

R.J.W. Evans and Guy P. Marchal (*editors*)
VOL VII THE USES OF THE MIDDLE AGES IN MODERN EUROPEAN STATES
History, Nationhood and the Search for Origins

Stefan Berger with Christoph Conrad
VOL VIII. THE PAST AS HISTORY
National Identity and Historical Consciousness in Modern Europe

Writing the Nation series
Series Standing Order ISBN 978-0-230-50002-0 hardback
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The Past as History

National Identity and Historical Consciousness
in Modern Europe

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palgrave
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First published 2015 by
PALGRAVE MACMILLAN

Palgrave Macmillan in the UK is an imprint of Macmillan Publishers Limited, registered in England, company number 785998, of Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS.

Palgrave Macmillan in the US is a division of St Martin's Press LLC,
175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010.

Palgrave Macmillan is the global academic imprint of the above companies and has companies and representatives throughout the world.

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ISBN 978–0–230–50009–9 hardback
ISBN 978–1–137–41409–0 paperback

This book is printed on paper suitable for recycling and made from fully managed and sustained forest sources. Logging, pulping and manufacturing processes are expected to conform to the environmental regulations of the country of origin.

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Berger, Stefan.

The past as history : national identity and historical consciousness in modern Europe / Stefan Berger, Ruhr-Universität Bochum, Germany ; with Christoph Conrad, University of Geneva, Switzerland.

pages cm. — (Writing the nation)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978–0–230–50009–9 (alk. paper)

1. Historiography. 2. Nationalism and historiography. 3. National characteristics. 4. Historiography—Europe. 5. Nationalism and historiography—Europe. 6. National characteristics—Europe. I. Conrad, Christoph. II. Title.

D13.B436 2014

940.072—dc23

2014022903

Typeset by MPS Limited, Chennai, India.

For Guy Marchal, in friendship and gratitude

Ihr stützt Euch auf Geschichte,
Und sucht nicht was ihr suchen sollt,
Und findet was ihr finden wollt –
Das nennet ihr Geschichte!
Und das Alte gehet doch zunichte.

*You rely on history,
But you do not seek what you should seek,
And you find what you wish to find –
That you call history!
And the past will still fall to pieces.*

Hoffmann von Fallersleben, 'Die historische Schule'.
From *Unpolitische Lieder*, vol. 2 (Hamburg, 1841), p. 51.

What's past is prologue.

William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*

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Preface

'History is about choosing your ancestors', wrote Lord Acton, regius professor of history at Cambridge between 1895 and 1902. And a century earlier, Christoph Martin Wieland ridiculed nationalist sentiments with sentences such as *Dulce est pro patria desipere* (It is sweet to act foolishly for the fatherland). These two statements indicate that those who were willing to see had a clear perception of the constructed nature of nation, ethnicity and nationalism. Constructivism thus does not begin with the nationalism studies of the 1980s, although it cannot be denied that the studies of Benedict Anderson, Eric Hobsbawm, Terence Ranger, Anthony Smith, John Breuilly, John Hutchinson and others have had a deep influence on the way we see and treat nationalism and national identity.

This volume is essentially concerned with the role of the past in the production of national identity. It explores how the professional producers of this past – historians – positioned themselves vis-à-vis their respective nations, and why they took up those positions. It analyses the intimate relationship between the writing of history and the construction of national identity and asks about its uses and abuses in modern European history.

This volume is the last of an eight-volume series that is the main outcome of the research programme entitled 'Representations of the Past: the Writing of National Histories in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Europe' (NHIST), funded by the European Science Foundation, which the authors of this volume had the pleasure to chair, together with Guy Marchal, between 2003 and 2008. It involved more than 200 scholars from more than 20 European countries, organised in four teams, who looked in depth at different aspects of the interrelationship between history writing and the construction of national identities. Team 1, led by Ilaria Porciani and Jo Tollebeek, examined the institutionalisation and professionalisation of historical writing. Team 2, led by Stefan Berger and Chris Lorenz, focused on the interrelationship of national master narratives with other non-spatial master narratives, such as religion, ethnicity/race, class and gender. Team 3, led by Matthias Middell and Lluís Roura y Aulinas, extended this analysis by looking at the spatial others of 'nation' in history writing, i.e. subnational and transnational forms of history writing, including local, regional, European, imperial and global/universal history. Team 4, led by Tibor Frank and Frank Hadler, examined the role of borders and borderlands in the construction of national histories across Europe.

A range of cross-team conferences analysed topics that were of mutual interest to all four teams, including the production of national master narratives in other genres and disciplines, the politics of history writing, and the role of the middle ages in modern national histories. Apart from the seven volumes which precede this one in the series 'Writing the Nation', the programme also produced a range of other publications that were extremely helpful in writing this synthesis. (For a full list of activities and publications, see the programme's website at <http://www>.)

uni-leipzig.de/zhsef) We are therefore, above all, indebted to all the participants in the NHIST programme, especially those who authored chapters and discussed the topic of national histories with us over the last ten years. In particular we would like to thank the team leaders for their friendship and collegiality over many years of close cooperation. The programme had a succession of programme coordinators who all did their best to assist the programme chairs in holding a large project together. Therefore we would also like to thank Linas Eriksonas, Jonathan Hensher, Andrew Mycock and Sven de Roode. At the European Science Foundation we were ably supported by Monique van Donzel, Madelise Blumenroeder, Marie-Laure Schneider and many other helpful and friendly hands. The rapporteur of the ESF Standing Committee for the Humanities, Maurice Bric, provided sound advice on several occasions. We would also like to thank the directors of the historical section of the Freiburg School of Advanced Studies at the University of Freiburg, Ulrich Herbert and Jörn Leonhard, who hosted us during the academic year 2009/10 and provided a congenial atmosphere for concentrated research work and writing. Finally, a special thanks goes to Guy Marchal, our co-chair, who started it all off by organising a European Science Foundation exploratory workshop in Luzern in 1999, which was the foundational moment for the NHIST programme. It is to him that we dedicate this volume in friendship and gratitude.

This book has been conceptualised by Stefan Berger and Christoph Conrad, who have had more conversations about the topic, the structure and the chapters of the book than they care to remember over many years. During the duration of the programme, they met regularly during its many workshops and conferences. In 2008, they spent a week together at the Institut für die Wissenschaft vom Menschen in Vienna, in order to hammer out the structure of the volume. In 2009/10, they were both senior fellows at the Freiburg Institute of Advanced Studies at the University of Freiburg, where again, they talked frequently about the book and Christoph Conrad commented on all draft chapters written by Stefan Berger. Ultimately, the writing of the book fell almost exclusively to Stefan Berger, who turned first drafts of the introduction and chapter 2, penned by Christoph Conrad, into the fuller and final versions that are included in the volume and authored the remaining chapters. Peter Aronsson, Tibor Frank, Ilaria Porciani, Jo Tollebeek, and Balázs Trencsényi have read the entire manuscript and provided Stefan Berger with many useful comments and suggestions. Johann Neem read the concluding chapter and also provided constructive feedback. Chapter 3 has been published in a different, abridged version in Stuart Macintyre, Juan Manguashca and Attila Pók (eds), *The Oxford History of Historical Writing, Volume 4: 1800–1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 19–40. I am grateful to OUP for allowing me to republish a considerably changed version of this chapter here. Alrun Berger at Bochum University helped with diverse technical aspects of preparing the final manuscript for delivery to the publishers. She went through all the chapters, proofreading and checking that everything was in Palgrave house style. I am particularly grateful to her for her help with finding translations of titles and institutions and providing transliterations from Russian.

Denise Schneider, Alrun Berger and Martin Sobek helped with the preparation of the appendix of brief biographical portraits of the historians mentioned in subsequent pages. Stefan Braun read the entire book at proof stage and helped the author with compiling the corrections that had to be made a very big thank you to all of them.

Regarding the use of foreign languages in the text, it should be noted that I have tried to give the original titles of books and journals as well as institutions wherever they were available to me, and then an English translation in parentheses. Transliteration from the Russian follows the standard international scientific rules on transliteration.

More than fifty years ago, a well-known historian of Europe, Geoffrey Barraclough, wrote: 'The more universal the historian's point of view, the more he strives to free himself from the preconceptions of a single nation or group of nations, the nearer he will approach to a conception of the past which is valid for the present.' This has been the benchmark for comparative and transnational historians ever since. We hope that our volume can make a small contribution towards achieving Barraclough's noble ambition.

Stefan Berger, Bochum

List of Abbreviations

AHRC	The Arts and Humanities Research Council
BRD	Bundesrepublik Deutschland (Federal Republic of Germany)
CAS	Centre for Advanced Study Sofia
CEU	Central European University (Budapest, Hungary)
CSIC	Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (National Research Council)
DDR	Deutsche Demokratische Republik (German Democratic Republic)
EU	European Union
EUROCLIO	European Association of History Educators
EUSTORY	History Network for Young Europeans
FORD	Foreign Office Research Department
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
GDR	German Democratic Republic
ICHHS	International Committee of Historical Sciences (also Irish Committee for Historical Sciences)
IHR	Institute for Historical Research
IHTP	Institut d'histoire du temps présent (Institute of Contemporary History)
IISH	International Institute for Social History
IPN	Instytut Pamięci Narodowej (Institute of National Remembrance)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NHIST	Representations of the Past: The Writing of National Histories in Europe
NISE	National Movements and Intermediary Structures in Europe
PID	Political Intelligence Department
SED	Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands (East German Socialist Unity Party)
SPD	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (West German Social Democratic Party)
UCC	University College Cork
UCD	University College Dublin

UCG	University College Galway
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USIHS	Ulster Society for Irish Historical Studies
USPD	Unabhängige Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (Independent Social Democratic Party of Germany)

1

Introduction – Constructing the Nation through History

Some say that the past is a foreign country: they do things differently there.¹ But normally it is our country, and they do familiar things there, such as the celebration of national days and other historical events that the nation is supposed to be proud of and that historians have written about. This book is about the relationship between the writing of history and nation-building in Europe. The active and deliberate construction of national identities in a variety of small and large European countries has been based on the use of the past as a resource, and the historical disciplines have often been handmaidens to such constructions. But the relationship between history and politics has not been a one-way street. True, politics has made use of national history, but historians have also made a deliberate political commitment to the nation, for a variety of different reasons. Of course, historians have not been the only ones to have worked on the construction sites of national identity: linguists, philologists, archaeologists, folklorists, geographers and representatives of the arts have all been prominent in the construction of national identities. The press and other media, schools and popular culture have also been major vectors of national identification. Still, history writing as an art and a science, as well as history as an academic discipline and a corpus of representations, has been crucial to the forging of nationalities and nation-states in modern Europe.

The Meanings and Infrastructure of National History

But what is 'national history'? Throughout this book we will use three connected meanings of 'national history' which constitute different layers of abstraction: First we will refer to the 'great works' on the national past of a territory, a state or a people. These tomes, which synthesise the knowledge of their time as well as the political and social world-views and expectations of their authors, are rather rare; they are not necessarily written either by professional historians or by native authors. They have often (but not always) been characterised by literary success and broad impact. Thomas Babington Macaulay's (1800–1859) history of England,

¹ David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge, 1985) alludes to L.P. Hartley's famous opening sentence in *The Go-Between* (1953).

the first two volumes of which were published in 1848 (with two more to follow in 1855 and the last one posthumously published in 1861) clearly set standards in this respect.

A second, more abstract level is reached when we refer to a broad genre of historical representation in which the 'national' is regarded as the most important dimension of history writing and differentiated from other spatial (local, regional, European and global) and non-spatial (ethnic/racial, class, religious and gender) histories despite the fact that it invariably interacts with those other histories.² It is at this level of methodological nationalism that nation-states are being privileged as the prime actors in history. It is interesting to note here that some prominent 'national historians' did research the history of countries other than their own. Leopold von Ranke's (1795–1886) work on England, or Ernest Lavisse's (1842–1922) scholarship on Prussia, stand out as prominent examples. And some of the best English literary histories were famously produced by French scholars.³

Thirdly, we understand 'national history' as the meta- or master narrative of historical writing, i.e. the underlying script of 'historical culture' at a given time in a given country. Such a narrative might retrace a remote past of foreign domination to a period when the nation allegedly struggled against such oppression and for independence. Ultimately this fight was supposed to end in the creation of an independent state with a modernising society. Such a nationalised view of history does not only take shape in the great works but also informs more limited writings and much more specialised monographs, biographies or essays. It is normally teleological and serves legitimatory functions. As we will discuss later in this introduction, the concept of 'master narrative' seems to fit best when it is actually not spelt out in one work or completely explicit in public discourse; rather it formulates what is taken for granted and defines both what is said and silenced. The meta-narrative, moreover, constitutes the format of the hegemonic political discourse and informs attitudes toward the neighbouring countries, competitors and internal adversaries. Because of its hegemonic character this type of narrative is the most contested. Except in totalitarian societies, it is, therefore, unusual to find only one homogenous discourse.

This volume is concerned with national history in the meaning of all three levels of abstraction discussed above. It also pays due attention to the political, social and institutional dimensions of the production of national histories. From the late eighteenth century the study and writing of history was increasingly supported by universities, academies, archives, museums, learned journals and societies, as well as source editions and publication series, all of which themselves became important means of representing national histories and framing national identities. In most European countries these academic infrastructures were public

² It should, of course, be noted that spatial and non-spatial histories themselves interact in manifold ways.

³ See, for example, Hippolyte A. Taine, *Histoire de la littérature anglaise*, 4 vols (Paris, 1878); Emile Legouis and Louis Cazamian, *A History of English Literature* (London, 1927).

and their expansion was state-driven. However, private and civil-society actors played their role; publishing houses and the book market acted as a powerful corrective to the public infrastructure. In a nutshell, the focus of this book is, therefore, on the men and women who have been *doing* history. Even if their personal biographies, their motivations and engagements, their style of doing research and writing can only be illustrated in a limited way, using selected examples, it is these individuals, their backgrounds, trajectories and networks, which are of primary importance for a 'shared history' of national histories in Europe.

Some of what we are concerned with in this volume has been inspired by what Karl Mannheim (1893–1947) called 'the social conditioning of knowledge',⁴ in our case, more specifically, of historical knowledge. We ask: how were national forms of historical knowledge shaped at specific times and places in modern Europe and how did they change over time? Drawing partially on Pierre Bourdieu (1930–2002), we understand national history to be a 'scientific field' in which national historians as actors develop a specific habitus. Only by exploring the interactions of national historians over time and space can we hope to arrive at a better understanding of how this specific 'scientific field' operated. What strategies and stances did national historians adopt, what investments did they make and what alliances did they form – both within the field and with other actors outside the field – in order to maximise their chances to rise in the field – preferably to positions of dominance and authority?⁵

National History as a Project of European Modernity

If historical practice was rooted in wider social and intellectual developments which have contributed to the transformation of a bewilderingly multifaceted and multispatial past into highly organised and teleological narratives of nations, why was this endeavour so important to nation states – old and new – from the late eighteenth century to the present? One answer has been provided by the new nationalism studies as they have developed from the mid 1980s onwards. Influential books – and suggestive titles – like *Imagined Communities* or *The Invention of Tradition* have set the tone.⁶ Their arguments focus on the internal nationalisation of societies. According to their findings, and very much in tune with our approach, modern societies have used their anchorage in the often distant past to help create a sense of belonging to the national community and

⁴ Karl Mannheim, 'The Sociology of Knowledge', in: idem, *Ideology and Utopia: an Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge* (London, 1960), p. 237.

⁵ Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power* (Cambridge, 1991); idem, *Practical Reason. On the Theory of Action* (Cambridge, 1998); idem, *Science of Science and Reflexivity* (Chicago, 2004); for an application to history as discipline cf. Olaf Blaschke and Lutz Raphael, 'Im Kampf um Positionen. Änderungen im Feld der französischen und deutschen Geschichtswissenschaft nach 1945', in: Jan Eckel and Thomas Etzemüller (eds), *Neue Zugänge zur Geschichte der Geschichtswissenschaft* (Goettingen, 2007), pp. 69–109.

⁶ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* [1983], revised edition (London, 1991); Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds), *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge, 1984).

a collective identity to overwrite ethnic, linguistic, religious or social cleavages. National history thus serves as justification for the existence, the particularity and often the greatness of the present nation state. For those intent on achieving statehood, history serves to legitimate that desire. The appeal to history as legitimation is particularly intense in times of rapid social change, of internal conflict, revolution, civil war or war, when we encounter the greatest concentration of attempts to 'write the nation' back into time, to create prehistories of the present and to construct traditions.

Another line of thought focuses on the external function and the outreach of this intimate connection between a conception of history and the naturalisation of its national format. This approach has more recently been developed under the impact of postcolonial studies. Christopher L. Hill (*1964) firmly links the development of a specific 'rhetoric' of national history in Japan, France and the United States to the efforts of these countries to place their societies at the forefront of modernity and to mark their political, military and economic rank in a 'world of nations' during the last third of the long nineteenth century.⁷ Even if Hill tends to overstate the degree to which national historical communities act in concert and with one will, his analysis allows us to situate our theme in a much wider framework: the relationship between transnational processes and the emergence of 'global modernity' on the one hand and individual nation-building on the other. In the field of historical master narratives, Hill confirms what others have shown for the economy, for migrations or socio-political institutions. In these functional contexts we know already how deeply each specific nationalism is related to others but what can be seen much more clearly is that individual nations construct their institutions and their identities as a consequence of globalisation. They strengthen their national format in order to compete, cooperate and prosper in a global context.

These two interpretations, the internal 'nationalisation' argument and the transnational self-localisation in the history of modernity, are not mutually exclusive. Seen together, they even help to explain the successful diffusion of national history as the gold standard of any history over the whole globe. Several authors have, therefore, pointed to the intellectual imperialism that the West successfully imposed on the rest of the world with its form of linear, scientific and nationally bounded history writing.⁸

⁷ Christopher L. Hill, *National Histories and the World of Nations. Capital, State and the Rhetoric of History in Japan, France and the United States* (Durham, NC, 2008).

⁸ For details of the debate surrounding the impact of Western national histories on the rest of the world see Eckhardt Fuchs and Benedikt Stuchtey (eds), *Across Cultural Borders: Historiography in Global Perspective* (Lanham, MD, 2002); Jack Goody, *The Theft of History* (Cambridge, 2006); Stefan Berger (ed.), *Writing the Nation: a Global Perspective* (Basingstoke, 2007); Georg G. Iggers and Q. Edward Wang with contributions from Supriya Mukherjee, *A Global History of Modern Historiography* (London, 2008); Daniel Woolf, *A Global History of History* (Cambridge, 2011); Markus Völkel, *Geschichtsschreibung: eine Einführung in globaler Perspektive* (Cologne, 2006).

Given the global dimensions of national history writing we have to state at the outset that this volume is concerned with Europe. Whilst we will occasionally consider how imperialism and imperial history interacted with national histories in Europe, the focus of the book is on European national histories. Whilst Europe is, of course, itself a notoriously slippery geographical concept, we have included all the nation states from Iceland and the British Isles in the west, Scandinavia in the north, Russia and Turkey in the East and the Balkans, Italy and the Iberian peninsula in the south.

Apart from geographical limits, this study also has chronological boundaries. It starts with the rise of a professional historiography, which can be traced to the second half of the eighteenth century and the historiography of the Enlightenment. Following Reinhart Koselleck's (1923–2006) concept of a *Sattelzeit* ('saddle period') around the turn of the nineteenth century,⁹ we start from the assumption that, around 1800, we witness a major transformation of the way in which people thought about time and history. The 'regime of historicity', in François Hartog's (*1946) term,¹⁰ changed significantly. History became future-oriented: it was read backwards from a particular *telos*, which lay in the future. That *telos* tended to be the nation state for much historical writing in Europe during most of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Before the nineteenth century, history was supposed to provide lessons: *historia magistra vitae est* (history is the teacher of life) meant that through the study of the past one could learn for the present. According to Hartog it was only with the rise of commemoration since the late 1970s and the end of the Cold War after 1989 that the modern regime of historicity was eroded by what he calls presentism, i.e. the notion that the past can only be read from a standpoint in the present.

If we follow Koselleck and Hartog in postulating a major break in historical perception between 1750 and 1850, it also appears to us that national histories had a different function and quality after that break. It was only then that they appealed to a broader public seeking to mobilise (theoretically) entire populations or peoples in the name of the nation. National history now appealed to the masses, no longer only to small circles of educated elites. Before the middle of the eighteenth century the masses were not a political factor in Europe – that changed in the century between 1750 and 1850. Other arguments for a profound break during the *Sattelzeit* come from intellectual history and philosophy. As Michel Foucault (1926–1984) has argued, the Western episteme was transformed at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century through the rise of a strong historical consciousness.¹¹ Moreover, a sense of historicity emerged

⁹ Reinhart Koselleck, 'Einleitung', in: Idem, Otto Brunner and Werner Conze (eds), *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe; Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache* (Stuttgart, 1979), vol. 1, p. xv.

¹⁰ François Hartog, *Régimes d'historicité. Présentisme et expériences du temps* (Paris, 2003).

¹¹ Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things* (New York, 1971); Wolf Lepenies, *Das Ende der Naturgeschichte. Wandel kultureller Selbstverständlichkeiten in den Wissenschaften des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts* (München, 1976).

out of a feeling of dispossession and disorientation following the dual impact of the industrial and political revolutions in the United States, France and Haiti. The intellectual discourse at the beginning of the nineteenth century formulated a deeply felt sense of loss, producing sentiments of melancholy and nostalgia.¹² Historians wrote history as a drama offering, perhaps at times consolation but, above all, explanation for the contingency, provisionality and malleability of the historical process. History, they showed, had been made in the past; historical development was subject-centred, and, as such, history could also be made in the present. The nation was arguably the central axis in this construction of a sense of historicity.

However justified it is to put the beginnings of this study somewhere in the second half of the eighteenth century (because of the impact of the triple break in the understanding of historical time, in the understanding of history writing and in the understanding of national identity), we do not mean to argue in favour of a complete rupture. Of course, national histories were written much earlier and in some parts of Europe can indeed be traced back to the Middle Ages. Many of the tropes, images and storylines which came to characterise modern national histories can equally be found in their early modern variants. An important debate in historical linguistics, literary and cultural history has foregrounded such 'nationalism before nationalism' in the early modern period.¹³ Therefore it would not make sense to insist on impenetrable borders dividing early modern from modern national histories, and it is for this reason that at the beginning of the next chapter we start off with a section tracing their long history from the middle ages to the advent of modernity.

Key Concepts in the Study of National Historiographies

Before we can move to a discussion of the earliest national histories, it is appropriate to take a step back and reflect briefly on some of the key concepts that we will be using in this book. The German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900), whose critiques of contemporary German historiography and triumphant nationalism (especially in the 1860s and 1870s) were as fundamental as they were marginal, once noted that only those concepts which have no history can be defined.¹⁴ Yet, all the terms which are at the heart of this book – e.g. nation, nationalism, state, history – were historically formed and transformed during the period under discussion. The evolution of their meaning and usage are part and parcel of the history of history writing. But we still need some guidance as to how

¹² Peter Fritzsche, *Stranded in the Present. Modern Time and the Melancholy of History* (Cambridge, MA, 2004).

¹³ Eckhart Helmuth and Reinhard Stauber (eds.), *Nationalismus vor dem Nationalismus?* (Hamburg, 1998).

¹⁴ Friedrich Nietzsche, 'Zur Genealogie der Moral. Zweite Abhandlung: "Schuld", "schlechtes Gewissen", Verwandtes', chapter 13, in: idem, *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 5, 3rd edition (Munich, 1993), p. 317.

the authors (and readers) of this book (should) use these concepts for their own purpose. Ideally, such definitions are flexible enough to point to the central meanings without excluding or obscuring the historical changes in their respective semantic field. Many of the terms are the result of what Quentin Skinner (*1940) termed 'rhetorical re-descriptions',¹⁵ and therefore they have a complex and idiosyncratic history, which makes it all the more necessary to clarify their usage here.

To start, throughout the book we are centrally concerned with histories of the nation. In ancient Rome commitment to the nation (*patria*) came before everything else. The Roman cult surrounding the *patria* was enshrined in Roman law, and the revival of the discourse of *patria* in Europe during the eleventh century coincided with the revival of the traditions of Roman law. As early as the eighth century, the venerable Bede (673–735) in his *Historia gentis Anglorum ecclesiae* (*Ecclesiastical History of the English People*), wrote about the 'historia ... nostrae nationis'.¹⁶ In twelfth-century France the idea of the nation was connected to the notion that humanity was divided into nations which occupied the earth and went back to the sons of Noah. Notions of genealogy, culture (especially language), geography and religion were all important components of nation. Thirteenth-century legal thought started from the assumption that Europe was made up of sovereign nation states.¹⁷ By the second half of the fifteenth century the University of Paris classified its students by nation, defined, by and large, by language. In sixteenth-century absolutist Europe, monarchy became a central ingredient of nation – with nation and king becoming virtually synonymous.

During the second half of the eighteenth century 'nation' acquired a diametrically opposed meaning: it now described the aim of civil society to participate politically in the affairs of the state. It was the French revolution which put forward the nation based on a 'social contract' and equated it with the '*demos*'. In this sense the nation constituted a universal regulatory idea with a timeless existence a priori. The revolutionary and Napoleonic wars propagated the idea all over Europe and motivated the people of occupied countries to appropriate and subvert this norm against its protagonists. Defining the geographical space of the nation became of utmost importance in the nineteenth century, which explains the obsession of modern national histories with national territory. The rise of nationalism in nineteenth-century Europe meant that nation states sought to nationalise the masses effectively, and national movements attempted to bring about nation states in areas of Europe, where empires or multinational states held sway. In response, empires that had existed for centuries tried to nationalise their core areas. Imperial histories were in fact more likely to be incorporated by national histories rather than overwriting them. The current study is mainly interested in the way in which histories contributed to the construction of national

¹⁵ Quentin Skinner, *Visions of Politics* (Cambridge, 2002), vol. 1, pp. 182 ff.

¹⁶ F.W. Garforth, *Bede's Historia Ecclesiastica: Introduction, Text, Notes, Vocabulary* (London, 1967), p. 25.

¹⁷ Gaines Post, *Studies in Medieval Legal Thought. Public Law and the State, 1100–1322* (Princeton, NJ, 1964).

identity across Europe in a post-1789 context. Histories producing national master narratives were frequently, but by no means invariably, nationalist, if we understand by nationalism the tendency to valorise one's own nation positively vis-à-vis other nations, which are often referred to in derogatory terms. However, even where histories avoided nationalism, it was, as we shall see, a slippery slope from national to nationalist history.¹⁸

National identity is just one of a range of collective identities, which are always relational, i.e. one can only define one type of group identity vis-à-vis other types. Hence collective identities have no essence, although this does not prevent collective identities being essentialised. We are centrally concerned in this book with establishing the 'codes of difference'¹⁹ of national identity and its potential spatial and non-spatial 'others'.²⁰ All of these identities are employed in a politics of recognition. In other words, they have been and continue to be part of political movements and struggles, which leads us to highlight the close associations between historical science and politics. As Frank Ankersmit (*1945) has written: '... politics has been the domain where modern historical writing and historical consciousness originated and, furthermore, ... it is politics to which we must turn in order to understand the major evolutions that historical writing has gone through in the course of its history.'²¹ National history has been one of the main instruments with which to construct collective national identity. Because the concept of 'collective identity' has been a weapon in political-ideological conflicts, its usage as an analytical concept is extremely limited, as Lutz Niethammer (*1939) has argued persuasively.²² It is important in our discussions of collective national identity to remain aware of the political functionalisation of this idea in historical writing and beyond.

This brings us to 'history'. History writing accompanies human history from the time when humans first began to develop written languages. Indeed, narrating histories has been part and parcel of human sociability since time immemorial. Social groups constituted forms of collective memory through the telling and retelling of stories. However, it is only in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries that the many histories turn into the one 'history'. This 'History' with a capital 'H' was then increasingly understood as a necessary process or development

¹⁸ On the development of national thought in Europe see the excellent overview by Joep Leerssen, *National Thought in Europe. A Cultural History* (Amsterdam, 2006).

¹⁹ Riva Kastoryano et al. (eds), *Les Codes de la différence. Race, origine, religion. France, Allemagne, États-Unis* (Paris, 2005).

²⁰ On the non-spatial others, see Stefan Berger and Chris Lorenz (eds), *The Contested Nation: Ethnicity, Class, Religion, and Gender in National Histories* (Basingstoke, 2008). On the spatial others, compare Matthias Middell and Lluís Roura y Aulinas (eds), *Transnational Challenges to National History Writing* (Basingstoke, 2012).

²¹ Frank R. Ankersmit, *Historical Representation* (Stanford, 2001), p. 265. See also idem, 'Representation: History and Politics', in: Horst Walter Blanke, Friedrich Jaeger and Thomas Sandkühler (eds), *Dimensionen der Historik. Geschichtstheorie, Wissenschaftsgeschichte und Geschichtskultur heute. Jörn Rüsen zum 60. Geburtstag* (Cologne, 1998), p. 29.

²² Lutz Niethammer, *Kollektive Identität. Heimliche Quellen einer unheimlichen Konjunktur* (Reinbek, 2000).

or progress, which turned History into the benchmark against which individuals and collectives had to be judged. As Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling (1775–1854) famously put it: ‘What is not progressive is no object of history.’²³ From this moment on, History has been judging people in a way that only God did previously, and to act or be in line with History has become one of the most important arguments for political programmes and actions. Samuel von Pufendorf (1632–1694) was arguably the first to describe History in this sense as ‘the most useful science’.²⁴ It became vital for social groups and collectives to depict themselves and their aims as being in line with History. The past had a firm grip over the present, and anything in the present that was not in line with the past could not possibly succeed.

Invariably, history writing was connected to attempts to account for one’s past; it was thus related to explaining who humans were and how they got where they were; it was, in short, related to identity formation, both individual and collective identity. As Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860) put it: ‘It is only through history that a people becomes fully conscious of itself.’²⁵ Historians, usually in the prefaces to their larger synthetic works, argued that they wished to contribute to strengthening national historical consciousness through their historical writing.

As collective memory everywhere is based on a sense of history, the importance of history for collective identities becomes even greater. National histories were part and parcel of a broader historical culture which found expression in diverse cultural institutions that were all engaged in acts of collective remembrance. Such collective remembrance via history was closely linked to narration. If the understanding of history changed significantly around 1800, its narrative character did not. In this volume we shall pay special attention to the way nation was narrated and communicated to the people through history in an attempt to offer them identification and a means of making sense of their lives.²⁶

History writing as a means of identity formation entered a new stage with the idea of scientificity. Scientific or *wissenschaftlich* forms of history writing can be traced back to humanist and early modern forms of history writing, but they were transformed into a coherent set of rules, a methodological credo, only with the professionalisation and institutionalisation of historical writing which we will trace in the pages of this book from the second half of the eighteenth century

²³ F.W.J. Schelling, ‘Aus der “Allgemeinen Übersicht der neuesten philosophischen Literatur”’, in: *Werke*, vol. 1 (Frankfurt/Main, 1958), p. 394.

²⁴ Cited in Reinhart Koselleck, ‘Geschichte, Historie’, in: Otto Brunner, Werner Conze and Reinhart Koselleck (eds), *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe. Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland*, vol. 2 (Stuttgart, 1975), p. 656.

²⁵ Arthur Schopenhauer, ‘Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung’ (1819), in: *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 2 (Munich, 1911), p. 507.

²⁶ Homi Bhabha, *Nation and Narration* (London, 1990); Geoffrey Roberts (ed.), *The History and Narrative Reader* (London, 2001); Aleida Assmann, *Der lange Schatten der Vergangenheit. Erinnerungskultur und Geschichtspolitik* (Munich, 2006); Jörn Rüsen, *Historische Orientierung: über die Arbeit des Geschichtsbewusstseins, sich in der Zeit zurechtzufinden* (Cologne, 1994).

onwards. By the 1820s and 1830s historians in some European countries began to refer to the 'science of history', the '*science historique*' or '*Geschichtswissenschaft*'. The new type of self-consciously scientific historian, typically working at a university history department, did engage in forms of collective identity-formation with the full force of his professional status. Having science, i.e. truth, on their side, who could deny them their status as foremost prophets of the nation? But how could they combine their scientificity with their partisanship for their particular nation? In the middle of the eighteenth century Martin Chladenius (1710–1759) had argued in favour of recognising that all historical interpretation was always written from a particular point of view and that all historical events could be interpreted from such different viewpoints.²⁷ However, perspectivity was not identical with partisanship. Ranke also understood the importance of historical science for political orientation, but he denied that the historian should start his enquiry from a particular stance in the present:

it is impossible to take one's standpoint in the present and convey this to science: in that case life impacts on science and not science on life ... We can only have a true impact on the present, if we start off by disregarding the present and move to the higher grounds of free and objective science.²⁸

Hence it was through its scientificity that the new *wissenschaftlich* history managed to validate its claims to academic recognition and public authority.

One of the hallmarks of the new scientific history writing was that it understood itself, more than ever before, as a myth-busting activity. Debunking myths and fighting against the teachings of teleological philosophies of history became one of the foremost tasks of the scientific historian. And yet, myth and history cannot easily be juxtaposed. After all, both create meaning and give orientation. Both have an integrating, legitimating and emancipating function.²⁹ As Chris Lorenz (*1950) has shown, theoretical assumptions about clear-cut demarcations between history writing and myth making, as they were perhaps most paradigmatically formulated by William McNeill (*1917), are difficult to sustain.³⁰ Lorenz demonstrates that myths and histories fulfil very similar functions when it comes to providing guidance for actions in the present and in particular when it comes to attempts to construct national identities and solidarities. Lorenz in fact

²⁷ Martin Chladenius, *Allgemeine Geschichtswissenschaft* [1752] (Vienna, 1985).

²⁸ Leopold von Ranke, 'Georg Gottfried Gervinus. Rede zur Eröffnung der zwölften Plenarversammlung der historischen Commission', *Historische Zeitschrift* 27 (1872), p. 142 f.

²⁹ Yves Bizeul, 'Theorien der politischen Mythen und Rituale', in: idem (ed.), *Politische Mythen und Rituale in Deutschland, Frankreich und Polen* (Berlin, 2000), p. 21.

³⁰ Chris Lorenz, 'Drawing the Line: "Scientific History" Between Myth-Making and Myth-Breaking', in: Stefan Berger, Linas Eriksonas and Andrew Mycock (eds), *Narrating the Nation: Representations in History, Media and the Arts* (Oxford, 2008), 35–55; William McNeill, 'Mythistory, or Truth, Myth, History and Historians', in: idem, *Mythistory and Other Essays* (Chicago, 1985).

shows that historians played a major role in making the nation into one of the 'self-validating' types of myths at the centre of McNeill's analysis. Drawing on Georg Iggers' (*1926) and Konrad von Moltke's (1941–2005) analysis of Ranke's and Wilhelm von Humboldt's (1767–1835) theoretical writings on history, Lorenz holds that religious motifs are inscribed into the very beginnings of German 'scientific' writing on history.³¹ Myths are, Lorenz concludes, part and parcel of 'scientific' history writing from its inception, and they have also invariably infused national master narratives.

Master narratives, sometimes also grand narratives or meta-narratives, are buzz words of today's humanities. The range of meanings stretches from overarching ideas about a direction of historical evolution, like the idea of progress or of secularisation, to concrete paradigmatic ways of framing a historical or political process. Even single influential books are sometimes called *Meistererzählungen*, masterly stories or narratives that provide a 'master key'.³² Tony Judt (1948–2010) usefully reminded us that this type of talk emerged at a particular historical moment: at the end of the 1970s when especially French intellectuals moved away from official Marxism. They characterised historical materialism, the Marxist philosophy of history, as a 'grand narrative' or, better, as the only surviving meta-narrative of modern societies.³³ It is in generalising this 'end of an illusion' (François Furet, 1927–1997) that Jean-François Lyotard (1924–1998), in 1979, posited the inability of 'grand narratives' (enlightenment, rationalisation, progress) to serve as frameworks for the organisation of knowledge in contemporary society.

Although this disillusionment with Marxism had direct historiographical consequences, as can be seen in Furet's obituary on the classic accounts of the French Revolution,³⁴ current references to 'master narratives' mostly do not aim to be overall philosophies of histories. Rather, the term designates a hegemonic framing of accounts which foreground central tendencies in a nation's evolution and define their significance for the present. Such a middle-range operationalisation of the term allows for an empirical study of different narrative strategies inside an overall master narrative, for example, nation formation.³⁵ The Whig interpretation of British history as a process of growing institutionalisation of

³¹ Georg G. Iggers and Konrad von Moltke (eds), *Leopold von Ranke: the Theory and Practice of History* (Indianapolis, 1973). A second edition of this very useful volume was published under the editorship of Georg G. Iggers by Longman, London, in 2011.

³² Krijn Thijs, 'The Metaphor of the Master: "Narrative Hierarchy" in National Historical Cultures of Europe', in Berger and Lorenz (eds), *The Contested Nation*, pp. 60–74.

³³ Tony Judt, *Postwar. A History of Europe since 1945* (London 2007), pp. 563–4; Thijs, *Metaphor*, p. 66.

³⁴ François Furet, *Penser la Révolution française* (Paris, 1978).

³⁵ For an exemplary study of narratives of US nation-building, see Dorothy Ross, 'Grand Narrative in American Historical Writing', *American Historical Review* 100 (1995), pp. 651–77; for an analysis referring to individual German syntheses, see: Paul Nolte, 'Darstellungsweisen deutscher Geschichte. Erzählstrukturen und "master narratives" bei Nipperdey und Wehler', in: Christoph Conrad and Sebastian Conrad (eds), *Die Nation schreiben: Geschichtswissenschaft im internationalen Vergleich* (Göttingen, 2002), pp. 236–68.

individual liberty, or the German '*Sonderweg*', as a – positively or, later, negatively valued – deviation from Western democratic development, can be seen as such frames that guide individual works of history but do not completely determine them.³⁶ An important advantage of assuming such 'frames' behind individual 'emplotments' is the introduction of the possibility of asking about systematic 'blind spots', silences and roads not taken in nationalising accounts of the past.

Processes of inclusion and exclusion are also at work in two key concepts for the historical understanding of human societies as they have developed from the late eighteenth century onwards: civilisation and culture. In the Enlightenment, civilisation stood for the overarching aim of the historical process, whereas culture could either be understood in the singular as *Bildung*, i.e. the self-perfection of capacities and virtues of the educated individual, or in the plural, 'cultures', as entities acting in the realm of universal histories. The pluralisation of culture – in parallel to that of people or language – opened a horizon of world or 'universal' history. Among early-nineteenth-century historians these definitions stayed important. The French statesman and historian François Guizot (1787–1874), for example, published his lectures *Histoire de la civilisation en Europe* (1828–1830), where he meant '*civilisation*' to include the economy, society, institutions, and the moral and intellectual life of nations, especially of France. Equally, in the tradition of the Enlightenment, British historians from David Hume (1711–1776) to Macaulay could inscribe their national histories in an overarching 'Whig' interpretation of civilisational progress.³⁷ However, the two terms also contributed to the 'othering' of non-European peoples and histories. With the institutionalisation of university disciplines for the study of foreign languages and 'cultures', a new demarcation line emerged in all Western countries in the late nineteenth century: while history, theology and philosophy were exclusively to be found in the writer's own nation and, perhaps, in the neighbouring European countries, the 'civilisations' of the Ancient World or of the precolonial Middle East or Asia became the domain of area studies and archaeology while the 'people without history', mostly in Africa, the Pacific and the South American jungle became the objects of an altogether different discipline: ethnology. At the same time, the imperial powers engaged in their 'civilising mission' toward the colonised successors of those ancient or 'primitive' cultures. With the critical concept of 'orientalism', Edward Said (1935–2003) has analysed this profound attitude change of

³⁶ For applications of such a middle-range definition of 'master narratives' see Konrad H. Jarausch and Martin Sabrow (eds), *Die historische Meistererzählung* (Göttingen 2002); Frank Rexroth (ed.), *Meistererzählungen vom Mittelalter* (Historische Zeitschrift, Beihefte 46) (München 2007). See also Arnd Bauerkämper, 'Geschichtsschreibung als Projektion. Die Revision der "Whig interpretation of history" und die Kritik am Paradigma vom "deutschen Sonderweg" seit den 1970er Jahren', in: Stefan Berger, Peter Lambert and Peter Schumann (eds), *Historikerdialoge. Geschichte, Mythos und Gedächtnis im deutsch-britischen kulturellen Austausch, 1750–2000* (Göttingen, 2003), pp. 383–438.

³⁷ Jürgen Osterhammel, 'Nation und Zivilisation in der britischen Historiographie von Hume bis Macaulay', in: idem, *Geschichtswissenschaft jenseits des Nationalstaats: Studien zu Beziehungsgeschichte und Zivilisationsvergleich* (Göttingen, 2001), pp. 103–50.

the Western metropolises to the rest of the world. Although his polemical stance has met with much criticism and revisionism, the fundamental mechanism that consists in a kind of hegemonic culturalisation of the other has proven an important key to the understanding of colonial mindsets.³⁸

While the meaning of terms such as 'culture' and 'civilisation' changed over time, their semantic content also varied in different languages. The difference between 'Kultur' in German and 'civilisation' in French and English became more and more pronounced during the nineteenth century. Where German authors saw their 'Kultur' intimately related to language, history and the *Volk*, French intellectuals would defend the view of French civilisation as bearer of universal values. Early twentieth-century German intellectuals interpreted the split between the two national discourses as a rupture between a profound, individualised and pure essence of values and ideas in the German universe as opposed to a superficial, collectivised and materialistic phenomenon in the Western, especially French and Anglo-American societies. During the First World War, these opposing world-views manifested themselves in the public engagement of historians, among other intellectuals, for the defence of 'cultural values' in Germany and Austria or for the universal norms of civilisation on the French and British side. Large world-historical interpretations like Oswald Spengler's (1880–1936) work, published in 1918, or Arnold Toynbee's (1889–1975) vast fresco of world civilisations in his *Study of History* (1934–61) did much to increase the scepticism of empirical historians toward such 'big history'.³⁹ Still, some of the conceptual heritage of the two terms has been preserved in the composite term *Kulturgeschichte* (cultural history) or in the longstanding subtitle of the *Annales*, namely: *Economies, Sociétés, Civilisations* (from 1945 to 1994).⁴⁰

As we have seen above, historians became closely entangled with notions of civilisation and culture. National history also positioned itself via a variety of other 'essentially contested concepts',⁴¹ such as ethnicity, race, class and people. As Etienne Balibar (*1942) has argued, ethnic homogeneity was, above all, a construction of nation states which attempted to nationalise their populations.⁴²

³⁸ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London, 1978); A.L. Macfie, *Orientalism* (London, 2002); Ulrike Freitag, 'The Critique of *Orientalism*', in: Michael Bentley (ed.), *Companion to Historiography* (London, 1997), pp. 620–38; Jürgen Osterhammel, *Die Entzauberung Asiens. Europa und die asiatischen Reiche im 18. Jahrhundert* (Munich, 1998).

³⁹ Patrick Manning, *Navigating World History: Historians Create a Global Past* (Basingstoke, 2003), pp. 37 ff.

⁴⁰ On the sociogenesis of the difference between 'Kultur' and 'civilisation' see Jörg Fisch, 'Zivilisation, Kultur', in: Otto Brunner, Werner Conze and Reinhart Koselleck (eds), *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe. Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland* (Stuttgart, 1992), vol. 7, pp. 679–774; also Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process, vol. 2: The History of Manners* (New York, 1978), pp. 3 ff.

⁴¹ W.B. Gallie, 'Essentially Contested Concepts', in: idem, *Philosophy and Historical Understanding* (New York, 1964), pp. 157–91. According to Gallie, essentially contested concepts are concepts on which there cannot be any consensus as rival interpretations are of equal validity.

⁴² Etienne Balibar, 'Fictive Ethnicity and Ideal Nations', in: John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith (eds), *Ethnicity* (Oxford, 1996), pp. 162–8.

Notions of common ancestry, shared historical memories, elements of a common culture (religion, customs, language), ideas of homeland and a sense of solidarity all went into the construction of ethno-national identities. In the nineteenth century, ethnicity and nation were frequently used as synonyms, expressing very similar sentiments. And yet the scientific discourse of ethnicity is really a phenomenon of the period after the Second World War, when it started to replace the older discourse of race, discredited by National Socialism. In fifteenth-century Spain, at the height of the *Reconquista*, racial hierarchies were emphasised. Notions of 'pure' and 'impure blood' had a wide currency, the latter referring to converts to Christianity from Judaism and Islam. Seventeenth-century travel writing and Enlightenment philosophy of the eighteenth century also dealt with the concept of race and tended to confirm the notion of a hierarchy of races. But it was only in the second half of the nineteenth century that Social Darwinism argued that race was the determining factor behind all social and cultural developments. Joseph Gobineau (1816–1882) and Houston Stewart Chamberlain (1855–1927) were the two most successful popularisers of the idea that historical development could not be understood properly without taking recourse to the category of race.⁴³ Innumerable British national histories spoke about Saxon 'blood ties'. In France, historians such as Augustin (1795–1856) and Amédée Thierry (1797–1873) popularised the notion of the 'Gallic race' well before the advent of Social Darwinism. Whilst there was no biological connotation in the Thierrys' concept of race, racist French national histories in the 1930s and 1940s, most of which were, to their credit, not written by professional historians, attempted to build on the Thierrys' work, wilfully misinterpreting their use of the term 'race'. In Germany Otto Hintze (1861–1940) used race synonymously with national character and emphasised, sometimes in Social Darwinist vein, the importance of 'healthy racial stock' for positive national development. After 1945, with the horrors of National Socialist race policies tainting Europe, race could only be used in conjunction with the notion that it was socially and culturally constructed.⁴⁴

The rise of the concept of class and its use in national histories is, by and large, a phenomenon which started in the second half of the eighteenth century, when economists such as the French physiocrats and later Adam Smith (1723–1790) and David Ricardo (1772–1823) introduced economic models of society which divided populations into classes. This was picked up prominently by Karl Marx's (1818–1883) theory of class. The 'social question' of the nineteenth century exacerbated the thinking about classes and the desire to make class a prominent feature in national history. The problem was that class highlighted divisions in the nation, whereas national histories tended to stress the unity of the nation.

⁴³ Joseph Arthur de Gobineau, *Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaine*, 4 vols (Paris, 1853–1855); Houston Stewart Chamberlain, *Die Grundlagen des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Munich, 1899).

⁴⁴ On the career of the concepts of race, ethnicity and class see Chris Lorenz, 'Representations of Identity: Ethnicity, Race, Class, Gender and Religion. An Introduction to Conceptual History', in: Stefan Berger and Chris Lorenz (eds), *The Contested Nation: Ethnicity, Class, Religion and Gender in National Histories* (Basingstoke, 2008), pp. 24–59.

This could lead to the exclusion of class analysis from national history or the claim that particular classes represented the nation above everyone else. The latter idea was prominent in socialist and, later, Communist national histories.

National histories have often been about kings, queens, political leaders and the powerful more generally, but it is equally true to say that in the modern period, few national histories lacked references to 'the people'. Feudal societies in Europe knew the term 'people' as referring to socio-economic groups at the lower end of the spectrum. In an age of universal suffrage, citizenship and civil society, it was virtually impossible to imagine the nation without the people. It now became a political and legal term, signifying rights and duties vis-à-vis states and national collectives. It had been Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803), standing, as we will show in Chapter 2, between the Enlightenment and Romantic traditions of history writing, who tied the term 'people' firmly to the term 'nation' – both terms were in fact used interchangeably by Herder. And yet, even in a post-Herderian world 'the people' remained a concept so ambiguous and multifaceted that it meant very different things in different spatial and temporal contexts. It never really lost its early pejorative overtones, but could also be used positively as reference point for justifying particular political projects. As *Volk* it gained widespread racial connotations in interwar German *Volksgeschichte*, whereas in Marxist national histories 'the people' was used almost synonymously with the working classes and the idea of 'progressive forces' in history. And in liberal discourse, references to the people became references to the political sovereign, which were connected to notions of parliamentary democracy and the rule of law. In what follows we will have to be aware of the very different contexts in which the idea of the people was used in national histories.⁴⁵

Representations of history and memory as expressions of collective national identities have been subsumed, in German-language scholarship, under the rubric of 'historical culture' (*Geschichtskultur*).⁴⁶ The advantage of such an overarching concept is that it takes images, myths, symbols and affective investments as seriously as the political use of commemoration or the scientific study of the past. Furthermore, it can explore the interactions and the intertextuality of different commemorative practices, genres and disciplines in a way that is impossible by focusing narrowly on just one discipline. However, the disadvantage is, simply put, that it is too complex to be described and studied over a longer period in more than one or two societies. The kind of long-term and comparative perspective on national histories that is put forward in our book, in contrast

⁴⁵ Reinhart Koselleck, 'Volk, Nation' in: Otto Brunner, Werner Conze and Reinhart Koselleck (eds), *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe. Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland*, vol. 7 (Stuttgart, 1992), pp. 141–431; for the manifold uses of the discourse of 'the people' in nineteenth-century British politics see Patrick Joyce, *Visions of the People: Industrial England and the Question of Class, 1848–1914* (Cambridge, 1991).

⁴⁶ Jörn Rüsen, 'Was ist Geschichtskultur? Überlegungen zu einer neuen Art, über Geschichte nachzudenken', in: Idem, Klaus Füssmann and Heinrich Theodor Grütter (eds), *Historische Faszination: Geschichtskultur heute* (Cologne, 1994), pp. 2–26.

to broader 'historical culture' analyses, chooses both a strict focus, that is on historiography, as well as a wide angle, that is on many countries and on a long time period of more than two centuries. If we refer occasionally below to the interstices between historiography and a much broader 'historical culture' it is to indicate the fruitfulness of intertextual and interdisciplinary perspectives, but it will be for someone else to systematise and categorically interpret such relations between the two.

National Histories in Comparative and Transnational Perspective

Here it might be appropriate to say a few words about methodology. We clearly aim to compare and build on a long and distinguished tradition of comparative history writing that is connected with names such as Marc Bloch (1886–1944), Otto Hintze (1861–1940), Charles Tilly (1929–2008), and Eric Hobsbawm (1917–2012). But we also, in an eclectic fashion take on board the important interventions made by the history of cultural transfers, *histoire croisée* and transnational history. All of these approaches have been attempting to overcome national tunnel visions, and all of them were deeply influenced by other disciplines, including the social sciences, languages, literature, law, cultural studies and education. Despite a number of hostile exchanges between representatives of these different types of transnational history writing, these approaches seem to us to be mutually reinforcing rather than exclusive or contradictory. It is true that all of them have been struggling to escape the trap of national moulds, often comparing nation states or observing instances of cultural transfer between them. Even in transnational studies it can be hard to escape the pull of the logic of the nation state which has come to dominate modern and contemporary forms of stateness. Having said this, first of all, there is no need to abandon the nation state as framework for historical studies altogether. At least from the seventeenth century onwards, nation states played an important role as historical actors in Europe and therefore the historian's attention needs to take this frame into consideration. Secondly, what strikes us as important is not to abandon the nation state as object of analysis but to do away with the methodological nationalism which has come to shape the historical and many neighbouring professions as a result of the predominance of the national framework. It is here that comparison, transnationalism and *histoire croisée* can play a useful role, for they allow us to look at instances of the reception, transformation and adaptation of cultural and social phenomena across borders, to emphasise circulation, networks and hybridity, to look at the relationships between centres and peripheries, to take the historical reality of globalisation seriously and explore the interconnectedness of hegemony and domination with acts of subversion, resistance and appropriation.

Once again, transnational approaches are fraught with difficulties of their own: concepts have different meanings in different national contexts and a transnationally aware conceptual history stands only at the very beginning of its attempts to historicise the translation of such concepts from one national context to another. Transnationalism also requires familiarity with more than one national context.

Here we are dealing with the whole of Europe, consisting at present of well over thirty nation states. The more national contexts one considers, the greater the linguistic pitfalls that one might encounter, especially as the linguistic abilities of even the best historians rarely include more than the mastery of five or six languages. With big comparisons, reliance on the existing secondary literature is inevitable, which means the comparative historian depends on different research traditions. Nationalised historiographies have asked different questions and pursued diverse lines of enquiries, and the comparative historian needs to be aware of these historiographical pitfalls. Furthermore, whilst any comparison needs firm and justifiable boundaries in time and space, the comparative historian needs to remain alert to the possibility that similar developments occurred in nationally constituted societies at different times. Hence, both synchronic and diachronic perspectives on the object of the comparison are necessary. Nevertheless, despite all the possible pitfalls, the combined methodological toolkits of transnational approaches have allowed historians to distance themselves successfully from positions of uniqueness that were constructed by methodological nationalisms and instead get a clearer view of the many entanglements that connected national histories in Europe and beyond. The aim must be to arrive at polycentric and polyperspectival understandings of the many interconnected histories that form the sum total of human experience. Instead of naturalising nations, transnational approaches have allowed historians to think about the constructedness of national story-lines as well as to consider the history of individual national historiographies in their interaction with others while at the same time highlighting the parallel processes of the transnationalisation of historiographies.⁴⁷

The present volume provides a predominantly European perspective and can therefore be accused of Eurocentrism. However, whilst the object of investigation here is undoubtedly Europe, we do not think that historians necessarily have to apologise for investigating such a diverse historical landscape as Europe over more than two centuries. Indeed, it seems an ambitious enough project to undertake in the first place. However, we have been acutely aware that history formed the backbone of national identity formation in many parts of the world and that national history, for better or worse, can be viewed as one of the most successful

⁴⁷ For introductions to comparative history, transnational history and *histoire croisée*, see Stefan Berger, 'Comparative History', in: Stefan Berger, Heiko Feldner and Kevin Passmore (eds), *Writing History: Theory and Practice*, 2nd edition (Basingstoke, 2010), pp. 192–210; Christoph Conrad, 'Vergleich und Transnationalität in der Geschichte', in: Andreas Wirsching (ed.), *Oldenbourg Geschichte Lehrbuch Neueste Zeit*, 2nd edition (Munich, 2008), pp. 317–32; Heinz-Gerhard Haupt and Jürgen Kocka (eds), *Comparative and Transnational History: Central European Approaches and New Perspectives* (Oxford, 2009); Deborah Cohen and Maura O'Connor (eds), *Comparison and History: Europe in Cross-National Perspective* (London, 2004); Michel Espagne, *Les Transferts Culturels Franco-Allemands* (Paris, 1999); Michael Werner and Benedict Zimmermann, 'Beyond Comparison: "Histoire Croisée" and the Challenge of Reflexivity', *History and Theory* 45:1 (2006), pp. 30–50; Johannes Paulmann, 'Internationaler Vergleich und interkultureller Transfer: zwei Forschungsansätze zur europäischen Geschichte des 18. bis 20. Jahrhunderts', *Historische Zeitschrift* 267:3 (1998), pp. 649–85; Charles Tilly, *Big Structures, Large Processes, Huge Comparisons* (New York, 1985).

export articles of Europe to all four corners of the world.⁴⁸ Studies of the global interconnections of historiography have confirmed the widespread transfer of ideas about history from Europe to other parts of the world, where these ideas were received as part and parcel of Europe's modernity.

Hence, Romantic national narratives seeking to establish the unique character of nations were emulated in places like China, Japan, South Africa, Australia and India. The ideology of scientificity came to permeate national historiographies everywhere, and the greatest proponents of scientific history writing were arguably Marxist historians. Particularly during the 1960s and 1970s Marxist approaches to national history writing provided a common reference frame for historians across different continents. Overall, the comparison of European national histories with their counterparts elsewhere showed clearly how salient the relationship between national history writing and national identity formation has been across the globe. Non-European national discourses were never wholly derivative of European models, but 'scientific' national history has been setting the parameters for academic history writing everywhere. This is even true for places like China or India, where it met with, rejected and adapted indigenous forms of history writing and concepts of nation. The national paradigm in history writing rose to prominence in the anti-colonial struggles of the colonised against European colonisers. Anti-colonialist historians used the emancipatory potential of national history and turned it against its European propagators only to find out that national history was as Janus-faced outside Europe as it was within it. After all, the contiguous empires of East-Central and Eastern Europe left a lasting legacy in the national histories of these regions.⁴⁹ Given the existence of three mighty empires in Eastern and East-Central Europe until the end of the First World War, nation-state formation and national history writing followed to some extent different trajectories, although in others, the historians in East-Central and Eastern Europe, such as Joachim Lelewel (1786–1861), František Palacký (1798–1876), Mihály Horváth (1809–1878), Mihail Kogălniceanu (1817–1891) or Simonas Daukantas (1793–1864), followed a recognisably European pattern of national history writing and, indeed, in their attempts to construct and promote historical writing that sought to provide the foundations of unified national cultures were as innovative and original as their Western European counterparts.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ For details, see Berger (ed.), *Writing National History: a Global Perspective*, as well as the *Oxford History of Historical Writing*, in five volumes, under the general editorship of Daniel Woolf and Ian Hesketh, which provides major global perspectives on the history of historiography: vol. 1: Andrew Feldherr and Grant Hardy (eds), *Beginnings to AD 600* (Oxford, 2011); vol. 2: Sarah Foot et al. (eds), *Historical Writing, 400–1400* (Oxford, 2012); vol. 3: José Rabasa, Masayuki Sato and Edoardo Tortarolo (eds), *Historical Writing, 1400–1800* (Oxford, 2012); vol. 4: Stuart Macintyre, Juan Manguashka and Attila Pok (eds), *Historical Writing, 1800–1945* (Oxford, 2011); vol. 5: Axel Schneider and Daniel Woolf (eds), *Historical Writing since 1945* (Oxford, 2011).

⁴⁹ Frank Hadler and Mathias Mesenhöller (eds), *Lost Greatness and Past Oppression in East Central Europe: Representations of the Imperial Experience in Historiography since 1918* (Leipzig, 2007).

⁵⁰ Monika Baár, *Historians and Nationalism. East-Central Europe in the Nineteenth Century* (Oxford, 2010).

If the Romanov, Habsburg and Ottoman empires provided very different frameworks for the writing of national histories in comparison to the composite multinational or national states of Western Europe, both Western and Eastern European historiography need to be discussed together in an attempt to analyse the power of national paradigms over European history writing from the nineteenth century to the present. This is one of the central aims of our book. We can build in this endeavour on a range of comparative works dealing with national histories and their links both to wider historiographical developments and to the history of nationalism, and in particular on the results of the NHIST programme mentioned in the preface.⁵¹

The current volume is, on balance, based on a top-down perspective on the history of historiography – we are dealing with institutions, states, leading historians and master narratives. It synthesises a substantial amount of secondary literature and primary sources available in different European languages and it aims to give an overview of the development of national histories over the *longue durée*. This is not to deny the value of bottom-up perspectives on the interrelationship between national history and national identity formation. Case studies of individual historians and their impact on the diverse ways in which the national master narratives took shape across Europe have proven their value.⁵² In future it will be important to provide more close readings of key national histories and analyse their particular political interventions and the everyday historical practices which helped produce these narratives. They raise the question how the construction of such histories was related to the practices and lives of professional

⁵¹ Apart from the many NHIST volumes, we would like to mention in particular: Karl Lönnroth, Karl Molin, and Ragnar Björk (eds), *Conceptions of National History* (Berlin, 1994); Stefan Berger, Mark Donovan and Kevin Passmore (eds), *Writing National Histories. Western Europe Since 1800* (London 1999); Christoph Conrad and Sebastian Conrad (eds), *Die Nation schreiben: Geschichtswissenschaft im internationalen Vergleich* (Göttingen 2002); Ann-Marie Thiesse, *La création des identités nationales: Europe XVIIIe–XXe siècle* (Paris, 2001); Miroslav Hroch, *Das Europa der Nationen: die moderne Nationsbildung im europäischen Vergleich* (Göttingen, 2005), especially pp. 145–70; Miroslav Hroch and Jitka Malečková, 'Historical Heritage: Continuity and Discontinuity in the Construction of National Histories', *Studia Historica* 53 (2000), pp. 15–36, reprinted in: Miroslav Hroch, *Comparative Studies in Modern European History: Nation, Nationalism and Social Change* (Aldershot, 2007); Hans-Peter Hye, Brigitte Mazohl, Jan Paul Niederkorn (eds), *Nationalgeschichte als Artefakt. Zum Paradigma 'Nationalstaat' in den Historiographien Deutschlands, Italiens und Österreichs* (Vienna, 2009); Frank Meyer and Jan Eivind Myhre (eds), *Nordic Historiography in the Twentieth Century* (Oslo, 2000); Eckhardt Fuchs and Benedikt Stuchtey (eds), *Across Cultural Borders: Historiography in Global Perspective* (Oxford, 2002); Daniel Woolf (ed.), *The Oxford History of Historical Writing*, 5 vols (Oxford, 2011 ff.); Baár, *Historians and Nationalism*. There are also a range of bilateral comparisons which have been extremely helpful for us. They include: Krzysztof Baczkowski and Christian Simon (eds), *Historiographie in Polen und in der Schweiz* (Krakow 1994); Christian Simon, *Staat und Geschichtswissenschaft in Deutschland und Frankreich, 1871–1914* (Bern, 1988); P. Wende and B. Stuchtey (eds), *British and German Historiography 1750–1950* (Oxford 2000), and S. Berger, P. Lambert and P. Schumann (eds), *Dialog der Schwerhörigen? Geschichte, Mythos und Gedächtnis im deutsch-englischen kulturellen Austausch 1750–2000* (Göttingen 2002), as well as many others which are mentioned on subsequent pages.

⁵² Stefan Berger and Chris Lorenz (eds), *Nationalizing the Past. Historians as Nation Builders in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Europe* (Basingstoke, 2010).

historians. A history of historiography paying due attention to these practices, personal emotions, working habits, rhetorical strategies, ethical dispositions and beliefs as well as family matters and political engagements is still in its infancy, but promising to deliver important results in the future.⁵³ We will refer to them where appropriate, but again cannot deliver a full-scale analysis of this material as it would go beyond the more limited remit of this volume.

Since professional history writing clearly never was the sole agency constructing national history, other genres and disciplines need to be investigated to get a fuller and more rounded picture of the ways in which national master narratives came about and gained popularity in different contexts.⁵⁴ The range of possible objects – from war monuments to patriotic lyrics, from historical novels to operas, from movies to TV series, or even to computer games and internet sites in our very present – is vast, and the methodological effort required for their study sometimes discouraging for historians, but their impact on the public is often more direct than that of scholarly texts. In our view, inter-textual, inter-medial, and trans-disciplinary approaches will be of huge benefit to the study of national 'historical cultures' in the future. The transgression of the often permeable boundaries of 'scientific' history writing will recur constantly in the following chapters: the switching of roles (politicians turned historians and vice versa), the priority taken by novels or non-professional writings over works of academic history, the engagement of professors as public intellectuals or the recycling of historical research in museums, all such interchanges happened in the past and are common today. They would certainly deserve more attention and dedicated study.

If one were to map the place of historiography among the actors and media of national identity formation one would have to relativise the importance of the historians' craft. There was only one of the disciplines and genres contributing to the development of national master narratives. Apart from history, language and literature have played major roles.⁵⁵ The collective work of scholars who created

⁵³ For examples of such a history of historiography from below see Jo Tollebeek, *Frederica & Zonen. Een Antropologie van de Moderne Geschiedwetenschap* (Amsterdam, 2008); Henning Trüper and Niklas Olsen (eds), *Cultural Sites of Historical Writing: Perspectives on Rhetoric, Practice and Politics*, special issue of *Storia della Storiografia* 53 (2008), pp. 43–144; Philip Müller (ed.), special issue of *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 18:2 (2007); idem, 'Ranko in the Lobby of the Archive: Metaphors and Conditions of Historical Research', in: Sebastian Jobs and Alf Lütke (eds), *Unsettling History. Archiving and Narrating in Historiography* (Frankfurt/Main, 2010), pp. 109–26.

⁵⁴ Stefan Berger, Linas Eriksonas and Andrew Mycock (eds), *Narrating the Nation: Representations in History, Media and the Arts* (Oxford, 2008); Sylvia Paletschek (ed.), *Popular Historiographies in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: Cultural Meanings, Social Practices* (Oxford, 2011); Stefan Berger, Chris Lorenz and Billie Melman (eds), *Popularizing National Pasts, 1800 to the Present* (London, 2012); Barbara Korte and Sylvia Paletschek (eds), *Popular Histories 1800–1900–2000* (Bielefeld, 2012).

⁵⁵ Annemarie Thiesse, *La création des identités nationales. Europe XVIIIe–XXe siècle* (Paris, 1999). It should be remembered that these endeavours belonged to the individual protagonists in phase A of Miroslav Hroch's social-historical model of nationalist movements; only subsequently did they become the object of civil society and state action, see most recently Miroslav Hroch, *Das Europa der Nationen* (Göttingen, 2005).

the first grammars and dictionaries, who unearthed (or invented) ancient poets and texts and who then collected and canonised national literatures is a huge field.⁵⁶ It would lend itself to a European comparative and transnational reconstruction along the model explored for national histories. Equally close to history but more concerned with the material uncovering of the origins of nations were archaeology, ethnography and prehistory. Directly involved in building up the knowledge basis and normative matrix of nation states were the disciplines of public law, political economy (called *Nationalökonomie* in the German speaking countries), geography, and, finally, the social sciences.

Whilst this volume will include the occasional nod towards the case study approach and the historical anthropology of historiography, and whilst it will also sometimes refer briefly to other genres, the full exploitation of these rich fields of study would go far beyond the remit of this (relatively) short attempt to provide the reader with some kind of synthesis on the interrelationship between history writing and national identity formation.

Some Remarks on the Structure and Main Themes of the Book

After introducing some of the key concepts of this study and reflecting on its methods and its geographical and time limits, let us finally familiarise the reader with the structure of the book's argument. The first substantive chapter following this introduction starts off with a brief survey of national histories from the middle ages to the middle of the eighteenth century and then deals, in the main, with Enlightenment national history during the second half of the eighteenth century. It looks at the ways in which national histories in this period provided a challenge to both the dynastic and the religious/confessional histories which had dominated the field in earlier centuries – notwithstanding the humanist scholarship in the Renaissance which often formed an important point of reference for Enlightenment historians. Geographically, the chapter focuses on the centres of Enlightenment historiography: Scotland, France and the German lands, although other, less well-known places in both Western and Eastern Europe also come into view. As ours is a history of historiography which asks about the production of historical knowledge – under which conditions, by whom and how – the chapter also pays attention to the political, societal, institutional and material conditions under which historical knowledge about the nation was produced. It is noticeable that, even during the highpoint of Enlightenment history, we already find national history as patriotic history, as the debates surrounding the free peasantry in Danish national history, or the debates between Normanists and Varangianists in Russian national history, amply demonstrate. In some parts of Europe, such as Finland, writing national history was deeply embedded in the promotion of

⁵⁶ See, for example, Marcel Cornis-Pope and John Neubauer (eds), *History of the Literary Cultures of East-Central Europe: Junctures and Disjunctures in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, 4 vols (Amsterdam, 2004–2010); Christoph Koenig (ed.), *Das Potential europäischer Philologien. Geschichte, Leistung, Funktion* (Göttingen, 2009).

the vernacular language against a dominant other language – Swedish in the case of Finland. It was also already an important political weapon, as demonstrated by the debates surrounding the Dacian–Roman continuities in Transylvania and their impact on the status of Romanians in Transylvania and in other parts of the Habsburg empire, such as the Banat.

The third chapter covers the first half of the nineteenth century. We emphasise not so much the harsh break between Enlightenment and Romantic national history as the gliding transitions and overlaps between the two. Whilst Romantic historians undoubtedly moved away from the universalising aspirations of their Enlightenment counterparts, the insights of most Romantic historians would be entirely unthinkable without the intellectual achievements of the Enlightenment. The chapter highlights the limits of the professionalisation of history writing during this period and its close association with literature, music, the fine arts, archaeology and theology. The spread of ‘scientificity’ in historical writing is described as a specifically German mission which coincided with the spread of Herderian ideas about nation, Hegelian links between nation and *étatisme* and Fichtean sacralisations of nation right across the European continent. As Franco Moretti (*1950) wrote with respect to the European novel in this period: ‘all of Europe [was] reading the same books, with the same enthusiasm, and roughly in the same years.’⁵⁷ This is true also for historians such as Ranke or Jules Michelet (1798–1874), or theorists of nation, such as Herder. Their writings had a Europe-wide purchase and influenced national historiographies right across the continent, albeit in diverse ways. In response to the universalism of the Enlightenment which seemed to find expression in the French revolutionary wars and the Napoleonic conquest of Europe, national historians employed history to defend their particular nations against such universalist ambitions. In a review of the basic elements which went into the construction of modern national histories in Europe, we highlight their many commonalities but also point out some significant differences. The chapter concludes with a reflection on alternative historiographical traditions, such as regional, empire, pan- and class-histories and their nationalisation in the nineteenth century.

The fourth chapter outlines the take-off of the institutionalisation and professionalisation of historical writing during the second half of the nineteenth and the first decades of the twentieth centuries. The rise of *historism*⁵⁸ permeated university departments of history, national academies, archives, libraries, dictionaries, museums as well as the setting up of historical associations, commissions, journals and source editions. Communities and networks of historians prolifer-

⁵⁷ Franco Moretti, *Atlas of the European Novel 1800–1900* (London, 1998), p. 176.

⁵⁸ Ever since 1995 Stefan Berger has deliberately used the term “*historism*” rather than “*historicism*”. Whereas “*historism*” (in German *Historismus*), as associated with Leopold von Ranke, can be seen as an evolutionary, reformist concept which understands all political order as historically developed and grown, “*historicism*” (in German *Historizismus*), as defined and rejected by Karl Popper, is based on the notion that history develops according to predetermined laws towards a particular end. We would plead to follow the German language and introduce two separate terms in the English language as well, in order to avoid confusion.

ated throughout Europe.⁵⁹ The chapter will comment in particular on the close interrelationship between transnational scientific practice and the nationalising agenda of history writing. Throughout the book we will pay attention to the permeability of nationally constituted historical cultures and ask how much they looked outside their borders. Michael Bentley has taken a somewhat dim view of English historiography: 'We readily overstress the permeability of the English intelligentsia in general and historians in particular to ideas from outside the culture in which they had been brought up.'⁶⁰ The current volume will attempt to shed more light on the willingness of different European intellectual cultures to open themselves up to outside influence. Undoubtedly the nationalising bias of historical writing could make transnationalism deeply problematical. Rival ethnic claims on one and the same territory often led to the setting up of rival national historiographies on the same territory, e.g. Bohemia, Belgium and Finland. The chapter will go on to discuss the huge impact of the state on history writing in Europe, especially its mediation of various attempts from within civil society bodies to promote particular variants of historical national master narratives.

Increased scientificity in the second half of the nineteenth century led to the drawing of more pronounced boundaries between history and amateurism and between history and other genres/ disciplines. However, an increase in the professional ethos of historians did not necessarily mean a withdrawal from the political project of nation-building. Quite the reverse: their enhanced 'scientific' status meant that historians could now claim a particular authenticity and increased ability to speak on behalf of the nation – either as official state-sanctioned historians or oppositional ones. Historians promoted historiographical nationalism in a wide range of scenarios, ranging from long-established states to new ones and from aspiring stateless nations to nationalising empires. They were also among the most effective popularisers of their more scholarly work following an alleged vocation as pedagogues or even prophets of the nation. Sceptics of such nationalisation of the historical discipline found themselves increasingly marginalised before 1914.

Border conflicts came to shape national master narratives to a considerable extent,⁶¹ and national narratives everywhere negotiated the demands of confessional, racial and class identities with their desire to present a unified national history. As the final section of this chapter will demonstrate, the thorough nationalisation of historical writing did not end history's transnational orientation. European history, world history, empire history and pan-histories were still being written, but ever more rarely as counter-histories to the national paradigm. Instead they became part and parcel of national master narratives.

⁵⁹ See in particular Ilaria Porciani and Jo Tollebeek (eds), *Setting the Standards: Institutions, Networks and Communities of National Historiography* (Basingstoke, 2012).

⁶⁰ Michael Bentley, *Modernizing England's Past. English Historiography in the Age of Modernism, 1870–1970* (Cambridge, 2005), p. 179.

⁶¹ This is explored in great depth by Tibor Frank and Frank Hadler (eds), *Disputed Territories and Shared Pasts: Overlapping National Histories in Modern Europe* (Basingstoke, 2011), on which we shall draw extensively in the following chapters.

The fifth chapter explores the fate of national histories between the outbreak of the First World War and the end of the Second World War. It describes the First World War as the high point of historiographical nationalism in Europe and reviews the attempts of historians to support the war efforts of their respective countries, whilst also giving some examples of a continued adherence to transnationalism within the historical profession. The debate over responsibility for the outbreak of war continued the historiographical nationalism of the war years into the post-war era. The new nation states that came into existence in East-Central and Eastern Europe after the end of the war quickly embarked on a state-promoted historiographical nationalism of their own in attempts to stabilise their 'young' nation states. The chapter also reviews the situation of older liberal-democratic national histories in a number of European nation states that increasingly looked beleaguered and defensive in the interwar period, as they were challenged by fascist and right-wing authoritarian, including religious, national histories on the one hand and Communist ones on the other. The rise of racist *Volksgeschichte* in interwar Europe is considered in comparative perspective, and the chapter will ask what German occupation in the Second World War did to the historical national master narratives of the occupied countries, especially where nations achieved 'independence' under fascism, as was the case, for example, in Slovakia and Croatia.

Communist national history was institutionalised in the Soviet Union after the Bol'shevik victory of 1917, but the merger of class and national history had a much longer tradition, which will be briefly reviewed. Under Stalin the nationalisation of Soviet historiography saw the repression of other histories in the Soviet Union, e.g. those of Ukraine or Byelorussia. The chapter ends with a review of the impact of exile from both fascism and communism on historical national master narratives and of attempts to maintain transnational and internationalist perspectives in historical writing in the midst of the hypernationalist *zeitgeist* of the interwar period.

The final substantive chapter of this book will explore the development of national history writing from the end of the Second World War to the present day. It will start with a survey of attempts across Europe to stabilise national historical narratives amidst the chaos of the end of the Second World War. Those attempts can be found in both Communist and capitalist countries in East and Western Europe. They were common in perpetrator, victim and neutral countries. It was only during the long 1960s that a delayed break with the positively accentuated national tradition of history writing took place in a number of European countries. The chapter comments on the deconstruction of heroic resistance stories in various countries occupied during the Second World War and highlights the importance of the expansion of higher education systems in Western Europe as well as the rise of social history for the emergence of more critical attitudes to national history during the 1960s and 1970s. The Cold War divided European historiographies but it also provided transnational platforms in both Eastern and Western Europe. And with the emergence of détente from the late 1960s onwards the possibilities for dialogue between the power blocks also increased among historians. In relation to Communist East European historiographies the chapter explores the impact of exile

historiographies which developed and maintained their own national histories. In the West, anti-communism and the notion of a Western community of values contributed to the opening up of national tunnel visions and the tentative beginnings of more transnational orientations of historians. However, there was no linear move away from national master narratives. The chapter comments on their revival in both Western and Eastern Europe, which started in Eastern Europe in the 1960s and 1970s (with a variety of national communisms) and in Western Europe in the 1980s (with the victory of neo-conservative and neo-liberal ideologies) and in many cases accelerated after the end of the Cold War. The fall of communism and the processes of Europeanisation strengthened such nationalising tendencies. The chapter assesses to what extent the strengthening of national history was a return to the 1950s or, rather, something different, and it also traces a variety of alternative efforts to keep clear of national history.

As the conclusion to this volume underlines, the contemporary history of historiography is characterised by two seemingly contradictory tendencies. On the one hand the end of the Cold War has seen a revival of national histories in many formerly Communist nations in Eastern Europe. But such renationalisation also accelerated in Germany (with reunification) and in many parts of Western Europe, where regionalisms transformed themselves into full-fledged nationalisms (e.g. Catalonia, Scotland, Flanders). On the other hand, professional history writing has discovered transnational history and investigates the entanglements pointing beyond the borders of the nation states which appear as artificial and constructed. Hence, we shall ask where history writing will and should be going in the twenty-first century and attempt to draw some lessons from the history of national historiographies which has been examined here. However, all of this is done only after an attempt to systematise some of the findings of this volume, making use of the general themes which are analysed throughout.

As will be clear from this brief introduction to the following chapters, we have adopted a chronological approach and yet we are pursuing throughout the volume some interrelated thematic strands which can be translated into seven sets of questions:

1. Where were national histories being written and by whom? Which factors promoted national history writing and which held it back? Throughout the book we are keen to stress agency and location and their importance in shaping historiographies in Europe. What motivated diverse historians to produce national history? How did the nationalisation of historiographies interact with the development of a transnational ethos among historians?
2. How was professional historical practice linked to institutions such as archives, museums and university departments that were established by European states and societies? National historiographies positioned themselves within civil society and vis-à-vis the state and they did so by excluding forms of amateurism and endorsing the idea of scientificity. How were processes of institutionalisation and professionalisation tied to disciplinary closures? How open did history remain towards other genres and disciplines? As Ann Rigney (*1957) reminds us,

'professional historical practice, far from floating serenely in some eternal space, reflected the hierarchies within the society in which it was rooted.'⁶²

3. How were national histories gendered? How were women excluded from professional history writing and how were they eventually integrated into the profession? What role did they play in shaping historiographies? Did their 'employment' of history differ from that of their male colleagues? How were notions of gender and gender order inscribed into the structure of national histories?
4. What were key ingredients of national master narratives? How did they develop over time? What major similarities and differences can be perceived between them? How did ideas about national history circulate within Europe and which standards were adopted as 'best practice' throughout Europe? How did processes of cultural transfer work?
5. How did political caesuras, wars and regime changes impact on historians and their writings? It has been part and parcel of the scientific ethos of the profession to claim a high degree of autonomy from political processes. Professional historians liked to link their ethos of impartiality to an idea of political neutrality. How much did this correspond to the actual involvement of historians with politics and the powers that were? From which position of power was national history being written? How marginal or dominant was it in different contexts? How easily was historiography instrumentalised by governments or political groups? What causes did historians serve?
6. All attempts to stabilise territorial orders produce borders. They and the scar tissue they produced on the map of Europe have played a major role in national histories. How did the nation define itself at and through the border and to what degree have border histories been infused with an acute sense of territoriality? How have themes like in- and out-migration, exile, ethnic minorities and transterritoriality been integrated in the national master narrative?
7. Finally, we also want to highlight that national history has never been the only show in town. Throughout the period under discussion here there have been a number of alternatives. What linkages and hierarchies existed between national histories and other forms of history writing? These alternatives were framed on different spatial levels, such as regional, European, universal or global history, and they were focused on other cleavages within and between societies, such as communities of ethnicity/race, religion/confession and class. To what extent were those real alternatives? Or, asked differently: to what extent has national history been capable of subsuming these alternatives under its seemingly all-pervasive paradigm?

National history writing resembles a performative act. Writing the nation has meant performing it in a range of different institutional and political contexts.

⁶² Ann Rigney, 'The Two Bodies of Mrs. Oliphant', *History and Theory* 40:1 (2001), pp. 74–89, quote on p. 78.

We seek to assess in particular national history's emancipatory and destructive potential. Such a balance sheet will allow us to ask what future there might be for identity constructions based on history in the context of ongoing Europeanisation and globalisation. At a time of further EU enlargement and of 'ever closer political union', the EU has become interested in promoting European historical consciousness. Our reading of national histories should allow us to comment and provide some tentative conclusions as to how advisable it would be for Europe to seek to copy the development of national historical consciousness through history.