

administrators, missionaries, 'progressive traditionalists', elders and anthropologists. Those like Ngugi who repudiate bourgeois élite culture face the ironic danger of embracing another set of colonial inventions instead. Ngugi himself solves the difficulty by embracing the tradition of Kenyan popular resistance to colonialism. As this chapter suggests, young men, women, immigrants – the exploited groups with whom Ngugi has sympathy – *have* sometimes been able to tap the continued vitality of the mingled continuity and innovation which resides within indigenous cultures as they have continued to develop underneath the rigidities of codified colonial custom.

As for historians, they have at least a double task. They have to free themselves from the illusion that the African custom recorded by officials or by many anthropologists is any sort of guide to the African past. But they also need to appreciate how much invented traditions of all kinds have to do with the history of Africa in the twentieth century and strive to produce better founded accounts of them than this preliminary sketch.

7. *Mass-Producing Traditions : Europe, 1870–1914*

ERIC HOBSBAWM

I

Once we are aware how commonly traditions are invented, it can easily be discovered that one period which saw them spring up with particular assiduity was in the thirty or forty years before the first world war. One hesitates to say 'with greater assiduity' than at other times, since there is no way of making realistic quantitative comparisons. Nevertheless, the creation of traditions was enthusiastically practised in numerous countries and for various purposes, and this mass-generation of traditions is the subject of this chapter. It was both practised officially and unofficially, the former – we may loosely call it 'political' – primarily in or by states or organized social and political movements, the latter – we may loosely call it 'social' – mainly by social groups not formally organized as such, or those whose objects were not specifically or consciously political, such as clubs and fraternities, whether or not these also had political functions. The distinction is one of convenience rather than principle. It is designed to draw attention to two main forms of the creation of tradition in the nineteenth century, both of which reflect the profound and rapid social transformations of the period. Quite new, or old but dramatically transformed, social groups, environments and social contexts called for new devices to ensure or express social cohesion and identity and to structure social relations. At the same time a changing society made the traditional forms of ruling by states and social or political hierarchies more difficult or even impracticable. This required new methods of ruling or establishing bonds of loyalty. In the nature of things, the consequent invention of 'political' traditions was more conscious and deliberate, since it was largely undertaken by institutions with political purposes in mind. Yet we may as well note immediately that conscious invention succeeded mainly in proportion to its success in broadcasting on a wavelength to which the public was ready to tune in. Official new public holidays, ceremonies, heroes or symbols, which commanded the growing armies of the state's employees and the growing captive public of

schoolchildren, might still fail to mobilize the citizen volunteers if they lacked genuine popular resonance. The German Empire did not succeed in its efforts to turn the Emperor William I into a popularly accepted founding father of a united Germany, nor in turning his birthday into a genuine national anniversary. (Who, by the way, now remembers the attempt to call him 'William the Great'?) Official encouragement did secure the building of 327 monuments to him by 1902, but within *one* year of Bismarck's death in 1898, 470 municipalities had decided to erect 'Bismarck columns'.¹

Nevertheless, the state linked both formal and informal, official and unofficial, political and social inventions of tradition, at least in those countries where the need for it arose. Seen from below, the state increasingly defined the largest stage on which the crucial activities determining human lives as subjects and citizens were played out. Indeed, it increasingly defined as well as registered their civil existence (*état civil*). It may not have been the only such stage, but its existence, frontiers and increasingly regular and probing interventions in the citizen's life were in the last analysis decisive. In developed countries the 'national economy', its area defined by the territory of some state or its subdivisions, was the basic unit of economic development. A change in the frontiers of the state or in its policy had substantial and continuous material consequences for its citizens. The standardization of administration and law within it, and, in particular, state education, transformed people into citizens of a specific country: 'peasants into Frenchmen', to cite the title of an apposite book.² The state was the framework of the citizens' collective actions, insofar as these were officially recognized. To influence or change the government of the state, or its policy, was plainly the main objective of domestic politics, and the common man was increasingly entitled to take part in it. Indeed, politics in the new nineteenth-century sense was essentially nation-wide politics. In short, for practical purposes, society ('civil society') and the state within which it operated became increasingly inseparable.

It was thus natural that the classes within society, and in particular

¹ G. L. Mosse, 'Caesarism, Circuses and Movements', *Journal of Contemporary History*, vi, no. 2 (1971), pp. 167-82; G. L. Mosse, *The Nationalisation of the Masses: Political Symbolism and Mass Movements in Germany from the Napoleonic Wars through the 3rd Reich* (New York, 1975); T. Nipperdey, 'Nationalidee und Nationaldenkmal in Deutschland im 19. Jahrhundert', *Historische Zeitschrift* (June 1968), pp. 529-85, esp. 543n, 579n.

² Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914* (Stanford, 1976).

the working class, should tend to identify themselves through nationwide political movements or organizations ('parties'), and equally natural that de facto these should operate essentially within the confines of the nation.³ Nor is it surprising that movements seeking to represent an entire society or 'people' should envisage its existence essentially in terms of that of an independent or at least an autonomous state. State, nation and society converged.

For the same reason, the state, seen from above in the perspective of its formal rulers or dominant groups, raised unprecedented problems of how to maintain or even establish the obedience, loyalty and cooperation of its subjects or members, or its own legitimacy in their eyes. The very fact that its direct and increasingly intrusive and regular relations with the subjects or citizens as individuals (or at most, heads of families) became increasingly central to its operations, tended to weaken the older devices by means of which social subordination had largely been maintained: relatively autonomous collectivities or corporations under the ruler, but controlling their own members, pyramids of authority linked to higher authorities at their apexes, stratified social hierarchies in which each stratum recognized its place, and so on. In any case social transformations such as those which replaced ranks by classes undermined them. The problems of states and rulers were evidently much more acute where their subjects had become citizens, that is people whose political activities were institutionally recognized as something that had to be taken note of - if only in the form of elections. They became even more acute when the political movements of citizens as masses deliberately challenged the legitimacy of the systems of political or social rule, and or threatened to prove incompatible with the state's order by setting the obligations to some other human collectivity - most usually class, church or nationality - above it.

The problem appeared to be most manageable where social structure had changed least, where men's fates appeared to be subject to no other forces than those which an inscrutable divinity had always unleashed among the human race, and where the ancient ways of hierarchical superiority and stratified, multiform and relatively autonomous subordination remained in force. If anything could

³ This was conclusively demonstrated in 1914 by the socialist parties of the Second International, which not only claimed to be essentially international in scope, but actually sometimes regarded themselves officially as no more than national sections of a global movement. ('Section Française de l'Internationale Ouvrière').

mobilize the peasantry of south Italy beyond their localities, it was church and king. And indeed the traditionalism of peasants (which must not be confused with passivity, though there are not many cases where they challenged the actual existence of the lords, so long as these belonged to the same faith and people) was constantly praised by nineteenth-century conservatives as the ideal model of the subject's political comportment. Unfortunately, the states in which this model worked were by definition 'backward' and therefore feeble, and any attempt to 'modernize' them was likely to make it less workable. A 'modernization' which maintained the old ordering of social subordination (possibly with some well-judged invention of tradition) was not theoretically inconceivable, but apart from Japan it is difficult to think of an example of practical success. And it may be suggested that such attempts to update the social bonds of a traditional order implied a demotion of social hierarchy, a strengthening of the subject's direct bonds to the central ruler who, whether this was intended to or not, increasingly came to represent a new kind of state. 'God save the King' was increasingly (if sometimes symbolically) a more effective political injunction than 'God bless the squire and his relations and keep us in our proper stations'. The chapter on the British monarchy throws some light on this process, though it would be desirable to see a study of the attempts by more authentically legitimist dynasties, such as those of the Habsburg and the Romanov, not merely to command the obedience of their peoples as subjects, but to rally their loyalty as potential citizens. We know that they eventually failed, but was their failure a foregone conclusion?

Conversely the problem was most intractable in states which were completely new, where the rulers were unable to make effective use of already existing bonds of political obedience and loyalty, and in states whose legitimacy (or that of the social order they represented) was effectively no longer accepted. In the period 1870-1914 there were, as it happens, unusually few 'new states'. Most European states, as well as the American republics, had by then acquired the basic official institutions, symbols and practices which Mongolia, establishing a sort of independence from China in 1912, quite rightly regarded as novel and necessary. They had capitals, flags, national anthems, military uniforms and similar paraphernalia, based largely on the model of the British, whose national anthem (datable c. 1740) is probably the first, and of the French, whose tricolour flag was very

generally imitated. Several new states and régimes could either, like the French Third Republic, reach back into the store of earlier French republican symbolism or, like the Bismarckian German Empire, combine appeals to an earlier German Empire, with the myths and symbols of a liberal nationalism popular among the middle classes, and the dynastic continuity of the Prussian monarchy, of which by the 1860s half of the inhabitants of Bismarckian Germany were subjects. Among the major states only Italy had to start from scratch in solving the problem summarized by d'Azeglio in the phrase: 'We have made Italy: now we must make Italians'. The tradition of the kingdom of Savoy was no political asset outside the north-western corner of the country, and the church opposed the new Italian state. It is perhaps not surprising that the new kingdom of Italy, however enthusiastic about 'making Italians', was notably unenthusiastic about giving the vote to more than one or two per cent of them until this seemed quite unavoidable.

Yet if the establishment of the legitimacy of new states and régimes was relatively uncommon, its assertion against the challenge of popular politics was not. As noted above, that challenge was chiefly represented, singly or in combination, by the sometimes linked, sometimes competing, political mobilization of masses through religion (mainly Roman Catholicism), class consciousness (social democracy), and nationalism, or at least xenophobia. Politically these challenges found their most visible expression in the vote, and were at this period inextricably linked either with the existence of, or struggle for, a mass suffrage, waged against opponents who were mainly by now resigned to fighting a delaying rearguard action. By 1914 some form of extensive if not universal manhood suffrage was operating in Australia (1901), Austria (1907), Belgium (1894), Denmark (1849), Finland (1905), France (1875), Germany (1871), Italy (1913), Norway (1898), Sweden (1907), Switzerland (1848-79), the United Kingdom (1867-84) and the U.S.A., though it was still only occasionally combined with political democracy. Yet even where constitutions were not democratic, the very existence of a mass electorate dramatized the problem of maintaining its loyalty. The unbroken rise of the Social Democratic vote in imperial Germany was no less worrying to its rulers because the Reichstag in fact had very little power.

The widespread progress of electoral democracy and the consequent emergence of mass politics therefore dominated the invention of

official traditions in the period 1870–1914. What made it particularly urgent was the dominance both of the model of liberal constitutional institutions and of liberal ideology. The former provided no theoretical, but only at best empirical, barriers against electoral democracy. Indeed, it was difficult for the liberal not to expect an extension of civic rights to all citizens – or at least to male ones – sooner or later. The latter had achieved its most spectacular economic triumphs and social transformations by systematically opting for the individual against the institutionalized collectivity, for market transactions (the ‘cash nexus’) against human ties, for class against rank hierarchy, for *Gesellschaft* against *Gemeinschaft*. It had thus systematically failed to provide for those social bonds and ties of authority taken for granted in earlier societies, and had indeed set out to and succeeded in weakening them. So long as the masses remained outside politics, or were prepared to follow the liberal bourgeoisie, this created no major political difficulties. Yet from the 1870s onwards it became increasingly obvious that the masses were becoming involved in politics and could not be relied upon to follow their masters.

After the 1870s, therefore, and almost certainly in connection with the emergence of mass politics, rulers and middle-class observers rediscovered the importance of ‘irrational’ elements in the maintenance of the social fabric and the social order. As Graham Wallas was to observe in *Human Nature in Politics* (1908): ‘Whoever sets himself to base his political thinking on a re-examination of the working of human nature, must begin by trying to overcome his own tendency to exaggerate the intellectuality of mankind’.⁴ A new generation of thinkers had no difficulty in overcoming this tendency. They rediscovered irrational elements in the individual psyche (Janet, William James, Freud), in social psychology (Le Bon, Tarde, Trotter), through anthropology in primitive peoples whose practices no longer seemed to preserve merely the childhood traits of modern humanity (did not Durkheim see the elements of all religion in the rites of the Australian aborigines?⁵), even in that quintessential fortress of ideal human reason, classical Hellenism (Frazer, Cornford).⁶ The intellectual study of politics and society was transformed by the recognition

⁴ Graham Wallas, *Human Nature in Politics* (London, 1908), p. 21.

⁵ Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (London, 1976). First French publication 1912.

⁶ J. G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, 3rd edn (London, 1907–30); F. M. Cornford, *From Religion to Philosophy: A Study of the Origins of Western Speculation* (London, 1912).

that whatever held human collectivities together it was not the rational calculation of their individual members.

This is not the place to analyse, even in the most cursory manner, this intellectual retreat from classical liberalism, in which only the economists failed to join.⁷ Its relationship to the experience of mass politics is obvious, not least in the country where a bourgeoisie which had, in Burke’s words, ‘rudely torn off... the decent drapery of life, ... the pleasing illusions which made power gentle and obedience liberal’⁸ in the most irrevocable manner, now found itself nakedly confronted, at last, with the permanent necessity to rule by means of a political democracy in the shadow of social revolution (the Paris Commune). It was plainly not enough to regret the disappearance of that ancient social cement, church and monarchy, as the post-Communard Taine did, having no sympathy for either.⁹ It was even less practical to restore the Catholic king as the monarchists wanted (themselves hardly the best advertisements for traditional piety and belief, as in the case of Maurras). An alternative ‘civic religion’ had to be constructed. The need for it was the core of Durkheim’s sociology, the work of a devoted non-socialist republican. Yet it had to be instituted by less eminent thinkers, if more practical politicians.

It would be foolish to suggest that the men who ruled the Third Republic relied mainly on inventing new traditions in order to achieve social stability. Rather, they relied on the hard political fact that the right was in a permanent electoral minority, that the social-revolutionary proletariat and the inflammable Parisians could be permanently outvoted by the over-represented villages and small towns, and that the Republican rural voters’ genuine passion for the French Revolution and hatred of the moneyed interest could usually be assuaged by roads suitably distributed around the arrondissements, by the defence of high farm-prices and, almost certainly, by keeping taxes low. The Radical Socialist grandee knew what he was about when he worked his electoral address, through appeals to the spirit of 1789 – nay 1793 – and a hymn to the Republic to the climax in which he pledged his loyalty to the interests of the viticulteurs of his Languedoc constituency.¹⁰

⁷ Presumably because they were able to eliminate from their field of vision everything which could not be defined as rationally maximizing behaviour; at the cost – after the 1870s – of a considerable narrowing of their subject.

⁸ Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, Everyman edn, p. 74.

⁹ J. P. Mayer, *Political Thought in France from the Revolution to the 5th Republic* (London, 1961), pp. 84–8.

¹⁰ Jean Touchard, *La Gauche en France depuis 1900* (Paris, 1977), p. 50.

Nevertheless, the invention of tradition played an essential role in maintaining the Republic, if only by safeguarding it against both socialism and the right. By deliberately annexing the revolutionary tradition, the Third Republic either domesticated social revolutionaries (like most socialists) or isolated them (like the anarcho-syndicalists). In turn, it was now able to mobilize even a majority of its potential adversaries on the left in defence of a republic and a past revolution, in a common front of the classes which reduced the right to a permanent minority in the nation. Indeed, as that textbook of Third Republican politics, *Clochemerle*, makes clear, the main function of the right was to provide something for good Republicans to mobilize against. The Socialist Labour movement resisted its co-option by the bourgeois Republic to some extent; hence the establishment of the annual commemoration of the Paris Commune at the Mur des Fédérés (1880) against the institutionalization of the Republic; hence also the substitution of the new 'Internationale' for the traditional, but now official, 'Marseillaise' as its anthem during the Dreyfus affair, and especially during the controversies on socialist participation in bourgeois governments (Millerand).¹¹ Again, the radical Jacobin Republicans continued, within the official symbolism, to mark their separation from the moderate and dominant ones. Agulhon, who has studied the characteristic mania for putting up monuments, notably of the Republic itself, during the period 1875 to 1914, acutely notes that in the more radical municipalities Marianne bared at least one breast, while in the more moderate ones she was decently clothed.¹² Yet the basic fact was that those who controlled the imagery, the symbolism, the traditions of the Republic were the men of the centre masquerading as men of the extreme left: the Radical Socialists, proverbially 'like the radish, red outside, white inside, and always on the side the bread is buttered'. Once they ceased to control the Republic's fortunes – from the days of the Popular Front onwards – the days of the Third Republic were numbered.

There is considerable evidence that the moderate Republican bourgeoisie recognized the nature of its main political problem ('no enemies on the left') from the late 1860s onwards, and set about

¹¹ Maurice Dommanget, *Eugène Pottier, Membre de la Commune et Chantre de l'Internationale* (Paris, 1971), ch. 3.

¹² M. Agulhon, 'Esquisse pour une Archéologie de la République; l'Allégorie Civile Féminine'. *Annales ESC*, xxviii (1973), pp. 5–34; M. Agulhon, *Marianne au Combat: l'Imagerie et la Symbolique Républicaines de 1789 à 1880* (Paris, 1979).

solving it as soon as the Republic was firmly in power.¹³ In terms of the invention of tradition, three major innovations are particularly relevant. The first was the development of a secular equivalent of the church – primary education, imbued with revolutionary and republican principles and content, and conducted by the secular equivalent of the priesthood – or perhaps, given their poverty, the friars – the *instituteurs*.¹⁴ There is no doubt that this was a deliberate construction of the early Third Republic, and, given the proverbial centralization of French government, that the content of the manuals which were to turn not only peasants into Frenchmen but all Frenchmen into good Republicans, was not left to chance. Indeed the 'institutionalization' of the French Revolution itself in and by the Republic has been studied in some detail.¹⁵

The second was the invention of public ceremonies.¹⁶ The most important of these, Bastille Day, can be exactly dated in 1880. It combined official and unofficial demonstrations and popular festivities – fireworks, dancing in the streets – in an annual assertion of France as the nation of 1789, in which every French man, woman and child could take part. Yet while it left scope for, and could hardly avoid, more militant, popular manifestations, its general tendency was to transform the heritage of the Revolution into a combined expression of state pomp and power and the citizens' pleasure. A less permanent form of public celebration were the occasional world expositions which gave the Republic the legitimacy of prosperity, technical progress – the Eiffel Tower – and the global colonial conquest they took care to emphasize.¹⁷

The third was the mass production of public monuments already noted. It may be observed that the Third Republic did not – unlike other countries – favour massive public buildings, of which France already had a large supply – though the great expositions left some

¹³ Sanford H. Elwitt, *The Making of the 3rd Republic: Class and Politics in France, 1868–84* (Baton Rouge, 1975).

¹⁴ Georges Duveau, *Les Instituteurs* (Paris, 1957); J. Ozouf (ed.), *Nous les Maîtres d'École: Autobiographies d'Instituteurs de la Belle Époque* (Paris, 1967).

¹⁵ Alice Gérard, *La Révolution Française: Mythes et Interprétations, 1789–1970* (Paris, 1970), ch. 4.

¹⁶ Charles Rearick, 'Festivals in Modern France: The Experience of the 3rd Republic', *Journal of Contemporary History*, xii, no. 3 (July 1977), pp. 435–60; Rosemonde Sanson, *Les 14 Juillet, Fête et Conscience Nationale, 1789–1975* (Paris, 1976), with bibliography.

¹⁷ For the political intentions of the 1889 one, cf. Debora L. Silverman, 'The 1889 Exhibition: The Crisis of Bourgeois Individualism', *Oppositions, A Journal for Ideas and Criticism in Architecture* (Spring, 1977), pp. 71–91.

of these behind them in Paris – nor gigantic statuary. The major characteristic of French 'statuomania'¹⁸ was its democracy, anticipating that of the war memorials after 1914–18. It spread two kinds of monuments throughout the cities and rural communes of the country: the image of the Republic itself (in the form of Marianne which now became universally familiar), and the bearded civilian figures of whoever local patriotism chose to regard as its notables, past and present. Indeed, while the construction of Republican monuments was evidently encouraged, the initiative, and the costs of, such enterprises were undertaken at a local level. The entrepreneurs catering for this market provided choices suitable for the purses of every Republican commune from the poorest upwards, ranging from modest busts of Marianne, in various sizes, through full-figure statues of varying dimensions, to the plinths and allegorical or heroic accessories with which the more ambitious citizenry could surround her feet.¹⁹ The opulent ensembles on the Place de la République and the Place de la Nation in Paris provided the ultimate version of such statuary. Such monuments traced the grass roots of the Republic – particularly in its rural strongholds – and may be regarded as the visible links between the voters and the nation.

Some other characteristics of the official 'invented' traditions of the Third Republic may be noted in passing. Except in the form of the commemoration of notable figures from the local past, or of local political manifestos, it kept away from history. This was partly, no doubt, because history before 1789 (except perhaps for 'nos ancêtres les Gaulois') recalled church and monarchy, partly because history since 1789 was a divisive rather than unifying force: each brand – or rather degree – of Republicanism had its own corresponding heroes and villains in the revolutionary pantheon, as the historiography of the French Revolution demonstrates. Party differences were expressed in statues to Robespierre, Mirabeau or Danton. Unlike the U.S.A. and the Latin American states, the French Republic therefore shied away from the cult of Founding Fathers. It preferred general symbols, abstaining even from the use of themes referring to the national past on its postage stamps until long after 1914, though most European states (other than Britain and Scandinavia) discovered their appeal from the mid-1890s onwards. The symbols were few: the

¹⁸ M. Agulhon, 'La Statuomanie et l'Histoire', *Ethnologie Française*, nos. 3–4 (1978), pp. 3–4.

¹⁹ Agulhon, 'Esquisse pour une Archéologie'.

tricolour (democratized and universalized in the sash of the mayor, present at every civil marriage or other ceremony), the Republican monogram (RF) and motto (liberty, equality, fraternity), the 'Marseillaise', and the symbol of the Republic and of freedom itself, which appears to have taken shape in the last years of the Second Empire, Marianne. We may also note that the Third Republic showed no official hankering for the specifically invented ceremonies so characteristic of the First – 'trees of liberty', goddesses of reason and ad hoc festivals. There was to be no official national day other than 14 July, no formal mobilizations, processions and marches of the civilian citizenry (unlike the mass régimes of the twentieth century, but also unlike the U.S.A.), but rather a simple 'republicanization' of the accepted pomp of state power – uniforms, parades, bands, flags, and the like.

The Second German Empire provides an interesting contrast, especially since several of the general themes of French Republican invented tradition are recognizable in its own. Its major political problem was twofold: how to provide historical legitimacy for the Bismarckian (Prusso-German) version of unification which had none, and how to deal with that large part of the democratic electorate which would have preferred another solution (Great Germans, anti-Prussian particularists, Catholics and, above all, Social Democrats). Bismarck himself does not seem to have bothered much about symbolism, except for personally devising a tricolour flag which combined the Prussian black–white with the nationalist and liberal black–red–gold which he wished to annex (1866). There was no historical precedent whatever for the Empire's black–white–red national banner.²⁰ His recipe for political stability was simpler:

²⁰ Whitney Smith, *Flags through the Ages* (New York, 1975), pp. 116–18. The nationalist black–red–gold appears to have emerged from the student movement of the post-Napoleonic period, but was clearly established as the flag of the national movement in 1848. Resistance to the Weimar Republic reduced its national flag to a party banner – indeed the militia of the Social Democratic Party took it as its title ('Reichsbanner'), though the anti-republican right was divided between the imperial flag and the National Socialist flag, which abandoned the traditional tricolour design, possibly because of its associations with nineteenth-century liberalism, possibly as not sufficiently indicative of a radical break with the past. However, it maintained the basic colour scheme of the Bismarckian empire (black–white–red), while stressing the red, hitherto the symbol only of the socialist and labour movements. The Federal Republic and the Democratic Republic both returned to the colours of 1848, the former without additions, the latter with a suitable emblem adapted from the basic model of the Communist and Soviet hammer-and-sickle.

to win the support of the (predominantly liberal) bourgeoisie by carrying out as much of its programme as would not jeopardize the predominance of the Prussian monarchy, army and aristocracy, to utilize the potential divisions among the various kinds of opposition and to exclude political democracy as far as possible from affecting the decisions of government. Apparently irreconcilable groups which could not be divided – notably the Catholics and especially the post-Lassalleian Social Democrats – left him somewhat at a loss. In fact, he was defeated in his head-on confrontations with both. One has the impression that this old-fashioned conservative rationalist, however brilliant in the arts of political manoeuvre, never satisfactorily solved the difficulties of political democracy, as distinct from the politics of notables.

The invention of the traditions of the German Empire is therefore primarily associated with the era of William II. Its objects were mainly twofold: to establish the continuity between the Second and First German Empires, or more generally, to establish the new Empire as the realization of the secular national aspirations of the German people; and to stress the specific historical experiences which linked Prussia and the rest of Germany in the construction of the new Empire in 1871. Both, in turn, required the merger of Prussian and German history, to which patriotic imperial historians (notably Treitschke) had for some time devoted themselves. The major difficulty in the way of achieving these objects was firstly the history of the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation was difficult to fit into any nineteenth-century nationalist mould, and secondly that its history did not suggest that the denouement of 1871 was historically inevitable, or even likely. It could be linked to a modern nationalism only by two devices: by the concept of a secular national enemy against whom the German people had defined their identity and struggled to achieve unity as a state; and by the concept of conquest or cultural, political and military supremacy, by means of which the German nation, scattered across large parts of other states, mainly in central and eastern Europe, could claim the right to be united in a single Greater German state. The second concept was not one which the Bismarckian empire, specifically 'Little German', cared to stress, though Prussia itself, as its name implied, had been historically constructed largely by expansion into Slavonic and Baltic areas outside the range of the Holy Roman Empire.

Buildings and monuments were the most visible form of establishing

a new interpretation of German history, or rather a fusion between the older romantic 'invented tradition' of pre-1848 German nationalism and the new régime: the most powerful symbols being those where the fusion was achieved. Thus, the mass movement of German gymnasts, liberal and Great German until the 1860s, Bismarckian after 1866 and eventually pan-German and antisemitic, took to its heart three monuments whose inspiration was basically not official: the monument to Arminius the Cheruscan in the Teutoburg Forest (much of it constructed as early as 1838–46, and inaugurated in 1875); the Niederwald monument above the Rhine, commemorating the unification of Germany in 1871 (1877–83); and the centenary memorial of the battle of Leipzig, initiated in 1894 by a 'German patriotic League for the Erection of a Monument to the Battle of the Peoples at Leipzig', and inaugurated in 1913. On the other hand, they appear to have showed no enthusiasm for the proposal to turn the monument to William I on the Kyffhäuser mountain, on the spot where folk myth claimed the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa would appear again, into a national symbol (1890–6), and no special reaction to the construction of the monument to William I and Germany at the confluence of the Rhine and the Moselle (the 'Deutsches Eck' or German Corner), directed against French claims to the left bank of the Rhine.²¹

Leaving such variations aside, the mass of masonry and statuary which went up in Germany in this period was remarkably large, and made the fortunes of sufficiently pliable and competent architects and sculptors.²² Among those constructed or planned in the 1890s alone, we may mention the new Reichstag building (1884–94) with elaborate historical imagery on its façade, the Kyffhäuser monument already mentioned (1890–6), the national monument to William I – clearly intended as the official father of the country (1890–7), the monument to William I at the Porta Westfalica (1892), the William I monument at the Deutsches Eck (1894–7), the extraordinary Valhalla of Hohenzollern princes in the 'Avenue of Victory' (Siegesallee) in Berlin

²¹ Hans-Georg John, *Politik und Turnen: die deutsche Turnerschaft als nationale Bewegung im deutschen Kaiserreich von 1871–1914* (Ahrensberg bei Hamburg, 1976), pp. 41f.

²² 'Fate determined that, against his nature, he should become a monumental sculptor, who was to celebrate the imperial idea of William II in giant monuments of bronze and stone, in a language of imagery and over-emphatic pathos.' Ulrich Thieme and Felix Becker, *Allgemeines Lexikon der bildenden Künstler von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart* (Leipzig, 1907–50), iii, p. 185. See also in general entries under Begas, Schilling, Schmitz.

(1896–1901), a variety of statues to William I in German cities (Dortmund 1894, Wiesbaden 1894, Prenzlau 1898, Hamburg 1903, Halle 1901) and, a little later, a spate of Bismarck monuments, which enjoyed a more genuine support among nationalists.²³ The inauguration of one of these monuments provided the first occasion for the use of historical themes on the postage stamps of the Empire (1899).

This accumulation of masonry and statuary suggests two comments. The first concerns the choice of a national symbol. Two of these were available: a vague but adequately military 'Germania', who played no notable role in sculpture, though she figured extensively on postage stamps from the start, since no single dynastic image could as yet symbolize Germany as a whole; and the figure of the 'Deutsche Michel', who actually appears in a subordinate role on the Bismarck monument. He belongs to the curious representations of the nation, not as country or state, but as 'the people', which came to animate the demotic political language of the nineteenth-century cartoonists, and was intended (as in John Bull and the goateed Yankee – but *not* in Marianne, image of the Republic) to express national character, as seen by the members of the nation itself. Their origins and early history are obscure, though, like the national anthem, they are almost certainly first found in eighteenth-century Britain.²⁴ The point about the 'Deutsche Michel' is that his image stressed both the innocence and simple-mindedness so readily exploited by cunning foreigners, and the physical strength he could mobilize to frustrate their knavish tricks and conquests when finally roused. 'Michel' seems to have been essentially an anti-foreign image.

The second concerns the crucial significance of the Bismarckian unification of Germany as the only national historical experience which the citizens of the new Empire had in common, given that all earlier conceptions of Germany and German unification were in one way or another 'Great German'. And within this experience, the Franco-German war was central. Insofar as Germany had a (brief) 'national' tradition, it was symbolized in the three names: Bismarck, William I and Sedan.

²³ John, *op. cit.*, Nipperdey, 'Nationalidee', pp. 577ff.

²⁴ J. Surel, 'La Première Image de John Bull, Bourgeois Radical, Anglais Loyaliste (1779–1815)', *Le Mouvement Social*, cvi (Jan–Mar. 1979), pp. 65–84; Herbert M. Atherton, *Political Prints in the Age of Hogarth* (Oxford, 1974), pp. 97–100.

This is clearly exemplified by the ceremonials and rituals invented (also mainly under William II). Thus the chronicles of one Gymnasium record no less than ten ceremonies between August 1895 and March 1896 recalling the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Franco-Prussian war, including ample commemorations of battles in the war, celebrations of the emperor's birthday, the official handing-over of the portrait of an imperial prince, illuminations and public addresses on the war of 1870–1, on the development of the imperial idea (*Kaiseridee*) during the war, on the character of the Hohenzollern dynasty, and so on.²⁵

A more detailed description of one such ceremony may elucidate their character. Watched by parents and friends, the boys marched into the school yard singing the 'Wacht am Rhein' (the 'national song' most directly identified with hostility to the French, though, interestingly, neither the Prussian nor the German national anthem).²⁶ They formed up facing representatives of each class who held flags decorated with oak leaves, which had been bought with money collected in each class. (The oak had associations with Teutonic-German folklore, nationalism and military virtues – still remembered in the oak leaves which marked the highest class of military decoration under Hitler: a suitably Germanic equivalent to the Latin laurel.) The head boy presented these banners to the headmaster, who in turn addressed the assembly on the glorious days of the late Emperor William I, and called for three ringing cheers for the reigning monarch and his empress. The boys then marched under their banners. Yet another address by the headmaster followed, before the planting of an 'imperial oak' (*Kaisereiche*) to the accompaniment of choral singing. The day concluded with an excursion into the Grunewald. All these proceedings were merely preliminaries to the actual commemoration of Sedan Day two days later, and indeed to a scholastic year amply punctuated by ritual gatherings,

²⁵ Heinz Stallmann, *Das Prinz-Heinrichs-Gymnasium zu Schöneberg, 1890–1945. Geschichte einer Schule* (Berlin, n.d. [1965]).

²⁶ There was in fact no official German national anthem. Of the three competing songs 'Heil Dir Im Siegerkranz' (to the tune of 'God Save the King'), being most closely associated with the Prussian emperor, roused least national fervour. The 'Watch on the Rhine' and 'Deutschland Über Alles' were seen as equal until 1914, but gradually 'Deutschland', more suited to an expansionist imperial policy, prevailed over the 'Watch', whose associations were purely anti-French. Among the German gymnasts by 1890 the former anthem had become twice as common as the latter, though their movement was particularly keen on the 'Watch', which it claimed to have been instrumental in popularizing. John, *op. cit.*, pp. 38–9.

religious and civic.²⁷ In the same year an imperial decree was to announce the construction of the Siegesallee, linking it with the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Franco-Prussian war, which was presented as the rising of the German people 'as one man', though 'following the call of its princes' to 'repel foreign aggression and achieve the unity of the fatherland and the *restoration* of the Reich in glorious victories' (my italics).²⁸ The Siegesallee, it will be recalled, represented exclusively the Hohenzollern princes back to the days of the Margraves of Brandenburg.

A comparison of the French and German innovations is instructive. Both stress the founding acts of the new régime – the French Revolution in its least precise and controversial episode (the Bastille) and the Franco-Prussian war. Except for this one point of historic reference, the French Republic abstained from historical retrospect as strikingly as the German Empire indulged in it. Since the Revolution had established the fact, the nature and the boundaries of the French nation and its patriotism, the Republic could confine itself to recalling these to its citizens by means of a few obvious symbols – Marianne, the tricolour, the 'Marseillaise', and so on – supplementing them with a little ideological exegesis elaborating on the (to its poorer citizens) obvious if sometimes theoretical benefits of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. Since the 'German people' before 1871 had no political definition or unity, and its relation to the new Empire (which excluded large parts of it) was vague, symbolic or ideological, identification had to be more complex and – with the exception of the role of the Hohenzollern dynasty, army and state – less precise. Hence the multiplicity of reference, ranging from mythology and folklore (German oaks, the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa) through the shorthand cartoon stereotypes to definition of the nation in terms of its enemies. Like many another liberated 'people', 'Germany' was more easily defined by what it was against than in any other way.

This may explain the most obvious gap in the 'invented traditions' of the German Empire: its failure to conciliate the Social Democrats. It is true that William II initially liked to present himself as a 'social emperor', and made a clear break with Bismarck's own policy of banning the party. Yet the temptation to present the Socialist movement as anti-national ('vaterlandslose Gesellen') proved too strong to be resisted, and Socialists were more systematically excluded

²⁷ Stallmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 16–19.

²⁸ R. E. Hardt, *Die Beine der Hohenzollern* (E. Berlin, 1968).

from the state service (including, by a specially passed law, from posts in higher education) than they were, for example, in the Habsburg Empire. No doubt two of the Empire's political headaches were considerably mitigated. Military glory and power as well as the rhetoric of German greatness disarmed the 'Great Germans' or pan-Germans, now increasingly divorced from their liberal or even democratic origins. If they were to achieve their ends at all, it would now be through the new Empire or not at all. The Catholics, as became clear when Bismarck's campaign against them was abandoned, caused no serious problems. Nevertheless, the Social Democrats alone, advancing with apparent inevitability towards majority status in the Empire, constituted a political force which, if other countries during this period are a guide, ought to have moved the German government towards a rather more flexible attitude.

Yet in a nation relying for its self-definition to so great an extent on its enemies, external and internal, this was not wholly unexpected;²⁹ all the more so, since the by definition anti-democratic military élite formed so powerful a device for assimilating the middle class to the status of a ruling class. Yet the choice of Social Democrats and, less formally, of Jews as internal enemies had an additional advantage, though the nationalism of the Empire was unable to exploit it fully. It provided a demagogic appeal against both capitalist liberalism and proletarian socialism which could mobilize the great masses of the lower middle class, handicraftsmen and peasants who felt threatened by both, under the banner of 'the nation'.

Paradoxically, the most democratic and, both territorially and constitutionally, one of the most clearly defined nations faced a problem of national identity in some respects similar to imperial Germany. The basic political problem of the U.S.A., once secession had been eliminated, was how to assimilate a heterogeneous mass – towards the end of our period, an almost unmanageable influx – of people who were Americans not by birth but by immigration. Americans had to be made. The invented traditions of the U.S.A. in this period were primarily designed to achieve this object. On the one hand the immigrants were encouraged to accept rituals commemorating the history of the nation – the Revolution and its founding fathers (the 4th of July) and the Protestant Anglo-Saxon tradition (Thanksgiving Day) – as indeed they did, since these now became

²⁹ H.-U. Wehler, *Das deutsche Kaiserreich 1871–1918* (Göttingen, 1973), pp. 107–10.

holidays and occasions for public and private festivity.³⁰ (Conversely, the 'nation' absorbed the collective rituals of immigrants – St Patrick's Day, later Columbus Day – into the fabric of American life, mainly through the powerful assimilating mechanism of municipal and state politics.) On the other hand, the educational system was transformed into a machine for political socialization by such devices as the worship of the American flag, which, as a daily ritual in the country's schools, spread from the 1880s onwards.³¹ The concept of Americanism as an act of *choice* – the decision to learn English, to apply for citizenship – and a choice of specific beliefs, acts and modes of behaviour implied the corresponding concept of 'un-Americanism'. In countries defining nationality existentially there could be unpatriotic Englishmen or Frenchmen, but their status as Englishmen and Frenchmen could not be in doubt, unless they could also be defined as strangers (*metèques*). Yet in the U.S.A., as in Germany, the 'un-American' or 'vaterlandslose' person threw doubt on his or her actual status as member of the nation.

As might be expected, the working class provided the largest and most visible body of such doubtful members of the national community; all the more doubtful because in the U.S.A. they could actually be classified as foreigners. The mass of new immigrants were workers; conversely, since at least the 1860s, the majority of workers in virtually all the large cities of the land appear to have been foreign-born. Whether the concept of 'un-Americanism', which can be traced back to at least the 1870s,³² was more of a reaction of the native-born against the strangers or of Anglo-Saxon Protestant middle classes against foreign-born workers is unclear. At all events it provided an internal enemy against whom the good American could assert his or her Americanism, not least by the punctilious performance of all the formal and informal rituals, the assertion of all the beliefs conventionally and institutionally established as characteristic of good Americans.

³⁰ The history of these festivities remains to be written, but it seems clear that they became much more institutionalized on a national scale in the last third of the nineteenth century. G. W. Douglas, *American Book of Days* (New York, 1937); Elizabeth Hough Sechrist, *Red Letter Days: A Book of Holiday Customs* (Philadelphia, 1940).

³¹ R. Firth, *Symbols, Public and Private* (London, 1973), pp. 358–9; W. E. Davies, *Patriotism on Parade: The Story of Veterans and Hereditary Organisations in America 1783–1900* (Cambridge, Mass., 1955), pp. 218–22; Douglas, *op. cit.*, pp. 326–7.

³² I am obliged to Prof. Herbert Gutman for this observation.

Table 1. *First use of historical stamps before 1914*³³

Country	First stamp	First historical stamp	Jubilee or special occasion
Austro-Hungary	1850	1908	60 years Franz Joseph
Belgium	1849	1914	War (Red Cross)
Bulgaria	1879	1901	Anniversary of revolt
Germany	1872	1899	Unveiling of monument
Greece	1861	1896	Olympic Games
Italy	1862	1910–11	Anniversaries
Netherlands	1852	1906	De Ruyter tercentenary
Portugal	1852	1894	500th anniversary of Henry the Navigator
Romania	1865	1906	40 years rule
Russia	1858	1905, 1913	War charity, tercentenary
Serbia	1866	1904	Centenary of dynasty
Spain	1850	1905	<i>Don Quixote</i> tercentenary
Switzerland	1850	1907	—

We may deal more cursorily with the invention of state traditions in other countries of the period. Monarchies, for obvious reasons, tended to link them to the crown, and this period saw the initiation of the now familiar public relations exercises centred on royal or imperial rituals, greatly facilitated by the happy discovery – or perhaps it would be better to say invention – of the jubilee or ceremonial anniversary. Its novelty is actually remarked upon in the *New English Dictionary*.³⁴ The publicity value of anniversaries is clearly shown by the occasion they so often provided for the first issue of historical or similar images on postage stamps, that most universal form of public imagery other than money, as Table 1 demonstrates.

Almost certainly Queen Victoria's jubilee of 1887, repeated ten

³³ Source: *Stamps of the World 1972: A Stanley Gibbons Catalogue* (London, 1972).

³⁴ The 'jubilee', except in its biblical sense, had previously been simply the fiftieth anniversary. There is no sign before the later nineteenth century that centenaries, single or multiple, still less anniversaries of less than fifty years, were the occasion for public celebration. The *New English Dictionary* (1901) observes under 'jubilee' 'especially frequent in the last two decades of the nineteenth century in reference to the two "jubilees" of Queen Victoria in 1887 and 1897, the Swiss jubilee of the Postal Union in 1900 and other celebrations', v, p. 615.

years later in view of its notable success, inspired subsequent royal or imperial occasions in this country and elsewhere. Even the most traditionalist dynasties – the Habsburgs in 1908, the Romanovs in 1913 – discovered the merits of this form of publicity. It was new insofar as it was directed at the public, unlike traditional royal ceremonials designed to symbolize the rulers' relation to the divinity and their position at the apex of a hierarchy of *grandees*. After the French Revolution every monarch had, sooner or later, to learn to change from the national equivalent of 'King of France' to 'King of the French', that is, to establish a direct relation to the collectivity of his or her subjects, however lowly. Though the stylistic option of a 'bourgeois monarchy' (pioneered by Louis Philippe) was available, it seems to have been taken only by the kings of modest countries wishing to maintain a low profile – the Netherlands, Scandinavia – though even some of the most divinely ordained rulers – notably the Emperor Francis Joseph – appear to have fancied the role of the hard-working functionary living in spartan comfort.

Technically there was no significant difference between the political use of monarchy for the purpose of strengthening effective rulers (as in the Habsburg, Romanov, but also perhaps in the Indian empires) and building the symbolic function of crowned heads in parliamentary states. Both relied on exploiting the royal person, with or without dynastic ancestors, on elaborate ritual occasions with associated propagandist activities and a wide participation of the people, not least through the captive audiences available for official indoctrination in the educational system. Both made the ruler the focus of his people's or peoples' unity, the symbolic representative of the country's greatness and glory, of its entire past and continuity with a changing present. Yet the innovations were perhaps more deliberate and systematic where, as in Britain, the revival of royal ritualism was seen as a necessary counterweight to the dangers of popular democracy. Bagehot had already recognized the value of political deference and the 'dignified', as distinct from the 'efficient', parts of the constitution in the days of the Second Reform Act. The old Disraeli, unlike the young, learned to use 'reverence for the throne and its occupant' as 'a mighty instrument of power and influence' and by the end of Victoria's reign the nature of the device was well understood. J. E. C. Bodley wrote about the coronation of Edward VII:

The usage by an ardent yet practical people of an ancient rite to signalise the modern splendours of their empire, the recognition

by a free democracy of a hereditary crown, as a symbol of the world-wide domination of their race, constitute no mere pageant, but an event of the highest historical interest.³⁵

Glory and greatness, wealth and power, could be symbolically shared by the poor through royalty and its rituals. The greater the power, the less attractive, one may suggest, was the bourgeois option for monarchy. And we may recall that in Europe monarchy remained the universal state form between 1870 and 1914, except for France and Switzerland.

II

The most universal political traditions invented in this period were the achievement of states. However, the rise of organized mass movements claiming separate or even alternative status to states, led to similar developments. Some of these movements, notably political Catholicism and various kinds of nationalism, were keenly aware of the importance of ritual, ceremonial and myth, including, normally, a mythological past. The significance of invented traditions is all the more striking when they arose among rationalist movements which were, if anything, rather hostile to them and lacked prefabricated symbolical and ritual equipment. Hence the best way to study their emergence is in one such case – that of the socialist labour movements.

The major international ritual of such movements, May Day (1890), was spontaneously evolved within a surprisingly short period. Initially it was designed as a single simultaneous one-day strike and demonstration for the eight-hour day, fixed on a date already associated for some years with this demand in the U.S.A. The choice of this date was certainly quite pragmatic in Europe. It probably had no ritual significance in the U.S.A., where 'Labour Day' had already been established at the end of summer. It has been suggested, not implausibly, that it was fixed to coincide with 'Moving Day', the traditional date for ending hiring contracts in New York and Pennsylvania.³⁶ Though this, like similar contractual periods in parts of traditional European agriculture, had originally formed part of the symbolically charged annual cycle of the pre-industrial labouring

³⁵ J. E. C. Bodley, *The Coronation of Edward VII: A Chapter of European and Imperial History* (London, 1903), pp. 153, 201.

³⁶ Maurice Dommanget, *Histoire du Premier Mai* (Paris, 1953), pp. 36–7.

year, its connection with the industrial proletariat was clearly fortuitous. No particular form of demonstration was envisaged by the new Labour and Socialist International. The concept of a workers' festival was not only not mentioned in the original (1889) resolution of that body, but was actively rejected on ideological grounds by various revolutionary militants.

Yet the choice of a date so heavily charged with symbolism by ancient tradition proved significant, even though – as Van Gennep suggests – in France the anticlericalism of the labour movement resisted the inclusion of traditional folklore practices in its May Day.³⁷ From the start the occasion attracted and absorbed ritual and symbolic elements, notably that of a quasi-religious or numinous celebration ('Maifeier'), a holiday in both senses of the word. (Engels, after referring to it as a 'demonstration', uses the term 'Feier' from 1893.³⁸ Adler recognized this element in Austria from 1892, Vandervelde in Belgium from 1893.) Andrea Costa expressed it succinctly for Italy (1893): 'Catholics have Easter; henceforth the workers will have their own Easter';³⁹ there are rarer references to Whitsun also. A curiously syncretic 'May Day sermon' from Charleroi (Belgium) survives for 1898 under the joint epigraphs 'Proletarians of all lands, unite' and 'Love one another'.⁴⁰

Red flags, the only universal symbols of the movement, were present from the start, but so, in several countries, were flowers: the carnation in Austria, the red (paper) rose in Germany, sweet briar and poppy in France, and the may, symbol of renewal, increasingly infiltrated, and from the mid-1900s replaced by the lily-of-the-valley, whose associations were unpolitical. Little is known about this language of flowers which, to judge by the May Day poems in socialist literature also, was spontaneously associated with the occasion. It certainly struck the key-note of May Day, a time of renewal, growth, hope and joy (we recall the girl with the flowering branch of may associated in popular memory with the 1891 May Day shootings at Fourmies).⁴¹ Equally, May Day played a

³⁷ A. Van Gennep, *Manuel de Folklore Français I*, iv, *Les Cérémonies Périodiques Cycliques et Saisonnières*, 2: Cycle de Mai (Paris, 1949), p. 1719.

³⁸ Engels to Sorge 17 May 1893, in *Briefe und Auszüge aus Briefen an F. A. Sorge u.A.* (Stuttgart, 1906), p. 397. See also Victor Adler, *Aufsätze, Reden und Briefe* (Vienna, 1922), i, p. 69.

³⁹ Dommanget, *op. cit.*, p. 343.

⁴⁰ E. Vandervelde and J. Destrée, *Le Socialisme en Belgique* (Paris, 1903), pp. 417–18.

⁴¹ Maxime Leroy, *La Coutume Ouvrière* (Paris, 1913), i, p. 246.

major part in the development of the new socialist iconography of the 1890s in which, in spite of the expected emphasis on struggle, the note of hope, confidence and the approach of a brighter future – often expressed in the metaphors of plant growth – prevailed.⁴²

As it happened, the First of May was initiated at a time of extraordinary growth and expansion in the labour and socialist movements of numerous countries, and might well not have established itself in a less hopeful political atmosphere. The ancient symbolism of spring, so fortuitously associated with it, suited the occasion perfectly in the early 1890s.

It thus became rapidly transformed into a highly charged annual festival and rite. The annual repetition was introduced to meet a demand from the ranks. With it the original political content of the day – the demand for an eight-hour day – inevitably dropped into the background to give way to whatever slogans attracted national labour movements in a particular year, or, more usually, to an unspecified assertion of the working-class presence and, in many Latin countries, the commemoration of the 'Chicago Martyrs'. The only original element maintained was the, preferably simultaneous, internationalism of the demonstration: in the extreme case of Russia in 1917 the revolutionaries actually abandoned their own calendar to celebrate their May Day on the same date as the rest of the world. And indeed, the public parade of the workers *as a class* formed the core of the ritual. It was, as commentators noted, the *only* holiday, even among radical and revolutionary anniversaries, to be associated with the industrial working class and no other; though – in Britain at least – specific communities of industrial workers had already shown signs of inventing general collective presentations of themselves as part of their labour movement. (The Durham miners' gala was first held in 1871.)⁴³ Like all such ceremonials, it was, or became, a basically good-humoured family occasion. The classical political demonstrations were not necessarily like this. (This character may still be observed in such later 'invented traditions' as the national

⁴² E. J. Hobsbawm, 'Man and Woman in Socialist Iconography', *History Workshop*, vi (Autumn 1978), pp. 121–38; A. Rossel, *Premier Mai. Quatre-Vingt-Dix ans de Luites Populaires dans le Monde* (Paris, 1977).

⁴³ Edward Welbourn, *The Miners' Unions of Northumberland and Durham* (Cambridge, 1923), p. 155; John Wilson, *A History of the Durham Miners' Association 1870–1904* (Durham, 1907), pp. 31, 34, 59; W. A. Moyes, *The Banner Book* (Gateshead, 1974). These annual demonstrations appear to have originated in Yorkshire in 1866.

festivals of the Italian communist newspaper *Unità*.) Like all of them it combined public and private merry-making and good cheer with the assertion of loyalty to the movement which was a basic element in working-class consciousness: oratory – in those days the longer the better, since a good speech was both inspiration and entertainment – banners, badges, slogans, and so on. Most crucially, it asserted the working-class presence by that most fundamental assertion of working-class power: the abstention from work. For, paradoxically, the success of May Day tended to be proportionate to its remoteness from the concrete every-day activities of the movement. It was greatest where socialist aspiration prevailed over the political realism and trade union calculation which, as in Britain and Germany,⁴⁴ tended to favour a demonstration on the first Sunday of the month over the annual one-day strike on the first of May. Victor Adler, sensitive to the mood of the Austrian workers, had insisted on the demonstrative strike against the advice of Kautsky,⁴⁵ and the Austrian May Day consequently acquired unusual strength and resonance. Thus, as we have seen, May Day was not so much formally invented by the leaders of the movement, as accepted and institutionalized by them on the initiative of their followers.

The strength of the new tradition was clearly appreciated by its enemies. Hitler, with his acute sense of symbolism, found it desirable not only to annex the red of the workers' flag but also May Day, by turning it into an official 'national day of labour' in 1933, and subsequently attenuating its proletarian associations.⁴⁶ We may, incidentally, observe that it has now been turned into a general holiday of labour in the E.E.C.

May Day and similar labour rituals are halfway between 'political' and 'social' traditions, belonging to the first through their association with mass organizations and parties which could – and indeed aimed to – become régimes and states, to the second because they genuinely expressed the workers' consciousness of their existence as a separate class, inasmuch as this was inseparable from the organizations of that class. While in many cases – such as Austrian Social Democracy, or

⁴⁴ Carl Schorske, *German Social Democracy, 1905–17: The Development of the Great Schism* (New York, 1965 edn), pp. 91–7.

⁴⁵ M. Ermers, *Victor Adler: Aufstieg u. Grösse einer sozialistischen Partei* (Vienna and Leipzig, 1932), p. 195.

⁴⁶ Helmut Hartwig, 'Plaketten zum 1. Mai 1934–39', *Aesthetik und Kommunikation*, vii, no. 26 (1976), pp. 56–9.

the British miners – class and organization became inseparable, it is not suggested that they were identical. 'The movement' developed its own traditions, shared by leaders and militants but not necessarily by voters and followers, and conversely the class might develop its own 'invented traditions' which were either independent of the organized movements, or even suspect in the eyes of the activists. Two of these, both clearly the product of our period, are worth a brief glance. The first is the emergence – notably in Britain, but probably also in other countries – of costume as a demonstration of class. The second is linked with mass sports.

It is no accident that the comic strip which gently satirized the traditional male working-class culture of the old industrial area of Britain (notably the North-East) should choose as its title and symbol the headgear which virtually formed the badge of class membership of the British proletariat when not at work: 'Andy Capp'. A similar equation between class and cap existed in France to some extent,⁴⁷ and possibly also in parts of Germany. In Britain, at least, iconographic evidence suggests that proletariat and cap were not universally identified before the 1890s, but that by the end of the Edwardian period – as photographs of crowds leaving football matches or mass meetings will confirm – that identification was almost complete. The rise of the proletariat cap awaits its chronicler. He or she, one may suspect, will find its history linked with that of the development of mass sports, since this particular type of headgear appears first as sporting wear among the upper and middle classes. Whatever its origins, it clearly became characteristic of the working class, not only because members of other classes, or those who aspired to such status, would be reluctant to be confused with proletarians, but also because manual workers did not care to choose (except no doubt for occasions of great formality) to cover their heads in any of the numerous other available fashions. Keir Hardie's demonstrative entry into parliament in a cap (1892) indicates that the element of class assertion was recognized.⁴⁸ It is not unreasonable to suppose that the masses were not unaware of it. In some obscure fashion they acquired the habit of wearing it fairly rapidly in the last decades of

⁴⁷ 'L'ouvrier même ne porte pas ici la casquette et la blouse' observed Jules Vallès contemptuously in London in 1872 – unlike the class-conscious Parisians. Paul Martinez, *The French Communist Refugees in Britain, 1871–1880* (Univ. of Sussex Ph.D. thesis, 1981), p. 341.

⁴⁸ Hardie's own deer-stalker-like cap represents a transitional stage to the eventually universal 'Andy Capp' headgear.

the nineteenth and the first decade of the twentieth century as part of the characteristic syndrome of 'working-class culture' which then took shape.

The equivalent history of proletarian costume in other countries remains to be written. Here we can only note that its political implications were clearly understood, if not before 1914 then certainly between the wars, as witness the following memory of the first National Socialist (official) May Day parade in Berlin 1933:

The workers... wore shabby, clean suits and those sailors' caps which were then a general external recognition sign of their class. These caps were decorated with an inconspicuous strap, mostly of black lacquer, but often replaced by a leather strap with buckles. Social Democrats and Communists wore this type of strap on their caps, the National Socialists another type, parted in the centre. This tiny difference suddenly leaped to the eye. The banal fact that more workers than ever before wore the parted strap on their caps carried the fatal message of a battle lost.⁴⁹

The political association of worker and cap in France between the wars (*la salopette*) is also established, but its pre-1914 history awaits research.

The adoption of sports, and particularly football, as a mass proletarian cult is equally obscure, but without doubt equally rapid.⁵⁰ Here the timing is easier to establish. Between the middle 1870s, at the earliest, and the middle or late 1880s football acquired all the institutional and ritual characteristics with which we are still familiar: professionalism, the League, the Cup, with its annual pilgrimage of the faithful for demonstrations of proletarian triumph in the capital, the regular attendance at the Saturday match, the 'supporters' and their culture, the ritual rivalry, normally between moieties of an industrial city or conurbation (Manchester City and United, Notts County and Forest, Liverpool and Everton). Moreover, unlike other sports with regional or local proletarian bases – such as rugby union in South Wales,⁵¹ cricket in parts of Northern England – football operated both on a local and on a national scale, so that the topic of the day's matches would provide common ground for conversation

⁴⁹ Stephan Hermlin, *Abendlicht* (Leipzig, 1979), p. 92.

⁵⁰ Tony Mason, *Association Football and English Society, 1863–1915* (Brighton, 1980).

⁵¹ Cf. David B. Smith and Gareth W. Williams, *Field of Praise: Official History of the Welsh Rugby Union, 1881–1981* (Cardiff, 1981).

between virtually any two male workers in England or Scotland, and a few score celebrated players provided a point of common reference for all.

The nature of the football culture at this period – before it had penetrated far into the urban and industrial cultures of other countries⁵² – is not yet well understood. Its socio-economic structure is less obscure. Originally developed as an amateur and character-building sport by the public-school middle classes, it was rapidly (by 1885) proletarianized and therefore professionalized; the symbolic turning-point – and recognized as a class confrontation – being the defeat of the Old Etonians by Bolton Olympic in the cup final of 1883. With professionalization, most of the philanthropic and moralizing figures from the national élite withdrew, leaving the management of the clubs in the hands of local businessmen and other notables, who maintained a curious caricature of the class relations of industrial capitalism as employers of an overwhelmingly proletarian labour force, attracted into the industry by a higher wage-rate, by the chance of windfall gains before retirement (benefit matches), but above all by the chance of fame. The structure of British football professionalism was quite different from that of professionalism in sports with aristocratic or middle-class participation (cricket) or control (racing), or from that of the demotic entertainment business, that other means of escape from the working-class fate, which also provided the model for some sports of the poor (boxing).⁵³

It is highly likely that football players tended to be drawn from skilled rather than unskilled workers,⁵⁴ probably unlike boxing, a sport which recruited in environments in which the ability to handle oneself was either useful for survival, as in big city slums, or was part of an occupational culture of masculinity, as in the mines. Though the urban and working-class character of the football crowds is patent,⁵⁵ their exact composition by age or social origin is not clear; nor is the development of the 'supporters' culture' and its practices; nor the extent to which the typical football enthusiast (unlike the

⁵² Abroad it was often pioneered by British expatriates and the teams of local British-managed factories, but though it clearly had been to some extent naturalized by 1914 in some capital cities and industrial towns of the continent, it had hardly yet become a mass sport.

⁵³ W. F. Mandle, 'The Professional Cricketer in England in the Nineteenth Century', *Labour History* (Journal of the Australian Society for the Study of Labour History), xxiii (Nov. 1972), pp. 1–16; Wray Vamplew, *The Turf: A Social and Economic History of Horse Racing* (London, 1976).

⁵⁴ Mason, *op. cit.*, pp. 90–3.

⁵⁵ Mason, *op. cit.*, pp. 153–6.

typical follower of racing) was or had been an active amateur player. On the other hand, it is clear that while as the apocryphal last words of the labour militant indicate, for many of his kind belief in Jesus Christ, Keir Hardie and Huddersfield United went together, the organized movement showed a collective lack of enthusiasm for this, as for several other unpolitical aspects of working-class consciousness. Indeed, unlike central European Social Democracy, the British labour movement did not develop its own sporting organizations, with the possible exception of cycling clubs in the 1890s, whose links with progressive thought were marked.⁵⁶

Little though we know about mass sport in Britain, we know even less about the continent. It would seem that sport, imported from Britain, remained a middle-class preserve very much longer than in its country of origin, but that otherwise the appeal of football to the working class, the replacement of middle-class (amateur) by plebeian (professional) football and the rise of mass urban identification with clubs, developed in similar ways.⁵⁷ The major exception, apart from contests closer to show-business than outdoor activity such as wrestling (suspect to the German gymnastic movement, but with a strong popular following), was cycling. On the continent this was probably the only modern mass sport – as witness the construction of ‘velodromes’ in big cities – four in Berlin alone before 1913 – and the institution of the Tour de France in 1903. It appears that in Germany at least the leading professional cyclists were workers.⁵⁸ Professional championships existed in France from 1881, in Switzerland and Italy from 1892, Belgium from 1894. No doubt the strong

⁵⁶ The Clarion Cycling Clubs come to mind, but also the foundation of the Oadby Cycling Club by a local radical poacher, labour activist and parish councillor. The nature of this sport – in Britain typically practised by youthful amateurs – was quite different from mass proletarian sport. David Prynne, ‘The Clarion Clubs, Rambling and Holiday Associations in Britain since the 1890s’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, xi, nos. 2 and 3 (July 1976), pp. 65–77; anon., ‘The Clarion Fellowship’, *Marx Memorial Library Quarterly Bulletin*, lxxvii (Jan.–Mar. 1976), pp. 6–9; James Hawker, *A Victorian Poacher*, ed. G. Christian (London, 1961), pp. 25–6.

⁵⁷ Of the Ruhr club Schalke 04, thirty-five out of forty-four identifiable members in 1904–13 were miners, workers or artisans, seventy-three out of eighty-eight in 1914–24, and ninety-one out of one hundred and twenty-two in 1924–34. Siegfried Gehrman, ‘Fussball in einer Industrieregion’, in J. Reulecke and W. Weber (eds.), *Familie, Fabrik, Feierabend* (Wuppertal, 1978), pp. 377–98.

⁵⁸ Annemarie Lange, *Das Wilhelminische Berlin* (E. Berlin, 1967), ch. 13, esp. pp. 561–2.

commercial interest in this sport by manufacturers and other advertising interests speeded its popularity.⁵⁹

III

To establish the class presence of a national middle-class élite and the membership of the much larger middle class was a far more difficult matter, and yet rather urgent at a time when occupations claiming middle-class status, or the numbers of those who aspired to them, were increasing with some rapidity in industrializing countries. The criterion for the membership of such classes could be nothing so simple as birth, landownership, manual labour or the receipt of wages, and while a socially recognized minimum of property and income was no doubt a necessary condition for it, it was not a sufficient one. Moreover, in the nature of things such a class included persons (or rather families) of a wide range of wealth and influence, each stratum tending to look down upon its inferiors. The fluidity of borders made clear criteria of social distinction unusually difficult. Since the middle classes were par excellence the locus of social mobility and individual self-improvement, entry to them could hardly be closed. The problem was twofold. First, how to define and separate the genuine national élite of an upper middle class (*haute bourgeoisie*, *Grossbürgertum*) once the relatively firm criteria by which subjective class membership could be determined in stable local communities had been eroded, and descent, kinship, intermarriage, the local networks of business, private sociability and politics no longer provided firm guidance. Second, how to establish an identity and a presence for the relatively large mass of those who neither belonged to this élite nor to ‘the masses’ – or even to that clearly inferior order of the petty-bourgeoisie of the ‘lower middle classes’ which at least one British observer firmly classed with the manual workers as belonging to the world of ‘the Board schools’.⁶⁰ Could it be defined, could it define itself, other than as ‘consisting essentially of families in the process of rising socially’, as a French observer of the British scene held, or as what was left over when the more obviously recognizable masses and the ‘upper ten’ had been

⁵⁹ Dino Spatazza Moncada, *Storia del Ciclismo dai Primi Passi ad Oggi* (Parma, n.d.).

⁶⁰ W. R. Lawson, *John Bull and his Schools: A Book for Parents, Ratepayers and Men of Business* (Edinburgh and London, 1908), p. 39.

subtracted from the population, as an English one did?⁶¹ A further problem arose to complicate the question: the emergence of the increasingly emancipated middle-class woman as an actress on the public scene in her own right. While the numbers of boys in French *lycées* between 1897 and 1907 rose only modestly, the number of girls increased by 170 per cent.

For the upper middle classes or 'haute bourgeoisie' the criteria and institutions which had formerly served to set apart an aristocratic ruling class provided the obvious model: they merely had to be widened and adapted. A fusion of the two classes in which the new components ceased to be recognizable as new was the ideal, though it was probably not completely attainable even in Britain, where it was quite possible for a family of Nottingham bankers to achieve, over several generations, intermarriage with royalty. What made the attempts at such assimilation possible (insofar as they were institutionally permitted) was that element of stability which, as a French observer noted of Britain, distinguished the established and arrived upper bourgeois generations from the first-generation climbers.⁶² The rapid acquisition of really enormous wealth could also enable first-generation plutocrats to buy themselves into an aristocratic milieu which in bourgeois countries rested not only on title and descent but also on enough money to carry on a suitably profligate life-style.⁶³ In Edwardian Britain the plutocrats seized such opportunities eagerly.⁶⁴ Yet individual assimilation could serve only a tiny minority.

The basic aristocratic criterion of descent could, however, be adapted to define a relatively large new upper-middle-class élite. Thus a passion for genealogy developed in the U.S.A. in the 1890s. It was primarily a female interest: the 'Daughters of the American Revolution' (1890) survived and flourished, whereas the slightly earlier 'Sons of the American Revolution' faded away. Though the ostensible object was to distinguish native white and Protestant Americans from the mass of new immigrants, in fact their object was to establish an exclusive upper stratum among the white middle class. The D.A.R. had no more than 30,000 members in 1900, mostly in the strongholds of 'old' money – Connecticut, New York, Pennsyl-

⁶¹ Paul Descamps, *L'Education dans les Ecoles Anglaises*, Bib. de la Science Sociale (Paris, Jan. 1911), p. 25; Lawson, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

⁶² Descamps, *op. cit.*, pp. 11, 67. ⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁶⁴ Jamie Camplin, *The Rise of the Plutocrats: Wealth and Power in Edwardian England* (London, 1978).

vania – though also among the booming millionaires of Chicago.⁶⁵ Organizations such as these differed from the much more restrictive attempts to set up a group of families as a quasi-aristocratic élite (by inclusion in a *Social Register* or the like), inasmuch as they provided nation-wide linkages. The less exclusive D.A.R. was more likely to discover suitable members in such cities as Omaha than a very élitist *Social Register*. The history of the middle-class search for genealogy remains to be written, but the systematic American concentration on this pursuit was probably, at this period, somewhat exceptional.

Far more significant was schooling, supplemented in certain respects by amateur sports, which were closely linked to it in the Anglo-Saxon countries. For schooling provided not only a convenient means of social comparability between individuals or families lacking initial personal relations and, on a nation-wide scale, a means of establishing common patterns of behaviour and values, but also a set of interlinked networks between the products of comparable institutions and, indirectly, through the institutionalization of the 'old boy', 'alumnus' or 'Alte Herren', a strong web of intergenerational stability and continuity. Furthermore it provided, within limits, for the possibility of expanding an upper-middle-class élite socialized in some suitably acceptable manner. Indeed, education in the nineteenth century became much the most convenient and universal criterion for determining social stratification, though it is not altogether clear when it did so. Mere primary education ineluctably classified a person as belonging to the lower orders. The minimal criterion for accepted middle-class status was secondary education beyond the ages of, say, fourteen to sixteen. Higher education, except for certain forms of strictly vocational training, clearly qualified a person for the upper middle class and other élites. It incidentally follows that the traditional bourgeois-entrepreneurial practice of sending sons into business in their mid-teens, or of eschewing university education, lost ground. It certainly did so in Germany, where in 1867 thirteen out of fourteen Rhineland industrial cities had refused to contribute to the fiftieth anniversary celebration of Bonn university on the grounds that neither industrialists nor their sons used it.⁶⁶ By the 1890s the percentage of Bonn students from families

⁶⁵ Davies, *Patriotism on Parade*, pp. 47, 77.

⁶⁶ Cited in E. J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital* (London, 1977), p. 59; F. Zunkel, 'Industriebürgertum in Westdeutschland', in H. U. Wehler (ed.), *Moderne deutsche Sozialgeschichte* (Cologne and Berlin, 1966), p. 323.

of the *Besitzbürgertum* had risen from c. twenty-three to just under forty, while those from the traditional professional bourgeoisie (*Bildungsbürgertum*) had fallen from forty-two to thirty-one.⁶⁷ It probably did so in Britain, though French observers in the 1890s still noted with surprise that the English rarely left school after 16.⁶⁸ This was certainly no longer the case in the 'upper middle class', though little systematic work has been done on the subject.

Secondary schooling provided a broad criterion of middle-class membership, but one too broad to define or select the rapidly growing, but nevertheless numerically rather small, élites which, whether we call them ruling class or 'establishment', actually ran the national affairs of countries. Even in Britain, where no national secondary system existed before the present century, a special sub-class of 'public schools' had to be formed within secondary education. They were first officially defined in the 1860s, and grew both by the enlargement of the nine schools then recognized as such (from 2,741 boys in 1860, to 4,553 in 1906) and also by the addition of further schools recognized as belonging to the élite class. Before 1868, two dozen schools at most had a serious claim to this status, but by 1902, according to Honey's calculations, they consisted of a minimum 'short list' of up to sixty-four schools and a maximum 'long list' of up to one hundred and four schools, with a fringe of perhaps sixty of more doubtful standing.⁶⁹ Universities expanded at this period by rising admissions rather than by new foundations, but this growth was sufficiently dramatic to produce serious worries about the overproduction of graduates, at least in Germany. Between the mid-1870s and the mid-1880s student numbers approximately doubled in Germany, Austria, France and Norway and more than doubled in Belgium and Denmark.⁷⁰ The expansion in the U.S.A. was even more spectacular. By 1913 there were 38.6 students per 10,000

⁶⁷ K. H. Jarausch, 'The Social Transformation of the University: The Case of Prussia 1865-1915', *Journal of Social History*, xii, no. 4 (1979), p. 625.

⁶⁸ Max Leclerc, *L'Éducation des Classes Moyennes et Dirigeantes en Angleterre* (Paris, 1894), pp. 133, 144; P. Bureau, 'Mon Séjour dans une Petite Ville d'Angleterre', *La Science Sociale (suivant la Méthode de F. Le Play)*, 5th yr, ix (1890), p. 70. Cf. also Patrick Joyce, *Work, Society and Politics: The Culture of the Factory in Later Victorian England* (Brighton, 1980), pp. 29-34.

⁶⁹ J. R. de S. Honey, *Tom Brown's Universe: The Development of the Victorian Public School* (London, 1977), p. 273.

⁷⁰ J. Conrad, 'Die Frequenzverhältnisse der Universitäten der hauptsächlichsten Kulturländer auf dem Europäischen Kontinent', *Jahrbücher f. N. Ök. u. Statistik*, 3rd series, i (1891), pp. 376-94.

population in that country, compared with the usual continental figure of 9-11.5 (and less than 8 in Britain and Italy).⁷¹ The problem of defining the effective élite within the growing body of those who possessed the required educational membership card was real.

In the broadest sense it was attacked by institutionalization. The *Public Schools Yearbook* (published from 1889) established the member schools of the so-called Headmasters' Conference as a recognizable national or even international community, if not of equals, then at least of comparables; and Baird's *American College Fraternities* (seven editions between 1879 and 1914) did the same for the 'Greek Letter Fraternities', membership of which indicated the élite among the mass of American university students. Yet the tendency of the aspiring to imitate the institutions of the arrived made it desirable to draw a line between the genuine 'upper middle classes' or élites and those equals who were less equal than the rest.⁷² The reason for this was not purely snobbish. A growing national élite also required the construction of genuinely effective networks of interaction.

Here, it may be suggested, lies the significance of the institution of the 'old boys', 'alumni' or 'Alte Herren' which now developed, and without which 'old boy networks' cannot exist as such. In Britain 'old boy dinners' appear to have started in the 1870s, 'old boy associations' at about the same time - they multiplied particularly in the 1890s, being followed shortly after by the invention of a suitable 'old school tie'.⁷³ Indeed it was not before the end of the century that the practice of sending sons to the father's old school appears to have become usual: only 5 per cent of Arnold's pupils had sent their sons to Rugby.⁷⁴ In the U.S.A. the establishment of 'alumni chapters' also began in the 1870s, 'forming circles of cultivated men who would not otherwise know each other',⁷⁵ and so, a little later,

⁷¹ Joseph Ben-David, 'Professions in the Class System of Present-Day Societies', *Current Sociology*, xii, no. 3 (1963-4), pp. 63-4.

⁷² 'In consequence of the general snobbery of the English, above all of the English rising in the social scale, the education of the Middle Classes tends to model itself upon that of the Upper Middle Class, though with less expenditure of time and money.' Descamps, *L'Éducation dans les Ecoles Anglaises*, p. 67. The phenomenon was far from purely British.

⁷³ *The Book of Public School, Old Boys, University, Navy, Army, Air Force and Club Ties*, intro. by James Laver (London, 1968), p. 31; see also Honey, *op. cit.*

⁷⁴ Honey, *op. cit.*, p. 153.

⁷⁵ W. Raimond Baird, *American College Fraternities: A Descriptive Analysis of the Society System of the Colleges of the US with a Detailed Account of each Fraternity*, 4th edn (New York, 1890), pp. 20-1.

did the construction of elaborate fraternity houses in the colleges, financed by the alumni who thus demonstrated not only their wealth, and the intergenerational links but also – as in similar developments in the German student ‘Korps’⁷⁶ – their influence over the younger generation. Thus Beta Theta Pi had sixteen alumni chapters in 1889 but one hundred and ten in 1913; only a single fraternity house in 1889 (though some were being built), but forty-seven in 1913. Phi Delta Theta had its first alumni association in 1876 but by 1913 the number had grown to about one hundred.

In the U.S.A. and in Germany the role of these intergenerational networks was consciously played out, possibly because in both countries their initial role as suppliers of men in public service was very clear. The ‘Alte Herren’ active in the ‘Kösener Korps’, the élite associations of this kind in the 1870s, included 18 ministers, 835 civil servants, 648 judicial officials, 127 municipal officials, 130 soldiers, 651 medical men (10 per cent of them officials), 435 secondary and university teachers and 331 lawyers. These greatly outnumbered the 257 ‘landowners’, the 241 bankers, company directors and merchants, the 76 in technical and the 27 in scientific professions and the 37 ‘artists and editors’.⁷⁷ The earlier American college fraternities

Table 2. *Alumni of Delta Kappa Epsilon (Dartmouth)*⁷⁸

	1850s	1890s
Civil service and law	21	21
Medical	3	17
Clergy	6	10
Teaching	8	12
Business	8	27
Journalism and intellectual	1	10
Other	3	5
Total	50	102

also stressed such alumni (Beta Theta Pi in 1889 prided itself on nine senators, forty congressmen, six ambassadors and fifteen governors), but, as Table 2 shows, economic and political development gave them an increasingly modest place, and in the 1900s they gave increasing

⁷⁶ Bernard Oudin, *Les Corporations Allemandes d'Etudiants* (Paris, 1962), p. 19; Detlef Grieswelle, ‘Die Soziologie der Kösener Korps 1870–1914’, in *Student und Hochschule im 19 Jahrhundert: Studien und Materialien* (Göttingen, 1975).

⁷⁷ Grieswelle, *op. cit.*, p. 357.

⁷⁸ *Delta Kappa Epsilon Catalog* (1910).

prominence to their capitalists. And indeed a body like Delta Kappa Epsilon, which in 1913 included a Cabot Lodge and a Theodore Roosevelt, as well as eighteen eminent New York bankers, among them J. P. Morgan and a Whitney, nine powerful businessmen from Boston, three pillars of Standard Oil, and even in remote Minnesota a James N. Hill and a Weyerhaeuser, must have been a formidable business mafia. In Britain, it is safe to say, the informal networks, created by school and college, reinforced by family continuity, business sociability and clubs, were more effective than formal associations. How effective may be judged by the record of such institutions as the code-breaking establishment at Bletchley and the Special Operations Executive in the second world war.⁷⁹ Formal associations, unless deliberately restricted to an élite – like the German ‘Kösener Korps’ which between them comprised 8 per cent of German students in 1887, 5 per cent in 1914⁸⁰ – served largely, it may be suggested, to provide general criteria of social ‘recognizability’. Membership of *any* Greek Letter Fraternity – even the vocational ones which multiplied from the end of the 1890s⁸¹ – and possession of *any* tie with diagonal stripes in some combination of colours served the purpose.

However, the crucial informal device for stratifying a theoretically open and expanding system was the self-selection of acceptable social partners, and this was achieved above all through the ancient aristocratic pursuit of sport, transformed into a system of formal contests against antagonists selected as worthy on social grounds. It is significant that the best criterion for the ‘public-school community’ discovered is by the study of which schools were ready to play games against each other,⁸² and that in the U.S.A. the élite universities (the ‘Ivy League’) were defined, at least in the dominant north-east, by the selection of colleges choosing to play each other at football, in that country essentially a college sport in origin. Nor is it an accident that the formal sporting contests between Oxford and Cambridge developed essentially after 1870, and especially between 1890 and 1914 (see Table 3). In Germany this social criterion was specifically recognized:

⁷⁹ R. Lewin, *Ultra Goes to War* (London, 1980 edn), pp. 55–6.

⁸⁰ Grieswelle, *op. cit.*, pp. 349–53.

⁸¹ Baird lists forty-one fraternities in 1914 unmentioned in 1890. Twenty-eight of them formed after 1900, ten founded before 1890, twenty-eight of these were confined to lawyers, doctors, engineers, dentists and other career specializations.

⁸² Honey, *op. cit.*, pp. 253ff.

Table 3. *Regular Oxford-Cambridge contests by date of institution*⁸³

Date	No. of contests	Sport
Before 1860	4	Cricket, rowing, rackets, real tennis
1860s	4	Athletics, shooting, billiards, steeple-chasing
1870s	4	Golf, soccer, rugby, polo
1880s	2	Cross-country, tennis
1890s	5	Boxing, hockey, skating, swimming, water-polo
1900-13	8	Gymnastics, ice-hockey, lacrosse, motor-cycle racing, tug-of-war, fencing, car-racing, motor-cycle hill climbing (Some of these were later abandoned.)

The characteristic which singles out academic youth as a special social group (*Stand*) from the rest of society, is the concept of 'Satisfaktionsfähigkeit' [the acceptability as a challenger in duels], i.e. the claim to a specific socially defined standard of honour (*Standesehre*).⁸⁴

Elsewhere de facto segregation was concealed in a nominally open system.

This brings us back to one of the most significant of the new social practices of our period: sport. The social history of upper- and middle-class sports remains to be written,⁸⁵ but three things may be suggested. First, the last three decades of the nineteenth century mark a decisive transformation in the spread of old, the invention of new, and the institutionalization of most sports on a national and even an international scale. Second, this institutionalization provided both a public show-case for sport, which one may (with tongue-in-cheek) compare to the fashion for public building and statuary in politics, and a mechanism for extending activities hitherto confined to the aristocracy and the rich bourgeoisie able to assimilate its life-styles to a widening range of the 'middle classes'. That, on the

⁸³ Calculated from Royal Insurance Company, *Record of Sports*, 9th edn (1914).

⁸⁴ Günter Botzert, *Sozialer Wandel der studentischen Korporationen* (Münster, 1971), p. 123.

⁸⁵ For some relevant data, see Carl Diem, *Weltgeschichte des Sports und der leibeserziehung* (Stuttgart, 1960); Kl. C. Wildt, *Daten zur Sportgeschichte. Teil 2. Europa von 1750 bis 1894* (Schorndorf bei Stuttgart, 1972).

continent, it remained confined to a fairly restricted élite before 1914 is another matter. Third, it provided a mechanism for bringing together persons of an equivalent social status otherwise lacking organic social or economic links, and perhaps above all for providing a new role for bourgeois *women*.

The sport which was to become the most characteristic of the middle classes may illustrate all three elements. Tennis was invented in Britain in 1873, and acquired its classic national tournament there (Wimbledon) in 1877, four years before the American and fourteen years before the French national championships. It acquired its organized international dimension (the Davis Cup) by 1900. Like golf, another sport which was to demonstrate an unusual attraction for the middle classes, it was not based on team-effort, and its clubs – managing sometimes rather expensive pieces of real-estate requiring rather expensive maintenance – were not linked into 'leagues' and functioned as potential or actual social centres: in the case of golf essentially for males (eventually largely for businessmen), in the case of tennis for the middle-class young of both sexes. Moreover, it is significant that competitive contests for women followed rapidly on the institution of competitive contests for men: the women's singles entered Wimbledon seven years after the men's, the American and French national championships six years after their institution.⁸⁶ Almost for the first time sport therefore provided respectable women of the upper and middle classes with a recognized public role as individual human beings, separate from their function as wives, daughters, mothers, marriage-partners or other appendages of males inside and outside the family. Its role in the analysis of the emancipation of women requires more attention than it has so far received, as does its relation to middle-class travel and holidays.⁸⁷

It is hardly necessary to document the fact that the institutionalization of sport took place in the last decades of the century. Even in Britain it was hardly established before the 1870s – the Association football cup dates back to 1871, the county cricket championship to 1873 – and thereafter several new sports were invented (tennis, badminton, hockey, water-polo, and so on), or de facto introduced on a national scale (golf), or systematized (boxing). Elsewhere in Europe sport in the modern form was a conscious import of social

⁸⁶ *Encyclopaedia of Sports* (S. Brunswick and New York, 1969 edn): Lawn Tennis.

⁸⁷ For an early recognition of the tennis club as 'part of the revolt of sons and daughters of the middle class', see T. H. S. Escott, *Social Transformations of the Victorian Age* (London, 1897), pp. 195-6, 444. See also R. C. K. Ensor, *England 1870-1914* (Oxford, 1936), pp. 165-6.

values and life-styles from Britain, largely by those influenced by the educational system of the British upper class, such as Baron de Coubertin, an admirer of Dr Arnold.⁸⁸ What is significant is the speed with which these transfers were made, though actual institutionalization took somewhat longer.

Middle-class sport thus combined two elements of the invention of tradition: the political and the social. On the one hand it represented a conscious, though not usually official, effort to form a ruling élite on the British model supplementing, competing with or seeking to replace the older aristocratic-military continental models, and thus, depending on the local situation, associated with conservative or liberal elements in the local upper and middle classes.⁸⁹ On the other it represented a more spontaneous attempt to draw class lines against the masses, mainly by the systematic emphasis on amateurism as the criterion of upper- and middle-class sport (as notably in tennis, rugby union football as against association football and rugby league and in the Olympic Games). However, it also represented an attempt to develop both a specific new bourgeois pattern of leisure activity and a life-style – both bisexual and suburban or ex-urban⁹⁰ – and a flexible and expandable criterion of group membership.

Both mass and middle-class sport combined the invention of political and social traditions in yet another way: by providing a medium for national identification and factitious community. This was not new in itself, for mass physical exercises had long been linked with liberal-nationalist movements (the German *Turner*, the Czech *Sokols*) or with national identification (rifle-shooting in Switzerland). Indeed the resistance of the German gymnastic movement, on nationalist grounds in general and anti-British ones in particular, distinctly slowed down the progress of mass sport in Germany.⁹¹ The rise of sport provided new expressions of nationalism through the choice or invention of nationally specific sports – Welsh rugby as distinct from English soccer, and Gaelic football in Ireland (1884),

⁸⁸ Pierre de Coubertin, *L'Ecole en Angleterre* (Paris, 1888); Diem, *op. cit.*, pp. 1130f.

⁸⁹ Marcel Spivak, 'Le Développement de l'Éducation Physique et du Sport Français de 1852 à 1914', *Revue d'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine*, xxiv (1977), pp. 28–48; D. Lejeune, 'Histoire Sociale et Alpinisme en France, XIX–XX s.', *ibid.*, xxv (1978), pp. 111–28.

⁹⁰ This must be distinguished from the patterns of sports and outdoor pastimes of the old aristocracy and military, even if they sometimes took to the new sports or forms of sport.

⁹¹ John, *op. cit.*, pp. 107ff.

which acquired genuine mass support some twenty years later.⁹² However, although the specific linking of physical exercises with nationalism as part of nationalist movements remained important – as in Bengal⁹³ – it was by now certainly less significant than two other phenomena.

The first of these was the concrete demonstration of the links which bound all inhabitants of the national state together, irrespective of local and regional differences, as in the all-English football culture or, more literally, in such sporting institutions as the cyclists' Tour de France (1903), followed by the Giro d'Italia (1909). These phenomena were all the more significant as they evolved spontaneously or by commercial mechanisms. The second consisted of the international sporting contests which very soon supplemented national ones, and reached their typical expression in the revival of the Olympics in 1896. While we are today only too aware of the scope for vicarious national identification which such contests provide, it is important to recall that before 1914 they had barely begun to acquire their modern character. Initially, 'international' contests served to underline the unity of nations or empires much in the way inter-regional contests did. British international matches – as usual the pioneers – pitted the nations of the British Isles against each other (in football: those of Britain in the 1870s, Ireland being included in the 1880s), or various parts of the British Empire (Test Matches began in 1877). The first international football match outside the British Isles confronted Austria and Hungary (1902). International sport, with few exceptions, remained dominated by amateurism – that is by middle-class sport – even in football, where the international association (F.I.F.A.) was formed by countries with little mass support for the game in 1904 (France, Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland). The Olympics remained the main international arena for this sport. To this extent national identification through sport against foreigners in this period seems to have been primarily a middle-class phenomenon.

This may itself be significant. For, as we have seen, the middle classes in the broadest sense found subjective group identification unusually difficult, since they were not in fact a sufficiently small

⁹² W. F. Mandle, 'Sport as Politics. The Gaelic Athletic Association 1884–1916', in R. Cashman and M. McKernan (eds.), *Sport in History* (Queensland U.P., St Lucia, 1979).

⁹³ John Rosselli, 'The Self-Image of Effeteness: Physical Education and Nationalism in 19th Century Bengal', *Past and Present*, 86 (1980), pp. 121–48.

minority to establish the sort of virtual membership of a nation-wide club which united, for example, most of those who had passed through Oxford and Cambridge, nor sufficiently united by a common destiny and potential solidarity, like the workers.⁹⁴ Negatively the middle classes found it easy to segregate themselves from their inferiors by such devices as rigid insistence on amateurism in sport, as well as by the life-style and values of 'respectability', not to mention residential segregation. Positively, it may be suggested, they found it easier to establish a sense of belonging together through external symbols, among which those of nationalism (patriotism, imperialism) were perhaps the most significant. It is, one might suggest, as the quintessential patriotic class that the new or aspiring middle class found it easiest to recognize itself collectively.

This is speculation. The present chapter does not permit us to pursue it further. Here it is only possible to point out that there is at least some *prima facie* evidence for it, seen in the appeal of patriotism to the white-collar strata of Britain in the South African War⁹⁵ and the role of the right-wing nationalist mass organizations – overwhelmingly of middle-class but not *élite* composition – in Germany from the 1880s on, the appeal of Schönerer's nationalism to the (German-speaking) university students – a middle-class stratum profoundly marked by nationalism in a number of European countries.⁹⁶ The nationalism which gained ground was overwhelmingly identified with the political right. In the 1890s the originally liberal-nationalist German gymnasts abandoned the old national colours en masse to adopt the new black-white-red banner: in 1898 only 100 out of 6501 *Turnervereine* still maintained the old black-red-gold.⁹⁷

⁹⁴ It would be interesting, in countries whose language permits this distinction, to inquire into the changes in the mutual social use of the second person singular, symbol of social brotherhood as well as of personal intimacy. Among the higher classes its use between fellow-students (and, as with French polytechnicians, ex-students), brother-officers and the like is familiar. Workers, even when they did not know one another, used it habitually. Leo Uhen, *Gruppenbewusstsein und informelle Gruppenbildung bei deutschen Arbeitern im Jahrhundert der Industrialisierung* (Berlin, 1964), pp. 106–7. Labour movements institutionalized it among their members ('Dear Sir and Brother').

⁹⁵ Richard Price, *An Imperial War and the British Working-Class: Working-Class Attitudes and Reactions to the Boer War, 1899–1902* (London, 1972), pp. 72–3.

⁹⁶ It is to be noted that in Germany the *élite* student Korps resisted the principle of anti-semitism, unlike the non-*élite* associations, though de facto applying it (Grieswelle, *op. cit.*, p. 353). Similarly anti-semitism was imposed on the German gymnastic movement by pressure from below, against some resistance from the old National-Liberal bourgeois leadership of the movement (John, *op. cit.*, p. 65).

⁹⁷ John, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

What is clear is that nationalism became a substitute for social cohesion through a national church, a royal family or other cohesive traditions, or collective group self-presentations, a new secular religion, and that the class which required such a mode of cohesion most was the growing new middle class, or rather that large intermediate mass which so signally lacked other forms of cohesion. At this point, once again, the invention of political traditions coincides with that of social ones.

IV

To establish the clustering of 'invented traditions' in western countries between 1870 and 1914 is relatively easy. Enough examples of such innovations have been given in this chapter, from old school ties and royal jubilees, Bastille Day and the Daughters of the American Revolution, May Day, the Internationale and the Olympic Games to the Cup Final and Tour de France as popular rites, and the institution of flag worship in the U.S.A. The political developments and the social transformations which may account for this clustering have also been discussed, though the latter more briefly and speculatively than the former. For it is unfortunately easier to document the motives and intentions of those who are in a position formally to institute such innovations, and even their consequences, than new practices which spring up spontaneously at the grass roots. British historians of the future, anxious to pursue similar inquiries for the late twentieth century, will have far less difficulty with the analysis of, say, the ceremonial consequences of the assassination of Earl Mountbatten than with such novel practices as the purchase (often at great expense) of individually distinctive number-plates for motor cars. In any case, the object of this book is to encourage the study of a relatively new subject, and any pretence to treat it other than in a tentative manner would be out of place.

However, there remain three aspects of the 'invention of tradition' in this period which call for some brief comment in conclusion.

The first is the distinction between those new practices of the period which proved lasting, and those which did not. In retrospect it would seem that the period which straddles the first world war marks a divide between languages of symbolic discourse. As in military uniforms what might be called the operatic mode gave way to the prosaic mode. The uniforms invented for the interwar mass

movements, which could hardly claim the excuse of operational camouflage, eschewed bright colours, preferring duller hues such as the black and brown of Fascists and National Socialists.⁹⁸ No doubt fancy dress for ritual occasions was still invented for men in the period 1870–1914, though examples hardly come to mind – except perhaps by way of the extension of older styles to new institutions of the same type and, hopefully, status, such as academic gowns and hoods for new colleges and degrees. The old costumes were certainly still maintained. However, one has the distinct impression that in this respect the period lived on accumulated capital. In another respect, however, it clearly developed an old idiom with particular enthusiasm. The mania for statuary and allegorically decorated or symbolic public buildings has already been mentioned, and there is little doubt that it reached a peak between 1870 and 1914. Yet this idiom of symbolic discourse was destined to decline with dramatic suddenness between the wars. Its extraordinary vogue was to prove almost as short-lived as the contemporary outburst of another kind of symbolism, ‘art nouveau’. Neither the massive adaptation of traditional allegory and symbolism for public purposes, nor the improvization of a new and imprecise language of vegetable or female, but in any case curvilinear, symbolism, mainly for private or semi-private purposes appears to have been suited more than temporarily to whatever social requirements gave rise to them. We can only speculate about the reasons, and this is not the place to do so.

On the other hand, it may be suggested that another idiom of public symbolic discourse, the theatrical, proved more lasting. Public ceremonies, parades and ritualized mass gatherings were far from new. Yet their extension for official purposes and for unofficial secular purposes (mass demonstrations, football matches, and the like) in this period is rather striking. Some examples have been mentioned above. Moreover, the construction of formal ritual spaces, already consciously allowed for in German nationalism, appears to have been systematically undertaken even in countries which had hitherto paid little attention to it – one thinks of Edwardian London – and neither should we overlook the invention in this period of substantially new constructions for spectacle and de facto

⁹⁸ The brightest such uniforms appear to have been the blue shirts and red ties of socialist youth movements. I know of no case of red, orange or yellow shirts and none of genuinely multicoloured ceremonial clothing.

mass ritual such as sports stadia, outdoor and indoor.⁹⁹ The royal attendance at the Wembley Cup Final (from 1914), and the use of such buildings as the Sportpalast in Berlin or the Vélodrome d’Hiver in Paris by the interwar mass movements of their respective countries, anticipate the development of formal spaces for public mass ritual (the Red Square from 1918) which was to be systematically fostered by Fascist régimes. We may note in passing that, in line with the exhaustion of the old language of public symbolism, the new settings for such public ritual were to stress simplicity and monumentality rather than the allegorical decoration of the nineteenth-century Ringstrasse in Vienna or the Victor Emmanuel monument in Rome;¹⁰⁰ a tendency already anticipated in our period.¹⁰¹

On the stage of public life the emphasis therefore shifted from the design of elaborate and varied stage-sets, capable of being ‘read’ in the manner of a strip cartoon or tapestry, to the movement of the actors themselves – either, as in military or royal parades, a ritual minority acting for the benefit of a watching mass public, or, as anticipated in the political mass movements of the period (such as May Day demonstrations) and the great mass sporting occasions, a merger of actors and public. These were the tendencies which were destined for further development after 1914. Without speculating further about this form of public ritualization, it does not seem unreasonable to relate it to the decline of old tradition and the democratization of politics.

The second aspect of invented tradition in this period concerns the practices identified with specific social classes or strata as distinct from members of wider inter-class collectivities such as states or ‘nations’. While some such practices were formally designed as badges of class consciousness – the May Day practices among workers, the revival or invention of ‘traditional’ peasant costume among (de facto the richer) peasants – a larger number were not so identified in theory and many indeed were adaptations, specializations or conquests of practices originally initiated by the higher social

⁹⁹ Cf. *Wasmuth's Lexikon der Baukunst* (Berlin, 1932), iv: ‘Stadhalle’; W. Scharau-Wils, *Gebäude und Gelände für Gymnastik, Spiel und Sport* (Berlin, 1925); D. R. Knight, *The Exhibitions: Great White City, Shepherds Bush* (London, 1978).

¹⁰⁰ Carl Schorske, *Fin de Siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture* (New York, 1980), ch. 2.

¹⁰¹ Cf. Alastair Service, *Edwardian Architecture: A Handbook to Building Design in Britain 1890–1914* (London, 1977).

strata. Sport is the obvious example. From above, the class line was here drawn in three ways: by maintaining aristocratic or middle-class control of the governing institutions, by social exclusiveness or, more commonly, by the high cost or scarcity of the necessary capital equipment (real tennis courts or grouse-moors), but above all by the rigid separation between amateurism, the criterion of sport among the upper strata, and professionalism, its logical corollary among the lower urban and working classes.¹⁰² Class-specific sport among plebeians rarely developed consciously as such. Where it did, it was usually by taking over upper-class exercises, pushing out their former practitioners, and then developing a specific set of practices on a new social basis (the football culture).

Practices thus filtering socially downwards – from aristocracy to bourgeoisie, from bourgeoisie to working class – were probably predominant in this period, not only in sport, but in costume and material culture in general, given the force of snobbery among the middle classes and of the values of bourgeois self-improvement and achievement among the working-class élites.¹⁰³ They were transformed, but their historical origins remained visible. The opposite movement was not absent, but in this period less visible. Minorities (aristocrats, intellectuals, deviants) might admire certain urban plebeian sub-cultures and activities – such as music-hall art – but the major assimilation of cultural practices developed among the lower classes or for a mass popular public was to come later. Some signs of it were visible before 1914, mainly mediated through entertainment and perhaps above all the social dance, which may be linked to the growing emancipation of women: the vogue for ragtime or the tango. However, any survey of cultural inventions in this period cannot but note the development of autochthonous lower-class sub-cultures and practices which owed nothing to models from higher social classes – almost certainly as a by-product of urbanization and mass migration.

¹⁰² Professionalism implies a degree of occupational specialization and a 'market' barely if at all available among the settled rural population. Professional sportsmen there were either servants or suppliers of the upper classes (jockeys, alpine guides) or appendages to amateur upper-class competitions (cricket professionals). The distinction between the upper- and lower-class killing of game was not economic, though some poachers relied on it for a living, but legal. It was expressed in the Game Laws.

¹⁰³ A Weberian correlation of sport and Protestantism has been observed in Germany up to 1960. G. Lüschen, 'The Interdependence of Sport and Culture', in M. Hart (ed.), *Sport in the Sociocultural Process* (Dubuque, 1976).

The tango culture in Buenos Aires is an example.¹⁰⁴ How far they enter into a discussion of the invention of tradition must remain a matter of debate.

The final aspect is the relation between 'invention' and 'spontaneous generation', planning and growth. This is something which constantly puzzles observers in modern mass societies. 'Invented traditions' have significant social and political functions, and would neither come into existence nor establish themselves if they could not acquire them. Yet how far are they manipulable? The intention to use, indeed often to invent, them for manipulation is evident; both appear in politics, the first mainly (in capitalist societies) in business. To this extent conspiracy theorists opposed to such manipulation have not only plausibility but evidence on their side. Yet it also seems clear that the most successful examples of manipulation are those which exploit practices which clearly meet a felt – not necessarily a clearly understood – need among particular bodies of people. The politics of German nationalism in the Second Empire cannot be understood only from above. It has been suggested that to some extent nationalism escaped from the control of those who found it advantageous to manipulate it – at all events in this period.¹⁰⁵ Tastes and fashions, notably in popular entertainment, can be 'created' only within very narrow limits; they have to be discovered before being exploited and shaped. It is the historian's business to discover them retrospectively – but also to try to understand why, in terms of changing societies in changing historical situations, such needs came to be felt.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Blas Matamoro, *La Ciudad del Tango (Tango Histórico y Sociedad)* (Buenos Aires, 1969).

¹⁰⁵ Geoffrey Eley, *Re-shaping the German Right* (Yale U.P., London and New Haven, 1980).