

Leopold von ranke essay sample

[History](#)



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The great German historian and historiographer Leopold von Ranke was born in a small city called Wiehe (in modern day Saxony) in the year 1795.

Actually born Leopold Ranke, the young boy attended gymnasium, and took a liking to religion including classical languages. By the year 1814 von Ranke was a college student with academic interests in a variety of subjects, but a lot of focus on the translation of classic texts along with philosophy, theology, and philology. After graduating he became a school teacher in Frankfurt an der Oder, where he published his first great work in 1824 titled History of Latin and Teutonic Nations 1494 to 1514. This contribution to history would propel the scholar to highest ranks of Germanic society, even being appointed Royal Historiographer by the King of Prussia in 1841.

By the time of his death in 1886, von Ranke had written several volumes on history, religion, and even a journal all of which would impact history forever. Leopold's masterpiece History of Latin and Teutonic Nations 1494 to 1514 engenders more than just the first word of the title. It breaks down the two great European peoples by demonstrating a pattern of unanimity between groups commonly thought to have perpendicular existences. Using the documents of individual experiences of the period in question, the work attempts to recreate what happened during those years of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century's on the Continent. Not only does

Goldberg 2 the author goes out of his way for authenticity of facts, but he gives his personal view of history and what a real student of history should strive to achieve. The record Romance and Germanic countries is extensive and can not be covered easily. To make it linear Ranke starts by demonstrating how Spanish and French peoples caused the division of Italy

and the death of Italian liberties. Iberian dominance is his next target for attention, namely the rise of monarchical powers on the peninsula and subjugation of the Germanic people of the Netherlands. Religious aspects do not escape von Ranke either, especially the papacy, and the great schism caused by the Reformation in Europe.

Despite a broad range of topics the German historiographer was still able to tie all the loose ends together. With such a successful life in the personal, private, and particularly in professional matters, Leopold von Ranke was without a doubt was thriving historian. However, achieving these feats can be done by many, but what can not be done by many is to redefine the field in which they spend their lives researching. The concept as illustrated in the author work mentioned above“...seeks only to show what actually happened [wie es eigentlich gewesen]” 2, a concept that changed historical study. He said “ the historian must direct his principal attention to the way in which the people of a certain period thought and lived;” 3 . This was new ground for a world in the mists of contemporary judgments determining what was historically accurate. In the grand scheme of historical icons Leopold von Ranke stands firm as a Revolutionary that was undeniably ahead of his time.