Conference Abstracts
Friday 2nd and Saturday 3rd March 2007
Friday 2\textsuperscript{nd} March

Parallel Session A: 9.30-11.00

- Political and Historical Perspectives on Irish Power

Eoin Clarke, School of History and Anthropology, Queen’s University Belfast.

The Politics of Northern Ireland Communist Betty Sinclair 1931-81

This paper proposes to address the career of Betty Sinclair. As Ireland’s best known female communist and trade unionist, her career spanned half a century. Chiefly, the primary focus would be an appraisal of her career within the trade union movement, seeking to contextualize her role as a woman in a hitherto male sphere. Sinclair led the Belfast Trades Council for a generation 1947-74, and her success in this regard demands elucidation.

It would also seek to examine why Sinclair never assumed the leadership of the Communist Party of Ireland (CPI) even though on two occasions she was evidently the most suitable for the post. The fluctuating fortunes of the CPI and Sinclair’s contribution will also be addressed. Whether Sinclair should share the blame for the failed opportunity of 1933 will be examined.

Towards the end of Sinclair’s career she held the chair of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA). Recent historiography has charged NICRA’s failure as one of the chief causes of the subsequent Irish troubles. Since Sinclair was its chairperson the paper would consider her culpability in this occurrence.

Lastly, Betty Sinclair was the most significant female politician in fifty years of Northern Irish history. The extent to which she remolded local politics paving the way for future women should also be addressed. Sinclair legacy should be examined in the context of her relations with her male counterparts.
At the centre of this paper lie Dublin’s reactions to British policies on the treatment of people interned, detained or otherwise imprisoned in the name of counter-terrorism in Northern Ireland during the Troubles. Allegations of ill-treatment made against the Security Forces reached new heights in October 1971 when the media publicised hitherto unseen degrees of abuse perpetrated against twelve men arrested under the initial internment sweep. In response to demands for action from the public in the UK and Ireland alike, London set up the Compton Committee to investigate these further allegations of ill-treatment. The remit and conclusions of the Compton Committee faced wide criticism, but none was as striking as the reaction from Dublin. Motivated by a desire to protect, and to be seen to protect, the minority in the North in the face of a growing trend of allegations of ill-treatment, the Irish Government decided to prosecute the UK under the European Convention on Human Rights at Strasbourg. In the context of Anglo-Irish relations in this period, the Strasbourg Case, as it became known, was a bold move by Dublin. London saw the Troubles as an essentially sovereign affair, but Dublin’s decision to take the UK to Strasbourg, which was costly and potentially damaging to Anglo-Irish relations during difficult years, was crucial in demonstrating to London, the people of the Republic, and the minority in the North, that Dublin had a sincere interest in the circumstances of Northern Ireland. While there was no immediate change in the treatment of prisoners in the North – it was the late 1970s before significant improvements were institutionalised – Dublin’s actions went some way towards making London realise the importance of their co-operation on Northern Ireland.
The Power of the Protestant/Orange/Tory alignment in Liverpool – and its demise.

The Conservatives held power in Liverpool from the mid 19th century continuously until 1955 through an alignment with the Protestant working classes and the members of the Orange Order – other English cities, such as Sheffield, had turned to Labour as early as 1926. The Everton district even returned councilors from the Protestant Party who enjoyed a pact with the Tories which guaranteed them no opposition from Tory candidates. During this period Liverpool earned its reputation as a centre of sectarian strife with bouts of rioting sparked off by speeches from ultra-Protestant, anti-Catholic preachers such as George Wise, a reputation it has found hard to shake off.

As recently as 1980 the local press were reporting that 20,000 people had turned out to participate in or support the Orange Order’s Merseyside Boyne Parade on July 12th. Recently though the numbers have fallen to around 4,000 – still substantial but far below the numbers who were prepared to take part a quarter of a century ago. Tory support in local politics collapsed in the early 1970s and no Liverpool constituency has returned a Tory MP since 1979.

My Doctoral research is examining the trajectory of these changes - Are they techno-economic (declining social capital, slum clearance, economic restructuring) or cultural (the growth of liberalism and secularism)? Sectarianism is clearly not the force it was – but is this the cause or effect of Orangeism’s collapse?

This paper reviews the situation that existed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and points to several of the factors that have contributed to declining support, or apparent declines in support, for the Orange Order, Protestantism and the Tories in Liverpool since 1945.
Re-conceptualising Power and Change

This paper proposes a multi-layered re-conceptualisation of power in the context of change. First it is demonstrated why such a re-conceptualisation is necessary, by showing that several existing interpretations of and references to power (Weber, Dahl, Bachrach & Baratz, Mann, Foucault, Giddens, Luhmann, Flyvbjerg) lack a coherent conceptualisation of how power relates to change. Subsequently a conceptualisation of power is developed at seven levels: 1) a philosophical understanding of its meaning, 2) a broad definition of it as the mobilisation of resources to reach a certain goal (Parsons), 3) a typology of its different co-existent forms (systemic, structural, innovative, destructive and transformative power) 4) methods and competences needed for its exercise, 5) the interaction between different forms of power, 6) the link to empowerment and leadership and 7) the relation between power and knowledge. In conclusion it is argued how the presented re-conceptualisation can be used as a framework to study power, and how this framework can be applied to studies that specifically address societal change while lacking consistent reference to power, such as studies on sustainable development and transition processes.
The private security industry in Britain has now grown to approximately twice the size of the public police force and is increasingly providing services formerly delivered exclusively by the state. This basic observation immediately conjures up interesting and important questions regarding the status and legitimacy of the various policing institutions operating within contemporary Britain - perhaps the most central of which is: does the state still hold its traditional monopoly over the use of legitimate force or has this most fundamental of sovereign powers now become partly the preserve of the private sector?

This paper will make a contribution towards answering this question by examining empirically the political relationship between the British state and the private security industry. It will show that since the 1960s, the Home Office, the Association of Chief Police Officers, Ministers, MPs and other related state agencies have been engaged in negotiations with the private security industry over the extent to which sovereign power can and should be transferred to the private sector. This paper will also demonstrate how the nature of these negotiations has changed according to shifting political contexts - from Old Labour to Thatcherite Conservatism and then on to New Labour - each of which offers a different view of the relationship between the state, the market and policing powers. This empirical study will then culminate with an examination of the Private Security Industry Act 2001, which essentially represents the culmination of 40 years worth of political bargaining over the right to police contemporary Britain.

The significance of this study for the conference themes is not only that it provides an exploration of the internal mechanisms of those institutions with the power to police ordinary citizens, but that it also offers broader insights into which of these institutions has the legitimate right to exercise this traditionally sovereign power and how historically such a designation of rights comes about.
Humanitarian aid organisations have marketed themselves as the protectors of humanity; they are at once the ‘world’s conscience’ and the ‘guardians of international humanitarian law’. While their discourse speaks of empowerment and solidarity, they often place themselves in the position of ‘the authority’, telling combatants and locals what they need, what to do, and what not to do. This hierarchal use of power logically requires a subordinate to act upon, and thus humanitarian discourse necessarily assumes and constructs the roles of ‘victims’ and ‘warriors’. These discursive constructs keep humanitarian organisations conceptually blind to the role of individuals and groups in shaping their own futures and effectively marginalises potential partners. This paper will briefly assess a number of key power theories premised around the concept of hierarchy, illustrate how these assumptions are brought to life in humanitarian action, and finally assess some of the possible repercussions of this construction of power on their ability to have other forms of influence.

In doing so, this paper will argue that a hierarchical conception of power such as ‘A gets B to do what it wants despite B’s resistance’ masks most of the power processes actually occurring in host countries. A broad definition of power conceived of as the effectiveness of relational networks and processes at producing desired results, makes it possible to conceptualise both the ways in which locals and humanitarian organisations remain capable of autonomous thought and action and the ways in which they mutually influence one another. This conception of power is important because it is more compatible with humanitarian goals as constructed in their discourse and because it points humanitarian organisations to other ways of exercising power that do not involve coercion or manipulation. In a time when the security of humanitarian aid missions is increasingly precarious, they must become more aware of the impact of their discourse and action on the ground.
Parallel Session B: 11.30-1.00

- Hispanic Representations of Power

Edoardo Balletta, Department of Foreign Languages and Literature, University of Bologna.

Una épica del deseo: Perlongher's works and the Representation of History in Ninteen-Eighties' Argentina

Néstor Perlongher (1949-1992), poet and anthropologist, is one of the most important Argentinean intellectuals of the Eighties. In his first poetical works the author, who is interested in Deleuze and Guattari philosophy, represents history as "delirium". Local and European history are read through a process of schizophrenization that, in anti-oedipal terms, allow to develop lines of escape from Power. If, on one hand, we will see that History in Perlongher's works is always a history of extermination (anticipating recent theories on bio-politics), on the other this "delirious" history, in which heroes, events and geographies mix up with no apparent logic, becomes the unique 'tool' to escape from bio-power. According to Benjamin the "cultural heritage" is constituted by the "spoils carried along in the triumphal procession" of the rulers. To tell an alternative history (not necessarily 'true') can become a technique of deterritorialization modifying and turning over categories and values of 'official history'. This alternative history has its basis on the antioedipal concept of desire as a machine able to create lines of escape. Argentinean XIX century history, for example, can be read not only as an epic of war where gauchos and caudillos are the macho-heroes but also as an epic of desire (épica del deseo) and, in a number of cases, of homoerotic desire. The XIX century pampa is no more a battle field and becomes an erotic or homoerotic field where a maiden and a priest live their 'obscene' romance ("Para Camila O' Gorman", Alambres, 1987) or where two gauchos kiss each other passionately ("Moreira", Alambres, 1987). Equally Eva Perón from political leader becomes an obscure object of desire, a queer icon, a fetish haunting Argentinean public life and culture.
This paper deals with feminine representations in the Mexican melodrama of the 40s. In particular, it will analyse films like *Las Abandonadas* (1944), *Enamorada* (1946) and *Aventurera* (1949).

In these films, the image of the woman has followed mainly two mythological poles. On one side, the “positive” one constructed through the image of the Guadalupe Virgin, on the other the negative one, inspired by the Malinche, translator and lover of Spanish Conqueror Hernán Cortés, for this reason emblem of betrayal and submission to the powerful foreigner. The former carried values such as decency, family feeding and sacrifice, the latter rejected these values and adopted masculine attitudes. Dolores del Rio, who usually played the “decent” woman, was often portrayed with the veil and suffering face, following the religious imaginary of the Virgin. Conversely, the image of the “negative” woman, interpreted by the actress María Félix, appears strong and untamed. Most of these negative characters were punished with abandoning, death or forced marriage, showing that the rationale of using this kind of role was indeed the one of defining how a good woman should be like.

In between these two strong images, interestingly, emerges a third and unexplored figure: the “cabaretera”. This third character, modelled on the figure of the prostitute, played among others by Ninón Sevilla, explored an unknown territory in Mexican cinema, where sweet women could use the sacred institution of marriage to commit vengeance, and beside mothers could embrace their sacrifice for the family, kidnapping teenagers and managing brothels.
The Role of the Catholic Hierarchy in the Rise to Power of General Franco

Max Weber defined power as “the chance of a man or a number of men to realize their own will in a command action even against the resistance of others who are participating in the action.” The preceding description could well be applied to the dictatorship of General Franco, who, in the words of the historian Paul Preston, governed Spain “as if it were a country occupied by a victorious foreign army.” Although not the intended leader of the 1936 rising which initiated the Spanish Civil War, Franco went on to establish a dictatorship of almost forty years’ duration that was based on an uneasy coalition of diverse political factions, held in place only by Franco’s ability to play them off against each other in a continuous power struggle, and perpetuate the divisions caused by civil war.

This paper will argue that a key factor in Franco’s ability to consolidate his power was the cooperation of the Catholic hierarchy. The Catholic bishops were quick to recognise Franco’s leadership, and acted as his first line of defence in the propaganda war with the Republican government. The stance adopted by the Church helped propagate the myth that the civil war was a religious crusade, thereby providing Franco and his supporters with powerful ideological support throughout three years of bitter conflict. Following Franco’s victory the Catholic Church became the primary instrument for the diffusion of the regime’s ideology. This system of Church-State relations, known as National Catholicism, proved to be crucial for bestowing legitimacy on the new regime. The close cooperation between Church and State, culminating in the signing of a Concordat with the Vatican in 1953, was a vital step in the process of ending the international isolation that befell Franco’s Spain at the conclusion of World War II. While internationally Church support allowed Franco to be seen as a world leader, within Spain the dividing lines between religious and political spheres of influence became blurred, allowing both Church and State to achieve maximum levels of social control.
• **Philosophies of Power**

Laura Reagan. School of Political Science, Northwestern University and Sciences-Po, Paris.

**Returning to *Leviathan* after Foucault: A Genealogy of the Automaton as a Symbol of Constituent Power**

Michel Foucault’s critique of sovereign power is developed as the opposite number to the theory of sovereign power in Thomas Hobbes’s *Leviathan* of 1651. This text, by the author who claimed to be the first political scientist, encouraged generations of scholars to focus on power/knowledge as it centers on the figure of the sovereign. My paper returns to the introduction of the *Leviathan* for a sustained analysis of the figure of the Automaton as a symbol of the commonwealth that is generated in the course of the text. A genealogy of the power/knowledge involved in the creation of this mimetic art object uncovers a model of *constituent* power/knowledge in the *Leviathan*. With this symbol, Hobbes draws on the meanings of *poiesis*, or productive craft that animated discussions of both mechanics and rhetoric in the Middle Ages. While in the *Leviathan*, the future subject-citizens alienate the constituent power implied by the figure of the automaton, my paper explores whether or not the model of power/knowledge associated with automata is a way of thinking past the quandry of sovereignty Foucault lays out, that is, that there is nothing to invoke against sovereign power except individual rights, which themselves remain within the discourse that legitimates sovereignty. Does Hobbes’s own rhetoric provide a place to think power outside of the framework of the sovereign state?
Power, Influence, and Responsibility

It is commonly believed that persons may possess great influence, but little power, and vice versa. This, however, is imprecise. The widely-accepted claim – which I wish to deny – is that control by means of influence never amounts to an exercise of power. I argue that there are circumstances within which influence suffices to confer power on an agent; furthermore, that these are circumstances which often obtain. I begin by outlining some distinctions, and then proceed to argue for an extended conception of agency. On this model, what matters is the ability to impose sanctions, irrespective of means. I then argue that the conditions for attribution of power are not the same as the conditions for attribution of responsibility; an agent may be powerful in virtue of being able to bring about a certain set of outcomes (specifically, sanctions), but the responsibility for such an outcome will rest in the first instance on the proximate cause of that outcome. If one incites another to murder, for instance, both are culpable, but the murderer, not the influence, is responsible for his act. I consider (favourably) the further suggestion that the credible threat of sanctions, rather than their actual exercise, is what is required for one to hold power over another.

One consequence of this argument is that the scope for the exercise of power, within the private as well as the public sphere, is greater than previously thought. Concomitant with this, one’s responsibility towards others is more stringent: it is a platitude that those in positions of power have more responsibilities (in the sense of moral obligations, rather than roles) than those in positions of mere influence. The example of (socially-constructed) notions of gender as a means of patriarchal control is given as a case in point.
In this paper I focus on abuse of power—specifically those cases where abuse can be classified as episodic and unexpected from the stance of the victim. Circumstances where such abuse may occur vary from the domestic (wife-beating, child sex abuse), to kidnapping, and commander betrayal in the armed forces. In all these cases individuals suffer a trauma. This trauma—or mental shock—constitutes a violation of people’s everyday assumptions about how some aspect of the world works.

In this paper I want to explore the view that victims’ responses to traumatic experiences are comparable to the responses of scientists when they come across theoretical anomalies. I will contend that there is a strong degree of overlap between these responses, which indicates a degree of underlying shared cognitive mechanisms in scientists and folk. The surprising upshot is that folk may be that rather more scientific in their outlook than traditionally thought.
TRaversing the Feminine: The Reclamation of Women’s “Immense Bodily Territories” in Jeanette Winterson’s Written on the Body and The Passion

Through a close reading of Jeanette Winterson’s novels Written on the Body and The Passion, this paper explores how Jeanette Winterson transgresses the borders that have been constructed by patriarchy around the female body and female sexuality. First, it discusses how women’s bodies have been a territory appropriated by men for their own sexual pleasure and aesthetic appreciation, and how in both popular culture and literary representation the female figure functions as an entity to be manipulated by men for their own impressions. Second, it illustrates how the narrative experiment of Written on the Body collapses the limiting and quantifiable language of scientific and medical discourse in relation to the human, and especially the female body. I argue that by subverting the tradition of fetishizing and fragmenting the female body via scientific, medical, and literary discourse, Winterson provides her heroine the autonomous subjecthood that women have historically been denied - one that is not predicated on man’s impressions. Next, it examines Winterson’s celebration of the cosmic nature of female sexuality in both The Passion and Written on the Body alongside the related theory of Luce Irigaray, Hélène Cixous, and Julia Kristeva. I argue that Winterson’s narrative is an unashamed hymn to women’s jouissance, defying the culture of shame and subordination that surrounds female sexuality. Finally, this paper explores the role that abjection plays in Winterson’s figurations of death, desire, and erotic love. I contend that Winterson transcends the hierarchical binaries of man/woman, dominant/inferior, lover/beloved, sinful/righteous, and symbolic/abject that have long pervaded sexual relations, and in so removing the division and oppression implicit in these oppositions, creates the hopeful vision of erotic love as a holy and transformative union.

Dystopias of Matriarchal Power: Deconstructing the Womb in Angela Carter’s *Heroes and Villains* and *The Passion Of New Eve*

This paper will examine two of Angela Carter’s novels that use dystopian tactics as a means of disrupting feminist fantasies of matriarchal power. In her focus on the ways in which women’s reproductive status has been used to define and oppress them, Carter’s dystopian texts invest women with power precisely because they are in possession of a womb, yet the very thing that grants them potency also makes them slaves to a patriarchal ideology, subjects only in relation to their reproductive roles. As I will be arguing in my readings of *Heroes and Villains* and *The Passion of New Eve*, both texts share striking similarities in their negative projections of a matriarchal order coming into power, exposing where this feminist fantasy, even if it originates in a desire to overturn the patriarchal order, might in the end further oppress women. Starting with *Heroes and Villains*, I will demonstrate how regardless if the female subject in this text attempts to assert an autonomous identity, through her reliance on a fantasy of maternal power she ends up playing according to patriarchy’s rules of mastery and violence, merely replacing one form of tyranny with another. My analysis of *The Passion of New Eve* will then examine the text’s deconstruction of the womb as an imaginative locale, which aims to show how the maternal body is not a sacred space or source of feminist power; that it in fact keeps women enslaved to their biology or reproductive status. However, as I will be concluding, through her rigorous deconstruction of the womb, Carter also begins to seek out an alternative locus, or, a ‘feminine’ imaginary; one that does not limit women to the maternal, but allows for non-repressive, multiple speaking positions with which the female subject might identify and articulate her desires.
The Eye of the Beholder: The Relationship Between Beauty and Power in Charlotte Brontë and Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre*

In this paper I consider the crucial consequences of one writer’s relationship with her own body, and her perception of the reception of that body in the public and private spheres of her society. I begin by considering Charlotte Brontë’s perspective as an aspiring female writer on literary and socio-political history, and simultaneously, her individual experience of the personal and social power of beauty in the quotidian world. I continue with a presentation of her avowed aims in writing *Jane Eyre* (1847), her intention to create “a heroine as plain and small as myself”, that would yet succeed in holding the attention, sympathies and admiration of a readership inured to the consumption of perfection.

In doing so I analyse the nexus between perception, judgement, beauty and power, and its manifestation in the novel. I explore the formal use of first-person narration, and the power it bestows upon the narrator to monopolise and manipulate the perspective of the reader. Taking key moments of prevarication in the text, and reading them against Brontë’s original manifesto, I suggest that the author’s ultimate, and perhaps subconscious, desire is not to subvert the significance of physical beauty, but instead to mould it in a new form, to recreate it in terms consonant with her own body and character, and those of her heroine.

I show the inevitability of such a desire, when it is understood within the context of her childhood, the artistic creations of which were preoccupied by the magnetism and pre-eminence of aristocratic beauty. I close with a questioning of contemporary critical reaction, and consider whether the reading of *Jane Eyre* as the revolution of the ordinary heroine, is not merely an act of collusion with the assertions of author and narrator.
Power and Identity Creation

Hania Sobhy Ramadan. Department of Politics, University of Exeter.

Histories of Power and Reform by Piety: The Uses and Implications of Islamist Articulations of Muslim History

The articulation of a certain reading of Muslim history provides a central piece of the appeal and message of political Islam. There are a number of critical elements in this Islamist construction of Muslim history. This work will analyze only one of these key elements and its layered implications. That is the discussion of the ‘power’ of Muslim societies under different/certain/all Muslim empires by different Islamists. Muslims were seen as being powerful in all spheres: military, economic, scientific, cultural and artistic. They were not ruled or occupied or humiliated by others. This represents a condition of ‘power’ and of reform to which many Muslims living under occupation, authoritarianism, corruption or economic duress may yearn. This construction has important implications for Muslim self-perception, guilt, and the very prospects of reform in Muslim societies. For the purpose of this paper, the analysis will focus on the works of a number of different Islamist figures as they relate to this issue.

Critical for the Islamist message is the creation, based on these readings, of an association between piety and power, with the implication that if only we were ‘good Muslims’, we would be powerful- again. To do this, Islamists have constructed an imagined history of piety and of its links to ‘power’ especially in the later Muslim empires, one which they rarely present proof to support. This however enables Islamists to tell Muslims that indeed they can get what they want most (all-encompassing reform, power), only if they adhere to what Islamists construct as ‘true Islam’. This becomes especially problematic in many discourses where this vision of adherence to ‘true Islam’ is focused on personal conduct, charity, or on attitudes towards the (Western) ‘other’ and not related to any actual reform- promoting activities: political, legal, economic, military or scientific.
The Middle East is exploding with new media sources that offer viewpoints never before seen in the region. The newly emergent media discourse in the Middle East can be interpreted as an anti-hegemonic movement against both endogenous and exogenous orthodoxies. The endogenous state controlled discourse is growing less feasible as transnational media, specifically satellite television stations and new media, pervade the Middle East. However, it will be argued the expanding pluralist model does not conform to the western conceptions of a homogenizing ‘globalist’ complex interdependence. The new media forms that are gaining popularity in the region can be explained as complex and anti-hegemonic projects against state control and western homogenization. Specifically, Al-Jazeera and other ‘new’ media outlets will be researched to focus on the double movement against neogramscian hegemony present in the Middle East Media.

This paper’s contribution to the literature surrounds adding the mechanism of media literacy to explain and possibly interpret the ‘double movement’ of anti-hegemonic processes occurring to Arab media producers and audiences.

The paper will be presented with full regard Edward Said’s extensive writing on how Orientalism has set both western and ‘oriental’ perceptions of what the Middle East is and the resultant need to acknowledge orientalist tendencies when examining indigenous Arab and Muslim conceptions of knowledge and information. Only from indigenous conceptions of knowledge, we can better examine prevailing orthodoxies present in the Middle East, and study the anti-hegemonic projects that new forms of media are producing. The power of these processes and their socio-economic consequences are debated, but they do offer a new dynamism to the region in terms of the creation of knowledge.
For the Copenhagen School, today’s security is deeply related with politicising an issue. Security politics is not just about underlining pre-existing threats; but also a performative activity that makes certain issues visible as a threat. Within this context, security refers to a concept that is more about how a society or any group of people come to designate something as a threat. As far as social side of security is concerned it is about the process by which threats get constructed.

In general the discourses of politicians and the security elite are based on schemes of inclusion and exclusion. Most societies construct their identities by positioning themselves with ‘other(s)’. In general, social interaction among different groups is influenced by the way in which the ‘other’ is perceived. Actors develop positive and negative conceptions of each other through their interactions with significant others. It is normal to assume that social interaction would be damaged as a result of conflict situations. This damage is further exacerbated when the interaction is among groups experiencing under acute conflict, as in the Israeli Palestinian conflict. In the region, the negative identification with ‘other’ paves the way securitisation processes within which the other is securitised as a threat to self’s survival. Both Palestinian and Israeli political elite have securitised the ‘other’ as a threat to their survival and thus justified their right to use extraordinary means for reasons of security.

The objective of this paper is to analyse the securitization of ‘other’ in the Israeli Palestinian conflict. It is assumed that, in the Israeli Palestinian case, the concept of ‘other’ has precluded reconciliation efforts. Throughout the paper, security discourses of political elites regarding ‘other’ will be analysed in order to evaluate the prospects and problems in reconciliation between Palestinians and Israelis.
This paper will consider the extent to which the adoption of gendered disguise by female characters in postmodern Shakespearean performance empowers them, providing them with a stronger voice and sense of self within the male-dominated societies of the drama. In Michael Radford's "The Merchant of Venice" (2004), Portia and Nerissa are able to move from the private, female-centred space of Belmont (Portia's estate) to the public, male-dominated law court of Venice. Whilst in the company of the male attendees of the court, these female characters are able to express themselves freely, gaining in confidence, which leads them to become stronger and more dominant towards their husbands in the final scenes of Radford's film. Antonio is visually banished at this point, which suggests further empowerment for the female characters - early in the film, there are strong suggestions of Antonio's homoeroticism, and his displacement by Portia here suggests an empowerment of her character both within public society (the law court) and within her marriage to Bassanio.

In many theatrical and filmic adaptations of "As You Like It", Rosalind's adoption of male attire enables her to interact with her lover, Orlando, on a more intimate basis. She is able to gain knowledge of him which it would be difficult for her character to achieve whilst undisguised, facilitating a progression towards establishing a happy union between the characters. This would suggest that disguise enables female characters in Shakespearean drama to express their opinions and assert themselves, thereby escaping the repression of their male-dominated societies.
Juan Mayorga is one of Spain’s most important contemporary dramatists. His significance as a playwright, however, stretches beyond national boundaries. His work has been translated into a variety of languages and has been performed throughout Europe and the Americas. *Hamelin* (2005) is arguably Mayorga’s most successful play to date, both commercially and critically.

One of *Hamelin*’s most distinctive features is the presence of a narrator-figure, the Acotador, who functions as a kind of interlocutor between audience and performance. Acting as an inner commentator, the Acotador at times deconstructs, explicitly explains, or embellishes on the action within the play. On one level, the Acotador’s explicatory role enables the audience to more fully engage with a play conventionally staged with almost no lighting or scenography. However, on another level, I argue that the Acotador’s efforts to ‘direct’ the public’s gaze can be viewed in a much more critical manner. The notion that dramatic meaning ‘emerges’ from the individual spectator’s engagement with a performance does not fit easily with the presence of a figure who, in contrast, ‘provides meaning’ on our behalf. Whereas commentators such as Eagleton or Schechner point to the potentialities of interpretation created by the spaces opened up between audience, text and performance, it seems the Acotador’s explanations appear to bridge these gaps, leaving the critical spectator questioning. Is this directorial figure the custodian of the ‘true’ meaning of the play? Or does Mayorga, through this character, encourage the spectator to look beyond the obvious and question the grand narratives offered to us as truth by those institutions of authority and power which surround us today?
Monumental Space and the Carnivalization of Power in the Novels of James Joyce and Rachid al-Daif

My paper investigates the transformation of the monument in the literary text into a carnivalesque space of performance dramatizing and subverting several forms of power politics. The main focus will be on passages from James Joyce’s *Ulysses* and from the novel *Ghaflat al-Turab (The Inadvertence of the Soil)* by the Lebanese writer Rashid al-Daif. The theoretical background of the paper comprises cultural geography, deconstruction, Bakhtin’s writings on carnival, and post-Marxist and postcolonial theories. The methodology consists of an interplay between theory and literary text to highlight the importance of a two-way process in approaching the politics of the representation of the monument in literature. The paper hence explores the construction and deconstruction of various discursive and material manifestations of power in the space of agency which Joyce’s and al-Daif’s texts dramatize in their representation of monumental sites. As such, the paper attends to the numerous intersections of several forms of power politics in the monumental space. The aim is to show that the performance of individuals or groups in the monumental site may contribute not only to the legitimization of power but also, to the destabilization and subversion of certain hegemonic constructs and dualities. The main argument is that the narrative texture of the selected literary texts dramatizes the carnivalized performance space of the monument and its power politics beyond the dualistic and fixed paradigms with which studies of monuments are usually constrained. These texts achieve this by embodying in their narrative space the overdeterminations and particularities of the performances occurring at monumental sites.
Civic Power and Questions of Community

Kim McKee. Department of Urban Studies, University of Glasgow.

The Micro-politics of Participation: ‘The Biggest Ingredient Here is The Tenants’

In Glasgow post-stock transfer, housing governance has become fragmented through the establishment of a network of sixty Local Housing Organisations, which are managed at the neighbourhood level by committees comprised of a majority of tenants. These new local, tenant-led organisations represent a key means of ‘empowering’ Glasgow’s tenants by devolving ownership and control from the state to local communities (McKee 2006; see also Glasgow City Council 2001, 2002; Scottish Executive 2004).

This paper investigates the means of transferring power from the state and housing professionals to local communities through active citizenship. We argue that ‘empowerment’ is more than a process involving an increase in control for previously subjugated citizens through the realisation of democratic ideals, for it is fundamentally a strategy of government and a relationship of power (Cruikshank 1999). By making up citizens capable of responsible, active self-government tenant participation allows for the objectives of the governors and governed to be reconciled (Cruikshank 1999). However, conflict, tensions and apathy are simultaneously part of the dynamic of this productive form of power, and an integral part of the ongoing struggle of authorities to access the private spaces of the community and local knowledges (see for example, Foucault 2003).
Sónia Sofia de Sousa Alves Ferreira. Faculty of Human and Social Sciences, Universidade Nova de Lisboa

“The Factory and the Street – Resistance Strategies of Women Workers”

In this presentation I intend to approach the way some women workers from the industrial South Bank of Lisbon develop different strategies of resistance during the Portuguese dictatorship period.

During the time of the “Estado Novo” regime, women were in general assigned with a specific social role, related to conservative values about family and religion. The particular women focused in this presentation didn’t totally fulfill the regime ideology in terms, for example, of the appropriation of the public space, especially during strikes and other public demonstrations. These women have developed quotidian strategies of resistance on the factory work, an invisible and gendered persisting activity, and occasionally participated in public, massive demonstrations. How they managed this repertoire of collective action, what motivates them, what kinds of power are we talking about is the subject considered here. Especially because they are an invisible group in historical and anthropological work in Portugal.

In terms of methodological approach I would also like to discuss the specificities of what we can call quotidian resistance because working with women and specifically with poor working women demands, in the area of anthropological and historical research, methodological tools that can manage with the problems of great invisibility or a dismissing view about everyday life acts of resistance.
Empowering Community in Contemporary Urban China: Ideal and Reality

The danwei system was a dominant institution of social organization in urban China, providing a particular carrier of the socialist state power to govern and administrate the citizenry to meet the intention to underpin and buttress the state’s dominance and control over society. However, the economic reforms begun in 1978 were to ultimately transfer every aspect of China’s economy and society. As a result, the danwei system experiences a dissociation of functions and a collapse of structure, which finally leads to the loss of the institutional paradigm of social organization, and the particular carrier of the socialist state power in urban China.

As a response to the demise of danwei, the concept of community has risen since the Ministry of Civil Administration (MCA) introduced the campaign, community service, in 1986. After the community service campaign has successfully spread out by the late 1980s, a further campaign, community construction, was launched in 1991. Going beyond services provision and shirking the roles of the state, community construction is supposed to empower community to self-organize and self-manage. A dual-track trajectory of the empowerment in the process of community construction is accordingly designated. One track is the retreat of the state power, and the other is the entry of the civil power.

Following the dual-track trajectory to examine the empowerment of communities, this paper explores the empowering process of the residents’ committees in the campaign of community construction. It is found that bureaucratization remains a common problem in the cases examined. It is worth arguing that the retreat of the state power or the entry of the civil power, so far, may only be an illusion. There is neither exit for the state power nor entry for the civil power. With such a dilemma, empowering communities is not so much the reality as the ideal in China’s current situation.
Saturday 3\textsuperscript{rd} March

Session E: 9.30-11.00

- **Representations of Power and Politics: Memorial, Inquiries and Docudramas.**

Elisabetta Viggiani. Institute of Irish Studies, Queen's University Belfast.

**Provisional Republicanism and the Politics of Commemoration in Post-Agreement Northern Ireland**

The paper will examine Republican commemorative practice as a strategy of mediating political messages to its wider constituency in the period after the signing of the Belfast Agreement of 1998. The Republican culture of commemoration represents something more than mourning or the recognition of loss. It can be seen essentially as the representation of a living continuity with the past and the expression of historical legitimacy, linking new forms of political engagement with older forms of violent resistance. In a post conflict setting which has seen major ideological compromises by Provisional Republicanism, and a shifting of the strategic locus away from the use of military violence, this paper will examine the political performance of ritual commemoration as a valuable strategy in reassuring base support and providing insulation from criticism; a strategy which also serves to facilitate the rededication and reinvigoration of the political project and maintains the cohesion of identity within the wider Republican constituency. This performance of politics allows the projection of crucial narratives and symbols of victimhood and resistance via the means of participatory parades, rallies and commemorative ceremonies, and the paper will examine the form and content of these media, with particular attention to the use of memorial sites as public stages for the political acting. Memorial sites do not simply play a part as framing space for rituals, but also act as props and enriching scenery, providing a supplementary repertoire of symbols with which spectators and protagonists can augment the projected narrative.

In summary, the paper will demonstrate the means by which the commemorative performance and the memorial stage both act to anchor and recast issues of identity and political power.
Public Inquiry and Docudrama are two very different methods of representing historical events. This paper looks specifically at the issues surrounding Inquiry and Docudrama as competing representations, making specific reference to the Saville Inquiry and the Docudramas *Bloody Sunday*, *Sunday*, and *Scenes from the Saville Inquiry*.

The paper discusses both the advantages and drawbacks of each method of representation while recognizing that the Saville Inquiry and the Bloody Sunday docudramas are a unique opportunity to compare the two types of representation in such close proximity. Since the Inquiry and the docudramas developed in parallel, they were inextricably linked and affected one another greatly. Both the Inquiry and the Docudramas make claims to truth, and though these claims are occasionally competitive and bound up with issues of power, they are often complimentary and contribute to our knowledge and interpretation of events.
There is a wealth of material on the topic of terrorism, however most of the literature attempts to either create a conclusive definition of the term terrorism, or to list terrorist actions that have occurred throughout the world. Most notably, following the September 11th terrorist attacks on the United States of America, there has been a general attempt to reconsider what constitutes a terrorist action, and to create a new framework of international terrorism to fit the unusual form that the terrorist attacks took. As a result, much of the literature on terrorism since September 2001 places a high importance on how the world has changed fundamentally since the attacks. This paper, however, will argue that it was not the world that changed on September 11th, instead, certain western governments changed in how they used terrorist attacks or the threat of terrorist attacks to promote their own policy agendas.

The paper will look at two case studies; the Omagh bomb which killed 31 people on 15th August 1998 and the London bombings on July 7th 2005 in which 56 people (including the four bombers) died. Studying these two terrorist attacks can provide a better understanding of the British state’s different response to the use of terrorist violence in the pre and post September 11th political climate, and it will demonstrate the power of terrorists to use the mechanisms of government for their own purposes.

This study is important because there has not been a systematic study of government response to terrorist attacks. Terrorism is a large subject area, however in examining the government response to the use of violence by terrorists the topic can be narrowed down to a manageable and coherent study. It will draw on a considerable amount of new source material which has not been used in any previous study of terrorism in the UK, notably using primary sources from Parliamentary records, and looking at the legislation which has come into effect following the different attacks. It is interdisciplinary as it falls under the remit of both law and politics. It will also address the motivations behind the course of action that has been taken by the government.
Feare of the Dark –Regulating the Cinematic Experience

Theresa Cronin. Department of Cultural Studies, Goldsmiths College, University of London.

Film and video releases in the UK are amongst the most tightly regulated in the Western World, and are subject to greater censorship than any other artistic medium. Given the popularity of film-viewing within the UK, this routine exercise of regulatory power affects almost all of us. However, following in the footsteps of Michel Foucault, I want to move beyond what Annette Kuhn might call a ‘prohibitive model’ of censorship and suggest that this power has been highly productive in its effects. In particular, what I want to demonstrate is that the wider discourses of censorship (which includes scientific studies and popular debate as well as the ‘official’ stance of the BBFC) actively constitute a particular form of contemporary spectatorship. That is, within the discourses of regulation and censorship, particularly those concerning issues of sex and violence on the screen, the body of the spectator becomes a central term around which these discourses revolve. As such, the discourses of censorship not only constitute a theoretical form of ‘corporeal spectatorship’, but actively shape the experience of watching certain kinds of ‘controversial’ films.
Do New Digital Technologies Represent a Cultural Shift in Power, Propaganda and Censorship?

This paper and short film are concerned with American individual’s attitude towards the Iraq war. This subject is communicated through the innovative use of sound within the experimental film ‘God Bless America’. The research is conducted in part through the creation and examination of the researcher’s own opinion and identity as well as the reflection of the filmic experimental nature of this short film. The practice based research project is then theorised within the context of power, identity, film theory and the broader field of visual culture in order to advance the contribution to practical as well as critical fields.

The research seeks to achieve a symbiotic relationship between theory and practice. The film work has already been selected for a range of international film festivals such as the Datatransfer Film Festival, Prague and the Antimatter Film Festival, Canada. The paper and film-work examine not only the theme of power and identity but challenge ideas of audio/visual collusion. The audience is motivated to take part in a journey through the filmmaker’s mind. The gap between audience and filmmaker is blurred and the ‘God-like’ power of the filmmaker reduced. In terms of the filmmaker’s identity; the film and paper should examine the generalisation of a nation, a notion that as a German director I hope both to uncover and ridicule. Furthermore the film work represents not only the abuse of power of the Bush administration but also the power of the individual to capture (through accessible equipment) parts of history.

This film forms part of the basis for a series of individual ‘case studies’ in which my work was subjected to a critical review and contextualised within a variety of theoretical frameworks concerned with the critical debate in the field of ‘film-sound as art’ as well as ‘identity’. My ‘hands-on-approach’ seeks to understand the intimacy of this film and the sound/film medium as a contemporary cultural, aesthetical, political as well as technology-led practice.

In particular, this paper and short film aim to address the question of whether a statement in form of a short film can form a sufficient counterpart to the politically/commercially controlled media. In parallel to this it questions if sound can form a sufficient counterpart to the filmic image dimension within our contemporary visually dominated society? Through a practice-led enquiry I seek to explore the different expressive dynamics/qualities between the media in general and the relationship between sound and the moving image. The research explores the use of guerrilla (no budget) films and the limited audience these can reach. The study concludes that the increasing rise of independent film festivals and the possibility of internet broadcasting raise new questions about the notion of distribution as an area of filmmaking still controlled by a rich and powerful elite?
The Power of Media History to Explore Institutional Power

This paper uses twentieth century newspaper coverage of the Speech from the Throne in Canada as a way of interrogating the dominant political science approach to a significant but understudied political institution. In Canada, conventional definitions of the Throne Speech tend to be glib statements, organized around a discussion of: the administration of Parliament; the ceremonial functions of the Crown; and/or the government’s (explicit or hidden) agenda. Common among these standard interpretative frameworks is (1) the tendency to treat the Throne Speech exclusively as a parliamentary affair, and, subsequently, (2) a failure to articulate, or to link, the Throne Speech to the vast majority of Canadian citizens. Noting several problems with this ongoing exclusion, the paper asks: What analytical move is necessary to conceptually connect citizen and Speech? Applying an analytical approach that examines its object of study through the lens of John B. Thompson’s “mediated publicness”, the paper argues that examining mass-mediated representations of the Speech from the Throne not only serves to bring Parliament to the People, but also provides a useful way of assessing how the Speech has changed over time, and helps to identify numerous ambiguities that effectively compose the centerpiece of Parliament’s opening ceremonies.

Throughout the paper, the concept of power is explored in two different contexts. At one level, the craft of the media historian is shown to possess powerful analytical capabilities—power as interdisciplinary critique. At another level, the force of media history is exercised with the purpose of encouraging political scientists to consider more complex understandings of the power(s) of political institutions—power as mediated publicness (as opposed to constitutional law). The paper concludes that a theoretical perspective informed by media history encourages the student of politics to explore multiple conceptions of institutional power, laying the foundation for analyses of legislatures that build upon, for example, Foucault’s concept of power/knowledge, or Edelman’s “symbolic reassurance”.
Session G: 2.00-3.30

- Gender and Power

Anna Gilling. School of Politics, Queen's University Belfast.

**Transforming the Political: A Feminist Conception of Power**

In order to understand politics, and to understand gender, we must first understand the central notion of power. Do women have a different experience of power to men – based on nature or perhaps women’s particular social roles and status (usually caring and private)? Does this different experience of power lead to differing world views and distinctive theoretical commitments (Hartsock 1996)? If we could identify and articulate a differing world-view and theoretical commitment, based on a uniquely gendered or feminist conception of power, could we use it to imagine new possibilities for the theory and practice of politics?

This paper will begin with an analysis of the 3 main schools of feminist critique of power; ‘power as domination’, ‘power as resistance and or empowerment’, and ‘power-with’, the latter most notably identified with Hannah Arendt’s definition of power as ‘the human ability not just to act but to act in concert’. This paper will draw on the 3 schools to propose a new feminist conception of power, which will in turn be explored in 2 case studies exploring the role of women as voters and women as politicians.
This paper will be partly based on the findings from the 40 semi-structured interviews I have completed with women who have “recovered” from eating disorders. I will first look at the manifestations of the power of the feminine ideal in Western culture and how they are intertwined with capitalism and consumerism. I will then deconstruct the control that is exacted over women’s lives through their bodies, sexualities, and identities. The primary thesis of my paper will be to examine the attempts made by some women to control their lives through the use of an eating disorder, and whether or not they do so as a means of feminist resistance to the standards of femininity. There are contradictory theories that eating disorders are either an extreme act of conformity with the feminine ideal, or a subconscious rebellion against it. Using both literature and first-hand evidence from the interviews, I wish to examine the need some women feel to rebel against the norms presented to them in society, and whether or not an eating disorder is an effective means of challenging these norms. That is, can eating disorders actually be a subversive way of undermining the narrowly-defined idea of what it means to be female in Western societies? Are women themselves aware of their “political” struggle? And how does this theory reflect upon the ever-increasing prevalence of eating disorders among women?
Omna Berick-Aharony. School of Culture, Communication and Language, Victoria University Melbourne.

Womanhood Under Terror

The paper will analyse the differences between a number of different images of 'womanhood' comparing some popular Australian and Israeli women's magazines. This analysis will employ some methods and theories drawn from (A) Terror Management Theory (Greenberg, Pyszczynski & Solomon 1986) and (B) Objectification Theory (Fredrickson & Roberts 1997). The paper is situated within a postgrad research that investigates what are some of the ideological uses made of women by western societies living under terror?

It has been documented beyond dispute that western societies have adopted a thin or slender ideal for the female body, and that women and girls are constantly exposed to this ideal in the mass media. (Champion & Furnham 1999; Murray 1999)

Terror Management Theory suggests that people, when reminded of their own inevitable death, ‘mortality salience’, will cling more strongly to their cultural worldviews, and try to build a higher self esteem. The data appear to show that nations or persons who have experienced traumas are attracted to traditional, pro-establishment authoritarian values (Cohen et al. 2005; Cohen et al. 2004). Objectification Theory (Fredrickson & Roberts 1997) argues that contemporary western society values women's bodies as objects and that, furthermore, women themselves tend to self objectification and use this as an instrument for evaluating their self worth, and constructing self esteem.

It is this paper’s assumption that a society under terror will tend to objectify women more, and that women in that society would use self objectification more freely in their self esteem construction.

In order to examine and critique the different ideological means through which societies reinforce these Models on women, a comparison will be made between Israeli and Australian women’s magazines as representing a central mass media ideological tool. This comparison will be analysed through texts and images. Qualitative research methods will be used in order to give an in-depth analysis of implicit meaning related to different models of femininity and womanhood in texts and images presented in the magazines (Andersen & DiDomenico 1992; Paek & Shah 2003).
Session H: 4.00-5.30

- **Power as Political and Cultural Narrative: Language, Experience, Propaganda**

  Chukwunenyengozi Eberendu. School of Politics, International Politics and Philosophy, Queen's University Belfast.

  **Narrative as Power: Experientiality, Social Stories and Political Conflicts**

Several authors from literary theorists to structuralists and poststructuralists, the notion of experience, while remaining contested, has been a way of characterizing the task of narrative. In this study I examine the relationship between narrative and experience focusing critically on power dimensions in the narratives about experiences of political conflicts. Using popular oral narratives about conflict in Nigeria, my study explores how verbal conversations about conflicts create individual and collective meanings for appropriating and (re)structuring power relations.

Working on narratives about conflicts invites in a very direct way the further questioning of the concept of power. Similarly, one is led to question the notion of experience as a historical essence rooted in a powerful past. The fact is that narrative as a basic condition for making sense of the experiential sequences of life turns narrativity into a theory of social power. But in stressing the intimate tie between disparate strands of life and the configurations of narrativity, attention is then given to the conditions of experience and ontological conditions of stories. This does not only extend and put into action the rhetorical power of narrative patterns but also provides a vocabulary and taxonomy for making sense of the significant power of narratives in other spheres.

I interrogate the subjective elements of narratives and how they constitute collective experience with power consequences. I contend that the elements, though indistinct or indeterminable, turn on the more durable social rhythms which branch off into the ordinary and lend narratives to a new hearing and provide discursive means to power. This is because they provide the interactive process for articulating grounded systems and performative ideas. More importantly, they provide the resources through which another dimension of politics is articulated - the politics of externalizing, transposing and constituting subjective experiential elements into enclaves of collective power.
Language and Power – The Cultural Colonization of Ireland

The paper will analyse the comprehensive cultural colonialization of Ireland from the onset of the 16th century Tudor conquest until the rapid demise of the Irish language in the late nineteenth century as a manifestation of a consistent, underlying pattern of hegemonic practice that assumed the superiority of English/British values, culture and language while asserting the power to project them through various means including physical, political, cultural and economic subjugation. It will explore and challenge various historical interpretations of the factors leading to this demise with the view to framing my analysis into a wider understanding of cultural shift in colonial contexts.

I will bring attention to some interpretations of cultural dispossession that view language loss and cultural change through colonization as an inevitable part of progressive socio-linguistic evolution in which only superior languages with greater communicative currency can survive. This analysis, however, will be seen to intentionally underplay or simply ignore the historical significance of colonialism and effectively obscure the fact that language loss rarely if ever occurs in communities of power, wealth and privilege, but rather to the dispossessed and disempowered.

I will argue that linguistic dislocation doesn’t occur in isolation from socio-cultural and socio-economic dislocation but always forms part of a wider process of social, cultural and political displacement often involving overt discrimination, suppression and subordination. I will examine the Irish example in order to demonstrate how native/indigenous victims of this process of colonial dispossession/dislocation predictably began to see their social, cultural and economic advancement, or evolution, in the guise of the powerful language which they internalise to be more ‘superior’ or ‘modern'. This process will be unrelated to questions of linguistic merit but ostensibly necessitated by the unequal exercise of social, economic and political power.

Concomitantly, in arriving at an critical perspective of how Ireland’s historical cultural colonization directly corresponds with the modern Global context, I will contend that colonial conquest, imperialism and globalisation have established a hierarchy of the most powerful languages, which echo the world’s power relations and thus, arguably aim to deliberately accelerate the extinction of ‘weaker’ minority language varieties through stigmatising and marginalizing them.
William S. Burroughs recounted the event variously: ‘In 1959 Brion Gysin said: “Writing is fifty years behind painting” and applied the montage technique to words on a page.’ This he achieved by splicing fragments from an array of random texts to produce new composite texts. And so occurred the advent of the cut-up.

While Gysin considered the initial results to be ‘a rather superior amusement,’ Burroughs saw serious potential in this approach to writing and commenced a lengthy spell of experimentation which yielded his most radical and inaccessible texts in the form of *The Soft Machine* (1961), *The Ticket That Exploded* (1962) and *Nova Express* (1964). But this was not experimentation for its own sake: through the cut-ups Burroughs sought not simply to deface the canon and demystify the creative process, but to attack the mechanisms of control implicit with the formulation and order of language, and to challenge the power structures which lie behind the use of the written word.

Burroughs believed language to be the most powerful instrument of control known to man. Despite believing that language controls man, and not the other way around, he was also aware of the ways in which words can be used to order the world and the societies within it. The power of persuasion and propaganda lies in the use of language, and laws exist by virtue of their being set in the written form. To this end, he sought to break the mechanisms of control first alluded to in *Naked Lunch* by striking at the very root of their power. This he attempted to do by literally dismantling the order of the word, by physically taking scissors to text – any text – and rearranging it at random.

In this paper I will discuss the theoretical background to the cut-ups and the ways in which Burroughs used the method to expose the power of language through its manipulation and how that power can be unsettled through the use of his revolutionary narrative practices within literature.
Kristina Lajosi. Department of European Studies, University of Amsterdam.

Aspects of Power in Richard Wagner’s Oeuvre

Richard Wagner (1813-1883) is one of the most controversial composers of Western art music. He could divide the music loving audience as no other artist before or after him. There are no Mozartians, Bachians or Lisztomaniacs, but when it comes to Wagner Wagnerians and anti-Wagnerians played a vital role in disseminating their ideas about Wagner’s art.

His works have been used and abused during the nineteenth and twentieth century for various political purposes. The most well-known and widely researched case is the appropriation of Wagner’s music as propaganda material during in the Nazi Germany. However, the ideology to view Wagner as a *par excellence* German artist, who incorporates the essence of the nation, has its roots in the late nineteenth century. Since the nineteenth century Wagner’s oeuvre has frequently been approached as the reification of the Second Reich and therefore his name became attached to the unification of Germany and German nationalism. Nevertheless, there are no traces in Wagner’s writings about such claims and there are no indication that he would have supported in any ways the official Prussian ideology and Bismarck’s aspirations for power. On the contrary, Wagner’s private letters and diaries are full of remarks that he opposed and detested the idea of Deutsches Reich that the Prussian government and Bismarck were trying to promote. Most of his operas (*Rienzi, Der Ring des Nibelungen, Die Meistersinger van Nürnberg, Tristan und Isolde*) can also be interpreted as a harsh social critique of political and economic power.

The paper aims to take under close scrutiny the different approaches and aspects of power in Richard Wagner’s oeuvre. On the one hand it is going to analyze the operas *Rienzi, Der Ring des Nibelungen, Die Meistersinger van Nürnberg, Tristan und Isolde*, on the other hand it is going to focus on Wagner’s prose writings – especially on *What is German?, On German Opera, Judaism in Music, Opera and Drama, The Art-Works of the Future* and *A Communication to my Friends* – his diaries – including Cosima Wagner’s diary –, as well as letters and biographical data. The paper wishes to trace the ideological roots of the reception of Wagner’s works in the twentieth century and to put under spotlight Wagner’s relation to power in the nineteenth century based on a thorough examination of his works and biographical records.