Demokratie – 50 years on from the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*

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Attending: Joanna Innes and Mark Philp (organisers), Andreas Fahrmeir, Franz Fillafer, Mark Hewitson, Theo Jung, Susanne Lachenicht, Hedwig Richter (core invitees); Christos Aliprantis (day 2 only), Jasper Heinzen (day 1 only), Cody Inglis, Jean-Michel Johnston, Jonathan Kwan, Avi Lifschitz (day 1 only), Iain McDaniel, Beth Macnamara-Dale, Stephen Sawyer (other invitees); Simon Arthur, Paola Medina-Gonzalez (attending)

1. Historiography: a changing setting

The *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* (henceforth GG) entry on *Demokratie*

- Predated the availability of digital library catalogues, let alone texts, and in practice drew on careful study of a relatively small number of texts, including works by famous thinkers; dictionaries, encyclopedias and broadly conceived educative surveys; also some relatively programmatic texts by political leaders and thinkers. Parliamentary debates were not a source; nor memoirs, travel accounts, occasional and ephemeral pamphlets, newspapers or magazines. We're told at some times that the term was not used in official documents, but not when it was.
- Was largely concerned with meanings, not uses: with what were at any given period possible significations of the word, rather than with who used it in what contexts to do what. Changes in register, bringing it from initial learned use into more general circulation, were indicated but not explored in any depth.
- Was especially concerned to capture changes of meaning, and the emergence of new meanings, especially enduring new meanings. Only a little attention is given to ephemeral new uses in the 1790s; even less to the new associations the word transiently acquired when it exploded into use in 1848 and the immediately following years.

To what extent has the account if provides been amplified or challenged – of has it come to look vulnerable to challenge -- over the past 50 years, because of

- the increasing availability of digital sources?
- growth in awareness of the methods of corpus linguistics and greater availability of textual analysis tools and software?
- developments within the 'history of concepts'? To what extent has attention within the history of concepts shifted from meanings towards uses?
- other historiographical developments, eg in intellectual history, the history of 'the enlightenment'; the study of the 'public sphere' or 'print culture', gender history or the history of emotions?
- new developments in understandings of this period of German history, such that the context implied in the account now looks in some way unconvincing?

Are there other features of the original work which you'd want to note, which we might now want to vary, challenge or move beyond?

The main geographical focus of GG seems to be what would become the Kaisertum. Usage in Habsburg lands is sometimes noted, but is not a major focus; Germanophone Switzerland barely figures, more as an object of interest than as a subject in its own right. Also not much interest is taken in variations within the Holy Roman Empire/German Confederation, bar a few odd references to free imperial cities; south German states, and Prussia.

- Do you think it's desirable to broaden or narrow the field of study – or to complement this level of generality with more broadly or narrowly-focussed accounts? Is that possible? Are there examples of studies of studies of concepts that operate within a different geographical ambit?

Discussion

Theo made three points.

- In relation to understanding the period, he thought that GG still had something to offer. In German historiography recently there has a good deal of interest in democracy and democratization, but often understood in rather teleological or presentist ways. He thought that conceptual history retained value in giving us some distance from current concepts.
- In terms of how the history of concepts is practiced, he thought that there had been a shift in emphasis from meanings to uses. He thought that some attention was paid to uses in the original. The chief problem was that changes were not well explained. Explanations mainly consisted in a. impulses from elsewhere (esp France), b. links to vague, large-scale processes like mediatization and industrialisation. Or else accounts were teleological: the direction of travel was assumed ("X did not yet see Y"). At many points, there was no explanation at all, f.e. Naumann. He thought that there should be more structuralist explanation, and more attention to the microdynamics of speech acts: how concepts were deployed in argument. Also concepts should be seen not just as indicators but as factors shaping change.
- Digital resources were certainly very helpful, not least for facilitating collocation analysis.

Susanne said that she thought *Historische Semantik* had developed as a concept, but hadn't really been realized in practice. Within adjacent research fields, media history and the history of genres (eg of songs, ballads, almanacs) had developed and were important. In sources like these one could see how concepts like *Freiheit* were actually deployed. In literary theory, New Historicism as practiced eg by Greenblatt had drawn attention to intertextuality. Discourse analysis had distinguished multiple levels of discourse. Sophie Wahnich had done an excellent job of showing different ways in which the word 'citizen' was used in different contexts. Achim Landwehr had developed methods for historians on how to apply discourse analysis with regard to historical sources, his *Historische Diskursanalyse* - Campus Verlag

Hedwig said that literature was an important source deserving of attention. She had attended an interesting workshop at Yale on writing democracy in literature Writing Democracy: Literature and Democratic History | Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures (yale.edu). She also thought that the history of emotions was important. Lynn Hunt (Inventing Human Rights. A History. NY/London 2008), Martha Nussbaum (Political Emotions. Why Love Matters for Justice. Cambridge 2013), and Michael Hughes ('Reason, Emotion, Pressure, Violence: Modes of Demonstration as Conceptions of Political Citizenship in 1960s West Germany', *German History*, Volume 30, Issue 2, June 2012) among others have written on this theme. She also thought that gender history was

relevant. Democracy was associated with masculinity, because of the legitimizing power of masculinity, its link to military service, to revolution, etc. Very smartly Mary Beard has also written about this topic (Women and Power, London 2017). It is good to look at where women have been actors in the history of democracy. But until the end of the 20th century, they were mostly not - and one should ask why that was the case.

Franz noted in this connection the idea of the husband as the representative or delegate of a household.

He thought that the chapter remained interesting. But it also showed that if one focusses on the history of the word, one can generate problems, like overstressing continuity, when in fact its significance was in part determined by counterconcepts. The notion that the word, or a new meaning of the word, came from abroad is a trope in its own right, linked to ideas about relative backwardness. One ambiguity attending the word was its association both with the past and (increasingly) with the future. Some of its counter-concepts were polemical, eg monarchy, dictatorship; others were more functional, like constitution, society.

Democracy could be embodied in many contrasting forms, eg centralised states or federal ones; it could be associated with the separation of powers, or with representation.

Kant said that all states were essentially of two kinds: despotic or republican.

Andreas noted that previous speakers had covered many points. He himself wondered if AI language models changed anything. It had been said that big data without big theoryproduced big bullshit.

Mark H said he had found it useful to go back to this article. He had been struck by differences between the work of different contributors. Conze seemed to differ from the others, because of his interest in intentionality and how that was expressed and responded to.

He suggested that the history of democracy and democrats were not necessarily the same. He wasn't sure that contributors did justice to wider patterns of action. The texts that were analysed tended to be ones that sought to characterise systems, not by those primarily concerned to mobilise and contest.

One important question that he thought was thrown up by 1848 was Who is a citizen? The constitution made Germans 'Staatsbürger. That opened up many more questions. In general, the texts don't talk about the edges and about what creates the boundaries between polities, but it was an important dimension.

General discussion.

Jonathan said that he had found the entry too concerned with ideas, and not enough the practical effects of what was said. He also argued that it is possible to have democratic practices without the word being used: thus elections, constitutions, newspapers, party programmes. He would have liked to see the words explored more in relation to practices.

Iain was interested in what Koselleck, Conze and Maier thought they were doing, back in 1972. He thought that d'Argenson emerged as a key figure in their account: his example helped them to make

the theme of 'democratic monarchy' central. Given debates around the 'Sonderweg', he was surprised that they didn't spend more time considering whether there were particularities to German uses.

Steve said that he thought they portrayed Hegel as closing the door on democracy; monarchy in alliance with the people filled the space.

Susanne said, in response to Iain, that we should consider what the metanarrative of German democracy was in 1970s and 1980s. The period saw the rediscovery of German radical democrats: 'German Jacobins', both in the FRG and GDR. A transfer of concepts from France (via among other things newspaper reports) certainly took place. This transnational approach (and the developing cultural transfer concept) provided an alternative to excessively nationalist accounts.

Franz said that the question of the Sonderweg was interesting, Koselleck himself said that every *weg* was a *Sonderweg.* He thought that the prominence given to Rotteck had the effect of creating a kind of German *juste milieu*; it normalised German history. By contrast, *Volksdemokratie* was seen as a bogus form of democracy: clearly this was directed against the DDR and other socialist republics.

Mark H said that he thought the treatment of the 1850s and 60s was interesting in that it barely figured.

Joanna observed that no one had yet responded to the point she made in the commentary about the way in which modern Germany was effectively projected backwards into the source material: the various sites in which the German language was and is spoken are not treated even-handedly. The question of geography is not squarely faced up to.

Avi said that he would have liked to see more done with collocation and other forms of complementary concept. Eg, was democracy more often linked with 'freedom' or 'republic'. Contrasts between ancient and modern democracy tended to revolve around different ideas about freedom. He agreed with Iain that the centrality of d'Argenson was interesting. Additionally, he would have liked to see more discussion of uses of term in relation to varieties of 'ancient constitutionalism': discussions of how states were governed in the classical period. This body of writing was ignored in favour of Kant and Hegel's takes.

Jonathan noted that we heard little about what was said against democracy – only that it was used negatively, but with no elaboration of what sort of complaint was being made against it. Austria's 1848 constitution said that all power came from the people; Stadion said of this that it went against the monarchical principle.

Jasper raised the question of who has the right to speak; who gets to decide what institutional forms will prevail and how they will be represented. Monarchy was certainly important, but monarchy also could be and was seen as an expression of popular will.

Franz said that democracy was often a universalising project, which didn't in practice give people choices. He noted in relation to Hans Maier that he was one of the best scholars of Christian democracy. He had written about Lamennais and others; about the conception of a 'consensus of the faithful', and about the tensions between liberty of faith and liberty of confession.

Cody noted that the 1920s and 30s had marked the heyday of a more pluralistic political Catholicism. The question of whether there can be a democratic monarchy was also relevant to interwar Yugoslavia

Jean-Michel said he had been thinking about the potential uses of collocation software. The GG approach depended on isolating concepts.

Susanne noted that some practitioners of historical semantics argued that collocation only made sense synchronically; it didn't work over time.

Theo said that the advantage of collocation software was that it could surprise you, alerting you to the need to look at conceptual relationships that hadn't occurred to you. Because otherwise the danger was that you only looked for what you expected to find.

Mark P remarked that it used to be normal to state that you can't derive theories from data. Now it seemed often to be supposed that you could. But there were good reasons for earlier injunctions against it.

Joanna suggested that if (as Jonathan had said of Stadion) it was commonly argued in the German world that there was a problem with combining monarchy and democracy, she thought that that was a local rather than a universal worry. Many Britons and indeed Spanish and Portuguese didn't see a deep contradiction; they thought the two could be complementary. Something seemed to hinge on the way the monarchical principle *came to be* understood. Initially, in the 1810s, it seemed from what she had seen that writers didn't find it hard to conceive of monarchical and democratic principles as existing in some complementary relationship. But as the monarchical principle was reinterpreted through the 1820s, 30s and 40s, there was increasingly seen to be a serious tension. Of course, rulers, and conservatives, were worried about democracy from the start, but she thought there were changes in the way that the concepts as such were deployed.

Hedwig thought that monarchy was treated as a given. The question for discussion often was whether and how democracy could be combined with it. For many, the two were not opposites. The problem was mostly considered to be the nobility with their "privileges".

Steve thought that the GG entry distinguished three main phases in the development of the term: an ancient phase, in which democracy was a form of rule; a middle phase, in which it was discussed mainly as a component within mixed government, and a late phase in which it was associated with social transformation. In each phase he thought that democracy and monarchy were potentially compatible, but they were articulated with it in different ways.

Hedwig said in US discourse, Europe was typed as monarchical and female; the US was typed as republican and male.

Susanne said that she thought the reception of the American revolution portrayed it as a matter of colonists claiming English freedoms. In this context, those who sympathised with America tended to argue that monarchy was no good; what was needed was a republic. England [as a constitutional monarchy], the Netherlands and the Swiss cantons were idealised. So sometimes they were contrasted rather than conjoined. One effect of the French revolution was to discredit republics, and correlatively to change attitudes to democracy among those previously attracted to it.

Iain cited the case of Friedrich Buchholz, a German admirer of Napoleon Friedrich Buchholz (Schriftsteller) – Wikipedia. He said that democracy was in practice like aristocracy: both involved rule by the few in practice. He said the really important contrast was between polyarchy (as in either of the former) and monarchy.

Mark H said that Roscher Wilhelm Georg Friedrich Roscher - Wikipedia continued to use the monarchy/aristocracy/democracy scheme in Germany; he didn't give much of a hearing to defenders of the monarchical principle, such as Stahl. Stahl's chief bete noire was parliamentarism.

Franz said that Roscher said that monarchy was the victim of its own success because by promoting the "third estate" against corporate aristocratic rights and privileges it ultimately sowed for its detractors to reap (this is e.g. the view adopted by Royer-Collard in the 1831 debate on the abolition of hereditary peerage in France)

Susanne said she thought it was important not to overgeneralise attitudes, but to be specific about period and author, since views changed and varied.

Theo didn't entirely agree with her: he thought that it was valuable to get away from individualised approaches and look at larger patterns of use.

Jonathan said it was easier to discern such patterns if one surveyed pamphlets and newspapers.

Franz noted that in GG the default too for establishing common use was Brockhaus Brockhaus Enzyklopädie - Wikipedia

Hedwig said that in the later nineteenth century, Britain was taken to be the model for a combination of monarchy and parliamentarism. Conservative-liberals in particular have praised the British model because of its restricted franchise.

Jasper thought that it was important to consider the institutional setting of the Holy Roman Empire, and its effect on the structure of authority, and the ways in which that was spread across different levels. There was at the time international support for the existence of a German Confederation.

Beth: on Britain as a role model, she said it was being cited in SW Germany in discussions of constitutions; in Munich it was already being invoked before 1830. She noted that one criticism of the Confederation at the time was there was no federal court, when courts had been a vital component of the empire.

Iain, also on the theme of German views of Britain, said that in the 1830s German discussions of democracy in Britain came to focus on parliamentarism as its key characteristic.

Mark H noted that there were problems in trying to use either Britain or the US as models. **Mark P** added, or the Swiss.

Iain said that one way in which the Swiss case influenced thinking was via German radicals who took refuge their after 48. They looked for alternative ways of using the Swiss model, eg through the formation of militias.

Hedwig wanted to link back to the point about different levels of organisation. She said the ideal of self government, *Selbst-regierung* was an important concept for the Prussian reformers. They saw it as presenting an alternative to absolutism. A scheme of history developed in the first third of the nineteenth century in which there were three eras: a glorified (selfgoverning) pre-absolutist; a negativ absolutist and now (coming back to the old self-government).

Franz noted that self-government also became a Slavonic idea, eliciting the question *who* was to self-govern themselves on what level of society at the expense or potentially at cross-purposes of

others' analogous rights provided a touchstone (the old nobility, and by extension the crownland, as maintained by Bohemian conservatives, or the free counties *excluding* the landholding nobility that owned the lion's share of their territory etc.). One needs to start from the idea of the *Gemeinde* (community, commons), see Jiří Klabouch's classic, *Die Gemeindeselbstverwaltung in Österreich, 1848–1918.*

Theo thought that these issues had a different significance and played out differently in cities on the one hand and rural communities on the other.

Cody noted that in the Habsburg empire, local representation was mediated by regional diets. The respublica came into being only when the diets met. Patriotism was mobile between different levels in the system. The 'nation' might be equated with a group of nobles.

Jonathan said that the Habsburgs were comfortable with power being distributed between these different levels. Things became problematic only if what the Habsburgs conceived of a central functions, basically fiscal military ones, were at issue.

Susanne noted that the Habsburgs lost the Swiss cantons (Vorderösterreich) early, but she wasn't sure how they talked about that in their historiography; wasn't sure that had been studied.

Steve said that the intersection between self-government and democracy was crucial. In the 1830s and 40s, left Hegelians saw the self-government tradition as anti-democratic because reminiscent of feudalism and therefore considered anti-national, or against national unification under a common set of rules and legislation.

Avi said that indeed they came out of distinct intellectual traditions.

Steve said that d'Argenson conceptualised self-government as post-absolutist: that was the way forwards.

Avi cited von Herzberg Ewald Friedrich von Hertzberg - Wikipedia, a Prussian courtier, who favoured a more democratic monarchy that would push back against claims of privilege. This, however, required a strong central authority in a different mode from traditionally self-governing states or cantons.

Andreas stressed how important he thought it was to remember how much of society was rural and how that conditioned how things worked and were imagined. In a local rural community, you might get to choose your own officials, but this might happen only once in a lifetime.

Franz said that in the Habsburg case, rural self-government was a by-product of the cadastral surveys since the 1780s that established cadastral communities with a modicum of budgetary rights and self-appointed bailiffs András Sipos: The cadastral heritage of the Habsburg Empire – necessity and possibilities of „virtual reunification" of a divided and scattered source material – EN ROUTE TO A SHARED IDENTITY (hypotheses.org) The Habsburg Cadastral Survey and Map Initiative – Gesher Galicia Map Room The constitutional reforms of the 1860s made it possible to cross-fade the territorially encoded language of self-government on "national", i.e. linguistically defined legal subjects aided by the jurisdiction of the imperial court.

2. Democracy as 'learned word'

As GG notes, democracy and cognates were originally – as in other parts of Europe - learned words, without much wider currency. Although they entered the vernacular language in Germany as elsewhere in the sixteenth century, GG suggests that they remained effectively learned terms until at least the French revolution.

- Consistently with its relatively low interest in patterns of use, GG does not make much attempt to map out the range of 'learned' contexts in which the word appeared, but we might be interested in that. What kinds of learned genres did it figure in? Natural law? History? Moral and political philosophy? Comparative studies of states and governments? Geography? Anthropology? Were there any notable developments in its use in any of these contexts?
- Is GG correct to stress its learned character, or is this overstated? In eighteenth-century Britain and France, it remained a word of the educated, but not really the *learned;* it entered the polite lexicon, becoming the kind of word magazine readers, male or female, would be expected to know, not needing a vernacular gloss. Was that the case in Germany – or not? Did it achieve any greater circulation in French revolutionary years? According to what chronology and by what steps did it pass into greater currency? (It may well have achieved wide currency at particular moments, and subsequently fallen out of wider use).
- To what extent and in what ways did 'learned' uses inform other uses? To put it another way, when new social groups became familiar with the word, what conceptual baggage did they acquire with it? In Britain in the 1840s, popular radical (Chartist) newspapers showed some interest in educating their readers in some of the term's classical associations. It also had French revolutionary associations (the French revolution was perhaps more often characterized as democratic in retrospect than by its supporters at the time). In a number of countries it was associated with particular accounts of the national past. It could be associated with discussions of the merits and demerits of government in Swiss cantons/Switzerland, or the United States. Would, for example, children have learned about any such contexts in school?

Franz Plato used an image of democracy as a fruit store: he envisaged democracy as a capacious portmanteau. Burke translated this as a bazaar. Filmer for his part had written of a fair. The common thread is provided by a notion of discordant elements in some form of market place.

He thought that it was true that in Habsburg lands 'democracy' was primarily a learned word. Even the Hungarian 'Jacobins' talked more about republics. One important learned context was provided by natural law literature, in which nineteenth-century Habsburg realms remained steeped. Habsburg apologists used enlightenment concepts to combat Revolution, universal monarch an popular sovereignty In the Paulskirche 1848, different legal traditions were in play. Wolfram Siemann Publikationen - Prof. Dr. i. R. Wolfram Siemann - Neueste Geschichte und Zeitgeschichte - LMU München (uni-muenchen.de) (*Juristendominanz*) demonstrated the dominance of jurists in that setting and the strong imprint natural law as a conceptual resource had left on the delegates from the Habsburg Central European lands. They had to sort out conceptually the relationship between citizenship and voting. In the context of anthropology, he thought the reception of Destutt de Tracy, Cabanis and the ideologues was important. They developed the idea that democracy was naturally suited to primitive societies. It is not true, as sometimes stated, that until 1848 there was no

reception of constitutionalism [a la francaise] in German lands. Close attention was paid in the press to debates in the French chamber. At that point, the capacious but transitory idea of democratic monarchy was held up my moderates of different stripes and persuasions: metaphorically there was talk of trying to hold back floodgates until the people were better educated. (He suggested that the history of metaphors would provide a fertile theme).

Susanne said that critics of the Holy Roman Empire, who came to be called in this period Jacobins, included some lawyers, but also some university professors. After 1792, in learned societies, attention focussed especially on France as an exemplar of democracy, whereas previously the Netherlands, Swiss cantons, Poland and some German states such as Wurttemberg had commonly been invoked. The line between the learned and others should not be too sharply drawn. Some of these 'learned' people published newspapers which reached wide audiences, including some simple people. It is interesting to see how they tried to translate from French newspapers. Some survived the Terror, staunch in their beliefs, and continued to embrace radical ideas under the Directory, when they were represented especially by Baboeuf.

Mark H thought that an important question to ask was How did what had once been a learned language come to enter poliltics? He thought that local involvement in self-government provided an important channel. Before the 1840s much of what we might call the public sphere was local in focus, and news coverage focussed on how politics was done at that level. Another channel was provided by officials, who were often lawyers. In the Frankfurt Parliament, half of delegates were civil servants; they drew on their classical university education. The press especially interested him as a channel of communication. Through this channel, academic discourse could certainly gain wider circulation. After 1848, he thought that the *Bildungsbürgertum* were more routinely exposed to academic discussion. That said, he thought it remained overall a learned term, on which others drew from time to time, rather than making it entirely their own.

Hedwig thought that as fas as she could see the word continued to be largely a learned word at least until mid nineteenth century. She noted that (as she had argued in her published work) that even when voting rights were extended, it happend often top-down, and turnout was mostly low (be it in USA, Danmark or German countries) and often people were not interested in using them. But the history of term "democracy" anyway is not identical with the history of voting rights or parliaments of course.

Andreas wondered if the proposition could be stood on its head. How can we access non-learned discourse anyway? He noted that from the early nineteenth century, newspapers carried extended essays, called *Beilagen*. But who did they reach? How can we know?

Theo the question how widely a particular discourse spread it not easy to deal with. Efforts of quantification are being made, but can only be done in the context of relatively standardised corpora. Luke Blaxill hd done research on British election speeches of the 1880s to look at the themes analysed. He thought that conceptual history now often looked beyond concepts eg also at metaphors, narratives, standard anecdotes/examples, standard quotations and authoritative references. He thought that the metaphor of 'voice' (vox populi) was an interesting one to consider. One might also look at standardised narratives, in which 'the democrat' appeared as a stereotyped figure: this suggests outreach to wider audiences. Visual material may also be suggestive.

General discussion

Jasper added that we should also look at the rituals of democracy.

Susanne thought that it was important to be specific about regions and time frames. We need case studies eg of particular cities.

Steve said that in the context of the French Revolution, 1792-94, speeches in clubs were the places where the word appeared with greater and greater frequency – so could be found in relatively popular as well as in said elite settings.

Joanna said that the object of the session had been to encourage people not to move on too quickly from 'learned' uses of the word, but to consider these as potentially of interest in their own right.

Susanne suggested that one dynamic might be that the word travelled outwards and then the learned tried to recapture it, but now with new meanings.

Mark H said that discussion in the early nineteenth century tended to be so linked with revolutions that learned and more general uses were hard to disentangle.

Steve said that in France in the 1790s, 'republic' tended to be the word most closely associated with popular sovereignty. Sovereignty was distinguished from government – so from 1792 the question became, given that we now have popular sovereignty, what kind of government should we have.

Iain suggested that in GG, two main 'anchors' were Rotteck and Bluntschli. Both were associated with dictionary projects. The dictionary was a medium that straddled the learned/popular divide.. Similarly, Treistschke and Bluntschli both wrote textbooks.

Susanne said that, in the same vein, it would be interesting to look at schoolbooks.

Joanna asked if there were German language 'political catechisms' a genre in which they had found democracy being invoked elsewhere. **Franz** said yes.

Franz suggested that whereas the classical past had been normative, the French discredited the classical past. This encouraged a trend for peoples to look instead to their own pasts.

Theo said that he thought GG was in fact quite good on learned uses. He thought that it would be interesting to trace networks of citation: who cites whom. For example, there were waves of Rousseauism and Anti-Rousseauism that aren't well captured in the GG. **Joanna** said indeed it quite often used 'learned' sources, but didn't reflect on specific genres of learned writing and what might distinctive or influential about them.

Mark H though almanacs would be another interesting genre. It would be good to know too what kinds of 'learned' works sat on other people's shelves, eg he thought that works on the science of the state were not – but that Treitschke's historical works were

Jasper thought that the natural law tradition of talking about equality left its mark.

Jean-Michel thought that it wasn't always easy to distinguish between different genres of learned work; politics and science might overlap, eg in the writings of Alexander von Humboldt (perhaps Wilhelm too!) He also noted that there had been work on how cameralism eg Patrick Anthony's work on Humboldt, and the influence of his training as a Saxon mine inspector on his understanding of South America, for instance, but also see the literature on orientalism, and how Enlightenment

ideas of history, progress were used to establish the 'civilisational' level of different culture/peoples. In the German context, this might be someone like August von Haxthausen: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/August_von_Haxthausen

Joanna agreed that travel literature could be an important cross-over genre.

Mark P asked if writing about democracy had an effect on the people who were its subject. In Britain, when Edmund Burke denounced the people as a 'swinish multitude', the phrase was taken up and parodied by its objects (eg in the radical periodical Pig's Meat).

Cody commented on the Slovene case. There, the language of learning was German, as also of the press, thus the *Laibacher Zeitung*, the most popular periodical in Ljubljana/Laibach from the 1780s onward, covered a wide range of news, including that of the French Revolution. While officials might use German at work and Slovene at home, so there was clearly potential for cross-over; meaning that uses of the word '*Demokratie*' in the German-language press could also signal its use in private in Slovene. Coverage of the French revolution was primarily counter-revolutionary, with democracy being seen as unrealizable, but this wasn't going to show up in the GG.

Jonathan was interested in the *casino* movement, involving reading groups that one had to join to get access to the books – opening up access to those who could not have afforded to buy them for themselves. Among other things they might take French journals.

He also noted the complications introduced by censorship. People might avoid using a word which they expected to upset the censor.

Hedwig thought that the question of who was able to read was very important. Research suggests that in 1800, literacy rates were higher in Germany than in France. GG tends not to keep the literacy issue in mind.

Steve countered that the practice of reading out loud was widespread, in France even in villages.

Theo wanted to return to the subject of repression. It was possible that democracy achieved its greatest prominence as a subject of suspicion by the police. One might wonder what their image of democracy was.

Beth noted that the state had a habit of targeting students. The Carlsbad decrees did not quickly fall from use.

Iain thought that 'demagoguery' was more common as a negative term than 'democracy'.

Franz didn't think that 'democracy' was a forbidden term. Metternich for example used it He thought it would be interesting to compare different translations of the Declaration of the Rights of Man, to see what words people chose to use in different circumstances. Printers sometimes hid behind the notion that certain things had appeared in error.

Susanne said that regulators might discriminate between different audiences for the same works. The Post Office directive said that it was acceptable for learned people to subscribe to radical newspapers. In fact, they were quite widely delivered: it was difficult to control such things.

Mark H said active censors could produce differences in coverage. He wondered what censors were doing in the 1850s. Whatever it was, it's not obvious that it had a great impact in practice. In Bavaria

there was censorship, but very few people were fined – the 'disciplinary effect' was probably achieved if at all by the requirement to deposit a copy of the paper. .From the 1840s he thought there was a switch from covering politics in German states to increasingly covering other states

Jean-Michel noted that James Brophy had written about the limits of censorship.

On the subject of cultural cross-overs, he noted that 'economic societies' in provincial towns might bring together civil servants and relatively ordinary local people. He noted also that the phrase *Allgemeine Wohl,* common good or general welfare, was a standard phrase in a cameralist context.

Jonathan noted that press reporting on what was going on elsewhere could spread ideas, eg the Czechs were very interested in reports of Daniel O'Connell's Irish 'monster meetings'

Iain said that he had done some work on Rotteck's support for Polish emigres. He talked to Poles, and also to Lafayette. His ideas about democratic monarchy were formulated in the context of such international exchanges.

Jasper noted that not all reading societies were progressive. Much might depend on who their leaders were.

Andreas wondered what significance we would see in it starting as a learned word and then moving out, if we could establish that pattern.

Joanna said that by the 1840s the Chartists weren't just picking up a word, but a whole package of ancient world cultural references, which they clearly prided themselves of deploying: the cultural display was part of the point. She thought that thinking about the sociology of word use was potentially an important corrective to a focus just on the raw incidence of words and semantic patterns.

3. Democracy in active politics 1: to 1815

Before the Revolution:

Before the French revolution, what we have found in other regions we've studied is that the word was used in various ways in active political life, in a manner that was informed by its ancient associations, but related to contemporary institutional arrangements and concerns – though we don't think that it became a political watchword, or that any elaborated discourse about the politics of the moment gave it an important and sustained place. A recent account which somewhat overstates the importance of this family of words in mid-seventeenth-century English debate, but does at least provide plenty of examples of their use, is Cesare Cuttica and Marku Peltonen eds, *Democracy and Anti-Democracy in Early Modern England* (2019).

Relatively common ways of using democracy and related speech forms included:

- as an element in a mixed system of government, whether in a national or urban context
- as one possible form of republic; or as effectively a variant on or synonym of 'republic', framing discussions about how to orient government to the promotion of the common good

- in either of those contexts, as a set of practical institutional arrangements, probably involving ordinary people being admitted to positions of power, perhaps as deputies, or by election
- as a pattern of political behaviour, involving demagogues, tumultuous crowds and disorder – perhaps leading by one or another route to tyranny
- as a section of the population, correlate of 'the aristocracy'

GG suggests that the first four meanings at least were to be found in Germany before the Revolution, and (from the eighteenth century) were sometimes applied to modern states, esp Swiss cantons or the Netherlands – but says that they appear chiefly in learned texts, and mostly at the level of theory.

The question we'd like to put is,

- Does that claim survive testing against a greater variety of texts than the GG contributors consulted? Can we now find more examples than they found of the words being used in commentary on ongoing or recent German events, or in the cut and thrust of public life?

- If so, is it possible to distinguish variations in use by time or place? GG cites a couple examples of their use in the context of city affairs, but was that unusual? We would also be interested to know more about how such words were employed within the Swiss confederation – work Swiss historians apparently haven't done (they were certainly employed in Geneva).

- If these words figure, was that especially at particular junctures or in discussion of particular incidents? If there are incidents that look like points where one might have expected to find them used if anywhere – when estates were being uppity, or some 'demagogue' did emerge – what other words were used instead? How about vernacular equivalents, *Volksregierung, Volksherrschaft* or the like: were they ever used in such contexts?

How did the French Revolution change patterns of use?

C1789-95: In France itself, the word doesn't seem to have been used much, or with very positive connotations, in the early years of the revolution – sovereignty of the people and republic did more conceptual work, except in particular contexts (eg the Cordeliers Club); Robespierre and St Just both framed positive thoughts around it, but apparently rarely, and then gave the impression of being motivated as much as anything by a concern defuse its negative charge. Cognate words, especially democrat and democratic, were more widely and more positively used, from the earliest days of the revolution, to convey opposition to privilege and 'aristocracy' (though 'aristocracy' was probably more commonly invoked, negatively, than 'democracy' was positively). In that connection, democracy-related words acquired a cluster of up-to-date connotations: connoting a lifestyle, and an array of social and political commitments, and these words caught on and were used positively in similar ways in some circles in Britain and the United States also. Though the word was also used even more widely and insistently in these places to denounce the revolution and all its works, and to suggest that modern democracies would fail as ancient ones had.

In this context, GG's suggestion that the word was often associated with criticism of the revolution in Germany at this time seems plausible. Still, we think there might be more to say about positive

appropriations by so-called 'jacobins' in the German-speaking world. And what about the Rhineland? GG cites Fichte identifying himself as a democrat – if only in 1799 and in private correspondence (Mark Philp also found the term more used by sympathisers at the time in unpublished than in published sources). We wouldn't be surprised to find even among so-called jacobins denunciations of aristocracy being more common than endorsements of democracy.

1795-1800: in the course of the 90s, the word and its cognates also acquired new political-institutional meanings: under the Directory, 'democrats' in France championed 'representative democracy', and it became increasingly common in various circles not to contrast but to equate democracy and representation (though one could still champion some forms of representative institution while denouncing 'democratic' variants). We have the impression that the word had somewhat more currency among French sympathisers in satellite states – the Batavian Republic, the Helvetic Republic, various north Italian republics – than in France itself during the later 90s, connoting in these sister-republic contexts sometimes a political and institutional, sometimes a social project. Overall the word acquired new significance and new associations – but wasn't generally officially avowed, and continued at the same time to carry many negative connotations and to be a good attack-word.

How did these things play out in the German-speaking world? GG reports Wieland writing of representative democracy in 1798, and of various more positive statements about it following the peace of Basel (notably from Schlegel and Görres; also Wagner 1804 associating it with the freedom to exercise talents). What was particular or different about how these themes were developed in different parts of the German-speaking world?

Susanne, kicking off discussion, said she would look at the period prior to the French revolution more broadly, and then specifically at the German newspaper press.

She had two main points to make about the prior period

- About how educated people talked about democracy. This was usually with reference to specific places, such as the Netherlands, Swiss cantons, Poland and Wurttemberg – the implication being that the term was not closely defined. It was not impossible for people to define themselves as living in a democratic system: Randolph Head found this in seventeenth-century Switzerland, and students of Peter Blickle have found the term in use with reference to specific forms of self-government. Insofar as that was true, it was definitely not merely a learned word. It was used also in the mining industries in Alpine regions to make claims.
- On its role in the German newspaper press. During the first French republic, there term didn't pop up much in newspapers – probably b ecause what was happening didn't correspond to established uses. When the revolution transformed for example Alsace and Mainz, more common keywords were freedom and republic. Democracy hadn't yet taken on a new meaning. A vast range of opinions was in play, for which 'anarchy' seemed a better description. Even radicals struggled with the concept. But many 'Jacobins' moved on to advocate more radical practices, and in this context after 1796 they came to conceive of themselves as 'democrats', continuing to use that name through to the 1830s. Indeed, some of their newspapers functioned until the 1850s and 60s.

Hedwig said that she hadn't worked on sources prior to the French revolution. In the period of 'Prussian reforms', *Selbstregierung* or suffrage was used to increase *Gemeinsinn,* spirit of community

(Hardenberg). In constrast to Stein, Hardenberg favoured developing the central state, and talked about its potential role in increasing *Gemeinsinn*, a spirit of community. Von der Marwitz, Hardenberg's critic, accused him of restricing freedom; . Similarly, for example, with the planter aristocracy in the U.S., but also with ordinary white U.S. citizens, freedom meant for von der Marwitz and other Junckers one's own freedom and privileges, which they defended against others (the farm laborers in Prussia or the blacks in the U.S.). Hardenberg countered these ideas with a central state with equal citizens. That is why the constitution was so important to him.

Franz wanted to stress the cosmopolitan dimension of the French revolutionary moment. Marc Belissa observed that when the French annexed territory, this was initially in the service of a universalist project. Sieyes was the first to suggest that constitutional justice might properly act as a check on democratic and republican systems: he thought that this was an under-examined theme. This didn't sound like oriental despotism.

Andreas wondered if there was a split between 'democracy' and 'representation' in this period. Even reactionary governments endorsed some forms of representation post war, if partly with an eye to relieving fiscal problems.

Mark H said that he just had questions. He wondered if there was a big difference between experience and attitudes in French-occupied and other territories. He thought an idea of the time was that democracy might make the state-system stronger. Gentz, however, used the state system to crush democracy.

Theo said that it wasn't easy to gauge the relative strength of different positions in a debate. He thought that it could be useful to look at the tone of apologetic discourse: which challenges did commentators take most seriously? In relation to newspapers, he thought that historians were often tempted to look at editorials, which purveyed a form of learned discourse. But we should also be interested in simple reports of what was happening. Also at what crowds called for when they were shouting. He had found uses of democracy in slogans shouted on streets: for example in the form of cries like We are the people! What was then interesting was how newspaper editors interpreted this.

General discussion

Susanne said that there was a notion at the time that constitutions were needed to contain democracy, to keep it in check. Constitutions were national, but always had a strong cosmopolitan dimension.

Franz agreed. He thought that this applied down to 1848. He noted also the idea that military service entitled people to the franchise. Comparisons were made with Rome.

Steve was struck that GG seemed to rely heavily on R.R. Palmer's account of early references to democracy. Palmer distinguished five different meanings of democracy, but thought that they were all connected.

There was some discussion as to whether in a German context 'democracy' implied German unification.

Susanne said that in the Rhineland the challenge was to find a German route to achieving what had happened in France. The experience of French occupation had not been inspiring. The French army didn't really take 'sister republics' seriously, but simply wanted them to provide resources for war.

Local Germans thought that they were more capable than the French of instituting a republic, having previously been more accustomed to freedom than the French had been. They were pragmatic about working within the circumstances in which they found themselves.

Avi wondered whether different experiments with representation filtered into different understandings of democracy.

Susanne thought that Rhineland radicals' top priority was to establish some form of representation. They were prepared to work with many variants, including adaptations of older forms.

Franz noted that in Arndt's translation of Sieyes, he used the phrase *Darstellung Verfassung* (representative constitution).

Susanne said that the American revolution was retrospectively reinterpreted through the lens of the French revolution. Many late 18th and early 19th century German intellectuals held that democracy/republicanism could flourish only in small states; therefore confederations were needed rather than large states.

Theo picked up on the theme of the citizen in arms. He thought that it was important to establish in relation to what themes people invoked this ideal. One was unity. A point of having citizen militias was so as to be able to act against eg brigands or rabbles and preserve public order without needing a centralized army – but it also made it possible to imagine opposing a federal army.

Cody was interested in the idea of people becoming self-fashioning democrats. An example was the Hungarian liberal Ferenc Kazinczy (1759–1831) writing 'Ich bin sans-culotte' in a letter to the Hungarian Jacobin József Hajnóczy (1750–1795) in the early 1790s, reflecting not only the multilingual character of communication, but also the reception of the ideals of the French Revolution in many different corners of Europe. He went on to suggest that we look for ideas related to *Isonomia*—a term used for the ideal of equality before the law, as brought up in the earlier parts of the GG—and that it may have appeared in different contexts rather than "democracy".

Beth thought that a German imperial dimension had so far been missing from the discussion. That mattered in the Palatinate and SW Germany specifically. The French were perceived as troublemakers.

Joanna noted that the phrase 'military democracy' was one in which democracy was most often used in the British Parliament around 1800, the heyday of national defence volunteering in the face of French invasion threats. The phrase provided a concept to think with: different things were asserted about it.

There was some discussion of democracy in relation to organisations: whether people made efforts to operationalize the concept of 'democracy' *within* them.

Susanne said this question did arise in relation to *sociétés populaires,* which struggled to develop a conception of their own role and workings.

There was some discussion as to when Germans came to be thought incapable of self-transformation. **Hedwig** thought that this happened in the twentieth century. **Mark H** noted that in 1848-9 even moderate liberals called themselves revolutionaries.

Iain said that he was struggling to say how the kinds of theorizing writing that he worked on fitted in with German Jacobins. Sieyes was a theorist of representative systems. Isaac Nakhimovsky says that Kant was the German Sieyes. Reidar Maliks discusses Kant's critics, who may have been more

representative of widespread patterns of thought. A later figure who supported democracy in Germany was the military figure and writer Wilhelm Rüstow Wilhelm Rüstow - Wikipedia, who linked his defence of militias to a defence of republican democracy.

Session 4: 1800-1840

4. Democracy in active politics 2: 1800-40s

1800-15: our impression is that though Napoleon did not disavow democracy, nor did he proselytize for it. We think that in this era, its use dwindled across the board.

Was it used positively by any German-speaking contemporaries in the context of any of the reform initiatives of the period (other than in Hardenburg's often cited formulation)? GG cites David Hansemann 1834 on Prussian reforms having democratic effects, but were they discussed in those terms at the time? What happened in the Rhineland? GG suggests that Arndt invoked democracy against Napoleon 1814. Was it employed at all in the context of the 'wars of liberation'? We wonder also how it figured in German-Swiss political discourse at this time, eg around the reconfiguring of the Swiss Confederation.

1815-30. Such semantic space as positively-connoted 'democracy' had ever managed to occupy in the previous generation was in the 'Restoration' era, we think, commonly colonized instead by so-called 'liberal' values and aspirations. Some liberals were relatively sympathetic to what some might then have recognized as democratic aspirations (eg in Spain, some parts of Latin America); by contrast, others, notably in France, defined liberal approaches to politics as decidedly *not* democratic, and all the better for that, though well suited to a democratic, or post-privilege, form of *society*. The word seems to have had some currency in a secret-society milieu, as the name for a radical alternative to autocracy and privilege; Buonarroti championed it; Italian Carbonari sometimes secretly endorsed it. But by and large it wasn't a term that even Carbonari and their ilk pushed to the fore when they wanted to attract a broader following; they were more likely to champion 'liberty'.

GG suggests (in section VI, so later in the exposition than one might expect) that German cpnstitutional debates of the Restoration era did produce formulations around monarchy, aristocracy and democracy, and how these might be conceptualized and positioned in relation to one another. Also Hegel at least contrasted corporate representative institutions with representative democracy, which he associated with the indiscriminate representation of individuals. We wonder whether in the context of such discussions, liberals were sometimes moved to defend democracy, or whether they too tended to define themselves against it? And did radical nationalists appeal to the primitive democracy of proto-German tribes, or did such accounts develop later?

1830-40s. In France, at least, 'democracy' doesn't seem to have been a watchword of the 1830 revolution (nor was it a few years later when liberal forces triumphed in Spain and Portugal) – but was that also the case in south German states and the Swiss confederation?

By contrast, it did come into more frequent use in the aftermath of 1830 revolutions, in both France and Britain, being used by radicals of various stripes to critique the liberal order. Some of these radicals were Catholics: Daniel O'Connell in Ireland and Lamennais and others in France. Then from 1835, the publication of the first volume of Alexis de Tocqueville's *De la démocratie en Amérique* (Ger. trans Leipzig, 1836) contributed to making democracy a talking point. Liberals, whatever their reservations about democracy, often agreed with Tocqueville that it was the zeitgeist; the important

question in that context was how to orient oneself in relation to it; what to do about it; how to ensure that its advent was as benign as possible. Through the 30s and 40s, critiques of liberalism increasingly focused on 'the social question', and 'democracy' acquired new content through that association.

We'd be interested to hear about the extent to which any of these lines of thought were taken up in Germany, and by who in what contexts.

GG makes several suggestions about developments in this era (probably mainly post-1830, though possibly starting earlier). It suggests that the phrase 'representative democracy' acquired more currency around this time; that a 'democratic principle' was conceptualized as being potentially at work in constitutional and institutional developments, shaping their changing character without necessarily being expressed in full-blown 'democracy', and that it was coming to be argued that monarchy and democracy were reconcilable: monarchy could absorb some democratic principles. (It may be that invocations of a 'monarchical principle' as a key to German constitutional developments encouraged conceptualization of an alternative or complementary 'democratic principle': we'd be interested to know more about how common a phrase that was) GG also suggests that it became more common at this time to historicise democracy, in any or all of the following terms: it had characterized the proto-political systems of German tribes; it had been extinguished with the rise of 'feudalism'; it was set fair to be the political form of the future, to which historical development was tending. GG also suggests (later, section VI) that these years saw the development of a case about the unsuitability of democracy for German circumstances (though if one argument as suggested is that it was only well suited to small states, one might have thought some German states would have qualified). Also that the phrases social democracy and social democratic caught on in Germany from the 1830s, and that it became more common to suggest that mere political democracy was insufficient. The binary political/social emerged in discourse in various European languages at this time, Germany among others, it seems. Use of the German *Verfassung/Verwaltung* binary to argue that democracy as *Verfassung* was insufficient unless the *Verwaltung* dealt effectively with the social (as reported by GG) may have been a more distinctively German formulation.

- We'd be interested to hear more about how any of these ideas were being deployed by political actors seeking to advance particular political goals.

Also more specifically:

- To what extent and in whose hands did 'democracy' come to be associated with universal suffrage – which GG suggests happened around this time?
- How did it figure in discourses about 'individualism' and 'socialism'?
- GG tends to look forward to its adoption by urban and industrial workers' movements, but what of rural 'social questions'? If a vision of history in which feudalism had extinguished democracy was gaining currency, was democracy also represented as challenging 'feudalism' in the present?

Democracy seems to have been endorsed by some in Baden especially. What were their reference points, and how well were their efforts known, and how regarded, elsewhere in the German-speaking world? Did political lexicons differ significantly between different Germanophone states/political cultures? GG quotes Heinrich von Gagern 1838 suggesting that democratic principles had proceeded further in south German states, but doesn't have anything much to say about state-specific political discourses.

The 1830s also saw the word catch on within transnational émigré circles, to distinguish some more radical members of that milieu, perhaps partly under the inspiration of the foundation of the 'Polish Democratic Society'. How was the word used by German political exiles and did they help to shape opinion at home?

Finally, the 1820s and 30s also saw the development of historical study and reflection on the French Revolution. To what extent did German-speakers engage with this? In what sorts of ways was 'democracy' conceptualized in this context?

Andreas said that his experience of putting 'Demokratie' into a German data-base of newspapers [Zeitpunkt.nrw (https://zeitpunkt.nrw/), a relatively new database with a focus on the Rhineland and Westphalia, though – interestingly enough – omitting some of the Catholic/ultramontane newspapers.was that the word was more common in this form than were Germanic equivalents, such as *Volksherrschaft*; it appeared more in this period than before; but was still not a very 'current' term, not appearing in every issue or even every year. It was relatively more common in the more highbrow *Kölnischer Zeitung*. For the most part, it was something that happened abroad, or in the past, or it figured in relatively abstract political analysis. In that context, it often figures as part of a triptych: monarchy, aristocracy, democracy, among which monarchy was the most comfortable and democracy the most challenging. It was not linked to representative bodies, or used in connection with calls for annual parliaments or elections.

It is first mentioned in a long speech in Paris reported 15 March 1803, on divorce, polygamy etc.

It is possible, however, that the underlying algorithm of the data-base might be skewing results.

He'd also consulted another database on Austrian newspapers (anno; https://anno.onb.ac.at/anno-suche#searchMode=simple&from=1); in this database, the term occurs only in learned journals during the period **Theo** said that the activities of the secret societies need more exploration. An attempt is underway to find funding to reconstruct the archives of the Bundeszentralbehörde in Frankfurt (an international office of secret police coordination, a kind of Interpol avant la lettre); this might enable some new work and insights.

He said that on reading the GG entry he had been struck by the ways in which it illustrated the historicization thesis: Koselleck's idea that in the course of the Sattelzeit things came to be located in a story of change over time. From relatively static Aristotelian categories, a story developed about a move towards democracy. That story also informs the GG text itself, with the use of terms like 'still', 'finally'.

In relation to liberalism and democracy, the thesis in the article is that they overlapped, and were sometimes almost synonymous. Then from 1848 they became contrasting party names – but this development is described as if it was inevitable; something that was bound to happen. It's suggested that the failure of the revolution was in some part due to this split. Yet in fact between the lines of this account one can see that objectives were more varied than that, and can't easily be distinguished into political vs social. Some for example had religious goals: the Lichtfreunde movement, which was enlightenment-adjacent, wanted separation of church and state. Then in rural regions feudal dues were an issue.

Susanne said that the Hambachfest should be approached in that way too. People might talk about democracy and yet have very different objectives.

Hedwig agreed. Her searches in south German newspapers suggested that the term 'democracy was not very common, and when it did appear it referred to something strange and far away. This changed a bit during the 1830s, but more in the 1840s. People did not routinely connect parliamentarism or elections with 'democracy', and it's hard to see that it was inevitable that that link would be forged. She thought that it was forged with the rise of mass elections in the 1840s and again after 1870. But even then the two weren't strongly equated until after the First World War.

She thought that links were made between 'nation' and 'democracy'. Leah Greenfield suggested that democracy was born from a sense of nationality. She thought that that link became stronger through the nineteenth century. The equation of 'nation' and 'people' made the link to 'democracy'. Also the nation was associated with equal citizen rights. Nation increasingly came to connote Germany rather than individual states. Pressure for unification was often directed against princes who opposed it, but the unification movement wasn't in principle anti-monarchical.

Mark H thought that the social question tended to be conceptualized in this period in very local terms– or alternatively very universal terms, as in French debates and by Hegel and Marx, when very grand accounts of economic change over time were constructed. That helps to explain why it was hard to knit social democracy and political reform together, because recipes for political change tended to be national, whereas social issues were conceptualized in ways that made them either too small and particular or too large and general for national governments to be able to engage with them.

In some ways it was puzzling that people did want to be part of a larger state. The newspaper press was still very local; newspapers didn't cross state boundaries much. The *Kölnische Zeitung* was one of the largest, and that had a circulation of only about 17,000 copies. Correspondence was important in keeping people informed partly because newspapers had such a limited range. Was there a pan-German network of democrats/reformers during the Vormärz? He thought not. When delegates headed for Frankfurt, they didn't already know each other. He thought the solution to the riddle lay in the existence of the German Confederation. It existed, but was thought to be imperfect, so the question was how to change it.

Franz said that he thought that the article argued that cyclical patterns of political change were replaced by linear development. But in fact patterns were more complex. Reactions to change produced complex effects. The Habsburgs responded to popular sovereignty also by reinventing their realm as a bulwark against Napoleonic universal monarchy. Napoleon adopted both the latter and plebiscitary Caesarism. Nations were very heterogeneous. Religion was important. GG laid much weight on Gervinus' Georg Gottfried Gervinus - Wikipedia vision of democracy as a Protestant project. What was happening here was really a response to attempts to hijack Enlightenment and progress for a state-confessionalist project. The Lichtfreunde and the Deutschkatholiken [not sure if we've got this right] reacted against this, arguing for the separation of church and state. They emphasized the centrality of the community of believers, and called for free science and free speech. In this context, Catholic sources were tapped to counter Protestantism's self-styled monopoly on individual freedom.

Joanna said that she wanted to make five points:

- She agreed with Theo that we should not essentialise liberalism and democracy. They did not stand in a consistent relationship to one another, but might be redefined in relation to each other.

- She agreed with Mark H that the relationship between political and socio-economic projects was uncertain. It's not clear whether or how people thought that gaining political power would address social and economic problems. In Britain, the Chartists wanted manhood suffrage, but it's not so clear whether and how they thought a more democratic state would act upon society.
- Also his point that identities were not brought to Frankfurt but forged there was interesting. Arguably 'democrat' was an identity forged there that allowed people to orient themselves among a large group with diverse world views. The same sort of thing happened in exile communities, another bedding ground for democratic identity.
- There was nothing inevitable about nineteenth-century unificatory projects: whether they would succeed or how far they would attempt to homogenise diverse parts. In the nineteenth-century UK, there were only quite limited attempts to homogenise the parts.
- Democracy was clearly not only a Protestant project, given the influence of Lamennais in shaping a Catholic version of democratic aspiration.

Steve asked Theo to clarify his point about liberalism and democracy.

Theo said he thought that the spirit of the treatment of this period in GG was 'where did we go wrong?'. A split between political/liberals and social/democrats was identified as a problem. He thought that it was important to gain more understanding of the 1830s, and decide if there was such a split, or how else we might understand political divides and tensions.

Jean-Michel agreed that after 1815, people positioned themselves in relation to specific issues, such as constitutions and parliaments, not liberalism or democracy. That perhaps changed in the 1830s, when Russia was assuming a different posture: crushing first the Decembrist and then the Polish uprising. There was then a sense that Russia stood for something different. But he didn't think that there were clear party lines. People get classified on the basis of one-off things they did, eg in the 1840s Werner Siemann was wandering around the Tiergarten in Berlin and signed a petition by German Catholics, and therefore gets labelled a liberal. He also thought it important to distinguish different regional experiences: the Rhineland must have been different from East Prussia. Or take the case of the Hanseatic cities. Bremen gets classed as a conservative city, but that was in the context of a local republican tradition; the city was oriented to the US, as we can see in the writings of Wilhelm Kiesselbach Wilhelm Kiesselbach (Schriftsteller) – Wikipedia [and see Maishak, *German Merchants in the Nineteenth-Century Atlantic*]. Heinrich Heine said in the 1830s that emancipation was the task of the century, but emancipation from what?

Mark P said that it was important not to think in terms of a sequence of rights emerging, first legal and civil, then political, then social. This is often said in the literature, but it's palpably false. He also thought we should take into account the rethinking of the French Revolution in the 1830 and 40s, with major studies and the publication of archives, making it possible to develop a more complex view of those events.

Cody said that the liberal/democratic divide did not always help to make sense of nation-building projects, which might have a mainly cultural identity. Thus the example of the Croatian Illyrian project (around the 1820s, associated with the work of Ljudevit Gaj (1809–1872)), associated with the South Slavic linguistic context; "democracy" was not a central concept in the discourse there, rather notions of autonomy or education appeared, which—in retrospect—would later comprise key elements in constructing a democratic, civic ethos in East Central Europe.

Franz said that religious, social and political equality in some senses competed: the pursuit of one could suffocate others. Conservatives told stories about the risks involved: see Hirschman's *Rhetoric of Reaction* (1991)

Susanne noted the existence of older notions of nationhood, involving in effect fraternity among people with common origins or language. Nationality so conceived could easily co-exist with allegiance to other entities such as dynasties, empires, religion or estates. During the age of revolutions, ideas about nationhood converged on ideas about sovereignty. But it remained unclear how to position nationhood in relation to other systems of allegiance. We might profitably ask, what problem is democracy meant to solve? She suggested that the new imperial history had helped to destroy some older master narratives. It was now understood that nations and empires were not antithetical. There were attractions in being an imperial subject, which might be greater than those of 'democracy'.

Jonathan said that he had looked at the Austrian National Library website, and found there spikes in references to democracy around 1830 and 1870. In each case it was used mainly to discuss other people's revolutions. From the Habsburg point of view, the question was how to incorporate the people while maintaining order.

Joanna said that indeed the triumph of 'democracy' was not inevitable, and rather than present it in that way it was better to ask what those who invoked it wanted it to do for them.

Christos noted that the Mediterranean revolutions of the 1820s also affected Germany and central Europe. Philhellenism was an attractive movement partly because it brought together religion and politics. 400 Germans went to Greece. Southern Germany, esp Bavaria, was the most Philhellenic region. The Greeks devised three quite radical constitutions. There were debates about whether Greece could serve as a model.

Joanna said it was also at this point that interest grew in ancient Greece as a model for democracy.

Hedwig said that ultimately political inclusion could not take place until there was more social inclusion – as she had argued in her books.

Iain wondered what was going on in Germany in relation to Napoleon. In both France and Britain in the 1830s, Napoleon was reinvented as an icon of democracy. Did this happen in Germany? Bonapartism wasn't necessarily anti-democratic, but rather offered a particular take on democracy. Louis Napoleon said democracy requires a leader.

Susanne said she wasn't sure that there was a general 'German' context. There were different perceptions reflecting in part different experiences of post-Vienna reaction. In the Palatinate, reaction came after 1830. Napoleon could be seen as having been by contrast a modernizer. But she wasn't sure that much work had been done on this.

Jonathan said that in Austria people were more likely to look to Joseph II than to Napoleon as a model, though in the 1850s and 60s some historians started to write about him.

Beth said that the Westphalian case was worth considering. Jurists there tended to like the French model, though implementation of the Napoleonic code hadn't got very far and hadn't delivered what they had hoped for from it. But it was different in other Rhinebund states, eg the Palatinate.

Steve said that Hardenberg's advocacy of democratic principles in a monarchical government in his *Rigaer Denkschrift* (1807) was Bonapartism in a nutshell.

Theo thought that this brought us back to the idea that this period was marked by inclusion-oriented revolutions. In a long perspective, the problem was how to include excluded groups within the state/nation. In that context, it mattered what excluded groups themselves wanted. As he saw it, a key argument of Hedwig's book was that mattered to them was often not the vote.

Hedwig said yes, interest in political inclusion had to wait on certain forms of social inclusion, via eg newspapers. Also the removal of other much larger concerns, like famine, before they could feel that they belonged to a greater whole.

Theo said that indeed it was important to take the viewpoint of those actors into account. If they responded to ideas of democracy, it was with their own most pressing concerns in mind. But we should be open minded about what those were, and not coopt people into our own narrative about the coming of what we understand by democracy.

Franz agreed, said we should not write history in terms of anticipation. Early statements about the need to include more people, from Hardenberg or Lorenz von Stein, might be concerned more with general welfare than with political rights.

Susanne said she thought we were heading back towards issues raised by Steve's response to Iain (that Hardenberg's idea that you could have democratic principles in a monarchical system was Bonapartism in a nutshell). The question was what kind of government was needed to realise a particular vision of sovereignty (one in which its function was to serve the people).

Steve agreed that the idea of popular sovereignty was developed as a critique of eighteenth-century forms of rule. What remained challenging and problematic was the idea that you might have a democratic *government* with a popular sovereign.

Iain noted that not everyone endorsed the idea of democratic monarchy. See in this connection what was going on in Göttingen, and notably Roscher's 1842 commentary on the life and works of Thucydides. This came at the end of a creative period of scholarship on the ancient world in Göttingen, in which the ancient world was seen as directly relevant to an understanding of the modern world. These scholars wanted to resurrect an Aristotelian as opposed to a Rousseauian model of democracy. For example, Heeren Arnold Hermann Ludwig Heeren - Wikipedia criticized Rousseau's separation between sovereignty and government; saw this as responsible for the rise of Napoleon, and as setting the scene for the idea of democratic monarchy.

Joanna asked about what was made of an executive/legislative distinction in this context.

Steve said there was a crucial difference between Britain and France here. In Britain, the quest for 'democracy' focused on the control of the legislature. Whereas in France, legislation was seen as an act of sovereignty; 'democracy' pertained rather to executive power, government, and administration, that is, how the business of ruling was to be managed.

Session 5: Democracy in active politics 3: era of the 1848 revolutions

Concerned as it is especially with the development of enduring new meanings, GG gives less attention than one might expect to the 1848-51 era, when the word seems to have exploded in use in the German-speaking world, though it acknowledges that these years saw the development within Germany as elsewhere of explicitly democratic organisations, including 'parties' contending for political influence.

So we think that there's potentially much more to be said about the new currency and meanings that the word and its cognates acquired, including programmatic content, and we'd be interested to hear more about that. The French helped to give the word a new impetus when they formally dubbed their new republic 'democratic'. The revolutionary era also presented observers with all kinds of things that corresponded to existing ideas about democratic phenomena. The word rose in prominence as a slogan, but also developments provided those either sympathetic to or suspicious of democracy with lots of new evidence to grapple with. Those who wanted to employ the word as either a positive or negative slogan also had to find ways of conveying its perhaps changing meaning and significance to new audiences.

Developments in Habsburg lands and Switzerland get little attention from GG at this juncture, but they're also of interest, both in themselves and as they were understood within other territories of the German Confederation. And vice versa: what was being said in other German-speaking territories about the character and fortunes of 'democratic' forces in Germany?

Mark H said that German efforts in 1848 were often seen in retrospect as impractical, overly academic, and a failure. But we need to focus on what practical questions they sought to solve (and which they did solve), and in what lineages discussions of this period stood.

He said that that 'democrats' in this period more normally called themselves 'radicals'. He did not think that they cohered to form a single German group until this point – he agreed with GG on that. The circumstances of 1848 were also seen to require the formation of parties: Heinrich von Gagern Heinrich von Gagern - Wikipedia came away with the conviction that it was only at the head of a political party that one could have political influence. Democrats initially commanded the allegiance of about 15% of members of the Frankfurt Parliament. They were very well represented in political clubs. There were about 700 clubs in Prussia, of which about 250 were democratic and 300 liberal. They provided a venue for new ways of doing politics.

Their goal was to institute popular or (as they more commonly expressed it) national sovereignty. Julius Froebel Julius Fröbel - Wikipedia said that achieving this would transform society. They got their way in relation to the franchise: in the debate on what the Reich electoral law should be: manhood suffrage was agreed. On all other issues, they had to modify their position. They came to accept the need for a strong federal state, a *Bundestaat*, though that wasn't always what their supporters in their home territories wanted: Robert Blum Robert Blum - Wikipedia received many petitions for the retention of a Saxon monarchical state. How willing were democrats to allow checks and balances to limit what their opponents termed their 'parliamentary absolutism'? They were prepared to accept a monarch so long as he had no more than a suspensive veto. It wasn't and isn't clear how these constitutional questions related to broader issues. What were the implications of these political reforms for social questions? There were no constitutional articles guaranteeing social rights (cf France).

Theo said that it would be interesting to explore through databases the relative frequency of 'democracy' and 'democrat'. He would also be interested to know how much it featured in relation to militias. He is now working on a local history of 1848 in Halle, where, in the context of the hunger crisis of 1846-7 a *Bürgerwehr* was formed. It was later disbanded, but in 1848 there was interest in reforming it. One challenge was how to supply it with weapons, since not all members could afford them. Ultimately two different militias were formed; the more popular one called themselves Lancers and were identified as 'democrats' in critical accounts.

Susanne said that we had talked a lot about the legacy of the French revolution. She thought that GG failed to register the importance of other 1848 revolutions for concepts of democracy. News of these spread through mass media, text and images, and transnational networks developed including militia networks [say a tiny bit more to explain how that worked?, members of national militias worked together, helped each other in different national insureections or as political exiles; see Italian exiles in U.S., or Poles in France]. These presented people with choices in terms of how to identify themselves: gave them perhaps new options, or provided new perspectives on what might be possible. What was going on elsewhere in Europe made German reevaluate their own positions. One challenge for historians in this context is how to think about the specific role played by language. How were people's perceptions affected by the way in which they saw terms such as 'democracy' and 'democrat' used?

Hedwig said that she didn't have much to say about this, but she had looked at the *Aschaffenburger Zeitung* (SW Germany – city and district originally attached to Mainz, then 1810 to the Grand Duchy of Frankfurt, then part of Bavarian Franconia Aschaffenburg - Wikipedia). Before 1848, this paper was negative about democracy, but in 1848 became more positive, recognised a 'Democratic Principle'. Militias were everywhere, and were very important to male conceptions of citizenship. In 1867, the paper picked up on the legacy of 1848 and advocated associations and emancipation for women and workers.

Franz said that Habsburg history had been a major casualty of the rise of national history, because it had been compartmentalised. The states that would emerge after 1918 provided a framework which conditioned how this earlier period was understood. One corrective might be to look at mobile groups, such as students, artisans and soldiers, and how they connected Habsburg space. Historians had tended to mark recent anniversaries by looking at 'memories' of events, but it would be more useful for historians to consider past practices. He suggested that the formulation of constitutional proposals had the effect of politicizing the public sphere, to lasting effect. Among issues which didn't go away were the importance of associational life and the emancipation of women workers.

Andreas suggested that one thing that emerged at this time was an idea of democracy as a way of organizing political decision-making. The need to make choices probably varied in place to place, eg may not have been so great in rural areas, where there may have been a high degree of consensus. It was quite different in the Paulskirche, however. He thought there was a (related) question about the appropriate scale of analysis for approaching the events of 1848. How to relate what happened at the federal level to what was happening within individual states? Surprisingly few local representative bodies had to face new elections in this period. 1848 also confronted the political classes with a kind of reality check. They had to ask themselves, what does democracy really involve? Did it mean rolling back the police state, and in that context developing the role of local militias? Moreover, it remained important to address a traditional question: what happened in the course of the year to the enthusiasm evident at the start?

General discussion.

Jean-Michel suggested that contact with the people may have changed ideas about what democracy could be. He noted that the Frankfurt Parliament met over a longish period. It imposed a kind of planning blight on other states. In Bavaria certainly they thought they needed to wait and see what came out of that before attempting change locally. Only belatedly did they realise that in the end not much would come of it.

Andreas agreed – and at the end there turned out not to be much time left in which to do things; the top priority had to be to address the economic crisis.

Franz said that the need to set up elections forced the pace of change. It was necessary to make quick decisions about who got represented. In Austria, the Belgian constitution was used as a template, but that didn't answer all questions; the persistency of private law-informed ways of assessing and ascertaining one's right to be represented can e.g. by shown by monasteries' rights to vote and/or to representatives as "moral persons" under civil law in 1848..

Jonathan said that though the demos might be conceptualized as one group, it quickly emerged that in practice it was fragmented. In Austria, the estates were redefined from the top down.

Susanne said the concept of a top-down reform had limits. We also need to ask how people understood what was happening. And then elites responded to what was happening on the ground.

Hedwig said that elections had a unifying effect. At this point people did want to vote; several groups fought for their right to vote (like some women or "Unselbständige"), turn out was high, around 75%. Voting together also served as a part of nation building.

Mark H said that there were clearly many pressing challenges, including how far to go towards precipitating civil war. In his view, what the Paulskirche delegates managed to agree on wasn't always sufficiently stressed. They did agree on an electoral law and a constitution; it was the individual state governments that blocked that. They agreed on what the structure of the Bund should be: that was quite an achievement.

Theo thought that it was important to look at the technicalities of voting. He thought that voting was often indirect, and that although the franchise was broad, it was generally agreed that you had to be autonomous in order to have the vote. There were also assemblies other than the Frankfurt Parliament, including a kind of pre-Parliament. The process for choosing that was very ill-defined.

Mark H said yes voting was indirect, but the merits of alternative approaches were also discussed.

Cody suggested that another key concept at this time, which we should pause on, was that of the republic. That was a focus for discussion in Hungary for example, around the Revolutions of 1848/49. Although national representation had been curial, during 1848 bourgeois and even some representatives of peasant origin appeared more prominently. Some even recognized that this limited conception of the link between sovereignty and representation still did not go far enough: The Hungarian radical Mihály Táncsics (1799–1884), for example, wrote a dialogue in the style of Plato (i.e., as a Socratic dialogue) between a republican and a royalist about popular sovereignty in the aftermath of 1848. Táncsics sides with a republican sense of democracy as a positive social good, arising from a wide well of popular sovereignty including the peasantry (*Királyista és republikánus*, December 1851, published 1885); this was a relatively marginal view at the time in Hungary. In this period, the national question already mattered to intellectuals as well. The Bohemian historian František Palacký (1789–1876) argued that the Frankfurt Parliament was democratic in some sense, but that it would undermine Czech liberties preserved in the historic autonomies afforded to the Lands of the Bohemian Crown (Bohemia, Moravia, and parts of Silesia; see his idea of 'Bohemian state's rights', Ger.: *böhmisches Staatsrecht*, Cz.: *české státní právo*). For Palacký, national autonomies (or 'liberties') were fundamental for the creation and preservation of democracy: the Austrian Empire would preserve Bohemian autonomies; a German republic would rather subjugate Czechs to centralization.

Hedwig said that indirect voting was not uncommon then. She thought that people nevertheless did feel involved. Bells rang on election day, people decorated the polling stations. Elections were a great celebration for many. The right to vote at all was a big thing for many people.

Franz agreed that people were really excited about the constitution, and that it was the focus for a lot of celebration, e.g *Verfassungsbretzeln* and *Verfassungspolkas.* Proof of the pudding for Germa Premarch polonophilia was enfranchisement of and cultural rights for Poles (Wollstein, "Grossdeutschland"). The Bund was transformed from the fringes. Assemblies posed the question of what language should be spoken within them, given eg that Galicians didn't necessarily speak German, a topic that we re-encounter in today's multilingual parliamentary system such as India where all languages can be used in plenary sessions but only Hindi and English are recognized as media of translation.

Steve wanted further to develop the theme of the need to differentiate by place. He noted that presence of an extraordinary group of Germans living in Paris in this period: including Moses Hess Moses Hess - Wikipedia, Georg Herwegh Georg Herwegh - Wikipedia, Lorenz von Stein Lorenz von Stein - Wikipedia and Marx. They were all trying to think about democracy and engaged in a conversation about what a German democracy might look like. But he didn't know how much influence these discussions had – perhaps von Stein was influential. They did have an impact in France.

Mark H said that he thought they were probably accorded more significance in retrospect than they had at the time.

Hedwig wasn't sure about that. In the *Aschaffenburger Zeitung* she had found a long article about one such meeting in Paris, in which it was noted that Dr Marx had come from Belgium for the meeting. German songs had been sung.

Steve said this group were all essentially left Hegelians.

Iain had a question for Mark Hewitson's interpretation of 1848, especially his push back against an account that sees the Frankfurt Parliament as an idealistic failure. In 1850-1, when it was seen to have failed, people blamed a lack of leadership: no man had emerged to seize the moment. And Democrats were making this point. It was said that a new Wallerstein to lead a new revolution. **Joanna:** before there was a Bonapartist coup? **Iain:** exactly.

Mark H said it wasn't clear to him what more determined leadership could have achieved. How could such a leader have confronted a regular army?

Franz noted that Marx and Engels wrote of Slavs as grave-diggers of European democracy.

Jean-Michel wondered what German reformers thought about where sovereignty lay during their proceedings. It was not the case, as in France, that the monarch had quit, leaving a vacuum to be filled.

Jonathan said that the location of sovereignty was an issue those drafting a constitution had to confront. In that context, people might argue against the monarchical principle. But that left issues of government unresolved: who was to run the army?

Andreas said that he thought for most for most sovereignty lay with the monarch. There wasn't necessarily a clear story about how he had acquired it; it was just something that he had. Though of course post-Vienna reorganization of borders meant that lots of people were subjected to new monarchs. Occasionally one gets the sense at the local level that the location of sovereignty wasn't

entirely clear. In 1848, it wasn't in practice always clear where last instance power lay: if monarchs did call out the troops, would they respond?

Mark H thought that effectively the question was parked while a new constitution was being drawn up.

Hedwig thought that it was widely assumed that some form of constitutional monarchy would emerge.

Joanna thought that one of the features of the Restoration era was that it, even if monarchy was widely accepted, there was no very hard-edged account of the source of their power. The discourse of 'legitimacy' was sometimes yoked to ideas of some kind of divine sanction for the institution if not the person, but part of the point of the concept of 'legitimacy' was to position that concept as something central but ineffable. The challenge was how to explain what made Napoleon illegitimate: he was a crowned sovereign; what made it OK to depose him and deny rights to his heirs? One answer to that was that he was illegitimate because he didn't have the right ancestors: hereditary succession was exalted. But not all sovereigns were equally well placed to play that card. Another answer was more sociological: legitimacy was an ineffable cultural thing which he just didn't have: he was widely seen as a usurper. Conveniently, he had displayed his essential illegitimacy by his lack of respect for the public law of Europe, the intra-European legal order, by acting in a 'spirit of conquest'.

She thought that a challenge for democrats at this time was that they needed to be seen to be doing something other than precipitate a reign of terror. They had to show that it was possible for democrats to do normal politics. There had developed since the American and French revolutions an ideal-type revolutionary process, involving the setting up of a provisional government until a new constitution-based order could be brought into being. In 1848, revolutionaries repeatedly attempted to go through this process in the most pacific way they could manage. But what was in practice repeatedly shown was that you could go through these motions and still not end up with a durable outcome. That set the scene for the idea that maybe beyond that one needed some form of charismatic leadership. Though equally French experience showed that the wrong charismatic leader could derail things. So another possible conclusion was that it was hard to democratize states and one needed to develop a more local, associational, 'commune'-based approach.

Theo agreed that sovereignty and legitimacy were up in the air during the revolutions, but they were subsequently fairly effectively reasserted, with and following the suppression of the Rastatt mutiny [Baden Revolution - Wikipedia]

Mark H He said that he thought in discussion at the time the word 'legitimacy' didn't appear much; a more pervasive concept was 'legality'.

Andreas thought legitimacy was more and less a problem in different localities in the revolutionary context. Regimes that were already based on constitutions were less exposed. In 1849 he thought that the locus of sovereignty had become unclear, and this uncertainty found expression eg in tax strikes.

Franz said the challenge of legitimating monarchy varied depending on what sort of monarch you had. Austria had at this time in Ferdinand a monarch with special needs. Many German monarchs had originally been electors. Their claims to be monarchs were quite recent. In this context it came more easily to see monarchy as a form of delegated power. Monarchs could be expected to prove their worth by protecting the rights of the people.

Mark H said that there were elements of terror, it not exactly in the original French revolutionary mould, eg there were lynchings in the war in Hungary. Liberals were very keen to avoid anything that looked like the Committee of Public Safety.

Legitimacy could be a matter of following the protocols. When Blum went to Vienna, he found that he simply wasn't recognized because he was not believed to be a legitimate successor of confederal plenipotentiaries.

Susanne thought that it was obvious that sovereignty resided in the nation; what was problematic was identifying who was in charge and on what basis.

Franz and Jonathan didn't think that worked for Austria, since there were many nations. At most, it might be thought to lie in the people. He noted however that Austrian tracts on natural law did not invoke the Volk.

Joanna also didn't think this was self-evident. The great powers balked at constitutions which affirmed national sovereignty. The Spanish were told in the 1820s that if they changed their constitution (inherited from 1812) to remove that claim it would be much easier for them to find international acceptance.

Andreas said that in the German case too it wasn't clear what a nation was.

Susanne said, yes, but that was the point. It was certainly complicated in the German case, with several layers of German nationhood and sovereignty being divided between different levels and sub-nations.

Theo pointed to the example of the Duchies of Anhalt-Dessau, Anhalt-Köthen and Anhalt-Bernburg, some of which gained very liberal (or democratic) constitutions during the revolution exactly to ward off any integration into the much larger states. This type of democracy was thus local in nature and directed against attempts at higher-aggregated integration, not only at the national level (not the main problem) but especially into Prussia (the very big neighbor).

Susanne said that it was certainly right to emphasize the specificity of constitutions for particular states; the local matters hugely.

Session 6: Democracy in active politics 4: 1852-1870

In GG, this figures as a period of reaction against all the democracy-talk of 1848 and after, as a period when even liberals came to distance themselves from 'democracy' and it was largely left for the nascent social-democratic movement to appropriate.

If true, this seems to contrast with developments elsewhere – which it may have done. Our impression in Europe more generally is that the effect of the 1848 revolutions was to solidify democracy's move into the standard lexicon of active politics, if at a lower level than that which it had briefly attained during the revolutionary years. Though it's also generally true that the revolutions fuelled anxieties about democracy, on the right and the left. After all, the French Second Republic's experimentation with manhood suffrage, which many democrats had come to see as the natural vehicle for democracy, had not in the event promoted liberty, equality and fraternity, but instead opened the way to Louis Napoleon/Napoleon III, who not only ruled France autocratically but directed French forces to crush the Roman Republic. Despite these setbacks, what we think we see elsewhere is a widening in the spectrum of people willing to avow democracy; moreover, there

survived and developed an international loosely liberal-democratic movement, with Italians like Mazzini and Garibaldi emerging as international icons.

One conclusion some conservatives drew from the outcomes of 1848 was that conservatives need not fear democracy: it could underpin relatively strong-arm, anti-liberal forms of rule. Iain McDaniel has been interesting himself in that strand of German democratic discourse, not really acknowledged in GG. See his "Constantin Frantz and the Intellectual History of Bonapartism and Caesarism: A Reassessment." *Intellectual History Review* 28, no. 2 (2018): pp. 317-338. https://doi.org/10.1080/17496977.2017.1361218 and 'The Politics of Historical Economics: Wilhelm Roscher on Democracy, Socialism and Caesarism', *Modern Intellectual History: MIH* 15, no. 1 (2018): pp. 93-122. https://doi.org/10.1017/S1479244316000056.

There may be other strands in German democratic discourse that were important within this period that are also missing from GG. What do you think? Does GG tend to underplay the vigour and diversity of democratic discourse in this period because its contributors don't see much novelty I the content of these discourses, their main concern? GG suggests that national democrats were defeated in the context of unification, but up to that point hasn't said much about them or what they stood for.

We're also interested in a kindred concept that's mentioned more than once: *Selbstbestimmung.* Varieties of this term played an interesting role as linked to but often connoting something different from democracy in various places at this time. It was often associated especially with the refashioning of local government. GG reports Treitschke assessing Prussian *Selbstbestimmung* as like English self-government and more aristocratic than democratic. Did this word have distinctive currency in Prussia?

We wonder also how 'democracy''s fortunes and uses varied across different German-speaking polities; and in the context of significant constitutional and political changes in Habsburg lands. Our impression is that developments in Switzerland attracted much international attention from those interested in democracy as a political form during the third quarter of the century (GG mentions Treitschke visiting). We're interested in developments in Switzerland in their own right, but also in terms of how they figured in others' discourse.

Finally, the varying aptitudes of countries in different parts of the world for democracy seems to have become more of a talking point at this time, and we wonder what Germans had to say about that.

Hedwig said that she sees less of a crises of the 1860s and more a strengthening of the idea of the power of the people and that government relies on the people; by the last third of the 19th century, even conservative thinkers said that public opinion is central to government. So there was a collective sense that politics and civil life needed to involve the people and that, for some (not too many), signalled democracy. In the Reichstag of the North German Confederation, 'democracy' was rarely mentioned, but when it was, it was usually in positive terms It might be employed by liberals in defiant self-description: they associated it with progress. Alternatively it was associated with Bonapartism. Around 1870, many electorates were extended throughout Europe, universal male suffrage was introduced in Germany (as well as in the USA), many constitutions in Europe were liberalized, the Third Republic was established in France, etc. It's not a coincidence that the last legal restrictions on Jews were removed at the same sort of time. Moves in this direction were seen as inevitable; the only question was when. But "Bonapartism" was a possible direction of travel. In

1866, that was where Engels predicted that franchise extension would take Germany: towards Bonapartism as the true religion of the modern bourgeoisie. But after the first elections in the "Norddeutsche Bund", he wrote that this "Bonapartist" elections could not happen in Germany. What is important, however, is that the great inclusion of this period and the mass politicization were accompanied by brutal exclusions; racism flourished, anti-Semitism, also colonialism belongs here.

Franz noted that 1848 was followed by a period of neo-absolutism in the Habsburg lands. That came to an end in 1861, when both Austria and Hungary acquired elected legislatures. The first Austrian legislature consisted of delegates from the regional diets. The new system was built around new *Stände*. Later – under Taaffe, 1874 -- there was a move to enfranchise all male citizens, but dividing them into five *Stände.* A leading proponent of this was Steinbach Steinbach, Gustav (Gusztáv) (biographien.ac.at), a Hungarian-born Jew, a pupil of Lorenz von Stein's. The hope was to tap the unspoiled masses, those not corrupted by liberalism and individualism. It would be interesting to know more about what Austrians and Germans made of what had been going on in France. That had been little studied.

Susanne said that in general GG was dominated by Prussia. It didn't have much to say about the 'third Germany'.

Andreas said that he had compared references to monarchy and democracy in the database and found references to monarchy 10x as common, though perhaps one might have expected them to be still more dominant. He had also checked the usage 'our democracy', and found this from the late 1860s. It tended to be used by left liberals in the Rhineland to refer to their party.

Theo wondered what Germans made of French experience. Did they see Bonapartism as marking failure? And what did they make of the Swiss example? When the Catholic Church was reconstructed in Germany to support a more popular form of Catholicism this was sometimes described as a kind of democratization, though he's not sure exactly what word was used. By the later nineteenth century, it was possible for conservatives to think that democracy might provide support for them: the people could be effectively incorporated. But again he isn't sure to what extent 'democracy' was the word used.

Mark H said he was interested in why radicals joined the Fortschrittspartei or the Nationalverein, and collaborated with liberals in the *Landtage*. Karl Biedermann Friedrich Karl Biedermann - Wikipedia talked of 'oases' of political activity (eg Sachsen-Weimar) in the 1850s. One perhaps needed to take into account the effects of exile, whether internal or in Switzerland. It was as if they returned to the patterns of 1846-7. Liberals for their part were not very exercised about the suffrage question, and their willingness to accept a very broad suffrage aligned them with democrats. Their beef with Bismarck was constitutional.

General discussion:

Steve wanted to go back to Theo's point about democracy and the Catholic Church. Germans in Paris thought that Protestantism had played an important role in liberalizing France, but that ultimately one needed also to be able to bring Catholics on board. Among Catholics, Ozanam Frédéric Ozanam - Wikipedia thought that the role given to monarchs in relation to the church in the twelfth and

thirteenth centuries had left a problematic legacy. He was interested in developing a dialogue with German Catholics [meaning Catholics in Germany] But Comte questioned whether the Catholic, or any previously established religion, could fulfil the religious needs of a new democratized society. He therefore proposed his own, new mode of religious practice.

Franz commented on the Katholikenverein in Austrian lands whose goal was to have a free church in a free state, though they didn't get it. They said that citizens were molested both by the crozier and by the sword. The idea retained some toehold until the 1870s.

Jean-Michel had looked at a couple of newspapers, and also a satirical paper [the *Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung* and *Kladderadatsch*. He had found lots of references to 'democracy' in the 1850s and 60s, but from 1872 almost none. He thought that there was a real obsession with social democracy in the 50s and 60s. This was also an era of enthusiasm for social monarchy, eg in Bavaria. Social democracy has perhaps to be understood as an alternative to social monarchy.

Iain thought that the 1850s and 60s were marked by the emergence of the idea that there were distinct Germanic and 'Romanisch' democratic traditions. Some said that it was wrong for Bismarck to be trying to emulate Napoleon III, when he should have tried to develop a more Germanic model. One exponent of this view was Gustav Diezel Deutsche Biographie - Diezel, Gustav (deutsche-biographie.de) He defended individual liberty as against egalitarianism, which as he saw it might legitimate an omnipotent state. Mommsen's Roman History 1854-6 was seen by its critics as a Caesarist work, supporting democratic monarchy, but he himself disavowed Caesarism. Georg Friedrich Kolb Georg Friedrich Kolb – Wikipedia moved in a more democratic direction. He thought parliamentarism had limits, and that there was a role for plebiscites.

Susanne thought what whereas there had been some international agreement as to what democracy was about, between 1848 and 1871 this fell apart; national variants proliferated.

Jonathan wasn't convinced that there was agreement in 1848. Leopold von Thun Leopold, Count von Thun und Hohenstein - Wikipedia, Habsburg minister for culture 1849-50, said that Austria was not like France, the US or Britain, but would proceed in a distinctly Austrian way, which would involve reform by government. He wasn't sure if Austrians looked to Bismarck as a model: the impact of Germany on Austrian thinking was unclear to him. There was certainly interest in British internal governmental arrangements across both Germany and Austria: see thus Gneist, Redlich.

Franz said Thun was himself steeped in regional patriotism. He argued that aristocracy had a role at a local level. Levelling was not the way forwards. He tried to appropriate Tocqueville for Austrian purposes. The period saw questioning about whether, even if France indicated a very broad direction of travel, other countries needed to follow closely in her footsteps, i.e. whether France's current fate was their future.

[In response to my request for more detail on Tocqueville, he has subsequently written: The reception of Tocqueville in East Central Europe is often glossed over, but quite fascinating! Alas there is no overarching comparative study. Thun-Hohenstein had an extensive, quote florid and ramified correspondence with Tocqueville whom he had first met in Paris in 1834 (but Thun also deeply steeped in Nassau senior's works on the factory act as well as in his principles of national economy and entertained a long correspondence with James Hope-Scott and other fellow tractarians); Ferenc Pulszky in the *Pesti Hírlap*, 1842, Nr. 116, referred to Tocqueville's remarks on Revolutionary centralisation to reflect on Enlightenment

reforms in Hungary, József Eötvös, easily Hungary's greatest 19th century political thinker, also was an avid reader and correspondent of Tocqueville. As with Thun, Eötvös was mainly interested in key Tocquevillean leitmotifs: the function of religion as a mainspring of civil liberties and the critique of the juggernaut-like centralising state, whether French-Revolutionary or "absolutist", i.e. Josephinian, a despotism that destroyed all social ties and corporate bodies conducive to the cultivation of liberties. These points became crucial since the 1840s when different attempts at state-making and state-breaking were implemented in Habsburg Europe. I get the impression that Tocqueville's remarks on the role of Catholics in the early American republic and in the French ancien régime resonated with his Central European correspondents, particularly when it comes to their desire to avoid the secluded self-sufficiency of "liberal" citizenship. Some French letters are in Katalin Vikol, "Tocqueville és hatása Magyarországon. Centralisták és liberálisok vitái a reformkorban," *Világosság*, 22 (1981), 73–79, for Thun-Hohenstein the comprehensive edition is now Hana Fořtová, and Doubravka Olšáková (eds.), *Lev Thun a Alexis de Tocqueville: Korrespondence 1835–1856,* Prague: Edice Oikúmené 2011. These themes deserve further study!]

Hedwig thought that in this period France was often a negative model, Britain a more positive one. Ideas about 'German democracy' often traced a tradition back to the Reformation.

Iain said in relation to self-government that both French and German texts often used the expression in English. Michael Sonenscher suggested that they got the idea mainly from JS Mill. He mentioned the Britain Robert Morier who visited several German states and wrote a book comparing English and German approaches to self government (1888) https://www.google.fi/books/edition/Local_Government_in_England_Germany/UhIuAAAAMAAJ

Cody said that many discourses of national character in the Habsburg Empire involved conceptions of democracy as well. For example, many Slavic intellectuals viewed feudalism as Germanic, and that Slavs were traditionally more democratic, as in the Russian *mir*, or the Balkan *zadruga*/*opština.* This is clear in the works of the Serbian socialist thinkers Svetozar Marković (1846–1875) and Živojin Žujović (1838–1870) during the 1850s–1870s. In this period too, a new coinage involved turning 'democracy' into an -ism: 'democratism'; this was apparent, e.g., in the popular press, as in the Slovene political catholic newspaper *Slovenec* (*The Slovene*) starting in the 1870s, where the term '*demokracija*' is rather substituted for '*demokratizem*'. [See example of search in corpus here]

Franz agreed that the term Demokratismus appeared. He said that it could be positive or negative. In relation to ideas of self-government, he noted that development by Haxthausen from Westphalia of the idea of an original self-governing village community. Ideas about Russian self-governing village communities that fed into the peasant emancipation act of 1861 were partly his invention, so were Indian musings about the village commune that snowballed back to domestic concerns in Ireland. He noted too that in 1856 Heinrich Clam-Martinic always wrote about English 'self-government'. He thought that that also accorded a role to aristocracy.

Theo thought that it was striking that whereas, in the early nineteenth century, people were concerned to find ways of bypassing or overriding intermediate levels of government in order to achieve reforms, in this period, intermediate levels themselves became the focus of reforming discourse, as source of ideas or object of action.

Susanne also found it puzzling that Britain now returned to favour as a model. She wondered where the US now figured.

Mark H suggested that one novelty in this period was the appearance of international organisations, which created a new context of the international exchange of ideas. But this was complicated by the rise of the 'national question'. As Paul Schroeder said, at this point the German question became a version of the national question, turning constitutional issues into diplomatic and geopolitical ones. The Crimean War was seen to raise a version of the same question, resting to an extent on a split between 'progressive' and 'reactionary' camps He noted also that the US Civil War was divisive within Germany: liberals and radicals had different views about its political significance.

Hedwig agreed that in this period the US was not much cited as a model; Britain much more, especially for more conservative thinkers. There was a discussion about the implications of mass politicization in which US experience was seen to illustrate some of the possibilities.

Jean-Michel suggested that German traditions of self-government were very different from French ones. He also noted that when the central state introduced new institutions of self-government, that could be seen as a destructive move, eg inasmuch as they destroyed guilds.

Gervinus' Georg Gottfried Gervinus - Wikipedia account of the history of the nineteenth century was interesting. He saw something extra-national in the progress of democracy, though he also thought Germany had played a particular role in the story.

He thought the Progress party might be interesting to look at in relation to how they conceptualised the kinds of issues we're discussing.

Steve agreed that England emerged as an important model for self-government, though the French preferred to talk about *administration democratique,* to underline that this entailed something new, not just a continuation of feudal arrangements. Rudolf von Thadden has written about this.

Chris said that one group of people who talked about democracy a lot were the police, who saw democracy everywhere. Thus also the Austrian minister Bach. Their concept of democracy was very loose and vague. However they identified the London Central Democratic Committee which Mazzini attended as a centre of conspiracy. Insofar as there was any attempt to rethink policing in a more democratic context, again Britain was seen to supply an interesting model.

Susanne thought that any attempt to chart the spread of concepts needed also to consider how they were being used locally.

Iain said in relation to the US that Kiesselbach (already cited) wrote about the US constitution in the 1860s, during the Civil War. He was a theorist of the *Rechtstaat*.

Franz mentioned Charles Seasfield, *Austria as it is* - a travel novel (1827). https://books.google.fi/books/about/Austria_as_it_is.html?id=e65nAAAAMAAJ He admired the plantation culture of the American South, and thought it might serve as a model for the treatment of serfs in Bohemia.

Mark H said that there were numerous publications about the American Civil War, offering differing perspectives. Some were the work of liberal exiles in the US.

Cody said that he thought GG was not wrong to focus on social democracy. Social democrats in this period tended to see themselves as fighting to build a democratic "social republic" (not always so-called, though there were some key examples, as in the Hungarian social democrat and Paris communard Leó Frankel's (1844–1896) letter to Karl Marx in March 1871, where he states they are

building a “social republic” in Paris [International Institute of Social History - IISG, Karl Marx / Friedrich Engels Papers - ARCH00860, D. Briefe an Karl Marx, Léo Frankel to Karl Marx (March 30, 1871), D 1953].

Steve agreed, though thought it important to note that there were also anti-democratic visions of what a social republic might be around. The premise was that people wouldn’t accept all of the sacrifices or choose to make all of the sacrifices necessary for the establishment of a social republic. It was therefore, in the view of some, to forego democratic politics in order to ensure more radical forms of equality.

Jonathan wondered how common talk of ‘social democracy’ was. He thought that the phrase *Soziale Frage* was much more common. **Iain** said it was certainly there in the 1860s, when Liebknecht for example used it. Or at least he advocated a *Volkstaat* or popular state.

Joanna said that her sense was that in this period ‘democracy’ became more acceptable as the name of a political or social form, and in that context people started developing variations on the theme, and debating not so much whether to have a democracy as what kind of democracy to have, or how to make democracy work better. Interest in experiments with new ways of involving the people in Switzerland and Belgium should be set in that context. **Hedwig** agreed that there was such practical discussion, but thought that often the word ‘democracy’ was not used.

Steve said that one question he had seen was ‘Do/Can you preserve a democratic society through democratic politics?!’