HISTORY EXTENSION PROJECT
The Easter Rising Rebels: Violent Insurgents or Heroes?

Evaluate the extent to which Irish historiography has retroactively glorified the actions and intentions of the insurgents involved in the 1916 Easter Rising and consider why its true nature has been distorted.
SYNOPSIS

Just over 100 years ago, on April 24, 1916, a group of over a thousand of extreme Irish nationalists mounted a week-long insurgence in Dublin, inciting an Irish rebellion against 700 years of British rule. The uprising consisted of members of a secret revolutionary organisation known as the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB), the Irish Volunteers and Irish Citizen Army, all intent on liberating Ireland against the might of the British Empire. They seized strategic locations around the city of Dublin, and standing in front of the General Post Office, read a proclamation signed by seven revolutionary nationalists declaring the establishment of a Republic of Ireland. After five days of warfare in the streets of Dublin, British government forces suppressed the uprising with 20 000 troops on the ground and artillery bombardments. The revolutionary leaders were forced to surrender and the revolution ceased its being. By the end of five days the carnage and devastation of the failed rising became apparent with many buildings reduced to ruins, over 2000 casualties and over 485 fatalities - more than half of which were innocent civilians. The leaders of the insurgency faced public condemnation and were soon thereafter executed by the British for their treasonous conduct. Subsequently, over 3000 people were arrested and over 1400 imprisoned, and initial condemnation of the rebels and their actions slowly turned to support and sanctification.

The Easter Rising of 1916 in Ireland is one of the foundational and prominent events in Irish history, however it’s place in history, like many others, is contentious. In my historical inquiry, I wanted to explore the subjective nature of the historical sympathisers and detractors of figures in highly politicised history in creating subjective historical interpretations. Historian, tend to portray important historical figures as inherently ‘good’ or ‘bad’ for the sake of an intriguing historical narrative. Hitler was pure evil, Gandhi was a saint. These figures are used as symbols for a single idea, value, or philosophy; therefore, one trait is emphasised and the other conflicting traits are overlooked or forgotten, such figures include the insurgents involved in the Easter Rising.

The progression of time has conjured significant historical debate over the nature of the 1916 Easter Rising and whether the intentions of the insurgents involved have been retroactively sanctified by historians. The issue has prompted fractures and disputes amongst historians over the last few decades in particular. Some historians sought to downplay the significance of violence in Irish history, with mixed sentiments about the era of rebellion and independence. Consequently, history has been constructed differently in that some consider it as an abolished attempt to gain sovereignty and disparage it be an uprising that was ultimately senseless, futile and doomed to fail in advance. Others particular nationalist and republican historians, however, view it as symbol of Irish martyrdom, a heroic uprising that was the first step towards a free state of Ireland and often portray the Rising in a narrative, grandiose way.

Question

Evaluate the extent to which Irish historiography has retroactively glorified the actions and intentions of the insurgents involved in the 1916 Easter Rising and consider why it’s true nature has been distorted.
“All changed, changed utterly:
“A terrible beauty is born”

William Butler Yeats

_Easter, 1916_

Whilst historiography can present a unique viewpoint of historical events, it can easily result in a glorified representation of certain figures in the past, resulting in prejudiced and misleading histories. The new trend of glorification of some historical characters either for some ulterior motive or to gain popularity by sensationalism has been discussed amongst numerous historians in past few decades. This is evidenced in the construction surrounding the rebels of the Easter Rising of 1916 in Ireland, whom are often revered and glorified in commemorative events or nationalistic portrayals, yet denounced by academic historians in recent times. The subjective portrayal of their involvement in the establishment of a free Irish Republic state is questionable, and frankly more concerned with sanctifying ‘martyrs’ rather than critically analysing their actions. By glorifying the past, it is could be easily forgotten that the intentions and aims who had sacrificed their lives in the Rising and had not been properly achieved and provided little to no advancement in the republican cause was made. Yet the rebels’ actions where valorised and sanitised by historians for decades in order to, ‘portray the deeds of the rebels in a heroic fashion’.¹ and perpetuating the notion of the heroic ‘blood sacrifice’. Contrastingly, although the bloodshed inherent in the 1916 Rising has been stigmatised by many historians over the years, there has been certainly no shortage of enthusiasts at the other end of the spectrum, who have typically portrayed the deeds of the rebels in a heroic fashion and overemphasised the role it played in the Irish Republican movement. Subsequently, it must be noted that the Rising itself had a negligible impact on advancing the Republican cause in Ireland, yet is often placed in a broader context and included as an imperative event in the independence movement. It is almost universally assumed that the past is immutable, unchangeable, set in stone. In fact, this is a misleading and potentially dangerous assumption. The past is actually as uncertain as the future. History is not only written time and time again. It is fluid, dynamic, and ever-changing. The facts of history can transform based on new context, perspectives, biases, interpretations, manipulations. It is imperative to argue the role that historiography has had in distorting the nature of the Rising by glorifying the actions and insurgents who have ultimately been, “shaped by the hand of history”².

It became evident that the Rising was a contentious issue even in the initial period when condemnation of the insurgents’ actions was dispelled by their executions at British hands. Primary sources convey the public condemnation and denouncement the actions of the insurgents. For example, newspapers including the Irish Catholic was particularly scathing, labelling the insurgency as a, “movement which has culminated in deeds of unparalleled bloodshed and destruction of property... Only idiots or lunatics can ever have supposed it would prove successful... it was most traitorous and treacherous to our native land”³. The Irish Times would suggest that the legacy of the Rising would be a “long trail of sorrow, misery and shame”. However, official witness statements and accounts from the insurgents and military officials involved in the event, suggest the beginnings of the conflict between violent insurgents and heroes that would dominate historiography for decades to come. For example Arthur P. Agnew, who participated in the Rising, stated in his witness statement that they, ‘got a bad reputation from the civilians as we passed along the St Thomas area’, yet he notes after his period of incarceration and eventual release, that upon returning to Dublin that, “It was very noticeable the change in outlook in the people. They were now sympathetic towards us and lauded us as heroes and gave us free gifts”⁴. The rebels, instead of being dangerous lunatics, became martyrs. More specifically they became Catholic martyrs. As the rebel leader Patrick Pearse had clearly envisaged, the sacrifice at Easter was folded

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¹ McGarry, Fearghal *The Easter Rising of 1916: BBC.co.uk*.
into the greatest of all blood sacrifices, that of Christ himself. What happened to the Rising is that it very quickly moved out of the realm of historical fact and into that of the imagination. The rich archives of statements by rebels convey very few examples of young insurgents who foresaw their death in a hopeless cause, in reality most naively thought they would be victorious. Despite this, the Rising itself, retrospectively was reshaped as a pivotal moment of heroic self-sacrifice, a story which is arguably more gripping, compelling and moving – the popular historical version of the Easter Rising.

Until recently the Rising had romantic connotations and rebels who were willing to sacrifice all and take up arms against the British Army were glorified and held in high esteem in Irish historiography. For lengthy periods of time, “the focus was on the insurgents’ clean and brave fight, their impeccable behaviour and the tragic dignity of the leaders facing death”5. Setting up the Rising up as the key moment in the establishment of the Irish state, without questioning its violent and divisiveness. Many nationalists believed and preached that the Easter Rising was the epitome of the Irish rebellious image. The creation of martyrs is central to the history of Anglo-Irish relations. in both Republican and Loyalists circles, the commemoration of those killed whilst promoting a particular political ideology contributed to the process of myth creation. The Anglophobic and nationalistic portrayal is deeply Anglophobic, irrational and displays a preference for physical force methods, glorifying violence and involving a messianic aspect, bound up by the concept of ‘blood sacrifice’. Many of these historical interpretations are almost hagiographical in nature, contrived by republic and nationalistic historians who are more concerned in establishing narrative arcs rather than portraying accurate and factual historical accounts.

The historical construct of the Easter Rising contrived by republican historians is concentrated on the bravery and sacrifice of the rebels, and thus the extent to which their historiography glorifies and sanctifies the violence of the insurgency is great. Integral in creating valorised and glorified perception of the rebels involved in the insurgency, are the historiographical works of nationalist historians, who seeks to glorify the rebels as national heroes in the name of a free Ireland, often disregarding evidence. Strong criticism by revisionist and post-revisionism schools labels the intentions of such historians as more concerned with creating nationalist propaganda rather than producing a balanced, wider objective view. This is exemplified in the works of early historian Louis Le Roux (1932) whose inherent bias in valorising the rebels is blatant when he suggests they are, “heroes equally chosen for a heroic task... nature had endowed them with the candour of heroes and the sincerity which conquers every obstacle”6. Similarly, to many of the initial historians, Le Roux was a Breton nationalist, whose political aspirations centre on the desire to obtain the right to self-rule in Brittany, France. Thus, Le Roux’s ability to depict a objective interpretation of the Easter Rising, which was lead by Irish republicans who wanted to end British rule, is therefore questionable. His political sentiments are epitomised in his hagiographical portrayal of rebel leader Patrick Pearse who he claims, “possessed all the qualities which go to the making of a saint. It would not be astonishing if Pearse were canonised some day”7. They are essentially glorifying the past it is could be easily forgotten that the intentions and aims who had sacrificed their lives in the Rising and had not been properly achieved. Thus, the extent to which nationalist historians have glorified both the actions and intentions of the Easter insurgents is significant, particularly in those who seek to establish a nationalist approach within Irish historiography. Why historians tend to glorify the actions and events to such an extent so as to create impressions on the minds of the reader that the historical figures were almost transcendent, almost non-human in form is particularly telling of distorted nature of Irish historiography and the extent to which Irish historiography has glorified the actions and pursuits of these Easter ‘heroes’.

However, not all of the earliest historical works glorified the actions of the insurgents, but a rare view rather provided a more balanced and subjective approach in recognising the futility of the rebels’ actions. One of the oldest works published on the events of the Easter Rising and the insurgents was in 1916 the very same year of the Rising itself. It is oversimplified however to argue that these nationalist and classical historians glorified

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the actions of the rebels during the classical time period did glorify the actions of the insurgents. Even without the benefit of historical hindsight, early historians Padraic Colum and Maurice Joy present a balanced argument of the rebels suggesting the rebels engaged in a rebellion they were aware, “was doomed to physical defeat”8. However, the historians sanctification of the ‘martyrs’ involved is as they sensationalise the insurgent’s fate, “Such was their gospel; they did not fight for the body which perished but for the soul which endures.”9.

Historiographical works as late as the 2000’s have glorified the significance of the Rising, with historians such as Martin Mansergh labelling the insurgency as holding, “iconic status at the pinnacle of the republican tradition” and Elon Neeson stating the Rising was, “the pivotal and formative event of modern Irish history”10. However, the inherent bias of these historians is evident as they directly involved in the Fianna Fail Party in Ireland, a republican political party founded by one of the rebels Eamon de Valera in 1921 after he avoided execution. Thus, the questionability of their historical interpretations that glorify the actions of the historians and elevate the significance of their actions is apparent. This distortion and political and cultural standpoints and inevitable political prejudice of historians is inextricably linked with the interpretational element of political subjectivity of such interpretations. Even as late as 2009 Toni Reideich would remark how the rebels were, “patriots who fought, outnumbered and starved, for a holy aim and who had to submit to the ruthless soldiers, sent by an illicit and tyrannous foreign government”11.

Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that these historians were unable to use many of the firsthand accounts and witness statements which were classified by the government for over 70 years, thus their glorification and sanitisation of the rebels actions was directly impacted. Over last 50 years however, the construction of the Rising has altered due to the declassification and public release of these documents, promulgating new historiographical writings, and thus the untouchable and traditional reputation of the rebels which dominated preceding generations was now open to debate.

However, over time interpretations of the event became contentious, and differing perspectives on the nature of the Rising were created as historians became more emotionally detached from the subject matter. For over 50 years, culminating in a great outburst of commemoration in 1966, Irish historiography presented a caricature of the reality and ideals of the Rising.

However, the extent to which the insurgents have been glorified is diminished by a gradual shift in historiographical trends in the past 50 years, it is thus imperative to evaluate the way in which post-revisionist historians reject the works of previous historians who acknowledge that the the Rising has been, “retroactively sanctified…squeezed into a tidy narrative”12. This post-revisionist school has become the predominant school in recent decades, as new scholarly works explicate. Mixed sentiments about the era of rebellion and independence characterised much of 1970s until the late 1990s, however by the end of the century a more balanced approach which depicted both the sinister and noble attributes of the Easter Rising cause emerged. Historians such as Kevin Myers insist, “the insurgents created a wasteland in the centre of Dublin and destroyed hundreds of lives for no good reason” or John M. Reagan, “Became a ‘gesture of sacrificial violence rather than a serious challenge to Britain’s government of Ireland.” Therefore, historians have become more critical of the Easter Rising and its participants.

The revelation that over 300 civilians died and over 2200 were wounded, a number previously underestimated, brought to light new historiographical accounts which acknowledged the misguided intentions of the rebels and the detrimental impact of their actions. This is exemplified by prominent Irish historian Fearghal McGarry

10 Ireland’s 1916 Rising: Explorations of History Making, Commemoration and Heritage in Modern Times, McCarthy M. (2016)
11 Friedrich, Toni. The Easter Rising As One Of The Most Crucial Events In Irish History. München, GRIN Verlag Gmbh, 2007..
who acknowledges it was a, “rebellion that accomplished little, resulted in horrific violence and the death of hundreds of individual citizens is often overlooked in favour of nationalist fervour”\textsuperscript{13}. This drastic change in the attitudes and inherently more objective view of the insurgents is arguably the result of the changing political climate in Ireland over the years, and the pursuit of truly objective history, summarised best by Ruth Dudley Edwards, “The Irish are too sophisticated these days to accept inherited myths uncritically. Dying for Ireland is out of fashion... They're no longer inclined towards blind loyalty to the dead of 1916, not least because they see from the evidence... that merely being prepared to give your life for your ideas doesn't make you right”\textsuperscript{14}

Similarly, the pluralistic agenda in the modern political climate has refuted the past glorifications of the rebels, instead adopting a more balanced and objective viewpoint. The detachment of these historians and their ability to incorporate past historical works provides a more comprehensive understanding of historical events, moving away from a popular historical approach. Rather than emphasising the narrative arc of the Easter Rising, they focused more on the historical fact and the analysis of primary, first-hand accounts that depicted the destruction and violence the insurgency involved, such as Brian Hanley, “During the Rising the rebels killed civilians sometimes by accident and occasionally deliberately. Unarmed policemen were shot and the rebels’ tactics arguably brought destruction down on Dublin’s inner city.\textsuperscript{15}

In all, it is apparent to a large extent the Irish historiography that glorifies of the actions and intentions of certain historical figures in regards to the Easter Rising insurgents has been an alarmingly trend dominating the past. Thus, the ability for many nationalist, republican historians to separate their political sentiments and the desire to create a intriguing, narrative interpretation of an event in pursuit of creating a popular historical version in exemplified in the historiographical approaches towards the 1916 Easter Rising. However, numerous recent historians have recognised this trend of glorification and sanctification of Irish revolutionary violence and have produced works that provide a more pluralistic, objective and academic interpretation of the Rising, grounded in first-hand accounts and reliable secondary sources. Thus, the extent to which Irish historiography has glorified the actions and intentions of 1916 Easter rebels whilst significant, has been diminished by recent historiographies which attempts to rectify the past biases and subjective interpretations of previous historians.

For many in the nationalist tradition, the \textit{heroic nature of the 1916 rising became part of a national self-image that justified the revolutionary means} by which independence had been achieved.\textsuperscript{???

\textsuperscript{13} McGarry, Fearghal \textit{The Easter Rising of 1916}; BBC.co.uk
\textsuperscript{15} Moderates and Peacemakers: Irish historians and the Revolutionary-Centenary. Hanley, Brian. (2016)
Bibliography


Source Analysis

SOURCE #1

- Mr McGarry is one of the most prominent Irish historiographers who has dedicated numerous titles and extensive research on the Easter Rising and its contentious portrayal over the past few decades. Through email correspondence he himself recommended this book to me as a starting point in my investigation.
- This secondary source provided an excellent, reliable and alternative perspective, allowing sympathetic interpretations and view to be considered and compared with past historiography which provided antithetical interpretations of the rebels actions.
- Useful analysis of political influences and historiographical trend of glorification, and informed historical analysis and justification behind varying interpretations.
- Published very recently, in 2016, and well-known publication, McGarry’s book is evidently accurate and reliable in that it originates from a credible author who is a Professor at Queen’s University Belfast specialising in modern Irish history, diminishing the prospect of potential bias with and educated background and position. Although neutrality of is undermines in a perspective focusing on criticism of political influences.
• As a secondary source, this book strives for an informative and educational purpose, providing accurate historiography of past historical interpretations, using digitised first hand documents of the Bureau of Military History. Its strengths include its methodology, including its comprehensive and detailed analysis of historian’s viewpoints surrounding the Easter Rising in regards to the contextual political atmospheres from which they are derived. Its weakness include that McGarry own viewpoint and attitudes permeate the book, and his denunciation of the rebels is apparent.

SOURCE #2

This secondary source is
• Researched over 7 years, Ms Wills is a distinguished scholar of Irish literature at Princeton University and an accomplished social historian. The early chapters reconstruct the events and give the heroics their due.
• Wills’ incisive study explores how the rising has been remembered in popular memory, in literature and film and in politics, which proved imperative in formulating my argument and furthering my research.
• Overall, this source historically is useful in providing valid information as it has accurate analysis and references to valid and relevant historical documents including the article on the ‘Brave Rebel Boys’ in the Woman’s Dreadnought by Sir Francis Fletcher and works and speeches by English writer Douglas Goldring in 1917.

SOURCE #3

• A primary source written by contextual historians directly after the Rising in 1916, collated numerous first hand accounts.
• Its reliability is comprised by the personal connection of the authors, particularly Padraic Colum who had a close relationship with Thomas MacDonaugh who he founded the The Irish Review, who was later executed for his role in the Rising. Thus the subjectivity of these interpretations of the Rising are questionable. In addition, little is known about the credibility of the first hand accounts depicted and relibility of individual historical opinions
• On the other hand, it was extremely valuable in providing the many sympathetic viewpoints towards the Easter Rising and initial attitudes held by the press, public,
• Account of history not contorted by future political climates and agenda but rather written in the political climate that the Rising itself occurred in.

Logbooks

18th November 2016

• Whilst studying WWI in modern history course, briefly touched on 1916 Easter Rising in Ireland which intrigued enough to research it outside class. Looked into the surrounding controversy and historical debate about the Rising that exists both in the past few decades and in contemporary times.
• Briefly touched on Irish Rebellion but was intrigued and went home and took personal initiative to look into the event.
• As preliminary research, I discovered the multitude of historiographical attitudes and perspectives that accompany Irish violent, rebellious and tumultuous history of the Easter Rising.
1st January
- Started researching into the Irish rebellion and doing some research into the 1916 Rising and what preceded it in order to gain a basic understanding of the event.
- Also began to look into some historiographical essays and novels on the event and what it led to.
- Found some recent media articles about controversy and debate about the centenary commemorations last year, including: Harland-Jacobs, J. (2016). *Ireland in 1916: the Rising, the War and controversial commemorations*. [online] The Conversation, and one from New York Times, *Martyrs with Gun and the Easter Rising* by Lawrence Downes (2016), which discussed how the Rising has been “retroactively sanctified...squeezed into a tidy narrative” and “The real event was a calamity. More than 1,200 took part in the Rising, mostly in Dublin. Britain flooded the city with troops and artillery. After six days of bombardment, about 450 were dead and 2,500 wounded. The bulk of the casualties were civilians.”
- This source provided a valuable understanding regarding both the sympathisers and detractors involved in the ongoing historical debate. However most importantly, it included quotations and primary sources that support the notion that initially many critics denounced the actions of the insurgents.
- I am currently finding it difficult to completely understand the nature of the Easter Rising and the complexity of the historical debate surrounding its place in Irish history, I believe doing more research into the event itself, it’s origins, Irish nationalism, the political climate of Ireland over time etc. will make this easier.

2nd January
- Continuing with the research undertaken yesterday, in order to gain a deeper understanding I watched a few documentaries to understand the Rising in a deeper way and bookmarked others to investigate.
- I started to compile all of my research thus far, opening a word document to record my sources and any pertinent information that could assist me in my historical investigation.
- One of the secondary sources I came across that assisted in understanding interpretations of historians proceeding the Rising. This included the work of prominent Irish historian Fearghal McGarry, *The Rising: Ireland: Easter 1916* (2010) which provides a comprehensive overview of the events prior, during and after the Rising from a more objective light. He also discusses the trend of Irish historiography to overlook the futility of the rebels’ actions, acknowledging that, “the rebellion that accomplished little, resulted in horrific violence and death is often overlooked in favour of nationalistic fervour”. This source provided a unique insight into the postmodernist school of thought surrounding the Easter insurgency.
- A possible line of enquiry emerging that my investigation could possible look at is the conflicting attitudes of historians towards the Easter Rising, as I am observing the two distinctive perspective of historians who either portray the rebels as insurgents or even to the extent of martyrdom.

23rd January
- Researched into the various other possible lines of inquiry by looking into various other sources and collating information.
- Looked at the debate and contention over whether the Easter Rising was a bloody protest or coup d’état. Keeping this as a possible line of inquiry as there is a lot of source material that would be beneficial and intriguing to discuss in my investigation.

6th February
- After and during school, I went to the school library to look through the various resources they had on Irish historiography and the Easter Rising itself. I failed to find any information that I would find pertinent to any of my historiographical focuses, however reading through the various sources on the
Easter Rising provided me with a deeper understanding of the Easter Rising as a whole.

7th February
- Read through numerous online and historical articles online to gather further information. Found a lot of information on Patrick Pearse – the rebel leader of the Easter Rising itself. Possibly looking at exploring this as a possible question as there is a plethora of source material, both secondary and primary on him.
- Of notable interest, was Louis Le Roux’s biography of Pearse which is almost hagiographical stating he, “possessed all the qualities which go to the making of a saint. It would not be astonishing if Pearse were canonised some day”. This could be valuable if I want to explore the political intentions of historians and the role politicised history plays in interpretations of the Easter Rising.

8th February
- Went through State Library online website
- Analysed the online collection, Reporting the Rising: Press Coverage of Easter 1916 by Mark Duncan, which provided a variety of primary sources in the form of newspaper articles and editorials which denounced the actions of the insurgents. For example, the Irish Catholic was particularly scathing, labelling the insurgency as a, “movement which has culminated in deeds of unparalleled bloodshed and destruction of property... Only idiots or lunatics can ever have supposed it would prove successful. it was most traitorous and treacherous to our native land”. The Irish Times would suggest that the legacy of the Rising would be a ‘long trail of sorrow, misery and shame’. However, I also searched through primary material via the Bureau of Military History and Military Service online collection that was of particular interest. The archives provided official witness statements and accounts from the insurgents and military officials involved in the event.

9th February
- I examined more secondary sources to gather knowledge about the interpretations of historians proceeding the Rising. This included the work of prominent Irish historian Fearghal McGarry, The Rising Ireland: Easter 1916 (2010) which provides a comprehensive overview of the events prior, during and after the Rising from a more objective light. He also discusses the trend of Irish historiography to overlook the futility of the rebels’ actions, acknowledging that, “the rebellion that accomplished little, resulted in horrific violence and death is often overlooked in favour of nationalistic fervour”.
- I also read numerous articles dedicated to the Rising including one from New York Times, Martyrs with Gun and the Easter Rising by Lawrence Downes (2016), which discussed how the Rising has been “retroactively sanctified...squeezed into a tidy narrative”.

13-16th February
- I mostly summarised the information I had collected thus far, and started to refine my potential topics down to the few that seemed intriguing and a prospect for my investigation. I have more or less moved away from discussing Patrick Pearse specifically, but rather looking at the rebels as a whole group as I don’t think the line of inquiry can be explored to the depth I want.
- I listened to a podcast featuring historians Pat Cooke, John Gibney and Conor Mulvagh titled, Was the Easter Rising a Blood Sacrifice?, from the RTE History. It provided the conflicting attitudes towards the Easter Rising rebels and their actions, as well as discussing the notion of ‘blood sacrifice’ that permeates history surrounding the Rising.

20-23th February
- Looked through the Irish Source Library compilation which has long lists of source material to examine
that was of great use to me. Content analysis is the predominant way in which I am collecting information and this comprehensive list of sources was incredibly beneficial.

- On the Bureau of Military Service, I gained access to the witness statements of individuals involved in the Easter Rising directly including Arthur P. Agnew.
- Realising that I was neglecting to look at primary resources in my methodology, this was imperative in ensuring I had a balanced understanding of the Rising and it’s interpretations from both primary and secondary sources. I really like direction my project is going in and I can see where it can be both unique.
- I started working on my proposal and putting the most prominent research I have collated and possible lines of inquiry I could venture into.

2nd March
- Around half way or so into my proposal, and am currently in the process of devising possible questions. At first I was having trouble with creating questions that were not repetitive and include different historiographical concepts and focuses. The majority of the questions however centred round whether historiography has glorified the actions of the insurgents. However I also devised questions that looked at the influence of political climates in Ireland in distorting the true nature of the Rising and in regards to the debate over whether it was a blood sacrifice or a coup d’état.
- Worked over the weekend to complete the rest of the proposal and I am extremely delighted with where the project as a whole is heading.

10th March
- Handed in Proposal today. Received feedback that I should focus on the glorification of the rebels and delve into the way in which historians can add supernatural narrative arcs to historical events. Mr Laidler overall was overall happy with where my project was heading and that I was on the right track.
- Decided to cement my line of historical inquiry upon recommendation from Mr Laidler on whether Irish historians have retroactively glorified the action and intentions of the insurgents involved in the 1916 Easter Rising in Ireland.

11th March
- Went to Hurstville library took look at secondary resources they had on Irish history during the Rising period and on the Rising itself.
- Of particular value was Dublin 1916: The Siege of the G.P.O which provided a comprehensive summary of the events preceding, during, proceeding the Rising as well as the changing historiographical interpretations and the shift in the public commemoration and memory of the Rising.

5th May
- Wishing to conduct an interview over email, I emailed prominent Irish historians Fearghal McGarry, Ruth Dudley Edwards and Brian Hanley. Each with their own differing views on the Easter Rising as a subject.
- Received replies on 6th and 7th May from Mr Hanley and Mr McGarry who assisted me in narrowing my focus question down and giving me advice on how to argue my point on how the Rising has retroactively glorified in history. They both stated that this was a strong argument/ line of enquiry and attached various source materials they had published that they believed would be well suited to my historiographical focus, of which I added to my research
- Receiving their assistance is invaluable to my historical investigation, as having read their writings frequently over the last few months, having the opportunity to discuss my project with them directly was extremely helpful. With their level of expertise, experience and educative backgrounds their
feedback was very imperative in assisting me in fine-tuning my question and understanding the Rising in greater detail.

11th June
• I started writing my synopsis and essay, which I found quite easy to do likely due to the months of research I have already done on it.
• I wrote a basic draft and formatting the project on Microsoft Word by making a heading page and writing the synopsis.

18th June
• I continued writing my essay and creating a first draft that is around 1500 words long so far. I focusing on writing by having arguing that whilst the majority of historians, particularly republican and nationalist historians with their own political sentiments have glorified the rising, however a minority in recent decades have taken a more objective and balanced view. I have inserted numerous quotes and footnotes, so my bibliography is also starting to take form.
• I went back through my research document and begun writing the citations and references of every single source I have used thus far in my research. I am hoping to show Mr Laidler a first draft of my essay in the next week or so.
• I also gave this first draft to my peer Olivia Brennan, who as a fellow (now ex) classmate in the History Extension Course was able to give me some advice on how to make it flow and make sense to someone unknowledgeable on the topic. I believe this was an important evaluation as it ensured that another set of eyes were able to look at my topic and be able to understand my focus clearly and the direction of my project as a whole.

23rd June
• In class this morning, I showed Mr Laidler a draft of my essay, having written about 2000 unedited words thus far. I asked him numerous questions including whether to include certain quotes, how much to include on the post-revisionist argument and how much I needed to counter my main argument.
• He provided me with beneficial feedback, informing me to include more historiography in my synopsis rather than just reiterating what actually happened in the Rising. He also stated that my structure needed to be clearer my ensuring that the schools of thought and contrasting interpretation are kept in chronological order and separated. This was to ensure that the essay did not jump back and forth, but rather was sequential and easier to comprehend. He also advised me to avoid saying ‘for example’ and rather just include the quotation from the historian.

2ND July – 7TH July
• Continued to progressively write and edit my essay, making small changes and writing paragraphs over the first week of the school holidays.
• Started writing source evaluations.

16th July
• Completed source evaluations