outlining that

the English did not allow Ireland to industrialize, and even describing how England was using Ireland as its agricultural producer to support its own industrialization. One Irish text, Exploring Change, also emphasizes that the English had more sinister motivations for their English policies which alludes to the idea that the inaction during the famine was intentional inaction. When the Potato Famine was included in the English texts, it was more likely to be discussed in historical isolation. It was an event that happened in history without much connection to the surrounding times or the surrounding areas. The spatial connection to the Potato Famine in the English texts was only in reference to the Irish immigrants, but this was framed as problem inducing as England was already dealing with population growth and the Irish immigrants caused further strain.

An issue in constructing narratives about conflict is how to identify the reasons why groups are living separately and also how to identify them. Segregation is the separation of groups based on race, religion, ethnicity or any other identifiable factor. Part of segregation is also identity, either identifying a group as an 'other', or self-identification. English settlers did not always live separately from the Irish when in Ireland. The English settlers that came in the early 12th century, eventually married Irish women and had Irish children and over the course of a few generations their English heritage merged with an Irish one. During the Reformation and the Tudor reign, the religious divide became an issue. The English became Protestant and the Irish remained Catholic. From this point on, segregation was more than just living separately; it quickly became an inequality issue. With regard to the heritage and identity issues prior to the Reformation, both English and Irish history textbooks refer to the English who "became Irish." The Irish texts did not qualify this cultural merge. The English texts, however, stated that the English who became Irish created a problem for England as it decreased the amount of control that they had over Ireland. In the initial conquest, the English history textbooks discussed that the settlers moved into the towns that the Vikings had left behind, and that the language in these towns was English or French, rather than Irish Gaelic which was the native language. The implication is that the Irish lived separately due to cultural differences and social reasons for segregation. In one of the British texts it states that the English lived in castles, while the Irish worked the fields. It does not give an explanation for this situation; it is just a statement about the different lifestyles that these two groups lived. The implication here is that the segregation was not forced, through either economic or legal sanction. The Irish perspective describes the

segregation in Ireland, particularly the segregation after the Reformation and the Penal laws as forced segregation, due to laws like the Catholic Penal Laws, or their land being confiscated. After the Reformation in England, many English converted to Protestantism, including many English living in Ireland. This complicated the identity issues in Ireland by adding another factor dividing the groups. The religious identification was added to identifications as native or outsider and national identity. In Anglo-Irish relations, and as well as in the Troubles of Northern Ireland, these two opposing groups are often discussed in terms of the religious divide. In the history school books some interesting findings presented themselves in regard to religious identification. The English textbooks were more likely to reference the Catholic or Protestant divide, or state religious motivations for action. The Irish history textbooks discuss the religious divide but identify other factors as well. Cromwell is a good example to show these differences in the history textbooks. The English textbooks give background information stating why Cromwell hates Catholics, and also that he believed that God justified his action against Ireland. The Irish history textbook, referring back to “Cromwell’s ‘Final Solution,’” concentrates more on Cromwell’s disdain for the native Irish while not classifying this group as Catholic.

The omissions and the overemphasis in the constructions of the conquest and the Potato Famine affect the narrative. As discussed in periodization, the English texts omitting the history of their policy towards Ireland prior to the Famine changes the way that the Famine is framed. Additionally, the omission in the narrative of the Potato Famine on the export of food decreases some of blame on the English. The English texts were more likely to construct narratives that emphasized the natural disaster aspect of the Potato Famine, although they did admit that the English government could have done more as the Famine was ongoing. The English texts were more likely to be silent on Anglo-Irish relations than the Irish texts. The Irish texts were directly connected to English history, what was happening in England was an important component of what was occurring in Ireland. The narrative emphasis of the Irish texts I saw occurring in conjunction with what people were emphasized as villains in their texts. Cromwell and Trevelyan were portrayed as villains in the Irish narrative, and their bad deeds were emphasized. The abundance of food that was being exported to England at this time was also emphasized much more in the Irish texts, leading in to an emphasis that the English were to blame for the devastation that the potato famine caused in Ireland. To summarize, the English narrative seemed to work to justify interference in Ireland, and in conjunction with this justification it

worked to nullify the imperial factors that led to the Potato Famine. Part of the English narrative also suggests that the identity of the two groups in Ireland was not an issue, until the religious divide of the 16th century. The Irish narrative worked to counteract this justification of English imperialism, as well as connecting the events that led up to the Potato Famine, the plantations and the potato dependency. This spells out to the English wrongfully taking Irish lands, resulting in their poverty. Emphasized in this way, it is easy to see why the English narrative wants to justify their interactions in Anglo-Irish relations. The Irish narrative addressed the identity divide in Ireland between the groups as an unequal economic relationship, which further serves to encourage their narrative of blame. Constructing the narratives in this way emphasizes the issues that arose during the Troubles of Northern Ireland, notably the identity issues and the conflict for control of territory. In the following section I will address multiperspectivity as a possible solution for mediating these differences in the narratives.

5.3 Multiperspectivity

As I have shown from my findings, the Irish and the English construct the narrative of their shared history differently. The differences in their narratives are potentially dangerous as shown how history and differing interpretations of history can cause conflict in the Troubles of Northern Ireland. My suggestion for the mediating between these two constructions of narratives is multiperspectivity as defined by Robert Stradling. Multiperspectivity is more than just addressing that there are different perspectives of historical events. It takes as a starting point that one (national) narrative is a perspective that has been filtered through cultural context and may reflect prejudices and biases.⁴⁰⁰ In order for this method to be fully effective, the teacher, as well as the students must be willing to accept this about their national narrative, and be open minded about learning of other perspectives. It will enable them to learn that there are many different ways to view history and the world, and that all may be equally valid.⁴⁰¹

Allan McCully defines perspectives as not just perspectives of ‘now’, but also the perspectives of the actors in the events being studied.⁴⁰² Reflecting on the parallel narratives would add an extra dimension to the history, instead of just “and thens,” we would also have the

⁴⁰⁰ Robert Stradling. *Multiperspectivity in history teaching: a guide for teachers*. Strasburg: Council of Europe. 2003. p. 37.

⁴⁰¹ *Id.* p. 25.

⁴⁰² Alan McCully. “History teaching, Conflict and the Legacy of the Past.” *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice*. 7:2. (2012). pp. 149.

“meanwhiles” of history.⁴⁰³ It can show how the parallel narratives have interacted and shaped each other.⁴⁰⁴ Using multiperspectivity, the historian can emphasize the main points of agreement and disagreement.⁴⁰⁵ Where the narratives converge and diverge can be analyzed to give great insight into the identities of each nation. Why do they converge and diverge where they do? What type of story are they trying to tell? How are they trying to portray themselves through their narrative? Historians using this method can give teachers the necessary tools to apply multiperspectivity in the classroom. Implementing these methods into the narratives in the English and Irish history textbooks would allow for a more multiperspective approach. One such method is the spatial connections of the texts, not addressing history in isolation but discussing outside events that affect the narrative. Incorporating this methodology into the construction of historical narratives in history textbooks can help combat the community narratives that can increase tension in sectarian conflicts, such as in the Troubles. Steps have been taken since the Troubles have ended in the late 1990s to ensure history is not a divisive issue between the two groups in Northern Ireland, and additionally between the English and the Irish. Pursuing multiperspectivity in history education in these nations, as well as others undergoing sectarian conflict, can lead to a future generation with more open minded ideas about the past.

⁴⁰³ Robert Stradling. *Multiperspectivity in history teaching: a guide for teachers*. p. 19.

⁴⁰⁴ *Id.* p. 20.

⁴⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

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